

March 2, 2017

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As advocates for women's rights, equality, justice and inclusion, we have come together to outline core domestic policy priorities that will help ensure that all women in the United States have the opportunity to succeed and thrive. From criminal justice reform to reproductive rights and health policy, from education to workplace policy, from income security to violence prevention, and from child care to a fair and just immigration system, it is critical that the administration address and promote women's interests in each of the policy decisions it makes. Women's success has been the nation's success. When we have an equal opportunity to succeed, our entire society and economy benefit.

Our priorities reflect the importance of effective policies serving women across their lifespans and regardless of income, identity or background. These priorities put the needs of women of color, immigrant women, LGBTQ people, women with disabilities, and women with low incomes front and center – recognizing that too often their experiences have been at the margins. When the needs of women and girls – particularly those needs most important to communities of color and immigrant communities – are an afterthought, justice is denied and the ability to create effective change is undermined. As we build the America of today and tomorrow, our economy, families and communities will be strengthened only if we incorporate principles of fairness, equality and inclusiveness that enable women of every race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, immigration status, family status, disability status, sexual orientation and gender expression to prosper.

We will evaluate your administration against these markers and we will measure your administration's success by how women have fared during your tenure.

These priorities fall into six broad categories:

1. Creating Workplaces that Work for Women and Their Families
2. Securing Quality Health Care and Reproductive Rights
3. Ensuring Income Security for All Families
4. Addressing and Preventing Violence
5. Building a Quality, Affordable and Equitable Education System
6. Securing Women's Equality Under Law

## **I. Creating Workplaces that Work for Women and Their Families**

The facts are clear: America does not work without women. Today, women make up nearly half of the U.S. workforce, and mothers are the primary or co-breadwinners in nearly two-thirds of

families.<sup>i</sup> In 60 percent of married-parent households, both parents hold paying jobs, and in households headed by unmarried women, 71 percent of mothers hold paying jobs.<sup>ii</sup> Women will also soon be the majority of college-educated workers.<sup>iii</sup> But many of America's workplace policies, standards, and practices have not changed with the times and because of that, America is losing out on women's participation in the labor force relative to other countries.<sup>iv</sup>

Overall, women in the United States who work full-time, year-round are paid 80 cents for every dollar paid to men who work full-time, year-round, amounting to an annual gender wage gap of \$10,470.<sup>v</sup> Black women are typically paid 63 cents and Latinas are paid just 54 cents, while white, non-Hispanic women are paid 75 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men.<sup>vi</sup> Asian women are paid 85 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men, even though some ethnic groups of Asian women fare much worse.<sup>vii</sup>

Over a lifetime, the wage gap costs women and their families hundreds of thousands of dollars – funds that could fuel their ability to make ends meet, build better lives for themselves and their children, and stimulate the country's economic growth.

Millions of American women, because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, still live without fundamental protections of their right to work and support their families. Women struggling to honor both their duties in the workplace and as caregivers to children or aging relatives at home often pay a particularly steep price in terms of wages, promotions, and retirement security.

Our commitment to fairer, safer, healthier, and more inclusive workplaces is steadfast, especially in an economy in which workers are too easily discarded and traditional employment relationships undermined by the misclassification of workers as independent contractors.

We will keep **fighting for a \$15 minimum wage** for all workers, including tipped workers, and **guaranteed access to paid sick days; strengthened equal pay protections** that provide stronger protections and more meaningful remedies; **paid family and medical leave** that offers adequate wage replacement and covers both women and men for parental, family, and self-care needs; affordable and available **child care and early learning** for all families, especially for those most in need; **fair work schedule protections; protections for pregnant workers; collective bargaining rights; protections against wage theft; and stronger anti-discrimination and anti-harassment laws.** We will stand against any efforts to weaken or undermine our hard-won rights and protections and hold accountable any elected or appointed leaders who seek to erode or undermine these rights.

America can only be great when women can participate fully in the workplace, and when our leaders support working women and their families.

## **II. Securing Quality Health Care and Reproductive Rights**

Health care is key to women's well-being and economic stability. This includes a woman's ability to make her own reproductive health decisions – whether using birth control or obtaining an abortion – decisions that affect not only her health but also the course of her life and the

opportunities she will have in education and employment. Unfortunately, the attacks on women's health, especially reproductive health care, are more relentless than ever, and the enormous progress women have made in health care and health insurance is at great risk.

