

Calendar No. 46

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**H. R. 7**

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 19, 2021

Received; read the first time

APRIL 20, 2021

Read the second time and placed on the calendar

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**AN ACT**

To amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Paycheck Fairness  
5 Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. ENHANCED ENFORCEMENT OF EQUAL PAY RE-**  
2 **QUIREMENTS.**

3 (a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 3 of the Fair Labor  
4 Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 203) is amended by  
5 adding at the end the following:

6 “(z) ‘Sex’ includes—

7 “(1) pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical  
8 condition;

9 “(2) sexual orientation or gender identity; and

10 “(3) sex characteristics, including intersex  
11 traits.

12 “(aa) ‘Sexual orientation’ includes homosexuality,  
13 heterosexuality, and bisexuality.

14 “(bb) ‘Gender identity’ means the gender-related  
15 identity, appearance, mannerisms, or other gender-related  
16 characteristics of an individual, regardless of the individ-  
17 ual’s designated sex at birth.”.

18 (b) BONA FIDE FACTOR DEFENSE AND MODIFICA-  
19 TION OF SAME ESTABLISHMENT REQUIREMENT.—Section  
20 6(d)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29  
21 U.S.C. 206(d)(1)) is amended—

22 (1) by striking “No employer having” and in-  
23 sserting “(A) No employer having”;

24 (2) by striking “the opposite” and inserting  
25 “another”;

1           (3) by striking “any other factor other than  
2           sex” and inserting “a bona fide factor other than  
3           sex, such as education, training, or experience”; and

4           (4) by inserting at the end the following:

5           “(B) The bona fide factor defense described in  
6           subparagraph (A)(iv) shall apply only if the em-  
7           ployer demonstrates that such factor (i) is not based  
8           upon or derived from a sex-based differential in com-  
9           pensation; (ii) is job-related with respect to the posi-  
10          tion in question; (iii) is consistent with business ne-  
11          cessity; and (iv) accounts for the entire differential  
12          in compensation at issue. Such defense shall not  
13          apply where the employee demonstrates that an al-  
14          ternative employment practice exists that would  
15          serve the same business purpose without producing  
16          such differential and that the employer has refused  
17          to adopt such alternative practice.

18          “(C) For purposes of subparagraph (A), em-  
19          ployees shall be deemed to work in the same estab-  
20          lishment if the employees work for the same em-  
21          ployer at workplaces located in the same county or  
22          similar political subdivision of a State. The pre-  
23          ceding sentence shall not be construed as limiting  
24          broader applications of the term ‘establishment’ con-

1       sistent with rules prescribed or guidance issued by  
2       the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.”.

3       (c) NONRETALIATION PROVISION.—Section 15 of the  
4 Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 215) is  
5 amended—

6           (1) in subsection (a)—

7               (A) in paragraph (3), by striking “em-  
8               ployee has filed” and all that follows and insert-  
9               ing “employee—

10               “(A) has made a charge or filed any com-  
11               plaint or instituted or caused to be instituted  
12               any investigation, proceeding, hearing, or action  
13               under or related to this Act, including an inves-  
14               tigation conducted by the employer, or has tes-  
15               tified or is planning to testify or has assisted or  
16               participated in any manner in any such inves-  
17               tigation, proceeding, hearing or action, or has  
18               served or is planning to serve on an industry  
19               committee;

20               “(B) has opposed any practice made un-  
21               lawful by this Act; or

22               “(C) has inquired about, discussed, or dis-  
23               closed the wages of the employee or another  
24               employee (such as by inquiring or discussing

1 with the employer why the wages of the em-  
2 ployee are set at a certain rate or salary);”;

3 (B) in paragraph (5), by striking the pe-  
4 riod at the end and inserting “; or”; and

5 (C) by adding at the end the following:

6 “(6) to require an employee to sign a contract  
7 or waiver that would prohibit the employee from dis-  
8 closing information about the employee’s wages.”;  
9 and

10 (2) by adding at the end the following:

11 “(c) Subsection (a)(3)(C) shall not apply to instances  
12 in which an employee who has access to the wage informa-  
13 tion of other employees as a part of such employee’s essen-  
14 tial job functions discloses the wages of such other employ-  
15 ees to individuals who do not otherwise have access to such  
16 information, unless such disclosure is in response to a  
17 complaint or charge or in furtherance of an investigation,  
18 proceeding, hearing, or action under section 6(d), includ-  
19 ing an investigation conducted by the employer. Nothing  
20 in this subsection shall be construed to limit the rights  
21 of an employee provided under any other provision of  
22 law.”.

23 (d) ENHANCED PENALTIES.—Section 16(b) of the  
24 Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 216(b)) is  
25 amended—

1           (1) by inserting after the first sentence the fol-  
2           lowing: “Any employer who violates section 6(d), or  
3           who violates the provisions of section 15(a)(3) in re-  
4           lation to section 6(d), shall additionally be liable for  
5           such compensatory damages, or, where the employee  
6           demonstrates that the employer acted with malice or  
7           reckless indifference, punitive damages as may be  
8           appropriate, except that the United States shall not  
9           be liable for punitive damages.”;

10           (2) in the sentence beginning “An action to”,  
11           by striking “the preceding sentences” and inserting  
12           “any of the preceding sentences of this subsection”;

13           (3) in the sentence beginning “No employees  
14           shall”, by striking “No employees” and inserting  
15           “Except with respect to class actions brought to en-  
16           force section 6(d), no employee”;

17           (4) by inserting after the sentence referred to  
18           in paragraph (3), the following: “Notwithstanding  
19           any other provision of Federal law, any action  
20           brought to enforce section 6(d) may be maintained  
21           as a class action as provided by the Federal Rules  
22           of Civil Procedure.”; and

23           (5) in the sentence beginning “The court in”—

24                   (A) by striking “in such action” and in-  
25                   serting “in any action brought to recover the li-

1 ability prescribed in any of the preceding sen-  
2 tences of this subsection”; and

3 (B) by inserting before the period the fol-  
4 lowing: “, including expert fees”.

5 (e) ACTION BY THE SECRETARY.—Section 16(e) of  
6 the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 216(e))  
7 is amended—

8 (1) in the first sentence—

9 (A) by inserting “or, in the case of a viola-  
10 tion of section 6(d), additional compensatory or  
11 punitive damages, as described in subsection  
12 (b),” before “and the agreement”; and

13 (B) by inserting before the period the fol-  
14 lowing: “, or such compensatory or punitive  
15 damages, as appropriate”;

16 (2) in the second sentence, by inserting before  
17 the period the following: “and, in the case of a viola-  
18 tion of section 6(d), additional compensatory or pu-  
19 nitive damages, as described in subsection (b)”;

20 (3) in the third sentence, by striking “the first  
21 sentence” and inserting “the first or second sen-  
22 tence”.

23 (f) ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Equal Opportunity Em-  
25 ployment Commission shall carry out the functions

1 and authorities described in section 1 of Reorganiza-  
2 tion Plan No. 1 of 1978 (92 Stat. 3781; 5 U.S.C.  
3 App.) to enforce and administer the provisions of  
4 section 6(d) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of  
5 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(d)), except that the Secretary  
6 of Labor, through the Office of Federal Contract  
7 Compliance Programs, may also enforce this provi-  
8 sion with respect to Federal contractors, Federal  
9 subcontractors, and federally-assisted construction  
10 contractors, within the jurisdiction of the Office of  
11 Federal Contract Compliance Programs under Exec-  
12 utive Order No. 11246 (42 U.S.C. 2000e note; relat-  
13 ing to equal employment opportunity) or a successor  
14 Executive order.

15 (2) COORDINATION.—The Equal Opportunity  
16 Employment Commission shall issue such regula-  
17 tions as may be necessary to explain and implement  
18 the standards of such section 6(d). The Secretary of  
19 Labor may issue regulations to govern procedures  
20 for enforcement of section 6(d) by the Office of Fed-  
21 eral Contract Compliance Programs. The Secretary  
22 of Labor and the Equal Employment Opportunity  
23 Commission shall establish other coordinating mech-  
24 anisms as may be necessary.



