



NYSPEC
c/o LIFWG
1740 Old Jericho Turnpike
Jericho, NY 11753

New York State Comparable Worth History

The State of New York agreed in 1986 to a one-time-only funding pool to cover pay equity adjustment for state employees. The set-asides represented one percent of the gross payroll in 1986-87 and 1987-88. The result was adjustments to higher salary grades for 233 NYS job titles based on the gender/race predominance of those in job titles. The employees in these job titles, over 47,000 of them, received raises. Some received adjustments of three or four grades for annual increments greater than \$4000, proving that *comparable worth is worth it*.

This took place 20 years ago as part of the union contracts with CSEA and PEF. But no legislation was ever passed. So there has been no reexamination of pay equity for those in state service and no extension of pay equity to all those in the private and broader public sector including cities, counties, and school districts.

International Perspective

Much of the rest of the western world has enacted legislation putting this reform in place. Note that, just across New York State's northern border, the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Quebec (where two-thirds of the Canadian population resides) require that salaries be established using gender-neutral job evaluation systems in both the public and private sectors. **U. S. companies that are providing pay equity for their Canadian employees are free to discriminate against their NY State employees.**

About the Legislation

The NYS Fair Pay Bill is strongly written enforceable legislation which provides for equal pay for jobs of comparable worth in both the public and private sectors. The NYS Fair Pay Bill (A.2712/S.3936) provides all those employed in NYS in job titles where women and people of color predominate receive equal pay for work of equal value. It also provides NYS employees with freedom of speech regarding their salaries.

A Brief Legislative History

The NYS Fair Pay Bill has passed in the Assembly each year since 2002 with bi-partisan support. In 2008 it was passed by the Assembly on March 10. We thank Assemblenember Susan Johns for her sponsorship and active advocacy and Speaker Silver and the Assembly members. The support of the Republican majority in the Senate has been non-existent although we have met on occasion with those who chair the Labor Committee (where the Fair Pay Bill is held captive) and with staff in Senator Bruno's office.

In 2007, Senator Craig Johnson, a Democrat from Long Island, became our Senate sponsor. Yes, we know that having a minority party sponsor is "the kiss of death," but, after consulting with lobbyists from several of our member organizations, we decided to go for Democratic sponsorship. Our reasoning included the lack of responsiveness of Senate Republicans in previous legislative sessions and our presumption that their lack of support would continue. We still hope for bi-partisan support which will get S3936 out of the committee process and on to the Senate floor for a vote. **The laws of New York State should make it clear that workers of all races and genders are to be paid fairly in our state.**