

EMPOWER Act

Organization Endorsements

List of Organizations

- **The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights**
- **National Women’s Law Center**
- **National Partnership of Women & Families**
- **National Employment Lawyers Association**
- **National Domestic Workers Alliance**
- **Feminist Majority**
- **Human Rights Campaign**
- **Equal Rights Advocates**
- **Futures Without Violence**
- **Equal Pay Today**
- **Alianza Nacional de Campesinas**
- **AARP**
- **NAACP**
- **National Council of Jewish Women**
- **Sikh American Legal, Defense & Education Fund**
- **People For the American Way**
- **Public Citizen**
- **The Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law**
- **Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law**
- **Women Employed**
- **American Association of University Women**

What They Are Saying:

- **Vanita Gupta, President & CEO, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights:**

“We applaud Senators Harris and Murkowski for working across the aisle to address the pervasive problem of workplace harassment, and proposing reforms which are critically important for low wage workers and people of color. The EMPOWER Act strengthens protections for employees experiencing harassment in the workplace not only based on sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity) but also when harassment is based on race, ethnicity, national origin, age, religion and disability. The bill’s prohibitions against non-disclosure and non-disparagement clauses in employment agreements will encourage all women and men, whether in Congress, Hollywood or in restaurants, to speak up about inappropriate conduct. Congress must enact strong protections against sexual and other workplace harassment now.”

- **Emily Martin, General Counsel and Vice President for Education & Workplace Justice, National Women’s Law Center**

“The last several months have confirmed that no workplace – from newsrooms, to restaurant kitchens, to factory floors – is immune from harassment. This bill will empower survivors and bystanders, who have remained silent for so long out of fear, to report harassment safely and will help lift the veil of secrecy that has allowed harassers to escape accountability for their actions. We applaud the leadership of Senators Harris and Murkowski, and are

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encouraged to see a bipartisan effort to find solutions for the longstanding and pervasive issue of workplace harassment.”

- **Debra L. Ness, President, National Partnership of Women & Families:**

“The EMPOWER Act is urgently needed legislation that will help stop sexual harassment and provide greater transparency when it does occur. The protections in this bill would make a meaningful difference for women, including those who face the largest power imbalances in the workplace, such as domestic workers, farmworkers, and restaurant and retail workers. We are especially pleased that the bill takes a comprehensive approach, prohibits nondisparagement and nondisclosure clauses in employment agreements, and requires public companies to disclose the number of settlements and judgments as well as repeat settlements with respect to individual perpetrators,” said Debra L. Ness, president of the National Partnership for Women & Families. “These provisions will create powerful disincentives for companies to tolerate workplace harassment, helping make #TimesUp for perpetrators. We commend Senators Kamala Harris and Lisa Murkowski for developing and championing this bill and urge every member of Congress to make its passage a high priority.”

- **Terry O’Neill, Executive Director, National Employment Lawyers Association:**

“Harassment and discrimination persist because employers have virtually unlimited control to silence employees who complain when they face illegal treatment on the job. This bill would stop employers from imposing their one-sided terms on victims of workplace abuse, and ends the tax penalty on those who succeed in holding their employers accountable. NELA applauds Senators Harris and Murkowski for introducing this important legislation and calls on every senator to help enact it into law.”

- **Ai-jen Poo, Executive Director, National Domestic Workers Alliance and Co-Director, Caring Across Generations:**

“All women deserve dignity and safety at work, regardless of where they work or the nature of the work they do. Despite the importance of their work supporting families and maintaining homes, domestic workers are especially vulnerable to abuse, in large part because they aren’t adequately protected under federal labor laws. I commend Senators Harris and Murkowski for including domestic workers in the EMPOWER Act and advancing new sexual harassment policies. Now survivors will have more accessible ways of reporting harassment, and our voices will no longer be silenced as a condition of keeping our jobs.”

- **Eleanor Smeal, President, Feminist Majority:**

“The Feminist Majority applauds Senators Kamala Harris and Lisa Murkowski for taking action and developing meaningful tools for workers to fight back against sexual harassment and gender-based discrimination. Their leadership on this critical issue gives voice to millions of people facing sexual harassment every day. From farmworkers to hotel workers to office workers, no one is immune from sexual harassment which undermines economic security and violates basic human rights.”

