

## Co-Sponsor and Support Swift Passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act

February 3, 2021

Dear Member of Congress:

As members of a broad coalition of organizations that promote economic opportunity for women and vigorous enforcement of antidiscrimination laws, we strongly urge you to co-sponsor and push for swift passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act as a top priority of the 117th Congress. Despite federal and state equal pay laws, gender pay gaps persist, and earnings lost to these gaps are exacerbating the financial effects of COVID-19, falling particularly heavily on women of color and the families who depend on their income. This legislation offers a much needed update to the Equal Pay Act of 1963 by providing new tools to battle pervasive pay gaps and to challenge discrimination.

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. Black women, Latinas, and other women of color are especially likely to be on the front lines of the crisis, risking their lives in jobs in health care, child care, and grocery stores; they are also being paid less than their male counterparts. At the same time, women in this country lost more than 5 million jobs in 2020; indeed, women accounted for 100% of the jobs lost in December 2020. The unemployment rate for Black women and Latinas remains exceptionally high. These high jobless numbers threaten to exacerbate gender wage gaps when women regain employment. We cannot build back an economy that works for everyone without ensuring that all women can work with equality, safety, and dignity, starting with pay equity.

There is no more fitting way to begin this session than by making real, concrete progress in ensuring all women receive fair pay. The Paycheck Fairness Act updates and strengthens 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.

Women are increasingly the primary or co-breadwinner in their families and cannot afford to be shortchanged any longer. Women working full-time, year-round are typically paid only 82 cents for every dollar paid to men. But for every dollar paid to their white, non-Hispanic male counterparts, Black women only make 63 cents, Native women only 60 cents, and Latinas only 55 cents. While Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) women make 87 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men, women in many AAPI communities experience drastically wider pay gaps. Furthermore, moms are paid less than dads. And even when controlling for factors, such as education and experience, the pay gaps persist and 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.

We recently commemorated the twelfth anniversary of the enactment of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. That vital law rectified the Supreme Court's harmful decision in *Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company*. The law helps to ensure that individuals subjected to unlawful compensation discrimination are able to have their day in court and effectively assert their rights under federal antidiscrimination laws. But the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, critical as it is, is only one step on the path to ensuring women receive equal pay for equal work. It's time to take the next step toward achieving equal pay. We urge you to prioritize the Paycheck Fairness Act in the 117th

Congress by co-sponsoring and urging swift passage of this legislation, taking up the cause of Lilly Ledbetter and all those who have fought for equal pay.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Kate Nielson, Director of Public Policy & Legal Advocacy at the American Association of University Women at 202.728.7617 or nielsonk@aauw.org, or Emily Martin, Vice President for Education & Workplace Justice at the National Women's Law Center at 202.588.5180 or emartin@nwlc.org.

Sincerely,

9to5

A Better Balance

AFCPE (Association for Financial Counseling & Planning Education)

All-Options

American Association of University Women (AAUW)

AAUW of Alabama

AAUW of Alaska (AAUW Fairbanks (AK) Branch)

AAUW of Arizona

AAUW of Arkansas

AAUW of California

AAUW of Colorado

AAUW of Connecticut

AAUW of Delaware

AAUW of District of Columbia (AAUW Washington (DC) Branch, AAUW Capitol Hill (DC) Branch)

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

AAUW of Michigan

AAUW of Minnesota

AAUW of Mississippi

AAUW of Missouri

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 Puerto Rico  
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

American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Unions (AFL-CIO)  
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees  
American Federation of Teachers  
AnitaB.org  
Association of Flight Attendants-CWA  
Bend the Arc Jewish Action  
California Women's Law Center  
Catalyst  
Center for American Progress  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)  
Center for LGBTQ Economic Advancement & Research  
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues  
Coalition of Labor Union Women  
    Philadelphia Coalition of Labor Union Women  
Community Health Councils  
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces  
Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF)  
Disciples Center for Public Witness  
Equal Pay Today  
Equal Rights Advocates  
Every Texan  
Family Forward Oregon  
Family Values @ Work  
Feminist Majority Foundation  
Futures Without Violence  
Gender Justice  
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters, USA-JPIC  
In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda  
Indiana Institute for Working Families  
Institute for Women's Policy Research  
Justice for Migrant Women  
KWH Law Center for Social Justice and Change  
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement  
Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
League of Women Voters of the United States  
Legal Aid at Work  
Legal Momentum, The Women's Legal Defense and Education Fund  
Legal Voice  
MANA, A National Latina Organization  
Methodist Federation for Social Action  
Mi Familila Vota

Michigan League for Public Policy  
MomsRising  
NAACP  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Center for Law and Economic Justice  
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 Employment Lawyers Association – Eastern Pennsylvania  
    National Employment Lawyers Association – Georgia  
National Network to End Domestic Violence  
National Organization for Women  
    Florida NOW  
    Illinois NOW  
    Indiana NOW  
    Jacksonville NOW  
    Kanawha Valley NOW  
    Maryland NOW  
    Monroe County NOW  
    Montana NOW  
    Northwest Indiana NOW  
    South Jersey NOW-Alice Paul chapter  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National WIC Association  
National Women's Law Center  
National Women's Political Caucus  
Native Women Lead  
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
New Jersey Citizen Action  
NewsGuild-CWA  
New York Women's Foundation  
North Carolina Justice Center  
People For the American Way  
PowHer New York  
Prosperity Now  
Reinventure Capital  
Restaurant Opportunities Centers (ROC) United  
Service Employees International Union  
Shriver Center on Poverty Law  
TIME'S UP Now  
U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce  
Union for Reform Judaism  
United State of Women  
WNY Women's Foundation  
Women and Girls Foundation of Southwest Pennsylvania  
Women Employed  
Women of Reform Judaism  
Women's Fund of Rhode Island  
Women's Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation

Women's Law Project  
Women's Media Center  
Women's Rights and Empowerment Network  
YWCA USA  
    YWCA Allentown  
    YWCA Arizona Metropolitan Phoenix  
    YWCA Billings  
    YWCA Butler  
    YWCA Central Alabama  
    YWCA Central Indiana  
    YWCA Central Maine  
    YWCA Central Virginia  
    YWCA Dayton  
    YWCA Duluth  
    YWCA Elgin  
    YWCA Genesee County  
    YWCA Greater Austin  
    YWCA Greater Baton Rouge  
    YWCA Greater Cincinnati  
    YWCA Greater Cleveland  
    YWCA Greater Portland  
    YWCA Greenwich  
    YWCA Hartford Region  
    YWCA Kalamazoo  
    YWCA Kauai  
    YWCA Kitsap County  
    YWCA Knoxville and the Tennessee Valley  
    YWCA Lower Cape Fear  
    YWCA McLean County  
    YWCA Metro Detroit - Interim House  
    YWCA National Capital Area  
    YWCA New Hampshire  
    YWCA North Central Indiana  
    YWCA Northern New Jersey  
    YWCA Oahu  
    YWCA Pierce County  
    YWCA Princeton  
    YWCA QUINCY  
    YWCA Sauk Valley  
    YWCA Seattle|King|Snohomish  
    YWCA South Hampton Roads  
    YWCA Southeastern Massachusetts  
    YWCA Southern Arizona  
    YWCA University of Illinois  
    YWCA Utah  
    YWCA Western New York  
    YWCA Wheeling  
    YWCA Yakima  
Zonta USA Caucus