

# 2015 NEW NYS WOMEN'S EQUALITY LAWS

2015 marks groundbreaking progress on passing laws to improve the lives of New York women.

This success is the result of years of advocates working together on key policy reform and unprecedented bi-partisan support of our elected officials. As the lead on Equal Pay and a Steering Committee member of the Women's Equality Coalition, PowHerNY is proud to be part of New York Herstory! Below is an update on the status of women's rights legislation, including the 10 Point Women's Equality Agenda proposed by Governor Cuomo in 2013 and additional new laws.

## WOMEN'S EQUALITY AGENDA 10-POINT LEGISLATION

### BILLS READY FOR GOVERNOR'S SIGNATURE

#### Equal Pay

##### S.1 (Savino)/A.6075 (Titus)

1) Strengthen our equal pay laws to make it tougher for employers to get away with paying women less; (2) Outlaw wage secrecy policies and prevent employer retaliation; and (3) Increase damages available to a prevailing litigant to 300% of unpaid wages.

#### Sexual Harassment

##### S.2 (Valesky)/A.5360(Galef)

Extend sexual harassment protections to employees of all private businesses, no matter how large or small.

#### Attorney's Fees

##### S.3 (Little)/A.7189 (Dinowitz)

Allow litigants who win a sex discrimination suit to collect attorney's fees.

#### Family Status Discrimination

##### S.4 (Little)/A.7173 (Russell)

Outlaws discrimination against parents in the workplace.

#### DV & Section 8 Housing Discrimination S.5

##### (Robach)/A.6354B (Peoples-Stokes)

Prohibit building owners, managers and leasing agents from refusing to lease or sell to a person, or evict a tenant, because of status as a domestic violence victim; and creates Taskforce to study source of income discrimination on access to housing.

#### Pilot Program for Videoconferencing

##### S.6 (Young)/A.6262 (Joyner)

Authorizes the creation of a pilot program to allow domestic violence victims to testify remotely when seeking a temporary order of protection.

#### Human Trafficking

##### S.7 (Lanza)/A./506(Paulin)

Offer better protection to survivors of human trafficking by treating survivors as victims and holding perpetrators accountable. This will include establishing an affirmative defense for trafficking victims, creating the crime of aggravated patronizing of a minor, and allowing victims to take civil action against their traffickers.

## Pregnancy Accommodation

S.8 (Hannon)/A.4272 (Gunther)

Require employers to provide reasonable accommodations to pregnant workers.

### BILL SIGNED INTO LAW

## Order of Protection Violations

S.5605 (Robach)/A.6547-B (Weinstein)

Offer better protection to survivors of human trafficking by treating survivors as victims and holding perpetrators accountable. This will include establishing an affirmative defense for trafficking victims, creating the crime of aggravated patronizing of a minor, and allowing victims to take civil action against their traffickers.

### AWAITING ACTION

## Reproductive Health

S.4432 (Stewart-Cousins)/A.6221 (Glick)

Ensure that a woman can access abortion care when her health is at risk by codifying in New York State law the 1973 Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade*.

## OTHER WOMEN FOCUSED BILLS

### BILLS READY FOR GOVERNOR'S SIGNATURE

## Pregnancy Insurance

S.7 (Lanza)/A./506(Paulin)

Makes pregnancy a "qualifying event" so that pregnant women can enroll in insurance plans outside of the "open enrollment period."

## Breastfeeding Bill of Rights

### Notification Act

S.5183 (Hannon)/A.7202A (Gunther)

Ensure that mothers know their rights to continue breastfeeding when they return to work.

## Nail Salon Workers

S.5966 (Venditto)/A.7630A (Kim)

Improves working conditions for nail salon workers by requiring employers to provide safety equipment, to post a Bill of Rights, and to secure accident, liability, and wage coverage insurance.

## Campus Sexual Assault

S.5965 (LaValle)/A.8244 (Glick)

Implements prevention and response policies and procedures for colleges and universities on sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking.