



March 12, 2025

Senator Tipping, Representative Roeder, and Honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor,

I join you today on behalf of the Maine Women's Lobby. For over forty years, the Maine Women's Lobby has worked to build gender justice in Maine through legislative advocacy and systems change.

We are before you today in support of LD 799, "An Act to Report Gender Wage Gaps", and thank Representative Roeder for sponsoring this important bill.

According to the United States Census Bureau, *"the difference between median earnings for men and women in Maine who worked full-time, year-round in 2022 was \$9,370<sup>1</sup>. Nationally, that gap is as much as \$28,797 for American Indian and Alaska Native women.<sup>2</sup> That disparity has actually widened since 2016.<sup>3</sup>*

**March 25 of this year marks 2025 Equal Pay Day**, the day of the current year marking how long women have to work to match men's earnings from the previous year. March 25th is the day marking earnings for ALL women earners, with days later on into the year marking earnings for different groups, to show the relative pay gap each group faces: This year, Black Women's Equal Pay Day is July 10, Disabled Women's Equal Pay Day is October 23, and Native Women's Equal Pay Day is not until November 18.<sup>4</sup>

**Equal Pay Day was March 14th last year– we're backsliding.**

**The gender wage gap is systemic, and policy solutions are needed to address it. As we shared last month during the hearing for LD 54 ("An Act to Require Disclosure of Pay Ranges and Record Keeping of Pay History"), universal requirements for wage transparency would be an incredibly helpful tool in addressing the issue. Salaries and wages are often considered a private, personal matter. An individual likely would not know if they were being paid less (or more!) than their colleagues. Increasing transparency provides employees the needed information to keep their employers accountable to providing equal pay.**

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<sup>1</sup> Maine Dept. of Labor (2024). Governor Mills Proclaims March 12 National Equal Pay Day in Maine. Retrieved from

[https://www.maine.gov/labor/news\\_events/article.shtml?id=12487464#:~:text=MAINE%20%2D%20Governor%20Janet%20Mills%20has,earned%20in%20the%20previous%20year.](https://www.maine.gov/labor/news_events/article.shtml?id=12487464#:~:text=MAINE%20%2D%20Governor%20Janet%20Mills%20has,earned%20in%20the%20previous%20year.)

<sup>2</sup> US Census Bureau (2021). American Community Survey. Retrieved from

<https://data.census.gov/table?q=median+earnings+by+race&tid=ACST1Y2021.S2002>

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey, 2016-2020.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

Ensuring this transparency on a statewide level takes this a step further - turning the individual into the systemic, which is exactly what helps us identify systemic challenges and potential solutions.

**We're mindful of the feedback we heard last month during LD 54.** Several associations reported that maintaining position compensation by roles over time would be a burden to many employers, and require a filing or organizational system that didn't currently exist. The committee had questions about software and cabinetry. Though we maintain that a simple spreadsheet would meet the need, **this bill offers an even simpler path - a single, once per year report to the State.** After creating the initial tool to track wage by gender, employers could easily find the information they are looking for over time, allowing them to identify and remedy any potential wage gaps, and for the State to collate such information for a more systemic analysis.

In short, this could be a powerful tool for a nominal investment, and we **hope you will vote 'ought to pass' on LD 799.**

Thank you for your time, and I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

Destie Hohman Sprauge, Executive Director  
Maine Women's Lobby