



THE WORKING FAMILIES AGENDA



FACT SHEET: Leveling the Playing Field

It is time to *level the playing field* so that every American has a fair shot at success.

- Discrimination remains a persistent barrier to working families' ability to get ahead. Five decades after the Equal Pay Act, on average, women who work full-time, year-round make only 78 cents for every dollar paid to their white male counterparts. The wage gap is much worse for African American and Hispanic women. Compared to their white male counterparts, African American women only earn 62 cents on the dollar, and Hispanic women earn just 54 cents on the dollar. The wage gap costs working families more than \$11,000 a year and more than \$400,000 over a woman's lifetime.
- Two-thirds of first-time mothers are in the workforce today and 82 percent of pregnant workers work into their third trimester. But all too often, pregnant workers are denied simple adjustments at work that they need to continue working safely during pregnancy—like a stool to sit during a very long shift, or the ability to stay off high ladders.
- Despite tremendous legal progress, LGBT Americans lack explicit legal protections from workplace discrimination on the basis of their gender and sexual orientation, and may have no resource if they are fired.

The Working Families Agenda includes legislation that would *level the playing field* by strengthening protections from discrimination.

- The **Paycheck Fairness Act** strengthens protections from pay discrimination, helping women and their families make ends meet. Equal pay for equal work could mean giving a family the chance to save for retirement, own a home, or afford child care.
- The **Pregnant Workers Fairness Act** makes unmistakably clear that women can get reasonable job accommodations when they need them to continue working safely during pregnancy. The right to these accommodations could make all the difference to a woman's ability to have a healthy pregnancy and provide for her growing family.
- The **Equality Act** makes explicit that employees are protected from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. Equal treatment for LGBT employees means no one will have to risk losing their jobs simply because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

These responsible policies will help ensure that all hardworking Americans have the opportunity to make a better life for themselves and their families.