

citizen action to call attention to the global crisis of climate change. Marchers from Rhode Island, from California, from all across our country, from different organizations, from different industries—a patchwork of America—will be there to demand responsible leadership in the fight against carbon pollution. I will be among them.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, what is the current business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in a period of morning business.

PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, in just a few minutes we are going to have a procedural vote on the Paycheck Fairness Act. If we truly believe women and men are equal and should be paid equally, this ought to be an overwhelming vote.

The Senate women held a press conference after the last vote. The Republicans gave the first procedural vote so we were able to get to this point, but now we have to have 60 votes in order to move forward with an actual vote on the Paycheck Fairness Act.

We all know what this vote is about. It is very simple. It is about women in America having the same opportunity for success as their male counterparts. No one should be paid less just for being a woman.

This issue was brought to us front and center by Lilly Ledbetter, who was a manager at a Goodyear tire plant in the South and who discovered just by happenstance that although there were five managers doing the same job—she and four men—she was getting considerably less money.

To make a long story short, the courts were stacked against her. At the end of the day, Lilly Ledbetter was told by the Supreme Court that she was too late—she didn't know about this; it took her a long time to know about it—therefore she had no case. We fixed that problem, and we said: No more. We are not going to put a statute of limitations because someone may never find out about this unfair situation for many years and they shouldn't be disqualified from justice.

But now we have more problems. We have testimony of people being harassed simply because they want to know whether they are getting paid fairly. I am so grateful to our colleague Senator MIKULSKI from Maryland for introducing the Paycheck Fairness Act which will help close the wage gap.

We may say: Is there truly a wage gap? Yes, there is. Women get paid 77

cents for every dollar made by a man for the same work. That is not every woman. But when we average it all, that is what she gets. In terms of a yearly pay, it is \$11,000. I think we ought to look at this \$11,000 less a year. What could we buy for \$11,000? One year of groceries, in many places a year of rent, in many places a year of daycare or a used car or community college.

What does this mean? It means that because the woman is not getting paid fairly, her family suffers, whether in the quality of housing or their food or the quality of daycare, the quality of their car, and certainly the ability of that woman to get an education and move up the scale.

Looking at it from a yearly standpoint I think is important, but I asked my staff: Let's look at it over a lifetime and what is the loss to this woman and her family in a lifetime. Almost one-half million dollars—\$443,000—in a woman's lifetime if she gets 77 cents instead of a full dollar. What could she do with that? She could pay off one or two mortgages for that, send three kids to the University of California or buy 8,000 tanks of gas. What we don't say here is you need more security, and economic security today, which is so critical. Thanks to science, we are living longer and we know it gets more expensive to live.

If I were to tell one of my Republican friends on the other side that somebody came up to a woman, knocked her on the head and took half a million dollars from her and stole it, they would be horrified and they would remedy it. They would bring in the law. Well, I am asking them to simply vote for the Paycheck Fairness Act. Just vote for it. Make sure women in this country earn what they deserve to earn.

The wage gap not only hurts our families, it hurts our economy. If you add it all up, it is \$200 billion a year in income that would be spent at the grocery, that would be spent at the gas station, that would be spent on vacation, that would be spent on local restaurants or in better housing.

In the history of our Nation we have had a lot of fights before over the issue of discrimination. We know you cannot discriminate on pay because of race, disability, or age. What we are saying is you shouldn't be able to discriminate based on your gender. It is wrong. I would say if it were reversed, I would be standing here fighting for the men. It is not right. People have to be paid based on the work they do, and if the work they do is similar to the work of a man, as in the case of Lilly Ledbetter, they should be paid the same.

What the Mikulski legislation does is it prohibits employers from retaliating against an employee who shares information with their coworkers. Right now if you are around the cooler of your corporation and somebody says: Oh, my God, I cannot afford to get a babysitter for my child, I need a raise,

and somebody says: Well, what do you make? And they say: I make X. Believe me, you can be fired for asking those questions. It is wrong. We have seen it happen. We want to make sure if there is a disparity in pay that it is warranted. Sure, if a woman is doing less than a man in a different job, of course that is not the same. We are saying if you do the same work, you have got to get paid the same.

We have hundreds of personal stories from all over this great Nation from people who have faced pay discrimination. I have many of these stories from California. One of them is a woman from my State who had an identical advanced degree as her husband, and she landed the exact job as her husband, but they were at different work-sites. Her husband was offered \$5,000 more in starting salary for the same job with the exact same resume—same job, the woman gets paid \$5,000 less.

Then there is a health care worker in Long Island. She discovered she had been earning \$10 an hour less than her colleagues with the exact experience. When she brought this up to her superiors, which you would expect her to do—you have got to fight for yourself. Don't we tell people that? Stand up, have respect, but ask the right questions. So she brought it up to her superiors. She was reprimanded. She was reprimanded and told not to discuss any type of wage gap.

Then there is a female employee from a major corporation in Florida. She was told when she was hired that if she disclosed her salary to other workers, that was grounds for dismissal. So you have somebody who is well trained. She is great. Then you are talking to your friends in the workplace, you mention your salary. She was told in advance that this is grounds for dismissal.

This bill is a major step in the right direction. I call on my Republican friends—we don't need many of you—five, is that right—six, if everyone is here. We need a handful. Stand with women, stand with families, stand for children, stand for equality, stand for justice, stand for what is right. Don't play games with this. Don't take the side of a boss who is exerting all kinds of pressure on a woman to tamp down her salary. I think clearly if we do this together tonight—and I always remain hopeful—if we do this together tonight, what we are going to see is an America that is fair, an America that is just when it comes to our women.

