



HB 649 - Labor and Employment - Equal Pay for Equal Work - Wage Range Transparency
Economic Matters Committee
February 21, 2024
SUPPORT

Chair Wilson, Vice-Chair Crosby and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 649. This bill is a common-sense next step to strengthen Maryland's equal pay laws by requiring transparency around salary ranges in job postings.

The CASH Campaign of Maryland promotes economic advancement for low-to-moderate income individuals and families in Baltimore and across Maryland. CASH accomplishes its mission through operating a portfolio of direct service programs, building organizational and field capacity, and leading policy and advocacy initiatives to strengthen family economic stability. CASH and its partners across the state achieve this by providing free tax preparation services through the IRS program 'VITA', offering free financial education and coaching, and engaging in policy research and advocacy. **Almost 4,000 of CASH's tax preparation clients earn less than \$10,000 annually. More than half earn less than \$20,000.**

When an employer shares the range they plan on paying for a position on job postings, it is a win-win for both employers and job seekers. ***The CASH Campaign of Maryland already implements transparent job listings that includes the salary range, benefits, and other compensation*** to help address the persistent gender- and race-based wage gaps that are holding back Maryland women.

Comparing all men and all women working full time, year-round, women in Maryland are typically paid 85 cents for every \$1 paid to a white, non-Hispanic man. But the wage gap is worse for many women of color compared to white, non-Hispanic men:

- Latina women: 49 cents
- Black women: 67 cents
- Native American women: 57 cents
- Asian American women: 85 cents

HB 649 would help address this by requiring that all job listings include the salary range for the position. Research shows that when job applicants are clearly informed about the context for negotiations, including the salary range, gender differences in negotiation outcomes diminish, which could help narrow gender wage gaps. Providing applicants with a salary range that the employer is willing to pay helps level the negotiating playing field by giving applicants important information that can inform an initial offer that is less tied to their previous pay levels or personal identity. Six states have passed laws specifically requiring pay ranges while legislatures in Virginia, Washington D.C., and Massachusetts recently passed their own pay range transparency laws, which are awaiting final approval.

Recent polling in Maryland showed that two-thirds of respondents have never worked for an employer that posts pay ranges for open roles, even though nearly three in four (74%) support implementing pay range transparency practices at their own workplace. Passing HB 649 would provide an opportunity to educate more businesses about this best practice and ensure a level playing field for all applicants.

Thus, we encourage you to return a favorable report for HB 649.

Creating Assets, Savings and Hope