

## **A Platform for Progress: Building a Better Future for Women and Their Families**

The statistics are alarming: One in four girls drops out of high school. More than 14 million women live in poverty, and more than 17 million women have no health insurance. Women still earn only 77 cents for every dollar paid to men.

According to a new poll conducted by Hart Research Associates on behalf of the National Women's Law Center, women feel the impact of rising food, energy, education, and health care costs more deeply than men, and more than half of women (55%) feel that the government should do more to solve problems.

Congress and the next administration can and should respond to these concerns by enacting a comprehensive agenda that meets the needs of women and their families. **A Platform for Progress: Building a Better Future for Women and Their Families** outlines concrete steps Congress can take to improve women's lives, including:

### **Supporting Women in the Workplace**

*Close the wage gap and ensure women are paid fairly by passing the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, the Paycheck Fairness Act, and the Fair Pay Act.*

- *77 percent of women say that it is extremely or very important to provide women with the legal protections they need to get equal pay.*

### **Building Economic Security**

*Help women move out of poverty by increasing the benefits of the Earned Income Tax Credit, expanding the Child Tax Credit, improving child support enforcement, eliminating arbitrary barriers in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and Supplemental Security Income programs, and expanding access to unemployment insurance.*

- *80 percent say we should develop a comprehensive plan to cut poverty in half over the next ten years.*
- *82 percent say it is extremely or very important to invest in child support enforcement.*

*Ensure access to high-quality child care by requiring that care meet basic health and safety standards, funding statewide quality rating systems to promote higher quality care, increasing the reimbursement rate for child care assistance, supporting initiatives*

*targeted to expanding access to high-quality infant and toddler care, doubling the number of children receiving child care assistance, increasing the Dependent Care Tax Credit, and increasing funding for Head Start and Early Education.*

- *Three in four women (75%) favor increasing government funding to ensure that parents have access to quality childcare and early education.*

## **Improving Women's Health**

*Reduce the number of uninsured women by creating a health care system that leaves no one out, provides comprehensive benefits, is simple to use and understand, and is sufficiently and fairly financed.*

- *Two-thirds of women (66%) feel that the nation's approach to health care needs either major changes or a complete overhaul.*
- *84 percent of women say it is extremely or very important for Congress and the next Administration to guarantee access to quality, affordable, comprehensive health care.*

*Expand access to affordable birth control, invest in comprehensive sex education, end federal funding for abstinence-only programs, and protect a woman's right to decide to have an abortion.*

- *Two-thirds (64%) of women say that it is extremely or very important for Congress and the next administration to address policies that will help prevent unintended pregnancies by expanding access to contraceptives and comprehensive sex education.*
- *Greater than three in five (62%) of women feel that Roe v. Wade should not be overturned, with half (49%) of all women feeling this way strongly.*

## **Improving Women's Education**

*Reduce the school dropout rate for girls by requiring schools to monitor dropout rates and provide dropout prevention programs targeted toward the needs of girls, including pregnant and parenting students.*

- *81 percent of women state that it is extremely or very important to develop and fund effective drop-out prevention programs to keep both girls and boys in high school through graduation.*

## **Guaranteeing Equal Rights**

*Promote a fair and independent judiciary.*

- *91 percent of women agree that we should work to confirm federal judges who have records that demonstrate respect for long-standing fundamental rights, including equal rights for women and basic privacy protections.*