**CONSUMER PROTECTIONS, WORKING CONDITIONS, and PAY EQUITY**

The Paycheck Fairness Act, (S.819 in the Senate; H.R.1869 in the House) would amend the 1938 Fair Labor Practices Act to strengthen equal pay provisions and stiffen penalties for companies that violate these. It also directs the Department of Labor to establish a grant program for job training for girls and women, conduct studies with the goal of eliminating gender-based pay disparities, and educate the public on issue of wage fairness. The Senate version of the bill is co-sponsored by all Democratic members of the Senate (including Feinstein and Harris) and one Independent; there are no Republican co-sponsors. It is with the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. The House version of the bill is co-sponsored by all Democratic members of the House (including Panetta); again, there are no Republican co-sponsors. It is with the House Education and the Workforce Committee.

**TELL** the Leadership of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee that we want to see action on S.819 and **EXPLAIN** to the Republican Chair that paycheck fairness should not be a partisan issue

• **Senator Lamar Alexander** (R-TN), Chair, Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, 428 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-5375

• **Senator Claire Murray** (D-WA), Ranking member, Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, 428 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-5375

**TELL** the Leadership of the House Education and the Workforce Committee that we want to see action on H.R.1869 and **EXPLAIN** to the Republican Chair and Vice-Chair that paycheck fairness should not be a partisan issue

• **Representative Virginia Foxx** (R-NC), Chair, House Education and the Workforce Committee, 2176 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-4527

• **Representative Joe Wilson** (R-SC), Vice-Chair, House Education and the Workforce Committee, 2176 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-4527

• **Representative Robert C. “Bobby” Scott** (D-VA), Ranking Member, House Education and the Workforce Committee, 2176 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-4527

**ENVIRONMENT**

California won’t be seeing an end to smoking at State Parks and Beaches any time soon, as Governor Jerry Brown has vetoed (for the third time!) legislation that would put such a ban in place. Brown’s veto statement said the ban isn’t needed because these are “wide open spaces.”

**REMIND** the Governor that our State is at year-round danger of catastrophic fires and that highly toxic cigarette butts are the most common form of beach and ocean pollution and **TELL** him that he’s made a very poor decision

• **Governor Edmund G. “Jerry” Brown**, c/o State Capitol, Suite 1173, Sacramento, CA 95814, (916) 445-2841

The House Natural Resources Committee has approved nine bills, all of which would weaken provisions of the Endangered Species Act under the guise of “modernization,” and which can now come before a vote of the full HOUSE. Among other things, these bills would delist or “downlist” endangered and potentially endangered species, give cities and states more influence in limiting endangered species protections, and would allow a “discharge” of species-protection petitions when there is a backlog of such petitions (in other words, do nothing and the petition *will* disappear).

**INSIST** to our Representative that H.R.6308, H.R.6344, H.R.6345, H.R.6346, H.R.6354, H.R.6355, H.R.6356, H.R.6364, and H.R.6360 represent an unacceptable threat to U.S. biological health and diversity and to the beauty of our Central Coast and **ASK** that he fight them with all possible means

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 225-2861

The Off Fossil Fuels for a Better Future Act, H.R.3671, would require that by 2027 80% of all electricity sales be generated from clean sources, that by 2027 80% of all cars sold must be zero-emissions vehicles, and that by 2027 80% of train lines and engines be electrified. Each of these thresholds would rise to 100% by 2035. It provides rebates for consumers purchasing clean vehicles, bans issuance of new permits for major fossil fuel projects beginning this year, ends fossil fuel subsidies, and provide tax credits to support wind and solar energy. A host of House committees and subcommittees is currently considering this legislation: the House Committee on Energy and Commerce; the House Committee on Ways and Means; the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; the House Committee on Education and the Workforce; the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee; the House Financial Services Committee; the House Foreign Affairs Committee; the Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials; the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management; the Subcommittee on Water Resources and the Environment; and two Subcommittees on the Environment.

