

Regular Session, 2013

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 145

BY REPRESENTATIVE LEGER

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To create a Louisiana Fair Pay Task Force to study wage disparities between men and women and make recommendations for policy change and legislation to prevent and eliminate these disparities.

WHEREAS, 2013 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the federal Equal Pay Act, which was passed in 1963 to prohibit wage discrimination based on sex; and

WHEREAS, 2013 marks the sixteenth anniversary of the 1997 passage of R.S. 23:332, which made it unlawful for an employer to:

(1) Intentionally fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to intentionally discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, or his terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of the individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; and

(2) Intentionally limit, segregate, or classify his employees or applicants for employment in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his status as an employee, because of the individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; and

WHEREAS, the wages paid to Louisiana women, on average, are significantly lower than the wages paid to Louisiana men; and

WHEREAS, the earnings gap between Louisiana women and men has placed Louisiana among the states with the greatest disparity in wages; and

WHEREAS, the wage disparities between women and men are deeply rooted in our legal system, employment practices, and cultural history; and

WHEREAS, though equivalent to the work of men in terms of skill, effort, and responsibility, the work performed by women has been historically undervalued; and

WHEREAS, pay disparities among workers increase the potential for absenteeism, grievances, strikes, and turnover; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana families depend on the wages of women for food, clothing, shelter, and education; and

WHEREAS, the great state of Louisiana seeks to employ all persons to their full potential.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana hereby creates the Louisiana Fair Pay Task Force to study and make recommendations relating to fair pay issues in the state of Louisiana. The task force shall be created no later than August 1, 2013, and shall gather information from sources, including but not limited to the federal census, the Louisiana Workforce Commission, the agencies in this state submitting reports pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution No. 174 of the 2012 Regular Session of the Legislature, namely, the Department of Children and Family Services, the Department of Health and Hospitals, the Department of Economic Development, the Department of Education, the division of administration, the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center-Health Care Services Division, and from other agencies in this state and other academic and statistical sources to:

(1) Study the extent of wage disparities between men and women in the workforce including certain public sector employment.

(2) Study the factors that cause, or tend to cause, wage disparities, including segregation between men and women across and within certain occupations and professions, such as the payment of lower wages for female dominated occupations, child-rearing responsibilities, education, and training.

(3) Study the consequences of such disparities on the economy of our state and on families.

(4) Collect data that provide statistics on wages of women and of men categorized by ethnic group, from each department.

(5) Develop actions including policy recommendations and legislation that are likely to lead to the prevention and elimination of wage disparities between the sexes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall consist of the following members:

(1) The executive director of the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus or her designee.

(2) The executive director of the office on women's policy, Department of Children and Family Services.

(3) The Louisiana state coordinator of United 4 Equality or his designee.

(4) One member appointed by the executive director of the Louisiana Commission on Human Rights.

(5) One member appointed by the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry.

(6) One member appointed by the Louisiana AFL-CIO.

(7) One member appointed by the director of the Louisiana State Civil Service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a chairperson be elected from the membership.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the task force shall receive no compensation, including per diem, for their services, and shall serve at no expense to the state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Workforce Commission shall provide the necessary support and staff for the task force to be able to conduct a thorough study.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the task force shall have access to all relevant available data from all agencies within the state of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall make an interim report by December 31, 2013, and make a final report to the House and Senate committees on labor and industrial relations, the Senate Committee on Finance, the House Committee on Appropriations, the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus, and to the governor, no later than March 1, 2014.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the report shall include the findings and recommendations of the task force, including proposed policy changes and legislation to eliminate and prevent wage disparities between men and women in the workforce of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services, the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals, the secretary of the Department of Economic

Development, the state superintendent of the Department of Education, the commissioner of the division of administration, the chief executive officer of the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center-Health Care Services Division, the executive director of the Louisiana Workforce Commission, the director of the Louisiana State Civil Service, the president of the Louisiana AFL-CIO, the president of the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry, the executive director of the Louisiana Commission on Human Rights, and the Louisiana state coordinator of United 4 Equality.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE