

SECRETARY OF STATE

Pay Equity Advisory Report



Report #2023-11

Senate Committee on Labor and Business – April 6, 2023

Oregon Must do More to Close Persistent Wage Gaps for Women and People of Color in State Government



2015

PAY EQUITY STUDY

Figure 1: Women and people of color earned a fraction of what white men earned for the same or similar work in 2015

White men 100%

Non-white men 87%

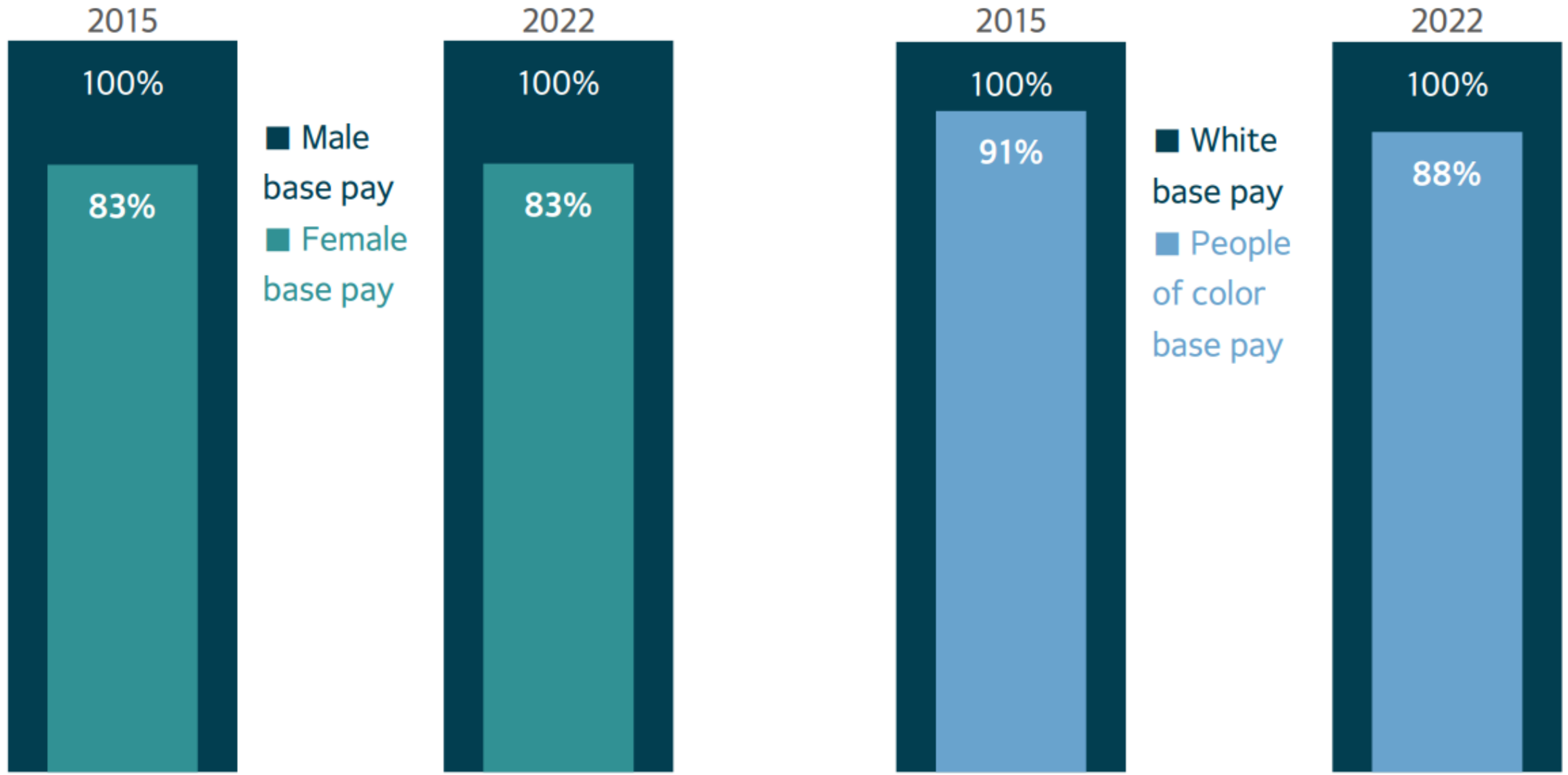
White women 86%

Non-white women 75%



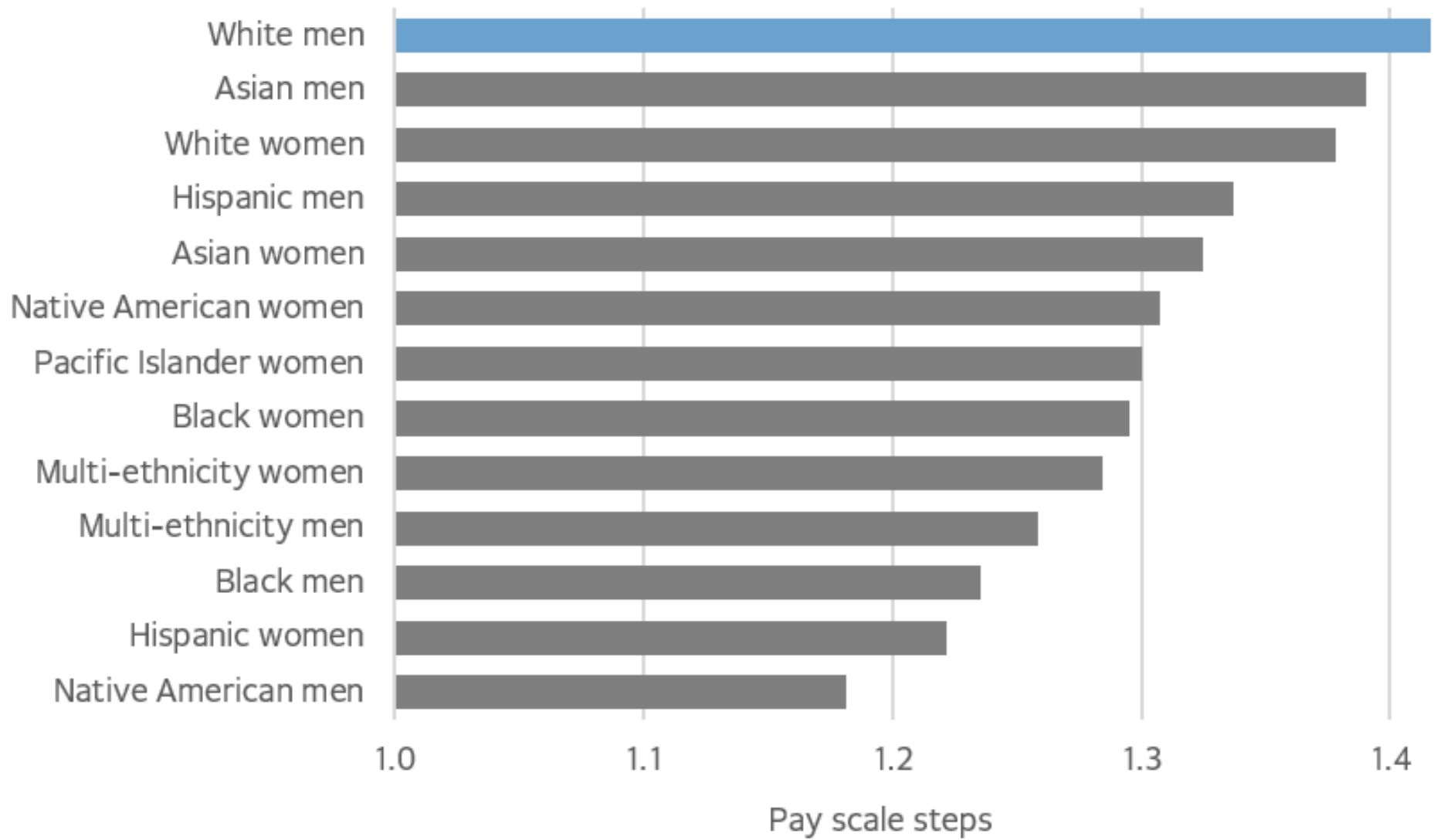
Source: Auditor created based on Portland State University's 2015 Pay Equity Study.

Figure 4: Women and people of color continue to face median wage gaps



Source: Auditor created based on 2015 Portland State report and 2022 payroll data from DAS.

Figure 7: White men received larger pay equity adjustments, on average, in 2019



Source: Auditor created based on 2019 payroll data from DAS. Auditors excluded subpopulations with fewer than 10 people receiving adjustments.

Figure 2: In the nearly 60 years since the federal Equal Pay Act was passed, the gender pay gap has narrowed but still remains



Source: Auditor created based on Current Population Survey data provided by the US Census Bureau. Number of real median earnings of total workers and full-time, year-round workers by sex and female-to-male earnings ratio, 1960 to 2021.

