

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2016 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 471

BY SENATORS KESSLER, BEACH AND LAIRD

[Introduced February 2, 2016;

Referred to Committee on Labor; and then to the
Committee on the Judiciary.]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §5-11-9 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating
 2 to the Equal Pay Act of 2016; making it unlawful for an employer to require, as a condition
 3 of employment, that an employee refrain from disclosing information about his or her
 4 wages, benefits or other compensation or sharing information about another employee’s
 5 wages, benefits or other compensation; and making it unlawful for employer to prohibit
 6 employees from disclosing information about his or her wages, benefits or other
 7 compensation or sharing information about another employee’s wages, benefits or other
 8 compensation.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

1 That §5-11-9 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended and reenacted
 2 to read as follows:

ARTICLE 11. HUMAN RIGHTS ACT.

§5-11-9. Unlawful discriminatory practices.

1 It shall be an unlawful discriminatory practice, unless based upon a bona fide occupational
 2 qualification, or except where based upon applicable security regulations established by the
 3 United States or the State of West Virginia or its agencies or political subdivisions:

4 (1) For any employer to discriminate against an individual with respect to compensation,
 5 hire, tenure, terms, conditions or privileges of employment if the individual is able and competent
 6 to perform the services required even if such individual is blind or disabled: *Provided*, That it shall
 7 not be an unlawful discriminatory practice for an employer to observe the provisions of any bona
 8 fide pension, retirement, group or employee insurance or welfare benefit plan or system not
 9 adopted as a subterfuge to evade the provisions of this subdivision;

10 (2) For any employer, employment agency or labor organization, prior to the employment
 11 or admission to membership, to: (A) Elicit any information or make or keep a record of or use any
 12 form of application or application blank containing questions or entries concerning the race,
 13 religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex or age of any applicant for employment or

14 membership; (B) print or publish or cause to be printed or published any notice or advertisement
15 relating to employment or membership indicating any preference, limitation, specifications or
16 discrimination based upon race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, disability or age; or
17 (C) deny or limit, through a quota system, employment or membership because of race, religion,
18 color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, blindness or disability;

19 (3) For any labor organization because of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry,
20 sex, age, blindness or disability of any individual to deny full and equal membership rights to any
21 individual or otherwise to discriminate against such individual with respect to hire, tenure, terms,
22 conditions or privileges of employment or any other matter, directly or indirectly, related to
23 employment;

24 (4) For an employer, labor organization, employment agency or any joint labor-
25 management committee controlling apprentice training programs to:

26 (A) Select individuals for an apprentice training program registered with the State of West
27 Virginia on any basis other than their qualifications as determined by objective criteria which
28 permit review;

29 (B) Discriminate against any individual with respect to his or her right to be admitted to or
30 participate in a guidance program, an apprenticeship training program, on-the-job training
31 program or other occupational training or retraining program;

32 (C) Discriminate against any individual in his or her pursuit of such programs or to
33 discriminate against such a person in the terms, conditions or privileges of such programs;

34 (D) Print or circulate or cause to be printed or circulated any statement, advertisement or
35 publication, or to use any form of application for these programs or to make any inquiry in
36 connection with a program which expresses, directly or indirectly, discrimination or any intent to
37 discriminate unless based upon a bona fide occupational qualification;

38 (5) For any employment agency to fail or refuse to classify properly, refer for employment
39 or otherwise to discriminate against any individual because of his or her race, religion, color,

40 national origin, ancestry, sex, age, blindness or disability;

41 (6) For any person being the owner, lessee, proprietor, manager, superintendent, agent
42 or employee of any place of public accommodations to:

43 (A) Refuse, withhold from or deny to any individual because of his or her race, religion,
44 color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, blindness or disability, either directly or indirectly, any of
45 the accommodations, advantages, facilities, privileges or services of the place of public
46 accommodations;

47 (B) Publish, circulate, issue, display, post or mail, either directly or indirectly, any written
48 or printed communication, notice or advertisement to the effect that any of the accommodations,
49 advantages, facilities, privileges or services of any such place shall be refused, withheld from or
50 denied to any individual on account of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age,
51 blindness or disability, or that the patronage or custom thereof of any individual, belonging to or
52 purporting to be of any particular race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex or age, or who
53 is blind or disabled, is unwelcome, objectionable, not acceptable, undesired or not solicited; or

54 (7) For any employer to:

55 (A) Require, as a condition of employment, that an employee refrain from disclosing,
56 discussing, or sharing information about the amount of his or her wages, benefits or other
57 compensation, or from inquiring, discussing or sharing information about any other employee's
58 wages, benefits or other compensation; or

59 (B) Require an employee to sign a waiver or other document that denies the employee
60 the right to disclose the amount of his or her wages, benefits or other compensation or to inquire
61 about, discuss or share information about any other employee's wages, benefits or other
62 compensation.

63 ~~(7)~~ (8) For any person, employer, employment agency, labor organization, owner, real
64 estate broker, real estate salesman or financial institution to:

65 (A) Engage in any form of threats or reprisal, or to engage in, or hire, or conspire with

66 others to commit acts or activities of any nature, the purpose of which is to harass, degrade,
67 embarrass or cause physical harm or economic loss or to aid, abet, incite, compel or coerce any
68 person to engage in any of the unlawful discriminatory practices defined in this section;

69 (B) Willfully obstruct or prevent any person from complying with the provisions of this
70 article, or to resist, prevent, impede or interfere with the commission or any of its members or
71 representatives in the performance of a duty under this article; or

72 (C) Engage in any form of reprisal or otherwise discriminate against any person because
73 he or she has opposed any practices or acts forbidden under this article or because he or she
74 has filed a complaint, testified or assisted in any proceeding under this article.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to be known as the "Equal Pay Act of 2016"; to make it an unlawful discriminatory practice for an employer to make a condition of employment, or prohibit an employee from disclosing information about his or her wages, benefits, or other compensation, or sharing information regarding any other employee's wages, benefits, or other compensation.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law, and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.