

Act to Establish Pay Equity

Current laws addressing pay have not adapted for the realities of the modern workplace, and the systems we have in place perpetuate unconscious bias. South Carolina needs to pass a robust pay equity bill that ensures that employee pay is based on factors such as skill, effort, and responsibility; bans the use of salary history; and provides pay transparency without retaliation.

South Carolina has a larger wage gap than the national average.¹

Black women earn 57.5 cents on every dollar earned by white men in South Carolina. Overall the average woman earns 77 cents on every dollar earned by white men.²

The overall wage gap for South Carolina women has narrowed by a mere four cents over the last 20 years.

If today's wage gap persists, a Black woman in South Carolina will lose \$860,000 to the wage gap over a 40 year career. For a Latinx woman, this adds up to more than \$900,000 in lost earnings over a 40 year career.

In order to “catch up” to what the typical white, non-Hispanic South Carolina man is paid by age 60, depending on her race, a South Carolina woman would need to work anywhere from 12 to 34 additional years.

The wage gap cannot only be explained by making different career choices; even within the same occupations, women typically earn less than men.³

Asking for prior wage history can lead to an employee with equal or superior qualifications making less than a coworker doing the same job, simply because they happened to make less in their prior position.⁴

Studies show that increased pay transparency creates work environments where employees are more likely to believe they are paid fairly, and thus are more engaged and productive.⁵

Eradicating gender and racial wage gaps would equate to greater economic empowerment for women, more economic stability and mobility for families, and economic growth of our state.

¹ Childers, C. (2018). *Women's Economic Empowerment in South Carolina*. [PowerPoint slides]. WREN Summit, Furman University, Greenville, South Carolina.

² Women's Rights and Empowerment Network and National Women's Law Center. (December 2019). Data Reveal Multiple Barriers to Gender Justice in South Carolina. Retrieved from: https://nwlc.org/wpcontent/uploads/2019/12/final_SC_NWLC_FactSheet.pdf

³ Division of Research, Moore School of Business, University of South Carolina. (2017). Solving the South Carolina Labor Shortage: The Economic Impact of Increasing Women's Participation in the Workforce. Retrieved from http://www.scwren.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/DOR_WREN_P2_FD4.pdf

⁴ National Women's Law Center. (2018). *The Wage Gap: The Who, How, Why, and What to Do*. Retrieved from <https://nwlc-ciw49tixgw5lbab.stackpathdns.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/The-Wage-Gap-The-Who-How-Why-and-What-to-Do-2018.pdf>

⁵ Seiter, C. (2016, Feb 26). The Counterintuitive Science of Why Transparent Pay Works. *Fast Company*. Retrieved from <http://www.fastcompany.com/3056975/the-future-of-work/the-transparent-pay-revolution-inside-the-science-and-psychology-of-open>

The Women's Rights and Empowerment Network is a South Carolina-based network whose mission is to build a movement to advance the health, economic well-being, and rights of South Carolina's women, girls, and their families.

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