- **David Stacy, Director of Government Affairs, Human Rights Campaign:**

“The epidemic of sexual harassment in the workplace is pervasive across all industries and impacts all demographics -- including the LGBTQ community,” said Human Rights

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Campaign Government Affairs Director David Stacy. “Far too often, survivors of workplace harassment are forced into silence while perpetrators and employers avoid consequences. Employers should not be allowed to hide behind nondisclosure agreements that pressure survivors to remain silent in exchange for their job. We thank Senator Harris and Senator Murkowski for introducing the EMPOWER Act that addresses these critical gaps in ending workplace harassment.”

- **Noreen Farrell, Executive Director, Equal Rights Advocates:**

“People of all genders who experience workplace sexual violence and harassment need justice not loopholes. Equal Rights Advocates is proud to stand with Senators Harris and Murkowski to support this bill which will remove many of the barriers thrown in the path of survivors of workplace violence and harassment.”

- **Esta Soler, President & Founder, Futures Without Violence:**

“We would like to thank Senators Harris and Murkowski for their thoughtful leadership in taking the first steps in transforming systems of accountability and enforcement in America’s workplaces to protect workers vulnerable to experiencing workplace harassment and violence. With this legislation, more workers will feel empowered to speak up about harassment and violence in the workplace without fear of retaliation, and employers will be moved to provide support, appropriate response, and engage in prevention. Futures Without Violence endorses this bill as an important start to helping the private sector change the culture of the American workplace to one of respect, equity, and support so that all workers and workplaces can thrive.”

- **David Lopez, a partner at Outten & Golden LLP who served as General Counsel of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission from 2010 to 2016:**

“I congratulate Senators Harris and Murkowski for introducing this important legislation to protect victims of workplace harassment. The EMPOWER Act will ensure that workers who are harassed on the job are not silenced by non-disclosure and non-disparagement agreements. And the Act’s confidential tip line will help the EEOC to more effectively enforce our laws prohibiting harassment and to educate workers about their rights.”

- **Joi Chaney, Executive Director and Campaign Director, Equal Pay Today:**

“Like wage discrimination, harassment -- whether based on sex (including gender), race, national origin, disability, age or another protected characteristic -- is a pernicious form of employment discrimination. Workplace harassment often contributes to the gap, suppressing the wages, economic stability, and professional mobility of its victims. Despite the efforts of the EEOC and similar agencies, harassment persists and more needs to be done to shine a light on this problem, protect all employees in all workplaces, and hold perpetrators and employers accountable. Even now, in this #MeToo era, too many are still being victimized in the shadows. Senators Kamala Harris and Lisa Murkowski’s EMPOWER bill could not be more timely and needed. They are to be commended on this bipartisan effort. Harassment violates the core principles of equal employment opportunity and robs its victims of the American Dream. Time’s up.”

