

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 17

Session of
2001

INTRODUCED BY ORIE, FICHTER, CAPPABIANCA, LESCOVITZ, BELARDI, DeWEESE, THOMAS, GEIST, NAILOR, SANTONI, ALLEN, MELIO, CORRIGAN, DALEY, ROEBUCK, BARRAR, READSHAW, TRAVAGLIO, FAIRCHILD, MANDERINO, SHANER, BUXTON, LAUGHLIN, DeLUCA, MANN, RUBLEY, WILT, BELFANTI, SOLOBAY, STURLA, TIGUE, RUFFING, CLYMER, McILHATTAN, R. MILLER, WOJNAROSKI, STABACK, HENNESSEY, YEWCIC, PISTELLA, GEORGE, FRANKEL, BISHOP, YUDICHAK, GRUCELA, SCRIMENTI, KELLER, E. Z. TAYLOR, TULLI, ROBINSON, SURRA, SATHER, HARHAI, MICHLOVIC, CURRY, BARD, PETRARCA, COSTA, M. COHEN, HERSHEY, L. I. COHEN, LEVDANSKY, WATSON, BEBKO-JONES, FREEMAN, JOSEPHS, HORSEY, MUNDY, DALLY, McCALL, STEELMAN, PRESTON AND CIVERA, JANUARY 29, 2001

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON RULES, JANUARY 29, 2001

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to study the
2 issue of workplace pay disparity and to reexamine existing
3 Federal and State laws relating to that issue and to make
4 recommendations to the General Assembly.

5 WHEREAS, Women work for pay in greater numbers, in more
6 occupations and for more years of their lives than ever before;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, The year 1999 marks the 40th anniversary of the act
9 of December 17, 1959 (P.L.1913, No.694), known as the Equal Pay
10 Law, a law which is as relevant today as it was on the day it
11 was signed; and

12 WHEREAS, The Equal Pay Law, along with the act of October 27,
13 1955 (P.L.744, No.222), known as the Pennsylvania Human
14 Relations Act, the Equal Pay Act of 1963 (Public Law 88-38, 77

1 Stat. 56) and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Public
2 Law 88-352, 78 Stat. 241), provides a critical foundation for
3 women seeking greater opportunities in the workplace and a
4 paycheck free from stereotypes about the value of women's work;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, Legislative efforts are currently under way at the
7 Federal level which call for enhanced enforcement of equal pay
8 laws, as well as additional policy initiatives and improved
9 training for government agencies charged with enforcing equal
10 pay requirements under the law; and

11 WHEREAS, The issue of equal pay continues to resonate among
12 women in the 1990's, as illustrated by a 1994 survey conducted
13 by the Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, which found that
14 improving pay and benefits was one of working women's three main
15 priorities for change, along with balancing work and family and
16 gaining respect and opportunity on the job; and

17 WHEREAS, According to the Department of Labor and Industry,
18 Bureau of Research and Statistics, the trend of more women
19 entering the labor force in this Commonwealth will continue
20 through the year 2005; and

21 WHEREAS, Women's share of the labor force will continue to
22 increase, exceeding 47% as a larger proportion looks for jobs;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, The effects of wage disparity can follow women
25 throughout their lives, since pension and Social Security
26 benefits are based on pay earned while working; and

27 WHEREAS, The existence of pay disparities:

28 (1) can depress the wages of working families who rely
29 on the wages of all members of the family to make ends meet;

30 (2) can prevent the maximum utilization of the available

1 labor resources; and

2 (3) violates the longstanding public policy of the
3 Commonwealth against wage discrimination;

4 and

5 WHEREAS, There is a need for a comprehensive reexamination of
6 the role that Federal and State laws play in the daily
7 deterrence of workplace wage discrimination; therefore be it

8 RESOLVED (the Senate concurring), That the General Assembly
9 direct the Joint State Government Commission to study workplace
10 pay disparity in this Commonwealth; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the area of review include a study of the
12 Equal Pay Law, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, the Equal
13 Pay Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to
14 determine their effectiveness in deterring wage disparity in the
15 workplace, a review of current Federal and State law to
16 determine if additional policy initiatives or outreach programs
17 or legislation is needed to ensure equal pay in this
18 Commonwealth, a review of current training and funding
19 mechanisms to determine if government agencies have the tools
20 and resources they need to identify and pursue equal pay
21 violations, and a study of Federal policy initiatives addressing
22 wage disparity as they may apply to this Commonwealth; and be it
23 further

24 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission report
25 its findings, recommendations and proposed legislation to the
26 General Assembly by August 31, 2001.