**INFORM** key committee and subcommittee members that H.R.3671 is exactly the sort of courageous, forward thin king legislation we need to slow climate change and its deadly consequences

• **Representative Greg Walden** (R-OR), Chair, House Energy and Commerce Committee, 2125

Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2927

• **Representative Joe Barton** (R-TX), Vice-Chair, House Energy and Commerce Committee,

2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2927

• **Representative Frank Pallone** (D-NJ), Ranking Member, House Energy and Commerce

Committee, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2927

• **Representative Fred Upton** (R-MI), Chair, Energy and Commerce Energy Subcommittee, 2125

Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2927

• **Representative Bobby Rush** (D-IL), Ranking Member, Energy and Commerce Energy

Subcommittee, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-2927

• **Representative Kevin Brady** (R-TX), Chair, House Ways and Means Committee, 1102

Longworth House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-3625

• **Representative Richard Neal** (D-MA), Ranking Member, House Ways and Means

Committee, 1102 Longworth House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-3625

• **Representative Bill Shuster** (R-PA), Chair, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, 2165 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-9446

• Representative Peter A. DeFazio (D-OR), Ranking Member, Transportation and

Infrastructure Committee, 2165 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202)

225-9446

• **Representative Lou Baretta** (R-PA), Chair, Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee

on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management, 2165 Rayburn

House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-9446

• **A. Drew Furgeson IV** (R-GA), Vice-Chair, Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee

on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management, 2165 Rayburn

House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-9446

• **Representative Dina Titus** (D-NV), Ranking Member, Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management, 2165 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-9446

• **Representative Virginia Foxx** (R-NC), Chair, House Education and the Workforce Committee, 2176 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-4527

• **Representative Joe Wilson** (R-SC), Vice-Chair, House Education and the Workforce Committee, 2176 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-4527

• **Representative Robert C. “Bobby” Scott** (D-VA), Ranking Member, House Education and the Workforce Committee, 2176 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-4527

• **Representative Lamar Alexander** (R-TX), Chair, House Science, Space, and Technology Committee, 2321 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-6371

• **Representative Frank D. Lucas** (R-OK) Vice-Chair, House Science, Space, and Technology Committee, 2321 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-6371

• **Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson** (D-TX), Ranking Member, House Science, Space, and Technology Committee, 2321 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-6371

• **Representative Randy Weber** (R-TX), Chair, Subcommittee on Energy, House Science, Space, and Technology Committee, 2321 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-6371

• **Representative Steve Knight** (R-CA), Vice-Chair, Subcommittee on Energy, House Science, Space, and Technology Committee, 2321 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-6371

• **Representative Marc Veasey** (D-TX), Ranking member, Subcommittee on Energy, House Science, Space, and Technology Committee, 2321 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-6371

• **Representative Jeb Hensarling** (R-TX), Chair, House Financial Services Committee, 2129 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-7502

• **Representative Patrick T. McHenry** (R-NC), Vice-Chair, House Financial Services Committee, 2129 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-7502

• **Representative Maxine Waters** (D-CA), Ranking Member, House Financial Services Committee, 2129 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-7502

• **Representative Ed Royce** (R-CA), Chair, House Foreign Affairs Committee, 2170 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-5021

• **Representative Francis Rooney** (R-FL), Vice-Chair, House Foreign Affairs Committee, 2170 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-5021

• **Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen** (R-FL), Chair Emeritus, House Foreign Affairs Committee, 2170 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-5021

• **Representative Eliot Engel** (D-NY), Ranking Member, House Foreign Affairs Committee, 2170 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-5021

The Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) has proposed rollback of rules put into place after the catastrophic Deepwater Horizon oil spill. These changes would remove independent verification of safety measures and equipment; drop requirements that equipment be required to function at “most extreme” weather, heat, and wind scenarios; and roll back requirements for certification by professional engineers of designs specified new well equipment.