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- **Mónica Ramírez, President, Alianza Nacional de Campesinas:**
“Farmworker women and many other workers currently work under the constant threat of sexual harassment and retaliation with little hope of any kind of relief or protection. The EMPOWER Act is an important step forward toward ensuring that all workers will be able to work with both safety and dignity no matter the worksite or employer size, while ensuring employer accountability. Among its important protections, employers will no longer be able to negotiate non-disparagement and non-disclosure agreements that favor their business interests and silence survivors. With measures like these, we believe that this bill will bring us closer to ending the wide-spread workplace sexual violence and other forms of discrimination that currently exist across all sectors and industries.”
- **Joyce Rogers, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs, AARP:**
“Age-based harassment is a significant problem for older workers, and apparently a growing one according to recent EEOC enforcement statistics. AARP is heartened that the bipartisan bill introduced by Sens. Harris and Murkowski includes age harassment (e.g. nicknaming an older worker “grandma” or badgering an older worker to retire) and strengthens protections against it.”
- **Hilary O. Shelton, Director of the NAACP Washington Bureau and the Senior Vice President for Policy and Advocacy, NAACP:**
“Harassment should never be tolerated or hushed up,” said Hilary O. Shelton, Director of the NAACP Washington Bureau and the Senior Vice President for Policy and Advocacy. “It must be exposed and confronted head-on. Senators Harris and Murkowski are to be commended for the EMPOWER bill, which would result in more women, and women of color, who are disproportionately victims of harassment, speaking out about their experiences. This “sunshine” would be a welcome fix for a problem which has lived in the shadows for far too long.”
- **Nancy K. Kaufman, CEO, National Council of Jewish Women:**
“National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) is pleased to support the bipartisan EMPOWER Act offered by Senators Kamala Harris and Lisa Murkowski. For far too long, sexual harassment has pervaded the workplace, and we are all too well aware that no industry is immune. While as a society we are declaring #metoo, the systems that have allowed sexual harassment in the workplace to be a well-kept secret must be addressed. The EMPOWER Act would do just that by expanding and strengthening the role of the EEOC in preventing and monitoring sexual harassment and prohibiting a number of employment practices and tax benefits that impede sexual harassment claims, among other important provisions. The EMPOWER Act is a strong first step to address gaps in federal law that allow this crime to remain hidden, enabling the culture of sexual harassment to flourish in our workplaces.”
- **Baldev Singh, Executive Director, Sikh American Legal, Defense & Education Fund:**
“Given our distinctive appearance and religious practices, we often find ourselves at the center of workplace discrimination and on issues involving our religious rights. We know this piece of legislation will “close the gaps” and create a just and inclusive workplace for Sikh Americans.”

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- **Marge Baker, Executive Vice President for Policy and Program, People For the American Way:**

“Workplace harassment is a pervasive problem that threatens both the livelihood and the safety of those experiencing it—disproportionately women in low-wage jobs. We applaud Senators Harris and Murkowski for taking an important step toward addressing this urgent issue. Every person deserves to feel respected and safe in their own workplace.”

- **Lisa Gilbert, Vice President for Legislative Affairs, Public Citizen:**

“We have reached a tipping point in society—and there is now a clear recognition that we should not, and will not, tolerate discrimination and harassment in the workplace. While there is much more that we have to do to shine a bright line on fixing systemic issues of discrimination and harassment, the EMPOWER Act is a promising first start and we look forward to working to quickly pass this important bill.”

- **Holly O’ Donnell, CEO, The Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law**

“Workplace harassment remains a widespread problem for workers with disabilities as well as other workers. The EMPOWER Act will bring needed transparency and help protect all workers. The Bazelon Center strongly supports this important legislation.”

- **Kristen Clarke, President & Executive Director, Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law**

“Everyone deserves to work in an environment free of harassment. Yet, women continue to face harassment by coworkers and supervisors. Women of color who experience harassment on the basis of race and gender face even greater barriers, higher rates of retaliation and fewer alternative economic opportunities. We commend Senators Harris and Murkowski for working together to introduce this comprehensive bill to protect victims of harassment who are too often silenced as a result of unfair nondisparagement and nondisclosure clauses. If passed, this bill would encourage victims of harassment to speak out against workplace abuses and incentivize employers to undertake proactive measures to root out harassment. We urge Congress to pass this important bill.”

- **Sharmili Majmudar, Interim CEO, Women Employed**

“Women Employed is proud to support the bi-partisan sexual harassment EMPOWER Act sponsored by Senators Harris and Murkowski that will provide much-needed strengthening to existing law. The #MeToo movement has shown that sexual harassment is all too pervasive for women regardless of where we work. We encourage all members of Congress to make this bill a priority to ensure its passage.”

- **Deborah J. Vagins, Senior Vice President of Public Policy and Research, American Association of University Women:**

“AAUW, along with our over 170,000 members and supporters across the country, commend Senators Harris and Murkowski for reaching across the aisle to take this important bipartisan step towards addressing pervasive workplace harassment, including harassment based on sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity), race, ethnicity, age, religion,

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and disability. This past year we have had a reckoning when it comes to the hostile climates and power dynamics that allow discrimination and harassment to fester in virtually every industry. The far reaching effects of harassment on an employee's pay, advancement, and well-being cannot be overstated. Women are raising their voices and they will no longer be silent. With the EMPOWER Act, workers will see an end to many practices that encourage silence and secrecy when harassment occurs and, by passing this bill, Congress can further assure survivors: we hear you, we support you, and we will stand by you."