

INTRODUCTION OF THE FAIR PAY
ACT OF 2026

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 4, 2026

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the Fair Pay Act of 2026. This bill would require that if men and women are doing comparable work, they must be paid comparable wages. The Equal Pay Act of 1963 (EPA), the first of the great civil rights statutes of the 1960s, has grown creaky with age and needs updating to reflect the new workforce, in which women work as much as men.

As the first woman to chair the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, where I enforced the EPA, I introduce this bill on behalf of the average female worker, who is often first steered to, and then locked into, jobs with wages that are deeply influenced by the gender of individuals who have traditionally held such jobs. The pay disparity most women face today stems mainly from the segregation of women and men in different jobs and women in female-dominated jobs being paid systematically less. For example, if a woman is an emergency services operator, a female-dominated profession, she should not be paid less than a fire dispatcher, a male-dominated profession, simply because each of these jobs has been dominated by one gender. We need more aggressive strategies to break through the societal barriers present throughout history, as well as employer-steering based on gender, which is as old as paid employment itself.

What may be the best case for a stronger and updated EPA occurred in Congress in 2003, when female custodians in the House and Senate won an EPA case after showing that female employees were paid a dollar less per hour for doing the same or similar work as male employees. Had those women not been represented by their union, they would have had an almost impossible task in using the rules for bringing and sustaining an EPA class action lawsuit.

This bill would not change the legal burden. Under this bill, as under the EPA, the burden would be on the plaintiff to prove discrimination. The plaintiff must show that the reason for the disparate treatment is gender discrimination, not legitimate market factors. Remedies to achieve comparable pay for men and women are not radical or unprecedented. State governments, in red and blue states alike, have shown that it is possible to eliminate the part of the pay gap that is due to job-steering. Many state governments have adjusted wages for female-dominated professions, raising pay for teachers, nurses, clerical workers, librarians and other female-dominated jobs that paid less than comparable male-dominated jobs. Minnesota, for example, implemented a pay equity plan when it found that traditionally female jobs paid 20 percent less than comparable traditionally male jobs. There may well be some portion of the gender wage gap that is traceable to market factors, but states have shown that you can tackle the gender discrimination-based wage gap without interfering in the market system. States generally have closed the wage gap over a period of four to five years at a one-time cost of no more than three to four percent of payroll.

Unequal pay has been built into the way women have been treated since Adam and Eve. To dislodge such deep-seated and pervasive treatment, we must go to the source, the traditionally female occupations, where pay is linked with gender and always has been.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

HONORING THE LIFE OF LESTER
E. WRIGHT, SR.

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 4, 2026

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, as family, friends, and community members gather to celebrate the life of Lester E. Wright Sr., I would like to join in paying tribute to his memory. Lester passed away on April 20, 2026 after a long life filled with countless professional and personal accomplishments.

Lester was a U.S. Army Veteran during WWII, successful businessman, beloved father, and the fastest known Centenarian. Until his honorable discharge in 1945, Lester proudly served in the United States Army as a rifle sharpshooter. For his time fighting in Central Europe and Northern France, he was awarded with the American Theater Ribbon, European African Middle Eastern Theater Ribbon, Good Conduct Medal, Victory Ribbon and Four Bronze Battle Stars. Since early in life, Lester was an avid runner. Most notably, Lester received two gold medals at the Penn relays for his performance at 76 years old and as the world record-breaking finisher in the 100-meter dash for a 100-year-old.

With his wife of 81 years, Adele, Lester owned and operated the Long Branch Dental Laboratory. This was the first Black owned and operated dental laboratory in Long Branch, NJ. As a lifelong resident of Long Branch, Lester exemplified community service through his involvement with the Boy Scouts of America, Community Center, and membership to the City's Recreation Committee and Board of Adjustments.

Mr. Wright, Sr. is predeceased by his loving wife Adele, his sons Lester Wright, Jr. and Joseph Wright. He is remembered in cherished memory by his daughters Doreen Wright and Carolyn McCain; grandchildren Michael Wall, Ronald Brown, John Wall, Rachel McConnell, Corinne Hood, and Brian Wall; his great and great-great grandchildren; nieces and nephews.

Mr. Speaker, I sincerely hope that my colleagues will join me in honoring Lester E. Wright, Sr. for his leadership and dedication to his community and our Nation.

