



ACTION ALERT

Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 1338 and S.766) Take Action Now! Close the Wage Gap!

The Paycheck Fairness Act was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives last week by a final vote of 247 to 178. The bill now will be taken up by the Senate after the August congressional recess. The bill could help women make real progress toward reducing the 23 percent differential in pay between women and men. Women continue to be paid only 77 cents to the dollar paid to their male counterparts. Women of color suffer additional pay discrimination: Latinas are paid on average 57 cents and African-American women 68 cents, compared to the dollar paid to men.

The legislation would amend the Equal Pay Act of 1963 to strengthen penalties for equal pay violations, enhance data collection from employers so that patterns of sex discrimination in pay can be identified, and more directly place the responsibility on employers defending wage differences to show that the differences are due to factors other than sex. A particularly important provision establishes the right of wage discrimination plaintiffs under the Equal Pay Act to receive compensatory and punitive damages, a remedy that is available in most other anti-discrimination statutes.

The Paycheck Fairness Act is a step forward to close the wage gap between men and women. There are 69 million women in the workforce, and wage discrimination hurts almost all of our nation's families and disadvantages women in nearly every occupational categories. Wage discrimination lowers total lifetime earnings, reducing women's benefits from Social Security and pension plans.



Take action now! Contact your Senators and ask them to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act! (Senate Bill Number 766). Call the Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121 to get contact information for your Senators.

To read the Paycheck Fairness Act visit the Library of Congress web site at <http://thomas.loc.gov/> and type in bill number S.766

Read *The Book of Resolutions 2004* #191. The Status of Women pg. 490.

Sources:

National Organization of Women, *Stop the Economic Crisis for Women Workers*, NOW Actions e-mail, July 28, 2008.

National Organization of Women, *House Passes Paycheck Fairness Act: All Eyes on Senate to Pass Legislation to End Unequal Pay Statement of NOW President Kim Gandy*, Press Release, August 1, 2008.

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