

# CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES

Resolution CYF-20-45

## A RESOLUTION ON PAY EQUITY TO REDUCE POVERTY RATE

WHEREAS, approximately 40 million people, or 12.3 percent of the U.S. population, were living in poverty as of 2017, 21.1 percent of all African American households and 18.3 percent of all Hispanic households living in poverty;

WHEREAS, 2016 Census figures show that 5.8 percent of the U.S. population lives in deep poverty, with an income 50 percent below the federal poverty line;

WHEREAS, one in eight American women live in poverty or are on the brink of it, accounting for 16 million women in the United States;

WHEREAS, American women are 35 percent more likely to be poor than American men and 35 percent of single mothers fall below the level of poverty;

WHEREAS, the 2018 Census Bureau found that 58 percent of children in poverty are from single mother households, with their income accounting for the sole source of financial support for the household, despite the fact that women account for nearly two-thirds of all minimum wage workers in the US;

WHEREAS, any unplanned expense, health emergency, or reduction in work hours or pay can push many female-led households over the brink;

WHEREAS, according to a study by the Institute for Women's Policy Research, in 2018 white women make only 81.1 cents on the dollar, and African American women only make 65.3 cents on the dollar when compared to men doing the same work;

WHEREAS, the National Women's Law Center found that African American women work nearly 20 months for the amount of pay white men make during the calendar year;

WHEREAS, a woman's percentage of pay will drop from 82 percent to 69 percent of their male counterparts' earnings over the course of ten years after having graduated college;

WHEREAS, a woman with master's degree and working a full-time job earns 75 cents on every dollar earned by a man with a master's degree and working a full-time job;

WHEREAS, almost 60 percent of working women would earn more if there were pay equity and nearly 65.9 percent of working single mothers would receive a pay increase;

WHEREAS, a 2017 study by the Institute for Women's Policy Research found that providing equal pay to women with similar education and hours of work as their male counterparts would cut poverty among working women by half, and, remarkably, this is true whether women are married, single mothers, or single women living on their own;

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WHEREAS, the same study found that gender pay equality for women would generate \$512.6 billion in additional income for the U.S. economy, comparable to 2.8 percent of the gross domestic product from 2016;

WHEREAS, the American Association of University Women found that half of all states pay women less than 80 percent of what their male counterparts make; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, the U.S. Senate unsuccessfully sought to reduce gender pay inequality by amending the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, also known as the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would have more narrowly defined legitimate reasons for pay disparities between women and men, and given more effective remedies for victims of gender based wage discrimination.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) urges the United States Congress to take additional steps towards reducing gender pay inequality for all Americans, because when men and women are paid equally for equal work, the U.S. economy is improved, and the poverty rate for working women is cut significantly;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL urges Congress to reintroduce and pass legislation that will promote gender pay equality, thus helping to increase economic self-sufficiency among women; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, members of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, and other federal and state government officials as appropriate.

**SPONSOR: Senator Raumesh Akbari (TN)**

**Committee of Jurisdiction: Children, Youth, and Families Policy Committee**

**Certified by Committee Co-Chairs: Representative Robin Shackleford (IN) and Representative Peablin Warren (AL)**

**Ratified in Plenary Session: Ratification Date is December 6, 2019**

**Ratification is certified by: Representative Gilda Cobb-Hunter (SC), President**