

March 17, 2020

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The Honorable Hannah-Beth Jackson  
California State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 2032  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Senate Bill 973 (Jackson) – Support**

Dear Senator Jackson,

On behalf of the California Women's Law Center (CWLC), we write in support of SB 973, which will help close the gender and race-based wage gaps in California by requiring large employers to submit annual pay data sorted by gender, race, ethnicity and job category to the Department of Fair Employment and Housing.

The gender pay gap results in an estimated \$78.6 billion in lost wages for women in California each year. Lack of pay transparency is an obstacle to closing the wage gap. Pay discrimination is often hidden from sight and can be a result of unconscious bias or historical inequity.

Recognizing that pay discrimination is difficult to detect and address, the Obama administration announced a federal rule that would require large employers to report their pay data by gender, race and ethnicity beginning in 2018. However, in August 2017, the Trump administration put a halt to the implementation of this new rule, dealing a significant blow to the fight for equal pay.

SB 973 will ensure that despite setbacks at the federal level, important pay data will continue to be compiled and reported in California. Requiring employers to conduct internal pay audits allows them to self-identify and correct wage gaps of which they were unaware.

CWLC's mission is to advance the potential of women and girls through transformative litigation, policy advocacy, and education. For over 30 years, CWLC has been on the frontlines of the fight for gender pay equity. We are dedicated to ending practices contributing to the gender pay gap and we work to ensure women have the opportunity to advance their careers and receive equal compensation and benefits.

For these reasons, the California Women's Law Center strongly supports SB 973.

Sincerely,



Betsy Butler  
Executive Director