

February 20, 2017

TO: House Committee on Business and Labor

I support House Bill 2005.

When I began work at the University, I was pleased to have the job and happy with my salary. While there was no rule about discussing salaries at our private university, it just “wasn’t done”. And I never did talk about it with my colleagues. About five years later, we got a new Dean. The Dean was a woman; the prior Dean was a man. The next year, when salaries were being set for the following year, she called me into her office. In addition to the usual raise for that year, (most people get the amount set University-wide, but Deans could give someone less or more), she gave me an additional significant increase. She told me that a colleague, who started the same year, had the same years of legal experience before starting, and his post-hiring career was not very different, had started at a significantly higher salary. The dollar difference grew over time as a result of applying the same percentage raise.

So mine is a story both of unequal pay and of the importance of having women in decision-making roles.

Respectfully,

Mary Coombs
Ashland, OR