1 **SEC. 3. TRAINING.**

2 The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission  
3 and the Secretary of Labor, acting through the Office of  
4 Federal Contract Compliance Programs, subject to the  
5 availability of funds appropriated under section 11, shall  
6 provide training to employees of the Commission and the  
7 Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs and to  
8 affected individuals and entities on matters involving dis-  
9 crimination in the payment of wages.

10 **SEC. 4. NEGOTIATION SKILLS TRAINING.**

11 (a) NEGOTIATION BIAS TRAINING.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Labor shall  
13 establish a program to award contracts and grants  
14 for the purpose of training employers about the role  
15 that salary negotiation and other inconsistent wage  
16 setting practices can have on allowing bias to enter  
17 compensation.

18 (2) TRAINING TOPICS.—Each training program  
19 established using funds under section (a) shall in-  
20 clude an overview of how structural issues may  
21 cause inequitable earning and advancement opportu-  
22 nities for women and people of color and assist em-  
23 ployers in examining the impact of a range of prac-  
24 tices on such opportunities, including—

1 (A) self-auditing to identify structural  
2 issues that allow bias and inequity to enter  
3 compensation;

4 (B) recruitment of candidates to ensure di-  
5 verse pools of applicants;

6 (C) salary negotiations that result in simi-  
7 larly qualified workers entering at different  
8 rates of pay;

9 (D) internal equity among workers with  
10 similar skills, effort, responsibility and working  
11 conditions;

12 (E) consistent use of market rates and in-  
13 centives driven by industry competitiveness;

14 (F) evaluation of the rate of employee  
15 progress and advancement to higher paid posi-  
16 tions;

17 (G) work assignments that result in great-  
18 er opportunity for advancement;

19 (H) training, development and promotion  
20 opportunities;

21 (I) impact of mid-level or senior level hir-  
22 ing in comparison to wage rates of incumbent  
23 workers;

24 (J) opportunities to win commissions and  
25 bonuses;

1 (K) performance reviews and raises;

2 (L) processes for adjusting pay to address  
3 inconsistency and inequity in compensation; and

4 (M) other topics that research identifies as  
5 a common area for assumptions, bias and in-  
6 equity to impact compensation.

7 (b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Labor,  
9 after consultation with the Secretary of Education,  
10 is authorized to establish and carry out a grant pro-  
11 gram.

12 (2) GRANTS.—In carrying out the program, the  
13 Secretary of Labor may make grants on a competi-  
14 tive basis to eligible entities to carry out negotiation  
15 skills training programs for the purposes of address-  
16 ing pay disparities, including through outreach to  
17 women and girls.

18 (3) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—To be eligible to re-  
19 ceive a grant under this subsection, an entity shall  
20 be a public agency, such as a State, a local govern-  
21 ment in a metropolitan statistical area (as defined  
22 by the Office of Management and Budget), a State  
23 educational agency, or a local educational agency, a  
24 private nonprofit organization, or a community-  
25 based organization.

1           (4) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a  
2           grant under this subsection, an entity shall submit  
3           an application to the Secretary of Labor at such  
4           time, in such manner, and containing such informa-  
5           tion as the Secretary of Labor may require.

6           (5) USE OF FUNDS.—An entity that receives a  
7           grant under this subsection shall use the funds made  
8           available through the grant to carry out an effective  
9           negotiation skills training program for the purposes  
10          described in paragraph (2).

11          (c) INCORPORATING TRAINING INTO EXISTING PRO-  
12          GRAMS.—The Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of  
13          Education shall issue regulations or policy guidance that  
14          provides for integrating the negotiation skills training, to  
15          the extent practicable, into programs authorized under—

16                (1) in the case of the Secretary of Education,  
17                the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of  
18                1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.), the Carl D. Perkins  
19                Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20  
20                U.S.C. 2301 et seq.), the Higher Education Act of  
21                1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.), and other programs  
22                carried out by the Department of Education that the  
23                Secretary of Education determines to be appro-  
24                priate; and

1           (2) in the case of the Secretary of Labor, the  
2       Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29  
3       U.S.C. 3101 et seq.), and other programs carried  
4       out by the Department of Labor that the Secretary  
5       of Labor determines to be appropriate.

