



**Remarks of Mayor Martin J. Walsh  
Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Development  
April 30, 2019**

*As prepared for delivery*

Thank you Chairperson **[Patricia] Jehlen**, Chairperson **[Paul] Brodeur**, and members of the Committee, thank you very much for having us today. For the record, my name is **Martin J. Walsh** and I am the Mayor of Boston. Before I actually testify on house bill 1660, I'd like to offer my support to many of the people in this room for house bill 1596 and senate bill 1043 and that will be relative to collective bargaining dues. I know that at the end of last session the bill was almost resolved, but I asked the committee to put this out favorably and get it to the floor so we can get this issue behind us.

[I am also here to testify](#) on [H. 1660: An Act Promoting Pay Transparency and Pipeline Advancement](#). I'm honored to join the sponsor of this bill, my dear friend, Rep. **Liz Malia** of Boston, and Dr. **Lee Pelton**, president of Emerson College in Boston.

Earlier this month, we marked [Equal Pay Day](#). This is the date that women have to work to, if they are to match what their male counterparts made the previous year. For the average woman, it's over three extra months of work. The situation is even more unfair for women of color. Black women have to work until about **August 22 of the second year**, and Latinas until **November 20 of the second year**, to match a white man's earnings in the previous year.

**We cannot accept this inequality in Boston, or in the Commonwealth.** We want to eliminate the need for Equal Pay Day. I've sat in your seats for sixteen years, I've sat as the Mayor of Boston now for five years, and there's been several pieces of legislation filed over the years about equal pay for equal work. It's time that we continue to not just talk about it in past legislation, but take some action. by becoming a city where people earn equal pay for equal work.

In the City of Boston, we are focused on that goal. We've grown the *100% Talent Compact* to over 250 employers who pledge to close gender pay gaps. What they do is they give us information, and we can take that information and do an analysis of exactly what those companies look like in the city of Boston. And we've *trained thousands of women to claim their worth* in what's called [salary negotiation workshops](#). Many of the folks that are in this room today, ironically, are leaders of their unions in the unions that are behind me, a man and a woman gets paid equal pay for equal work. But there's still a large portion of our

society where they are not unionized and women will get offered a job and take it for less money. They will then negotiate a higher salary, so we are working to train women.

**Massachusetts is a leader on this issue.** I was proud to support the [Massachusetts Equal Pay Act](#) and I thank the legislature for your efforts to pass it. It was one more in a series of steps in the right direction.

**But we cannot be complacent.** In addition to ending discrimination in the workplace, we need more women to enter decision-making positions. *Women are still under-represented in leadership roles, across all kinds of different organizations.* Leadership positions not only offer higher pay, they also enable women to shape workplace cultures that work better for everyone in a diverse workforce. In a competitive, global economy, we cannot afford to limit our talents and perspectives any longer.

That's why I believe this bill is the right piece of legislation to follow up on the achievement of the Mass. Equal Pay Act. It is the bill that can get us to the next level in the fight for equal pay and equal representation.

To empower women to move up in their careers, transparency is key, because it allows women to know where they stand. If organizations report the gender and race of employees holding leadership positions, then women and people of color will be able to make informed decisions about which organizations can provide opportunities to them. This will give employers an incentive to improve their culture and adapt to the needs of working women.

**We cannot keep asking women and people of color to fit into a mold that was designed when they were not fully included in the workforce.** Our employers need to be focused on creating a welcoming environment for all.

Transparency is already a practice at Boston City Hall. We publish our workforce demographics and pay data in an [online diversity dashboard](#). Anyone can get that dashboard anytime of day. Employees know where they stand and all of us are better because of that open information.

This legislation would also establish a fund to provide professional development for employees in companies where disparities are the highest. This would help them improve their employer rating. This component is important, because we all have to work together to achieve real culture change. Everyone has a role to play.

**In Boston, we are determined to be a city of opportunity for everyone, a city where everyone's talents are recognized, rewarded, and fairly compensated.** We know the entire Commonwealth shares this aspiration. And we know that these values are key competitive advantages for our city and state. *The Pay Transparency and Pipeline Advancement Act will help us get closer to reaching these goals.*

**We don't want to have to recognize any more Equal Pay Days,** because we don't accept that women must work more for equal pay. And we are not going to stand for that anymore in the City or in the Commonwealth. So let's work together to take down the barriers women face in the workplace. Massachusetts has an obligation to do right by women and an opportunity to strengthen our workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important legislation. I respectfully urge this committee to continue to treat H-1160 as a priority and move it favorably out of your committee.