

Seventy-Eighth Oregon Legislative Assembly - 2015 Regular Session
STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY
House Committee On Business and Labor

MEASURE: HB 2007 A
CARRIER: Rep. Fagan

Fiscal: No Fiscal Impact
Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 02/25/15
Action: Do Pass As Amended And Be Printed Engrossed.
Meeting Dates: 02/09, 02/25
Vote:
Yeas: 6 - Barton, Doherty, Evans, Fagan, Holvey, Nosse
Nays: 5 - Barreto, Esquivel, Heard, Kennemer, Weidner
Prepared By: Jan Nordlund, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Makes disciplinary action against employee who inquires about or discloses wage information an unlawful employment practice and provides employee a private right of action. Creates exception.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Wage gap between males and females
- Limits of whistleblower statutes
- Impact on equal pay when employees can discuss wages without retaliation

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

Clarifies that exception is for employee who has access to wage information of other employees as part of the position's job functions, even if the access is not part of the position's "essential" job functions.

BACKGROUND:

In 2011, Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian directed the Oregon Council on Civil Rights, an advisory board appointed by the Commissioner, to create a formal set of policy recommendations regarding equal pay in Oregon. Two years later, the Legislative Assembly passed Senate Bill 744 to direct the Council to study wage inequality and the factors that contribute to it. In January 2014, the Council issued its formal recommendations to address pay inequality in Oregon. House Bill 2007 was introduced to address one of the recommendations contained in the report.

House Bill 2007-A protects employees who inquire about, discuss, or disclose information about their wage or the wage of another employee. The measure also protects an employee who makes a charge, files a complaint, or institutes any proceeding based on the disclosure of the wage information by the employee. A violation is an unlawful employment practice that allows an aggrieved employee to file a private right of action.