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California State Legislature

SENATOR
HANNAH-BETH JACKSON
NINETEENTH SENATE DISTRICT



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JOINT COMMITTEE ON ARTS

Senate Bill 358, the California Fair Pay Act, Author's Message

Dear California Pay Equity Task Force Members,

Last year was a historic year for pay equity when my legislation, SB 358, the California Fair Pay Act, was signed into law, making California the nationwide leader in efforts to close the wage gap women face at work. Likewise, today is a historic day as California takes the lead on implementation efforts by convening a statewide, multi-stakeholder task force in order to encourage effective and meaningful compliance with SB 358.

As a member of the Commission and the Task Force I am very proud and enthusiastic to be part of this collaborative effort to ensure my bill is fully implemented. I've dedicated decades advocating for pay equity and bringing about real change for California's women who deserve to be paid fairly for the work we do. Most employers want to do the right thing and the best way to ensure the change, for which we have fought so hard, is to work together.

While California has prohibited gender-based pay discrimination since 1949, we still have had an unacceptable gender wage gap – especially for women of color. This persistent disparity in earnings between men and women has had a significant impact on the economic security and welfare of millions of working women and their families.

Specifically, SB 358 provides that employees will no longer face retaliation by their employer for asking about the wages being paid to other employees. Women will now be able to challenge pay discrimination based on wages paid to other workers at different worksites for the same employer or for doing substantially similar work. Employers will now be required to show that a difference in wages is based on a specific factor that is legitimate, serves a business purpose, and is not based on or derived from a gender bias.

I want to thank the Commission on the Status of Women and Girls for bringing together diverse interests to continue the collaborative work that is needed to achieve pay equity. We are fortunate to have a Commission that is up and running and is at the threshold of some amazing accomplishments for the women and girls of this State.

As we move forward, learning from past success and focusing on future endeavors, I believe we can continue to shift the outdated thinking about women's work to really underscore how women are the true engines of our economy.

And importantly, our success will serve as the template for the rest of the nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hannah-Beth Jackson".

Hannah-Beth Jackson
Senator, 19th District