

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 174 Session of 2017

INTRODUCED BY WATSON, O'NEILL, READSHAW, WARD, TOEPEL, BOBACK,
 V. BROWN, BULLOCK, DEAN, DELOZIER, DRISCOLL, FITZGERALD,
 GOODMAN, HELM, JAMES, McNEILL, MURT, NEILSON, PASHINSKI,
 M. QUINN, RAPP, SOLOMON AND TOOHIL, MARCH 21, 2017

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND INDUSTRY, MARCH 21, 2017

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to study the
 2 issue of workplace pay disparity, 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 2017 marks the 58th 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 on the day the law was
 11 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
 15 Stat. 56) and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Public
 16 Law 88-352, 78 Stat. 241), provides a critical foundation for
 17 women seeking greater opportunities in the workplace and
 18 compensation without wage discrimination; and

1 WHEREAS, A 1994 survey conducted by the United States
2 Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, found that improving pay
3 and benefits was one of working women's three main priorities
4 for change, along with balancing work and family; and

5 WHEREAS, Gaining respect and opportunity on the job and the
6 issue of equal pay continue to resonate among women; and

7 WHEREAS, The effects of wage disparity follow women
8 throughout life, as pension and Social Security benefits are
9 based on pay earned while working; and

10 WHEREAS, Pay disparities depress the wages of working
11 families who rely on the wages of all members of the family to
12 make ends meet, prevent maximum utilization of available labor
13 resources and violate the longstanding public policy of the
14 Commonwealth against wage discrimination; and

15 WHEREAS, According to the 2015 Census Bureau data, women
16 Statewide average 78.4¢ for every \$1 paid to men; and

17 WHEREAS, A recent study by the American Association of
18 University Women found that among people hired within the first
19 year after college, women in 2009 were paid 82¢ for every \$1
20 paid to men; and

21 WHEREAS, According to the National Committee on Pay Equity,
22 women's earnings were 79.6% of men's in 2015, compared to 78.3%
23 in 2013; and

24 WHEREAS, Nationwide, men's median earnings in 2015 were
25 \$51,212 and women's were \$40,742; and

26 WHEREAS, In Pennsylvania in 2013, the median yearly pay for
27 women working full time was \$38,368, while the median yearly pay
28 for men was \$50,231, leaving a yearly gap of \$11,683 between
29 full-time working men and full-time working women in this
30 Commonwealth; and

1 WHEREAS, There is a need for a comprehensive reexamination of
2 the role of Federal and State laws in deterring workplace wage
3 discrimination; therefore be it

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

7 RESOLVED, That the area of review include a study of the
8 Equal Pay Law, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, the Equal
9 Pay Act of 1963 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to
10 determine the laws' effectiveness in deterring wage disparity in
11 the workplace; a review of existing Federal and State laws to
12 determine if additional policy initiatives, outreach programs or
13 legislation are needed to ensure equal pay in this Commonwealth;
14 a review of current training and funding mechanisms to determine
15 if government agencies have the tools and resources needed to
16 identify and pursue equal pay violations; and a study of Federal
17 policy initiatives addressing wage disparity as the policy
18 initiatives may apply to this Commonwealth; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission report
20 its findings, recommendations and proposed legislation to the
21 General Assembly by November 30, 2017.