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**APRIL 9TH IS EQUAL PAY DAY, WHEN WOMEN WILL FINALLY EARN WHAT MEN DID IN 2012:
50 Years After the Equal Pay Act, Women Still Earn Just \$0.77 to a Man's Dollar**

Portland, Oregon (April 8, 2013) – Tomorrow, April 9th, is Equal Pay Day. It's the day in 2013 when women will have finally caught up to men's 2012 earnings. The reason it takes women 464 days to earn what men earn in just 365 is that, on average, women in the United States are paid just \$0.77 for every \$1.00 men earn for equal work, a 23% pay gap that unfairly shortchanges women of over \$10,000 a year – and hundreds of thousands of dollars over a lifetime. Income that many need for basic living expenses for themselves and their families and to save for retirement.

This unequal pay is for the very same work; the gap is calculated after controlling for variables like income, education, job type, and more. The majority of the gap can be attributed to discrimination for the value of women's work - and this is a real economic problem for women and the families they increasingly support.

The gap widens significantly for mothers and women of color: African American women are paid just 64 cents and Latinas are paid a lowly 55 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men. Mothers face what is now called a "motherhood penalty," where they earn less than women without children, less than men in general, and less than fathers. The "motherhood penalty" is estimated to be five percent *per child*. And it is estimated that women without children now earn 94 cents for every dollar earned by men, but mothers earn 60 cents for every dollar a father makes. Perhaps most alarming: motherhood is a leading predictor of poverty in old age in our country – and the wage gap contributes greatly to this problem.

Here in Oregon, working women fare slightly better than the national average, earning about 78 cents for every dollar Oregon men earn. That's hardly cause for celebration, though, since Oregon women don't pay 22% less for housing, health care, transportation, food or anything else – but they do have far less buying power because of this wage discrimination, which persists 50 years after President John F. Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act into law on June 10, 1963.

Andrea Paluso, Executive Director of Family Forward Oregon, sees the wage gap as a real barrier to Oregon women and mothers' economic security and supports Senate Bill 744, sponsored by Senator Chris Edwards (D-Eugene) and supported by Oregon Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian, which would commission a state study on causes and solutions of the gender wage gap (she testified in favor of the bill before the Oregon Senate Committee on General Government, Consumer and Small Business Protection on April 3, 2013):

“The persistent, discriminatory gender wage gap in this country is a reminder that while women have made much progress in the workplace, significant barriers to equality remain. The wage gap is one of them. Fifty years after the Equal Pay Act was signed into law by President John F. Kennedy we ought to have made more progress – the 18 cents we’ve gained in those 50 years is not enough to address the persistent income instability faced by too many women and families.

If we continue to do nothing, it will take until 2056 for women to be paid equally for equal work. But we’re not willing to wait, which is why we’re so pleased to support Senate Bill 744, which will commission an Oregon study to understand and explain the problem in our state and recommend concrete solutions. It is high time to take effective steps to end the wage discrimination that is hurting so many Oregon women and the families who increasingly depend on their income to survive.”

Marcia Kelley, Policy Advocate with the American Association of University Women’s Oregon chapter sees the annual Equal Pay Day as a way to raise consciousness about an issue that is too often out of the public eye because wages are often kept secret and discrimination remains hidden:

“Equal Pay Day shines a light every year on pay discrimination in the workplace. This year Equal Pay Day is April 9th -- it took women 99 extra days to earn what men earned in 2012. And when you dig into the data, you can see even greater gaps for mothers and women of color. It’s not acceptable because it’s patently unfair and, it harms Oregon women, their families, and our economy. We pay the same amount for our housing, food, health care, and kids as men do, after all, it just takes us longer to afford it. And that needs to change.”

Resources on calculating the wage gap and its impacts on women, families and the economy can be found online:

- **American Association of University Women:** <http://www.aauw.org/issues/economic-justice/>
- **Center for American Progress:** <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/women/news/2009/01/06/5460/wage-gap-by-the-numbers/>
- **Institute for Women’s Policy Research:** <http://www.iwpr.org/initiatives/pay-equity-and-discrimination>
- **National Women’s Law Center:** <http://www.nwlc.org/our-issues/employment/equal-pay-and-the-wage-gap>

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