We are committed to **protecting essential laws and programs – like the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid, Medicare, the Children's Health Insurance Program and the Title X program** – that keep women healthy, that provide the critical insurance coverage and health services they need, and that protect women from medical debt and bankruptcy. We are committed to improving these policies when needed, to ensure equitable access to health care for all women, regardless of their income or where they get their insurance. We will **oppose efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act**, which would send women back to a time when insurance companies treated being a woman as a preexisting condition, refused to cover the important services women need, like maternity care, and charged women more than men for the same care. We will oppose efforts to block grant the Medicaid program, impose caps, or approve waivers that impose work requirements or otherwise significantly alter the nature of the program. We will oppose efforts to privatize Medicare, a program that serves as the primary source of health care and the lynchpin of financial independence for millions of older women.

We commit to **protecting an individual's right to make personal decisions about whether and when to have children**. We will oppose any attempts to interfere with this right, including any restrictions on abortion access, efforts to penalize women's reproductive health providers like Planned Parenthood, efforts to block comprehensive sex education, or policies allowing the use of religion to discriminate against those seeking reproductive health care. We will oppose efforts to eliminate or deny funding for reproductive health services, which would fall most heavily on low-income women and women of color.

We will keep working to protect and improve our health care system so that it better responds to women's health care needs throughout their lives. We also commit to **improving and strengthening our investment in medical research that is responsive to and inclusive of women's unique health needs**, especially the needs of women of color, who are disproportionately excluded from medical research. We will fight for a health care system that provides all women, regardless of race or ethnicity, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, income, immigration status, or geography with access to high-quality, patient-centered care, including reproductive health care.

### **III. Ensuring Income Security for All Families**

America must maintain and expand its commitment to supporting people as they build better lives for their children and families. Despite progress in the last eight years, too many families still live in poverty. Nearly 17 million women – one in eight – live in poverty, and women are disproportionately at risk – women are 35 percent more likely to live in poverty than men.<sup>viii</sup> The picture is even more dire for single mothers, women of color, LGBTQ women, and elderly women.<sup>ix</sup> More than one in three single mothers, one in four African American women, more than one in five Hispanic women, and nearly one in five elderly women living alone are poor.<sup>x</sup> And as noted above, the continuing attacks on women's long-established rights to decide if, when, and how to become parents also undermine the economic security of millions of families.

Investments in people are investments in America's strength and promise. We urge **more investments in low-income families, more investments in early learning and quality, affordable child care, with higher wages for the care workforce and strengthened retirement security**. These investments are critical to improving the economic security of low-income families and the prosperity of the nation as a whole. For instance, a high-quality early childhood development program could deliver an annual return of 13 percent per child on upfront costs through better long-term outcomes in education, health, employment, and social behavior.<sup>xi</sup>

We will **oppose efforts to block grant or otherwise cut social safety net programs**, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; Temporary Assistance to Needy Families; the Women, Infant, and Children Special Supplemental Nutrition Program; or rental assistance. Such programs are critical for low-income families and individuals and particularly for women who are more likely than men to be poor at all stages of their lives due to ongoing employment discrimination, overrepresentation in low-wage jobs, and greater responsibilities for unpaid caregiving.<sup>xii</sup> The weakening of these critical supports or stricter eligibility requirements would erode the income and economic security of women and families, and particularly harm our oldest and youngest people.

#### **IV. Addressing and Preventing Violence**

If we are not safe, we cannot be free. Violence by private individuals and the state continues to violate the most basic human rights of women, LGBTQ individuals, communities of color, and immigrant and refugee communities. We must not only **address but also prevent violence** in all of its forms – **gun violence, gender-based violence, and human trafficking**, as well as **state-sanctioned violence in the form of police brutality, mass incarceration, and immigrant detention and deportation**. We must work to **reform the criminal justice system** so that people of color do not face disproportionate sentences or egregiously harsh treatment. We must **safeguard the rights and freedoms of immigrants**, and especially immigrant women and children in our communities. We oppose the unconstitutional and brutal executive actions that target immigrant and refugee families.

Women cannot succeed and thrive until we address head-on and take action to prevent the pervasiveness of gender-based violence in this country. Women and girls of all ages, income levels, racial and ethnic communities, sexual orientations, gender identities, and religious affiliations are subjected to shockingly high rates of family and intimate partner violence, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and human trafficking. One in three women has experienced intimate partner violence, one in five has been raped, and one in six has been stalked during their lifetime.<sup>xiii</sup> These forms of violence have far-reaching consequences for women and families, from negative physical and mental health, to job loss, homelessness, and for too many, incarceration in juvenile and adult detention facilities. We will oppose any efforts to gut core programs designed to address gender-based violence. We will keep fighting to take real steps to ensure freedom and justice for all people.

