

HCS HB 44 -- GENDER PAY EQUALITY GUIDELINES

SPONSOR: Webber

COMMITTEE ACTIONS: Voted "Do Pass with Amendments" by the Standing Committee on Workforce Standards and Development by a vote of 10 to 0. Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Select Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations by a vote of 8 to 0.

This bill requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to create best-practice guidelines in gender pay equality for state and local government and private businesses. The guidelines may include, but are not limited to, explanations of the following:

- (1) The definition of gender pay equality;
- (2) The causes of gender pay inequality;
- (3) The benefits of gender pay equality; and
- (4) Ways in which to achieve gender pay equality.

The guidelines must be submitted to the General Assembly and will take effect immediately upon passage of a concurrent resolution by both houses of the General Assembly approving the guidelines.

Nothing in this section must be interpreted to create a cause of action on behalf of any employee, and no employer will be required to adopt or implement the best-practice guidelines.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that it is simply a fairness issue. Full-time working women in Missouri make about 71% of what men make. This is consistent across the US, all levels of income, all job fields. The longer women work, the more unfairly they are paid; the disparity increases over time.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Webber; Pam Rich, Empower Missouri; Jane Crigler; Wendy Doyle, Women's Foundation; Michael Louis, Missouri AFL-CIO; ACLU Of Missouri; Kansas City Missouri; United Steelworkers District 11; International Union Of Painters and Allied Trades District Council# 3; International Union of Painters and Allied Trades District Council #58; Missouri Attorney General's Office; Missouri National Education Association; Jefferson City NAACP; and MO Womens Network.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that they are not really sure what the bill is trying to do. The department already can do a study. If the purpose of the bill is to bring notice to the issue, filing the bill does that. One of the concerns is that the

guidelines could be used to bring a lawsuit against an employer. Another concern is that what starts as best practices and guidelines could easily become a mandate.

Testifying against the bill were Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Associated Industries Of Missouri.