



Business and
Professional
Women's
Foundation

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On Equal Pay Day, BPW Foundation Calls for Closing Wage Gap
Senate Needs to Pass Paycheck Fairness Act Now

[Washington, DC] – “Equal pay is good for business and good for employees,” says Business and Professional Women’s Foundation CEO, Deborah Frett, as she joins women, other business leaders and equal pay advocates across the country to recognize April 20 as Equal Pay Day, the day women have to work to catch up with the salaries of their male counterparts. “That’s right. It takes women 16 months to earn what men do in 12 months,” Frett added.

“Pay equity is important to BPW Foundation because it is important to the well-being of working women, their families and workplaces,” Frett continued. “Successful and profitable businesses know that it is essential to attract and retain women employees and to do that they must be committed to equal pay.”

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, one of the most significant trends of the past 50 years has been the movement of women into the paid labor force and the growth of women-owned businesses. Women now make up half of the U.S. workforce and women-owned firms represent 30 percent of all U.S. businesses.

“But despite all of these gains, and enactment of legislation like the Equal Pay Act in 1962 and the Lilly Ledbetter Act in 2009, the Census Bureau reports that, on average, full-time working women earn only 77 cents to every dollar earned by men. Things are even worse for African American and Latina women who earn an average of 10 to 19 percent less than their Caucasian female colleagues,” Frett explained.

“This wage gap is not due to women’s education levels or personal choices and it hurts working women, their families and employers. Wage discrimination lowers total lifetime earnings, reduces women’s benefits from Social Security and retirement plans and inhibits their ability to save not only for retirement but for other vital lifetime goals. Women cannot continue to accept the slow pace of wage catch-up that has occurred during the last 30 years.”

“The Senate needs to act now to ensure equal pay by passing The Paycheck Fairness Act. This bill will close loop holes in current law and empower women to negotiate for equal pay, create incentives for employers to follow the law, and strengthen federal outreach, training and enforcement efforts.” Frett concluded.

The BPW Foundation Blog, *Young Women Misbehavin'*, will host an [UnHappy Hour](#) on [Equal Pay Day](#) April 20 at Kellari, 1700 K Street NW, 5-8pm to commemorate the day when women “catch up.” Because women receive an average of 77 cents of every dollar made by a man, attendees are asked to donate to the initiative, in increments of “23,” to serve as a reminder of the inequality women currently face in the workplace.

BPW Foundation believes in a three-pronged approach to creating a successful workplace: advocating for legislation like the Paycheck Fairness Act; partnering with businesses to proactively implement and update their own workplace policies; and empowering women through education. BPW Foundation has been a member of the National Committee on Pay Equity and co-sponsor of [Equal Pay Day](#), an annual event to raise awareness of the wage gap, since its creation 14 years ago.

BPW Foundation supports workforce development programs and workplace policies that recognize the diverse needs of working women, communities and businesses. BPW Foundation is a 501 © (3) research and education organization. To learn more, visit [BPW Foundation – Business and Professional Women](#).

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