ENROLLED

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 66

BY REPRESENTATIVES ST. GERMAIN, BARROW, KATRINA JACKSON, MORENO, NORTON, SMITH, STOKES, THIERRY, AND WOODRUFF AND SENATORS BROOME, BUFFINGTON, DORSEY-COLOMB, AND PETERSON

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To recognize Tuesday, April 8, 2014, as Equal Pay Day in the state of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, for more than fifty years after the passage of the Equal Pay Act, women, especially minority women, continue to suffer the consequences of unequal pay; and

WHEREAS, House Concurrent Resolution No. 145 of the 2013 Regular Session of the Legislature, by Representative Leger, established the Louisiana Fair Pay Task Force to study wage disparities between men and women, and to make recommendations for policy changes and legislation to prevent and eliminate the disparities of unequal pay; and

WHEREAS, the findings of the Louisiana Fair Pay Task Force were published and submitted to the Legislature of Louisiana on March 1, 2014; some of the findings are included within this Resolution; and

WHEREAS, according to the United States Census Bureau, full-time working women who worked year-round in the year 2011 earned an average of 77% of the earnings of their male counterparts, which indicates minimal progress in pay equity; and

WHEREAS, nationally, women's median annual earnings were $37,133; the highest paid women workers were in the District of Columbia with annual earnings of $60,332, while the lowest paid women were in the state of Mississippi with annual earnings of $29,548; and

WHEREAS, in the state of Louisiana, women represent a steady number of the work force comprising of 44.3% of the full-time, year-round Louisiana labor force; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, Louisiana women who worked full-time, year-round earned just 66.9 cents for every dollar earned by a Louisiana man, resulting in a gender wage gap of 33%, which was a 2% greater gap than in 2011; and

WHEREAS, in Louisiana, women working full-time, year-round in 2012 earned an average $31,586, which is a decrease of $276 from the 2011 earning average of $31,862; and

WHEREAS, the decrease in Louisiana women's earnings dropped Louisiana's ranking from forty-third to forty-sixth lowest among the fifty states and the District of Columbia; and

WHEREAS, in contrast, Louisiana men working full-time, year-round earned on average $47,249, which is an increase of $936 from 2011, ranking Louisiana men twenty-second with average earnings greater than the earnings of men in twenty-nine other states; and

WHEREAS, nearly four in ten mothers are primary income producers in their households, and nearly two-thirds are significant earners, which makes pay equity critical to families' economic security; and

WHEREAS, in Louisiana, poverty is most prevalent among female-headed families with children under eighteen years of age at an estimated 49%; and

WHEREAS, poverty rates were highest in Louisiana for black women and girls at 36.1%, Hispanic females at 27%, Asian females at 25.6%, and white females at 14.3%; and

WHEREAS, in Louisiana, educational attainment is greater for women than for men who are twenty-five years of age or older; and

WHEREAS, according to one study, 84.7% of Louisiana women have a high school education or higher education, compared to men at 81.2%; 15% of women have attained a bachelor's degree, compared to men at 13.7%; and 7.8% of women have a graduate or professional degree, compared to men at 7.3%; and

WHEREAS, in Louisiana, women and men are not paid equitably for their educational attainment; and

WHEREAS, according to an estimate, college-educated women who work full-time earn more than a half-million dollars less than their male peers earn over the course of a lifetime; and

WHEREAS, a lifetime of lower pay means women have less income to save for retirement and less income that is calculated in a Social Security or pension benefit formula; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus who support equal pay join with the American Association of University of Women and other women's organizations across the state of Louisiana and the United States to share information regarding equal pay; and

WHEREAS, fair pay equity policies can be implemented simply without undue costs or hardships in both public and private sectors; and

WHEREAS, fair pay strengthens the security of families and eases future retirement costs, while enhancing the American economy; and

WHEREAS, Tuesday, April 8, 2014, symbolizes the time in 2014 when the wages paid to American women catch-up to the wages paid to men from the previous year.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby proclaim Tuesday, April 8, 2014, as Equal Pay Day in Louisiana and urges the citizens of Louisiana to recognize the full value of women's skills and significant contributions to the labor force, and further encourages businesses to conduct an internal pay evaluation to ensure women are being paid fairly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Louisiana Legislative Women's Caucus.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE