

National Organization for Women

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Dear Senator,

The National Organization for Women, with members and supporters all across the nation and in your state, urges you to support S.1843, the Fair Pay Restoration Act, sponsored by Senators Kennedy and Specter. The House version of the bill (H.R. 2831, the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act) passed this summer and it is imperative that the Senate do the same. S.1843 must come to the Senate floor sometime this fall if we hope to restore wage discrimination protections guaranteed in the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Please sponsor and support this important civil and women's rights restoration act which will rectify the Supreme Court's May ruling in *Ledbetter v. Goodyear*. The Court's 5-4 decision in effect sanctioned lower pay for women and gave the green light to employers to discriminate as long as they weren't caught in the first six months after the onset of their illegal actions.

The Court's *Ledbetter v. Goodyear* conclusion was a blow to workplace equality and completely misconstrued the intent and interpretation of Title VII regarding when a pay discrimination claim is filed in a timely fashion. It severely limited the ability of a worker protected by Title VII to file a wage discrimination suit—allowing only 180 days to file the claim from when the pay discrimination **first began**. Since inquiring about or sharing salary and wage comparisons is not only hard to do but is strongly discouraged by employers, this ruling makes it extremely difficult for workers to uncover pay discrimination within the mandated 180 days of its first occurrence.

We are sure that you have heard from opponents of fair pay for women, including the President, and they will tell you that the bill eliminates the 180 days and that discriminatory pay decisions made long ago will be dragged back into court, burdening the courts and the employers with lawsuits that are very costly. This was not true before the Court's decision and will not be true when Congress restores the longstanding and workable precedent for handling pay discrimination. This legislation will NOT cost employers millions of dollars in lawsuits if they pay fair and equal wages to their workers. It will only cost them if they underpay and discriminate and hope that the women won't notice or can't find out about the wage discrepancies. More importantly, one discriminatory paycheck often compounds to impact a woman over the course of her career, even when she changes jobs. Your constituents and all women deserve better.

The Fair Pay Restoration Act is an important step toward remedying the Supreme Court's restrictive ruling and your support for this bill will truly demonstrate your dedication to equal pay for women. We look forward to hearing from you and working with you to support the economic rights of women and families in the future.

Sincerely,

President