

April 25, 2017

Members of the Senate Committee on Workforce
Senate Workforce Committee
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Workforce,

The Oregon Women's Health and Wellness Alliance (OWHWA), is a group of legislators, health care personnel, state and local agency staff and citizen advocates, who are dedicated to promoting the health, safety and economic well-being of women, strongly support HB 2005A.

According to the 2016 Women's Foundation report entitled *Count Her In*, Oregon women earn between 53 and 83 cents for every dollar men in Oregon earn. The problem exists, and is more acute for those with intersectional identities. HB 2005A works to address this issue by strengthening protections for workers across protected classes.

HB 2005A prevents an employer from setting compensation based on a job applicant's prior earnings, in order to interrupt ways an employer may perpetuate unfair pay gaps. The bill also clarifies in what circumstances it is okay to pay an employee differently and when it is not. HB 2005A will prohibit pay differentiation should an employee file an official complaint, and prevents employers from lowering a worker's compensation in order to "resolve" an unequal wage issue.

Everyone should have the ability to earn a living wage without fear of discrimination based on gender, race or sexuality. HB 2005A works to decrease the wage gap and create equity in the workforce for all individuals. OWHWA appreciates the committee's thoughtful consideration of this bill, and urges your support for HB 2005A.

Sincerely,

The OWHWA Co-Chairs:



Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward



Representative Karin Power



Senator Kathleen Taylor



Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer