

F I N A L R E P O R T  
COMPARABLE WORTH REVIEW COMMITTEE

December, 1984

The Comparable Worth Review Committee was established by the Legislative Council based upon section 6 of Senate File 2359, which was vetoed by the Governor.

Members appointed to the Review Committee were:

Senator Charles Bruner, Co-Chairman  
Representative Minnette Doderer, Co-Chairwoman  
Senator Joe Brown  
Senator Julia Gentleman  
Representative Bob Arnould  
Representative Dorothy Carpenter

The Committee was granted four meetings. Meetings were held on August 14, September 28, November 21, and December 6, 1984.

At the Committee's first meeting Co-Chairman Bruner stated that the following issues should be addressed:

1. Incorporation of comparable worth policy into state agencies exempt or partially exempt from the state merit system.
2. Establishment of a single pay plan for state merit employees in lieu of the seven existing pay plans.
3. Implementation of the comparable worth adjustments to bring all job titles below their comparable worth pay grade up to that pay grade.
4. Implementation of other adjustments to the pay grade positions of job titles that are needed to avoid compaction in job series or otherwise correct internal discrepancies within job series.
5. Implementation of a system to handle overvalued jobs by red circling or another method. Another issue to be addressed is the pay status of new employees hired to these jobs.
6. Implementation of recommendations to combine job titles.
7. Implementation of procedures for maintaining a comparable worth factor determination system for job evaluation and the assignment of factor scores for new job titles.

Co-Chairwoman Doderer added that the Committee should review the progress of the State Board of Regents regarding the implementation of comparable worth for its nonfaculty employees. She also stated that the Committee must address the need for a single pay plan, correcting compaction problems and the combining of job classifications. She added that it should be emphasized to state employees that job titles with current pay grades above their comparable worth grade will not be down-graded or frozen at least until total implementation of the comparable worth adjustments is complete.

Representative Carpenter stated that another issue which should be addressed is the concern among state employees that the money appropriated for comparable worth adjustments will be used to correct existing compaction problems. She stated that the Committee needs to carefully monitor the implementation of the pay adjustments.

The Committee then received reports from the Governor's Comparable Worth Oversight Committee, the Judicial Department, the Iowa Merit Employment System, and the State Board of Regents concerning their efforts to oversee and carry out comparable worth implementation in accordance with the laws.

At its second meeting the Committee received reports from the State Comptroller's Office which is coordinating implementation of comparable worth for employees exempt from the merit system, and from the Attorney General's Office, the Commission for the Blind, the Department of Public Broadcasting, the Department of Public Instruction, including Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Department of Public Safety concerning efforts to implement comparable worth for exempt employees. It also discussed the Supplemental Collective Bargaining Agreement relating to Comparable Worth Adjustments with the state negotiator and AFSCME.

The Committee's third meeting included further reports on comparable worth implementation from the Judicial Department and the State Board of Regents. The Committee discussed implementation costs with the State Comptroller, and procedures with the Merit Employment Department.

At its fourth and final meeting, the Committee received a further report from Merit Employment Department and then proceeded to develop its final recommendations. The Co-Chairpersons plan to present the following recommendations to the Governor, with suggestions for those which may best be implemented by the executive branch. These include concerns regarding an appeal process, pay compaction, adjustment date for nonmerit employees, and the newly formed clerical bargaining unit. The following recommendations were adopted by all members present at the final meeting, except that recommendation #9 regarding red-circling or freezing was adopted by a majority of the members present.

COMPARABLE WORTH REVIEW COMMITTEE -- RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Single Pay Plan.

Because current variations among pay plans in the merit system are small in most cases, and pay plans covering jobs that are predominantly female are not at a disadvantage relative to pay plans covering jobs that are predominantly male, it is not the Committee's belief that a single pay plan is necessary in order to effect comparable worth policy--although a single pay plan is desirable for a number of other reasons. One reason is that future collective bargaining agreements would be less likely to give advantage to one sex over the other.

Modifications to the current pay plan structures that create any greater divergence among pay plans well could subvert the goals of comparable worth, because many pay plans are composed of either predominantly male or predominantly female job classifications. The Committee believes that any changes in the pay plan structure shall be in the direction of greater conformity, rather than additional divergence.

2. Starting Step.

While pay plans themselves currently do not act as an impediment to implementing comparable worth policy, the step upon which employees are placed upon entry into a job does. To the extent trades and technical personnel start out at step four on the basis of experience attained in prior employment but secretaries start on step one regardless of their previous employment history, the policy of comparable worth is subverted.

Any methodology used by the Iowa Merit Employment Department (IMED) and all other state pay plans that allows employees in any job classification to start at a position other than step one shall be the same for all other jobs in the merit system or other state pay plan. The Committee recommends that IMED establish procedures to accomplish this goal of uniformity of starting salaries for all individuals in state employment.

