

NATIONAL EQUAL PAY DAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Hawaii for her leadership on this issue, and I will be yielding the floor to the lead sponsor of today's effort.

Our Nation is built on the belief that anyone who works hard should have the opportunity to achieve the American dream. Yet there are women across this country who are doing the same job as their male colleagues and being paid less. That is why today, on National Equal Pay Day, I stand with my fellow Senators to renew our efforts to ensure equal pay for equal work.

Fifty years after the passage of the Equal Pay Act, women still only earn 79 cents on every dollar paid to a man. This wage gap is even worse for women of color. African-American women who work full time make only 60 cents for every dollar paid to white males. Hispanic women earn only 55 cents.

Women are paid less even when factors such as age, education, occupation, and work hours are taken into consideration. In nearly every occupation in our country, women's median earnings are less than their male competitors. It is no different for women in my State of Illinois. The median earning for Illinois women is \$10,000 less than the median earning for men. While African-American women in Illinois make slightly more than the national average, Hispanic women are paid even less—48 cents on the dollar. Think about that. Hispanic women are making less than half the earnings of their male coworkers who have similar levels of education and do the same job. This isn't right, and it isn't fair.

The gender wage gap translates into nearly \$11,000 less in median earnings for women each year and over \$430,000 in lost wages over a lifetime. Now that women are the sole or primary breadwinners in 4 out of 10 families, this means less money for food, housing, and education. It is no wonder the poverty rate for female heads of households continues to be disproportionately high.

This disparity follows women into their retirement since retirement savings and Social Security are based on income earned. In Illinois, the average weekly Social Security benefit for female retirees is 77.3 percent of the average for Illinois males per week. While female retirees receive less, on average, compared to men under Social Security, women tend to live longer and spend more on medical care, forcing them to do more with less.

What would happen if we closed this wage gap? Amazing things. Sixty percent of women would earn more if they were paid the same wages as their male counterparts, nearly two-thirds of single working mothers would receive a pay increase, and the poverty rate for women would be cut in half. It would mean fewer families in poverty and fewer families would need safety net programs. Equal pay for equal work

would also mean women and their families would have more to spend on basic goods and services, and that is good for our economy.

So what do we have to do to close this wage gap? We can pass the Paycheck Fairness Act introduced by my colleague Senator MIKULSKI and my friend and colleague Senator MURRAY. Employers still maintain policies that punish employees who voluntarily share salary information with coworkers. This makes it nearly impossible for employees to find out whether they are being paid fairly.

This bill would provide women the same remedies for pay discrimination as people who are subjected to discrimination based on race and national origin. It would also close loopholes in current law that still permit retaliation against workers who disclose their wages.

The Paycheck Fairness Act would build on the success of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which clarified the 180-day statute of limitations for filing a lawsuit on pay discrimination that resets with each affected paycheck. This was the first bill signed into law by President Obama in 2009. The Senator from Maryland remembers that day because President Obama signed the bill, took the first pen that he used to sign it, and handed it to the Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Yes.

Mr. DURBIN. I remember that because I stood there and thought: That is entirely appropriate that a Senator who has dedicated her life to this kind of fairness and equality for women at work would receive the first pen from the first bill signed into law by this new President.

My Republican colleagues: Why aren't you with us on this issue? Don't you agree that your daughter should be paid the same as your son for doing the same work? It is a basic issue of fairness. It shouldn't have anything to do with party labels, so we invite you to join us. This should not be a partisan issue at all. Certainly for women at work, it is not partisan. It is just a matter of fairness. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I come to the floor to join my colleagues in calling for equal pay for equal work for women.

I just left the President of the United States. He is right up the street at the Sewall-Belmont House. This is the home of the National Woman's Party in which so much organizing and strategizing took place to get women the right to vote. The President is there to declare that building a national monument to commemorate the tremendous work that was involved in getting suffrage, under the Antiquities Act, and that is his right to create that.

It is not only the building we want to preserve. It is not only the records of

the battle for suffrage that we want to preserve and be able to display. It is what it stands for: the fact that women are included fully in our society.

We had to fight every single day in every single way to be able to advance ourselves. Even when the men were in Philadelphia writing the Constitution, thinking great thoughts and doing great deeds, Abigail Adams was back in New England running the family farm, keeping the family together, and she wrote John a letter saying: Don't forget the ladies because if you do, we will ferment our own revolution.

In our country, we call revolutions social movements where ordinary people organize and mobilize to accomplish great deeds to move democracy forward. It took us over 150 years to get the right to vote in 1920. We are coming up on the anniversary of suffrage, but it is not only that we got the right to vote, it is what that right to vote means. We wanted to be able to participate fully in our society. We wanted to be able to exercise our voice in terms of choosing leaders who will choose the right policies. Along the way, we have been advocating those policies.

In 1963, working with the President, who was committed to civil rights, Lyndon Johnson, the equal pay for equal work act was passed as part of a great step forward in three major civil rights bills. We thought we had settled the issue, but, no, 50 years later we have only gained 19 cents—19 cents. At that rate, it will take us until 2058 to get equal pay for equal work. That is not the way it should be. We need to make sure we eliminate the barriers and impediments that allow this to keep happening.

When we women fight for equal pay, we are often sidelined, redlined, pink-slipped, harassed, or intimidated. We are often confronted with: Why are you doing this? And then we are often harassed for doing it.

People may say: Senator BARB, didn't you take care of that when you passed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act in 2009. The Lilly Ledbetter legislation, of which I am so proud, has kept the courthouse doors open by changing the statute of limitations, but now we need to pass legislation to end the loopholes that are often strangleholds on women getting equal pay in the first place.

I have legislation pending called the Paycheck Fairness Act. That Paycheck Fairness Act does three things. First of all, it stops retaliation for even sharing pay information in the workplace. Right now, if you ask, you are forbidden to tell, or get fired. If you ask, you are forbidden to tell, or get fired, or if you are a man working side by side with a woman and you want her to know that as a nurse, as a computer software engineer, what your pay is, and there is an opportunity, she could get fired and he could get fired. This is wrong.

We also want to stop employers from using any reason to pay women less,

such as he has a better education. Use the same education for the same job. We are willing to compete. We are out there. More women are in college. More women are Phi Beta Kappas. More women are getting ahead.

Then we heard: He has to be paid more because he is the breadwinner. What are we, crumbs? If he wins the bread, we want to be winners too. Very often it is women in the marketplace who are now either the sole breadwinner or also a significant breadwinner, and the men or the partner they love says: We want you to get equal pay for equal work as well.

So we don't want to hear: He is the breadwinner. We don't want the crumbs anymore. We want to be paid equal pay for equal work. We also want punitive damages for women who are discriminated against. Backpay alone is not a strong enough deterrent.

I want my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to know they have ideas. One of my colleagues spoke on the floor earlier today. I have such admiration for her. She is a fine Senator, and she agrees with the thrust of the press conference we had. We have faced this in the past, where we share the same goal, but we differ on means. My means, I must say, are the way forward. These means are the way forward because they solve the problems.

Of course, we will sit down and talk, have conversations, and see what we can do, but at the end of the day, we face this issue: It costs more to be a woman. Women pay more for everything. Women pay more in medical costs than men, given the same age and the same health status. Women pay a significant amount of money for childcare. Guess what. Women get charged more for dry cleaning. We have to pay more for our blouses being cleaned than men to have their shirts washed and pressed.

We are tired of being taken to the cleaners. We want equal pay for equal work. Whether we are U.S. Senators, whether we are nurses or executive assistants or others, we want equal pay for equal work.

We stand with the women's soccer team. They kick the ball around, but we are tired of being kicked around. So give us equal pay for equal work. Pass the Mikulski effort to get equal pay for equal work. I think we can then move forward. Why should our women go to the Olympics winning the gold, when they don't get paid the gold? So it is time for a change, time for a difference, and time for something we can do.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I wish to say a special thank-you to Senator MIKULSKI for her terrific leadership on all of this.

