

# U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Introduce legislation to hold workplace harassers accountable with Rep. DeLauro

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (CT-03) today reintroduced legislation to strengthen workplace harassment laws. The *Fair Employment Protection Act* restores protections for workers harassed on the job by supervisors and those with authority to direct people's day-to-day work. These protections were weakened by the U.S. Supreme Court's June 2013 decision in *Vance v. Ball State University*. This legislation has been introduced in the 113<sup>th</sup>, 114<sup>th</sup>, and 115<sup>th</sup> Congresses.

"If you work hard and play by the rules you should have the opportunity to get ahead. Unfortunately, workplace harassment remains an unacceptable reality that threatens the economic security of far too many people, particularly women, working to build a better future for themselves and their families," **said Senator Baldwin**. "The United States Supreme Court weakened workplace protections in their Vance decision. They got it wrong and we have to make it right. Our legislation gives workers the tools that they need to get a fair shake in this system and makes it clear that employers should be responsible for supervisors that are engaging in harassment or discriminatory behavior in the workplace."

"Harassment of all kinds has no place in our nation's workplaces—especially when the perpetrator is your supervisor," **said Congresswoman DeLauro**. "That is what made the Supreme Court's decision to restrict victims' ability to obtain justice so

awful. A narrow majority of the Court overturned longstanding precedent, leaving people without proper recourse. That is wrong, and Congress needs to fix it. That is why I am proud to stand with my colleagues in introducing the *Fair Employment Protection Act* to restore critical workplace protections.”

In fiscal year 2018, sex discrimination comprised over 32.3 percent of the charges filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) under all the statutes the agency enforces, with women filing more than 84.1 percent of all sexual harassment charges. Studies have shown that sexual harassment of women, including unwanted touching, grabbing, and stalking, is common in industries with low-wage jobs like restaurants and hospitality, as well as in male-dominated industries such as construction, public safety, manufacturing, farming, and the high-tech industry. Harassment in male-dominated industries operates as a barrier to women’s entry into higher-paying jobs.

The *Fair Employment Protection Act* clarifies when employers should be held vicariously liable for unlawful harassment. The bill would expand employer liability to include harassment by individuals who are in charge of an employee’s daily work activities, as well as supervisors who can recommend employment actions such as hiring and firing decisions.

An online version of this release is available [here](#).