EXPLAIN to the Secretary of the Interior and the BSEE that the current rule exist because we have already had a catastrophic oil spill and that the damage these rules prevent is not theoretical

• **Ryan Zinke**, Secretary of the Interior, 1849 C St. NW, Washington DC 20240, (202) 208-3100

• **Scott A Angelle**, Director, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, Department of the Interior, 1849 C St. NW, Washington DC 20240, (202) 208-4378

• **Doug Morris**, Chief of Offshore Regulatory Programs, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, Department of the Interior, 1849 C St. NW, Washington DC 20240, (202) 208-4378

• **Jennifer Mchaffey**, Acting Chief, Safety Enforcement Division, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, Department of the Interior, 1849 C St. NW, Washington DC 20240, (202) 208-4378

**ETHICS, TRANSPARENCY, and SEPARATION of POWERS**

Here’s a giant exercise in connect-the-dots. Andrew Wheeler, former *coal* lobbyist and current Acting Director of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is sending the White House a proposal to raise the threshold for mercury emissions from *coal*-burning power plants. This is a rollback that Robert E, Murray, chief executive of Murray Energy Corp. (which produces *coal*-based energy), personally requested. And why would Wheeler and the White House listen to a *coal* executive? Because said executive is Wheeler’s *former boss* and was also *a major donor* to the Trump inauguration fund. Not a very pretty picture once those dots are connected. And—bonus fun fact—this proposal to change mercury emissions rules cites a dissent by Brett Kavanaugh to a court ruling that upheld limits on mercury emissions.

**EXPLAIN** to Wheeler that he is now an employee of the U.S. people, not coal companies, and that we, the people, like our air mercury-free

• Andrew Wheeler, Acting Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, Mail Code 1101A, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC 20460, (202) 564-4700

**TELL** our Congresspeople that you don’t like the picture you’re seeing and you want **ACTION** on this apparent collusion between the coal industry and the Republican administration

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamal Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-35653

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 225-2861

**FAMILY SEPARATION, DENATURALIZATION, and IMMIGRATION**

At the end of September the New York Times reported that hundreds of children being held in immigration detention at sites ranging from Kansas to New York were roused in the middle of the night, loaded on busses, and taken to their new home—a tent city in Tornillo, Texas. The children sleep twenty to a tent. They have no school, but instead are given “workbooks” that they are not required to complete. The camp opened in June with a capacity of 400 children. It has now been expanded to hold 3,800 children. Most of these children have been held in detention for at least 60 days, despite the Flores Settlement, which requires that children not be held in such facilities for longer than twenty days. The Tornillo tent city has not been inspected or monitored by child welfare authorities, who would have the power to impose requirements for safety, education, and staff training. Instead, they are functioning under guidelines set up by the Department of Health and Human Services. The children in Tornillo are among an estimated 13,000 children are being held in immigration detention nation-wide.

**DECRY**, yet again, these appalling actions by our government

• **Kirstjen Nielsen**, Secretary of Homeland Security, 245 Murray Lane SW, Washington DC 20528-0075, (202) 282-8494

• **Ronald D. Vitiello**, Deputy Director and Senior Official Performing the Duties of Director, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 500 12th St. SW, Washington DC 20536,(866) DHS-2-ICE

• **Alex Azar**, Secretary of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Ave. SW, Washington DC 20201, (877) 696-6775

• **Steven Wagner**, Acting Assistant Secretary, Administration for Children and Families, 200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20201, (202) 401-9200

**DEMAND** Congressional investigation of the Tornillo facility

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamal Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-35653

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 225-2861

**HEALTH and HEALTHCARE**

If the term “contraception desert” is new to you, you need to get used to hearing it because these “deserts” are growing. For years, Planned Parenthood has provided safe, affordable family planning for women—while regularly coming under fire from “religious” conservatives. Meanwhile, a new type of “family planning” [sorry, but this write-up necessitates excessive use of skeptical quotation marks] clinic has been popping up. Obria Group’s clinics, currently there are thirty-eight of these with 22 more in planning, “protect” women from from being “forced” to “live every day having to take a carcinogen.” [That last set of quotation marks is “real,” surrounding the words of Obria Group Chief Executive Kathleen Bravo.] Bravo also claims “A woman needs a choice, but you can’t have a choice if the only clinic that a woman can go to is Planned Parenthood.” And Obria Groups choice offerings? There are limited to family planning methods that require women to track their periods and to refrain from sex when they are most fertile, methods that are only 76% effective, even when followed correctly. The Rupublican Trump administration is now considering changes to Title X that, based on geography, may make Obria-type clinics the only ones available to women with limited means. Currently Title X requires that clinics receiving funding offer a full range of contraceptive options, including condoms, birth control pills, IUDs, and implants. [Side note: clinics receiving Title X funds cannot use these funds for abortion and many Title X clinic do not provide abortions, even if funded through non-government funds.] It now appears that under Title X Director Diane Foley (formerly chief executive of a group of anti-abortion, “crisis” pregnancy centers) Title X will embrace a “Protect Life Rule,” which would promote and direct federal funding to clinics like Obria that do not offer condoms, hormonal contraception, IUDs, or abortion.

