



U.S. Women's Chamber
of Commerce the relationship of business

January 6, 2009

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 500,000 members of the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce, I strongly urge you to **support the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and the Paycheck Fairness Act**, which will be on the House floor for a vote this week. The Women's Chamber also urges you to oppose any amendments that would weaken these bills, and to vote no on a motion to recommit.

The U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce was founded to support the continued economic advancement of the millions of women in America. Our members are young and old, students and retirees, employees and business owners, located in all 50 states. These members understand that the fight for equal pay is part of the battle that all women face for economic independence. Millions of women left these very struggles to become business owners. Studies have shown that women business owners frequently provide stronger employee benefits than their male counterparts, and our members tell us that – even as business owners – they understand and respect the ongoing struggle against wage discrimination that women continue to face.

Passing both bills, in tandem, is critical to the overall goal of achieving pay equity for all: the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act rights the wrongs done by the Supreme Court in *Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.*, regaining ground we have lost and ensuring people who have been discriminated against can seek vindication in a timely matter. The Paycheck Fairness Act is a comprehensive bill that will create stronger incentives for employers to follow the law as well as increase penalties for violations; strengthen federal outreach, education and enforcement efforts; and prohibit retaliation against workers who ask about employers' wage practices. Additionally, as women-owned firms pay fairly, requiring other businesses to play fairly will level the playing field for competition when it comes to paying for overhead; clearly it is time to support women as workers and as business owners.

Together, these bills will help to create a climate where wage discrimination is not tolerated, and give the new administration the enforcement tools it needs to make real progress on pay equity. As the 111th Congress begins, American women are looking for concrete action to improve their economic security.

As employees and business owners, women understand the profound need to actively advance and protect our civil rights. The U.S. Women's Chamber urges you to **support the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and the Paycheck Fairness Act**, oppose any amendments that would weaken these bills, and to vote no on a motion to recommit.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Margot Dorfman'.

Margot Dorfman, CEO
U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce