

Communications Workers of America

CWA National Women's Committee

77th CWA Convention
July 2019

CWA National Women's Committee

District 1

Elizabeth Mercado, Business Agent
CWA Local 1105

NABET-CWA

Cheryl Bacon, Secretary
NABET-CWA Local 59053

District 2-13

Shannon Opfer, Local President
CWA Local 2107

AFA-CWA

Sherrie Thompson, MEC Sec/Treasurer
Frontier Local 27071

District 3

Yolanda Pearson, Executive Vice President
CWA Local 3808

IUE-CWA

Ebony Burgess, Communications Chair
IUE-CWA Local 81381

District 4

Grace Catania, President
National Women's Committee Chair
TNG-CWA Local 34071

Public Sector

Natashia Pickens, Local President
CWA Local 6355

District 6

Sandra Strain, V.P. Avaya, Inc.
CWA Local 6016

TNG-CWA

Janet Moore, President
TNG-CWA Local 37002

District 7

Celeste Jones,
CWA Local 7901

T&T

Sylvia Chapman, Vice President
CWA Local 4250

District 9

Pandy Allen, Secretary Treasurer
CWA Local 9003

Table of Contents

Young People and the Labor Movement

By: Janet Moore, CWA Local 37002 & Grace Catania CWA Local 34071(Committee Chair) 4

Promoting the Involvement of Women in Politics

By: Shannon Opfer CWA Local 2107 & Cheryl Bacon CWA Local 59053 7

Women Behind Bars: The Impact of Mass Incarceration on Women

By: Celeste Jones CWA Local 7901..... 9

#MeToo and the Labor Movement: CWA’s Stance against Sexual Harassment

By: Natasha Pickens CWA Local 6355 & Sherrie Thompson CWA Local 27071 12

CWA Supporting Working Families Serving As Caregivers

By: Elizabeth Mercado CWA Local 1105 & Sandra Strain CWA Local 6016 14

Fighting Against Workplace Bullying

By: Pandy Allen CWA Local 9003 & Ebony Burgess CWA Local 81381 17

Gender Wage Disparity and Its Impact on Women’s Pension

Sylvia Champman CWA Local 4250 & Yolanda Pearson CWA Local 3808..... 19

Young People and the Labor Movement

The labor movement has seen an inspiring new wave of young activists, and the Communications Workers of America (CWA) continues to capitalize on their energy, passion and fresh way of approaching the age-old challenges facing working people.

According to the Economic Policy Institute (EPI), workers ages 35 and under are the main component of an unprecedented surge in union membership over the past two years. In 2017, nearly 860,000 workers under the age of 35 were hired nationwide, and a quarter of those jobs were in unionized work places.

Growing by some 198,000 workers, millennials (born between 1981 and 1996) in unionized work places are offsetting the loss of union jobs in older age brackets, EPI states. This challenges the stereotype that millennials are “economically and politically adrift.” They are stepping into a void of union jobs that has hemorrhaged middle-aged workers over the past three decades.

Perhaps one of the reasons why millennials are drawn to the labor movement is because they “are behind in almost every economic dimension,” according to a report by the California Labor Federation. A recent report by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York found that outstanding student loan debt increased from \$1.44 trillion to \$1.46 trillion in the final quarter of 2018.

Strangled by student loan debt, the overall dearth of jobs that pay a living wage, and a sense of powerlessness, “millennials really are building wealth more slowly than other working generations,” wrote Alice Munnell at the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College. The problem, she said, “is not insurmountable, as long as millennials are willing and able to work longer than their parents and grandparents did.”

As the California Labor Federation pointed out: “The idea that future generations will have to put in twice the work just to receive minimal benefits is absurd. As labor shifts into a new era, more and more young adults want to secure their future with economic stability, rather than living from paycheck to paycheck.”

Millennials understand that collective action gets collective results. A recent Pew Research study found that 68 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds have a favorable view of unions. Another study by Gallup, found 62 percent of Americans approve of unions, about the same as in 2017 — the highest level since 2003.

Interestingly, an even-higher percentage of people (65 percent) between the ages of 18 to 34 held a favorable view of unions. “We’ve seen waves of young people mobilize, protest and take up progressive issues with fierce rigor recently,” the California Labor Fed reported. “The labor movement is the perfect vehicle to harness that energy into a

new wave of economic prosperity for younger workers.” It’s pretty simple, really: Millennials and unions are the perfect match.”