3. The Collective Bargaining Agreement, Step Loss, and Noncontractual Employees.

In its bargaining with the state for comparable worth implementation for fiscal year 1985 for other than the newly established clerical unit, AFSCME and the state agreed to a one-step reduction for employees receiving comparable worth adjustments.

Under Senate File 2359, noncontractual employees will not receive a one-step reduction in fiscal year 1985. However, under the conditions of Senate File 2359, contractual employees will receive a somewhat smaller biweekly adjustment in pay, but will receive this adjustment for more pay periods than will noncontractual employees who receive larger adjustments. For fiscal year 1985, the money will be provided equitably among contractual and noncontractual employees; although the distribution will differ within each group.

Because of this, the Committee feels there is no permanent discrimination inherent in the fiscal year 1985 implementation. Contractual employees will only be treated at a disadvantage should they not, through the collective bargaining process for the 1986-1987 fiscal years, recover that lost step.

The Committee believes, to effectively implement comparable worth policy, no employees should lose a step in receiving their adjustments. Therefore, it is the Committee's hope and intent that the state and the contractual units bargain to restore this step loss, commencing July 1, 1985.

#### 4. Pay Grades Above Pay Grade 32.

The jobs with recommended "comparable worth" pay adjustments to pay grades above pay grade 32 by and large represent jobs with so few incumbents that they cannot properly be classified as male dominated or female dominated. Further, statistical regression analysis at the ends of the pay grade spectrum is more susceptible to error and is more likely to require some modifications to reflect other than linear influences. This has already been done at the lower pay grade level by a modification in point scores from the straight line regression predictions.

Such correction would minimize the overall recommended adjustments to positions above pay grade 32. For most positions, therefore, the Committee sees no need to implement comparable worth adjustment recommendations in order to effectively implement comparable worth policy.

However, because they fall within a job series that is predominantly female, for whom the study recommended major increases both for their positions and for other positions in their series, and for whom pay compaction would be pronounced were adjustments not made, the Committee recommends that, by gubernatorial directive, the following nursing positions be adjusted as per the comparable worth study's recommendations at the same time other adjustments are made for fiscal year 1984-1985:

Nursing Services Director	to Pay Grade 33
Director of Nursing	to Pay Grade 35
Director of Public Health Nursing	to Pay Grade 35

#### 5. Appeals and Review.

When the General Assembly passed Senate File 2359, it directed that prior to implementation of adjustments a full review and appeals process be conducted and completed. Not only was this designed to allow all employees an opportunity to have any concerns of theirs addressed, it also was intended to clear up several jobs that obviously were misplaced within their job series. The Governor vetoed the review process outlined in Senate File 2359, but pledged to employees that there would be a review process. In the collective bargaining negotiations, the state and AFSCME negotiated for a March 8 comparable worth adjustment date with no review of any job classifications.

The Committee believes there should be a review and appeal process available to all employees. Since the General Assembly has already acted in this area, and the Governor has vetoed the Assembly's approach, the Committee now calls upon the Governor to present a proposal for implementing this review and appeal process he promised state employees, for action by the General Assembly.

#### 6. Job Misplacements and Pay Compaction.

There are several "obvious" job classification misplacements (e.g., classes having inverted pay grades between levels in a class series) that should be addressed at the earliest possible time.

The Committee believes that these would have been solved by a review and appeals procedure prior to implementation of comparable worth adjustments. Now, any such process will have to be conducted after implementation, which is far from the preferred situation and carries with it additional problems. The Committee strongly recommends that the Governor and the Governor's Comparable Worth Oversight Committee present to the General Assembly a reasonable review and appeals proposal to provide a means to fine tune the comparable worth study recommendations.

In addition to the obvious misplacements outlined above, the IMED has indicated a number of job series where comparable worth adjustments will create additional pay compaction. Some of these in fact may be resolved through a review and appeals procedure, but others may not.

To address this issue of pay compaction within a comparable worth framework may require a rethinking of the components of

supervisory responsibilities themselves. The Committee believes that any process for reevaluating positions where pay compaction is posited to exist must recognize the reasons that caused such compaction in terms of the comparable worth rating system and then explore modifications to the compacted positions' job responsibilities that would eliminate the compaction problem while retaining comparable worth principles. Such actions could also serve to achieve span of control ratio adjustments by shifting some personnel currently in supervisory positions back to nonsupervisory positions while having the remaining supervisors' positions assume greater responsibilities.

#### 7. Comparable Worth Implementation for Nonmerit Employees.

Senate File 2359 requires reports from agencies with positions that are exempt from the state merit system on their recommendations for comparable worth adjustments for those employees. In its hearings, the Committee has sought to provide direction to agencies regarding their study of positions potentially requiring comparable worth adjustments. While Senate File 2359 does not dictate a specific methodology for these evaluations, the clear emphasis has been upon using an evaluation system that as much as possible will be congruent with that provided in the merit system study. The Committee is particularly pleased with the judiciary department's efforts in this respect. The Committee also is concerned that the legislative branch of state government take a leadership position in evaluating positions in the Legislative Service Bureau, including the Code office staff and the Public Information Office, the Legislative Fiscal Bureau, the Citizen's Aide Office, the Administrative Rules Review Committee staff, Senate and House staff, and partisan staff in terms of comparable worth.

In Comptroller William Krahl's testimony before the Committee, he expressed concern that a later implementation schedule for nonmerit employees for comparable worth adjustments than for merit employees is inequitable and will cause morale problems. While Senate File 2359 was predicated on implementing necessary comparable worth adjustments for nonmerit state employees on July 1, 1985; the Committee would welcome moving that implementation date forward, subject to two conditions:

a. The recommended adjustments are finalized and in a position to be implemented prior to July 1, 1985, and

b. The Governor's office requests any supplemental appropriations necessary to effect such adjustments.

The Committee would request that the Comptroller develop an estimate of the cost for implementing adjustments for nonmerit state personnel concurrently with those adjustments for merit personnel.

8. Position "Leapfrogging" and Former Position Re-Entry.

Any time there are salary adjustments that alter the relative pay positions of job classifications within the state system, some employees may find their own preferences for jobs to change. Certain employees who have moved from one state position to another for reasons of pay now find their old position has "leapfrogged" over their new position in terms of pay. Ironically, this has been true particularly in instances where enlightened management has sought to move women from predominantly female positions to predominantly male positions in order to receive better pay.

It is the Committee's position that employees who have made such career decisions should have the opportunity, at the earliest time when it is possible to do so without bumping or laying off personnel, to move back into the position they previously held. The Committee recommends that IMED establish procedures to do this and that employees making this selection not lose steps as a result of the move.

9. "Red Circling" and Other Means to Fully Implement Iowa's Comparable Worth Law.

The legislation enacted by the General Assembly on comparable worth (HF 313 and SF 2359) did not call for any freezes of any employee's salaries or any "red circling" of jobs. The negotiated collective bargaining agreement ruled out "red circling" in the implementation of the fiscal year 1985 comparable worth adjustments.

Still, to fully implement a comparable worth system requires not only moving jobs that have been "underpaid" by comparable worth standards up to the comparable worth pay grade (as in SF 2359) for all jobs, but requires that all jobs in state government that have moved beyond the pay grade in Senate File 2359 shall be held at the present rate until jobs with the same point value catch up, but this should not be done until after a review and appeal process. Without some action, it is the Committee's feeling that the state will not have fully implemented its comparable worth law and may be subject to litigation. As long as qualified applicants are verified for positions held at the present rate, the salaries shall be adjusted annually but the adjusted salaries shall not appear in the pay plan. All persons newly hired in positions which are being held at the present rate shall be hired at the comparable worth pay grade rate.

Collective bargaining shall not negate previously awarded comparable worth adjustments.

10. Newly Organized Employees and Comparable Worth Adjustments for Fiscal Year 1985.

With the election by state clerical employees to be represented by AFSCME, these employees find themselves in a unique position with respect to comparable worth for fiscal year 1985. They are not part of the already negotiated agreements, and they do not automatically receive the adjustments that noncontractual employees receive.

It is the Committee's belief that the clerical positions must receive comparable worth adjustments in fiscal year 1985. Failure to do so would be a clear case of unfair labor practices. It is therefore the Committee's recommendation that collective bargaining negotiations be reopened for this bargaining unit.

Further, it is the Committee's strong recommendation that the state not negotiate with an effort to provide for a step loss for these employees but rather provide comparable worth adjustments equivalent to those provided in the law for noncontractual employees.

Since virtually all employees within the clerical bargaining unit would be disadvantaged by a step loss and virtually none would receive any protections from a prohibition against "red circling," it is the Committee's belief that the contract negotiated for other contractual personnel makes no sense for the clerical unit. A state negotiating effort to impose this agreement would be very unfair and grounds to perceive the state as intending to create disunity and antagonisms by the newly organized employees toward their union.

Further, since it is imperative that such employees not be penalized for their decision to organize, these employees must receive comparable worth adjustments in fiscal year 1985 as they otherwise would have if they had remained noncontractual employees.

The Committee expresses great concern over this issue because testimony before the Committee from members of the executive department suggested that there was no clear posture from the executive department on providing adjustments for the clerical unit in fiscal year 1985. Failure to do so fully would, in the Committee's estimation, be a grave mistake.

11. Comparable Worth and Affirmative Action.

The Committee states that comparable worth policy does not serve as a substitute for affirmative action efforts, and affirmative action is also needed to achieve pay equity.

12. Further Study -- Comparable Worth -- Merit System.

The Committee recommends further study to determine if the state has achieved comparable worth; and also to review chapter 19A of the Code (State Merit System) for needed improvements.

13. State Personnel Management.

The study of comparable worth has revealed that the many separate personnel systems in state government result in a lack of coordination and duplication in management systems. The Committee recommends that a study be established to examine a more comprehensive and coordinated personnel management system.