



OSAGE NATION CONGRESS
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MEMBER OF CONGRESS
ELI POTTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
3/24/2021 2:40PM

OSAGE NATION- Equal Pay Day

March 24, 2021 is Equal Pay Day in the United States. “Women’s Equal Pay Day marks the day into the year on which it takes for women on average to earn what men did in 2020. That’s 15 months. Or, if you look at a typical 9:00-5:00 work day, women start working for free at 2:40 p.m.” according to the Equal Pay Today Campaign.

According to the Oklahoma Policy Institute, on May 2, 2019, “Oklahoma women can expect to earn \$0.73 cents for every dollar paid to men, with an even wider gap for women of color.” That’s \$0.09 cents below the national average.

<https://okpolicy.org/oklahoma-women-cant-afford-wage-discrimination-bill-aims-help/>

This is not a problem unique to Oklahoma and in many cases more negatively impacts Native American Women. According to the National Indian Council on Aging, Inc. “American Indian women earn approximately \$0.57 cents on the dollar of white, non-Hispanic men.”

<https://www.nicoa.org/native-american-womens-equal-pay-day/>

In September of 2019, Then Congresswoman Deb Haaland contributed to an article stating “The fact that Native women only make 58 cents on the dollar compared to white men in similar positions is absolutely unacceptable.”

<https://www.cnb.com/2019/09/23/deb-haaland-native-american-women-pay-gap-even-bigger-heres-a-way-to-fix-it.html>

“I agree with Secretary Haaland, it is absolutely unacceptable.”, said Congressman Potts. “Laws exist to prevent gaps in gender pay, and when we look at the work environment in Oklahoma, the Osage Nation is not immune from unknowingly and even unintentionally contributing to a gender pay gap” he continued.

Gaps in gender pay exist for a variety of reasons, including public disclosure laws, laws that prevent pay from being discussed, and a general lack of openness and transparency. “No matter how hard we strive, it’s possible that a gap in gender pay could exist without us knowing. That’s the purpose for ONCA 21-35, to make sure that we are studying this issue and ensuring the Osage Nation is an Equal Pay institution.” said Congressman Potts.

While today is Women’s Equal Pay Day for the average female wage earner, Equal Pay Day specific for Native American Women will be September 23rd, 2021. “Hopefully by passing this legislation during the coming Hun-Kah Session, we can ensure that Equal Pay day is every day in the Osage Nation” Congressman Potts concluded.