



EQUAL PAY DAY IN COOK COUNTY, 2012

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE COOK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, throughout history, working women have provided the foundation upon which our great country has been built; and

WHEREAS, women in the workplace have continually overcome obstacles and have met challenges that others have not had to endure; and

WHEREAS, almost 50 years after the passage of the federal Equal Pay Act of 1963 women still experience wage discrimination; and

WHEREAS, on January 29, 2009, President Barack Obama signed his first official bill into law, the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Restoration Act, which allows individuals to challenge wage discrimination based on gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, or disability; and

WHEREAS, in 2011 nearly half of all working Americans are women, yet women earn only about 80 cents for every dollar men earn; and

WHEREAS, equal pay for equal work strengthens a woman's position in the workforce and secures stability of families and our larger communities; and

WHEREAS, in 1993, the Cook County Human Rights Ordinance was passed by the Cook County Board of Commissioners, the Ordinance, in pertinent part, protects individuals from discrimination in the terms and conditions of employment, including unequal pay, based on sex, and other protected bases; and

WHEREAS, in 1995, the Cook County Commission on Women's Issues was created by Resolution of the Cook County Board to address the concerns and economic well-being of women and girls in Cook County; and

WHEREAS, in 2010, I was elected as the first woman President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners of Cook County, the second largest County in the Country; and

WHEREAS, I remain committed to the mission and mandate of both the Commission on Human Rights and Commission on Women's Issues as necessary forums and voices for equality in the work place for women; and

WHEREAS, my Administration will strive to end pay disparity based on gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, and other protected bases in Cook County, and throughout Cook County government, and to continue to promote the benefits of economic and workplace equality; and

WHEREAS, my Administration acknowledges the proficiency, expertise and talents women add to the workforce; and

WHEREAS, my Administration currently has 29 women appointed to key leadership positions throughout Cook County government; and

WHEREAS, we must recognize, that all of Cook County, not just Cook County working women, will benefit when wage discrimination is eradicated and equal pay for equal work is not just the law, but is the reality.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Toni Preckwinkle, President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners, do hereby, proclaim April 17, 2012, as **COOK COUNTY EQUAL PAY DAY**, in recognition of the value of women's skills and contributions to the work place, and I call on all employers in Cook County, to provide equal pay for equal work, both as a matter of fairness and as a matter of good business.

Toni Preckwinkle, President
Cook County Board of Commissioners