

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 13, 2016

Dr. Rita Luthra
Longmeadow, Massachusetts

Dear Dr. Luthra:

Thank you for writing. From reaching for the ballot box to breaking barriers in boardrooms and on battlefields, American women have stood resolute in the face of adversity and overcome many obstacles to realize success. However, we have more to do to advance opportunity for women, and I appreciate your message.

This begins with ensuring women earn a wage equal to their efforts. Today, they make up about half of our workforce, and more than half of our college graduates. More women are now the main breadwinners for their families. But in many ways, our economy hasn't caught up to this reality. The average woman who works full time earns 77 cents for every dollar a man earns, and for minority women, the gap is even greater. That's wrong: women deserve equal pay for equal work.

Too many women also face discriminatory workplace policies that hold them back from caring for a new child or a sick parent, which hurts our families and our economy. Through the White House Council on Women and Girls and legislation like the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act—the first bill I signed into law—my Administration is working to combat these disparities and give every woman the opportunity she has earned. I also signed an Executive order protecting the employees of Federal contractors who share information about how much they are paid, and my Administration strongly supports the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would extend this and other protections to employees across the country. In addition, we are pushing for more chances for women to pursue educations and careers in fields where they are underrepresented. And we are supporting female entrepreneurs and small business owners through new loans and tax credits.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, preventive care like mammograms and contraception are covered for many women at no cost, and women can't be charged higher premiums than men for coverage. And more than 40 years after the Supreme Court affirmed a woman's constitutional right to privacy, including the right to choose, we shouldn't have to remind people that only a woman—not politicians or employers—should get to make decisions about her health.

Thank you, again, for writing. America must be a level playing field, a fair race where anybody who's willing to work hard has a chance to get ahead. Restoring opportunity for every American—especially for women—will remain a driving focus for our country.

Sincerely,



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WASHINGTON, DC 20500



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