

2016 -- S 2906

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

SENATE RESOLUTION

PROCLAIMING APRIL 12, 2016, AS "EQUAL PAY DAY" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Senators Gallo, Goldin, Paiva Weed, Goodwin, and Morgan

Date Introduced: April 12, 2016

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, The Equal Pay Act was signed 53 years ago however, the wage gap between
2 working women and working men has narrowed by less than half a cent per year; and

3 WHEREAS, According to the United States Department of Labor and the US Census
4 Bureau, among full-time workers, women still earn less than men, earning 78.6 percent of what
5 men earn. Additionally, a wage gap persists between the genders when further analyzing by
6 educational attainment, age groups, race and ethnicity; and

7 WHEREAS, Economist Evelyn Murphy, president of The Wage Project, estimates that
8 during the average 47 years of full-time work the wage gap amounts to a loss in wages for a
9 woman of:

- 10 • \$700,000 for a high school graduate;
- 11 • \$1.2 million for a college graduate; and
- 12 • \$2 million for a professional school graduate; and

13 WHEREAS, In 2013, women were more likely to live in poverty (14.5 percent of women
14 compared to 11 percent of men). Women therefore have higher rates of economic insecurity than
15 do men and are thus more likely to rely on public benefits like Medicaid, the Supplemental
16 Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly known as Food Stamps) and housing assistance; and

17 WHEREAS, The wage disparity over a woman's working lifetime has a tremendous
18 impact on Social Security benefits and pensions, and in 2010, women 50 and older received only
19 56 cents for every dollar received by men in income from pensions and annuities; and

1 WHEREAS, The three time, and current, World Cup champion and four time Olympic
2 gold medalist United States Women's Soccer Team brought in twenty million dollars more in
3 revenue in 2015 for the United States Soccer Federation than did the men's soccer team, yet the
4 members of the multiple world champion women's team are paid approximately four times less
5 than the men's soccer team members; and

6 WHEREAS, The economic impact of this persistent pay inequality is far-reaching: if
7 women in the United States received equal pay with comparable men, poverty for working
8 women would be reduced by half and the U.S. economy would add \$482 billion (equivalent to
9 2.8 percent of 2014 gross domestic product) to its economy; and

10 WHEREAS, Closing the gender wage gap would not only increase women's earnings, it
11 would grow each state's economy. Equal pay would provide a significant boost to the economy;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, With equal pay, a working woman in Rhode Island would see an average of
14 \$6,066 increase or a 14 percent increase in pay which is 2.9 percent of the state's gross domestic
15 product (GDP); and

16 WHEREAS, In 2015, The Institute for Women's Policy Research estimated that women
17 will not receive equal pay until 2059; and

18 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Commission on Women is dedicated to leading reforms
19 involving equal pay for the women and girls of Rhode Island, and to recognizing the full value of
20 women's skills and significant contributions to the labor force; and

21 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Commission on Women encourages businesses to
22 conduct an internal pay evaluation to ensure that women are being paid fairly; and

23 WHEREAS, Fair pay equity policies can be implemented simply and without undue costs
24 or hardship in both the public and private sectors; and

25 WHEREAS, Fair pay strengthens the security of families today and eases future
26 retirement costs, while enhancing the American economy; and

27 WHEREAS, Tuesday, April 12th symbolizes the date on which the wages paid to
28 American women catch up to the wages paid to American men during the previous year; now,
29 therefore be it

30 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
31 hereby proclaims Tuesday, April 12, 2016, as "Equal Pay Day" in the state; and be it further

- 1 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
- 2 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Women's Fund of Rhode Island.

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