June 8, 2021

Dear Senator:

The AFL-CIO urges you to support the Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 7) when it comes to the Senate floor.

The Paycheck Fairness Act is a long overdue remedial measure that responds to the demonstrated inadequacies of the 1963 Equal Pay Act. Although the Equal Pay Act made it illegal for employers to pay unequal wages to male and female employees who perform the same work, wage disparities between men and women persist in both the private and public sectors, at every educational level, across the country. Women working full time are paid only 82 cents for every dollar paid to men, and this gap is greater for women of color. Without intervention, the wage gap between all men and women is not expected to close until 2059 and will take significantly longer for Black and Hispanic women. While belonging to a union is the surest way to guarantee equal pay on the job—unionized women earn some 27% more than do their non-union counterparts—the Paycheck Fairness Act would provide new effective tools to close the wage gap.

The Paycheck Fairness Act provides targeted remedies designed to update the 1963 Equal Pay Act. It requires employers to demonstrate that wage gaps between men and women doing the same work truly result from factors unrelated to gender. It prohibits employer use of prior salary history in setting pay for new hires and employer retaliation against workers who discuss their pay with coworkers. The Paycheck Fairness Act provides grants to teach women workers wage negotiation skills. Last, H.R. 7 brings Equal Pay Act remedies and class action procedures into conformance with those available for other civil rights claims, and strengthens the government's ability to identify and remedy systematic wage discrimination by requiring employers to report pay data to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

When women endure pay discrimination, entire families suffer. We urge you to support the Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 7).

Sincerely,

William Samuel
Director, Government Affairs