

**To:** Members of the House Judiciary Committee

**CC:** Rep. Genevieve Mina

**From:** Joelle Hall, President of the Alaska AFL-CIO

**Date:** April 8, 2025

**Subject:** House Bill 156 - DISCLOSURE OF WAGE INFORMATION

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## **The Alaska AFL-CIO supports HB 156 on the following grounds:**

**Protecting Alaska's workers:** The Alaska AFL-CIO supports measures that protect Alaska's workers, including protecting them from practices that discriminate against them in the workplace. Wage transparency is one important and simple tool that mitigates the gender pay gap.

When individuals are required to provide their last salary but are not provided the salary range for their new job, it hurts their wages, particularly for women. Prohibiting employers from asking about salary history has resulted in higher pay for women and Black job candidates who were hired—8% and 13%, respectively, according to a study authored by economists at Boston University School of Law and published in June 2020. Additionally, when employers use past wages as a bargaining tool instead of paying what the job is worth, workers suffer.

**Strengthens existing federal law on non-retaliation:** Though the National Labor Relations Act of 1935 (NLRA) made talking about pay legal in the American workplace, many employers retaliate against those who openly and freely discuss wages. As it stands, there is little recourse for workers who are subject to retaliation for discussing wages in the workplace. This bill would raise the baseline of NLRA anti-retaliation protections to resemble modern anti-retaliation laws, providing more of a deterrent against lawbreaking by employers and making a real difference for working families.

**Saves employers and job seekers time and effort:** The Alaska AFL-CIO would like to see as many Alaskans as possible working in good jobs with fair wages that move our state forward. As it currently stands, employers can post a job listing without a salary range. Those looking to enter the workforce for the first time, re-enter, or transition, should know before applying whether the compensation is suitable to support them and their family. Job searching can be cumbersome for working families, and job seekers should avoid time wasted applying for a job that does not meet their compensation needs and wants. Likewise, it saves employers time, money, and effort. Take a likely scenario in which an employer schedules an interview with a qualified candidate, only to find out after an hour-long meeting that the salary for the posting does not fit the candidate's criteria.



# ALASKA PUBLIC INTEREST ✦ RESEARCH GROUP

**April 28, 2025**

**To: House Judiciary Committee**

**From: Bridget Shaughnessy Smith, Communications Lead, AKPIRG**

**RE: Letter of Support for House Bill 156**

Chair Gray, Vice-Chair Kopp, and Members of the Committee:

The Alaska Public Interest Research Group (AKPIRG) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit and the only non-governmental public interest and consumer advocacy organization in Alaska. We work to ensure accountable and accessible government, inclusive public services, and a sustainable, people-centered economy.

AKPIRG supports House Bill 156 – Disclosure of Wage Information – which would establish statewide standards for fair, transparent, and equitable hiring practices. By setting clear, consistent expectations for job postings and interviews, HB 156 helps level the playing field for jobseekers and makes Alaska a more appealing, competitive place to apply for and secure employment. When workers are met with transparency and fairness, they are more likely to seek out opportunities, remain in their positions, and contribute to the stability and resilience of our communities. This legislation sends a clear message that Alaska values its workforce and is taking proactive steps to ensure equitable treatment in the hiring process.

HB 156 is a meaningful step forward in promoting fairness and equity for workers across Alaska by requiring salary or wage ranges to be included in job listings and protecting applicants who choose to discuss – or decline to disclose – their salary history. These changes not only protect individual rights but also help close persistent wage gaps related to race, gender, and educational background. By reducing wage disparities and removing unnecessary barriers for applicants, this legislation supports long-term workforce resilience and economic opportunity across the state.

We urge the legislature to pass HB 156 and take a stand for transparency, fairness, and economic opportunity for all Alaskans. Thank you for considering our input. AKPIRG is available to provide additional information or discuss this legislation and other bills that impact the public interest and economic equity in Alaska.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bridget S Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Bridget Shaughnessy Smith**  
Communications Lead, AKPIRG

A handwritten signature in black ink. It begins with a large, stylized "V" followed by a cursive "di" and a horizontal line extending to the right.

