

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Washington, D.C. – Today, [Business Forward](#) issued its latest report on women’s progress in the workforce, the potential impact of eliminating the gender gap, and steps the Trump Administration has taken to make it harder for women to raise a family and succeed at work. [Gender Gap in Illinois](#) finds that helping women match men’s labor force participation could grow the U.S. economy by \$1 trillion a year.

“Women are overrepresented in low-paying jobs, underrepresented in high-paying jobs, overworked at home, and undermined at the office,” said Jim Doyle, president of Business Forward. “They’re also America’s largest potential driver of economic growth.”

Nationally, women earn 82 cents for every dollar a man earns, and they are working 27% more hours per year than they did in 1980, simply to keep their families above water. In Illinois, they earn 78 cents for every dollar a man earns. Over a career, women in Illinois earn nearly \$500,000 less. At the current rate, women in Illinois will close the gender gap in 2065.

“Our competitors, recognizing the impact helping women succeed in the workforce can have, spend three times more supporting families than the U.S. does,” Doyle explained. “Once a leader, we now rank 20th out of the world’s 22 advanced economies on women’s labor participation rate.”

“While our competitors make it easier for women to succeed at work, President Trump is making it harder,” said Doyle. “The Trump Administration has restricted reproductive health care and family planning services; pushed for spending cuts for after school programs, on-campus childcare for students, and child care assistance for low-income working families; opposed equal pay measures; and blocked overtime pay reforms and tougher laws on sexual harassment.”

The report cites data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and findings from S&P Global, Citigroup, McKinsey & Company, Center for American Progress, and Washington Center for Equitable Growth.

The [report’s](#) findings include:

- If women participated in the economy at the rate and at the pay men do, our economy could grow by \$1 trillion to \$1.6 trillion/year.
- Women in Illinois make 78 cents for every dollar that men make, and have a labor force participation rate that is 10 percent lower than men.
- Illinois is ranked #38 among US states in gender pay equity, lacks paid leave laws to support working families, and has high childcare costs.
- Two out of three mothers are either the primary or equal earners in their household, yet they handle two to three times more household and parenting work.

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With the help of more than 60 of America's most respected companies, Business Forward is making it easier for more than 100,000 business leaders from across America to advise Washington on how to create jobs and accelerate our economy. Business Forward is active in over 125 cities and works with more than 650 mayors, governors, members of Congress, and senior Administration officials.