



July 13, 2010

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

**New Polling Data Indicates Overwhelming Support for
the Paycheck Fairness Act**

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Dear Senator:

On behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), its over half a million members, fifty-three affiliates nationwide, and countless additional supporters and activists, we urge you to support and seek swift passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act (S. 182). American families cannot wait any longer to bring home fair pay. At the beginning of this Congress, the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed the Paycheck Fairness Act with bipartisan support. The bill, now with 40 co-sponsors in the Senate, is poised for passage.

The Paycheck Fairness Act provides a much needed update to the Equal Pay Act of 1963 – a law that has not been able to achieve its promise of closing the wage gap because of limited enforcement tools and inadequate remedies. Specifically, the Paycheck Fairness Act would:

- require employers to demonstrate that wage differences between men and women doing the same work have a business justification and stem from factors other than sex;
- prohibit retaliation against workers who inquire about their employers' wage practices or disclose their own wages, while also protecting certain confidential wage information;
- level the playing field by ensuring that women can obtain the same remedies as those subject to discrimination on the basis of race or national origin; and
- authorize additional training for EEOC staff to better identify and handle wage disputes and require the U.S. Department of Labor to provide technical assistance to employers and reinstate the collection of certain wage-related data.

There should be little doubt that additional improvements are still necessary. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, women who work full time still earn, on average, only 77 cents for every dollar men earn.¹ African American women were paid only 61 cents and Latinas, only 52 cents, as compared to white men.

¹ See U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2009 Annual Social and Economic Supplement, Table PINC-05: Work Experience in 2008 – People 15 Years Old and Over by Total Money Earnings in 2008, Age, Race,

According to a recent, nationwide poll, support at home for the Paycheck Fairness Act is overwhelming. In the poll of registered voters, **84% said they support** a new law that would provide women more tools to get fair pay in the workplace.² High levels of support for this bill held true regardless of political party, gender, race, ethnicity, or regions of the country. For example, **77% of Republicans support it, along with 91% of Democrats and 87% of Independents.** Large majorities of **both men and women support the law as well – 81% and 87% respectively.** Perhaps this is because so many women today are breadwinners and families are affected by the fact that women are not bringing home the wages they deserve. Due to rising unemployment rates, families need to bring home every dollar they rightfully earn – making pay equity even more necessary, not only to families' economic security, but also to the nation's economic recovery.

This bill is a measure that the American public – across the country and across parties – overwhelmingly supports. And in this tough economic climate, there is no better time than now to support fair pay legislation. We strongly urge you to support and seek swift passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act (S. 182), without weakening amendments. American voters have spoken and they deserve a fair paycheck.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Deborah J. Vagins at (202) 715-0816 or dvagins@dcaclu.org.

Sincerely,



Laura W. Murphy
Director



Deborah J. Vagins
Legislative Counsel

Hispanic Origin, and Sex, available at http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032009/perinc/new05_000.htm (last visited January 14, 2010).

² For more poll results, see Paycheck Fairness Act Coalition 2010 Polling Data, available at <http://www.aclu.org/womens-rights/paycheck-fairness-act-coalition-polling-data-graphs-2010>.