



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Liz Krueger

Krueger Reintroduces Equal Pay Constitutional Amendment

LIZ KRUEGER April 23, 2007

Albany—New York State Senator Liz Krueger marked today's national observance of Equal Pay Day by announcing that she has reintroduced S3358, a proposed amendment to the New York State Constitution. The amendment would guarantee equitable pay for all persons for work of comparable skill, effort and responsibility, for duties performed under similar working conditions.

There are multiple legislative proposals that seek to advance pay equity, but Krueger's bill appears to be the only proposal that would amend the Constitution, which in turn would allow for legal challenges to be brought forth by victims of equitable pay discrimination.

"The New York State Constitution is silent on the issue of equity in pay," Krueger said. "It is a little hard to believe that in 2007 we still don't have basic protections for equitable pay in the very state that is home to some of the single most significant historical achievements for equality between the sexes."

The observance of Equal Pay Day in the month of April is to indicate how far into each year a woman must work to earn as much as a man earned in the previous year. For the amount of money the average man earned between January and December 2006, it took the average woman January 2006 to April 2007 to earn an equivalent amount.

"Unequal pay reinforces the false notion that if a woman assumes a role similar to that of a man, maintains an equal workload, responsibility, and produces an equal product, she is inferior to her male counterparts," Krueger said.

Studies and analysis have confirmed that women are at a distinct disadvantage when it comes equitable pay. For instance, national Census data indicates that women earn only 77 cents for every dollar earned by men. That ratio is even more bleak in New York, where women receive just 73 cents for every dollar earned by men.

"Forty years ago, women earned about 59 cents for every dollar men earned. This means we are moving at a pace of less than half a penny per year. At that rate, pay equity won't be a reality even within the lifetime of our granddaughters. There are a number of things that should determine a position's pay, including experience and qualifications—the gender of the person who fills the position should not be one of those factors," Krueger concluded.