

## Vote Yes on Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 1338)

July 30, 2008

Dear Representative:

On behalf of a broad coalition of organizations that promote economic opportunity for women, we strongly urge you to **support the Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 1338)**. We further urge you to reject any weakening amendments, and to **vote no on any motion to recommit**.

The Paycheck Fairness Act, **which currently has 231 co-sponsors**, will strengthen the Equal Pay Act of 1963. This bill would be an important step in addressing the persistent wage gap between men and women by updating the Equal Pay Act – passed more than 45 years ago – and as a result improve that law’s effectiveness. The Paycheck Fairness Act would:

- Clarify acceptable reasons for differences in pay by requiring employers to demonstrate that wage gaps between men and women doing the same work are truly a result of factors other than sex.
- Deter wage discrimination by strengthening penalties for equal pay violations, and by prohibiting retaliation against workers who inquire about employers' wage practices or disclose their own wages. The bill’s measured approach would ensure that women can obtain the same remedies for pay discrimination as those subject to discrimination on the basis of race or national origin. We would collectively oppose any efforts to weaken such remedies, such as adding artificial caps on damages.
- Provide women with a fair option to proceed in a class action suit under the Equal Pay Act, and allow women to receive punitive and compensatory damages for pay discrimination.
- Clarify the establishment provision under the Equal Pay Act, which would allow for reasonable comparisons between employees to determine fair wages.
- Authorize additional training for Equal Employment Opportunity Commission staff to better identify and handle wage disputes.
- Aid in the efficient and effective enforcement of federal anti-pay discrimination laws by requiring the EEOC to develop regulations directing employers to collect wage data, reported by the race, sex, and national origin of employees.
- Require the U.S. Department of Labor to reinstate activities that promote equal pay, such as: directing educational programs, providing technical assistance to employers, recognizing businesses that address the wage gap, collecting wage-related data, and conducting and promoting research about pay disparities between men and women.
- Establish a competitive grant program to develop salary negotiation training for women and girls.

Women currently make, on average, only 77 cents for every dollar earned by men; the gap for women of color is even wider.<sup>1</sup> This wage disparity is not simply a result of women’s education levels<sup>2</sup> or life choices.<sup>3</sup> Further, this persistent wage gap not only impacts the economic security of women and their families today; it also directly affects women’s retirement security down the road. Now is the time for additional proactive measures to effectively address wage discrimination and eliminate loopholes that have hindered the Equal Pay Act’s effectiveness. **Again, we urge you to vote yes on the Paycheck Fairness Act, and oppose any weakening amendments and a motion to recommit.**

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Lisa Maatz, Director of Public Policy and Government Relations at the American Association of University Women (202/785-7720) or Jocelyn Samuels, Vice President for Education and Employment, at the National Women’s Law Center (202/588-5180).

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor and Statistics. August 2006. Annual Demographic Survey. [http://pubdb3.census.gov/macro/032006/perinc/new05\\_000.htm](http://pubdb3.census.gov/macro/032006/perinc/new05_000.htm) Accessed January 16, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. 1993/2003 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study.

<sup>3</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics. Employment Status of Women by Presence and Age of Youngest Child, Marital Status, Race, and Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity, 2004. <http://www.bls.gov/cps/wlf-table6-2005.pdf> Accessed December 21, 2006.

Sincerely,

9to5, National Association of Working Women  
American Association of University Women (AAUW)  
American Civil Liberties Union  
American Federation of Teachers  
American Humanist Association  
American Library Association  
Association for Gender Equity Leadership in Education (AGELE)  
Business and Professional Women/USA  
Buying Influence, Inc.  
Clearinghouse for Women's Issues  
Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW)  
Coalition of Religious Communities  
Equal Rights Advocates  
Equal Rights Alliance, Inc.  
Feminist Majority Foundation  
General Board of Church & Society, United Methodist Church  
Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America  
Hard Hatted Women  
International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW)  
Legal Momentum  
MomsRising.org  
Ms. Foundation for Women  
National Association of Commissions for Women  
National Center for Lesbian Rights  
National Committee on Pay Equity  
National Council of Jewish Women, Inc.  
National Council of Negro Women  
National Council of Women's Organizations  
National Education Association  
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund  
National Organization for Women  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National Women's Law Center  
National Women's Conference Committee  
NEXT STEP  
OWL The Voice of Midlife and Older Women  
Project IRENE  
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)  
The International Brotherhood of Teamsters  
The WAGE Project, Inc.  
USAction  
U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce  
Wider Opportunities for Women  
Women at Work  
Women Employed  
Women Work! The National Network for Women's Employment  
Women's Law Project  
Women's Voices. Women Vote.  
Women's Research & Education Institute (WREI)  
Women's Sports Foundation  
Women Under Forty PAC  
YWCA USA

