Pennsylvania Women and the Wage Gap

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In Pennsylvania, on average, a woman who holds a full-time job is paid $37,089 per year while a man who holds a full-time job is paid $47,956 per year. This means that women in Pennsylvania are paid 77 cents for every dollar paid to men, amounting to a yearly gap of $10,867 between men and women who work full time in the state.¹

Nationally, women who hold full-time, year-round jobs are paid, on average, just 77 cents for every dollar paid to men.² African American women are paid 64 cents and Latinas are paid just 55 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men.³

What Does the Wage Gap Mean for Pennsylvania Women?

As a group, women who are employed full time in Pennsylvania lose approximately $19,072,074,015 every year due to the wage gap.⁴ If the wage gap were eliminated, a working woman in Pennsylvania would have enough money for approximately:

- 83 more weeks of food (1.6 years' worth);⁵
- Eight more months of mortgage and utilities payments;⁶
- 14 more months of rent;⁷ or
- 2,963 additional gallons of gas.⁸

Pennsylvania Women and Families Cannot Afford Discrimination and Lower Wages

Pennsylvania women are responsible for the economic security of their families.⁹

- 597,610 households in Pennsylvania are headed by women. About 30 percent of those households, or 180,478 households, have incomes that fall below the poverty level.¹⁰

Eliminating the wage gap would provide much-needed income to women whose salaries are of critical importance to them and their families.

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 for 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.

3 Ibid.
10 U.S. Census Bureau. (2012). American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2011, Geographies: All States within United States, Table DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics. Retrieved 22 March 2013, from http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_11_1YR_DP03&prodType=table (To determine whether a household falls below the poverty level, the U.S. Census Bureau considers the income of the householder, size of the family, number of related children, and, for 1-and 2-person families, age of householder. The poverty threshold is $18,123 for a single householder and two children under 18.)