CWA has harnessed the energy of young people through its Next Generation (NextGen) program which began in 2010. NextGen’s mission: Identifying, recruiting, and training young members who will strengthen our movement for social and economic justice. These young activists engage in CWA’s core programs, including CWA Strong, Human Rights, Organizing and Political Action.

NextGen has been building networks of young members with dedicated lead activists in our districts and sectors. Since the program’s inception, hundreds of young members from across the country have attended two national summits and dozens of local, regional and national actions to learn from each other and build our movement.

A recent CWA Strategic Industry Fund grant called for four new NextGen trainings, which began last spring. The curriculum relies heavily on Political Boot Camps, as well as some of the elements used in the CWA Strong, Runaway Inequality and student debt training modules. The focus of the most-recent SIF-funded training will be on educating young members on the history of the labor and social justice movements, organizing and leadership skills, strategic planning and accountability. Many of the new members will be trained by existing NextGen Lead Activists, along with experienced CWA trainers.

The hope is that participants leave the training with an action plan developed in collaboration with lead activists for members’ districts or sectors (and working in conjunction with both). For example, activists could run political action drives at their worksites, engage in side-by-side organizing visits with lead activists, organize bargaining mobilization activities, and campaign for CWA-endorsed political candidates. Along the way, lead activists will mentor trainees with regular check-ins, meetings, follow-up trainings and joint activities. The lead activists will also track their progress and report to the program director, as needed.

Case Study: The NewsGuild-CWA

Over the past year or so, the NewsGuild-CWA has organized more than 1,400 new members, mostly journalists yearning for a voice in their respective workplaces. This historic surge of worker power was largely fueled by young people, many of whom had no experience with labor unions.

Kristina Bui, 27, a copy editor at the Los Angeles Times, was one of several hundred in her newsroom who banded together to join the NewsGuild. Tired of years of turnover parsed by their corporate overlord, Chicago-based Tronc Inc., organizers said they hoped to bargain for better pay, including equal pay for women and people of color, and

job protections in the workplace. But Bui said the movement is also “being driven by journalists taking their seat at the table and taking charge of their work. How could I not want to be part of that?”

At first, Bui had no experience with the labor movement. After a co-worker approached her about joining the Guild, “the more we talked, the clearer it became that we needed [a union]. Our parent company at the time, Tronc, was, at best, an internet joke. At its worst, it was a threat to the Times' name and integrity.” She spoke with her colleagues about the idea and discovered “hope is contagious, and the more I worked to spread it, the more I felt it.”

Some of the organizers at the Times, many of whom were just beginning their journalism careers, were “a little scared,” Bui said. “But these journalists are also so brilliant and hopeful.” No one pursues journalism as a career to make a lot of money -- most believe it's a calling. “That sounds, you know, *noble*,” Bui said. “But it loses some effect when you graduate with tens of thousands of dollars in student loan debt and you're so busy trying to stay afloat that it feels like you'll never be able to get ahead or meaningfully plan for the future.”

Kiley Cruse, a journalist at the Omaha World Herald, was instrumental in the organizing effort in her newsroom. She said “young people are drawn to fairness in the workplace. The younger generation is less likely to put up with being OK with men making more than women. I think the labor movement is a way to ensure fairness in the newsroom.”

One galvanizing factor in Omaha was when Lee Enterprises was hired by the paper's owner, BH Media, to manage the newspaper. Iowa-based Lee is well known for decimating newsroom staffs. “It was really a no-brainer,” Cruse said. “I knew that organizing was the only way to possibly survive,”

Likewise, Bui said it didn't help that every few months yet-another round of layoffs was announced at media organizations across the country. This sense of precariousness in the news business prompted millennial organizers like Bui to ask: “What do I have to lose? And what do I have to gain? For many of us, what do we stand to gain from organizing -- job protections, higher wages, a sense of stability and a voice in our newsrooms -- represents so much more than what we have to lose that I think the question often evolves into: What risk am I taking if I *don't* organize?”

What can CWA do to encourage young people to get involved in our very own youth-quake movement? “Education is key,” Cruse said. “During our initial phase of unionizing I was surprised how many people knew nothing about unions. As soon as we were able to give them information about what a union could offer them, there were very few that said no -- as our 71-5 union vote shows.”

