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For Immediate Release: May 5, 2001
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Legislature: Women Should Get Equal Pay

(JUNEAU) –The State of Alaska will conduct an investigation to determine if female state employees receive unfairly low wages compared to their male counterparts under the direction of a bill passed today by the House.

“We know that female state employees are making less than their male counterparts, but we don’t know if it is the result of wage discrimination,” said Sen. Dave Donley (R-Anchorage), sponsor of Senate Bill 65. “This study will determine if the state is illegally paying men and women different wages for performing the same or similar jobs.”

Senate Bill 65, which is co-sponsored by Sen. Robin Taylor (R-Wrangell), requires the Department of Administration to identify instances in which the state is illegally paying women less than men. If disparities in pay are identified, the state will be able to develop phased strategies to eliminate sex discrimination.

“We need to determine if the state is paying male and female co-workers differently simply because of gender, and if a problem exists we need to fix it as quickly as possible,” said Donley. “Paying women and men equally for equal work is the legal thing to do, it’s the smart thing to do, and it’s the right thing to do.”

SB 65 passed the House with a vote of 32 –2, and now goes to the governor for signature.

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