

MAKING **MISSISSIPPI WOMEN** **SECURE**

September 29, 2021

Senator John Horhn, Chairman of the Senate Labor Committee
Committee Members
Members of the Senate
Members of the House of Representatives

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard regarding the need for passage of an Equal Pay Law in Mississippi.

Mississippi's women make up 49 percent of the overall Mississippi workforce. Despite women serving as the backbone of Mississippi's economy, women's economic security is challenged by policies that create major economic security gaps for women, especially Black women and girls. These barriers not only hold Mississippi's women back, they undermine Mississippi families, business, and the entire state economy. Passage of an Equal Pay Law will add \$4.15 billion in wage and salary income to the state's economy.

The statistics demonstrate that a large percentage of Mississippi women live in poverty:

19.8% of women in Mississippi live in poverty. The national figure is 12.0%.

49.4% of female-headed households in Mississippi live in poverty. The national figure: 33.8%

Equal pay would increase the ability to pay for housing, childcare, and healthcare.

Mississippi women need and deserve an Equal Pay Law that ensures all employees:

- Receive equal pay for equal work;
- Are protected from retaliation for discussing their pay with co-workers;
- Are not forced to share salary history;
- Are able to recover compensatory and punitive damages.

Thank you for your earnest consideration and for protecting and prioritizing Mississippi's women.

Respectfully submitted,

Member Organizations

Mississippi Women's Economic Security Initiative Coalition

The Mississippi Women's Economic Security Initiative Coalition

is a collective of over 50 organizations with thousands of members from across the entire State of Mississippi.

The Coalition is organized to promote policies to improve the economic wellbeing of women in Mississippi and their families.

The Mississippi Women's Economic Security Initiative is a project of the Mississippi Black Women's Roundtable.