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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Landmark wage equity legislation defeated in Senate today**

*Paycheck Fairness Act was to help eradicate the gender wage gap and provide resources for women to challenge wage discrimination*

**PITTSBURGH— WED., NOV.17, 2010** —The Paycheck Fairness Act, the landmark legislation which was to help eliminate the national gender wage gap, was unable to generate the 60 votes needed to prevent a filibuster, ending just two votes shy of the goal (58-41). Pennsylvania Senators Arlen Specter and Bob Casey co-sponsored the bill and voted affirmative.

“I am disheartened that legislation aimed at making sure women in Pennsylvania and across the country are paid the same as men for doing the same work has been blocked by the United States Senate,” said Senator Casey. “I will continue to work with my Senate colleagues to reduce wage inequality for women and help the American families they support.”

The Paycheck Fairness Act was to provide women with legal resources to challenge wage discrimination and help to eliminate the wage gap. Among the bill’s many important provisions intended to advance fair pay for women, the bill would have closed loopholes in the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and prevent retaliation against workers who disclose the amount of their wages. This legislation would have had a major impact on millions of working women and their families during our current economic downturn.

“We are terribly disappointed that partisan politics trumped civil rights today. The passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act would have had significant impact on the economic security of Pennsylvanians, as our state has one of the worst gender wage gaps in the nation and women represent more than half of our workforce,” said Women and Girls Foundation Chief Executive Officer Heather Arnet. “At WGF, we have been working to help close the gender wage gap regionally through cooperative efforts with local employers and government officials and through offering negotiation training programs for women. The Congress had an opportunity with this bill, to finally take significant action in remedying this systemic

barrier to women's rights in the workplace. It is a sad day for Americans everywhere when half the Congress refuses to stand up for our rights and freedoms."

According to the Women and Girls Foundation's 2010 report *The Female Face of Poverty and Economic Insecurity: The Impact of the Recession on Women in Pennsylvania and Pittsburgh MSA*, Pennsylvania women are paid only 72 cents on the dollar compared to men, and in Pittsburgh, women make less than 69 cents to a man's dollar. Since 2005, WGF has succeeded in raising awareness of the gender wage gap, by hosting annual Equal Pay Day rallies in Downtown Pittsburgh, working with elected officials to pass wage-equity legislation in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, conducting negotiation training classes for women, and advocating for wage equity at local and national levels.

**For more information about the Women and Girls Foundation or to schedule an interview with a WGF representative, please call 412-258-2567 or 412-720-4280.**