



NEW YORK

Working Women and the State's Wage Gap

In New York, on average, a woman working full time is paid \$40,584 per year, while a man working full time is paid \$49,174 per year. **This creates a wage gap of \$8,590 between full-time working men and women in the state.**ⁱ

What does the wage gap mean for working women in New York?

As a group, full-time working women in New York lose approximately **\$22,340,027,689** each year due to the wage gap.ⁱⁱ If the wage gap were eliminated, New York's working women and their families would have enough money for:

- 64 more weeks of food (1.2 years' worth);ⁱⁱⁱ
- 4.4 more months of mortgage and utilities payments;^{iv}
- 9 more months of rent;^v
- 3 more years of family health insurance premiums;^{vi} or
- More than 2,000 additional gallons of gas.^{vii}

The women of New York are increasingly responsible for the economic security of their families and cannot afford to face discrimination and lower wages.

- More than 63 percent of working mothers in New York bring in more than a quarter of their families' income,^{viii} and 1,050,106 households in New York are headed by women.^{ix}
- More than 26 percent of women-headed households in New York live below the poverty level.^x Eliminating the wage gap would provide critical income to 279,328 families living in poverty.

Women and families suffer when women are underpaid. Congress must pass the Paycheck Fairness Act.

In the 112th Congress, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Paycheck Fairness Act, but it fell just two votes short in a key procedural vote in the Senate. Congress needs to consider this bill again. The Paycheck Fairness Act:

- Prohibits employers from retaliating against workers who discuss salaries with colleagues;
- Requires that employers prove that any pay differences exist for legitimate, job-related reasons;
- Creates a negotiation skills training program for women and girls;
- Recognizes employers for excellence in their pay practices;
- Provides assistance to businesses, especially small ones, to help with equal pay practices; and
- Enhances the Department of Labor's and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's abilities to investigate and enforce pay discrimination laws.

The Paycheck Fairness Act is essential to combating the persistent wage gap.

- Nationally, in 2009, women working full-time, year-round were paid only 77 cents for every dollar paid to men. African-American women were paid only 61 cents, and Latinas only 52 cents, for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men.^{xi}

- The wage gap has been closing at a rate of less than half a cent per year since the passage of the 1963 Equal Pay Act, when women were paid 58.9 cents for every dollar paid to men. Unless we expedite our progress, the wage gap will not close completely until 2058 – when today’s high school students will be preparing for retirement.

The wage gap is not a matter of personal choice.

- According to a 2003 Government Accountability Office study, the wage gap remains even when accounting for personal choices – such as work patterns and education. Mothers tend to pay a “penalty” for having children while fathers get a bonus: Women with children are paid 2.5 percent less than women without children, while men with children experience an earnings boost of 2.1 percent over men without children.^{xii}

American voters overwhelmingly support the Paycheck Fairness Act.

- In a nationwide poll of registered voters, 84 percent said they support “a new law that would provide women more tools to get fair pay in the workplace” and 72 percent of respondents strongly support such a law.^{xiii}
- Both men and women support equal pay laws. Eighty-one percent of men and 87 percent of women support a new law. Sixty-nine percent of men and 74 percent of women expressed strong support.
- Members of all political parties strongly support improving equal pay laws. Ninety-one percent of Democrats, 77 percent of Republicans and 87 percent of Independents support a new law. Eighty-three percent of Democrats, 61 percent of Republicans and 70 percent of Independents strongly support a new law.

ⁱ Getz, D. (2010, September). *American Community Survey Brief: Men’s and Women’s Earnings for States and Metropolitan Statistical Areas: 2009*. U.S. Census Bureau. Retrieved 4 April 2011, from <http://www.census.gov/prod/2010pubs/acsbr09-3.pdf>. Calculation uses median wages.

