



**Testimony in support of HB18-1378 Equal Pay for Equal Work Act
Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs
May 4, 2018**

Thank you, Madame Chair and Committee Members, for your consideration of HB18-1378. My name is Eliana Posner and I am an MSW student at the University of Denver and the social work and public policy intern at The Women's Foundation of Colorado. I respectfully request your support of this bill.

At The Women's Foundation, we advance women's prosperity through our community, philanthropy, and impact. One of the ways that we achieve impact is through research. For many years we have partnered with the Institute for Women's Policy Research or IWPR to identify where the opportunities and barriers are to women achieving economic security. Earlier this year we released an update (<https://www.wfco.org/impact/the-economic-status-of-women-in-colorado-2018>) to the *Economic Status of Women 2015* in partnership with IWPR. The findings from the update are startling. While the gender pay gap has narrowed somewhat, that is not true for all women.

- Colorado women are paid 86 cents on the dollar as compared to men.
- Substantial pay disparities across racial and ethnic groups persist. In comparison to the earnings of white men, who are the highest earners, the figure is 63 cents for black women, Native American women 56 cents for Latinas 54 cents. With Latina women comprising one of the fastest growing demographics in our state, closing the gender pay gap is an opportunity to help them advance individually and make a significant difference in our state's economy.

Catalyzing community to advance and accelerate economic opportunities for women and their families

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While there are multiple factors that contribute to the gender wage gap, the gap remains even when controlling for occupation, educational attainment, years of experience, and other factors that may reasonably explain a difference in earnings.

Our *Economic Status of Women 2015* [report](https://www.wfco.org/impact/the-economic-status-of-women-in-colorado-2015) (<https://www.wfco.org/impact/the-economic-status-of-women-in-colorado-2015>) found that if Colorado achieved pay equity, an additional \$9.2 billion would be added to the Colorado economy.

It is time to implement common-sense measures to prevent pay disparities and ensure wage transparency. Our past research shows that there are ways to address pay inequity through systemic change and this bill addresses those solutions.