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March 26, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Republican Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy:

On behalf of our 38 million members and all Americans age 50 and older, AARP is writing to express our support for the Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 7). This bill would strengthen financial security for women both while in the workforce and later in retirement, and it would provide an important protection for all workers against age discrimination in hiring.

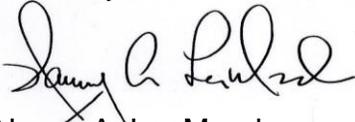
Pay discrimination against women jeopardizes their financial security, both while working and in retirement. The roughly 20% pay gap between women and men who work full-time, year-round means women's median earnings are more than \$10,000 a year less than men's, with an even bigger shortfall for women of color. Because all elements of retirement income – Social Security, pensions, and savings – are based on one's earnings while in the workforce, lower earnings during women's work lives follow them into retirement. As a result, women age 65 and older are 80% more likely than men to live below the poverty level in retirement. By strengthening the law against pay discrimination, H.R. 7 would help address women's lower pay and lower incomes in retirement.

In addition, AARP supports the Paycheck Fairness Act's provision on salary history. While asking about a job applicant's prior salary history has long been recognized as a barrier to equal pay, it has also proven to be a barrier to *employment* for older workers. A majority (56%) of all older workers age 50+ have been prematurely pushed out of longtime jobs before they choose to retire. Once displaced, older workers have great difficulty finding reemployment, and most are unable to find a job with wages comparable to the job they lost. It is quite common for prospective employers to use a prior higher salary level to disqualify an older applicant from consideration because they simply assume that the worker will require the same wage. However, there are many

reasons why an older worker might be willing to accept a lower salary, including better benefits or work hours; a more desirable job/firm; a career change; or simply desperation to find a new job. In these cases, the ability of the employer to ask about and rely on salary history in considering an older applicant often results in age discrimination in hiring.

In conclusion, H.R. 7 will help prevent one of the age-related assumptions that hinder equal opportunity for older workers, as well as enhance retirement income security for women. For these reasons, we urge support for the Paycheck Fairness Act. If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me, or have your staff contact Deborah Chalfie on our Government Affairs staff at 202-434-3723.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy A. LeaMond". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Nancy A. LeaMond  
Executive Vice President and  
Chief Advocacy & Engagement Officer