

APRIL 3, 2001

STATEMENT OF U.S. REPRESENTATIVE JAN SCHAKOWSKY ON EQUAL PAY DAY

WASHINGTON, D.C. - While I am not proud about the gender disparity of wages in the United States, I am proud today to join with my colleagues as a cosponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act.[]

It is unbelievable that women still earn only a percentage of what men earn for comparable work.[] In the 21st century, women earn 72 cents for every dollar a man earns.[] In communities of color, the gap is wider: black women earn 64 cents for each dollar and Latinas earn only 55 cents for each dollar a man earns.[]

According to these numbers, the average woman must work an additional 12 weeks a year to make up the disparity in income.[] The pay gap has a significant impact on entire families; it is estimated that American families lose \$200 billion each year.[] Both the AFL-CIO and the Institute for Women's Policy Research report that, if women were paid the same as comparable men, their family incomes would rise by nearly 6 percent.[] Poverty rates would drop by more than 50 percent.[]

Unequal pay is unjustified for equal work.[] It hurts individuals, families, and communities.[] We must do better to support hard working women and their families.[] We must pass the Paycheck Fairness Act; it is the only right and fair thing to do.