

Subject: Please tell Premier Wynne to fund and enforce pay equity law

Dear [name of your MPP]

I'm writing this email because I think women working in developmental services have waited far too long for justice. I want you to know that I signed this [petition](#) asking the province to do its part in enforcing pay equity, and I am asking for your pledge to help win this fight.

Pay equity was made law in the late 1980s, and yet, to this day, it is still not a reality for thousands of working women in Ontario. In the early 1990s, the province took the additional and progressive step, with the proxy comparison method, to ensure access to pay equity for the most vulnerable women working in female-dominated workplaces. A number of these workers are in the developmental services sector. They are doing what has been known as care work, historically labelled "women's work." This work has long been undervalued and underpaid, specifically *because* it is gendered. That is why special provisions exist in the *Pay Equity Act* to protect these women.

Workers in developmental services have been fighting to achieve pay equity for decades, but employers continue to evade their legal obligation to pay. Why are we still fighting for pay equity, nearly 30 years after it became law?

For far too long, pay equity has been treated as optional rather than the human right it is.

While the legal responsibility falls on employers to meet pay equity obligations, there is a massive elephant in the room, and it needs addressing. It is no secret that many agencies in the developmental services sector are sorely underfunded and have been for quite some time. There is a real crisis in this sector. This is where the province needs to step in.

The *Pay Equity Act*, on its own, is not making equal pay for work of equal value a reality for the most vulnerable women workers in this province. It needs to be supported by funding. Government funds the agencies; it must fund pay equity.

In her 2016 mandate letters, Premier Kathleen Wynne clearly stated that closing the gender wage gap was a key priority. She also initiated the Gender Wage Gap Review to investigate ways of closing Ontario's vast wage gap between men and women.

It does not take the Gender Wage Gap Review to know that one significant way the province can work to close the wage gap is enforcing pay equity.

I call for the government to take three steps now:

1. immediately start funding pay equity in the developmental services sector;
 2. ensure agencies do not lay off any workers to pay for their legal pay equity obligations;
- and

3. mandate that all agencies in the Broader Public Sector that use the proxy comparison method make public their financial plans to achieve and maintain pay equity to close the gender pay gap.

I urge you to stand up for every worker's right to equal pay for work of equal value. Please help make this happen by telling Premier Wynne that she needs to take action now.

Sincerely,

[your name]