

# January 27, 2009 - Rep. Slaughter Applauds Enactment of Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act

FOR  
IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, January 27, 2009

Congresswoman  
Slaughter Applauds Enactment of Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act

Historic Legislation is the First Major Bill Signed by President  
Obama

Washington, DC - Congresswoman Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28), Chairwoman of the House Committee on Rules, today applauded the enactment of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, a historic law to reverse a Supreme Court ruling that makes it difficult for Americans to pursue pay discrimination claims. The bill is the first major piece of legislation President Obama signed into law.

This law applies to workers who file claims of discrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, or disability.

"Simply put, a woman should not be paid less because she's a woman," said Congresswoman Slaughter. "This historic law is about restoring fundamental fairness to the workplace. No one should be treated differently because of their gender, the color of their skin, or their religious beliefs."

Despite claims from critics, the Congressional Budget Office estimated in 2007 that the legislation will not lead to an onslaught of costly new litigation. [Click here for the CBO estimate.](#)

"Especially during these tough economic times when too many workers are seeing their jobs and wages slashed, we've got to make sure that all Americans are paid fairly for their hard work," Slaughter concluded. "This law is a shining testament to the commitment of this new Congress and new Administration to rebuild our economy and strengthen our middle class."

## BACKGROUND ON LEDBETTER V. GOODYEAR

Lilly Ledbetter worked for nearly 20 years at a Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. She sued the company after learning that she was paid less than her male counterparts at the facility, despite having more experience than several of them. A jury found that her employer had unlawfully discriminated against her on the basis of sex.

However, the Supreme Court said that Ledbetter had waited too long to sue for pay discrimination, despite the fact that she filed a charge with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as soon as she received an anonymous note alerting her to pay discrimination.

While Ledbetter filed her charge within 180 days of receiving discriminatory pay, the court ruled that, since Ledbetter did not raise a claim within 180 days of the employer's decision to pay her less, she could not receive any relief. Under this Supreme Court decision, employees in Ledbetter's position would be forced to live with discriminatory paychecks for the rest of their careers. The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act reverses this Supreme Court decision.

###