

**To:** House Committee on Business and Labor  
**From:** Senator Diane Rosenbaum  
**Date:** February 9, 2015  
**RE:** Testimony in Support of HB 2006, HB 2007: Equal Pay in Oregon

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Chair Holvey, Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today to testify in support of House Bills 2006 and 2007, ensuring fair practices regarding equal pay and wage transparency in Oregon.

For the record, I am Diane Rosenbaum, State Senator representing District 21 which includes inner Southeast Portland, Milwaukie and Oak Grove.

Prior to my election to the Oregon Legislature, I served as chair of the Oregon Commission for Women from 1993-1998. As a Legislator, I have focused on joining workforce issues and women's issues in my role as the founder of the Oregon Women's Health and Wellness Alliance and as Senate Majority Leader. I am a proud Chief sponsor of these bills because I have seen our families, our communities and our economy flourish when women have a fair shot at getting ahead, not just getting by.

Right now we know that women in Oregon earn roughly 79 cents for every dollar her male counterpart makes despite the equal pay law we already have in place. Minority women experience an even greater gap in earnings. Despite our equal pay law Oregon is failing to ensure that women receive comparable wages for positions that require comparable skills, background, education and experience. House Bill 2006 will alleviate persisting gender-based disparities, and propel Oregon forward.

Although two thirds of working women in Oregon are the primary or co-breadwinners in their families, right now they take home less income, are less likely to earn wage raises and promotions, earn fewer retirement benefits and accumulate lower lifetime wealth. Pay inequality not only impacts these women, but directly impacts children and other adults who are dependent on these women's incomes.

Oregon does not stand to benefit from persisting economic insecurities like pay inequality. It is necessary to not only acknowledge the importance of securing working women the protections to speak openly and transparently about their wages, but enact policy that ensures those protections. House Bill 2007 would prohibit retaliation against Oregon's working women and employees who discuss employment practices and salaries.

I truly appreciate the hard work that has gone into crafting these bills. Thank you Commissioner Avakian, and members of the Civil Rights Council for the time you dedicated to exploring this important issue. Chair Holvey and members of the committee,

I urge you to fulfill the promise of pay equity in Oregon by voting in support of House Bills 2006 and 2007. Oregon's working women, their families and our communities deserve a fair shot at a fair wage, and we must act now.

I began my working career 40 years ago and I recognize that we have made significant progress toward equal pay. But there is still work to do. That is why I am a proud Chief sponsor of HB 2006 and HB 2007. I look forward to working with you this session to promote policies that work for working women.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diane Rosenbaum". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Senator Diane Rosenbaum  
Senate Majority Leader  
District 21