



Commonwealth of Virginia

General Assembly

RICHMOND

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Virginia Legislators Speak at White House Convening on Equal Pay *Legislation Needed to Narrow the Wage Gap for Women and Minorities*

RICHMOND, VA – Today, Senator Jennifer Boysko and Delegate Michelle Maldonado participated in a White House Convening on Equal Pay held in advance of Equal Pay Day, March 14 - the day that women have to work through the new year to earn as much as men did in the prior year. What does that really mean? Women and minorities fall further behind financially each year due to the wage gap.

The legislation they carried in the 2023 legislative session would have added a new section to Virginia’s Labor and Employment code, joining 19 other states that have passed bipartisan legislation prohibiting an employer from seeking salary history from a prospective employee. The Democratically-controlled Senate passed Senator Boysko’s bill which was then killed, as was Delegate Maldonado’s bill, in the Republican-controlled House of Delegates.

The Department of Labor’s Women’s Bureau shared a [salary history issue brief](#) explaining why eliminating salary history has been effective in narrowing the wage gap, “Research shows that salary history bans can narrow the gender wage gap, largely by increasing women’s earnings. . . . Relying on previous salaries to set current pay can perpetuate the systemic undervaluing of women’s work, especially for women of color who have faced historic discrimination and occupational segregation that has led to many inequities in the labor market, including lower wages.”

The wage gap is present in every racial group, and is higher for minorities.¹

- Women in Virginia typically make 80 cents for every dollar paid to men.
- Black women in Virginia typically make 60 cents for every dollar paid to white men.
- Latina women in Virginia typically make 54 cents for every dollar paid to white men.

¹ ; <https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Black-Women-Wage-Gap-State-By-State-2021-v2.pdf>;
<https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Latina-Women-Wage-Gap-State-By-State-2021.pdf>

Citing data from the national partnership for women and families, **Senator Boysko who has carried this legislation for the past seven years explains**, “On average, women employed full time in the United States lose a combined total of nearly \$930 billion every year due to the wage gap. These lost wages mean women and their families have less money to support themselves, save and invest for the future, and spend on goods and services. Women, their families, businesses and the economy suffer as a result.”²

Delegate Maldonado shared the impact of passing legislation to narrow the wage gap. “Closing the gender wage gap would reduce poverty in families with a working woman by half. Mothers are breadwinners in 40 percent of families with children under 18 each year and about 70 percent will be the primary earner at some point in their first 18 years of motherhood.”³

Data shows that banning the salary history requirement has helped to close the gender wage gaps.

Participants from the Biden-Harris Administration included:

- Jennifer Klein, Assistant to the President and Director of the Gender Policy Council
- Julie Chavez Rodriguez, Senior Advisor to the President and Director of the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs
- Latifa Lyles, Special Assistant to the President for Gender Policy
- Wendy Chun-Hoon, Director of the Department of Labor Women’s Bureau
- Morgan Mohr, Senior Advisor, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs & GPC
- Diana Boesch, Policy Advisor, Gender Policy Council
- Amy Dalrymple, Policy Analyst, Department of Labor Women’s Bureau

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²<https://www.nationalpartnership.org/our-work/resources/economic-justice/fair-pay/americas-women-and-the-wage-gap.pdf>

³<https://www.nationalpartnership.org/our-work/resources/economic-justice/fair-pay/americas-women-and-the-wage-gap.pdf>