Today is Equal Pay Day. By the sound of it, one would think it is some sort of historic holiday commemorating the anniversary of a landmark

day that our country guaranteed equal pay for women, but that is not what it is about—not even close—because in the year 2016, at a time when we have self-driving cars and computers that fit on our wrists, women still make only 79 cents for every \$1 a man makes, and we are still standing in the U.S. Congress debating whether a woman should get fired for asking what the guy down the hall makes for doing exactly the same job.

So why do we recognize April 12 as Equal Pay Day? It took the average woman working from January 1 of last year until today to make as much as the average man made in 2015. That means she had to work an extra 3½ months in order to make what a man made last year, and that means, once again, she starts the year in a hole.

Equal Pay Day isn't a national day of celebration. It is a national day of embarrassment.

We hear a lot about how the economy is improving, and there is good news to point to. Unemployment is under 5 percent, GDP continues to rise, the stock market is up, but too many families across the country feel like the game is rigged against them. They work hard, they play by the rules, and they still struggle to make ends meet. Here is the thing: They are right. The game is rigged against working families, and pay discrimination is part of that.

For women, it has been a one-two punch in the gut. For decades, wages have flattened out for American workers, and for women the wage gap just compounds that problem. If we closed both the productivity wage gap and the gender wage gap from 1979 to 2014, women's median hourly wages would be 70 percent higher today.

Even though we have solid data, the Republicans in Washington refuse to act. Heck, they would rather spend their time trying to defund Planned Parenthood health clinics and cut women's access to birth control than do anything—anything at all—to give working women a raise.

So, yes, the game is rigged when women earn less than men for doing the same work. It is rigged when women can be fired for asking how much the guy down the hall makes for doing the same job. It is rigged when women have to choose between healthy pregnancies and getting their paychecks. It is rigged when women can get fired just for requesting a regular work schedule to go back to school or get a second job. It is rigged when women earn less their whole lives so that their Social Security checks are smaller and their student loans are bigger. The game is rigged against women and families, and it has to stop.

I am standing with my colleagues today. I am standing with women and friends of women all over the country to demand equal pay for equal work. It is 2016—not 1916—and it is long past time to eliminate gender discrimination in the workforce. This is about economics, but it is also about our val-

ues. It is about who we are as a people and what kind of country we are trying to build for both our sons and our daughters.

Today, we recognize Equal Pay Day, and we fight today because we don't want to have to recognize it year after year after year in the future.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today on Equal Pay Day to stand up and speak out about an issue that impacts women and families in every State across this great country. I rise to give voice to the fact that there is paycheck inequality for working women across this country, and it is time that we do something about it.

Working women make up over 50 percent of our workforce, and they are working harder than ever to get ahead. But far too many are barely getting by, and far too many women and children are living in poverty. In Wisconsin, the economy is lagging behind other States. Household incomes are falling and communities across our State are experiencing job loss and layoffs. In fact, recent reports have concluded that poverty in Wisconsin has reached alarming levels.

The least we can do is to level the playing field and give women a fair shot at getting ahead, because they deserve equal pay for equal work. So I am proud to join several of my colleagues today to deliver a call for action to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act.

I would like to share the story of Shannon. Shannon is a single mother of three from Two Rivers, WI. She is working hard to support her family. In order to help her family get ahead, Shannon has continued her education to advance her career as an interpreter in a school. But she faces the grim reality that women teachers are often paid less than their male counterparts.

It is not just teaching. When we look at men and women working equivalent jobs across different industries, women are making less than their male counterparts across the country. This paycheck inequality is holding women back, and it is holding our entire economy back. Closing the gender pay gap would give Shannon and her family more financial freedom to better deal with the daily issues that working moms face. Whether it is an unexpected car problem or children outgrowing their clothing and their shoes, whether it is help to pay off student loan debt or the ability to save a little bit of their paycheck to ensure that their kids have a chance for a higher education, working families across America need paycheck fairness to ensure they have a fair shot at getting ahead.

Millions of American women get up every day to work hard for that middle class dream—a good job that pays the bills, health care coverage you can rely on, a home that you can call your own,

and a secure retirement. But instead, gender discrimination in pay is holding women and their families back.