6       (d) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the  
7       date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter,  
8       the Secretary of Labor, in consultation with the Secretary  
9       of Education, shall prepare and submit to Congress a re-  
10      port describing the activities conducted under this section  
11      and evaluating the effectiveness of such activities in  
12      achieving the purposes of this section.

13   **SEC. 5. RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND OUTREACH.**

14      (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after  
15      the date of enactment of this Act, and periodically there-  
16      after, the Secretary of Labor shall conduct studies and  
17      provide information to employers, labor organizations, and  
18      the general public concerning the means available to elimi-  
19      nate pay disparities between men and women (including  
20      women who are Asian American, Black or African-Amer-  
21      ican, Hispanic American or Latino, Native American or  
22      Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and  
23      White American), including—

24           (1) conducting and promoting research to de-  
25      velop the means to correct expeditiously the condi-

1 tions leading to the pay disparities, with specific at-  
2 tention paid to women and girls from historically  
3 underrepresented and minority groups;

4 (2) publishing and otherwise making available  
5 to employers, labor organizations, professional asso-  
6 ciations, educational institutions, the media, and the  
7 general public the findings resulting from studies  
8 and other materials, relating to eliminating the pay  
9 disparities;

10 (3) sponsoring and assisting State, local, and  
11 community informational and educational programs;

12 (4) providing information to employers, labor  
13 organizations, professional associations, and other  
14 interested persons on the means of eliminating the  
15 pay disparities; and

16 (5) recognizing and promoting the achievements  
17 of employers, labor organizations, and professional  
18 associations that have worked to eliminate the pay  
19 disparities.

20 (b) RESEARCH ON GENDER PAY GAP IN TEENAGE  
21 LABOR FORCE.—

22 (1) RESEARCH REVIEW.—Not later than 12  
23 months after the date of the enactment of this Act,  
24 the Secretary of Labor, acting through the Director  
25 of the Women’s Bureau, shall conduct a review and

1       develop a synthesis of research on the gender wage  
2       gap among younger workers existing as of the date  
3       of enactment of this Act, and shall make such review  
4       and synthesis available on a publicly accessible  
5       website of the Department of Labor.

6               (2) **AUTHORITY TO COMMISSION STUDIES.**—Not  
7       later than 36 months after the date of the enact-  
8       ment of this Act, the Secretary of Labor, acting  
9       through the Director of the Women’s Bureau, shall  
10      request proposals and commission studies that can  
11      advance knowledge on the gender wage gap among  
12      younger workers, and shall make such studies avail-  
13      able on a publicly accessible website of the Depart-  
14      ment of Labor.

15 **SEC. 6. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIONAL AWARD FOR**  
16 **PAY EQUITY IN THE WORKPLACE.**

17       (a) **IN GENERAL.**—There is established the National  
18      Award for Pay Equity in the Workplace, which shall be  
19      awarded by the Secretary of Labor in consultation with  
20      the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, on an  
21      annual basis, to an employer to encourage proactive ef-  
22      forts to comply with section 6(d) of the Fair Labor Stand-  
23      ards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(d)), as amended by this  
24      Act.

1 (b) CRITERIA FOR QUALIFICATION.—The Secretary  
2 of Labor, in consultation with the Equal Employment Op-  
3 portunity Commission, shall—

4 (1) set criteria for receipt of the award, includ-  
5 ing a requirement that an employer has made sub-  
6 stantial effort to eliminate pay disparities between  
7 men and women and deserves special recognition as  
8 a consequence of such effort; and

9 (2) establish procedures for the application and  
10 presentation of the award.

11 (c) BUSINESS.—In this section, the term “employer”  
12 includes—

13 (1)(A) a corporation, including a nonprofit cor-  
14 poration;

15 (B) a partnership;

16 (C) a professional association;

17 (D) a labor organization; and

18 (E) a business entity similar to an entity de-  
19 scribed in any of subparagraphs (A) through (D);

20 (2) an entity carrying out an education referral  
21 program, a training program, such as an apprentice-  
22 ship or management training program, or a similar  
23 program; and



1           (3) an entity carrying out a joint program,  
2           formed by a combination of any entities described in  
3           paragraph (1) or (2).

