

hope maybe they will see the light tonight. I don't think anything I have said will influence them, but I hope it might, because I do think it is in their interests as well as the interests of the women in this Nation to stand united with the Democrats on this: equal pay for equal work, fairness and justice to the women in this Nation. They deserve it.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the importance of closing the pay gap for women, and I thank my colleague from California, Senator BOXER, who has been working on this issue on the front line for so long as a leader on the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act to help us get that done and as a leader again.

I am a cosponsor on this bill and I urge my colleagues to join me in support of the Paycheck Fairness Act. People deserve a fair shot at the American dream. People deserve a fair working wage. That is why we need to raise the minimum wage. Equal work should get equal pay, and that is why we need to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act.

I wish to thank the dean of the Senate women, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, for leading this effort for equal pay for equal work in the passage of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and keeping the focus on the need to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act.

In 2009, we passed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act to make sure that workers who face pay discrimination based on gender, race, age, disability, religion, or national origin have access to the courts. In doing so we restored the original intent of the Civil Rights Act and the Equal Pay Act. Now it is time to prevent that pay discrimination from happening in the first place.

Women have made big strides in this economy. Women are getting advanced degrees. They are starting new businesses. They are leading major corporations. The Fortune 500 now has 24 women CEOs. Twenty-four out of five hundred there is still a lot of work to do, but that is so much better than where we were decades ago. Now we have a record 20 women in the Senate. Yet despite the progress we have made and all the gaps we have closed, women still make less money than men do.

The pay gap has real consequences for American families in our entire economy. Two-thirds of today's families rely on the mother's income entirely or in part, and in more than one-third of families the mother is the main breadwinner. But women only earn more than men in exactly 7 of the 534 occupations listed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. That is only seven occupations, and I know there is disagreement about what the pay disparity is, if it is just based on other factors. But the truth is when you look at the list of the occupations, in only seven do women make more than men.

As Senate Chair of the Joint Economic Committee, I released a report

showing how this pay disparity affects women's financial security, because I think a lot of times people are very focused on the here and now, what that means the wage differential, and what that means in the workplace. This report shows that lower wages impact women all throughout their working lives, and these lower lifetime earnings translate into less security and retirement.

You have the fact that women live longer but yet they have less money to begin with. Women live longer than men on average and are more likely to spend part of their retirement on their own because they live longer. So women actually need to have more money for their years in retirement. According to our report, the average annual income—this is average annual income for women aged 65 and older—is about \$11,000 less than it is for men. That is \$11,000 less each year to buy groceries, to pay heating bills, to be able to see grandchildren.

Lower lifetime earnings result in lower retirement benefits. Retirement security is often described as the three-legged stool—Social Security, pension benefits, and personal savings. A woman's Social Security check is 78 percent of a man's check on average. Those are the facts. Again, it is about 80 percent of that of a man. The median income from company or union pension for women is 53 percent lower than for men. Finally, lower earnings also affect the ability of women to contribute to their own retirement plan. Women have less income to put aside and are less able to save money for their own retirement. They have smaller paychecks, they have smaller Social Security checks, smaller pension checks, and less savings in their retirement plans. They live longer and they worry all the time that they are going to outlive their savings. All this contributes to less retirement security.

The pay gap is an especially large burden on women in the sandwich generation, juggling jobs, juggling their kids, and looking out for their aging parents at the same time. When two-thirds of the caregivers for aging parents are women, we need to make sure they have financial security.

So make no mistake, the pay gap impacts women. But my point today is that it impacts women through the entire arc of their lives, and, if anything, it impacts older women who for now decades have been making less money in an even greater way than it impacts them when they are younger.

Around 70 percent of our economy is consumer-based. If we don't have fair pay, if we don't have enough pay for middle-income families, then they are not going to buy things whether they are younger or older. That is yet another argument for not only having adequate minimum wages but also for addressing this pay gap. This legislation builds on the promises of the Equal Pay Act and the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and gives women new

tools and protections they need to guard against pay discrimination.

I want to get this done, but I also want to work on the issue of long-term savings and how we can make it easier for women and men to save their money when they are working at jobs so they can help themselves. As we move forward, as we are living longer—which is great—we know it is going to get harder and harder.

It was the late Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota who famously said, "We all do better when we all do better." I still believe that is true, and so do my colleagues who have joined me today. We need to be focused on how we can help more women share in the economic dream because if we do, we will all be doing better.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Paycheck Fairness Act.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 2199, a bill 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.

Harry Reid, Tom Harkin, Barbara A. Mikulski, Benjamin L. Cardin, Richard J. Durbin, Maria Cantwell, Mazie Hirono, Kay R. Hagan, Jack Reed, Patty Murray, Dianne Feinstein, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Barbara Boxer, Sheldon Whitehouse, Amy Klobuchar, Charles E. Schumer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on S. 2199, a bill 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, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.