



NOW-NYC

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NOW-NYC Urges Protections for Caregivers

Strengthening of NYC's Human Rights Law Can Help Close Wage Gap for Women

New York, NY- NOW-NYC supports Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum's bill, Int. 565-A, to amend New York City's Human Rights Law to explicitly protect caregivers from workplace discrimination.

NOW-NYC deputy director Jean Bucaria says, "This is maternal profiling. Although discrimination on-the-job due to one's caregiving status can happen to anyone, it is working mothers and women who overwhelmingly pay the price. They pay for it every time they are passed over for a salary increase, a promotion, or a new job opportunity."

Employer assumptions about care-giving responsibilities (for children or the elderly) often negatively and unfairly impact salaries, pay increases, and promotion decisions, and women bear the brunt of this stereotyping. Up to 75 percent of caregivers are women, and sixty four percent of mothers with children under the age of six are in the workforce. Studies have shown that while fathers garner more respect in the workplace, mothers are viewed less favorably. This plays out in actual dollars: mothers earn about 2.5 percent less than women without children, while fathers enjoy an increase in earnings of 2.1 percent, compared to men without children.

Bucaria says "While we've all heard the national statistic that women earn only 78 cents for every dollar earned by men, we need to be aware that the local picture is not much different. If the women of New York were paid as much as men for comparable work, family incomes would increase by thousands of dollars per year."

Making sure that caregivers are protected against discrimination protects women and protects families. This law can help close the wage gap for women and will establish necessary protections for workers, which is especially critical in this difficult economic climate. This is a great opportunity for New York City to set precedent for work-life balance without unfair penalties.

The National Organization for Women is the nation's largest organization working to advance women's rights and improve women's lives. The New York City Chapter of NOW, founded in 1966, is one of the largest chapters in the country with over 5,000 members locally and 35,000 statewide. NOW-NYC works to protect women's reproductive choices, end violence against women and eliminate sex discrimination in our schools, workplaces, and the justice system in New York.

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