Oregon
John A. Kitzhaber, Governor

Oregon Commission for Women
"Advocating Equality and Diversity"
1819 SW 5th Ave., Portland, OR 97201
O 503.302.9725/F 503.473.8519
Email: oaco.mail@state.or.us
Website: www.oregon.gov/Women

Testimony in support of SB 744, May 13, 2013, 9:00 AM
House Committee on Business and Labor

Chair Doherty, Vice Chairs Barton and Kennemer and Reps. Fagan, Holvey, Mathews, Thatcher, Thompson, Weidner, and Witt:

The Oregon Commission for Women submits this testimony in support of SB 744, on studying pay equality in Oregon.

Access to good jobs and earning power is a strategic priority of the Oregon Advocacy Commissions and is part of the equation when we are advocating for better education outcomes for communities of color and women, improved health outcomes, stable housing and many other areas that affect or are affected by earning power. Using an equity lens is necessary to understand earning power for women and communities of color if we hope to understand and reduce pay inequality. Pay equality issues hound women throughout their work lives and into retirement. For workers of color, the pay divide between gender, job classification, and education level is worse. You will hear compelling testimony today with many startling facts about pay equality in Oregon and nationally.

We believe study is needed to better understand the underlying causes of inequities, to inform policy and other decisions, and to improve the situation for all Oregonians. In our view, the Oregon Civil Rights Council within BOLI is the right place for the study; their analysis and report to the legislative assembly is key. The findings of the study will fill important gaps in understanding and be helpful to the work of the legislature, the Commissions, and other policy groups. The Oregon Commission for Women urges the legislature to support this vitally important study.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Vardavas, Chair, Oregon Commission for Women

OR Commission for Women

Chair:
Stephanie Vardavas

Vice Chair:
Jeanne Burch

Commissioners:
Jenny Greenleaf
Megan Jacquot
Jessica Rodriguez-Montegna
Dr. Cynthia Scheines
Dr. Barbara Spencer
Mariahm Stephenson

Legislative Liaisons:
Sen. Laurie Monnes Anderson
Rep. Betty Komp

Staff:
Lucy Baker, Administrator
Nancy Kramer, Executive Asst.