4 **SEC. 7. COLLECTION OF PAY INFORMATION BY THE EQUAL**  
5 **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION.**

6           Section 709 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42  
7 U.S.C. 2000e–8) is amended by adding at the end the fol-  
8 lowing:

9           “(f)(1) Not later than 24 months after the date of  
10 enactment of this subsection, the Commission shall pro-  
11 vide for the annual collection from employers of compensa-  
12 tion data disaggregated by the sex, race, and national ori-  
13 gin of employees. The Commission may also require em-  
14 ployers to submit other employment-related data (includ-  
15 ing hiring, termination, and promotion data) so  
16 disaggregated.

17           “(2) In carrying out paragraph (1), the Commission  
18 shall have as its primary consideration the most effective  
19 and efficient means for enhancing the enforcement of Fed-  
20 eral laws prohibiting pay discrimination. The Commission  
21 shall also consider factors including the imposition of bur-  
22 dens on employers, the frequency of required reports (in-  
23 cluding the size of employers required to prepare reports),  
24 appropriate protections for maintaining data confiden-  
25 tiality, and the most effective format to report such data.

1       “(3)(A) For each 12-month reporting period for an  
2 employer, the data collected under paragraph (1) shall in-  
3 clude compensation data disaggregated by the categories  
4 described in subparagraph (E).

5       “(B) For the purposes of collecting the disaggregated  
6 compensation data described in subparagraph (A), the  
7 Commission may use compensation ranges reporting—

8           “(i) the number of employees of the employer  
9 who earn compensation in an amount that falls with-  
10 in such compensation range; and

11          “(ii) the total number of hours worked by such  
12 employees.

13       “(C) If the Commission uses compensation ranges to  
14 collect the pay data described in subparagraph (A), the  
15 Commission may adjust such compensation ranges—

16           “(i) if the Commission determines that such ad-  
17 justment is necessary to enhance enforcement of  
18 Federal laws prohibiting pay discrimination; or

19          “(ii) for inflation, in consultation with the Bu-  
20 reau of Labor Statistics.

21       “(D) In collecting data described in subparagraph  
22 (A)(ii), the Commission may provide that, with respect to  
23 an employee who the employer is not required to com-  
24 pensate for overtime employment under section 7 of the

1 Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 207), an  
2 employer may report—

3 “(i) in the case of a full-time employee, that  
4 such employee works 40 hours per week, and in the  
5 case of a part-time employee, that such employee  
6 works 20 hours per week; or

7 “(ii) the actual number of hours worked by  
8 such employee.

9 “(E) The categories described in this subparagraph  
10 shall be determined by the Commission and shall in-  
11 clude—

12 “(i) race;

13 “(ii) national origin;

14 “(iii) sex; and

15 “(iv) job categories, including the job categories  
16 described in the instructions for the Equal Employ-  
17 ment Opportunity Employer Information Report  
18 EEO-1, as in effect on the date of the enactment  
19 of this subsection.

20 “(F) The Commission shall use the compensation  
21 data collected under paragraph (1)—

22 “(i) to enhance—

23 “(I) the investigation of charges filed  
24 under section 706 or section 6(d) of the Fair

1 Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C.  
2 206(d)); and

3 “(II) the allocation of resources to inves-  
4 tigate such charges; and

5 “(ii) for any other purpose that the Commission  
6 determines appropriate.

7 “(G) The Commission shall at 18-month intervals  
8 make publicly available aggregate compensation data col-  
9 lected under paragraph (1) for the categories described in  
10 subparagraph (E), disaggregated by industry, occupation,  
11 and core based statistical area (as defined by the Office  
12 of Management and Budget).

13 “(4) The compensation data under paragraph (1)  
14 shall be collected from each employer that—

15 “(A) is a private employer that has 100 or  
16 more employees, including such an employer that is  
17 a contractor with the Federal Government, or a sub-  
18 contractor at any tier thereof; or

19 “(B) the Commission determines appropriate.”.

20 **SEC. 8. REINSTATEMENT OF PAY EQUITY PROGRAMS AND**  
21 **PAY EQUITY DATA COLLECTION.**

22 (a) BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS DATA COLLEC-  
23 TION.—The Commissioner of Labor Statistics shall con-  
24 tinue to collect data on women workers in the Current  
25 Employment Statistics survey.