Promoting the Involvement of Women in Politics

The election in 2018 was historic in many ways. Voters turned out in record numbers, pro-worker Democrats took back the House, and women broke records for winning seats in Congress, state legislatures, and governorships. Lauren Underwood (D-IL 14th District) became the youngest Black woman elected to congress. She sits on the newly renamed Committee on Education and Labor. In Missouri, Karla May, a former Shop Steward for CWA Local 6300, was elected to the state Senate. Gains of over 5% were made in Alaska, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Utah. Six chambers flipped to Democrat control and many turned purple. Nevada now has a woman majority legislature. These were the biggest gains since 1992, the so called “year of the woman.” Women rode that “blue wave” to victory from coast to coast.

These women share the diversity of the nation in party, race, and religion. Once in office, they didn’t wait long to make their presence felt. Last February Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the congresswomen from New York’s 14th District, introduced the Green New Deal Resolution It’s has since elevated the discussion around climate change to a national level.

However, these women weren’t elected solely on “women’s issues”. They were elected for their leadership on issues like education, healthcare, and workers’ rights. These gains made by women in national and state legislatures across the country came from unexpected places. Some candidates were long shots and some created a political earthquake. Many of these women weren’t supported by their national party. Some had little or no elective political experience. They ran because they felt it was necessary. Many of these women ran truly grass roots campaigns supported by small individual donors.

Additionally, for CWAers and other union members, the 2018 election presented an opportunity to participate, not just as supporters, but also as candidates.

The AFL-CIO reported that over 700 union members were elected to public office in 2018. Teamsters, teachers, ironworkers, and other unionists won seats in city councils, state legislatures, and other bodies. These victories did not occur by happenstance. CWA and other unions invested in developing members to run for office or help union members and activists get elected. For example, the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor created a Leadership Academy to train union members to run for office. The CWA Political Activist program recruited hundreds of volunteers and activists to support pro-worker candidates through block walks, phone and text banks, and transformative organizing. CWAers were and continue to be part of this national mobilization effort that makes an enormous difference in our political future.

However, CWA still has work to do in addressing the gender gap in leadership within its ranks. Women make up a large percentage of our membership but this percentage is not reflected in its leadership. CWA has worked hard and invested resources to change that. In 1983, we created the Minority Leadership Institute to create a pathway for women and people of color to leadership positions. We continue to reap the benefits of the success of this program. Our union and our country is made stronger by continuing to build on our efforts to embrace our diversity and develop leaders that truly reflect our membership.

It cannot be stated too strongly that early support is critical for pro-worker candidates and grassroots campaigns. This is where CWA can have an impact. CWA's Local Legislative & Political Committees should continue to support national, state and local candidates who truly champion workers' rights and remain vigilant in fighting against those who seek to exploit workers. We should continue to build strong relationships with pro-worker candidates and elected officials to promote issues that impact our members and all working people. We should also continue to strengthen our Political Action Fund that allows us to directly support the candidates of our choice.

We should demand that our representatives fight for the right of working people to organize, mobilize, and negotiate for fair contracts and better wages. They must stand up against anti-worker policies such as Right-To-Work laws and bad trade deals.

It has been a long time coming for women to gain political power and although the 2018 midterm elections presented historic gains for women we still have a long way to go to address the lack of representation of women in positions of power. Not all women elected representatives or candidates are or will be pro-worker. It is our duty as union activists to seek out and support those who will champion our working families' agenda while recognizing that achieving full representation of women is not entirely about party or ideology, but about electing lawmakers who understand the lives of their constituents and reflect their values.

Women Behind Bars: The Impact of Mass Incarceration on Women

In the last 25 years, the number of women and girls within the criminal justice system has skyrocketed; many have been swept up under the guise of the War on Drugs and subject to increasingly punitive sentencing for minor nonviolent offences. There are now more than 200,000 women behind bars making the United States a nation with the highest percentage of women behind bars in the world and this number is continuing to grow rapidly.¹ Many of these women struggle with substance abuse, mental illness, and histories of physical and sexual abuse. Few get the services they need to address their physical and mental health.