**OBJECT** to this change that would limit many women’s family planning choices to the least effective method available and POINT OUT that any talk about preventing abortion is a red herring because Title X funds *do not pay for abortions*

• **Diane Foley**, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Population Affairs, Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Ave. SW, Washington DC 20201, (877) 696-6775

• **Alex Azar**, Secretary of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Ave. SW, Washington DC 20201, (877) 696-6775

**URGE** fierce protection of all women’s access to basic family planning services

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamal Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-35653

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 225-2861

HUMAN and CIVIL RIGHTS

Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke has proposed federal rule changes that would charge protestors fees for demonstrating on public lands. We can make official comments on this proposal on the Federal Register: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/08/15/2018-17386/special-regulations-areas-of-the-national-park-system-national-capital-region-special-events-and#open-comment>. We can also contact our Congresspeople to let them know how utterly appalled we are by this proposed infringement on First Amendment freedoms.

**EXPRESS** your outrage to

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamal Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-35653

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 225-2861

In the midst of the Kavanaugh Circus, a number of other important topics have not received the attention they deserve. These include the status of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). VAWA was set to expire at the start of October, but has been temporarily extended through December 7 as part of a spending bill.

**TELL** our Congresspeople that we want to see legislation dedicated to making VAWA protections permanent and **OBJECT** to this important issue being kicked about as a result of partisan politicking

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamal Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-35653

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 225-2861

The Republican administration has announced that it will no longer issue family-member visas to same-sex partners of foreign diplomats and employees of international organizations (the U.N., N.A.T.O., the World Bank, etc.) in the United States. Under a new policy, they will issue visas only to legally married couples—despite the fact that only 13% of the world’s countries make marriage available to same-sex couples. This decision will not only separate families; it will also place domestic partners forced to return to countries with anti-gay legislation or strong anti-gay sentiment, where their lives may be at risk.

**CONDEMN** this act of governmental prejudice and its potentially devastating real-world consequences

• **Mike Pompeo**, U.S. Secretary of State, 2201 C St. NW, Washington DC 20520-2204, (202) 647-6575

**ASK** our Congresspeople to oppose this move by the Republican administration

• **Senator Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA), 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-3841

• **Senator Kamal Harris** (D-CA), 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 224-35653

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 225-2861

Our government continues to provide weapons being used to attack civilians in the Saudi-led war in Yemen. The humanitarian crisis in Yemen is exactly that—a humanitarian crisis that is exposing the Yemeni people to epidemic diseases like cholera and contributing to extensive famine in the country. H.Con.Res.138 makes it clear that the U.S. role in this war has not been authorized by Congress and calls for the removal of U.S. forces from the conflict. This legislation is currently with the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

**URGE** key House Foreign Affairs Committee members to take swift action to see that H.Con.Res.138 can be brought to the House floor

• **Representative Ed Royce** (R-CA), Chair, House Foreign Affairs Committee, 2170 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-5021

• **Representative Francis Rooney** (R-FL), Vice-Chair, House Foreign Affairs Committee, 2170 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-5021

• **Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen** (R-FL), Chair Emeritus, House Foreign Affairs Committee, 2170 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-5021

• **Representative Eliot Engel** (D-NY), Ranking Member, House Foreign Affairs Committee, 2170 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515, (202) 225-5021

**URGE** our Representative to become a co-sponsor of and to fight for passage of H.C.on.Res.138

• **Representative Jimmy Panetta** (D-CA), 228 Cannon House Office Building, Washington DC 20510, (202) 225-2861