**Veri di Suvero**  
Executive Director, AKPIRG



**National Association for the Advancement of Colored People**

State Area Conference, Alaska | Oregon | Washington  
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April 11, 2025

Attorney Sheley Secrest  
President, NAACP State Area Conference (AK, OR, WA)  
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Office of Representative Genevieve Mina  
State of Alaska Legislature, House District 19  
Alaska State Capitol, Room 416

**Re: Letter of Support for HB 156**

Honorable Representative Mina:

NAACP is proud to express our support for HB 156, a crucial piece of legislation aimed at addressing the persistent pay disparities faced by the Black community in Alaska. For far too long, systemic inequities have hindered economic opportunities and growth for many individuals in this community, contributing to a cycle of poverty and limited access to resources.

HB 156 seeks to implement measures that promote pay equity, ensuring that all workers receive fair compensation for their contributions, regardless of race. This is not just a matter of economic justice; it is a fundamental human right. By addressing wage gaps and promoting transparency in pay practices, this bill will empower individuals, foster a more inclusive workforce, and drive economic growth across our state.

The Black community in Alaska has demonstrated resilience and strength, yet the disparities in income and employment opportunities remain stark. By passing HB 156, we can take a significant step toward rectifying these injustices and building a more equitable society where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

I urge you to support HB 156 and commit to dismantling the barriers that have long hindered the progress of the Black community in Alaska. Together, we can create a brighter and more just future for all Alaskans.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Secrest', is positioned above a horizontal line.

Attorney Sheley Secrest  
President, NAACP State Area Conference  
(Alaska, Oregon, Washington)

Dear 34th Alaska State Legislature,

As a social justice organization committed to fostering equity and inclusion, we are writing to express our support for Representative Mina's House Bill 156: the implementation of pay range transparency and prohibiting employers from inquiring about an applicant's salary history. This practice is a crucial step toward addressing systemic pay inequities that disproportionately affect marginalized communities.

Research shows that women and people of color often earn significantly less than their white male counterparts for the same roles. For example, the National Women's Law Center reports that women earn only 82 cents for every dollar earned by men, with women of color facing even steeper disparities. This disparity in Alaska is 72 cents for every dollar and only decreases with each marginalized community subset.

### **Benefits of Pay Range Transparency**

- *Promotes Fairness and Equity*
  - Job seekers and current employees will have clear expectations regarding compensation, which can help mitigate biases in hiring and promotion processes.
- *Encourages Diverse Talent Attraction*
  - Transparent pay practices can widen the talent pool by encouraging candidates from diverse backgrounds to apply. Knowing that the pay range is fair and equitable can empower individuals who may have previously felt excluded from certain roles due to perceived disparities.
- *Facilitates Informed Negotiations*
  - Transparency allows candidates to negotiate their salaries based on data rather than assumptions. This can lead to more equitable starting salaries and reduce the likelihood of perpetuating existing pay gaps.
- *Enhances Employee Retention*
  - Employees who perceive their compensation as fair are more likely to remain with an organization. Reducing turnover not only saves costs related to hiring and training but also fosters a more stable and engaged workforce.

We strongly encourage you to move forward HB 156: prohibiting employers from inquiring about an applicant's salary history. By doing so, you will contribute to a broader movement toward dismantling systemic inequities in the workforce through common sense regulation. Thank you for considering this vital policy and supporting Alaskan communities, including our most vulnerable.

Until Justice Just Is,



Jessie Lavoie  
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# International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

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**DOUG TANSY**  
BUSINESS MANAGER • FINANCIAL SECRETARY

**CECIL COLLEY III**  
PRESIDENT



April 10, 2025

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

On behalf of more than 4,000 members of IBEW Local 1547, I am writing in support of HB 156.

This bill is a common-sense step toward fairness in the workplace. Wage transparency helps close the gender and racial pay gaps by ensuring workers are paid based on the job—not their past salary. Research shows banning salary history questions boosts pay for women and Black workers by 8% and 13%, respectively.

HB 156 also strengthens protections for workers who discuss their pay. Though legal under federal law, retaliation still happens, and this bill offers stronger safeguards to ensure workers can speak up without fear.

Finally, posting salary ranges saves time for everyone. Job seekers can focus on opportunities that meet their needs, and employers avoid interviews that go nowhere due to mismatched expectations.

This is a smart move for Alaska's workforce. We urge your support.

Sincerely,

Doug Tansy  
Business Manager