

Equal Pay Day not Cause for Celebration

Written by GBP Staff

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Instead it should be used as a call to bring greater freedom to women in the workplace.

MADISON - Saying Equal Pay Day is not cause for celebration, State Senator Dave Hansen (D-Green Bay), said instead it should be used as a call to action by those who believe women should have the same freedom to work, succeed and earn good, family-supporting wages as their male counterparts.

“Equal Pay Day is a day for recognizing the critical role women play in the workplace, in our families and in our society and the need for society in return to value them,” said Senator Hansen author of the Equal Pay Enforcement Act. “Wisconsin cannot truly succeed if Wisconsin women are not allowed the freedom to pursue their jobs and careers and be fairly compensated for their efforts the same as men.”

Women typically earn only 77 cents on the dollar compared to men doing the same work. Equal Pay Day marks on average the length of time a woman has to work into this year to equal the amount in wages that a man made last year.

“In a just and free society men and women are equal partners, entitled to the same opportunities to succeed and be fairly compensated for their work. If Republicans are truly interested in earning the support of women, they should reinstate the Equal Pay Enforcement Act so women can truly earn the same as men for doing the same work.”

In 2009, after years of effort, the Wisconsin Legislature passed the Equal Pay Enforcement Act. After it became law research showed Wisconsin was one of a handful of states that saw the gap between women’s and men’s pay narrow. After the law was passed Wisconsin jumped 12 spots in the gender earnings parity ranking between 2009 and 2010, from 36th to 24th.

“We saw firsthand what can happen when women are given the freedom to work, earn a living

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and succeed in the workplace the same as men. Our families are better for it, our economy is better for it and our state is better for it.”

Unfortunately, despite the new law’s success, during the 2011-12 Legislative Session the Republican majority passed and Governor Walker signed a law repealing the Equal Pay Enforcement Act.

“Over and over here in Wisconsin we have seen firsthand who is on the side of average citizens and who is on the side of corporate employers. Whether we’re talking about equal pay for women, increasing the minimum wage or making sure all employees have reasonable time off to care for their health and the health of their families, Republicans have consistently chosen to side with the wealthy and corporations over working families and the middle class.”