



Testimony of Thursa Isaac  
President of AFSCME Local 562  
Labor and Public Employees Committee  
HB 6850: AAC Pay Equity and Fairness  
March 3, 2015

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Good afternoon, Senator Gomes, Representative Tercyak, and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. My name is Thursa Isaac. I am the President of AFSCME Local 562, and serve on the Council 4 AFSCME Executive Board. I am also the Chair of the Women's Committee.

Council 4 supports HB 6850: An Act Concerning Pay Equity and Fairness. This bill prohibits employers from disallowing employees from talking to each other about what they are paid. It prohibits an employer from punishing or firing employees for talking about their wages.

We thank Governor Malloy for putting in this bill. This bill helps empower employees to correct a wrong that happens to women every day where they are paid less than men doing the same exact work.

What happened to Lily Ledbetter is exactly why employees need to be able to share this information with each other. Ms. Ledbetter was an employee who for years was paid less than her male counterparts. She did not know this because her employer prohibited her from discussing her wages with other employees. In other words, her employer was able to sexually discriminate against her on a wage basis, and was able to cover it up by disallowing speech that might lead to the discovery of such discrimination. Even though Ledbetter's employer was found to have discriminated against her in court, she was unable to collect on the back wages owed her because of a statute of limitations.

Being a loyal employee Ledbetter followed her employer's instructions and never discussed her pay with any of her 14 all male colleagues. At retirement she found out that she was being made about 25% lower than any of her colleagues including those who had been hired well after her.

The U.S. Census showed that women make 77 cents for every dollar that a man makes on average.

Council 4 would be happy to provide the committee with any additional information. Thank you for your consideration.