

One Wisconsin Now: April 2 is Pay Equity Day in Wisconsin

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MEDIA CONTACT
Mike Browne, Deputy Director
mike@OneWisconsinNow.org
[\(608\) 444-3483](tel:(608)444-3483)

'Wisconsin Needs to Do Better'

MADISON, Wis. — April 2, 2019 is National Equal Pay Day, marking the day women would, on average, have to work until in order to equal the wage earned by a man in calendar year 2018. In Wisconsin, according to analysis of the National Women's Law Center based on U.S Census data, women in Wisconsin typically make 80 cents for every dollar paid to men. However, the gap for women of color is even worse with Black women earning roughly 61 cents for every dollar paid to white men and Latina women workers only making 53 cents for every dollar paid to white men.

"Wisconsin needs to do better," said One Wisconsin Now Executive Director Analiese Eicher. "Women ought to be paid the same as men for the same work and they ought to be able to count on their state government to help make sure that is not just the law but also the reality."

Unfortunately, Eicher noted, that is not the case in Wisconsin. Under Scott Walker, Assembly Republican Speaker Robin Vos and Senate Republican Leader Scott Fitzgerald the state equal pay law was repealed, leaving Wisconsin as one of a handful of states in the nation without one. Under the provisions of the law women could have sought redress in state courts for being paid less than their male counterparts for doing the same work.

The \$1.5 trillion student loan debt crisis provides a dramatic example of how the economic impact pay disparities unfairly burden women. According to the American Association of University Women (AAUW) as of 2018 women in the U.S. held nearly two-thirds of the nation's student debt while accounting for just over half of college and university enrollees.

She concluded, "The economic ripple effects of this shameful gender and race wage disparity include women being even more burdened by the student loan debt crisis. It's time our policy makers in Wisconsin understand we all do better when we all do better."