

June 30th, 2022

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Members of Congress,

In the wake of the Supreme Court taking away the constitutional right to abortion, and on the heels of a pandemic and recession that has gutted women's economic security, women – especially women of color, LGBTQ people, disabled women and immigrant women – are facing historic attacks that risk setting back progress for gender justice by a generation.

Over the course of the pandemic, women have been over-represented among essential workers, unemployed workers, and unpaid caregivers who struggled to balance work with caring for children and family members. Two years later, over 650,000 women – disproportionately mothers and caregivers – have not yet returned to the labor force. The American Rescue Plan was a lifeline, helping millions of families make ends meet, stabilizing our collapsing child care sector, and investing in emergency public health measures. But it was not designed to address the underlying conditions that left us so vulnerable to the pandemic in the first place and which, left unaddressed, will result in a fragile and unequal economy for women and the families who depend on us.

Already in the face of rising prices, women are making difficult decisions every day at the grocery store, gas pump, and when paying for other necessities. We have combed the aisles for baby formula and tampons amid shortages. We are struggling to find the child care and home care we need to be breadwinners for our families, even as the women – overwhelmingly women of color – who work in child care and home care are paid poverty wages for their essential work. We feel intensely the impacts of climate change and gun violence. And now we have just lost the federal right to abortion, which means many of us will likely have to travel through multiple states to access care or be forced to carry a pregnancy against our will – all without paid family and medical leave or paid sick days.

The bottom line: women and girls are not healthy, nor safe. We are not OK. And we will not silently watch as a generation of gains for women and families are dismantled. We write to urge you to use your leadership, your voice, your votes, your action to fight for women.

There are several things you can do right now, this year, to show up for women and girls in this moment:

- Fight for our right to abortion, birth control, and all reproductive health care. That means final passage of the **Women's Health Protection Act**, the **EACH Act**, the **MARCH Act**, eliminating all other federal restrictions on abortion and robustly funding reproductive health care without harmful riders.
- Recognize that our unpaid and underpaid care work is the backbone of our economy and show us that you care about women's jobs. Absent **investment in reconciliation**, the child care sector faces dramatic funding cliffs in FY2023 and FY2024 that will once again leave the industry on the

brink of collapse, pushing more mothers out of the labor force. Enacting the bipartisan infrastructure package without investments in our care infrastructure will cut off pathways for many women to fill these jobs, while leaving the home care and child care workforce – over 90 percent of whom are women and majority women of color – holding up our economy on poverty wages. **Fighting for us means insisting on an economic reconciliation package that includes robust funding for child care and home care.**

- Fight for our right to a safe and healthy pregnancy. That means **prioritizing passage of the Pregnant Worker’s Fairness Act, which enjoys overwhelming bipartisan support.** It would be an appalling missed opportunity not to ensure that pregnant workers who need reasonable accommodations at work can receive them, so they are no longer forced to choose between a paycheck and the health of their pregnancy.
- Fight for mothers, caregivers, and the families who depend on us. In addition to child care and home care, this means **fighting for a fully refundable child tax credit in a legislative vehicle before the end of the year** such as the House Ways and Means plan or the FAMILY Act with the protections guaranteed by the Job Protection Act.
- Fight to advance comprehensive and inclusive paid family and medical leave legislation such as the House Ways and Means plan or the **FAMILY Act** with the protections guaranteed by the Job Protection Act.
- Fight for an immigration system that creates safe pathways for migrant women and their families to live and work with dignity through reforms such as a pathway to citizenship for essential workers and the **LIFT the BAR Act.**

We call on you to show up for women in these ways and many more. As mothers and daughters, caregivers and workers, labor and business, constituents and voters, we are watching to see how you stand up for women in these trying times. Your leadership has never been more sorely needed.

Sincerely,

National Women’s Law Center

A Better Balance
Abortion Access Front
Abuse Counseling and Treatment (Florida)
ACASV (Alabama)
ACCESS Reproductive Justice (California)
American Association of Doctors of Behavioral Health
Asian Americans for Community Involvement (AACI) (California)
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)
ACT (Florida)
All Our Kin
Asset Building Strategies
Autistic Self Advocacy Network

Be A Hero
Building Futures (California)
California Partnership to End Domestic Violence (California)
Campaign for America's Future
Caring Across Generations
Catalyst Domestic Violence Services (California)
Catholics for Choice
Center for Community Solutions (California)
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center for Economic and Policy Research
Center for Survivor Agency and Justice
Child Care for Every Family Network
Chicago Foundation for Women (Illinois)
Community Beyond Violence (California)
Community Change Action
Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF) (Connecticut)
DemCast USA
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund
Domestic Violence Solutions for Santa Barbara County (California)
DOVES of Big Bear Valley, Inc. (California)
Downtown Women's Center (California)
Economic Policy Institute
Equal Rights Advocates
Family Equality
Family Values@Work
Feminist Women's Health Center (Georgia)
Futures Without Violence
FVAP (California)
Georgia Budget and Policy Institute (Georgia)
GLSEN
Golden State Opportunity
Gray's Trauma-Informed Care Services Corp (California)
HAVEN (California)
Haven Hills, Inc. (California)
Health Care Voices
Healthcare Career Advancement Program (H-CAP)
Hispanic Federation
Institute for Women's Policy Research
Interface Children and Family Services (California)
Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence (Iowa)
Jenesse Center, Inc. (California)
Jewish Women International (JWI)
Justice for Migrant Women
Kids Forward (Wisconsin)
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
Legal Aid at Work (California)
Legal Momentum, the Women's Legal Defense and Education Fund
Lumina Alliance (California)
Main Street Alliance
Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence Inc (MNADV) (Maryland)

Massachusetts Workforce Association (Massachusetts)
MCADSV (Montana)
Michigan Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence (Michigan)
MomsRising
National Birth Equity Collaborative
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
National Council of Jewish Women
National Domestic Workers Alliance
National Employment Law Project
National Immigration Law Center
National Network to End Domestic Violence
National Partnership for Women & Families
NC Justice Center (North Carolina)
Neighborhood Villages (Massachusetts)
Nevada Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence (Nevada)
New Mexico Voices for Children (New Mexico)
NJ Citizen Action (New Jersey)
Oklahoma Policy Institute (Oklahoma)
Oxfam America
Paid Leave for All
Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA)
PFLAG National
PL+US: Paid Leave for the U.S.
Policy Matters Ohio (Ohio)
Public Citizen
Public Justice Center (Maryland)
Rainbow Services (California)
RedRover
R2H Action [Right to Health]
Reproductive Justice Resilience Project
RESULTS DC/MD (District of Columbia)
SafeNest (Nevada)
SEIU
Shriver Center on Poverty Law
Supermajority
The Center for Family Safety and Healing (Ohio)
The Freedom Train Project Incorporated
The People Concern (California)
UltraViolet
Union for Reform Judaism
United State of Women
Victims Empowerment Support Team (VEST) (California)
Victor Valley Domestic Violence Inc. (California)
Walnut Avenue Family & Women's Center (California)
We Demand More Coalition
William E. Morris Institute for Justice (Arizona)
W.O.M.A.N., Inc. (California)
Women Employed (Illinois)
Women's Center-High Desert, Inc. (California)
Women's Lobby (Maine)

Women's March

Women's Media Center

Women of Reform Judaism

YWCA Glendale and Pasadena (California)

YWCA Golden Gate Silicon Valley (California)

YWCA USA