#### **V. Building a Quality, Affordable and Equitable Education System**

To fulfill its promise now and in the future, America must ensure every child, regardless of where she or he lives, has access to a world-class public education. Our public schools must ensure that students are safe, can nurture and develop their talents, and can gain the tools and knowledge they need to become successful citizens. Yet, too many students across the country face barriers that impede their access to education, and young women in particular continue to be denied equal opportunities in many important educational programs, including the science and technology programs that undergird our future economy. Sexual harassment and assault continue to deprive women and girls of educational opportunities. Pregnant and parenting students face discriminatory barriers that push them out of school. And transgender, queer and gender nonconforming students are at an increased risk of gender-based violence, harassment, and discrimination in school.

Young women of color continue to face constrained educational opportunities in K-12 education and to lag behind white women, and men, in admissions to institutions of higher education. Girls of color experience disproportionately high rates of school suspensions and expulsions, and Black girls face higher risks of exclusion from school for subjective behavioral infractions.

**Title IX and other civil rights laws** must be fully and vigorously enforced so that sex discrimination in our schools is finally eliminated. We must **invest in early learning programs** and **urge states and school districts to close resource and opportunity gaps**, protect the ability of public schools to provide the education that students need, and **make sure that private and charter schools are held to the same standards as our public schools**. We must **ensure college is accessible to all students** regardless of gender, income, or caregiving status and **oppose predatory, usurious practices** that lead to insurmountable, crushing student debt.

## **VI. Securing Women's Equality Under Law**

Women and LGBTQ individuals have made great progress in securing fundamental and equal rights over the last half century, but the Constitution does not explicitly affirm that rights must not be abridged on the basis of sex. The **U.S. Constitution should be amended to explicitly enshrine women's full and equal rights**, ensuring that equality for women will always be a bedrock principle for our nation, and the United States should **ratify the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**, an international treaty adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly, and ratified by 189 countries.<sup>xiv</sup>

The judiciary must also respect and reflect well-established and long-held rights. Federal court decisions also affect every aspect of women's lives, from the schools we can attend, to our ability to decide whether and when to have children, to the safety of the air we breathe, to our voting rights. The courts serve as the critical backstop and protector of the fundamental rights and freedoms that define our democracy, including civil rights, our right to privacy, and religious freedom. **Federal judges must be independent, fair-minded, well-qualified, and diverse, understand the real impact of the law on women's lives, and respect the precedents protecting women's rights.**

We must also **guarantee voting rights**, which are the bedrock of our democracy and oppose any efforts to undermine fundamental civic engagement through restrictive laws or by permitting voter intimidation and harassment.

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As President, you represent all of America's people – including its 157 million women – and your job is to build a more fair, just and equal nation with opportunity for all. We urge your administration to build upon the gains made for women and to continue the work of your predecessors in opening doors, breaking down barriers, and rejecting policies that undermine opportunities for women to succeed.

Sincerely,

1,000 Days

9to5, National Association of Working Women

9to5 California

9to5 Colorado

9to5 Georgia

9to5 Wisconsin

A Better Balance

Advocates for Youth

African American Health Alliance

AIDS Ride South Africa, Ltd.

Amara Legal Center

American Academy of Nursing

American Association of University Women (AAUW)

American Civil Liberties Union

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

American Federation of Teachers

American Nurses Association

Atlanta Women for Equality

Basic Rights Oregon

Bend the Arc Jewish Action

Better Idaho

Black Women's Health Imperative

Black Women's Roundtable

Bozeman Birders

Break the Cycle

BreastfeedLA

Broward Women's Emergency Fund, Inc.

Business and Professional Women/St. Petersburg-Pinellas (BPW/SPP)

