

STATE SENATOR • LIZ BRATER • 18TH DISTRICT

Brater Press Release

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Sen. Brater Introduces Equal Pay Legislation

Bill would require equal pay for equal work, closing the wage gap between men and women

LANSING - Today Sen. Liz Brater (D-Ann Arbor) introduced legislation that would amend the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act to require employers to provide equal pay for equal work, or work that is of a “comparable value.” The bill would make pay discrimination based on sex, religion, race, color, national origin, age, height, weight, or marital status a civil rights violation.

“In our current economic climate, women have to work longer and harder to support their families and make ends meet,” said Sen. Brater. “The current wage disparity costs the average American woman and her family up to \$2 million in lost wages over a lifetime. Women still have a long way to go in the struggle for equality, and until the pay gap is closed, economic and social progress will remain stalled.”

Sen. Brater introduced the bill in conjunction with Equal Pay Day, which symbolizes how far into the year a woman must work to earn as much as a man earned the previous year. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, women nationally earn about 78 cents for every dollar a man earns. In Michigan, that amount is only 72 cents. Currently Michigan is ranked 44th in the U.S. for women’s wage parity with men.

The wage gap adversely affects all working women, but is especially hard on single mothers, young women starting careers and saving for retirement, older women struggling to survive on limited investments, and minority women. Sen. Brater’s bill would level the playing field for these women, making their work just as valuable as the work of their male co-workers.

This legislation is supported by the American Association of University Women of Michigan, Business and Professional Women, Michigan Federation, League of Women Voters of Michigan, Ingham County Women’s Commission, Metro-Detroit Chapter of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, Michigan National Organization for Women, Michigan Women’s Commission, Michigan WomenWork!, Michigan Pay Equity Network, and the White House Project.

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