Let's pass the Paycheck Fairness Act and strengthen families and our economy by providing working women with the tools they need to close the gender pay gap. By taking action, we will show the American people our commitment to building an economy that works for everyone, not just those at the top.

Before I yield, I wish to take a moment to thank and recognize the senior Senator from Maryland, BARBARA MIKULSKI, for her tremendous leadership on this issue. It has been an honor to serve alongside such a champion for women and families, and I am looking forward to continuing this particular fight together and winning this fight together.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, let me first thank Senator BALDWIN for her comments. I agree with her statement, and I am also grateful for the leadership of the senior Senator from Maryland and the leadership Senator MIKULSKI has shown on gender issues. The paycheck fairness legislation is just a recent example of her extraordinary leadership throughout her career on gender equity issues.

I particularly wanted to be here not only to say how proud I am of Senator MIKULSKI but also to state that the Paycheck Fairness Act is not about women. It is about families, about our economy, and about fairness. It is about American values. It affects everyone in America. We all should be personally engaged in making sure paycheck fairness becomes law. To this Senator, it is outrageous that a woman has to work 5 days at the same work that a man works in 4 days for the same pay. That is inherently unfair and needs to be corrected. The Paycheck Fairness Act would do that.

I note that today is Equal Pay Day, which basically reflects how long a woman has to work—basically without getting a paycheck—in order to get paid for the same amount of work as a man does in a year.

As the Presiding Officer knows, as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, this Senator has the privilege of being the ranking member on the committee. One thing we look at is how other countries deal with basic rights. One of those rights is how they treat their women. One of the barometers for determining how well a country does is how well they are treating women. If they treat women well, they are generally doing much better.

The truth of the matter is, in many cases women do better in investments than men. They invest in children, families, and economic growth, whereas men are more likely to invest in war. We see much more economic

growth where women are treated fairly in other countries.

It is an important value for America. We have promoted gender equity issues in our foreign policy, our development assistance, and in our diplomacy. But for us to be effective globally, we first need to take care of our issues at home.

The Paycheck Fairness Act would do exactly that. It would deal with the issue of fairness in the workplace in America. We are not where we need to be. Everybody talks about the fact that women aren't paid as much; and that is true. But if you happen to be a minority, it is even worse. We need to take care of this for the sake of the American economy, for our values, et cetera.

This Senator has introduced legislation that would allow us to pick up the ratification of the equal rights amendment so that we could have in the Constitution of the United States fairness with no gender discrimination. This would be a lot easier. We only need three States in order to ratify it and to become a part of our Constitution. The late Justice Scalia noted accurately that there is nothing in the Constitution that requires discrimination against women; but there is nothing in the Constitution that protects discrimination based upon gender. We can do a better job with fundamental changes.

What we can do in this Congress now is to take on paycheck fairness. That can get done in this Congress and can be effective this year and can be the legacy of this Congress. I would urge my colleagues: Let's do this. We all talk about gender equity issues. With the bill that is pending on paycheck fairness, we can act and we can act now. We can make a major change in American policy that will not only be fair to women but will be fair to all Americans and allow our economy to grow.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my esteemed colleague from Maryland, who is here with a number of other people to talk about the need to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act to make sure that we end once and for all paycheck discrimination against women.

I think the American people believe very strongly in fairness, equal treatment, and a level playing field for everyone, because these are core American values. I think that is why people find it shocking and unacceptable that women in the United States continue to be denied equal pay for equal work.

More than half a century ago, President Kennedy signed into law the Equal Pay Act, yet today wage discrimination continues as an ugly reality across our Nation. Women earn only about 79 cents for every \$1 men earn. It is a disparity that exists at all levels of education, in nearly every in-

dustry, across hundreds of occupations, from elite professionals to everyday blue-collar workers. There are complex factors that contribute to the gender pay gap, but according to a new study by the Joint Economic Committee, as much as 40 percent of the pay gap can be attributed to outright discrimination.

