



CHANGE IS POSSIBLE. CHANGE IS HAPPENING.

April 3, 2013

Testimony for Senate General Government Committee in support of SB 744

Dear Chair Shields and Committee Members,

My name is Andrea Paluso and I'm the Executive Director of Family Forward Oregon. We advocate on economic security issues that impact women and families in Oregon.

Equal pay for equal work is still a far off reality for most women. Wage discrimination takes many forms, but can be seen across all industries, at all ages for working women. **Accounting for all other variables (education, training, job type, income level, geography), women still make 77-cents for every dollar a man earns** - a gap of 23%- simply because they are women.¹ This is even more marked for women of color: African American women are paid 64-cents and Latinas are paid just 55-cents for every dollar a white man earns.²

In Oregon the picture is slightly different: women are paid 78-cents for every dollar paid to men, meaning full-time, **working women make \$9,949 less than men each year.**³ That's hardly a cause for celebration, when women and our families are being shortchanged almost ten thousand dollars each year, amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars over a lifetime.

Nationally, women also earn less than men in both the highest and lowest paying occupations as well as being segregated in occupations based on gender. Female surgeons make just 71% of the wages their male counterparts do; likewise maids and housekeepers make only 82.6% for the same work as men.⁴ The more women work in any given sector, the lower the wages are in that occupation and the reverse is true for sectors primarily occupied by men. The Commission's policy recommendations would allow us to raise awareness of the problems faced by men and women in accessing different occupations, something which would help Oregon's economy and it's businesses.

This gender wage gap affects mother's disproportionately- and given that three out of four mothers work outside the home, their wages matter a great deal. Forty percent of those

¹ Budig, Michelle J. New Evidence on the Gender Pay Gap for Women and Mothers in Management. Testimony before the U.S. Congressional Joint Economic Committee Hearing. September 28, 2010.

² U.S. Census Bureau. (2012). *2011 Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) Supplement: Table PINC-05. Work Experience in 2011 -- People 15 Years Old and Over by Total Money Earnings in 2011, Age, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex*. Retrieved 31 March 2013, from http://www.nationalpartnership.org/site/PageNavigator/issues_work_wagegap_map_or.html

³ U.S. Census Bureau. (2012). *2011 American Community Survey 1 Year Estimates, Geographies: All States within United States and All Congressional Districts within the United States in the 112 Congress, Table B20017: Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months (in 2011 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars) by Sex by Work Experience in the Past 12 Months for the Population 16 Years and Over with Earnings in the Past 12 Months*. Retrieved 31 March 2013, from http://www.nationalpartnership.org/site/PageNavigator/issues_work_wagegap_map_or.html

⁴ IWPR Factsheet, Gender Wage Gap by occupation



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mothers are the primary breadwinners for their family. Mother's make 60 cents for every dollar a father makes and childless women's pay is 94 cents for every dollar of childless men's pay. That means mothers are losing out on 40% of the pay fathers receive as a consequence of having children. This leads to poverty for families, economic instability for women, and creates unnecessary burdens for the Oregon economy. With more families relying solely on women's paychecks for their livelihood, we must do something to ensure the financial stability of Oregon's women and families.

Women and mothers can't wait for change. We must act now. That's why Family Forward Oregon is supporting Senate Bill 744. The report from the Oregon Council on Civil Rights would make concrete, state-specific recommendations for needed changes to policy-makers and would provide a clear understanding of the barriers to wage equality in our state. With that information, we can identify a path forward toward wage equality in Oregon.

Thank you.