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Representative David Brock Smith Votes for HB 2005 - Pay Equity Legislation That Benefits All Oregonians

SALEM - State Representative David Brock Smith (R-Port Orford) was one of the 58 Legislators that voted unanimously today for a bipartisan pay equity bill, House Bill 2005, which seeks to ensure all Oregonians are compensated fairly for their work. The bill originally passed the House of Representatives in March on a nearly partisan vote after House Republicans advocated for including Veterans in the list of people protected by the legislation through a Minority Report. The Minority Report failed 29-34.

“I was really disappointed when Republicans were labeled as voting against women when this bill first passed the House. Our opposition was because Veterans, a group of people who we owe a great deal, were excluded,” said Rep. David Brock Smith. “The amended bill includes many pieces of our original Minority Report; protecting employers over trial lawyers while providing equal pay protection for all Oregonians. I am so proud to support this bill today.”

HB 2005 now includes expanded equal pay protections for Oregonians regardless of their race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, disability, age and/or veteran status. Furthermore, HB 2005 prohibits employers from asking about or using an employee’s salary history as a factor in determining future compensation.

HB 2005 also includes language designed to make Oregon employers be proactive in establishing an equal pay work environment. Under the provisions of the bill, employers who perform an equal-pay analysis and have made reasonable and substantial progress toward addressing pay disparities, may claim protections against law suits under certain circumstances. The provision is similar to language originally sought by House Republicans, who argued the bill should emphasize compliance rather than punishment.

“It’s good policy over politics. The process worked with this bill and I appreciate Representatives Hack & Lininger, Senators Knopp & Taylor, and all involved for their work on incorporating the necessary changes. This is an example of the good work that can be accomplished when we work in a bi-partisan way and make the interests of Oregonians, present and future, the priority,” said Rep. David Brock Smith.

Rep. David Brock Smith represents House District 1, which includes Curry, Coos, Douglas and Josephine counties. This press release and an archive of previous press releases issued by Rep. David Brock Smith’s office are available on the web at: www.oregonlegislature.gov/smithd.

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