

**Opening Statement of Chair Alma Adams (NC-12), Subcommittee on Workforce Protections**  
Joint Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Human Services and Workforce Protections Hearing  
*The Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 7): Equal Pay for Equal Work*  
2175 Rayburn House Office Building  
Wednesday, February 13, 2019 | 10:15am

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Good morning. I want to share my appreciation to Chairwoman Bonamici, Ranking Members Byrne and Comer, and to the witnesses who have joined us here today for this important discussion.

Thank you for being here today.

It takes the average woman an additional 91 days—three additional months—to earn what her male peers earned in 2018.

That is unacceptable.

From the North Carolina House to the U.S. House, for 3 decades, I have been fighting to close gender and gender-based wage gaps.

Today, I feel like Fannie Lou Hamer – Sick and tired of being sick and tired of this ongoing inequality.

Fifty-six years have passed since we signed the *Equal Pay Act* into law.

And it's been ten years since President Obama signed into law the *Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act*.

But today in my District in North Carolina, women still only make about **82 cents** for every dollar a man makes.

And nationally, that statistic is even worse – 80 cents for every dollar.

Women of color are even less likely to make as much as a man working the same job.

Black women earn only 63 cents for every dollar a man makes.

When women are shortchanged our children, families and our economy are shortchanged.

In fact, it shortchanges us **500 billion dollars** annually.

That's why, as the new chair of the Subcommittee on Workforce Protections, I am proud to co-host the subcommittee's first hearing on addressing persistent gender-based wage discrimination through the *Paycheck Fairness Act*.

We can no longer wait while, every day, women across the nation are deprived of equal wages for equal work.

Time's up for that.

The *Paycheck Fairness Act* is an opportunity for Congress to strengthen the *Equal Pay Act*, bolster the rights of working women, and put an end to gender-based wage disparity once and for all.

It's the right thing to do because it's right!

At this time, I ask unanimous consent to introduce for the record four letters all in support of the *Paycheck Fairness Act*.

One from the National Partnership for Women & Families, one from the American Bar Association, one from the American Association of University Women, and one from the National Women's Law Center.

I look forward to our discussion today and yield to the Ranking Member, Mr. Byrne.