



When African American Women Succeed, America Succeeds

Key Economic Facts and Reports

EQUAL PAY & THE MINIMUM WAGE

- “Black women have extremely high rates of labor force participation, higher than all other women in the nation, and maintain that lead even after entering motherhood.” ([National Coalition on Black Civic Participation](#))
- “Studies show that the number of women who are earning a minimum wage dramatically increased as a result of the recession – among all racial groups.” ([National Coalition on Black Civic Participation](#))
- 15.64 percent of African American women workers are earning annual incomes below the national poverty threshold. ([National Coalition on Black Civic Participation](#))
- Single African American women had a median wealth of \$100 v. \$41, 500 for white women; almost half of single African American women had zero or negative wealth; and only 33 percent of single black women were homeowners v. 57 percent of single white women” (“Lifting as We Climb (2010), [National Coalition on Black Civic Participation](#))
- In 2011, working-poor rates for black and Latino women were 14.5 percent and 13.8 percent respectively compared to white women who had a working-poor rate of 6.6 percent ([Center for American Progress](#))
- In 2011, poverty rate among women was 14.6 percent—the highest in the last 18 years. For black and Latina women that same year, the poverty rate was 25.9 percent and 23.9 percent, respectively. ([Center for American Progress](#))
- African American women lose up to the equivalent of 118 weeks of groceries each year due to the wage gap.” ([Huffington Post via National Partnerships](#))
- African American women are more affected by the minimum wage. In 2012, 28 percent of African American women were employed in the service industry as opposed to 20 percent of white women ([Center for American Progress](#))
- In 2012, household data found that only 11.9 percent of African American women were in management, business, and financial operations positions. In comparison, women as a whole are employed in these fields at a rate of 41.6 percent. ([Center for American Progress](#))
- Minimum wage - “African American women more than doubled their share of workers earning the minimum wage or below from 2007 to 2012.” ([Center for American Progress](#))



This year, our nation marks the 165th anniversary of the Seneca Falls Convention, the first women's rights convention that addressed the status of women in social, economic, and political life. The Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions adopted at the convention recognized the potential of women's contributions to our nation, highlighted the moral urgency of securing equality for women, and demanded that women be granted the same rights and privileges afforded to men.

American women have made great strides since that historic gathering – but the fight for justice, for equal rights, for our values, is far from over. There is more work to do to provide women with the economic security and opportunities they deserve and their families need.

House Democrats proudly support ***When Women Succeed, America Succeeds: An Economic Agenda for Women and Families***, an agenda that stands on the shoulders of what was accomplished at Seneca Falls, what was achieved by the suffragettes, and what was advanced by activists in every generation, by addressing the economic challenges facing women and families in our time.

Today, women play an expanded role in America's workforce, in businesses small and large, and in our homes. Almost half of all workers are women, and 40 percent of working women are the primary breadwinners in their families. The success of our nation relies upon the economic security of women. Unfortunately, women - and specifically unmarried women - are the most economically insecure today. Too many women face financial pressures simply due to outdated policies that constrain opportunities for women's full participation in our economy. Too many women are faced with the lack of good-paying jobs, the rising costs of education and debt, and the daily challenge to put food on the table.

The Facts Are Staggering:

- Women continue to earn less than men. Women make only 77 cents for every dollar a man makes; a pay gap exists even the first year out of college and continues through a woman's life.
- Women account for two-thirds of minimum wage workers.
- The poverty rate – 14.5 percent for women – remains the highest in two decades.
- Family and medical leave protections fail to cover nearly half of full-time employees.
- Women-owned businesses continue to lag behind men-owned businesses. The average revenue of women-owned businesses is only 27% of the average revenue of men-owned businesses.

Democrats have long led the way to address the health and economic security of women and families. With the passage of the Affordable Care Act, beginning in 2014, being a woman will no longer be treated as a pre-existing medical condition. We have always fought and will continue to fight to strengthen and protect Social Security and Medicare.

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The Solution: *When Women Succeed, America Succeeds*

The *When Women Succeed, America Succeeds* economic agenda will enable women to achieve greater economic security, raise wages for women and their families, and allow working parents to support and care for their families.

It addresses the need to ensure that women get equal pay for equal work. It helps ensure work and family balance by allowing working parents to support their families and care for their children. It recognizes that expanding educational opportunities, increased job training, and investments in women entrepreneurs are essential for women's success in our economy.

Below are the policies included in this agenda in the areas of pay, work and family balance, and child care.

