

QUESTIONS TO ASK CANDIDATES ABOUT PAY EQUITY

1. What procedures will or have you put in place to identify and address wage inequity which predominately affects women and people of color? Please include potential policy and legal reform in your response.
2. How will you engage with the business community, state and federal governments to improve the economic status of NY women?
3. Would you support the establishment of an officially sanctioned entity to study in depth the issues of salary equity and equal opportunity for women and people of color? Why or why not? Would you recommend any other alternatives, or have you implemented any other policies aimed at promoting fiscal parity and equal opportunity? Please explain.
4. Job titles done primarily by women and people of color, such as childcare worker, librarian, nurse's aid, food service worker, social worker, and early childhood educator are frequently undervalued relative to their responsibility levels because of their association with "women's work." Is it okay to continue to under pay these jobs?
5. Are you concerned about the kind of unequal pay that is specific to job titles done primarily by women and people of color?
6. There is ample evidence that both individuals and job titles have been undervalued in the workplace due to the historical race and gender discrimination perpetuated by the market, generation after generation. Since the work of both women and people of color has been traditionally seen as of lesser value than the work done by white men, job titles that contain substantial proportions of either category historically experienced bias. Examples of such jobs are librarian, dental assistant, social worker, food service worker, teacher aid, office administrator, early childhood educator, janitor and maintenance

assistant. Under your leadership, how could underpaid job titles be identified and the issue of equal pay for work of comparable value be addressed?

7. Women and minorities who work in segregated occupations suffer from a wage gap. *Example: Susan D., who works as a school nurse, a job that requires a four year college degree, makes less than custodians working for the same school district.* If elected, what will you do to pass legislation that requires employers to pay equal pay for work of equal value or comparable worth?
8. The Senate has blocked pay equity bills from reaching the floor for a vote - bills already passed by the Assembly - for the last decade. What will you do, if elected, to remedy equal pay law that fails to cover wage discrimination for women and minorities who work in segregated occupations and who therefore earn less than co-workers who do comparable work for higher pay?
9. A statewide coalition of civic, human rights and women's organizations, the New York State Pay Equity Coalition with a combined membership of thousands wants to know your position on bills that would remedy equal pay for equal work law to include equal pay for work of equal value, or comparable worth. These bills, passed each year by the Assembly, would enable women and minorities who work in segregated job titles like nurse, secretary, seamstress, and early childhood teacher to be paid comparable to workers in job title with the same level of skills and responsibilities where women and minorities do not predominate. Please state your position on this issue.

*Insertion of an example from the questioner's region would be preferable. The more we personalize this issue, the more effective we will be.

**NOTE: This last question can be used for candidates for Governor as well.

From Lois Haignere NYSPEC