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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 7, 2017

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Be Bold for Change

Democrats continue the fight for women's rights

MADISON – March 8th marks the 2017 International Women's Day, a global celebration of social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. It serves as a reminder that work still needs to be done for gender parity. As part of this year's theme, "Be Bold for Change," Wisconsin Democrats are introducing the Equal Pay Reinforcement Act which would provide a stronger enforcement mechanism for violations of pay and workplace discrimination.

"Wisconsin Democrats value the work of women in our state and believe that all employees should be compensated fairly for their work," said Sen. Jennifer Shilling (D-La Crosse). "Fair wages ensure women can improve their family's financial security and current work policies don't reflect the needs of modern families."

According to the Center for American Progress, roughly 45% of Wisconsin women are the sole or primary breadwinners and account for almost half of family earnings. Additionally, the average woman working full-time earns 80% what the average man earns. Those rates are even lower for minorities.

"By closing the wage gap, making childcare more affordable, and expanding access to healthcare, women can reach their full economic potential," added Shilling. "We know that Wisconsin does better when our families, our neighbors and our communities do better. This International Women's Day, Democrats are committed to creating bold ideas that strengthen women and families across our state."

Since 2011, Legislative Republicans have limited access to birth control, eliminated funding to Planned Parenthood, repealed Wisconsin's Equal Pay Enforcement Act and repealed the Healthy Youth Act, a law requiring comprehensive sex education in schools. Democratic proposals seek to increase wages, lower student loan debt, strengthen access to health care, and expand paid and family sick leave.

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