

*Washington, DC* - In an effort to close the pay gap between men and women, Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today helped the House pass two bills that will help ensure women get paid the same as men in similar positions with similar qualifications and experience. The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and the Paycheck Fairness Act both passed the House with broad support.

"These bills extend important basic rights to women in the workplace in order to help close the shameful pay gap that unfortunately exists between men and women today," Hinchey said. "A lack of equal pay for women impacts families because it means that household incomes are not at a fair level. With the cost of living continuing to climb, American families should not have to deal with a household income that is suppressed because of gender discrimination."

More than 40 years after the passage of the Equal Pay Act and Title VI -- two landmark civil rights bills, women continue to be paid less for performing the same job as their male colleagues. On average, women earn just 78 cents for every dollar earned by men. The Institute of Women's Policy Research has found that this wage disparity will cost women anywhere from \$400,000 to \$2 million in lost wages over a lifetime.

The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act is named for a woman who was a clear victim of sex-based pay discrimination but was denied any remedy in the 2007 Supreme Court Ledbetter decision. Lilly Ledbetter worked for nearly two decades at a Goodyear Tire and Rubber facility in Alabama. She sued the company after learning that she was the lowest-paid supervisor at the plant, despite having more experience than several of her male counterparts. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Ledbetter had waited too long to sue for pay discrimination, despite the fact that she filed a complaint with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as soon as she received an anonymous note alerting her to pay discrimination.

The bill that Hinchey and his colleagues passed today simply restores the law as it was prior to this erroneous Supreme Court Ledbetter decision. The Court ruled that a pay discrimination claim must be filed within 180 days of the employer's initial decision to pay an employee less. The bill passed today clarifies that each paycheck resulting from a discriminatory pay decision would constitute a new violation of law. As long as workers file their charges within 180 days of a discriminatory paycheck, their charges would be considered timely. The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act would apply to workers who file claims of discrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, or disability.

## **Hinchey Helps House Pass Two Bills Ensuring Equal Pay for Women**

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The Paycheck Fairness Act that Hinchey and his House colleagues also passed today enhances the Equal Pay Act of 1963 by putting sex-based pay discrimination on par with race-based pay discrimination; requiring that employers seeking to justify unequal pay show that the disparity is not sex-based, but job-related; and prohibiting employers from retaliating against employees who share salary information with their co-workers.