

Support Passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act

June 20, 2023

Dear Member of Congress:

The more than 100 undersigned organizations committed to closing gender and race-based pay gaps, advancing economic security for women, and promoting vigorous enforcement of anti-discrimination laws, strongly **urge you to support the Paycheck Fairness Act** (S. 728/H.R. 17).

Sixty years after the passage of the Equal Pay Act, sexist, racist pay gaps continue to persist, underscoring the need to strengthen the law and provide new tools to help ensure fair pay and challenge discrimination. Women working full-time, year round are typically paid only 84 cents for every dollar paid to men. The loss of 16 cents on the dollar adds up over a month, a year, and a lifetime. Based on this wage gap, women would lose nearly \$400,000 over the course of a 40-year career. When we compare the median earnings of all women who worked with the median earnings of all men who worked—regardless of how many hours or weeks they worked—the pay gap is even worse: women are typically paid just 77 cents for every dollar paid to a man. Women of color, who face both race and sex discrimination in the workplace, experience the most significant losses within this group. Black women are paid 64 cents for every dollar paid to a white, non-Hispanic man, Latinas are paid 54 cents, and Native women are paid just 51 cents. While Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) women make 80 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men, women in many AANHPI communities experience drastically wider pay gaps.

These losses directly harm women by limiting their ability to meet basic needs, plan for a financial emergency, or save for retirement, and reducing their total Social Security and pension benefits. And even when controlling for factors, such as education and experience, pay gaps persist, start early in women's careers, and contribute to a wealth gap that follows them throughout their lifetimes. These pay gaps can be addressed only if workers have the legal tools necessary to challenge discrimination and employers are provided with effective incentives and technical assistance to comply with the law.

The Paycheck Fairness Act would update and strengthen the Equal Pay Act of 1963 to ensure that it provides robust protection against sex-based pay discrimination. Among other provisions, this comprehensive bill bars retaliation against workers who voluntarily discuss or disclose their wages. It closes loopholes that have allowed employers to pay women less than men for the same work without any important business justification related to the job. It ensures women can receive the same robust remedies for sex-based pay discrimination that are currently available to those subjected to discrimination based on race and ethnicity. It prohibits employers from relying on salary history in determining future pay, so that pay discrimination does not follow women from job to job. And it also provides much needed training and technical assistance, as well as data collection and research.

The COVID-19 pandemic and systemic racism have exposed how the work performed primarily by women, and particularly Black and brown women, has long been and continues to be undervalued and underpaid, even as the rest of the country is newly recognizing the essential nature of this work. Three years into the pandemic, as women and their families continue to recover from massive job loss, face an ongoing care crisis, and navigate increasing restrictions on reproductive rights, it remains imperative that Congress help create an economy that works for everyone by ensuring that all women can work with equality, safety, and dignity, starting with pay equity.

It's time to take the next step toward achieving equal pay. We urge you to prioritize the Paycheck Fairness Act in the 118th Congress by pushing for passage of this legislation. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Meghan Kissell at the American Association of University Women at kissellm@aauw.org, Gaylynn Burroughs at gburroughs@nwlc.org, Michelle Feit at the National Partnership for Women & Families at mfeit@nationalpartnership.org, or Jessica Stender at Equal Rights Advocates at jstender@equalrights.org.

Sincerely,

10,000 Women Louisiana
9to5
A Better Balance
AFL-CIO
American Association of University Women
American Civil Liberties Union
American Federation of State County and
Municipal Employees
AnitaB.org
Black Women's Roundtable
Bozeman City for CEDAW Task Force
California Women's Law Center
Center for Advancement of Public Policy
Center for American Progress
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Coalition of Labor Union Women, AFL-CIO
Connecticut Women's Education and Legal
Fund (CWEALF)
ERA Coalition
Esperanza United (formerly Casa de Esperanza:
National Latin@ Network)
Family Values @ Work
Fayetteville Police Accountability Community
Taskforce
Feminist Majority Foundation
Gender Equality Law Center, Inc.
Independent Independent Women's Organization
of Greater New Orleans
Institute for Women's Policy Research
Jewish Women International
Jobs With Justice
Justice for Migrant Women
KWH Law Center for Social Justice and Change
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement
League of Women Voters of New Orleans
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human
Rights
Legal Aid at Work
Legal Momentum, The Women's Legal Defense
and Education Fund
Legal Voice

Louisiana Progress
Methodist Federation for Social Action
Michigan Pay Equity Network (P.E.N.)
Mississippi Black Women's Roundtable
MomsRising
National Network to End Domestic Violence
National Action Network
National Committee on Pay Equity
National Council of Jewish Women
National Domestic Violence Hotline
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project
National Employment Lawyers Association
National Immigration Law Center
National Institute for Workers' Rights
National Network to End Domestic Violence
National Organization for Women (NOW)
Baltimore Metro NOW
Baton Rouge, NOW
Brooklyn-Queens Chapter, NOW
California NOW
Central New York Chapter, NOW
Charlottesville NOW
Chicago NOW
Clean County NOW
Columbia Area NOW
FL0365 Pasco County NOW, Inc.
GLHS NOW Chapter
Greater Portland Chapter, NOW
Hollywood Chapter, NOW
Illinois NOW
Indiana NOW
Indianapolis NOW
KY 0040 Chapter, NOW
McHenry County, NOW
Montana Chapter, NOW
Montgomery County MD Chapter, NOW
Morris County NJ, NOW
New Jersey NOW
New York City, NOW
NE Indiana NOW
North Carolina NOW

Northern New Jersey NOW
Northwest Indiana NOW
Ohio NOW
Oregon NOW
Raleigh NOW
Rochester NOW
Shre Area NOW
Virginia NOW
Will County NOW
National Urban League
New Jersey Tenants Organization
Ohio NOW Education and Legal Fund
The Ohio Women's Public Policy Network
(WPPN)
Oxfam America
Philly CLUW
PowHer New York
Prosperity Now
Restaurant Opportunities Centers United
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Sexual Violence Prevention Association (SVPA)
Shriver Center on Poverty Law
Union for Reform Judaism
United Food and Commercial Workers
International Union
USOW
Women Employed
Women of Reform Judaism
Women's Rights and Empowerment Network
Women's Law Project
Workplace Fairness
YWCA Tri-County Area
YWCA USA
Zioness Movement