

January 7, 2009

Vote Yes on Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and Paycheck Fairness Act

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of a broad coalition of organizations that promote full enforcement of the antidiscrimination laws and economic opportunity for women, we strongly urge you to pass expeditiously pay equity legislation that gives workers the tools they need to challenge pay discrimination against them: the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and the Paycheck Fairness Act.

In 2007, the Supreme Court made it virtually impossible for women and others subject to pay discrimination to go to court to vindicate their rights, holding that any challenges to pay discrimination must be filed within 180 days of an employer's initial decision to discriminate or be forever barred. The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act would overturn the Supreme Court's decision in *Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.*, and restore the long-standing interpretation of civil rights laws that employees can file pay discrimination claims within 180 days of each discriminatory paycheck they receive.

The Paycheck Fairness Act would deter wage discrimination by closing loopholes in the Equal Pay Act and barring retaliation against workers who disclose their wages. The bill strengthens the Equal Pay Act to ensure that it will provide effective protection against sex-based pay discrimination. Toward that end, it also allows women to receive the same remedies for sex-based pay discrimination that are currently available to those subject to discrimination based on race and national origin.

Ensuring that women receive equal pay for equal work is a critical component of any effort to stimulate the economy and to ensure self-sufficiency for them and their families. More than four decades after Congress outlawed wage discrimination based on sex, women continue to be paid, on average, only 78 cents for every dollar paid to men. This persistent wage gap can be addressed – and Congress' intent vindicated – only if women and all other workers are armed with the tools necessary to challenge discrimination against them. We therefore urge you to immediately enact the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and the Paycheck Fairness Act without amendment.

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

Sincerely,

9to5, National Association of Working Women

Atlanta 9to5 Working Women

9to5 Colorado

9to5 Milwaukee

9to5 Bay Area Los

Angeles 9to5

ACLU

Alliance for Justice

American Association of University Women

AAUW of South Dakota

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

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 Rhode Island
AAUW of San Jose
AAUW of South Carolina
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

A Better Balance: The Work and Family Legal Center
American Federation of Teachers
American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)
Department for Professional Employees (AFL-CIO)
Association for Women in Science
American Jewish Committee
Anti-Defamation League
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
BCN Consulting
Business and Professional Women/USA
Arkansas Federation of Business and Professional Women
Business and Professional Women/Arizona
Business and Professional Women/Florida
Business and Professional Women/Iowa
Business and Professional Women/Kansas
Business and Professional Women/Maine
Business and Professional Women/New Jersey.
Business and Professional Women/Rhode Island
Business and Professional Women/Texas
Business and Professional Women/Virginia
Business and Professional Women of New York State
Maryland Business and Professional Women
Massachusetts Federation of Business and Professional Women
Michigan Federation of Business and Professional Women
Minnesota State Federation of Business and Professional Women
Missouri Federation of Business and Professional Women Clubs, Inc
Montana Business and Professional Women
Nebraska Federation of Business and Professional Women
New Mexico Federation of Business and Professional Women
Ohio Federation of Business and Professional Women
Oregon Business and Professional Women
Pennsylvania Federation of Business and Professional Women

Tennessee Federation of Business and Professional Women
Utah State Business and Professional Women
Center for Inquiry
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Coalition for Equal Pay (south SF Bay Area)
Coalition of Labor Union Women
Equal Rights Advocates
Federally Employed Women
Feminist Majority
Finger Lakes Women's Bar Association
First Impressions Gender Equity Club at the University of Hawaii at Manoa
General Federation of Women's Clubs
GloriaFeldt.com: SpeakingUp
Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America
Hard Hatted Women
Idaho Women Lawyers, Inc.
Iowa Commission on the Status of Women
Law Students for Reproductive Justice
Legal Momentum
Maine Women's Lobby
Mexican American Legal Defense & Educational Fund (MALDEF)
MHB Consulting, LLC
Middle East and Africa Democracy and Human Development (MEADAD)
MomsRising
Montgomery County Commission for Women
NAACP Colorado Springs, Colorado Branch
National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
National Association of Commissions for Women
National Association of Mothers' Centers and its MOTHERS Initiative
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health (NPWH)
National Capital Area Union of Retirees (NCAUR)
National Committee on Pay Equity
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of Negro Women
National Council of Women's Organizations
National Education Association
National Employment Lawyers Association
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association
National Organization for Women
National Partnership for Women and Families
National Women's Conference Committee
National Women's Law Center
National Women's Political Caucus
New York Women's Agenda
OWL - The Voice of Midlife and Older Women
People For the American Way
Project Kid Smart

Sisters in the Building Trades Inc.
Southwest Women's Law Center
The Church Women United Board
The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
The WAGE Project
Union for Reform Judaism
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
Washington Office Of Public Policy, Women's Division, General Board of
Global Ministries
Wider Opportunities for Women
Women Employed
Women's City Club of New York
Women's Committee of 100
Women's Division
Women's Information Network
Women's Law Center of Maryland Inc.
Women's Law Project
Women of Reform Judaism
Women Under Forty PAC
Women's Voices. Women Vote Action Fund
Women Work! The National Network for Women's Employment
YWCA USA