



NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON PAY EQUITY

555 New Jersey Ave. NW, Washington DC 20001-2029 ♦ 703-920-2010 ♦ Fax 703-979-6372

For immediate release

Washington, DC—Members of Congress will speak at a Capitol Hill press conference on April 23, held in conjunction with Equal Pay Day, to support the passage of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act by the Senate. Equal Pay Day, sponsored by the National Committee on Pay Equity (NCPE), is an annual event held to raise awareness of the gap between men's and women's wages in this country.

Senators Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Reps. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) and George Miller (D-CA) are scheduled to attend the press conference. Other speakers will include Marsha Zakowski, President, Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW); Rosalyn Pelles, Director, Department of Civil, Human and Women's Rights, AFL-CIO; Margot Dorfman, CEO, U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce; Deborah Frett, CEO, Business and Professional Women/USA; Michele Leber, Chair, NCPE, and Lilly Ledbetter, whose complaint of wage discrimination was denied by the Supreme Court decision in May 2007.

Ledbetter, one of the few female supervisors at the Goodyear plant in Gadsden, Alabama, was earning 20 percent less than the lowest paid man in the same position when she filed a complaint with EEOC. Lower court rulings supported her claim and awarded her damages, but the Supreme Court, in a 5-4 decision, held that her claim was not filed within 180 days of Goodyear's initial discriminatory pay decision and therefore was not valid. In July, the House of Representatives passed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act to reverse the effect of the Supreme Court decision and establish each discriminatory paycheck as a violation of law. The Senate is expected to vote on the bill during the week of Equal Pay Day, which is April 22.

At a luncheon at the American Federation of Teachers after the press conference, Ledbetter will receive the Winn Newman Award, given annually by NCPE to the individual or organization that has done the most to further the cause of pay equity in the previous year. The award is named for the late Winn Newman, an advocate and litigator on behalf of pay equity, who was lead counsel on the *AFSCME v. Washington* case, resulting in a large pay equity settlement for state employees.

Equal Pay Day was originated by NCPE in 1996 to symbolize how far into the current year a woman must work to earn as much as a man earned in the previous year, based on U.S. Census Bureau statistics of median wages of fulltime, year-round workers. In 2006 women earned 77 cents for every dollar men earned, the same as in 2005. The wage gap has remained substantially unchanged since the turn of the century.

For more information contact Eula Tate, Interim Executive Director Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) and Chair of the NCPE Equal Pay Day Task Force at (202) 508-6951 or etate@cluw.org.