



May 18, 2009

Hon. Malcolm A. Smith  
New York State Senate Majority Leader  
909 Legislative Office Building  
Albany, NY 12247

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Dear Majority Leader Smith:

I am writing on behalf of the Women's City Club of New York (WCC). As the session is winding down, we urge you to conference the NYS Fair Pay Act [S.955] very soon. Already 24 Senators have signed as co-sponsors of the bill showing wide support because this is a family pocketbook issue that transcends gender, income levels and race, and can help lift many out of poverty which is particularly important in these difficult economic times. Passage of S.955 would be good news coming from Albany, after many months of grim news and a definite accomplishment to point to.

The current equal pay laws, even the Ledbetter Act, apply only to jobs within the same job title, so thousands of employees who work in job titles where women and people of color predominate are underpaid. Passage of the NYS Fair Pay Act will protect employees in both the public and private sectors in NYS from unfair pay. This bill will also protect workers when they discuss salary information, thus creating more transparency in wage issues.

Research has shown that:

- Across occupations, pay equity has the potential to reduce the percentage of workers earning poverty level wages for a family of 3 by 48.8% for women of color and 40% for white women, and by 37.1% for men of color and 31.8% for white men (Lapidus & Figart 1998).
- Among the working poor in occupations dominated by people of color, pay equity would raise 60% of them above the poverty threshold for a family of 3, and in occupations dominated by women of color, 52% would be lifted above the poverty level for a family of 3 (Lapidus & Figart 1998). Under pay equity, men and women of color would earn approximately 94% of what white men typically earn (Stone & Kuperberg 2005).

**Please use the power of your office to get the NYS Fair Pay Act (S.955) conferenced and onto the Senate floor for passage.** Thank you for your help to make New York a better place to work and live.

Sincerely,

Ruth E. Acker  
President

Marjorie Ives  
Chair, Women's Issues Committee