



**WASHINGTON BUREAU · NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE**

1156 15<sup>TH</sup> STREET, NW SUITE 915 · WASHINGTON, DC 20005 · P (202) 463-2940 · F (202) 463-2953

E-MAIL: WASHINGTONBUREAU@NAACPNET.ORG · WEB ADDRESS WWW.NAACP.ORG

March 25, 2019

The Honorable  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**RE: NAACP STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE IMMEDIATE PASSAGE OF H.R. 7, THE  
*PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT***

Dear Representative ,

On behalf of the NAACP, our nation's oldest, largest and most widely-recognized grassroots-based civil rights organization, I strongly urge you to support and vote in favor of H.R. 7, the *Paycheck Fairness Act*. This critical legislation would update and strengthen the Equal Pay Act of 1963, which mandated that employers pay equal wages to men and women who perform substantially the same work. The *Paycheck Fairness Act* closes loopholes in the *Equal Pay Act* which have diluted its effectiveness in combating unfair and unequal pay. While the *Equal Pay Act* has helped to narrow the wage gap between men and women in our workforce, significant disparities remain and must be addressed.

Especially in today's economy, more women work outside of the home and their paycheck is a necessary part of their households' resources. Yet all too often women are forced to raise their families on incomes lower than that of male colleagues performing the same jobs. According to 2018 data, women in the United States are typically paid 80 cents for every dollar paid to men. The median annual pay for a woman who holds a full-time, year-round job is \$41,977 while the median annual pay for a man who holds a full-time, year-round job is \$52,146 – a difference of \$10,169 per year. The statistics are even worse for women of color. African-American women make only 61 cents, and Hispanic women only 53 cents, for every dollar earned by white, non-Hispanic men. These gaps translate into a loss of almost \$24,000 a year for African-American women and almost \$28,500 annually for Hispanic women.

The *Paycheck Fairness Act* is a responsible, steady yet aggressive bill. It will help remedy this inequity and close this unacceptable gap. In short, the legislation will protect women and families across America by: protecting against retaliation for discussing salaries with

colleagues; prohibiting employers from screening job applicants based on their salary history or requiring salary history during the interview and hiring process; requiring employers to prove that pay disparities exist for legitimate, job-related reasons; providing plaintiffs who file sex-based wage discrimination claims under the *Equal Pay Act* with the same remedies as are available to plaintiffs who file race- or ethnicity-based wage discrimination claims under the 1964 *Civil Rights Act*; removing obstacles in the *Equal Pay Act* to facilitate plaintiffs' participation in class action lawsuits that challenge systemic pay discrimination; and creating a negotiation skills training program for women and girls.

I again urge you to do all you can to see that this important legislation is enacted as quickly as possible so that women can begin to have some parity for a day's work. This in turn will help hard working American women, their children and their families gain the economic stability they deserve. Please support the *Paycheck Fairness Act* and work to eliminate this unacceptable gap in pay. Should you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at my office at (202) 463-2940.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hilary O. Shelton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Hilary O. Shelton  
Director, NAACP Washington Bureau &  
Senior Vice President for Policy and Advocacy