Probably, most people who have watched TV in the last couple of weeks have seen one particularly egregious example that has been cited, and that is the U.S. women's soccer team, whose members make only about one-quarter of what their male counterparts make. Both the women's and men's soccer teams work for the same employer, the U.S. Soccer Federation. The women's soccer team generates significantly more revenue than the men's team. It has won the Women's World Cup three times, including last year. It has been the Olympic champion four times and has been the world's top-ranked team for nearly two decades. Yet they are paid a quarter of what men make. It is hard to understand that under any circumstances except outright discrimination.

As outrageous as that case is, the wage gap is even more damaging to the 40 percent of American women who are sole or primary breadwinners in households with children, to the women who are waitresses and certified nursing assistants, and to secretaries who work at jobs where equal pay is not only about fairness but it is also about providing adequately for their families. It is about being able to afford Internet access so their kids can do their homework. It is about paying for their child's inhaler. There is a lot that women breadwinners can do with that extra \$10,800 that women would earn on average if it were not for pay discrimination.

I also serve as the ranking member on the Senate's Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee, and I have seen how similar gender gaps confront women-owned small businesses. Just as women on average are paid 21 percent less than men, a recent Commerce Department study found that the odds of businesses owned by women winning a Federal contract are about 21 percent lower than for otherwise similar companies—for male-owned enterprises.

In workplaces across America, women are speaking out more and more and are demanding equal pay. It is time for Congress to do our job as well. I know from experience that legislation can make a difference. As Governor, I signed a law to prohibit gender-based pay discrimination in New Hampshire and to require equal pay for equal work. We haven't made as much progress as I would like at this point, but at the time we signed that law, women in New Hampshire were making 69 percent of their male colleagues' wages. Today, they are making 76 percent or a little less than the national average.

Back in the early 1980s, I served on New Hampshire's Commission on the

Status of Women. I chaired a report on employment in New Hampshire. At that time, women were only making 59 cents for every dollar a man earned. The conclusion of that report was that this has an impact not just on women, but it is an impact on, of course, their whole family. It is something that their children, their husbands, and their entire family is affected by. If we can close this pay gap for women, it helps not only the women who make up two-thirds of minimum wage workers, but it helps their families. It helps pull their kids out of poverty.

We need to do more at the Federal level, and that is why I strongly support the Paycheck Fairness Act. This legislation would empower women to negotiate for equal pay, it would close loopholes that courts created in the laws that are already in place, and it would create strong incentives for employers to obey these laws.

This legislation is about basic fairness. It is about equal treatment. It is about creating a level playing field in the workplace for our daughters and our granddaughters and for every American. It also is about making sure that their spouses, their children, and their relatives benefit from making sure that they have the same access to equal pay as the men in the workplace do.

So I urge my colleagues to support the Paycheck Fairness Act. Sixteen years into the 20th century is way past time to make good on our promise of equal pay for equal work in the United States.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. 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. MURRAY. Mr. President, we are 103 days into 2016, and on Equal Pay Day, that number takes on significant, unfortunate meaning. Women have to work 103 extra days to match what men earned last year. That is unacceptable. Workers should be paid fairly for the work they do, regardless of their gender. Closing the wage gap would help grow our economy from the middle out, not from the top down.

I am glad to be here today with my colleagues to recognize Equal Pay Day, to stand up on behalf of women across the country, and to renew our call to put an end to the wage gap. Last year, I heard from a woman named Sandy from Seattle. Right out of college, Sandy got a job at a local nonprofit. After a couple of months of work, she was just chatting with a male colleague and found out he was offered 20 percent more in salary for doing the exact same job. She thought there had been some mistake. But when she asked about it, her boss told her they

could not offer her a pay raise because of budget constraints.

Sandy's story is so common. On average, women today make 79 cents for every dollar a man makes. The pay gap is even wider for women of color. That is not just unfair to women; it hurts our families, and it hurts our economy. Today, 60 percent of working families rely on wages from two earners—60 percent.

More than ever, women are likely to be the primary breadwinner for their family. Women's success in today's economy is critical to families' economic security and to our Nation's economy as a whole. We need to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act to help close the wage gap. I so appreciate Senator MIKULSKI's tremendous leadership and passion on this issue. Her Paycheck Fairness Act would make it unlawful for employers to retaliate against workers for discussing pay. It does so in a commonsense way that reflects today's reality in the workplace.

It would empower women to negotiate for equal pay. It would close significant loopholes in the Equal Pay Act. It would create strong incentives for employers to provide equal pay. Passing the Paycheck Fairness Act is a critical step on the long list of things we can do to build our economy from the middle out and make sure our country works for all families, not just the wealthiest few.

No matter where they live, no matter their background, no matter what career they choose, on average, women earn less than their male colleagues, even women soccer players on the U.S. Women's National Team. The Women's National Team has won three World Cup titles. They have won four Olympic Gold Medals. But despite all of their success, they are not immune from the pervasive wage gap. In fact, on average as players, they earn four times less than their male counterparts. It is not just about the men. Think about the message the wage gap sends to young girls who see women valued less than men for doing the same work and, in the case of the women's soccer team, doing it so much better.

I am glad members of the women's national soccer team are taking a stand to gain equal pay for the work they do. In the Senate, we are going to keep championing the Paycheck Fairness Act to make equal pay a reality for women across the country. I look forward to an Equal Pay Day in the future that we can actually celebrate, once we finally achieve pay equity regardless of gender.

Until then, my colleagues and I are going to keep fighting on behalf of all women and families until they get the equal pay they have earned.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I am very pleased to be here with both of the Senators from Washington, one of

the few States that have two Senators who are women. It is great to be here with both of them. I would also like to thank Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI for leading the effort for the Paycheck Fairness Act. She is the longest serving woman in congressional history. She has opened many doors for all of us.

When she first wrote her book about women in the Senate, it was called "Nine and Counting." Well, today, our count is even higher, as there are 20 women in the Senate. She was the first woman—BARBARA MIKULSKI was—to chair the Senate Appropriations Committee. Because of her groundbreaking work in this Congress, 10 committees have either a chair or a ranking member who is a woman.

Today, as the presiding officer knows, President Obama formally dedicated a new national monument to honor women's suffrage and equal rights. I am a cosponsor of the bill to have the Sewall-Belmont House named as a national historical site. The Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument is named after Alice Paul and Alva Belmont, two leaders of the National Woman's Party. It will house an extensive collection that documents the history of the movement for women's equality.

What has happened in the last decade or so? Well, in 2009, we passed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act to make sure that workers who face pay discrimination based on gender, race, age, religion, disability, 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. We all know women have made big strides in our country and in our economy over the last few decades. Women are getting advanced degrees. They are starting new businesses. The Fortune 500 now has 20 women CEOs. That does not sound like much, but when you look back just a few decades, there were not any.

Yet, despite all of the progress we have made and all of the gaps that we are starting to close, women in this country still earn only around 80 cents for every dollar a man makes. When two-thirds of today's families rely all or in part on the mother's income—and in about 40 percent of families the mother is, in fact, the main breadwinner—this pay gap has real consequences for American families and our entire economy.

I wanted to focus on one issue at the end here, and that is retirement savings, which are maybe not the first things you would think about when you think about a pay gap. It is probably not what our young pages think about. They don't think: Well, what about what the retirement gap? But, in fact, it is something everyone should be thinking about.

When I was the Senate chair of the Joint Economic Committee, I released

a report showing how equal pay affects women's financial security. The report showed that lower wages impact women all throughout their working lives, and these lower lifetime earnings translate to less security in retirement.

According to the JEC report, the average annual income for women age 65 and older, including pensions, private savings, and Social Security, is \$11,000 less than it is for men. Social Security retirement benefits are based on a person's lifetime earnings. The average monthly benefit for female retirees is 77 percent less. The same thing goes for pensions. A woman's pension income is 53 percent that of men. Women also receive smaller pension checks from Federal, State, and local government pension plans.

Finally, a recent study showed that the average woman was able to save less than half of what the average man was able to save in an IRA. So what we have here is, first of all, women are making less to begin with. That is what we are talking about today. That means they save less and have less money in Social Security. Secondly, they live longer. That is great, but it means they are going to have less money. Then, finally, we have the fact that they are often a single breadwinner in 40 percent of households. The fact that they take time off often to have children—that is the third factor that leads to less savings.