HONORING KEVIN WILLIAMS

HON. JAMES COMER

OF KENTUCKY
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 4, 2026

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Russell County native, Kevin Williams, for his outstanding commitment to public service and youth advocacy through the founding of Kevin's Kids, a charitable organization dedicated to supporting and uplifting local children.

Throughout Kevin's life, he has achieved recognition as a renowned guitarist and speaker, most notably as a member of The Gaither Vocal Band and as co-host of Bill Gaither's Homecoming Radio Show.

Despite his numerous commitments and busy schedule, Kevin has remained deeply rooted in his community and continues to invest in the next generation with his annual Kevin's Kids concert. The charity has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for the Russell County Family Resource and Youth Services Centers.

Kevin's life-long work reflects a strong dedication to service, compassion, and the enduring impact of hometown values. I commend Kevin for his commitment to his community and devotion to the Russell County youth and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Kevin for his exemplary contributions.

RECOGNIZING MARC RABOURDIN
FOR HIS EXCEPTIONAL WORK IN
VIRGINIA'S SEVENTH DISTRICT

HON. EUGENE SIMON VINDMAN

OF VIRGINIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 4, 2026

Mr. VINDMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and thank my Deputy District Director, Marc Rabourdin for his service to the people of Virginia's Seventh Congressional District with distinction for more than four years.

Before joining my office Marc began his service to the Seventh Congressional District working for my dear friend and predecessor, former Congresswoman and now Governor Abigail Spanberger.

Bringing a wealth of knowledge, professionalism, and care, he has continued to deliver results for Central and Northern Virginia. From the very first day in January 2025, his dedication has made a real difference in the lives of the people we serve.

Marc cultivated strong partnerships across the Seventh district. Always calm, steady, we referred to as the "Mayor" given his talent for meeting people where they were and nurturing positive relationships with leaders and stakeholders of all backgrounds.

Most notably, Marc was instrumental in my office's Community Project Funding initiatives for Fiscal Year 2026 as he helped to secure thousands of dollars for improving water treatment processes in the rural counties of Greene and Orange and brought millions of dollars for supporting law enforcement including Stafford County Sheriff, Town of Culpeper Police Department, Caroline County Sheriff's office, and Madison Sheriff's Office.

Marc is moving on to an exciting new role, now serving as the Director of Local Government Engagement in the Office of Governor Spanberger. While it is bittersweet to see him depart, I know that he will continue to do great work serving communities all across the Commonwealth.

I want to personally thank Marc for hitting the ground running and for setting a stellar example for the rest of my district team.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending Marc Rabourdin for his immeasurable service to the Commonwealth and Virginia's Seventh congressional district.

HONORING THE CAREER OF MS.
SURABHI DABIR

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 4, 2026

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding career and public service of Ms. Surabhi Dabir, a respected policy leader and dedicated advocate for housing and community development across our Nation.

For more than three decades, Ms. Dabir has worked at the intersection of federal policy, community engagement, and economic opportunity, helping to shape programs that have strengthened rural, Tribal, and underserved communities.

From her leadership roles at the Housing Assistance Council and Enterprise Community Partners, to her service at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Housing Service, she has consistently translated complex policy into real results for families in need.

During her tenure at USDA, Ms. Dabir served as a trusted advisor to senior leadership and Members of Congress, helping to guide billions of dollars in housing and infrastructure investments, advance Farm Bill priorities, and expand access to affordable homeownership.

Her work has supported disaster recovery efforts, strengthened rural economies, and ensured that communities across the country have the tools to thrive.

Ms. Dabir has been invaluable to my office as well—twice. First as a USDA fellow and now in her current role as a Legislative Assistant, Ms. Dabir fought hard for rural services, and especially for colonias.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Ms. Dabir's commitment to service is grounded in family. She is supported by her husband, Dr. Jeremy Blum, and their sons, Arjun and Anand, who share in this moment of recognition.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Surabhi Dabir's career reflects a deep and enduring commitment to public service, innovation, and opportunity. Her impact will be felt for generations to come.

