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S. CON. RES. 31

Recognizing the duty of Congress to meet the needs of working women.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 25, 2026

Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. PADILLA, and Ms. DUCKWORTH) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Recognizing the duty of Congress to meet the needs of
working women.

Whereas the Congress recognizes its obligation to guarantee equal protection of the law to all workers;

Whereas this obligation requires the Congress to safeguard workers from unequal treatment on the basis of real or perceived sex, gender, or nonconformity to norms or stereotypes thereof;

Whereas working families are working paycheck to paycheck and deserve a quality, affordable life, which can only be made possible by addressing the needs of the approximately 75,000,000 women in the workforce;

Whereas recent executive and administration actions have caused disproportionate harm to women in the broader rollback of workplace rights, freedoms, and protections;

Whereas women comprise nearly half of the Nation's workforce, and are essential to the economic stability, growth, and prosperity of the United States, and make indispensable contributions across every sector of the economy, serving as leaders in education, health care, public service, caregiving, and other vital industries;

Whereas persistent wage disparities, loopholes in section 6(d) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (commonly known as the "Equal Pay Act of 1963") (29 U.S.C. 206(d)), occupational segregation, workplace discrimination, and gender-based violence and harassment continue to disproportionately burden working women, particularly women of color;

Whereas recent progress toward pay parity and gender equity has been undermined by deliberate, coordinated opposition, including legislative, administrative, and judicial actions weakening civil rights enforcement, removing workplace protections, limiting access to essential health care, and destabilizing programs that support working families;

Whereas the administration has specifically targeted for elimination such Federal programs which advance gender equity in the Nation and abroad;

Whereas actions of the President have threatened to eliminate the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor, which was established by Congress in 1920 and is the only Federal agency tasked with advancing economic opportunity for working women and which, for more than

100 years, has concretely worked to improve the wages and working conditions for women across the Nation;

Whereas the targeted elimination of equal opportunity obligations under apprenticeship programs of the Department of Labor has undermined women's pathways to high-paid careers in the trades traditionally dominated by men;

Whereas the rescission of the "Enforcement Guidance on Harassment in the Workplace" of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has created intentional confusion and left women vulnerable to harassment in the workplace;

Whereas reductions in staffing, funding, and enforcement capacity at Federal agencies charged with protecting workers' rights and enforcing civil rights laws have weakened oversight of workplace discrimination, harassment, wage theft, and retaliation;

Whereas women are disproportionately represented in public sector employment, and cuts to public programs and services disproportionately threaten women's employment, wages, and retirement security;

Whereas the administration has undertaken reckless mass layoffs which gutted Federal agencies with majority-women workforces, including the Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of the Treasury, and Department of Housing and Urban Development;

Whereas not only are women of color and immigrant women overrepresented in care work, but the critical caregiving services women provide are often otherwise taken on as unpaid labor by women;

Whereas the lack of Federal actions to create a robust, well-paid care industry harms women’s economic opportunity and directly exploits some of the most vulnerable women;

Whereas the administration has unjustly sought to push Federal contractors, grant recipients, and even private employers to abandon efforts to promote gender and racial equity at work;

Whereas the administration has sought to erode workers’ ability to form unions and collectively bargain for their rights, who organized as such have won a narrower gender pay gap;

Whereas, consequently—

(1) data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate volatility in women’s labor force participation in 2025, with more than 455,000 women exiting the workforce in the United States and the steepest declines among mothers of young children, especially Black mothers;

(2) unemployment among women, especially Black women, has increased under the Administration, with Black women’s unemployment greater than 7 percent; and

(3) the wage gap between women and men has increased for 2 consecutive years, highlighting the compounded effects of the policy failures described herein;

Whereas women continue to face barriers to economic advancement, and disproportionate caregiving responsibilities, all of which are exacerbated by the cost of living crisis and rising costs of housing, health care, childcare, food, and education; and

Whereas Congress, the first branch of the United States Government, has a duty to act decisively to advance the rights and freedoms of working women in face of these barriers: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives*
2 *concurring), That Congress—*

3 (1) recognizes an affirmative duty to ensure
4 women have equal opportunity within the workforce,
5 as a prerequisite for economic security, democratic
6 participation, shared prosperity, and full participa-
7 tion in public life;

8 (2) recognizes that the workforce of the Nation
9 is stronger, more innovative, and more competitive
10 when women are able to contribute and lead across
11 all industries;

12 (3) affirms its commitment to economic pros-
13 perity for all, including—

14 (A) equal pay for equal work;

15 (B) pay transparency;

16 (C) workplaces free from discrimination;

17 (D) workplace safety standards and regu-
18 lations designed to protect the health of the Na-
19 tion's workers;

20 (E) comprehensive and accessible health
21 care, including reproductive health care;

1 (F) affordable, high-quality childcare and
2 early education;

3 (G) paid family and medical leave;

4 (H) paid sick days;

5 (I) predictable scheduling and fair labor
6 standards; and

7 (J) access to affordable housing, education,
8 and workforce development opportunities;

9 (4) affirms its commitment to ensuring that all
10 women, regardless of race, immigration status, lan-
11 guage, or occupation, are able to work with dignity,
12 free from violence, harassment, discrimination, retal-
13 iation, and abuse;

14 (5) recognizes the value of all work, especially
15 domestic and part-time work, and recognizes its obli-
16 gation to ensure that such work is dignified with fair
17 pay, benefits, protections, and working conditions;

18 (6) condemns actions and policies that weaken
19 civil rights enforcement, undermine workplace pro-
20 tections, reduce access to health care and essential
21 services, or otherwise threaten the economic security
22 of working women;

23 (7) commits itself to restoring and strength-
24 ening Federal agencies that combat discrimination
25 in the workplace, including the Equal Employment

1 Opportunity Commission and the Office of Federal
2 Contract Compliance Programs;

3 (8) reaffirms its commitment to ensuring all
4 people can live a life with dignity by raising wages,
5 including by raising the Federal minimum wage, and
6 eliminating tipped and subminimum wages;

7 (9) reaffirms its commitment to expanding ac-
8 cess to high-paying jobs across gender lines by
9 strengthening programs that dismantle occupational
10 segregation;

11 (10) recognizes the right of every worker to join
12 a union, free from interference and intimidation, and
13 bargain collectively for fair wages and working con-
14 ditions;

15 (11) calls upon Federal, State, and local gov-
16 ernments, employers, labor organizations, and com-
17 munity institutions to work collaboratively to ensure
18 that all working women have the opportunity to
19 thrive and be free from harassment and discrimina-
20 tion; and

21 (12) declares that addressing the immediate
22 needs of working women is essential to the pros-
23 perity of the United States.

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