What we should be doing is looking at how we can address the savings gap. There are ways we can address it by making it easier to save and making it easier to set up 401(k)s and IRAs and looking at the millennials and how we can respond to what is an increasingly different economy for young people. But we also can simply make sure women make the same amount as men when they do the same job.

It was the late Paul Wellstone of my State who famously said: "We all do better when we all do better." I still believe that is true today and so do my colleagues who join me. We need to be focused on how we can help more women share in our economic growth and share in the American dream. I ask my colleagues to support and pass the Paycheck Fairness Act.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 5 minutes.

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

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I come to the floor with my colleague from Minnesota and my colleague Senator MURRAY from Washington, along with our other colleagues who have already been here to speak about the important issue of paycheck fairness.

It is truly shameful this kind of discrimination still exists. We have heard the statistics about what the pay gap

means, but literally over someone's career—over a 40-year career—a woman in my state could lose as much as \$500,000 in income. An Asian American woman could lose \$700,000 over a 40-year career and a Native American woman could lose as much as \$900,000 over the same time period. So, yes, when women are discriminated against, it costs them and their families.

The gender pay gap issue is a family issue. Women are breadwinners too. Women today still earn only 79 cents for every \$1 paid to a man. This means less food on the table, less money to buy clothing for their children, or less money for insurance premiums. What we need to do is make sure we are listening to these stories and taking action.

Here is a story from one of my constituents, Adrianna from Olympia. She said:

In 1993, when I was in college, I was working at a restaurant. . . . This job enabled me to pay my way through school with no student loans. A young man several years younger than me with less experience was making a larger wage and I found out about it. I politely confronted the owner as to why this fellow was making more money than me. The owner was caught off guard and could give me no reason whatsoever. . . . The thing that really stuck in my craw was that the young man told me he only worked there so he could get money to gamble. . . . Of course, I had no other choice and worked 7 days a week for 5 years to get a Bachelor's degree.

Unfortunately, this story isn't unique. Wage discrimination affects a wide range of professional fields, including realtors, educators, administrators, and even CEOs. For example, male surgeons earn 37 percent more per week than their female counterparts. In real terms, that female surgeon earns \$756 less per week than her male colleagues, and this adds up. And this does not apply only to high-paying, male-dominated careers: Women are 94.6 percent of all secretaries and administrative assistants. Yet they still earn only 84 percent of what their male counterparts earn per week.

My colleague Senator MURRAY brought up the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team that helped bring this issue to the forefront. Despite being more successful and attracting more viewers than the men's team, the U.S. women's soccer team still is paid 25 percent less than the men's team.

In fact, one of my constituents last week—an 11-year-old girl soccer player from Washington—asked: If I keep playing sports, am I going to get fair pay?

Young women are asking us to do our job and make sure we pass legislation that helps. That is why we commend Senator MIKULSKI for introducing the Paycheck Fairness Act and for her tireless efforts on this legislation. I am proud to be one of its cosponsors.

The Paycheck Fairness Act requires that pay be job related and not discriminate based on gender. It would strengthen the penalties for discrimi-

nation and give women the tools they need to identify and confront unfair treatment. It would make sure we recognize women are breadwinners, too, and that they get the equal pay they deserve.

That is why my colleagues are coming to the floor today to say we should pass this bill this year. We don't need to commemorate another day of what women have done for our country; women need to receive equal pay for the equal work they are doing. I thank my colleagues for helping to bring attention to this issue, and I encourage the passage of this legislation.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:35 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 636, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 636) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend increased expensing limitations, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Thune/Nelson amendment No. 3464, in the nature of a substitute.

Thune (for Gardner) amendment No. 3460 (to amendment No. 3464), to require the FAA Administrator to consider the operational history of a person before authorizing the person to operate certain unmanned aircraft systems.

Cantwell amendment No. 3490 (to amendment No. 3464), to extend protections against physical assault to air carrier customer service representatives.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NATIONAL EQUAL PAY DAY

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, after another whole year, a very unfortunate milestone has once again arrived. Today is Equal Pay Day. This is