

Eshoo Votes to Approve Pay Equity Legislation

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Anna G. Eshoo (D-Palo Alto) joined her House colleagues today in approving historic changes to the Equal Pay Act that will strengthen protections against pay discrimination based on gender . The legislation, the Paycheck Fairness Act, closes dangerous loopholes in current law that allow employers to avoid responsibility for discriminatory pay.

“The wage gap between men and women has narrowed since the passage of the landmark Equal Pay Act in 1963, but women continue to make only 77 cents for every dollar earned by a man,” said Rep. Eshoo. “It’s time to close the gap and pass this law. This legislation will strengthen workplace discrimination laws and empower women to negotiate for equal pay.”

The Paycheck Fairness Act closes a loophole that has allowed some employers to avoid liability in pay discrimination cases if they can name any factor that has determined the pay other than gender, even if it isn’t work-related. The bill will put gender-based discrimination sanctions on equal footing with other forms of wage discrimination by allowing women to sue for compensatory and punitive damages. The legislation will also prevent employers from punishing workers who discuss their wages with their fellow employees.

“No matter what her job is, a woman’s work is just as valuable as a man’s,” said Rep. Eshoo. “Today we have taken another step toward eliminating the discrimination that diminishes and shortchanges women in the workplace.”

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