There are many socioeconomic factors that foster the cycle of mass incarceration for both men and women. However, the exponential growth of female inmates, particularly those with low-ranking socioeconomic status, in the last few decades reflects the pervasive gender discrimination in our country. This gender discrimination within our criminal justice system not only impacts the increase in the number of women going to prison but also extends to mistreatment of women in prisons. For example, men and women prisons typically receive the same funding. This approach does not take into account the various needs women have including feminine hygiene products and other reproductive health needs. The overrepresentation of minorities including women of color and poor people in the prison system reflects deeply entrenched forces of institutional racism and class prejudice.²

There are four major factors that have contributed to the mass incarceration crisis. First, the impacts of globalization and economic restructuring on low-income communities. Second, the so called War on Drugs. Third, the role of globalization in fueling migration from the global South, the criminalization of migration, and growth of immigrant incarceration. Lastly, emergence of the prison-industrial complex; a relationship between corporate and governmental interests that has led to prison expansion.³

In addition to these factors, women's poverty is criminalized in many ways. In particular, the feminization of poverty and lack of housing choices for women of color with children, has led to a disproportionate impact of the War on Drugs on minority women living in inner cities, forcing them to live in high crime, drug-infested areas. Faced with declining incomes and few economic opportunities, many women often have no choice but to turn to the street economy: sex work, petty theft, welfare "fraud," and other means of survival. For many women, personal or domestic violence and sexual abuse are often linked to the cause of their incarceration. For poor women especially, experiences of violence, particularly in the household, may incite behavior that leads to arrest and criminal charges. Poverty is also criminalized when women with mental illness, most who have experienced post-traumatic symptoms from childhood and adult trauma,

come into contact with the law, either through “antisocial or violent behavior or through self-medication with illegal drugs.”⁴

Correctional facilities have generally been developed to house men, leaving several facilities struggling to catch up with the specific needs of women inmates. Incarcerated women are more likely than incarcerated men to suffer from chronic and communicable diseases like HIV, Hepatitis C, and sexually transmitted infections. They are also more likely than incarcerated men to suffer from mental illness, and are very likely to have a history of physical and sexual abuse.⁵

In addition to treatment for physical, mental, and substance-related illness, female inmates require reproductive health care that may include pre- and post-natal care for pregnant women and family planning services. The Federal Bureau of Prisons guarantees the provision of such services, and most states have policies regarding reproductive health care for women. However, there is no comprehensive review of how these policies are implemented across the states and whether the care and services provided meet standards set by National Commission on Correctional Health Care, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, or the American Public Health Association. Additionally, 32 states have not banned the practice of shackling women in state prisons while they give birth and states who have banned the practice struggle with enforcement.

Our union is uniquely positioned to fight against a criminal justice system that clearly targets communities of color and poor people. The exponential rise in the rate of incarcerated women in the last few decades didn't happen by accident, it is a direct result of failed “tough on crime” policies that allow private anti-worker corporations to profit from mass incarceration. Building a strong labor movement is dependent on reforming our failed criminal justice system that impacts millions of working people. CWAers have harnessed the energy of women's rights by voting at the 2017 CWA Convention to require all locals have an active women's committee. The mission of these women's committee includes educating our membership on health, economic and social issues that affect women, encouraging and supporting women in fighting at the local, state and national level for legislation designed to improve the status of working women and their families, promoting and encouraging women to run for elected public office and support candidates who champion women's rights, supporting efforts to recruit and train women organizers and striving to continuously educate women about the labor movement while encouraging their involvement at all levels of the union.

These women's committees provide an opportunity for members to come together and organize around issues that specifically impact working women and their families. We should continue our efforts to build fully functioning women's committees in every local and provide them with proper training and resources to be able to fulfill their stated

mission. In addition we should make criminal justice reform a core part of our political and organizing efforts. Change will only happen if we all actively participate in the broader struggle for social and economic justice and stand in solidarity with communities impacted by our failed criminal justice system to demand a more just system.

#MeToo and the Labor Movement: CWA's Stance against Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is perpetrated far too frequently in our workplaces and communities. The perpetrators seems to go unpunished and the act is usually not properly addressed while the recipient of sexual harassment too often is ridiculed and/or villainized. In 2018, 7,609 sexual harassment charges were filed with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunities Center (EEOC). According to an online survey launched by a nonprofit called Stop Street Harassment, 81 percent of the women and 43 percent of men had experienced some form of sexual harassment during their lifetime (NPR-2/21/18, Rhitu Chatterjee).

