



OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER CHRISTOPHER WARD THIRD COUNCIL DISTRICT

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COUNCILMEMBER WARD PROPOSES SAN DIEGO EQUAL PAY ORDINANCE

SAN DIEGO – (Friday, February 10, 2017) – San Diego Councilmember Chris Ward (District Three) today formally announced a proposal for a San Diego Equal Pay Ordinance, which would require that any contractor certify that they provide equal pay based on gender and ethnicity before being awarded a city contract.

“The city has a responsibility to do whatever it can to achieve equal pay under the law for all residents, and this is a proactive measure to ensure we're leading throughout the region to close the stubborn gender pay gap, said Ward. “The City should use our tremendous purchasing power to drive pay equity for everyone, and ensure that neither gender nor ethnicity hold back any hard working San Diegan from being able to make ends meet and be successful in our communities.”

The proposed Equal Pay Ordinance will build upon and strengthen the State Fair Pay Act by requiring that all city contractors certify that it will provide equal pay to its workers regardless of their gender or ethnicity, provide more effective local enforcement, and will better empower employees to discuss pay without fear of retaliation. The purpose of an Equal Pay Ordinance is equal treatment and equal pay for equal work. It is intended to bring the City’s contracting practices in line with non-discrimination laws, prohibiting City contractors from discriminating against employees.

“Three weeks ago, tens of thousands of San Diegans marched in solidarity for equality, fairness and justice,” said State Senator Toni Atkins. “Although that was a national statement, we have the power to effect meaningful change, and make real progress, at the local level, and the Equal Pay Ordinance is a great example of that power in motion.”

Modeled after the City’s very successful Equal Benefits and Living Wage Programs, the Equal Pay proposal utilizes a similar framework to ensure compliance is provided including assisting contractors in

understanding obligations, monitoring contracts, maintaining records, conducting reviews, investigating complaints, and providing reports as needed.

“Councilmember Ward's proposed equal pay ordinance continues San Diego's long legacy of leadership in standing up for all workers and ensuring economic opportunity for everyone,” said Assemblymember Todd Gloria. “Today, there is absolutely no reason why pay disparities between genders or ethnicities should exist. With the equal pay ordinance, we can affirm San Diego's commitment to equal pay for equal work for everyone. I thank Councilmember Ward for bringing this ordinance forward.”

Despite the Equal Pay Act of 1963, a woman who works full time in California makes a median salary of \$42,486, compared to a median salary of \$50,539 for a man, according to an analysis of Census Bureau data conducted by the National Partnership for Women and Families. That makes for a difference of about 84 cents to every dollar earned by a man or the equivalent of \$8,000 per year, the average cost of six months of rent in the state.

The problem is even worse for women of color: African American and Latina women working full-time in California make an average of just 64 cents and 44 cents, respectively, for every dollar earned by white men. California has the worst Latina gender wage gap in the nation.

“Our most recent research found that women in the City of San Diego are paid 72 cents to every dollar men are paid, even greater than the statewide pay gap,” explained Dr. Peter Brownell, Research Director of the Center on Policy Initiatives. “Women of color face additional disadvantages: Latina women are paid 37 cents to every dollar White men are paid, and Black women are paid 50 cents to every dollar White men are paid.”

In Fiscal Year 2017 alone, the City is budgeted to have a contract expenditure value of over \$613.5 million. Additionally, the magnitude and demand of the City's \$4 billion Capital Improvements Program has made the City of San Diego the single largest employer of consultants and contractors in the region and positions the City to drive employment standards.

The persistent disparity in earnings has a significant impact on the welfare and economic security of millions of women and their families in our state and contributes to the higher poverty rate among women—especially among women of color and single women living with children. As a group, working women in California lose over \$38.8 billion each year due to the wage gap. Not only is this a problem of fairness, it makes it more difficult for women to achieve financial independence, provide for their families or prepare for a secure retirement.

In his formal memo on the Equal Pay Ordinance, Councilmember Ward has requested that the City Council's Rules Committee consider the proposal and direct the City Attorney to provide language to the Council for review.

For more information or to interview Councilmember Ward, contact Lucas O'Connor at (619) 236-6633 or (619) 368-3153.

Councilmember Chris Ward represents San Diego's Third Council District including communities of Downtown, Little Italy, Bankers Hill, Mission Hills, Middletown, Hillcrest, University Heights, North Park, Normal Heights, Old Town, South Park, and Golden Hill.

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