



Business and
Professional
Women's
Foundation

For Immediate Release

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Senator Ted Kennedy Was A Champion for Women and Families
Statement of Deborah L. Frett, CEO BPW Foundation

August 26, 2009, Washington DC – Senator Edward Kennedy was a champion for women and families with a proven track record as a long-time advocate for those without a voice. His ability to bring people together, across party lines for the greater good of the country will be missed. Kennedy was a staunch defender of equality and a champion for civil rights who continuously fought racial and gender discrimination.

Throughout his career, Kennedy fought for many Americans without a voice, when it was unpopular to do so including children, the physically and mentally challenged, women, people of color and low-income families. It is this sense of goodwill that made him a great leader and challenged people to become engaged in service.

Senator Kennedy was also a fierce and determined advocate for women and pay equity as evidenced by his tireless work in support of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. As I watched President Obama sign the Ledbetter Act on his first day in office, I knew that it would not have happened without the lion of the senate behind it.

You can not remember Ted Kennedy without reflecting on his dedication to quality health care for everyone, in the midst of this roiling debate of healthcare reform. As the leader in legislation such as The COBRA Act, National Cancer Act, Mental Health Parity Act, AIDS Care Act, SCHIP, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act and FMLA that has expanded healthcare access for American families, it is fitting that despite his personal health challenges, he actively sought to push the healthcare reform conversation forward.

BPW Foundation is hopeful that as we reflect on the life of Edward Kennedy, we do so with action not just in ceremony. In memoriam, Congress should complete the work Senator Kennedy started and launch a healthcare reform debate focused on solutions to provide access to quality and affordable healthcare for American women and families, rather than partisanship.

Business and Professional Women's Foundation is creating successful workplaces by focusing on issues that impact women, families and employers. Successful Workplaces are those that embrace and practice diversity, equity and work life balance.

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 (c) (3) research and education organization.