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## *In-House Counsel*

### **Male In-House Lawyers Don't See Gender Wage Difference, Survey Finds**

Gender disparity is prevalent in many industries, but only 8 percent of male in-house counsel polled in a recent survey believe it exists in their industry, while almost half of women do.

The Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC) survey also found that 53 percent of the male respondents say they are adequately paid, while only 45 percent of females feel that way.

"It is sad and a little bit surprising to me that we're still" discussing this problem, Joel Stern, chief executive officer of the National Association of Minority and Women Owned Law Firms, told Bloomberg BNA. "We've got to start solving" it.

The ACC polled 1,889 in-house counsel in 53 countries for its first-ever report on corporate counsel trends, released June 13.

Some women feel they're more fairly compensated in a corporation when the analysis is based on compensation and the number of hours they expect to work, National Association of Women Lawyers President Leslie Richards-Yellen told Bloomberg BNA.

In other findings, the ACC survey said one in four female lawyers polled took extended leave, compared to one in 20 men.

The report also found that once women had been out of the workplace for at least a year, the difficulty they experienced in finding a new position jumped from 35 percent to 62 percent.

"These types of surveys are inflection points for people to think about what they want out of their lives," Richards-Yellen said.

**Salary Increases** More generally, the ACC and other recent surveys found that salaries for corporate counsel continue to rise.

According to a survey released June 15 by executive search firm BarkerGilmore, the median annual salary for corporate counsel increased 4.3 percent in 2016 across all industries, up 0.1 percent from the year before. The technology sector saw the greatest rise—4.9 percent.

BarkerGilmore, which polled 1,600 U.S. in-house attorneys, also found that 43 percent of respondents believe their compensation is below or significantly below their peers, compared to 44 percent the year before.

"The value of in-house counsel continues to increase as demonstrated by compensation increases," BarkerGilmore Managing Partner Bob Barker told Bloomberg BNA.

In-house attorneys are vital parts of their company's success, ACC Vice President and Chief Legal Strategist Amar Sarwal told Bloomberg BNA. Sarwal also said that in-house counsel have seen themselves as more valued by their companies over the last three to four decades.

However, the surveys also found that corporate counsel have no problem moving to another company. The ACC report found that 73 percent of those polled in the U.S. would consider a position at a different company for career advancement. Those who were considering new positions still planned to work as in-house counsel.

The BarkerGilmore report found that 41 percent of those polled would consider a new position in the next year due to compensation issues, up from 40 percent in 2016.

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