

**PROGRAM ON A PAGE
(or two)**

The Paycheck Fairness Act

The most recent data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that nationally women make only 78 cents for every dollar earned by a man. This wage discrimination hurts the majority of American families by lowering total lifetime earnings. This reduces women's benefits from Social Security and pension plans and inhibits their ability to save, not only for retirement but for other lifetime goals, such as buying a home and paying for a college education.

The Paycheck Fairness Act was introduced March 6, 2007 by Senator Hillary Clinton and Representative Rosa DeLauro to strengthen the Equal Pay Act of 1963. This is a comprehensive bill that would create stronger incentives for employers to follow the law, empower women to negotiate for equal pay, and strengthen federal outreach, education and enforcement efforts. This bill would also deter wage discrimination by strengthening penalties for equal pay violations and by prohibiting retaliation against workers who ask about employers' wage practices or disclose their own wages. This critical piece of legislation can help create a climate where pay discrimination is not tolerated and give the new administration the enforcement tools it needs to make real progress on pay equity. The Paycheck Fairness Act was passed by the House on January 9, 2009. Our call to action is to urge our senators to support this bill.

Equal pay for equal work is a simple matter of justice for all women. AAUW strongly supports initiatives like the Paycheck Fairness Act that seek to close the persistent and sizable wage gap between men and women. We know that "equity is still an issue," and equal pay is essential in eliminating wage discrimination.