9to5 Atlanta  
 9to5 Bay Area  
 9to5 Colorado  
 9to5 Los Angeles  
 9to5 Milwaukee  
 Alliance for the Status of Missouri Women  
 AAUW of Alabama  
 AAUW of Alaska  
 AAUW of Arizona  
 AAUW of Arkansas  
 AAUW of California  
 AAUW of Colorado  
 AAUW of Connecticut  
 AAUW of Delaware  
 AAUW of District of Columbia  
 AAUW of Florida  
 AAUW of Georgia  
 AAUW of Hawaii  
 AAUW of Idaho  
 AAUW of Illinois  
 AAUW of Indiana  
 AAUW of Iowa  
 AAUW of Kansas  
 AAUW of Kentucky  
 AAUW of Louisiana  
 AAUW of Maine  
 AAUW of Maryland  
 AAUW of Massachusetts  
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 AAUW of Minnesota  
 AAUW of Mississippi  
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 AAUW of Montana  
 AAUW of Nebraska  
 AAUW of Nevada  
 AAUW of New Hampshire  
 AAUW of New Jersey  
 AAUW of New Mexico  
 AAUW of New York  
 AAUW of North Carolina  
 AAUW of North Dakota  
 AAUW of Ohio  
 AAUW of Oklahoma  
 AAUW of Oregon  
 AAUW of Pennsylvania  
 AAUW of Rhode Island  
 AAUW of South Carolina  
 AAUW of South Dakota  
 AAUW of Tennessee  
 AAUW of Texas  
 AAUW of Utah  
 AAUW of Vermont  
 AAUW of Virginia  
 AAUW of Washington  
 AAUW of West Virginia  
 AAUW of Wisconsin  
 AAUW of Wyoming  
 Arizona Advocacy Network  
 Bell Policy Center  
 Boston College Women's Law Center  
 BPW/Arizona  
 BPW/Colorado  
 BPW/Florida  
 BPW/Maryland  
 BPW/Montana  
 BPW/Montgomery County  
 BPW/New Hampshire  
 BPW/North Dakota  
 BPW/Pennsylvania  
 BPW/Wisconsin  
 Alaska Federation of Business and Professional Women  
 Business and Professional Women's Clubs of Rhode Island  
 Hawaii Federation of Business and Professional Women  
 Massachusetts Federation of Business and Professional Women  
 Michigan Federation of Business and Professional Women  
 Minnesota Federation of Business and Professional Women  
 Nebraska Federation of Business and Professional Women  
 New York Federation of Business and Professional Women's Organizations  
 Oklahoma Federation of Business and Professional Women  
 State Federation of Business and Professional Women of New Jersey  
 Citizen Action/Illinois  
 Citizen Action/Michigan  
 Citizen Action/New Jersey  
 Citizen Action/New York  
 Citizen Action/Tennessee  
 Citizen Action/Wisconsin  
 Colorado Center on Law and Policy  
 Colorado Progressive Action  
 Colorado Public Employee Alliance-CWA  
 Connecticut Citizen Action Group  
 County and City of San Francisco, Department on the Status of Women  
 Democratic Women's Forum of San Francisco  
 Equal Pay Coalition NYC, a project of the New York Women's Agenda  
 Equality Maine  
 Florida Consumer Action Network  
 Georgia Rural Urban Summit

Iowa Citizen Action Network  
Iowa Commission on the Status of Women  
Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center  
Maine Civil Liberties Union  
Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence  
Maine People's Alliance  
Maine Women's Lobby  
Maine Women's Network  
Mainely Girls  
Missouri Progressive Vote Coalition  
Montgomery County Commission for Women  
National Association of Social Workers –  
    Maine Chapter  
National Council of Jewish Women – California  
National Council of Jewish Women – Connecticut  
National Council of Jewish Women – Virginia  
New Hampshire Citizens Alliance  
New Mexico Voices for Children  
NDPeople.org  
California, NOW  
Detroit, NOW  
Greater Bangor, NOW  
Greater New Orleans Chapter of NOW  
Iowa, NOW  
Kansas, NOW  
Los Angeles, NOW  
Massachusetts, NOW  
New York State, NOW  
New York City, NOW  
Northwest Suburban IL, NOW  
Orange County, NOW  
Oregon, NOW  
Ventura-Oxnard, NOW  
Vermont, NOW  
Virginia, NOW  
West Pinellas, NOW  
West Suburban Milwaukee Chapter, NOW  
Wisconsin, NOW  
Ocean State Action (Rhode Island)  
Oregon Action  
PathWaysPA  
Pay Equity Coalition of Minnesota  
Progressive Maryland  
Southwest Women's Law Center  
United Vision for Idaho  
Wage Project Maine  
Washington Community Action Network  
West Virginia Citizen Action Group  
Wisconsin Women's Network  
Women & Politics Institute, American University  
Women's Law Center of Maryland, Inc.  
Women's City Club of New York