



**March 4, 2015**

**Re: SB 491, HR C: Senate Workforce committee**

Chair Dembrow, members of the Committee: Thank you for holding the hearing on Senate Bill 491. For the record, I am State Representative Betty Komp, representing House District 22, Woodburn, Gervais and North Salem.

The problem: Pay *inequity* is a reality in Oregon.

A 22% wage gap exists for women across of types of jobs and all ages of those employed. Women of color experience this more harshly, as do mothers, who, according to Family Forward Oregon, experience a “motherhood penalty” of three to seven percent wage gap *per child*.

In addition to pay gender gaps, inequities also result in differences in *who* is hired in the first place.

SB 491 is a step in the right direction. This bill would ensure that the state would support employers that are doing their best to promote equal pay practices within their personnel. This bill is one piece of a large movement towards pay equity that Oregon must take. State-level policy solutions can help accurately value women’s work and help Oregon workers be more financially and economically secure.

What it comes down to is: equal pay for equal work. While Oregon is slightly ahead of the nation, we pay 79 cents on the dollar to women instead of the national average of 77 cents; there is still a lot of work to do on the path towards wage equality in Oregon. I urge you to support Senate bill 491, which would merely show our state that our money is where our mouth is.

Thank you for your time today.

Sources:

Family Forward Oregon: [http://www.familyforwardoregon.org/equal-pay-for-equal-work/#\\_ftn1](http://www.familyforwardoregon.org/equal-pay-for-equal-work/#_ftn1)