Cadwell & Company

California Partnership to End Domestic Violence

Cambodian Women Networking Association

CAMEO-California Association for Micro Enterprise Opportunity

Caring Economy Campaign

CASA  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)  
Center for Popular Democracy  
Center for Reproductive Rights  
Central Arizona National Lawyers Guild  
Chicago Foundation for Women  
Chicago Women Take Action  
Citizen Action of New York  
Cleveland Jobs with Justice  
Coalition Ending Gender-Based Violence  
Coalition of Labor Union Women  
    Chicago Chapter Coalition of Labor Union Women  
    Coalition of Labor Union Women Rhode Island  
    Coalition of Labor Union Women St. Louis Chapter  
    Greater New Jersey Coalition of Labor Union Women  
    Los Angeles Chapter of the Coalition of Labor Union Women  
    Maryland State CLUW  
    Neshaminy Bucks CLUW  
    Philadelphia Chapter of Coalition of Labor Union Women  
    San Francisco Chapter Coalition of Labor Union Women  
Coalition to Abolish Slavery & Trafficking  
Communications Workers of America  
Courage Campaign  
Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund  
DC Abortion Fund  
DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
Economic Policy Institute  
EMILY's List  
Envision Planning, LLC  
Equal Pay Today!  
Equal Rights Advocates  
Equality California  
Family Equality Council  
Family Forward Oregon  
Family Values @ Work  
    Labor Project for Working Families in partnership with FV@W  
Feminist Majority  
Florida Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPW/FL)  
FORGE, Inc.  
Forward Together  
Girls for Gender Equity (GGE)  
Hope's Door  
Human Impact Partners  
Human Rights Campaign  
Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence  
Independent Women's Organization

Institute for Science and Human Values  
International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)  
Ipas  
Jewish Women International (JWI)  
Jewish Women's Foundation of New York  
Keystone Progress  
Know Your IX  
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement  
    Pittsburgh LCLAA  
Langelan & Associates  
Lean On And Lead, Mothering and Work in the 21st Century Economy  
Legal Aid at Work (formerly Legal Aid Society-Employment Law Center)  
Legal Voice  
LIFT  
Lift Louisiana  
Louisiana Business & Professional Women's Organization  
Louisiana Progress Action  
Make it Work  
Maine Women's Lobby  
MANA, A National Latina Organization  
Maryland Working Families  
MomsRising.org  
Monmouth County Democratic Women's Caucus (New Jersey)  
Montana Women For  
Montgomery County Branch, NAACP (Maryland)  
Ms. Foundation for Women  
NARAL Pro-Choice America  
National Abortion Federation  
National Advocates for Pregnant Women  
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum  
National Black Justice Coalition  
National Center for Law and Economic Justice  
National Center for Lesbian Rights  
National Center for Transgender Equality  
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Employment Law Project  
National Employment Lawyers Association  
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association  
National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs – NYC  
National Health Law Program  
National Institute for Reproductive Health  
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health  
National LGBTQ Task Force  
National Organization for Women (NOW)  
    Alameda County/Tri-Valley NOW (ACT NOW)

Alaska NOW Chapter  
Arlington, Virginia NOW  
Bay County NOW  
Brevard NOW  
California NOW  
Capital Area Missouri NOW  
Central New York NOW  
Central Oregon Coast NOW  
Central Phoenix/Inez Casiano NOW Chapter  
Charlottesville NOW (CNOW), Virginia  
Chicago NOW  
DC NOW  
Durham, North Carolina NOW  
Fayetteville NOW  
Fergus Falls Area NOW  
Florida NOW  
Fort Myers/Naples NOW  
Gainesville Area NOW  
Greater Portland NOW  
Greater Rochester Chapter NOW  
Hollywood NOW  
Illinois NOW  
Indiana NOW  
Jacksonville Area NOW  
Madison NOW  
Maryland NOW  
Middlesex County, New Jersey NOW  
Minnesota NOW  
Monroe County, Indiana NOW  
Montana Chapter of NOW  
Montgomery County (Maryland) NOW  
Morgantown, West Virginia NOW  
Morris County NOW  
New Mexico NOW  
Ni-Ta-Nee NOW  
North Carolina NOW  
North Dallas NOW (Dallas, Texas)  
Northern New Jersey Chapter, NOW  
Northern Virginia NOW Chapter  
NOW Baton Rouge  
NOW - Broward County Chapter  
NOW Campus Affiliate of Shortridge High School (Indiana)  
NOW, Columbia Area  
NOW, Indianapolis Chapter  
NOW, Massachusetts Chapter  
NOW, Mid-Suffolk Chapter

NOW, Missouri  
NOW of New Jersey  
NOW New York  
NOW Palm Beach County  
NOW, Philadelphia Chapter  
NOW - Pinellas County Florida  
NOW - Shreveport/Bossier Chapter  
NOW, Southwest Pennsylvania Chapter  
NOW, West Suburban Illinois Chapter  
Ocean County NOW (New Jersey)  
Oregon NOW  
Pasco County NOW (Florida)  
Pennsylvania NOW  
Rockbridge Valley NOW (Virginia)  
Sacramento NOW  
San Diego Area Chapter of NOW  
San Gabriel Valley/Whittier NOW  
San Joaquin County NOW (California)  
San Luis Obispo NOW (California)  
Santa Fe NOW  
Seattle Chapter NOW  
Shore Area Chapter – NOW (New Jersey)  
South Jersey NOW – Alice Paul chapter  
South Willamette Valley chapter of NOW  
Southwest Idaho NOW  
Spokane Area NOW  
Sun Cities West Valley NOW  
Tallahassee, Florida NOW  
Thurston County NOW (Washington)  
Toledo NOW  
Triad NOW  
Union County NOW  
Vienna Area NOW  
Virginia NOW  
Washington State NOW  
West Pinellas NOW  
Westchester NOW  
Williamsport (Pennsylvania) Chapter of NOW  
Women of Color and Allies Essex County NOW Chapter  
Young Feminists and Allies: NOW's Inaugural Virtual Chapter  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence  
National Women's Health Network  
National Women's Law Center  
NC Women Matter  
New York Paid Leave Coalition

