

GENERAL CONFUSION

AG HEALEY'S DEMANDS FOR PAY DATA REMAIN A MYSTERY

Even as pay-equity legislation was signed into law last week, there remains no indication of what Attorney General Maura Healey intends to do with the pay- and gender-data her office requested from some Massachusetts employers earlier this year.

The bill, which received unanimous approval from lawmakers, is intended to eliminate pay gaps between men and women for the same type of work. In the runup to the bill's passage, Healey's office sent letters to select employers asking them to provide employees' names, sex, titles and current salaries, among other information. Healey wanted the information to determine whether the employers were in compliance with an older pay-equity law, the Massachusetts Equal Pay Act, the letters said.

Lawyers have wondered what Healey will do with the data,



Maura Healey

especially considering their clients had never previously received such a letter under MEPA. Some have speculated the collection of the information was tied to the effort to get the pay-equity bill passed, though that appears not to be the case.

"The attorney general is in fact entitled to seek that information. What they intend to do with it remains to be seen. It's certainly possible it could be used for enforcement purposes," Fisher Phillips lawyer Amber Elias said.

A spokeswoman for Healey declined comment on the purpose of the demand letters. One of the letters was provided to the Business Journal with the name of its recipient redacted. The names of the companies that

received the letters were not immediately available.