

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2015

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HOUSE BILL 578

Short Title: Families' Economic Security Act. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Cunningham, Fisher, Meyer, and Reives (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of Sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly Web Site.

Referred to: Finance, if favorable, Judiciary I, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations
of the House.

April 6, 2015

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO ENACT THE FAMILIES' ECONOMIC SECURITY ACT TO ENSURE THAT
EMPLOYEES IN THIS STATE ARE PAID THE SAME WAGES IN THE SAME
ESTABLISHMENT FOR THE SAME QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF THE SAME
CLASSIFICATION OF WORK.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Chapter 95 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new
Article to read:

"Article 2B.

"Families' Economic Security Act.

"§ 95-25.26. Title; definitions.

(a) This Article shall be known and may be cited as the "Families' Economic Security
Act of North Carolina."

(b) The following definitions apply in this Article:

- (1) Employee. – Every woman or man in receipt of or entitled to compensation
for labor performed for another.
- (2) Employer. – Includes (i) this State and any local political subdivision of the
State and (ii) every person having control or direction of any woman or man
employed at any labor, or responsible directly or indirectly for the wages of
another, who employs more than five employees.
- (3) Person. – As defined by G.S. 95-25.2(11).
- (4) Wage or wages. – Any compensation for labor measured by time, piece, or
otherwise.

"§ 95-25.27. Equal wage rates.

(a) No employer shall pay any person in the employer's employ at wage rates less than
the rates paid to employees of the opposite sex in the same establishment for the same quantity
and quality of the same classification of work. Any employer who violates this section is liable
to the employee affected in the amount of the wages that the employee is deprived by reason of
the violation.

(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, nothing in this
section prohibits a variation of rates of pay for male and female employees engaged in the same
classification of work based upon seniority, a difference in length of service, ability, skill,
difference in duties or services performed, whether regularly or occasionally, difference in the
shift or time of day worked, hours of work, or restrictions or prohibitions on lifting or moving



1 objects in excess of specified weight, or other reasonable differentiation, factor or factors other
2 than sex, when exercised in good faith.

3 (c) An employer that is in violation of this section may not reduce the pay of any
4 employee in order to bring the employer into compliance with this Article.

5 (d) An employer shall not retaliate against any employee who seeks redress pursuant to
6 this Article or who participates in the investigation of a complaint under this Article.

7 **"§ 95-25.28. Complaints; enforcement; civil actions.**

8 (a) An affected employee may file with the Department of Labor a complaint that the
9 wages paid to the employee are less than the wages to which the employee is entitled under this
10 Article. The Department of Labor shall investigate the complaint and notify the employer and
11 employee of the results of the investigation.

12 (b) An employee receiving less than the wage to which the employee is entitled under
13 this section may recover in a civil action the balance of such wages, together with the costs and
14 attorneys' fees, notwithstanding any agreement to work for a lesser wage. The employee is not
15 required to exhaust administrative remedies before filing the civil action.

16 (c) A civil action pursuant to this section shall be instituted within two years after the
17 date that the alleged violation is discovered by the affected employee."

18 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.