

Finance & Personnel Committee, Seattle City Council
Public Hearing, June 26, 1989
Event 13225 (00:00:29 – 00:04:19)

Linda Averill: Hello, my name is Linda Averill and I'm speaking on behalf of Seattle Radical Women and I live at 1619 Redwing Ave South. And I wanted to say it's just a few minutes earlier when we heard the man talking about, umm, trying to set-up a situation where people can make money off of, umm, off of this program, I was reminded of the kind of situation that women have been forced to live in, umm, in the past 20 years, before the beginning of the feminist movement where women were married, a lot in large part because it was economically the only option that was available to them, and one of the greatest victories of the feminist movement was to give women the ability to work outside of the home to gain economic independence and to win economic freedom from the servitude of the home. And yet we're still facing economic discrimination in the workplace by not being able--if we live as single women with children...or we live in a nontraditional relationship that is not sanctioned by the church or by the state, we're not qualified for the same kinds of benefits that those who do live in traditional relationships qualify for. We support this ordinance as a first step because it does provide women more flexibility in their job situation. It gives the very important benefit to women to be able to take sick leave to care for their children, or it gives, umm, women living in nontraditional relationships the ability to take sick leave to care for their partners. So that we support.

But we think that it this--that the City Council needs to go a lot further. As taxpayers, and also as many of us as workers, whose wages are set, in part by the benefits that are provided, we're tired of being discriminated against in the benefits that we receive or also paying our taxes for a system that discriminates against us. And we want more. We want the City Council to live up to the spirit of the nondiscrimination ordinances that are on the books. Umm, first, we think that in this particular ordinance that the City should strike any requirement that an employee sign an affidavit proving what--that they are living in a domestic partnership...uhh situation...is my time up? No, okay. Umm, currently people living in a marital situation don't have to sign affidavits, so why are we now going to signing affidavits that the City is going to extend it to domestic partners?

Secondly, umm, we also do support changing the Sick Leave Transfer Program from "may implementing a pilot program" to "shall implement a pilot program." The City *should* implement the Sick Leave Transfer Program.

And finally we think that the City should--the next step is to bring back the health benefits or to introduce the health benefits that were before the City Council in May and that you decided to suspend: the section of the ordinance that would have allowed health benefits. The fact is that--that the majority of people paying taxes and working in this system are single women with children, are people living in nontraditional relationships and we want to start receiving the benefits that we are paying for right now.

Thank you.

Councilmember Virginia Galle: Thank you Linda.