

# National Organization for Women

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Dear Senator:

The National Organization for Women (NOW), with members all across the country and in your state, strongly encourages you to co-sponsor the Paycheck Fairness Act (S.182) and add your name to the growing list of supporters who believe that it's time to end the wage gap that exists between women and men in the workplace. Your constituents and women workers everywhere are looking to you to support a woman's right to get paid what she is worth and to be free of wage discrimination. Thank you if you are already a sponsor and I hope you will encourage your colleagues to join you in support of the Paycheck Fairness Act.

In light of the tragic circumstances of today's economy, many women workers are the sole support of their families and their ability to receive fair wages may be all that stands between their families and economic hardship. Last month Congress passed and the President signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Restoration Act which was an important beginning in our work to end wage discrimination and guarantee fair pay. The Paycheck Fairness Act, which passed the House resoundingly on January 9, 2009 with 256 bi-partisan supporters, is the next step for the Senate. This important bill to help guarantee women's work equality should go to the President's desk for signing before this session of Congress is over.

Women working full-time year round currently average less than 78 cents for every dollar earned by men. A wage disparity exists even when controlling for women's education levels or life choices. This persistent and pernicious gap has a major impact on the economic stability of women and their families, directly affects women's ability to support themselves and their family and threatens women's future retirement security.

The Paycheck Fairness Act addresses this persistent wage gap between men and women, updates the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and improves the law's effectiveness. In addition, S.182 instructs the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to develop guidelines for employers to collect wage data on their workers and report this by race, sex, and national origin. The bill also ensures that women can obtain the same remedies in court as those who have been subjected to discrimination based on race or national origin.

The Paycheck Fairness Act also requires the U.S. Department of Labor to reinstate long held practices and activities that promote equal pay such as: presenting educational programs; providing technical assistance to employers; positively recognizing businesses that address the wage gap; collecting wage-related data; conducting and promoting research about pay disparities between men and women; and establishing a competitive grant program to help girls and women learn how they can get full-time employment and get paid what they are worth. I look forward to hearing from you about Paycheck Fairness. Thank you so much if you are already a sponsor. If you are not, I hope to see your name as a supporter of the bill in the near future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kim Gandy' in a cursive script.

Kim Gandy, President