ⁱⁱ U.S. Census Bureau. (2009). *Selected Economic Characteristics: 2009: New York*. Retrieved 4 April 2011, from http://www.factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ADPTable?_bm=y&-geo_id=04000US36&-qr_name=ACS_2009_1YR_G00_DP3&-context=adp&-ds_name=&-tree_id=309&-lang=en&-redoLog=false&-format=; and U.S. Department of Labor. (2010, December). *Women in the Labor Force: A Databook*. Retrieved 4 April 2011, from <http://www.bls.gov/cps/wlf-databook-2010.pdf>. Calculation.

ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2010, October). *Table 8. Region of residence: Average annual expenditures and characteristics, Consumer Expenditure Survey, 2009*. Retrieved 4 April 2011, from <http://www.bls.gov/cex/2009/Standard/region.pdf>. Calculation uses overall average “food” cost for region.

^{iv} U.S. Census Bureau. (2009). *Median Monthly Housing Costs for Owner-Occupied Housing Units with a Mortgage (Dollars): United States and States*. Retrieved 4 April 2011, from http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/GRTTable?_bm=y&-geo_id=01000US&-box_head_nbr=R2511&-ds_name=ACS_2009_1YR_G00_-redoLog=false&-format=US-30&-mt_name=ACS_2008_1YR_G00_R2511_US30

^v U.S. Census Bureau. (2009). *Median Monthly Housing Costs for Renter-Occupied Housing Units (Dollars): United States – States; and Puerto Rico*. Retrieved 4 April 2011, from http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/GCTTable?_bm=y&-context=gct&-ds_name=ACS_2009_1YR_G00_-mt_name=ACS_2009_1YR_G00_GCT2514_US9&-CONTEXT=gct&-tree_id=809&-redoLog=true&-geo_id=&-format=US-9&-lang=en. Calculation uses median gross rent for state.

^{vi} Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. (2010). *State Health Facts: Average Family Premium per Enrolled Employee for Employer-Based Health Insurance, 2009*. Retrieved 4 April 2011, from <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparetable.jsp?typ=4&ind=271&cat=5&sub=67>. Calculation uses 2009 average family premium data for employee contribution.

^{vii} AAA. (2011). *AAA’s Daily Fuel Gauge Report: Current State Averages*. Retrieved 18 March 2011, from <http://www.fuelgauge.com/sbsavg.html>. Calculation uses average cost of regular quality gasoline on March 18, 2011.

^{viii} Center for American Progress. (2010, April 20). *Interactive Map: Women Provide for Their Families*. Retrieved 4 April 2011, from http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/04/women_breadwinners.html

^{ix} U.S. Census Bureau. (2009). *Selected Social Characteristics in the United States: 2009: New York*. Retrieved 4 April 2011, from http://www.factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ADPTable?_bm=y&-context=adp&-qr_name=ACS_2009_1YR_G00_DP2&-ds_name=ACS_2009_1YR_G00_-tree_id=309&-redoLog=false&-caller=geoselect&-geo_id=04000US36&-format=&-lang=en

^x See note ii.

^{xi} U.S. Census Bureau. (2008). *Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) Supplement: Table PINC-05: Work Experience in 2008 – People 15 Years Old and Over by Total Money Earnings in 2008, Age, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex*. Retrieved 14 January 2010, from http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032009/perinc/new05_000.htm

^{xii} U.S. General Accounting Office. (2003, October). *Report to Congressional Requesters: WOMEN’S EARNINGS: Work Patterns Partially Explain Difference between Men’s and Women’s Earnings*. Retrieved 4 April 2011, from <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d0435.pdf>

^{xiii} The poll was conducted from May 21-24, 2010 by Lake Research Partners. A nation-wide sample of 932 registered voters was asked the following question: Congress is considering a new law that would provide women more tools to get fair pay in the workplace. The law will also make it harder for employers to justify paying different wages for the same work and ensure that businesses that break the law compensate women fairly. Would you support or oppose such a law? For full results and methodology, see: http://www.nationalpartnership.org/site/DocServer/5-2010_Poll_Data_One_Pager_LL_2_.pdf?docID=6681