

**House Bill 221 Sponsor Testimony**  
**House Civil Justice Committee**  
**May 14, 2019**  
**Representative Janine Boyd**  
**9<sup>th</sup> House District**

Good afternoon Chairman Hambley, Vice Chair Patton, Ranking Member Brown, and esteemed members of the Civil Justice Committee. It's my honor to share my testimony with you today as joint sponsor of House Bill 221 with Representative Erica Crawley.

This bill represents so much more than setting up a simple hotline. This bill is a workforce development tool. If there is more money going into the pockets of Ohioans, there will be more money spent back into the economy. If we put money into the pockets of our workers we can alleviate the reliance on welfare programs. The bill will allow individuals and families to see a doctor for preventative care rather than emergency room visits, they will have more money to spend on groceries instead of EBT benefits, or even have the money to get child care.

The simple truth is a gender pay equity gap still persists. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics 2018 "Women's Earnings in Ohio" report, women make up 45 percent of the workforce in Ohio, but on average make 81 cents for every dollar their male counterparts earn. This issue persists across all demographics, especially in traditionally female-dominated professions like teaching, child-care and nursing. It persists for every age group, with the gap growing over time. It persists for women

who have children. It persists for women who look like me, which tends to experience the largest pay gap. Black women are paid just 61 cents for every dollar paid to white men and Latinas are paid just 53 cents for every dollar paid to white men.

Once inequality grows, women face more difficulties as it translates into a lifetime of lower earnings with implications for their ability to provide for their family or support themselves in retirement. The anonymous reporting process created in House Bill 138 provides a clear path, free from fear or retribution, for victims of wage discrimination to notify the state. Information received by the state could be invaluable to the legislature as we consider policies to minimize or eliminate the gender pay equity gap. Let's collect the data and use it to inform our positions regarding equal pay as we work to serve all Ohioans, to the best of our abilities.

Ultimately, policies that increase women's earnings make it easier to combine work and family responsibilities, improving not just women's economic security, but Ohio families' economic security too. Such policies will also improve Ohio's economy, which is at least one important priority we all share.

We have a lot of work ahead of us to ensure all Ohioans can experience the opportunity and promise of our state, but HB 221 is a good small step in moving toward a future with more economic opportunity, security and growth in our state.

Thank you kindly, for your attention and support. I'm happy to take any questions from the committee.