



REPRESENTATIVE THOMAS NELSON  
ASSEMBLY MAJORITY LEADER

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ASSEMBLY MAJORITY LEADER THOMAS NELSON  
PLEDGES QUICK ACTION ON EQUAL PAY LEGISLATION

MADISON – The Assembly Committee on Labor heard public commentary today on AB-31, the Equal Pay Enforcement Act – a bill that will allow victims of discriminatory employment practices to sue in court for damages. The bill is expected to pass out of the committee next week, and today Assembly Majority Leader Thomas Nelson (D-Kaukauna) pledged to immediately schedule the bill for a floor vote following committee passage.

“Employment discrimination hurts everyone – men, women, children, families – everyone,” said Rep. Nelson. “Workers who are victims of discrimination deserve to have their day in court. This protection is long overdue, and following committee passage of AB-31, I will immediately schedule this bill for a vote by the full Assembly.”

Under current law, the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) handles complaints about employment discrimination. DWD can take actions that include awarding the victim back pay and attorney’s fees, but individuals are not allowed to sue in Wisconsin State Circuit Court. The Equal Pay Enforcement Act provides victims with the ability to file a suit to recover compensatory and punitive damages caused by the alleged discrimination.

Pay equity is a growing problem in Wisconsin – recent studies have shown that, on average, Wisconsin women make up to 22% less than their male colleagues. The Equal Pay Enforcement Act would help to bridge this gap by creating a stronger disincentive for employers to engage in discriminatory practices in the first place.

“This is a serious problem, and the consequences should be serious,” continued Rep. Nelson. “Whether you’re a man or a woman – you deserve to be honored for putting in a hard day’s work.”

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