America’s Women and the Wage Gap

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Nationally, on average, a woman holding a full-time, full-year job is paid $37,118 per year while a man is paid $48,202. This means that, overall, women are paid 77 cents for every dollar paid to men, amounting to a yearly wage gap of $11,084 between full-time working men and women.

The wage gap varies by state and metropolitan area. In Wyoming, for example, women are paid 67 cents for every dollar paid to men, while in Vermont, women are paid 87 cents for every dollar (see state chart, right). The wage gap persists in the country’s largest cities. It is greatest in the Seattle area, where women are paid just 73 cents for every dollar paid to men (see metropolitan area chart, next page).

For details on the wage gap by state and metropolitan area, visit www.NationalPartnership.org/Gap.

What Does the Wage Gap Mean for America’s Women?

If the wage gap were eliminated, a woman working full time, year round would have enough money for approximately:

- 89 more weeks of food (1.7 years’ worth);
- More than seven more months of mortgage and utilities payments;
- More than one year of rent; or
- More than 3,000 additional gallons of gas.

Women & Families Cannot Afford Discrimination and Lower Wages

Women are increasingly responsible for the economic security of their families.
More than 15.1 million households in the United States are headed by women. And more than 31 percent, or 4,743,666 of those households, have incomes that fall below the poverty level.

Congress Must Pass the Paycheck Fairness Act

The economic security of women and families is put at risk when women are paid less than men. The Paycheck Fairness Act would strengthen the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and help women fight wage discrimination.

The Paycheck Fairness Act would:
- Prohibit employers from retaliating against workers who discuss salaries with colleagues;
- Put gender-based discrimination on equal footing with other forms of wage discrimination – such as race or national origin – and allow women to take legal action to pursue damages;
- Require employers to prove that pay differences exist for legitimate, job-related reasons;
- Create a negotiation skills training program for women and girls;
- Recognize employers for excellence in their pay practices;
- Provide businesses, especially small ones, assistance with equal pay practices; and
- Enhance the ability of the Department of Labor and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to investigate and enforce pay discrimination laws.

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3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.