<h1>Pay</h1>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Paycheck Fairness•Increase Minimum Wage (including Tipped)•Invest in Job Training and Education Opportunities•Protect and Restore Employment Rights•Support Women Entrepreneurs/Small Businesses•Pregnant Workers Fairness•Adequate Tools to Investigate Wage Discrimination
<h1>Work & Family Balance</h1>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Paid Sick Leave•Paid Family and Medical Leave•Expanded Family and Medical Leave•Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave
<h1>Child Care</h1>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•President Obama's Preschool and Early Head Start/Child Care Initiative•Promote Affordable and High Quality Child Care•Adequate Funding of Child Care Programs•Adequate Training and Pay for Child Care Workers•Expand Child Care Tax Credit•Make Child Tax Credit Permanent and Indexed•Increase Access to Child Support

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When African American Women Succeed, America Succeeds

Activities and Events to Highlight Economic Challenges Facing Women and Families

In 1971, Congress designated August 26 as “Women’s Equality Day” to commemorate the 1920 passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, granting women the right to vote. On the occasion of this day, national groups and their local chapters are encouraged to participate in activities or host events in their communities to highlight the barriers women still face in having an equal shot at economic opportunity.

Women make up half the workforce and 40 percent of working women are the primary bread winners in their families. Despite these staggering numbers, women are still more likely than men to struggle with lack of good-paying jobs, the rising costs of education and debt, and the daily challenge to put food on the table. That is why the *When Women Succeed, America Succeeds* is important to women and our nation.

National organizations are marking Women’s Equality Day as a day for unity and collective action on these issues by showing their support for policies that address real economic needs facing women and families: ensuring equal pay for equal work, increasing the minimum wage, promoting work and family balance, and providing access to quality, affordable child care. These economic solutions will enable women to achieve greater economic security, raise wages for women and their families, and allow working parents to support and care for their families.

On August 26, groups will host events around the country, share social media tools, and ultimately echo a unified message: more can and must be done to ensure that women have an equal opportunity to succeed in our economy.

Participate in Local Events

The following events will be taking place during the lead-up to or on August 26. Groups are encouraged to have local chapters participate in the following planned events:

- August 18 - Women Leading Change Now is hosting a Working Families Summit in Atlanta, Georgia from 7:30 pm – 8:30 pm. For more info, please contact Elaine@womenleadingchangenow.org.

- Many Members of Congress will be holding events on Tuesday, August 26 - including House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi (San Francisco, CA) and Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards (Suitland, MD). Specifics of other events will be shared later in the month.
- August 26 - A "National Day of Action" with Family Values @ Work in the form of community forums, house parties, and meetings with elected officials. For more info about local events, please visit www.familyvaluesatwork.org.

Host Your Own Event or Activity

Groups and their local chapters can host their own unique event on these issues in their communities. These events and activities can complement social media efforts that will take place on August 26:

- Host a community forum around these issues at a local university, a community college, a church that has a child care center, or a civic center. Invite your elected official and local press to participate.
- Plan a house party with neighbors and local families to discuss the need for family-friendly policies.
- Ask your local business to pledge to employ best business practices by providing paid sick days and paying workers a fair wage.
- Request a meeting with your local elected official to ask about their stance on these issues.
- Write a press release or submit an op-ed to a local news organization about your organization's support for policies that bring greater economic security to women and families.
- Send a letter to your local chapters about *When Women Succeed, America Succeeds: An Economic Agenda for Women and Families* and the latest data on women's economic security.
- Share information on *When Women Succeed, America Succeeds* in your next organizational newsletter or on your website.



When African American Women Succeed, America Succeeds

Social Media Tools

71 percent of women use social media, as do 68 percent of African Americans: they create communities, read the news, share information, and do most of their research online. By using social media, you can make sure you're amplifying your message in the most effective way.

Available Online/Social Media Tools

- **Twitter Townhalls/Chats**—By creating a unique hashtag for a designated time period of the day, you can conduct a Q+A with constituents/women on Twitter that's specific to the issue of your choice. Many national women's groups will be using #WEMatter on August 26.
 - **Sample Hashtags:** #BlackWomenSucceed, #WEMatter, #SEE (Sisters Empowering the Economy)

Sample Tweets

“Almost 16% of Af-Am women workers are earning annual incomes below national poverty line. Must do more to help #BlackWomenSucceed.”

“Number of women who are earning a minimum wage dramatically increased bc of recession – among all racial groups. #RaiseTheWage #WEMatter”

“Af-Am women lose up to 118 weeks of groceries each year due to the wage gap. We need #EqualPay to help #BlackWomenSucceed.”