1           (b) OFFICE OF FEDERAL CONTRACT COMPLIANCE  
2 PROGRAMS INITIATIVES.—The Director of the Office of  
3 Federal Contract Compliance Programs shall collect com-  
4 pensation data and other employment-related data (in-  
5 cluding, hiring, termination, and promotion data) by de-  
6 mographics and designate not less than half of all non-  
7 construction contractors each year to prepare and file such  
8 data, and shall review and utilize the responses to such  
9 data to identify contractors for further evaluation and for  
10 other enforcement purposes as appropriate.

11           (c) DEPARTMENT OF LABOR DISTRIBUTION OF  
12 WAGE DISCRIMINATION INFORMATION.—The Secretary of  
13 Labor shall make readily available (in print, on the De-  
14 partment of Labor website, and through any other forum  
15 that the Department may use to distribute compensation  
16 discrimination information), accurate information on com-  
17 pensation discrimination, including statistics, explanations  
18 of employee rights, historical analyses of such discrimina-  
19 tion, instructions for employers on compliance, and any  
20 other information that will assist the public in under-  
21 standing and addressing such discrimination.

1 **SEC. 9. PROHIBITIONS RELATING TO PROSPECTIVE EM-**  
2 **PLOYEES' SALARY AND BENEFIT HISTORY.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Fair Labor Standards Act of  
4 1938 (29 U.S.C. 201 et seq.) is amended by inserting  
5 after section 7 the following new section:

6 **“SEC. 8. REQUIREMENTS AND PROHIBITIONS RELATING TO**  
7 **WAGE, SALARY, AND BENEFIT HISTORY.**

8 “(a) IN GENERAL.—It shall be an unlawful practice  
9 for an employer to—

10 “(1) rely on the wage history of a prospective  
11 employee in considering the prospective employee for  
12 employment, including requiring that a prospective  
13 employee’s prior wages satisfy minimum or max-  
14 imum criteria as a condition of being considered for  
15 employment;

16 “(2) rely on the wage history of a prospective  
17 employee in determining the wages for such prospec-  
18 tive employee, except that an employer may rely on  
19 wage history if it is voluntarily provided by a pro-  
20 spective employee, after the employer makes an offer  
21 of employment with an offer of compensation to the  
22 prospective employee, to support a wage higher than  
23 the wage offered by the employer;

24 “(3) seek from a prospective employee or any  
25 current or former employer the wage history of the  
26 prospective employee, except that an employer may

1 seek to confirm prior wage information only after an  
2 offer of employment with compensation has been  
3 made to the prospective employee and the prospec-  
4 tive employee responds to the offer by providing  
5 prior wage information to support a wage higher  
6 than that offered by the employer; or

7 “(4) discharge or in any other manner retaliate  
8 against any employee or prospective employee be-  
9 cause the employee or prospective employee—

10 “(A) opposed any act or practice made un-  
11 lawful by this section; or

12 “(B) took an action for which discrimina-  
13 tion is forbidden under section 15(a)(3).

14 “(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ‘wage  
15 history’ means the wages paid to the prospective employee  
16 by the prospective employee’s current employer or previous  
17 employer.”.

18 (b) PENALTIES.—Section 16 of such Act (29 U.S.C.  
19 216) is amended by adding at the end the following new  
20 subsection:

21 “(f)(1) Any person who violates the provisions of sec-  
22 tion 8 shall—

23 “(A) be subject to a civil penalty of \$5,000 for  
24 a first offense, increased by an additional \$1,000 for  
25 each subsequent offense, not to exceed \$10,000; and

1           “(B) be liable to each employee or prospective  
2           employee who was the subject of the violation for  
3           special damages not to exceed \$10,000 plus attor-  
4           neys’ fees, and shall be subject to such injunctive re-  
5           lief as may be appropriate.

6           “(2) An action to recover the liability described in  
7           paragraph (1)(B) may be maintained against any em-  
8           ployer (including a public agency) in any Federal or State  
9           court of competent jurisdiction by any one or more em-  
10          ployees or prospective employees for and on behalf of—

11           “(A) the employees or prospective employees;  
12          and

13           “(B) other employees or prospective employees  
14          similarly situated.”.

