

opened criminal investigations against at least eight companies in connection with last year's fires, but there has yet to be a single high-profile case to get to court."

"The government in Jakarta, the capital, has recently banned the draining and clearing of all peatland for agricultural use, and it has ordered provincial governments to adopt better fire suppression methods. But it has not publicly responded to calls for better prevention, such as cracking down on slash-and-burn operations by large palm oil companies."

It would be an unforgiveable tragedy if any species of great apes were to become extinct in the wild. They are all endangered—gorillas, chimpanzees, bonobos, and orangutans. We need to do whatever is necessary to build international support for protecting these animals, and to help countries like Indonesia enforce its laws to stop the destruction of tropical forests on which these and so many other species depend.

NATIONAL EQUAL PAY DAY

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today is Equal Pay Day, and I wish to speak about the importance of ensuring women in this country are paid fairly.

April 12—102 days into the year—marks the day that women's wages catch up to men's wages from the previous year. That is unacceptable. We can do better.

Last week, the national women's soccer team filed a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The complaint states that women are paid just 40 percent of what men are paid—despite the fact that our women's soccer team has long been one of the best in the world. The team has won four of the last five Olympic Gold Medals and three of the last seven World Cups. Women soccer players are even given smaller per-diems when they travel. Women receive \$50 per day while men receive \$62.50 per day. This shows the pervasiveness of wage discrimination in this country. The most successful women's soccer team in the world still earns just 40 cents for every dollar earned by men.

Next, I would like to turn to my home State. Women in California are paid just 84 cents for every dollar earned by men. While better than the national average of 79 cents, California's wage gap totals nearly \$40 billion each year in lost wages. That is \$8,053 for every woman who works full time.

This gap has a significant effect on the economic security of working families—40 percent of women are the primary or sole breadwinners in their families. That means 40 percent of families depend on women's wages to pay the bills. Every dollar women lose to the wage gap makes a difference.

Here are just a few examples of what the wage gap costs families: \$8,000 is about 1 year's worth of groceries for a

family of four, 4 months of mortgage and utility payments, or 6 months of rent.

And the wage gap is even bigger for African-American and Latino women. African-American women are paid just 63 cents. Hispanic women are paid just 43 cents. We can't allow this discrimination to continue.

Next, I would like to address a longstanding myth about the wage gap. Some say it exists only because women choose lower-paying professions than men. For example, women are the vast majority of child care and home health care workers. This is a myth.

Even when women perform the same job as men, with the same level of education, the wage gap persists. For example, men who are nurses are paid \$5,000 more than women, even though only 10 percent of nurses are men.

We need to do more to close the wage gap, and I am very proud that California is leading the way. A landmark bill signed by Governor Jerry Brown last year protects women from retaliation if they ask how their pay compares to their colleagues. This is important because secrecy contributes to the wage gap. Women often don't know they are being paid substantially less than men.

The bill also requires employers to justify higher wages for men who perform the same jobs as women.

This law is a big step to improve the economic security of California families.

While it is good news that States are addressing this issue, the wage gap is a national problem. It affects all American women, and the Senate must take action. The Paycheck Fairness Act is a good place to start. I have long supported this bill, which is sponsored by Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI.

The Paycheck Fairness Act is similar to the new California law. It would protect women from retaliation and require employers to justify paying women less than men for the same job.

The bill would also make it easier for women to take legal action under the Equal Pay Act, including class action lawsuits.

Under current law, it is significantly easier to recoup lost wages if they were denied through other discriminatory practices—like failure to pay overtime.

Lastly, the bill would create a training program to help women learn how to negotiate their salaries.

This is a commonsense bill, and one that is long overdue.

In closing, President John F. Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act in 1963. At the time, women made 59 cents for every dollar earned by men. In 53 years, we have only closed the gap by 16 cents. At this rate, it won't be eliminated until 2059.

Women and their families deserve better, and they can't afford to wait that long.

I strongly urge the Senate to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CALIFORNIA CASUALTIES

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to four servicemembers from California or based in California who have died while serving our country in Operation Freedom's Sentinel and in Operation Inherent Resolve since I last entered names into the RECORD.

TSgt Anthony E. Salazar, 40, of Hermosa Beach, CA, died April 13, 2015, at an air base in southwest Asia in a noncombat related incident. Technical Sergeant Salazar was assigned to the 577th Expeditionary Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force Squadron, 1st Expeditionary Civil Engineer Group, U.S. Air Forces Central Command.

CAPT Jonathan J. Golden, 33, of Camarillo, CA, died October 2, 2015, in the crash of a C-130J Super Hercules aircraft at Jalalabad Airfield, Afghanistan. Captain Golden was assigned to the 39th Airlift Squadron, Dyess Air Force Base, TX.

SGT Joseph F. Stifter, 30, of Glendale, CA, died January 28, 2016, at Al Asad Airbase, Al Anbar Province, Iraq, from wounds suffered when his armored HMMWV was involved in a roll-over accident. Sergeant Stifter was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Riley, KS.

SSgt Louis F. Cardin, of Temecula, CA, died March 19, 2016, in northern Iraq, from wounds suffered when the enemy attacked his unit with rocket fire. Staff Sergeant Cardin was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit, Camp Lejeune, NC.

37TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF THE TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the 37th anniversary of the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act, TRA. Since the TRA was signed into law in 1979, the U.S.-Taiwan bilateral relationship has continued to expand, growing into an important friendship as trading partners and allies. In 2015, Taiwan became the United States' ninth largest trading partner and our seventh largest destination for agricultural exports. My home State of Arkansas has seen firsthand the benefit of these close commercial partnerships with Taiwan.

As a member of the Senate Taiwan Caucus, I support efforts to further strengthen and deepen the bonds between the people of the United States and Taiwan, and I am not alone in these efforts. During the past 8 years, 40 State legislative chambers have passed resolutions in support of U.S.-Taiwan trade and a close cultural relationship. As Taiwan President Ma Ying-jeou recently pointed out, U.S.-Taiwan relations have never been better, and I look forward to working with President-elect Tsai Ing-wen to ensure this continues to be the case.