- **Facebook Conversations**—Facebook released a new feature that allows you to conduct a Q+A with followers and directly answer questions on the Facebook thread. Facebook also now uses hashtags, so you can use your unique hashtag to build a conversation.
- **Instagram**—A photo/video app that allows you to take and share pictures that relate to a specific issue. Hashtags are available on this platform, and pictures/video can be automatically posted to Facebook/Twitter.
- **Vine**—6-second videos you can post to twitter. You can send video responses to twitter questions, or request constituents to send in short videos of their lives as working women

- [Tumblr](#)—a very informal tool to quickly share photos, infographics, and videos.

MIDDLE CLASS JUMPSTART



100 Day Democratic Action Plan to Put the Middle Class First

House Republicans' flawed priorities have stalled middle class opportunity while consistently stacking the deck for wealthy special interests.

Instead of tax incentives to create good paying jobs to "Make It In America," they give tax favors to corporations that ship jobs overseas.

Instead of allowing college students to refinance staggering student debts, they protect bank profits.

Instead of passing legislation to ensure women receive equal pay for equal work, they support putting bosses in charge of women's health freedoms. They even threatened to shut down the government to stop women from accessing Planned Parenthood.

It's time for a Congress that puts you ahead of the special interests.

Within 100 days of a Democratic House Majority, we will pass bold, concrete initiatives to jump-start the middle class and those working to get into the middle class. Our three-pronged plan will grow the middle class with good jobs, support for women and education that is more affordable and accessible for working families.

House Democrats. Putting the middle class above the special interests.

MIDDLE CLASS JUMPSTART



House Republicans are stacking the deck for the wealthy and their special interest friends at the expense of middle class families. In the first 100 days of 2015, a Democratic House Majority will act to put the middle class first.

'MAKE IT IN AMERICA' • BETTER JOBS AT HOME

- ✗ Republicans voted to give tax breaks to companies that ship American jobs overseas
- ✓ Democrats will introduce the “21st Century Make It In America Act” to provide tax incentives for creating good-paying jobs here at home
- ✗ Republicans blocked legislation to make long-term investments in our nation’s aging highway system and opposed creating clean energy jobs of the future
- ✓ House Democrats will pass the “Build America Bonds Act” to boost job growth and modernize America’s infrastructure by building roads, bridges, broadband technology and investing in clean energy initiatives – paid for by closing corporate tax loopholes
- ✗ Republicans refused to raise the minimum wage but gave massive tax giveaways to corporate special interests and the ultra-wealthy
- ✓ House Democrats will pass the “Fair Minimum Wage Act” and the “CEO/Employee Pay Fairness Act” to deny CEOs the ability to claim tax deductions for pay over \$1 million unless they give their employees a raise

WHEN WOMEN SUCCEED, AMERICA SUCCEEDS

- ✗ House Republicans refused to ensure equal pay for equal work, and voted to reduce access to child care and against paid sick leave
- ✓ House Democrats will pass the “Paycheck Fairness Act” to guarantee both women and men get equal pay for equal work, pass the “Healthy Families Act” to ensure paid sick leave for men and women, and increase access to affordable child care
- ✗ House Republicans voted to weaken domestic violence laws that protect women and voted to defund Planned Parenthood
- ✓ House Democrats will strengthen the “Violence Against Women Act” and will expand women’s access to comprehensive health care and family planning

AFFORDABLE EDUCATION TO KEEP AMERICA #1

- ✗ House Republicans voted to pile more debt on the backs of students and families by preventing Americans from refinancing their student loans and by voting to cut Pell Grants
- ✓ House Democrats will pass the “Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act” to help Americans refinance their college loans to new, lower rates, and will increase access to Pell Grants for higher education
- ✗ House Republicans voted to limit access to quality early childhood education
- ✓ House Democrats will pass the “Strong Start for America’s Children Act” to increase access to effective early childhood learning

- Poverty rates – For African American women, the poverty rate is 28.6 percent. In comparison, the poverty rate of white, non-Hispanic women is 10.8 percent. ([Center for American Progress](#))
- “Nearly 50 percent of African-American households headed by a single mother live in poverty, compared to 42.2 percent of all U.S. single-mother households.” ([Bread for the World Institute](#))

AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE

- In 2011, 67% of African American kids are being raised in a single parent household ([Kids Count Data Center](#))

SINGLE MOTHERS AND EDUCATION

- Unwed mothers - “The black community's 72 percent rate eclipses that of most other groups: 17 percent of Asians, 29 percent of whites, 53 percent of Hispanics and 66 percent of Native Americans were born to unwed mothers in 2008, the most recent year for which government figures are available. The rate for the overall U.S. population was 41 percent.” ([Associated Press](#))
- “75% of unmarried mothers are under 30, and only 7% of have finished college. Single motherhood and lack of a college degree are two of the strongest indicators of poverty. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, women devote more than 110 million hours a year to unpaid interactive child care.” ([The Shriver Report](#))