

# US State Pay-Secrecy Bans (Right to Discuss Pay) — Evidence of ~2% Lower Wages in Econometrica Study

Gender Equality · Good practice · United States of America

Quality score: 30/100

Evidence strength: Cautionary / limited

## Summary

Several US states banned employer pay-secrecy rules so workers can discuss pay. An Econometrica event-study finds such laws lowered wages about 2% on average, less where individual bargaining power is low. A mixed-evidence cautionary case.

## Key dimensions

| Dimension                       | Score |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Transferability / replicability | 2/3   |
| Impact on gender equality       | 0/1   |
| Effectiveness                   | 0/1   |
| Efficiency                      | 0/1   |
| Evaluated outcomes              | 1/1   |
| Sustainability                  | 1/1   |
| Achievement / evidence          | 0/1   |
| Gender-mainstreaming embedding  | 0/1   |
| Curator validation              | 0/1   |

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

## Data sources

[C-NAPSE web research](#) — accessed 2026-10-10

[US state legislatures \(event-study by Cullen & Pakzad-Hurson\)](#) — accessed 2026-10-10

[Econometrica \(2023\) article](#) — accessed 2026-10-10

[NBER Working Paper 28903](#) — accessed 2026-10-10

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