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### Support HB 2669

AAUW Oregon fully supports any efforts to educate and enforce civil rights protections for all classes of people. Interns while gaining workplace experience through unpaid activities should be protected just as if he or she were a compensated employee.

AAUW Oregon through our contributions to the national association was instrumental in the publication of “Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School” in 2011. The nationally recognized report revealed the prevalence of sexual harassment in schools and the negative impact it has on student achievement.

Statistics from the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) and state and local Fair Employment Practices agencies show a decrease in charges filed from the high of 2000. However some of the decrease in filed cases may be a result of the loss of employment due to the 2008 recession.

Some statistics have remained fairly consistent however. Charges filed by men asserting sexual harassment have remained fairly steady at around 15 or 16 percent of the filings in recent years.

Monetary awards filed with the EEOC totaled \$52 million excluding litigation awards.

Those statistics however are not complete because those working in internships are not covered by either Federal or Oregon state law for civil rights violations at a workplace.

Judy Greenwald in an article in Business Insurance, an online publication, discusses best practices for employers for confronting employee sexual harassment as suggested by experts. The components are a strong policy, training, a readily accessible complaint procedures, responsive investigations and a corporate culture that discourages sexual harassment. Later in the article Paul E. Starkman, a partner with Chicago law firm Pedersen and Houpt is quoted,

Executives in particular still may not believe the issue applies to them, so, “you’ve got to develop the culture where people feel they don’t need to put up’ with sexual harassment, where employees “can let someone know and something will actually will be done about it.”

Please support interns by allowing them to be covered under Oregon Civil rights laws. That is a beginning.

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