

Regular Session, 2013

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 36

BY REPRESENTATIVES ST. GERMAIN, BARROW, KATRINA JACKSON, MORENO,
NORTON, SMITH, AND THIERRY AND SENATORS BROOME, DORSEY-
COLOMB, AND PETERSON

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To recognize Tuesday, April 9, 2013, as Equal Pay Day in Louisiana.

WHEREAS, fifty years after the passage of the Equal Pay Act, women, especially minority women, continue to suffer the consequences of unequal pay; and

WHEREAS, according to the United States Census Bureau, full-time women working year-round in 2011 earned on average seventy-seven percent of the earnings of their male counterparts, indicating little change or progress in pay equity; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, Louisiana women working full-time, year-round earned just 68.8¢ for every dollar earned by a Louisiana man, a gender wage gap of thirty-one percent; and

WHEREAS, the great disparity in earnings between Louisiana women and men has consistently ranked Louisiana forty-ninth or fiftieth among the fifty states and the District of Columbia; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, Louisiana was again fiftieth with only Wyoming having a larger wage gap; and

WHEREAS, in Louisiana, women working full-time, year-round in 2011 earned on average \$31,862, making Louisiana the forty-third lowest among the fifty states and the District of Columbia in rates of women's earnings; and

WHEREAS, nationally, working women's median annual earnings were \$37,133 and the highest paid women workers were in the District of Columbia (\$60,332), while the lowest paid were in Mississippi (\$29,548); and

WHEREAS, in contrast, Louisiana men working year-round, full-time earned on average \$46,313, ranking Louisiana men twenty-first with average earnings greater than the earnings of men in thirty other states; and

WHEREAS, nationally, the median annual earnings for men in 2011 was \$46,993; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana ranks second highest in the nation for women living in poverty at 20.6%, which is experienced predominantly by female-headed families (50.3%), Native American women (35%), and black women (32.5%); and

WHEREAS, in 2009 the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act was signed into law, which gives to employees their day in court to challenge a pay gap, and now we must pass the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would amend the Equal Pay Act by closing loopholes and improving the law's effectiveness; and

WHEREAS, according to one estimate, college-educated women working full time earn more than a half-million dollars less than their male peers do over the course of a lifetime; and

WHEREAS, nearly four in ten mothers are primary breadwinners in their households, and nearly two-thirds are significant earners, making pay equity critical to families' economic security; and

WHEREAS, a lifetime of lower pay means women have less income to save for retirement and less income counted in a Social Security or pension benefit formula; and

WHEREAS, members of the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus who support equal pay join with the American Association of University Women and other women's organizations across Louisiana and the United States to share information regarding equal pay; and

WHEREAS, fair pay equity policies can be implemented simply and without undue costs or hardship in both the public and private sectors; and

WHEREAS, fair pay strengthens the security of families today and eases future retirement costs, while enhancing the American economy; and

WHEREAS, Tuesday, April 9, symbolizes the time in 2013 when the wages paid to American women catch up to the wages paid to men from the previous year.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby proclaim Tuesday, April 9, 2013, as Equal Pay Day in Louisiana and urge the citizens of Louisiana to recognize the full value of women's skills and significant contributions to the

labor force, and further encourages businesses to conduct an internal pay evaluation to ensure women are being paid fairly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE