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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

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GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

June 10, 2013

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner,

As you know, today marks the 50th anniversary of President John F. Kennedy signing the Equal Pay Act into law – a watershed moment for equality in the workplace that has helped reduce, but not completely close, the wage gap that exists between men and women in the United States.

Fifty years ago, women who were working full-time, year-round made 59 cents on average for every dollar earned by men. Today, that figure stands at 77 cents – clearly we need to do more to eliminate this gap and finish the work that Congress and President Kennedy started in 1963.

In Rhode Island's First Congressional District, the gap stands at 83 cents – better than the average but still not good enough. Since I was first elected to Congress, I have heard from dozens of Rhode Islanders who want to know when the federal government will finally update the Equal Pay Act and provide women with the resources they need to effectively fight wage discrimination.

That's why I am writing to you today and urging that you hold a vote on the Paycheck Fairness Act – legislation that would close loopholes in the Equal Pay Act and ensure that employees are not punished for sharing information on their salaries with coworkers.

This bill, which passed the House in the 111th Congress and has garnered the support of 206 co-sponsors in the 113th Congress, would help to ensure that working women are always treated based on their merits as employees.

In 2013, there is no reason that women should either continue earning less than men in the workplace or still lack the appropriate resources to fight discrimination. I urge you to expedite consideration of the Paycheck Fairness Act to provide long-overdue protections for working women.

My best always,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David N. Cicilline".

David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress