

ADDRESSING THE SITUATION IN
KAZAKHSTAN CONCERNING
BERGEI RYSKALIYEV

HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 2, 2019

Mr. HUNTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my concern with what appears to be a politically motivated prosecution of the former governor of Kazakhstan's western Atyrau region, Bergei Ryskaliyev, as well as 22 other people, including Ryskaliyev's family members and colleagues from the western oil-producing region of the country. This sham trial appears to be the next step in the Kazakh regime's efforts to silence legitimate calls of local citizens demanding oil revenue transparency, safe working conditions, and fair pay. Just not long ago, in the country's western oil-producing city of Zhanaozen, a peaceful demonstration was crushed by Kazakh police, who opened fire on the protestors, resulting in at least 16 people killed.

The fact that Kazakhstan has a long history of discrediting and even criminally prosecuting members of the ruling elite when they are perceived to be gaining too much power and prominence, which was the case with Mr. Ryskaliyev during his time in office, points to the possibility of political motivation behind the prosecution. Additionally, independent NGOs and western legal experts who observed the trial point out that there has not been sufficient evidence to justify the prejudicial findings regarding Mr. Ryskaliyev, essentially denying him a fundamental human right to a fair trial. The U.S. State Department Human Rights Reports for 2018 corroborates that there is no such thing as judicial independence in Kazakhstan and corruption is evident at every stage of the judicial process.

As Kazakhstan is aspiring to be a strategic partner of the United States, I call on my colleagues to join me in urging the State Department to review the case of Mr. Ryskaliyev and assure that it will be included in our Government's discussions on promoting democracy in this important part of the world.

In light of the resignation of President Nursultan Nazarbayev, the issue of peaceful transition of power with participation of opposition politicians and people previously convicted on politically motivated charges is extremely important.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FAIR PAY
ACT OF 2019

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 2, 2019

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today is Equal Pay Day, which marks the number of additional days a woman must work to earn what a man earned the prior year. The 1963 Equal Pay Act (EPA), the first of the great civil rights statutes of the 1960s, has grown creaky with age and needs updating to reflect the new workforce, in which women work almost as much as men.

The best case for a stronger and updated EPA occurred here in the Congress in 2003,

when female custodians in the House and Senate won an EPA case after showing that female workers were paid a dollar less per hour for doing the same or similar work as males. Had these women not been represented by their union, they would have had an almost impossible task in using the rules for bringing and sustaining an EPA class action lawsuit.

Based on my own experience as the first woman to chair the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, I again introduce the Fair Pay Act (FPA) on behalf of the average female worker, who is often first steered to, and then locked into, jobs with wages that are deeply influenced by the gender of individuals who have traditionally held such jobs. Much of the wage inequality women experience today is because of employer-steering and deeply rooted wage stereotypes, which result in wages paid according to gender and not according to the skill necessary to do the job. I introduce the FPA because the pay disparity most women face today stems mainly from the segregation of women and men in different jobs and paying women in female-dominated jobs systematically less. Two-thirds of white women and three quarters of African-American women work in just three areas: sales/clerical, service and factories. We need more aggressive strategies to break through the societal barriers present throughout history the world over, as well as employer-steering based on gender, which is as old as paid employment itself.

The FPA requires that if men and women are doing comparable work, they are to be paid comparable wages. If a woman, for example, is an emergency services operator, a female-dominated profession, she should not be paid less than a fire dispatcher, a male-dominated profession, simply because each of these jobs has been dominated by one sex. If a woman is a social worker, a traditionally female occupation, she should not earn less than a probation officer, a traditionally male job, simply because of the gender associated with each of these jobs.

The FPA, like the EPA, will not tamper with the legal burden. Under the FPA, as under the EPA, the burden will be on the plaintiff to prove discrimination. The plaintiff must show that the reason for the disparate treatment is gender discrimination, not legitimate market factors.

Remedies to achieve comparable pay for men and women are not radical or unprecedented. State governments, in red and blue states alike, have shown that it is possible to eliminate the part of the pay gap that is due to discrimination. Twenty state governments have adjusted wages for female-dominated professions, raising pay for teachers, nurses, clerical workers, librarians, and other female-dominated jobs that paid less than comparable male-dominated jobs. Minnesota, for example, implemented a pay equity plan when it found that traditionally female jobs paid 20 percent less than comparable traditionally male jobs. There may well be some portion of a gender wage gap that is traceable to market factors, but 20 states have shown that you can tackle the gender discrimination-based wage gap without interfering in the market system. States generally have closed the wage gap over a period of four to five years at a one-time cost of no more than three to four percent of payroll.

In addition, many female workers routinely achieve pay equity through collective bargaining, and countless employers provide it on their own as they see women shifting out of vital female-dominated occupations as a result of the shortage of skilled workers, as well as because of the unfairness to women. Unequal pay has been built into the way women have been treated since Adam and Eve. To dislodge such deep-seated and pervasive treatment, we must go to the source, the traditionally female occupations, where pay is linked with gender and always has been.

CELEBRATING KATHLEEN M.
WILSON'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. AYANNA PRESSLEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 2, 2019

Ms. PRESSLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Kathleen M. Wilson and wish her a happy 100th birthday. Mrs. Wilson, a longtime resident of Boston and Massachusetts's 7th District, is known for her youthful spirit, her volunteerism, her sense of humor, uncontrollable laugh and her love of dance.

Mrs. Wilson has spent over four decades as a public servant and a strong member of our community. She stood as the pinnacle of equality, working tirelessly with several women from Roxbury to fight segregation in the Boston Public Schools and demand a quality education for children in Boston's black community. Kay, the nickname given to her by her late husband and love of her life, regularly boarded helicopters and small service planes to deliver pay and supplies to workers in devastated areas after joining the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in her retirement.

Mrs. Wilson is a mother of two, grandmother of three, great-grandmother of three, and beloved by all of them. She remains active with the Goldenaires, The Urban League Guild, AARP of Boston, Seniors on the Move and The Swingers at 12th Baptist Church. No matter who Mrs. Wilson meets, they do not believe that she is 100 years young.

LILA DANIELS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 2, 2019

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Lila Daniels for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Lila Daniels is a student at Three Creeks K-8 and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Lila Daniels is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Lila Daniels for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge