



Representative Louise M. Slaughter
Chairwoman, House Committee on Rules
Representing New York's 28th District

P R E S S R E L E A S E

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rep. Slaughter Joins Congressional Women To Rally For Fair Pay

Washington, DC – Congresswoman Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28), Chairwoman of the House Committee on Rules, today joined Speaker Pelosi, Senator Clinton, Lilly Ledbetter, and many other Members of Congress at a rally to discuss Democrats' commitment to ensure equal pay for working people without regard to gender. The women legislators came together in support of enacting the Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 1338) and the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act (H.R. 2831).

“Simply put, working women deserve equal pay for equal work,” said Rep. Slaughter.

Forty-five years ago President John Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act to address the practice of paying women workers less than men. At that time women earned 59 cents for each dollar earned by a man. Over the last four and a half decades, the wage gap between men and women has narrowed, but working women still earn only 77 cents for every dollar earned by men.

“This is not just a women’s issue – it’s a family issue,” Slaughter continued. **“A woman’s income is essential to a family’s ability to pay for basic necessities. At a time when we are struggling to rebuild our economy, we cannot allow this pervasive wage gap to stand in the way of women working to provide for their children.”**

Last year, the Supreme Court dealt working women a blow when it decided Ledbetter v. Goodyear. In that case, Lilly Ledbetter worked as a supervisor for a Goodyear Tire plant and discovered, after nearly two decades, that she had been paid less than all her male coworkers. Ms. Ledbetter brought an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission complaint against Goodyear. A jury awarded her nearly \$225,000, but in a 5-4 decision, the Supreme Court ruled that Ms. Ledbetter could not collect the wages Goodyear had cheated her of. Under the ruling, in order to enforce her right to be paid fairly, Ms. Ledbetter would have had to file a wage-discrimination complaint within 180 days of receiving her first paycheck, though it is unlikely that she, or any other American worker, would be aware of any pay discrepancies at that time.

“It is imperative that women have a legal remedy to enforce equality,” Slaughter concluded. **“I am proud to have stood with my colleagues today in strong support of legislation that will ensure that hardworking women across this nation are compensated fairly.”**

BACKGROUND

The Paycheck Fairness Act

The Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 1338) takes affirmative steps to eliminate gender-based wage discrimination and ensure that women earn what men earn for doing the same job. The legislation adheres to the current work standards under the Equal Pay Act but would reform the procedures for enforcing the law.

Specifically, the bill strengthens the Equal Pay Act by providing more effective remedies to women who are not being paid equal wages for doing equal work. The bill also prohibits employers from retaliating against employees who share salary information with their co-workers.

Rep. Slaughter is a cosponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act which has been referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor

The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act

The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act (H.R. 2831) rectifies the Supreme Court's decision in Ledbetter v. Goodyear, by restoring the longstanding interpretation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act – that each paycheck that results from a discriminatory decision is itself a discriminatory act that resets the clock on the 180-day period within which a worker must file.

Rep. Slaughter is a cosponsor of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act which was passed by the House of Representatives last summer. This critical legislation is currently under consideration in the Senate.

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