

have filibustered the Paycheck Fairness Act. They prevented a vote on this issue—this issue of basic fairness.

Today is a new opportunity for Senate Republicans to do what is right for America's working women and families. The Paycheck Fairness Act would help close a wage disparity by empowering women to negotiate for equal pay.

Shouldn't a woman be able to negotiate for equal pay?

This bill would also give workers stronger tools to combat wage discrimination and bar retaliation against employees for discussing salary information. Shouldn't a woman be able to talk about wage disparity without fear of reprisal?

One of the first things we passed in the Obama administration was the Lilly Ledbetter legislation, and that is one reason we are doing this today. Lilly Ledbetter worked for many years doing the same work as men in her position. She learned she was being paid a lot less, but the U.S. Supreme Court said: Too bad—you should have discovered this a lot earlier. If she had discovered it earlier, she would have been fired. This bill would give workers stronger tools to combat wage discrimination and bar retaliation against employees for discussing salary information. That is why we passed the Lilly Ledbetter legislation.

I repeat: Shouldn't a woman be able to talk about wage disparity without fear of reprisal?

This legislation would help secure adequate compensation for victims of gender-based pay discrimination. Shouldn't a woman be able to recoup wages that are illegally withheld? The answer, of course, is yes.

These are commonsense proposals that are supported by the vast majority of Americans. Why is there even a debate on the issue of equal pay? It is because Senate Republicans continue to stifle debate on this issue. They are filibustering yet another piece of important legislation.

Instead of doing what is right for working women and families and our economy, Republicans are saying: We will not even let the Senate vote on this issue.

Republicans say there really is no issue and the pay gap between men and women is exaggerated, and if there is one, it is OK. Republicans say that there are already strong Federal laws that prevent gender-based pay discrimination. I wish it were so. Some Republicans say—as one did here in the Senate last week—that equal pay for women is nothing more than a political show vote. But when all their excuses and explanations have been exhausted, their wives, their daughters, and their granddaughters are still making 77 cents for every dollar their male counterparts make for doing the exact same work—and that is not fair.

If Republicans will not stand up for the women in their homes and communities and all across this Nation, we Senate Democrats will.

American women deserve better. They deserve fair wages. They deserve a fair shot at providing for their families. American women deserve equality.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

Would the Chair announce the business of the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WALSH). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 5:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Vermont.

REMEMBERING THOMAS HALE BOGGS, JR.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I appreciate the kind, heartfelt words of the distinguished majority leader when speaking about Tommy Boggs—Thomas Hale Boggs, Jr. Many of us knew him well.

I was at Georgetown law school with Tommy, and we often talked about those days and the friendships we had, and so many people who we knew are still in this town. I think of him walking down the hall, and we would see each other and start grinning or laughing. Whoever his client was would wonder what we were laughing about. It was usually something that happened in our law school class from 30, 40 or 50 years ago.

He was very, very effective. He was very good. He had an easygoing attitude that somehow cloaked the fact that he had a first-class mind. He had an encyclopedia knowledge for facts.

As someone who deals with Members of Congress, he had one unfailing attribute that made him successful. He always told the truth even if it was something one didn't want to hear, and he always kept his word. He was a good friend.

JUSTICE FOR ALL REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2013

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as one who had the privilege of being a prosecutor, I have great faith in our criminal justice system and the men and women who have dedicated their lives to making it work. Sometimes mistakes are made, and those mistakes have catastrophic consequences. They can mean an innocent person spends his or her life in prison, or worse, is executed. They mean a guilty person remains free—able to victimize again. When mistakes are made, lives are destroyed.

We would like to think these kinds of mistakes are few and far between, but they happen all the time. Just this month we saw that two innocent men

in North Carolina were exonerated. They had served 30 years behind bars for a crime they did not commit. One of those men had been sentenced to death.

Can you imagine being in a prison and having those steel doors close every day all the while knowing you are there—perhaps never to leave until you die—for a crime you never committed? But even worse, you know that the person who committed the crime is out free.

Can you imagine that? I know some of these people. I have talked with them. I know it and can just begin to understand what gnaws at them when they are behind bars for a crime they didn't commit, knowing that the person who committed the crime is out free to do it again.

Henry Lee McCollum and his half brother Leon Brown were teenagers. They were arrested in 1983 for a heinous crime—the rape and murder of an 11-year-old girl. They were interrogated for hours, and then these two mentally disabled teens gave false confessions. They were ultimately convicted of a crime they did not commit. While these innocent men sat behind bars, the unthinkable happened—the real offender went on to rape and murder another young girl.

These men have lost so much. They were not there when their mother or grandmother died. They have never married or had children. Mr. McCollum had to be placed in isolation every time another inmate was taken to the execution chamber to keep him from harming himself in his distress. It was only this year when a cigarette butt left at the crime scene was finally tested for DNA that their names were cleared and the real perpetrator identified.

That critical DNA test was made possible by the Kirk Bloodworth Post-Conviction DNA Testing Grant Program, which is part of the Innocence Protection Act that I wrote more than 14 years ago. I was proud to be there with President Bush when he signed it into law as part of the Justice for All Act of 2004. The program was named for a man whom I consider my friend, Kirk Bloodworth. Kirk was a young man just out of the Marines when he was arrested, convicted, and sentenced to death for a heinous crime he did not commit. He was the first person on death row to be exonerated by DNA evidence. He had been convicted on eye witness identification, even though he made it very clear he wasn't anywhere near where this happened. Do my colleagues know that when they finally exonerated him and identified who the real person was, there was someone at the prison who said, Oh, yeah, we have that guy locked up for another crime. Boy, they do look alike, don't they?

Unfortunately, hundreds of others have gone through the same hell Kirk lived through. Well over 300 Americans have been exonerated using DNA testing. But then I wonder how many others are going to have to suffer before