

HR 1521

EMPOWER Act

Congress: 116 (2019–2021, Ended)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: Civil Rights and Liberties, Minority Issues

Introduced: Mar 5, 2019

Current Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties.

Latest Action: Referred to the Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties. (Apr 8, 2019)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/1521>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. Frankel, Lois [D-FL-21]

Party: Democratic • **State:** FL • **Chamber:** House

Cosponsors (88 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Del. Norton, Eleanor Holmes [D-DC-At Large]	D · DC		Mar 5, 2019
Del. Sablan, Gregorio Kilili Camacho [D-MP-At Large]	D · MP		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Blunt Rochester, Lisa [D-DE-At Large]	D · DE		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Casten, Sean [D-IL-6]	D · IL		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Castor, Kathy [D-FL-14]	D · FL		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Cisneros, Gilbert Ray, Jr. [D-CA-39]	D · CA		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Clark, Katherine M. [D-MA-5]	D · MA		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Clarke, Yvette D. [D-NY-9]	D · NY		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Cohen, Steve [D-TN-9]	D · TN		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Cooper, Jim [D-TN-5]	D · TN		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Cox, TJ [D-CA-21]	D · CA		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Davis, Susan A. [D-CA-53]	D · CA		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Dean, Madeleine [D-PA-4]	D · PA		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. DeLauro, Rosa L. [D-CT-3]	D · CT		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Demings, Val Butler [D-FL-10]	D · FL		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. DeSaulnier, Mark [D-CA-11]	D · CA		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Dingell, Debbie [D-MI-12]	D · MI		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Espaillat, Adriano [D-NY-13]	D · NY		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Fitzpatrick, Brian K. [R-PA-1]	R · PA		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Haaland, Debra A. [D-NM-1]	D · NM		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Harder, Josh [D-CA-10]	D · CA		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Hastings, Alcee L. [D-FL-20]	D · FL		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Hill, Katie [D-CA-25]	D · CA		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Jackson Lee, Sheila [D-TX-18]	D · TX		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Johnson, Eddie Bernice [D-TX-30]	D · TX		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Kaptur, Marcy [D-OH-9]	D · OH		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Katko, John [R-NY-24]	R · NY		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Kuster, Ann M. [D-NH-2]	D · NH		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Lawrence, Brenda L. [D-MI-14]	D · MI		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Lee, Barbara [D-CA-13]	D · CA		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Lowenthal, Alan S. [D-CA-47]	D · CA		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. McCollum, Betty [D-MN-4]	D · MN		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Meng, Grace [D-NY-6]	D · NY		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Moore, Gwen [D-WI-4]	D · WI		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Nadler, Jerrold [D-NY-10]	D · NY		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Omar, Ilhan [D-MN-5]	D · MN		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Pocan, Mark [D-WI-2]	D · WI		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Porter, Katie [D-CA-45]	D · CA		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Pressley, Ayanna [D-MA-7]	D · MA		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Raskin, Jamie [D-MD-8]	D · MD		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Rice, Kathleen M. [D-NY-4]	D · NY		Mar 5, 2019