Positive outcomes

3,500 wage gaps closed in 2019

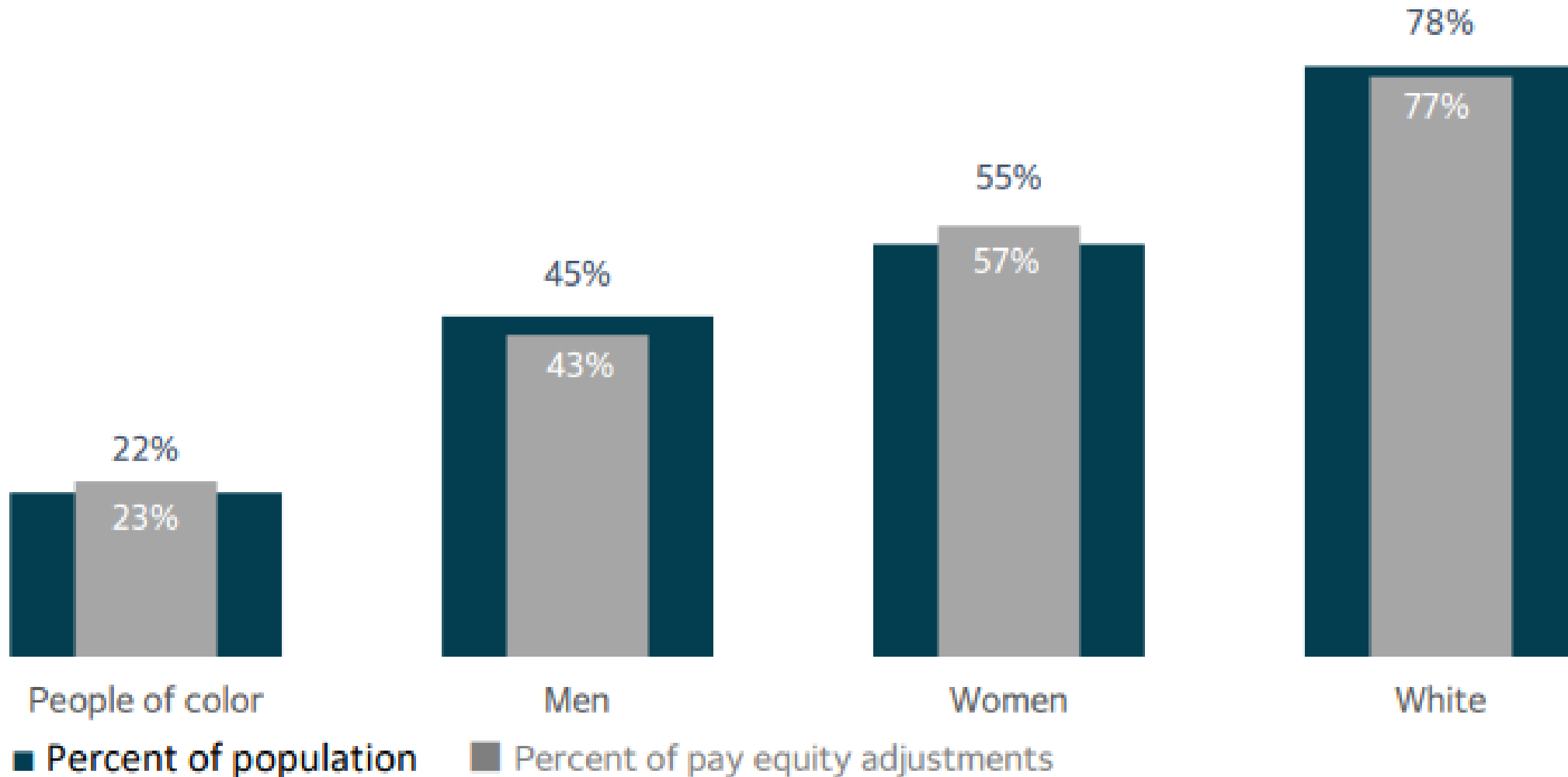
3,000 wage gaps closed in 2022

Starting pay no longer based on prior salary history

Pay based on education, experience, and other factors

Employees have right to sue if they feel pay is unfair

Figure 8: Pay equity adjustments were close to the demographics of the state workforce and did not significantly favor women or people of color, perpetuating existing wage inequities



Source: Auditor created based on 2022 payroll data from the Department of Administrative Services.

In general, female and BIPOC employees have less seniority in state government than male and white employees. One reason is that women generally continue to perform a disproportionate amount of housework and child care. Time away from employment to raise a child or support other family members may result in women having fewer years of experience relevant to their job compared to men. The exact cause of the disparities in seniority between BIPOC and white employees was not determined, though factors such as varying retention of employees from different demographic groups could play a substantial role.

Women's greater responsibility for housework and caregiving may be associated with decisions that reduce their labor market success compared to men's.

- Francine Blau et al.

Figure 10: Oregon's workforce has grown more diverse, but people of color still make up less than a quarter of the state workforce

	2007	2022	% of total in 2022	Percent of population	2007-2022 change	
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	18	235	0.6%	0.5%	1,205.6%	↑
Two or more	349	1,472	3.8%	4.0%	321.8%	↑
Hispanic or Latino	1,893	3,576	9.2%	13.5%	88.9%	↑
Black or African American	658	982	2.5%	2.2%	49.2%	↑
Asian	1,057	1,556	4.0%	4.9%	47.2%	↑
American Indian or Alaska Native	526	648	1.7%	1.8%	23.2%	↑
White, not Hispanic or Latino	30,418	30,387	78.2%	75.1%	-0.1%	↓
Total	34,919	38,856				

Source: Auditor created based on 2007 and 2022 payroll data from DAS and 2021 United States Census Bureau Population Estimates. Census figures total more than 100%.



1. We suggest the Oregon Legislature study the implementation of the Pay Equity Bill and consider if legislative action is needed to address persistent wage gaps.
2. We suggest DAS review existing pay equity processes to determine the causes of systemic wage gaps in state government and if adjustments are needed for future rounds of pay equity studies. Adjustment could include a focus on education and culture change.

QUESTIONS?

Oregon Secretary of State Staff

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Key recommendation

Study the implementation of pay equity in Oregon

