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Tuesday, April 28, 2009

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**Rep. Doris Matsui Recognizes April 28th as Equal Pay Day**

*Reiterates Need for Further Legislation Before Equal Rights for Women Are Achieved*

**Washington, D.C.** - Congresswoman Doris Matsui (CA – 05) recognized today as Equal Pay Day, a day designed to mark the ongoing struggle of equal pay for women workers across America by releasing the following statement:

“Today, I along with the rest of the country, recognize Equal Pay Day to highlight the continuing presence of pay discrimination in the workplace. We must use this opportunity to renew our dedication to achieving equal pay by working together to fight these unfair pay practices.

“With the passage of the Equal Pay Act by President John F. Kennedy in 1963, millions of working women looked to the future of a day when women could earn a wage equal to that of men. Nearly five decades later, women continue to make only 78 cents for every dollar made by their male counterparts. Though this number has improved from 59 cents in 1963, its slow improvement highlights the ongoing struggle for equality in the workplace.

“On January 9th of this year, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Paycheck Fairness Act. This comprehensive bill updates the 46-year-old Equal Pay Act, bringing equal pay laws in line with civil right laws. This legislation takes real steps to deter wage discrimination by empowering women to negotiate for equal pay, creating stronger incentives for employers to follow the law, and strengthening federal enforcement efforts. Similar legislation is currently being considered by the US Senate, and if passed, would truly provide a new foundation to the ongoing struggle for equal pay for women.

“Since then, Congress cleared the final legislation for the Lilly Ledbetter Act, and on January 29, 2009, President Obama signed this bill into law. The Lilly Ledbetter Act restores the right of women and other workers to challenge unfair pay in the court. As the first bill signed into law by President Obama, this critical piece of legislation is one big step in the direction towards equal pay for women. However, work must not end here. Today on Equal Pay Day - 26 years later - we must renew our commitment to equal pay for women in every workplace, in every corner of the country.”

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