



OREGON HOUSE REPUBLICAN OFFICE

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House Democrats Reject Pay Equity Protections For Veterans

Republican Minority Report to HB 2005 would have added veterans as protected class

Salem, Ore. - House Democrats today rejected a Republican minority report to HB 2005 that would have made it illegal to pay military veterans unequal pay for equal work. HB 2005 MRA was voted down on a 29-31 vote.

“Oregon workers deserve equal pay for equal work,” said Representative Jodi Hack (R-Salem). “But as we continue the conversation on how to best protect Oregonians from wage discrimination, we need to make sure that our veterans do not get left behind. It is no secret that our vets sometimes have difficulty adjusting to the civilian workforce after they have concluded their service. The least we can do is make sure that when they do find a job, they are paid fairly for their work.”

HB 2005 as currently drafted includes protections for employees or applicants on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, marital status or age. The Republican minority report would have added veterans to the list of protected individuals. The minority report would have also maintained an employee’s right to pursue compensatory damages if and when an employer has been found in violation of Oregon’s equal pay laws, and established an affirmative defense against wage discrimination claims for employers who have proactively sought to establish an equal pay environment by meeting a specific criteria.

House Democrats rejected HB 2005 MRA on a 29-31 vote, with four House Democrats joining Republicans voting in favor of the substitute bill.

“We had an opportunity today to move forward on a bill that would have provided protections for Oregonians, including veterans, while also encouraging Oregon businesses to be proactive in ensuring that they are operating within the law,” concluded Representative McLane (R-Powell Butte). “I am disappointed that our efforts to develop a compromise and to find common ground were met with rejection from House Democrats.”

Minority Report A can be read in its entirety [here](#).

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