



ISSUE UPDATE

DATE: August 31, 2017
TO: Concerned Parties
FROM: Hilary O. Shelton, Director, Washington Bureau

NAACP-SUPPORTED EEOC EQUAL PAY DATA COLLECTION INITIATIVE HALTED BY TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Data Collection Initiative approved by EEOC during the Obama Administration was intended to help employers remedy wage discrimination by race, gender and ethnicity

THE ISSUE:

On August 29, 2017, in an extreme act further distancing himself from the very real struggles of every-day hard working Americans, President Trump put an indefinite hold on equal pay data collection, reversing an initiative which was begun by President Obama – and strongly supported by the NAACP -- which was set to begin in 2018. Specifically, the initiative which President Trump stopped would have updated the form required by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) of businesses with more than 100 employees. The updated form would have continued to be called the “EEO-1”. In addition to data which has been collected for nearly 50 years, requested additional information, which would be kept confidential, about how much each business paid their employees by gender, race, and ethnicity. This data would help companies find and remedy wage discrimination within their midst, and would also better equip the EEOC to combat pay discrimination.

Significant pay gaps still exist in our country. For example, for every dollar paid to a white male, white women with equivalent backgrounds make just 80 cents. African American men earn 78 cents and African American women, who must contend with both racism and sexism, earn less than 63 cents compared to white men with similar characteristics. Latinas are typically paid just 54 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men. Racial and gender wage gaps exist in every state, regardless of geography, occupation, education or work patterns. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 allows the EEOC to collect certain employment data, which has proven central to its ability to identify and root out employment discrimination based on race, gender, and national origin. By halting the collection of pay information, President Trump and his Administration will seriously cripple the EEOC’s ability to address wage discrimination and will further weaken the economic security of America’s communities of color.

In March, 2016, the NAACP testified before the EEOC in support of the updated form. During our testimony, we argued that the data which is collected under the new form will allow the federal government to ensure it is doing its part to uphold our collective ideal that all hard-working Americans enjoy a fair and level playing field at work. We are now committed to working with Congress to ensure that the latest move by President Trump is overturned, the new form is employed and that the sunshine, transparency, and fairness which goes along with better data collection becomes a reality.

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