



# PRESS RELEASE

## REP. JENNIFER WILLIAMSON HOUSE DISTRICT 36

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For Immediate Release  
Feb. 28, 2019

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## **Workplace Fairness Act Introduced in Oregon House**

SALEM – Rep. Jennifer Williamson (D-Portland) and Rep. Andrea Salinas (D-Lake Oswego) joined 31 of their colleagues in introducing the Workplace Fairness Act in the Oregon House today.

House Bill 3333 seeks to protect Oregonians from workplace harassment through a number of provisions that level the playing field between workers and employers. The legislation:

- Prevents employers from asking for nondisclosure agreements;
- Ends the practice of preventing the rehiring of previously discriminated against employees;
- Extends the statute of limitations for employment discrimination; and
- Clarifies that when individuals in executive level positions engage in harassing behavior, they may be held liable.

“The statutes governing workplace harassment and discrimination are outdated and fail to protect working Oregonians,” Rep Salinas said. “The Workplace Fairness Act provides much-needed updates to current law, and I am proud to take a stand for equal employment for everyone.”

Statistics around workplace harassment demonstrate why this legislation is so important. At least one in four women have experienced sexual harassment and 75 percent of women experience retaliation when they reported it. Further, as many as 94 percent of employees experiencing harassment do not file a formal complaint and out of the 28,000 Equal Employment Opportunity Commission complaints that were filed, 45 percent were sexual.

“As we work to improve the culture of the Capitol, it is vital that we also ensure that the culture is improved in every workplace throughout our state,” Rep. Williamson said. “The staggering statistics around workplace harassment demonstrate that Oregon’s workers deserve better. The Workplace Fairness Act is an important step in the right direction.”

This legislation would also require the Bureau of Labor and Industries to develop policies and procedures for both employees and employers around workplace sexual harassment.

A companion bill, Senate Bill 726, has been introduced in the Oregon Senate.

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