

August 20, 2018

To the Honorable Members of
The Illinois House of Representatives,
100th General Assembly:

Today I return House Bill 4743 by extending its application to all racial and ethnic classes protected under Section 1-103(Q) of the Illinois Human Rights Act.

As presented to me, this legislation prohibits pay and wage discrimination against African-American employees in comparison to other employees for the same or substantially similar work under similar working conditions for jobs requiring equal skill, effort, and responsibility.

This is a laudable goal that acknowledges the long-reaching effects of unfair pay and wage practices. This bill works to address the harmful impact of this unequal treatment on African-American employees, their families, and the community. Notwithstanding clear progress that has been achieved by African-Americans employees in Illinois, I recognize that employers must do more to stamp out pay and wage discrimination based solely on the demographic makeup of employees.

The intent of this legislation is to put into place enhanced statutory mandates which would hold employers that engage in unlawful pay and wage practices against African-Americans accountable. However, wage discrimination is not limited to African-Americans, and other racial and ethnic groups are suffering similar harms in their employment. They, too, are subject to unequal compensation and salaries and are equally deserving of relief. I would be remiss if I did not extend the substantial benefits granted African-Americans under this bill to all racial and ethnic protected classes.

As one of the principles to be upheld in our governing and our lawmaking, we should always seek to see where what may be good for the few can be good for the many. Broadening this legislation sends a message of inclusivity and fairness that is clearly in keeping with the spirit of this bill.

Therefore, pursuant to Section 9(e) of Article IV of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby return House Bill 4743, entitled "AN ACT concerning employment," with the following specific recommendations for change:

By replacing page 1, line 23 through page 2, line 7, with the following:

“No employer may discriminate between employees by paying wages to an employee who is of a protected class that is based on race, color, national origin, or ancestry, against whom such practices would constitute “unlawful discrimination” under Section 1-103(Q) of the Illinois Human Rights Act, at a rate less than the rate at which the employer pays wages to other employees who are not members of a protected class that is based on that race, color, national origin, or ancestry under this Act for the same or substantially similar work on jobs the performance of which requires equal skill, effort, and responsibility, and which are performed under similar working conditions, except where the payment is made under.”

With these changes, House Bill 4743 will have my approval. I respectfully request your concurrence.

Sincerely,

Bruce Rauner
GOVERNOR