

Support Senator Murray's amendment funding the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's implementation of the EEO-1

June 22, 2016

Dear Senator:

As organizations committed to equal pay and equal opportunity in the workplace, we urge you to support Senator Murray's amendment to the FY 2017 Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations bill. The measure would provide funding for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to implement a rule supplementing the information collected through the Employer Information Report (EEO-1) to include pay data from many employers. By collecting pay data, the EEOC can better uncover pay discrimination and target enforcement resources to help ensure that all Americans enjoy the fair and level playing field that is the basis for economic security for all. This is particularly important because many victims of pay discrimination are unaware that they are being paid less than their male coworkers, and so are unable to challenge the discrimination.

Our strong support for Senator Murray's amendment and the improved EEO-1 data collection is buttressed by the clear and convincing data that the gender pay gap is a pernicious problem that undermines the economic security of families in this country. As it currently stands, women who work full-time typically are paid about 79 cents for every dollar a full-time male worker is paid.¹ Over a lifetime of work (47 years), the total estimated loss of earnings of women compared to men is \$700,000 for a high school graduate, \$1.2 million for a college graduate and \$2 million for a professional school graduate.² It's also important to remember that the pay gap does not affect all women equally. Women of color, older women, and moms experience an even larger pay gap. These statistics have real world consequences for women, families, businesses and the economy.

Although the discrimination associated with the pay gap has persisted for decades, access to robust data can help address the problem today. Shining a light on existing pay practices and gathering wage data will give the EEOC, experts, and employers the information they need to better address the problem. Data exposes trends in hiring, paying, and promoting employees, which can inform appropriate interventions. It can reveal sex segregated jobs, a lack of women and people of color in upper management, and disparate salaries, benefits, or bonuses. Once these issues are apparent, businesses can analyze and remedy any gaps.

Earlier this year, the EEOC, in coordination with the Department of Labor, proposed revising the EEO-1 to collect pay data from larger employers. The new proposal will cover more than 63 million employees, and the data collected will provide critical insights into the pay gap based on gender, race and ethnicity. Allocating funding for this endeavor will provide the EEOC with the support necessary to investigate allegations of pay discrimination and better enforce existing law. It is time to make real progress in closing the pay gaps that have hurt women and their families for far too long.

I urge you to support Senator Murray's amendment to fund the EEOC in their efforts to close the gender pay gap. For more information, please contact Lisa Maatz of the American Association of University Women at maatzi@aauw.org or 202-785-7720.

Sincerely,

9to5, National Association of Working Women
9to5 California
9to5 Colorado
9to5 Georgia
9to5 Wisconsin
African American Ministers In Action (AAMIA)
American Association of University Women (AAUW)
American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)
Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
Catalyst
Coalition of Labor Union Women
Equal Pay Today! Campaign
Equal Rights Advocates
Feminist Majority
Institute for Science and Human Values
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
MALDEF (Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund)
Make it Work Campaign
NAACP
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Employment Law Project
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund
National Organization for Women (NOW)
National Partnership for Women and Families
National Women's Law Center
PowHer New York
UltraViolet
U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce
Women Employed
Women of Reform Judaism
Women's Law Project
Women's Voices. Women Vote Action Fund

¹ American Association of University Women (2016). The Simple Truth about the Gender Pay Gap. Washington, DC: AAUW. http://www.aauw.org/files/2016/02/SimpleTruth_Spring2016.pdf.

² National Committee on Pay Equity. (2014). *The Wage Gap Over Time: In Real Dollars, Women See a Continuing Gap*. www.pay-equity.org/info-time.html.