New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
North Carolina Federation of Business & Professional Women  
North Carolina Justice Center  
North Carolina Women United  
North Dakota Women's Network  
Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence  
Ohio Women's Public Policy Network  
Parent Voices CA  
Physicians for Reproductive Health  
PL+US Paid Leave for the U.S.  
Planned Parenthood of Greater Ohio  
PoliticaNC  
Population Connection Action Fund  
Population Institute  
PRBB Foundation  
Pro Choice Coalition of Broward County  
ProgressNow  
    Progress Michigan  
    Progress Virginia  
    ProgressNow Colorado  
    Progress Ohio  
Public Justice Center  
Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Coalition  
Raising Women's Voices for the Health Care We Need  
ReSisters of Southern Ocean County  
Restaurant Opportunities Centers United  
Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
RN Therapeutics  
ROADwomen, Houston, TX  
Rockefeller Family Fund  
Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law  
State Innovation Exchange  
Stop Street Harassment  
Survivors and Advocates for Empowerment, Inc.  
The Breeding Ground  
The Movement Advancement Project  
The Rachtman Group LLC  
The Relentless Feminist  
The Space Coast Progressive Alliance  
The United State of Women  
The Voices and Faces Project  
The Voter Participation Center  
The Women's Information Network (WIN NYC)  
UltraViolet  
United For Equality, LLC

United Steelworkers (USW)  
Universal Health Care Action Network of Ohio  
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity  
US Woman and Cuba Collaboration  
Unitarian Universalist Voices for Reproductive Freedom  
Virgin Islands Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Council (DVSAC)  
Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance  
Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
Westchester Women's Agenda  
Women and Girls Foundation  
Women Employed  
Women Graduates - USA  
Women of Reform Judaism  
Woman's Democratic Club of Montgomery County (Maryland)  
Women's Law Project  
Women's Voices. Women Vote Action Fund  
Working Families Party  
YWCA USA  
    YWCA Ames-ISU  
    YWCA Asheville  
    YWCA Aurora  
    YWCA Brooklyn  
    YWCA Central Carolinas  
    YWCA Central Maine  
    YWCA Central Massachusetts  
    YWCA Clark County  
    YWCA Elgin  
    YWCA Greater Pittsburgh  
    YWCA Kauai  
    YWCA Kitsap County  
    YWCA Madison  
    YWCA Metropolitan Chicago  
    YWCA Mohawk Valley  
    YWCA Mount Desert Island  
    YWCA New Mexico  
    YWCA North Orange County  
    YWCA Northcentral Pennsylvania  
    YWCA of Austin  
    YWCA of Binghamton and Broome County  
    YWCA of Greater Flint  
    YWCA of Rochester & Monroe County  
    YWCA of the University of Illinois  
    YWCA Olympia  
    YWCA Orange County, New York  
    YWCA San Francisco & Marin  
    YWCA Seattle | King | Snohomish

YWCA Silicon Valley  
YWCA South Hampton Roads  
YWCA Southeastern Massachusetts  
YWCA Southern Arizona  
YWCA Spokane  
YWCA Warren  
YWCA York  
YWCA White Plains & Central Westchester

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iii See note i.

iv OECD. (2014). *Labour Force Participation Rate By Sex, 15+, 15-64 and 15-24 Years Old*. Retrieved 13 January 2017, from <http://www.oecd.org/gender/data/labourforceparticipationbysex15and15-24yearsold.htm>

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vi Ibid.

vii Ibid. Despite an overall wage gap for Asian women in the United States that is smaller than for other groups of women of color, analysis by the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum shows there are substantial variations in the wage gap between particular ethnic groups of Asian women and white, non-Hispanic men, with many subpopulations of Asian women facing significantly greater wage penalties. For more information, see <https://napawf.org/2016/03/how-the-model-minority-myth-impacts-how-we-see-the-wage-gap-for-aapi-women>

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