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**SB 217**  
**Labor and Employment - Wage History and Wage Range**  
**Hearing before the Senate Finance Committee**  
**February 13, 2020**

**Position: SUPPORT**

The Public Justice Center (PJC) is a not-for-profit civil rights and anti-poverty legal services organization which seeks to advance social justice, economic and racial equity, and fundamental human rights in Maryland. The PJC strongly **SUPPORTS SB 217**.

**SB 217 Would Help Eliminate the Cycle of Underpayment Experienced by People of Color and Women.** Asking a job applicant for salary history perpetuates pay discrimination and racial and gender wage disparities. Women and people of color on average are paid less than white, non-Hispanic men, and anchoring a new salary to an old one for these groups helps perpetuate this inequity. Asking for salary history forces workers to carry low earnings from job to job and prevents economic mobility. As an employer committed to equitable hiring, the PJC publishes salary range in job postings, encourages conversations around salary disclosure, and refuses to ask job applicants for salary history.

**SB 217 Would Foster Much-Needed Transparency.** SB 217 would help create a level playing field by ensuring that a pay range for open positions is transparent. Rather than promoting the secrecy that often hurts women and people of color by perpetuating unjustified pay differentials, such transparency enables applicants to have necessary information to negotiate effectively. When job applicants are informed of the types and range of compensation and benefits available, they have the information required to negotiate successfully. This transparency fosters a balance of power between employer and potential employees. It also minimizes racial and gender wage gaps through informed, transparent negotiations.

For the foregoing reasons, the PJC strongly **SUPPORTS SB 217** and urges a **FAVORABLE** report. Should you have any questions, please contact Andrea Johnson at [AJohnson@nwlc.org](mailto:AJohnson@nwlc.org).

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