I am really glad one of our colleagues is here to discuss this from her perspective. You know, my kids would say to me, "Mom, this is a no-brainer."

This is not complicated, equal pay for equal work. We stand for that as Democrats, and we are going to keep on fighting for it. Tonight is that moment in time when we will see whether our Republican friends stand with us to give a fair shot to the women in this country—a fair shot—or they will block us as they have done before. I

hope maybe they will see the light tonight. I don't think anything I have said will influence them, but I hope it might, because I do think it is in their interests as well as the interests of the women in this Nation to stand united with the Democrats on this: equal pay for equal work, fairness and justice to the women in this Nation. They deserve it.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the importance of closing the pay gap for women, and I thank my colleague from California, Senator BOXER, who has been working on this issue on the front line for so long as a leader on the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act to help us get that done and as a leader again.

I am a cosponsor on this bill and I urge my colleagues to join me in support of the Paycheck Fairness Act. People deserve a fair shot at the American dream. People deserve a fair working wage. That is why we need to raise the minimum wage. Equal work should get equal pay, and that is why we need to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act.

I wish to thank the dean of the Senate women, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, for leading this effort for equal pay for equal work in the passage of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and keeping the focus on the need to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act.

In 2009, we passed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act to make sure that workers who face pay discrimination based on gender, race, age, disability, religion, or national origin have access to the courts. In doing so we restored the original intent of the Civil Rights Act and the Equal Pay Act. Now it is time to prevent that pay discrimination from happening in the first place.

Women have made big strides in this economy. Women are getting advanced degrees. They are starting new businesses. They are leading major corporations. The Fortune 500 now has 24 women CEOs. Twenty-four out of five hundred there is still a lot of work to do, but that is so much better than where we were decades ago. Now we have a record 20 women in the Senate. Yet despite the progress we have made and all the gaps we have closed, women still make less money than men do.

The pay gap has real consequences for American families in our entire economy. Two-thirds of today's families rely on the mother's income entirely or in part, and in more than one-third of families the mother is the main breadwinner. But women only earn more than men in exactly 7 of the 534 occupations listed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. That is only seven occupations, and I know there is disagreement about what the pay disparity is, if it is just based on other factors. But the truth is when you look at the list of the occupations, in only seven do women make more than men.

As Senate Chair of the Joint Economic Committee, I released a report

showing how this pay disparity affects women's financial security, because I think a lot of times people are very focused on the here and now, what that means the wage differential, and what that means in the workplace. This report shows that lower wages impact women all throughout their working lives, and these lower lifetime earnings translate into less security and retirement.

You have the fact that women live longer but yet they have less money to begin with. Women live longer than men on average and are more likely to spend part of their retirement on their own because they live longer. So women actually need to have more money for their years in retirement. According to our report, the average annual income—this is average annual income for women aged 65 and older—is about \$11,000 less than it is for men. That is \$11,000 less each year to buy groceries, to pay heating bills, to be able to see grandchildren.

Lower lifetime earnings result in lower retirement benefits. Retirement security is often described as the three-legged stool—Social Security, pension benefits, and personal savings. A woman's Social Security check is 78 percent of a man's check on average. Those are the facts. Again, it is about 80 percent of that of a man. The median income from company or union pension for women is 53 percent lower than for men. Finally, lower earnings also affect the ability of women to contribute to their own retirement plan. Women have less income to put aside and are less able to save money for their own retirement. They have smaller paychecks, they have smaller Social Security checks, smaller pension checks, and less savings in their retirement plans. They live longer and they worry all the time that they are going to outlive their savings. All this contributes to less retirement security.

The pay gap is an especially large burden on women in the sandwich generation, juggling jobs, juggling their kids, and looking out for their aging parents at the same time. When two-thirds of the caregivers for aging parents are women, we need to make sure they have financial security.

So make no mistake, the pay gap impacts women. But my point today is that it impacts women through the entire arc of their lives, and, if anything, it impacts older women who for now decades have been making less money in an even greater way than it impacts them when they are younger.

Around 70 percent of our economy is consumer-based. If we don't have fair pay, if we don't have enough pay for middle-income families, then they are not going to buy things whether they are younger or older. That is yet another argument for not only having adequate minimum wages but also for addressing this pay gap. This legislation builds on the promises of the Equal Pay Act and the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and gives women new

tools and protections they need to guard against pay discrimination.

I want to get this done, but I also want to work on the issue of long-term savings and how we can make it easier for women and men to save their money when they are working at jobs so they can help themselves. As we move forward, as we are living longer—which is great—we know it is going to get harder and harder.

It was the late Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota who famously said, "We all do better when we all do better." I still believe that is true, and so do my colleagues who have joined me today. We need to be focused on how we can help more women share in the economic dream because if we do, we will all be doing better.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Paycheck Fairness Act.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 2199, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Tom Harkin, Barbara A. Mikulski, Benjamin L. Cardin, Richard J. Durbin, Maria Cantwell, Mazie Hirono, Kay R. Hagan, Jack Reed, Patty Murray, Dianne Feinstein, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Barbara Boxer, Sheldon Whitehouse, Amy Klobuchar, Charles E. Schumer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on S. 2199, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.