

NEW JERSEY STATE AFL-CIO

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June 7, 2012

Dear Members of the Senate Labor Committee:

Re: Please Support Gender Pay Equity Legislative Package

- SR-50 (Sweeney / Weinberg): Urges Congress to Pass the "Paycheck Fairness Act"**
- S-1930 (Weinberg / Greenstein): Requires Employers to Post Certain Notices**
- S-1933 (Sweeney / Weinberg): Concerns Discrimination in Compensation**
- S-1935 (Weinberg / Greenstein): Concerns the Disclosure of Certain Employee Information**

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO supports the above bills and thanks the sponsors for their leadership on the issue of pay fairness for women. To summarize the wage gap in a nutshell: women must work more than three months longer to earn the same money as men, because women's wages still average just 77 percent of what men earn. Because of the wage gap, since 1960, the real median earnings of women have fallen short by more than half a million dollars compared to men. Furthermore, minority women face even a larger wage gap. Compared to white men, African American women make 70 cents on the dollar (African American men make 74 cents) and Hispanic or Latina women make about 60 cents (Hispanic men make almost 66 cents).

The union movement in America has been part of leading the charge to ensure pay equality for women and all workers. The "union difference" allows for the bargaining of enforceable wage standards which leads to a 30 percent increase in average pay for women who are in a union compared to those who are not. Collective bargaining agreements are a great equalizer that effectively remedies gender pay disparities.

The drastically changing dynamics of the American family structure continues to strengthen pro-women and pro-worker policy initiatives. Today's dual income earner environment has become the norm, not the exception for America's working families, and the AFL-CIO has sought to educate lawmakers to embrace policies that allow females equal pay in the workplace – which is what this package of legislation seeks to accomplish. We respectfully ask for your support.

Sincerely,

Charles Wowkanech
President

Laurel Brennan
Secretary-Treasurer

CW:LB:jn
OPEIU:153