RECOGNIZING THE WORK OF OUR
DISTRICT'S VITA VOLUNTEERS

HON. JASMINE CROCKETT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 4, 2026

Ms. CROCKETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and thank the volunteers and organizations who have served the constituents of the 30th congressional district of Texas as VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) center volunteers over the last four years. The team of volunteers dedicated countless hours of studying to earn certification from the IRS Stakeholder Partnerships, Education and Communication (SPEC) office. Once certified, our volunteers provided free tax assistance to many underserved and low-income residents in Dallas. The over 1,600 families who were assisted saved thousands of dollars in tax preparation fees and received over \$1,033,363 in issued refunds. For their work and commit-

ment to community, I extend immense appreciation to Matthew Asiaban, Beth Byrum, Brend Casneiro, Karina Chavez, Kerry Goodwin, Michelle Jones, Yair Martinez, Elise Phillips, Robert Phillips, Mayra Pratz, Barbara Rogers, Paola Sanchez, Esther G. Smith, Maria Valenzuela, Michelle Valenzuela, Jim Wilson, Robert Williams, IRS/SPEC, Sharing Life, the Ferguson Road Initiative, LightChurch, and Lochwood Branch Library.

HONORING DANIELA RODRÍGUEZ
APONTE, 2026 CONGRESSIONAL
ART COMPETITION WINNER FOR
PUERTO RICO

HON. PABLO JOSÉ HERNÁNDEZ

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 4, 2026

Mr. HERNÁNDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding achievement of the winner of the 2026 Congressional Art Competition in Puerto Rico, a nationwide initiative that encourages high school students to explore art, innovation, and cultural expression.

This year, students were invited to reimagine our island through the creativity, storytelling, and design principles of video games. Among many talented participants, one student distinguished herself through originality, strong thematic relevance, and technical excellence.

I am proud to recognize Daniela Rodríguez Aponte, a 12th grade student at Escuela Especializada Central de Artes Visuales in San Juan, as this year's winner. Her piece, titled "Level Up: Borikén Dreams," is a digital illustration that portrays Puerto Rican youth immersed in a vibrant, arcade-like setting, engaging with a game that reflects their identity, environment, and aspirations. Through its composition and use of color, the work captures both imagination and cultural pride, offering a compelling interpretation of the competition's theme.

This artwork reflects not only technical excellence, but also a thoughtful message about how younger generations engage with culture, technology, and community. It is a clear demonstration of how art can serve as a powerful language to communicate ideas and inspire reflection.

Daniela's achievement is a testament to the creativity, discipline, and talent that distinguishes Puerto Rico's young artists. It also underscores the importance of arts education in fostering innovation and expression, and in strengthening the cultural fabric of our communities.

On behalf of the people of Puerto Rico, I extend my sincere congratulations to Daniela Rodríguez Aponte for this remarkable accomplishment. Her work represents the creativity, determination, and excellence that we strive to cultivate in all students.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SYDNEY KAMLAGER-DOVE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 4, 2026

Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained during the vote on S.

4465—To amend the FISA Amendments Act of 2008 to extend the authorities of title VII of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 155.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE
OF CHARLES SCOTT

HON. TIM WALBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 4, 2026

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, it is my special privilege to recognize Charles Scott of Coldwater as the Veteran of the Month for May and to honor him for his dedicated service to our great Nation.

Charles served in the United States Army from 1979 to 1992, reaching the rank of Staff Sergeant. For his committed service, he was presented with numerous badges and awards, including the Army Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Overseas Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Driver and Mechanic Badge, Korean Defense Service Medal, and Army Achievement Medal.

After being honorably discharged, Charles earned his Bachelor of Science degree from Drury University and went on to work as a school supervisor. He then moved to Coldwater, where he served as a Veterans Service Officer for 22 years. During his time in the role, he received numerous awards, including the Certificate of Appreciation from the Branch County Veterans Board in 2008, the Veterans Service Officer of the Year Award in 2013, a Certificate of Appreciation for planning, designing, and managing the Branch County Veterans Memorial, Branch County's Patriotic Citizen of the Year Award in 2015, and the Special Tribute Award in 2025.

While Charles was specifically tasked with guiding Branch County veterans through the process of securing the benefits they have so rightfully earned, he also helped guide other veterans in surrounding communities to find the help they needed. Charles provided both expertise and compassion to thousands of veterans during his time as a Veterans Service Officer, ensuring that they received the care, benefits, and respect they deserved. While Charles has retired from the position, he continues to assist veterans wherever possible, including by recently organizing a veterans' program at the Branch County Fair.

Charles Scott's life of service, love of country, and keen desire to serve fellow veterans inspire us all. May others know of my high regard for Charles, as well as my deep gratitude for his lasting contributions to the country we love.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF SHERIFF DALE "FROG" FORD

HON. JAMES COMER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 4, 2026

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Sheriff Dale