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. Roybal-Allard, Lucille [D-CA-40]	D · CA		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Rush, Bobby L. [D-IL-1]	D · IL		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Schakowsky, Janice D. [D-IL-9]	D · IL		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Speier, Jackie [D-CA-14]	D · CA		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Stefanik, Elise M. [R-NY-21]	R · NY		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Tlaib, Rashida [D-MI-13]	D · MI		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Underwood, Lauren [D-IL-14]	D · IL		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Velazquez, Nydia M. [D-NY-7]	D · NY		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Wasserman Schultz, Debbie [D-FL-23]	D · FL		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Watson Coleman, Bonnie [D-NJ-12]	D · NJ		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Wild, Susan [D-PA-7]	D · PA		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Wilson, Frederica S. [D-FL-24]	D · FL		Mar 5, 2019
Resident Commissioner González-Colón, Jenniffer [R-PR-At Large]	R · PR		Mar 5, 2019
Rep. Ocasio-Cortez, Alexandria [D-NY-14]	D · NY		Mar 8, 2019
Rep. Brownley, Julia [D-CA-26]	D · CA		Apr 3, 2019
Rep. Pingree, Chellie [D-ME-1]	D · ME		Apr 3, 2019
Rep. Visclosky, Peter J. [D-IN-1]	D · IN		Apr 3, 2019
Rep. Beyer, Donald S., Jr. [D-VA-8]	D · VA		Apr 18, 2019
Rep. Blumenauer, Earl [D-OR-3]	D · OR		Apr 18, 2019
Rep. Lawson, Al, Jr. [D-FL-5]	D · FL		Apr 25, 2019
Rep. Smith, Adam [D-WA-9]	D · WA		May 14, 2019
Rep. Lujan, Ben Ray [D-NM-3]	D · NM		Jun 6, 2019
Rep. Delgado, Antonio [D-NY-19]	D · NY		Jun 13, 2019
Rep. McGovern, James P. [D-MA-2]	D · MA		Jul 30, 2019
Rep. Napolitano, Grace F. [D-CA-32]	D · CA		Jul 30, 2019
Rep. Lofgren, Zoe [D-CA-19]	D · CA		Sep 26, 2019
Rep. Neguse, Joe [D-CO-2]	D · CO		Oct 28, 2019
Rep. Grijalva, Raúl M. [D-AZ-3]	D · AZ		Jan 24, 2020
Rep. Khanna, Ro [D-CA-17]	D · CA		Jan 24, 2020
Rep. Levin, Andy [D-MI-9]	D · MI		Jan 24, 2020
Rep. Sewell, Terri A. [D-AL-7]	D · AL		Jan 24, 2020
Rep. Carson, Andre [D-IN-7]	D · IN		Jan 27, 2020
Rep. Johnson, Henry C. "Hank," Jr. [D-GA-4]	D · GA		Jan 27, 2020
Rep. Kilmer, Derek [D-WA-6]	D · WA		Jan 27, 2020
Rep. Garcia, Jesus G. "Chuy" [D-IL-4]	D · IL		Jan 30, 2020
Rep. Keating, William R. [D-MA-9]	D · MA		Jan 30, 2020
Rep. Kennedy, Joseph P., III [D-MA-4]	D · MA		Jan 30, 2020
Rep. Quigley, Mike [D-IL-5]	D · IL		Jan 30, 2020
Rep. Trahan, Lori [D-MA-3]	D · MA		Jan 30, 2020
Rep. Hayes, Jahana [D-CT-5]	D · CT		Feb 3, 2020
Rep. Sires, Albio [D-NJ-8]	D · NJ		Feb 3, 2020
Rep. Costa, Jim [D-CA-16]	D · CA		Feb 7, 2020

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. Escobar, Veronica [D-TX-16]	D · TX		Feb 7, 2020
Rep. Foster, Bill [D-IL-11]	D · IL		Feb 7, 2020
Rep. Jayapal, Pramila [D-WA-7]	D · WA		Feb 7, 2020
Rep. Veasey, Marc A. [D-TX-33]	D · TX		Aug 14, 2020
Rep. Barragan, Nanette Diaz [D-CA-44]	D · CA		Oct 23, 2020

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Committee on House Administration	House	Referred To	Mar 5, 2019
Education and Workforce Committee	House	Referred To	Mar 5, 2019
Financial Services Committee	House	Referred To	Mar 5, 2019
Judiciary Committee	House	Referred to	Apr 8, 2019
Oversight and Government Reform Committee	House	Referred To	Mar 5, 2019
Ways and Means Committee	House	Referred To	Mar 5, 2019

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Civil Rights and Liberties, Minority Issues

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
116 S 574	Related bill	Feb 27, 2019: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance.
116 S 575	Related bill	Feb 27, 2019: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Ending the Monopoly of Power Over Workplace harassment through Education and Reporting Act or the EMPOWER Act

This bill addresses policies and procedures related to claims of workplace harassment.

Specifically, the bill makes it an unlawful practice (with exceptions regarding certain settlement or separation agreements) for an employer to (1) enter into a contract with an employee or applicant, as a condition of employment, promotion, compensation, benefits, or change in employment status or contractual relationship, if that contract contains a nondisparagement or nondisclosure clause that covers workplace harassment; and (2) enforce, or attempt to enforce, a nondisparagement clause or nondisclosure clause that covers workplace harassment.

Under the bill, an employee or applicant retains any right they would otherwise have had to report a concern about workplace harassment to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and other specified agencies, regardless of whether they have signed a nondisparagement or nondisclosure clause. Employees or applicants also retain the right to pursue legal action regardless of signing such clauses.

The bill sets forth (1) enforcement powers of the EEOC and other entities, and the jurisdiction of U.S. courts, regarding workplace harassment; and (2) the applicable procedures and remedies for employees' claims.

The EEOC must (1) establish a confidential tip-line that supplements its process for submitting a charge of discrimination, and (2) provide for the development and dissemination of workplace training programs and information regarding workplace harassment.

The bill modifies the tax treatment of expenses and payments related to workplace harassment and employment discrimination.

Actions Timeline

- **Apr 8, 2019:** Referred to the Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties.
- **Mar 5, 2019:** Introduced in House
- **Mar 5, 2019:** Referred to the Committee on Education and Labor, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, Financial Services, House Administration, Oversight and Reform, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.