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**Senate Small Business and Economic Opportunity Committee**  
**Senate Bill 231 Sponsor Testimony**  
**Require system for anonymous reporting of wage discrimination**  
**June 25, 2024**

Chairman Lang, Vice Chair Wilkin, Ranking Member Sykes and our good friend Senator Landis. Thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony to help fix the persistent problem of the gender wage gap. You will hear about two pieces of legislation to attempt to fix this matter. The first of which, Senate Bill 231 would create an anonymous method of reporting possible gender wage discrimination

I believe you four gentlemen are all aware of this data but let me state for the historic record that research indicates there is a difference in the amount of wages earned by men and women who do the same job.

The gender wage gap refers to the difference in earnings between men and women who are working the same job. Analyzing Census Bureau data from 2018, women of all races earned, on average, just 82 cents for every \$1 earned by men of all races, but that gap can be even wider for women of color.

### The gender wage gap is more significant for most women of color

Comparing 2018 median earnings of full-time, year-round workers by race/ethnicity and sex



Notes: The gender wage gap is calculated by finding the ratio of women's and men's median earnings for full-time, year-round workers and then taking the difference. People who have identified their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race.

Chart: Center for American Progress • Source: For all groups except American Indian and Alaska Native women, the Center for American Progress calculated the gender wage gap using data from U.S. Census Bureau, "Current Population Survey: PINC-05. Work Experience-People 15 Years Old and Over, by Total Money Earnings, Age, Race, Hispanic Origin, Sex, and Disability Status: 2018," available at <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/cps-pinc/pinc-05.html> (last accessed March 2020). Specific tables used are on file with the author. CAP calculated the gender wage gap for American Indian and Alaska Native women using U.S. Census Bureau, "Table B20017C: American Indian and Alaska Native alone population, non-Hispanic or Latino population 16-years and over with earnings in the past 12 months, 2018 American Community Survey (ACS) 1-Year Estimates," available at <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/> (last accessed March 2020); U.S. Census Bureau, "Table B20017H: White alone, non-Hispanic or Latino population 16-years and over with earnings in the past 12 months, 2018 American Community Survey (ACS) 1-Year Estimates," available at <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/> (last accessed March 2020).

Research also indicates it doesn't matter what type of job you have. The Institute for Women's Policy Research looked at the top 20 occupations for men and women and found that within those 40 different jobs there was only one where equal pay for equal work existed – the job of Teaching Assistant. For the other 39 of 40 there was a gender wage gap.

*Source:* <https://iwpr.org/women-earn-less-than-men-whether-they-work-in-the-same-or-in-different-occupations/>

Other research from the IWPR indicates that if we closed the gender wage gap, we could cut the poverty rate of working Moms in half. Let me put that another way. If equal pay for equal work existed, the result would be that thousands would be pulled out of poverty without raising taxes.

*Source:* <https://iwpr.org/closing-the-gender-wage-gap-could-pull-half-of-working-single-moms-out-of-poverty-april-10-2015/>

According to a 2017 IWPR report, if we do nothing the wage gap will not fully close in Ohio until 2067. 50 years – that's too long.

So Senator Hicks Hudson and I introduced two pieces of legislation to fix this problem.

Senate Bill 231 would create a Pay Equity Hotline where employees could report possible wage discrimination to the Ohio Civil Rights Commission. The hope is that just the creation of this Hotline will cause Ohio businesses to reduce the gender wage gap, where it exists so that if a complaint were brought against that business, an investigation would determine that such a wage gap does not exist.

Members of the Committee, we appreciate your consideration of this legislation and would be happy to respond to any questions that you might have.