

## Talking Points

# Equal Pay

### National Council of Jewish Women's (NCJW) Message

NCJW has long supported equal pay, from working to pass the 1963 Equal Pay Act, to advocating for the 2009 Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, through today — rooted in the Jewish value of *Kavod Ha Bri'ot*, respect and dignity for all human beings. The Paycheck Fairness Act (HR 17/ S728), introduced by Representative Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) and Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), would deter wage discrimination by updating and strengthening the Equal Pay Act. **Congress must pass the Paycheck Fairness Act to close the gender wage gap.**

- **The wage gap affects all women, especially women of color.** On average, women earn only 82 cents for every dollar earned by white, non-Hispanic men. When including part and full-time positions, women earn only 77 cents. It's worse for women of color — African American women are paid 63 cents, Native American women are paid 60 cents, Latinas are paid 58 cents, and some Asian American earn as little as 52 cents. Women of color are more likely than white women to hold low-paying, hourly jobs, lead single-parent households, and experience substantial caregiving burdens, making pay inequality particularly devastating.
- **Laws have been passed to promote equal pay, but further action is needed to close the wage gap.** In 1963, President Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act into law, requiring men and women to be paid equally for equal work. The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act became law in 2009, and made it easier for employees to seek legal action to remedy unequal pay. But a significant gap still remains and more must be done, including protecting employees who discuss compensation, prohibiting prospective employees from using past salary to determine future salary, and collecting pay data at the federal level by gender, race, and ethnicity to better identify pay discrimination.
- **The Paycheck Fairness Act would deter wage discrimination by updating and strengthening the Equal Pay Act.** The bill would close loopholes that allow pay discrimination to continue and increase transparency and accountability so workers know whether they are being paid fairly, ensuring they have the evidence to hold their employers accountable when pay discrimination occurs.