



**“Women are a valuable part of society and we must treat them as such. This means giving them the same rights and opportunities as men, and empowering them to fight gender barriers.”**

**-Jessica Liebau**

When it comes to women’s rights, we cannot afford to move backwards. We must move forward and fight against legislation that deepens gender inequality. America’s women deserve no less.

The Republican party pushes against laws that would grant women equal rights. They want to set us back in time and against the progress that we must make in ensuring equal pay for equal work, reproductive rights, and health care. Jessica firmly believes that enabling and empowering women is beneficial to our country’s economic success and overall well-being.

### **Fight for Equal Pay**

On average, women in America earn only 79 cents to every man’s dollar, and women of color earn significantly less. ([read more here](#)) This is an extremely consequential issue that affects a huge and valuable demographic in our country. Women deserve equal pay for equal work—anything less is discriminatory and inequitable. Discrimination against women continues to permeate the workforce, and in turn, our economy is suffering. Had women received equal pay, the economy would have produced an additional \$482 billion in 2014. We must fight to sign the Paycheck Fairness Act into law and hold workplaces accountable for implementing pay equity.

### **Protect Reproductive Rights**

Women should have control over their own bodies, not Republican policies. The constitutional right to an abortion in all states is long overdue, and all women must have access to a safe abortion, affordable contraception, and myriad sexual and reproductive health services. We must protect Planned Parenthood, Title X, and other women’s health programs. These initiatives are vital to women’s health in America and must be protected from policy makers that want to restrict women’s rights.

## **Ensure Paid Family Leave**

The United States is the only major country that hasn't ensured workers' paid leave. We must finally guarantee that a worker be paid when they must leave work to take care of family or have a baby. Strong families are what make our country more prosperous, and ensuring paid vacation and family leave encourage an emphasis on families. Women and mothers should have the right to take absences from work to focus on family and not worry about being paid.

## **Provide Families with Affordable Child Care**

Many mothers, especially low-income mothers, struggle to take care of their children while working long hours to provide for their families. They should not have to spend a large amount of their paycheck on child care while they are working. By providing these services, more women will be able to work and for longer hours, helping to lift families out of poverty.

## **Raise Minimum Wage**

Most minimum wage workers are women. Currently, the federal minimum wage is merely \$7.25 per hour, and it is only \$2.13 per hour for tipped workers. In Wisconsin, a minimum wage worker would need to work an outrageous 79 hours a week to afford rent for an average two-bedroom unit. It is clear that the minimum wage is too low to support women, let alone a family. We must raise the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour to further support our women and families and give them the wages they deserve for their work.

## **Address Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Against Women**

In America, 1 in 5 women will be sexually assaulted in college, a woman is beaten every 9 seconds, 1 in 4 women are victims of domestic violence, and 1 in 6 women have been the victim of rape. These statistics are shameful and action must be taken to decrease these numbers. We must fund, support, and implement programs to fight sexual assault and provide services to victims.