

Rev. Leslye Dwight
10808 Hollaway Dr.
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772

February 12, 2020

Miller Senate Office Building
c/o Senate Finance Committee
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

As the Minister of Social Justice at Community of Hope A.M.E. Church, I am writing to strongly urge your support of HB 123/SB 217—the Salary History Bill. Daily, I have the great privilege of serving thousands of families within faith community who live in the State of Maryland. Unfortunately, too many times this means serving in a role that requires providing advocacy and gap filling services to single-family households headed by women. In particular, women of color who spend many hours on their job but whose salary isn't enough to make ends meet.

Gender and racial wage disparities exist as a form of systemic oppression. This form of oppression perpetuates a longstanding cycle of women having to settle for lower earnings than their male counterparts. The disparity is not driven by a lack of skill, education, or experience. Rather, it is due to the failure to legislate measures like HB 123/ SB 217 which seeks to interrupt the cycle of businesses making wage determinations based on biased and inequitable salary history. Further, the lack of transparency in the wage determination process continues to create space for such bias by not standardizing the requirement for employers to provide wage ranges for positions. The research supporting the impact on bills such as this is plentiful in support of adopting such legislation as a best practice.

It is time that Maryland adopts this best practice by passing the Salary History Bill. Black women are paid 69cents to the dollar that white men make. It is time to level the playing field. Latina women are paid 46 cents to the dollar that white men make. It is time to level the playing field. As our elected officials, it is your duty to serve the best interest of the people by eliminating economic disparities. While this piece of legislation does not carry a financial burden to the State budget, it will alleviate the financial burden to many households across the State who are oppressed by the prevalence of wage disparities in their homes.

Therefore, it is with extreme hope and confidence in your ability to serve the people, that I thank you in advance for your support of the Salary History Bill.

Sincerely,



Rev. Leslye Dwight