



State of Connecticut  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

**JAMES M. ALBIS**

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • DEPUTY MAJORITY LEADER

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
CAPITOL: (860) 240-8585  
CELL: (203) 435-8927  
E-MAIL: James.Albis@cga.ct.gov

**MEMBER**

FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE  
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE  
INSURANCE COMMITTEE

**Testimony of State Representative James Albis in support of HB 5591  
Labor and Public Employees Committee Public Hearing  
Thursday, February 17, 2017**

Good Afternoon Representative Porter, Senator Gomes, Senator Miner, and distinguished members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. First, let me say thank you for granting me the opportunity to testify today on HB 5591 AN ACT CONCERNING PAY EQUITY IN THE WORKFORCE.

I strongly believe the time has passed for us to recognize and honor pay equality in the workforce. The legislation is very simple nature in that it would require employers to provide equal pay to employees in the same workplace who perform comparable duties. Equal pay, for equal work.

Over the decades we have legally recognized equality when it come outlawing segregation, discrimination and extending voting rights. I believe the rational next step our state needs to take is pay equality, which can help set an example for the rest of the nation on just how much we value the efforts and contributions of women in the workplace. It is long overdue. With this bill all we are asking is that women be treated the same as men who perform the same job in the workplace and that they be compensated justly. I would note that while the focus of this legislation is to ensure women are treated fairly in the workplace, passage will benefit all families. So many households today rely on dual incomes that ensuring pay fairness helps *everyone* – mothers, fathers, and children.

The negative impact of pay inequality over the course one's career is tremendous. Please consider the fact that:

- Average lifetime losses for all women who were born between 1955 and 1959 and worked full-time, year-round each year total \$531,502.
- Women with a college education who were born between 1955 and 1959 and worked full-time, year-round each year lost, on average, nearly \$800,000 by age 59 due to the gender wage gap.

- In Connecticut, median annual pay for a woman who holds a full-time, year-round job is \$50,706 while median annual pay for a man who holds a full-time, year-round job is \$60,385. This means that women in Connecticut are paid 83 cents for every dollar paid to men, amounting to an annual wage gap of \$10,679.
- On average, Connecticut women who are employed full time lose a combined total of more than \$5.5 billion every year due to the wage gap. These women, their families, businesses and the economy suffer as a result. Lost money means families have less money to save for the future or to spend on basic goods and services – spending that helps drive the economy.
- If all working women in the United State aged 18 and older were paid the same as comparable men – men of the same age, level of education, and urban/ rural residence, and who work the same number of hours – women's average earnings would increase from \$37,358 to \$43, 909 (\$6,551 or 17.5 percent annually. Added up across all working women in the United States, this would amount to an earnings increase of \$482.2 billion or 2.8 percent of the country's gross domestic product in 2014. Put another way, U.S. women who are also consumers, savers, and asset owners, lost \$482 billion in 2013 due to the gender wage gap.
- Women's median annual earnings in Connecticut for full-time-year-round workers (\$46,800) are considerably higher than earnings for women nationwide (\$37,000), but lower than earnings for men in Connecticut (\$60,000). Women's median annual earnings in the state vary substantially across the largest racial and ethnic groups. White women have the highest earnings (\$51,000) and Hispanic women have the lowest (\$30,947).
- In Connecticut, as in the nation as a whole, women with a bachelor's degree or higher earn nearly twice the amount that women with a high school diploma earn Yet, women who work full-time year-round earn less than men at every educational level, and at some levels of education they earn the same as or less than men with lower educational qualifications. A woman in Connecticut that has a high school diploma has an average salary of \$35,000, which is the same average for men in Connecticut with less than high school diploma.

In closing, I strongly urge the committee's passage of this long overdue legislation to help us set an example we can be proud of for our grandmothers, mothers and sisters and daughters. Let us never once again have to answer the question of why a women's work is not valued as much as a man's for our future generations.

Thank you again for this opportunity to submit this testimony.