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Alder, Ward 26

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February 17, 2017

Labor and Public Employees Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 3800
Hartford, CT 06106

Testimony in Support of Proposed Bill No. 5591

Dear Esteemed Members of the Committee of Labor and Public Employees:

I am Darryl Brackeen Jr., the Alderman of Ward 26 from the New Haven City Government. I come to you today in support of the Proposed Bill No. 5591 that advocates for equal pay for equal work.

Many of the constituents in my ward are constantly concerned about the wellbeing of themselves and their families. Unfortunately, wage gaps have proven to be a hindrance to achieving or maintaining financial stability. Without legislative protections, many Connecticut employers do not feel the need to pay their employees their fair share for the work that they are doing.

According to a study done by the National Partnership for Women and Families in 2016, women are paid \$0.83 for every dollar a man would make, which would amount to a median yearly wage gap of \$10,679. This is also not just an issue that is specific to some parts of the state over others. In every single one of Connecticut's congressional districts, the median yearly pay for full-time working women is less than that for men.

This is absolutely unacceptable. Today, I am appalled as to how so many workers throughout Connecticut could be given wages and benefits based on arbitrary discriminatory practices, causing the female workforce in Connecticut to lose a combined total of more than \$5.5 billion every year. Gender is not an excuse for such a large amount of money to be ripped out of the hands of deserving workers.

Should this bill be passed, Connecticut would be taking steps in the proper direction to ensure that each person is receiving the proper pay for the work that he/she is doing. Connecticut would thus be able to put the money back in the hands of those who earn it, and the workers would be better equipped to better take care of themselves and their families.

Please remember that behind each paycheck is a real worker. If the annual wage gap would be eliminated, each working woman would have more for about 81 more weeks of food for her family, 10 more months of rent, or five more months of mortgage and utilities payments, according to the National Partnership research. This one bill could make significant positive change on Connecticut workers and their families, and I hope you will stand with me in support of the bill.

Sincerely,

Darryl Brackeen, Jr.
Alder, 26th Ward