

Pay equity

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do a job classification and wage change to correct the differences, Hallock said.

In the 1985 Legislature, Senate Bill 59 proposed to dedicate \$5 million to upgrading pay of the most undervalued jobs and allocated \$500,000 to the state Personnel Division to complete a reclassification study.

All state workers are "classified" in accordance with how complex and demanding their jobs are. The pay scale is divided along classification lines, so in theory, jobs with similar levels of complexity pay similar salaries.

But Gov. Vic Atiyeh vetoed the Senate bill, giving two main reasons: he wanted to complete the classification study to determine the undervalued jobs before raising pay, and he disagreed with the bill's provision that no state employee's wages could be frozen if they were found to be overvalued.

Atiyeh then requested money to continue the classification study. State employees were outraged at the veto, and Atiyeh's request for money to complete the study drew fire.

The Legislature approved the reclassification study on condition that the Personnel Division focus on the most undervalued jobs and present a pay raise proposal to the 1987 Legislature.

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workforce, and we have not spent one dime on eradicating that problem," Hallock said.

One area where pay improvement is most needed, and most likely, is among clerical and service employees in the State System of Higher Education, Hallock said.

"The higher education classified staff is grossly underpaid for the work they do," Hallock said. "For the level of complexity and responsibility, their jobs are undervalued by 10

helping them push slowly toward their goals.

"Since pay equity is something that affects me personally, I felt like I had to do something personally to contribute," Boykin said. "The solidarity I feel with the other clerical workers on campus is very moving to me. What we do for a living is honorable. It's as honorable as groundskeeping, or plumbing, or painting, and it's often more complex and demanding," she said.

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— **Margaret Hallock**

percent to 30 percent compared to other jobs in the state.

"Higher education depends a lot on clerical employees, that's why the employees here are so active in the union," Hallock said.

In fact, OPEU membership at the University has increased by leaps and bounds in the past three years to its current level including about 75 percent of all classified employees here.

Boykin, who is chairperson of the clerical committee at the University, said she thinks the solidarity of clerical workers is

About one-half the employees the OPEU represents are clerical workers, nearly all of whom are women, said Kathy Wittwer, the OPEU higher education bargaining chairperson who is an accounting clerk in the University's Instructional Media Center.

Wittwer said the solidarity of clerical workers has greatly helped to increase their voice and draw support to their side in the fight for pay equity. "Pay equity is one of the top priorities supported by the whole union," Wittwer said.

"There is widespread agreement that full-time state employees should not have to be subsidized by public services," Hallock said. Strong supporters of pay equity include University President Paul Olum and Oregon State University President John Byrne.

Some opponents to pay equity argue that it would upset the free-market determination of wages.

But "market wages reflect

years of discrimination against women," said Hallock, a former economics professor. "Eliminating that disadvantage requires a proactive intervention in the market."

Wittwer added: "The other side of that same coin is that the work we do is intrinsically more valuable than what we're being paid. We don't like to think about what would happen at the University if the classified staff were not around."

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"I've been out making contacts today with my folks, and I'm not sure where we stand," Campbell said. In the case of a tie, "the speaker and I will be talking. It's obviously going to require some cooperation," he said.

McDaniel said he thinks he still has a chance at a win. "In any race within 35 votes, there's always potential," he said. McDaniel said he is uncomfortable that joint control of the House hinges on his race, he said. "I wish it hadn't worked out that way), but that's the way it is."

"It's unlikely with that kind of margin that a recount would change the outcome," Keisling said. However, "I think the Democrats in a 30-30 position are somewhat stronger than the Republicans," he said.

"Assuming that lead of 31-29 holds, the ease of the Democrats organizing the House just increases exponentially," he said.

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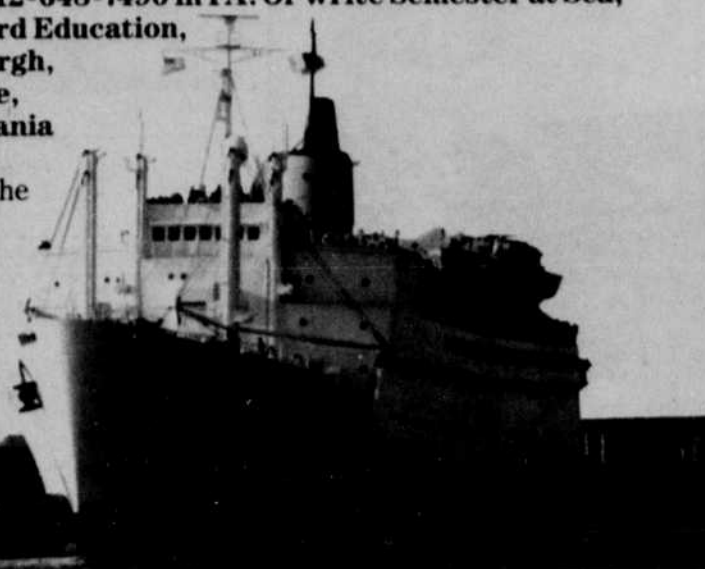
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