15 **SEC. 10. NATIONAL EQUAL PAY ENFORCEMENT TASK**  
16 **FORCE.**

17          (a) **IN GENERAL.**—There is established the National  
18 Equal Pay Enforcement Task Force, consisting of rep-  
19 resentatives from the Equal Employment Opportunity  
20 Commission, the Department of Justice, the Department  
21 of Labor, and the Office of Personnel Management.

22          (b) **MISSION.**—In order to improve compliance, public  
23 education, and enforcement of equal pay laws, the Na-  
24 tional Equal Pay Enforcement Task Force will ensure that



1 the agencies in subsection (a) are coordinating efforts and  
2 limiting potential gaps in enforcement.

3 (c) DUTIES.—The National Equal Pay Enforcement  
4 Task Force shall investigate challenges related to pay in-  
5 equity pursuant to its mission in subsection (b), advance  
6 recommendations to address those challenges, and create  
7 action plans to implement the recommendations.

8 **SEC. 11. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

9 (a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
10 are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be  
11 necessary to carry out this Act.

12 (b) PROHIBITION ON EARMARKS.—None of the funds  
13 appropriated pursuant to subsection (a) for purposes of  
14 the grant program in section 5 of this Act may be used  
15 for a congressional earmark as defined in clause 9(e) of  
16 rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

17 **SEC. 12. SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE.**

18 (a) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This Act and the amend-  
19 ments made by this Act shall take effect on the date that  
20 is 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act.

21 (b) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MATERIALS.—The Sec-  
22 retary of Labor and the Commissioner of the Equal Em-  
23 ployment Opportunity Commission shall jointly develop  
24 technical assistance material to assist small enterprises in

1 complying with the requirements of this Act and the  
2 amendments made by this Act.

3 (c) SMALL BUSINESSES.—A small enterprise shall be  
4 exempt from the provisions of this Act, and the amend-  
5 ments made by this Act, to the same extent that such en-  
6 terprise is exempt from the requirements of the Fair  
7 Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 201 et seq.) pur-  
8 suant to clauses (i) and (ii) of section 3(s)(1)(A) of such  
9 Act (29 U.S.C. 203(s)(1)(A)).

10 **SEC. 13. NOTICE REQUIREMENTS.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—Each employer shall post and  
12 keep posted, in conspicuous places on the premises of the  
13 employer where notices to employees are customarily post-  
14 ed, a notice, to be prepared or approved by the Equal Em-  
15 ployment Opportunity Commission and the Secretary of  
16 Labor, of the requirements described in this Act (or the  
17 amendments made by such Act).

18 (b) RELATION TO EXISTING NOTICES.—The notice  
19 under subsection (a) may be incorporated into notices re-  
20 quired of the employer as of the date of enactment of this  
21 Act.

22 (c) DIGITAL NOTICE.—With respect to the notice  
23 under subsection (a), each employer shall—

24 (1) post electronic copies of the notice on an in-  
25 ternal website to which employees have access; and

1           (2) notify employees on such internal website of  
2           the location of the place on the premises where the  
3           notice is posted.

4 **SEC. 14. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**

5           Nothing in this Act, or in any amendments made by  
6 this Act, shall affect the obligation of employers and em-  
7 ployees to fully comply with all applicable immigration  
8 laws, including being subject to any penalties, fines, or  
9 other sanctions.

10 **SEC. 15. SEVERABILITY.**

11           If any provision of this Act, an amendment made by  
12 this Act, or the application of that provision or amend-  
13 ment to particular persons or circumstances is held invalid  
14 or found to be unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act,  
15 the amendments made by this Act, or the application of  
16 that provision to other persons or circumstances shall not  
17 be affected.

Passed the House of Representatives April 15, 2021.

Attest:                           CHERYL L. JOHNSON,  
*Clerk.*

**Calendar No. 46**

117<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
1<sup>ST</sup> Session

**H. R. 7**

**AN ACT**

To amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

APRIL 20, 2021

Read the second time and placed on the calendar