

SB 123-2 Amendments

Chair Taylor and Members of the Committee

The OWRC has long stood for equal pay for all, most especially women. We were overjoyed with action taken by the 2017 legislature to strengthen Oregon's pay equity.

We commend Family Forward and AAUW-Oregon for their efforts in this arena.

Equal pay is vital for women as more and more women are in the workplace. Women's long-term economic condition should be a matter of concern for all Oregonians as well.

We are in opposition to the -2 amendments for the same reasons as is Family Forward Oregon and AAUW.

In addition, we wish to call attention to the results of historic low pay for women. Women have been partners in the workforce for decades. Yet their economic status has not kept up with women.

This is not only costly for women; it is costly for society as a whole. We will give one telling example.

Low income women when they reach the age of 65 and qualify for Medicare, can qualify to be a "dual eligible" or a person whose Medicare is paid for by the state by the Medicaid program because they do not have adequate resources.

A study published by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, "Medicare-Medicaid Enrollees State Profile Oregon shows this costly and dramatic effect. In Oregon there were about 90,000 dual eligibles. Of those 65 years who were dual eligible, 70% were women. This is a dramatic difference from dual eligibles 18-64, those on some sort of disability whose gender break down was 52 male and 48 female.

This stark profile underlines the need for fixing the equal pay issues. We do not believe that the -2 amendments are the answer.

Marcia Kelley

OWRC Public Policy Advocate