

Texas legislature considers bill to promote pay equity

State Sen. Eric Johnson has introduced legislation that would bar employers from asking for an applicant's salary history before making a qualified job offer that includes a proposed salary.

The legislation, House Bill 290, is similar to legislation passed in California, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York. The city of Philadelphia enacted a similar measure in January.

Pay equity advocates argue that basing an applicant's salary on previous history perpetuates existing pay inequities that commonly result in women receiving lower pay than men for similar work.

H.B. 290 would bar employers from requesting an applicant's salary history on an application, asking the employee about past pay and seeking compensation-related information from past employers.

Once an offer that includes an agreed-upon wage and benefit package is made, applicants would be free to allow employers to verify past pay with previous employers.