



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Hugh T. Farley

## Sen. Farley Reports Senate Passes Women's Equality Legislation

HUGH T. FARLEY June 17, 2014

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State Senator Hugh T. Farley (R, C, I – Schenectady) reported that the New York State Senate recently passed three bills – all part of the Senate’s Women’s Equality Agenda – that would prevent employment discrimination against people with families, stop housing discrimination against victims of domestic violence, and ensure women receive equal pay for equal work.

## **STOPPING DISCRIMINATION BASED ON FAMILY STATUS**

The Senate unanimously passed legislation (S5875) to help working mothers by preventing discrimination in the hiring and promotion of people with families. The bill prohibits employers from denying work or promotions based on family status, such as parents and women who are pregnant.

This bill would prohibit employers from denying work or promotions to workers because they have children. Existing law only prohibits discrimination based on family status in credit and housing, but not employment -- which can have a negative impact on women with children.

## **PREVENTING HOUSING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS**

The Senate also unanimously passed legislation (S5876) to protect victims of domestic violence from housing discrimination.

Discrimination against victims of domestic violence is almost always discrimination against women. Eighty-five percent of domestic violence victims are women; 1.3 million women are victims of assault by an intimate partner each year, and it's estimated that one in four women will experience intimate partner violence in their lifetimes. Many of these victims are forced to stay with or return to their abusive partners because of lack of available housing or they are refused housing.

This measure would prohibit discrimination against domestic violence victims in housing, and, under the provisions of the bill, a violation of this prohibition would be a misdemeanor. The legislation also allows the option of a civil action for a violation of the prohibition.

## **ENSURING EQUAL PAY**

The Senate approved legislation (S5872) that would ensure that women receive the wages they are entitled to by prohibiting employers from paying employees disparate amounts due to gender.

Despite existing protections under the law, women in New York earn 84 percent of what men earn and jobs traditionally held by women pay significantly less than jobs predominately employing men. In New York, on average, a woman working full time is paid \$42,113 per year, while a man working full time is paid \$50,388 per year. This creates a wage gap of \$8,275 between full-time working men and women in the state. The bill would ensure that women receive equal pay for equal work.

All three of these measures were also passed in June 2013 as part of the Senate's Women's Equality Agenda.

The bills have been sent to the Assembly.