

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. CON. RES. 37

Recognizing the significance of equal pay and the disparity in wages paid to men and to Black women.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 9, 2024

Mr. WARNOCK (for himself, Ms. BUTLER, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Recognizing the significance of equal pay and the disparity in wages paid to men and to Black women.

Whereas, July 9, 2024, is Black Women's Equal Pay Day, which marks the day that symbolizes how long into 2024 Black women must work to make what White, non-Hispanic men were paid in 2023;

Whereas section 6(d) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(d)) prohibits discrimination in compensation for equal work on the basis of sex;

Whereas title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.) prohibits discrimination in compensation because of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex;

Whereas, despite the passage of the Equal Pay Act of 1963 (29 U.S.C. 206 note) 6 decades ago, which requires that

men and women in the same workplace be given equal pay for equal work, Census Bureau data show that Black women working full time, year round, are paid 69 cents for every dollar that is paid to White, non-Hispanic men;

Whereas, when part-time and part-year workers are included in the comparison, Black women are paid 66 cents for every dollar that is paid to White, non-Hispanic men;

Whereas, if the current trends continue, on average, Black women will have to wait over 100 years to achieve equal pay;

Whereas the median annual pay for a Black woman in the United States working full time, year round, is \$49,480, which means that, if the current wage gap were to continue, the average Black woman would lose nearly \$884,800 in potential earnings to the wage gap over the course of a 40-year career;

Whereas lost wages mean Black women have less money to support themselves and their families, save and invest for the future, and spend on goods and services, causing businesses and the economy to suffer;

Whereas Black women's median earnings are less than men's median earnings at every level of academic achievement;

Whereas Black women with bachelor's and master's degrees experience a higher wage gap in comparison with White, non-Hispanic men than in comparison with Black women with a high school diploma;

Whereas, in the United States, more than 68 percent of Black mothers are the sole or primary breadwinners for their families, compared to just more than one-third of non-Hispanic White mothers;

Whereas the lack of access to affordable, quality childcare, paid family and medical leave, paid sick leave, and other family-friendly workplace policies contributes to the wage gap by forcing many Black women to choose between having a job and getting quality care for themselves or their family members;

Whereas if the wage gap were eliminated, on average, a Black woman working full time would have enough money for more than 2 additional years of tuition and fees for a 4-year public university; the full cost of tuition and fees for a public 2-year community college; more than 41 additional months of premiums for employer-based family health insurance coverage with employer contributions; more than 50 weeks of food for a family of 4; more than 12 additional months of home ownership costs, including mortgage payments, real estate taxes, insurance, utilities, and fuel costs; more than 17 additional months of rental costs, including rent payments, utilities, and fuel; or the full cost of an average borrower's Federal student loan debt in under 2 years;

Whereas 38 percent of women have been sexually harassed at the workplace and over 78 percent of sexual harassment charges filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission are filed by women, yet research has found that only a small number of women who experience harassment formally report incidents for reasons including fear of retaliation;

Whereas workplace harassment forces many women to leave their occupation or industry;

Whereas targets of harassment are 6.5 times as likely as individuals who are not targets to change jobs or pass up

opportunities for advancement, contributing to the gender wage gap;

Whereas Black women were the most likely of all racial and ethnic groups to have filed a sexual harassment charge;

Whereas nearly two-thirds of workers that are paid the minimum wage or less are women and there is an overrepresentation of women of color in low-wage and tipped occupations;

Whereas 60 percent of private sector workers reported that they were either discouraged or prohibited by their employers from discussing wage and salary information, which can hide pay discrimination and prevent remedies;

Whereas the pay disparity Black women face is part of a wider set of disparities that Black women face in home ownership, unemployment, poverty, access to childcare, and the ability to accumulate wealth;

Whereas the gender wage gap for Black women has only narrowed by 5 cents in the last 2 decades;

Whereas true pay equity requires a multifaceted strategy that addresses the gender and racial injustices that Black women face daily;

Whereas the pandemic had a disproportionately negative economic impact on Black women; and

Whereas many national organizations have designated July 9, 2024, as Black Women's Equal Pay Day to represent the additional time that Black women must work to compensate for the lower wages paid to Black women in 2023: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives*
2 *concurring)*, That Congress—

1 (1) recognizes the disparity in wages paid to
2 Black women and its impact on women, families,
3 and the United States; and

4 (2) reaffirms its support for ensuring equal pay
5 for equal work and narrowing the gender and racial
6 wage gaps.

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