Over the past couple of years there has been an increased effort by people who have been victims of sexual harassment to publicly tell their stories and bring national attention to this issue. We have all seen the headlines and major news stories and documentaries about sexual harassment. What has been made clear over the past couple of years is that sexual harassment has no age barrier, no respect for race, social or economic status. We know there are perpetrators in every industry, and the victims are both female and male. We also know that the majority of victims are women. It is important to understand that whether it takes place in the workplace, classroom, doctor's office, etc., sexual harassment is not about just about sexuality but also about power, and the abuse of it.

CWA has long recognized the threat working people especially working women face at the hands of those who abuse their power and sexually exploit working people. In an effort to understand how the issue of sexual harassment impacts our union, CWA's Women's Committee, Human Rights department and Secretary-Treasurer's office conducted a general survey of the membership on sexual harassment. Based on the results of this survey CWA is developing a Sexual harassment training to address all forms of sexual harassment including member to member, member with their employer and job assignments, and members with local officers within CWA. CWA is working to assure members that sexual harassment of any kind is not tolerated within our union and the industries we represent and we are working to make our environments less susceptible to sexual harassment. In 2018, the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA conducted a survey of CWA-represented flight attendants. The survey found that 1 in 5 flight attendants reported having been physically assaulted at work. To combat this, AFA-CWA has worked with airlines (United, Alaska and Spirit) to implement training for Flight Attendants around sexual misconduct onboard. CWA and other unions are partnering to have open and frank discussions to expose this behavior and to make it clear that it is unacceptable. The CWA National Women's Committee through the Human Rights Department and local Human Rights Committees will continue to bring

awareness and expose the impact of sexual harassment in the workplace to ensure victims feel safe to tell their stories, and that we will stand with and support survivors of sexual assault and harassment. As a progressive union, we must take a strong stance at every level of the union to stand by victims of sexual harassment and hold perpetrators accountable. We must proactively fight back against the rhetoric that blames victims. We have to fight for further protections for victims through our organizing, political and representational work to ensure safe work environments free of the discrimination and oppression caused from sexual assault and harassment.

The courage of a few women who came forward to tell their stories, gave wings to the #MeToo movement. Women of all ages began to share their stories, their truths. CWA should continue to partner with other unions and women's organizations to continue this dialogue and promote the elimination of sexual harassment and ensure offenses are addressed appropriately.

CWA Supporting Working Families Serving As Caregivers

Working adults serving as caregivers has become more relevant now as it has ever been. They provide the majority of informal care to spouses, friends, neighbors and aging parents. There are approximately 57- 81% of women serving as caregivers for their aging parents. With over 70% of aging parents now needing care, it becomes more and more difficult for working women to balance their lives, to raise a family, maintain a full time position and care for their elderly parents.

Working women who serve as caregivers lack adequate support in the workplace in order to effectively and efficiently manage all aspects of their lives. Although men also provide assistance, female caregivers may spend as much as 50% more time providing care than male caregivers.⁶ The average caregiver is a 49 year old woman who works outside the home and provides at least 20 hours of unpaid care to their elderly parents.⁷

One national study on women and caregiving highlighted the conflicting demands of work and eldercare.⁸ The study also found that:

- 33% of working women decreased work hours
- 29% passed up a job promotion, training or assignment
- 22% took a leave of absence
- 20% switched from full-time to part-time employment
- 16% quit their jobs
- 13% retired early

In addition to the physical and emotional toll of caregiving and risk factors for disease, adult caregivers are less likely to have their own health needs met. The psychological health of the family caregiver is negatively affected by providing care. Higher levels of stress, anxiety, depression and other mental health effects are common among family members who care for an older relative or friend.⁹ Some of the issues they face include higher levels of depression, increased levels of stress and frustration, increased risk of heart disease, and lower levels of self-care.

It is clear that caregiving can have negative health effects and although it has its physical, emotional and financial toll, it can also be rewarding, allowing some caregivers to experience personal growth and more self-acceptance. Those moments of growth and self-acceptance begin with the individual cultivating a mindset of abundance. There is great power in positive thinking.

Fellow caregivers can exercise this type of positive thinking by sharing knowledge and updates with family, collaborating with other caregivers, sharing tips and tools that are working for you, be willing to ask for help from others and be open to accepting that help

and lastly, focusing on how well you are doing as opposed to what is lacking. Work on avoiding caregiver burnout by caring for your personal needs.

Caregivers can do that by:

- Getting organized.
- Nurturing their positive relationships.
- Joining a support group, if needed.
- Giving themselves a break.
- Taking care of their own mental and physical health.
- Reaching out to someone to talk to. There are more people who share a similar experience who may be able to provide some insight and advice.

CWA has negotiated provisions in contracts nationwide to ensure employees are able to balance their work and family responsibilities.

In 1990, CWA along with IBEW and AT&T created the Family Care Development Fund and the National Eldercare referral program. The Family Care Fund has funded over 6 million dollars across different sectors of the telecommunications field.

In addition, CWA has continuously negotiated for benefits among bargaining units coast to coast to include family care leave along with work and family resources outside of the Federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). This enables the employee who has exhausted their time permitted by FMLA to request additional time off in relation to the care of an immediate family member including elder parents.

2018, marked the 25th anniversary of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). The Family and Medical Leave Act was an important step forward in helping working Americans juggle the dual demands of work and family. It recognized that workers need time for family responsibilities, whether to care for a new baby, an ailing parent or other concerns.

Throughout the years CWA has fiercely fought to ensure that these benefits remain and that employees in all sectors of CWA are covered by these benefits.

CWA helps provide resources for worker centers that help organize home health care workers. Adults as caregivers have taken on much of the responsibility usually done by medically trained professionals. For example, provide bathing and bathroom assistance, cooking special dietary meals, monitoring glucose levels, administering medications and injections, follow ups with doctors and many other activities. All the while, raising children and maintaining full time employment.

CWA must continue to negotiate and advocate for benefits that would enable working caregivers the ability to provide care for loved ones as well contribute to their daily work

load responsibilities. We should collectively stand by women and men caregivers and ensure they are provided all tools necessary in order to be efficient at home and with their work duties.

We salute CWAers and its leaders on their continued fight for the dignity and justice of all working people.

Fighting Against Workplace Bullying

Unlike sexual harassment, which identifies a specific problem and is legally recognized, workplace bullying is still being established as a relevant social problem. Approximately one fourth of working Americans have reported bullying at work.¹⁰ It is four times more common than either sexual harassment or racial discrimination on the job. Workplace bullying is frighteningly common and takes an enormous toll on workers and employers. One of the main differences between schoolyard bullying and workplace bullying is that it tends to be less physically harmful and more psychological and verbal in nature. It is subtler than schoolyard bullying, but is quite distinctive from normal workplace stress.¹¹

Workplace bullying refers to repeated, unreasonable actions of an individual that are directed towards another worker or group of workers. It is intentionally intimidating, and poses a health and safety risk to workers. Some examples of workplace bullying include unwanted or invalid criticism, blame without factual justification, being treated differently than the rest of the group, being sworn or shouted at, exclusion or social isolation, being humiliated, being the target of practical jokes, and excessive monitoring.¹²

People have been bullied at work for years, with little retribution. Unfortunately, workplace bullying often occurs in private settings and by people in power, therefore it is difficult to unearth evidence and provide proof. Workplace bullying involves an abuse or misuse of power. Bullying may intimidate, degrade, offend and humiliate a worker, prompting feelings of defenselessness. It undermines an individual's right to dignity at work.

According to a 2017 survey conducted by the Workplace Bullying Institute (WBI), more than 60 million Americans are affected by workplace bullying. About 70 percent of the perpetrators are men, while 60 percent of the targets are women. The survey indicates that Hispanics are the most-frequently bullied race and that 61 percent of the bullies are people in management positions. WBI states that 65 percent of those targeted lose their jobs and bullied individuals pay dearly due to the loss of their economic livelihood to escape being bullied. WBI also reported that 46 percent of the people surveyed said there was a worsening of work relationships following the increasingly hostile environment workers are faced with since the election of Donald Trump.

CWA has long fought against injustices that affect all working people. Workplace bullying impacts CWA members and their families. While CWA already has an employment policy on Workplace Harassment and Bullying -- which is much stricter than federal law -- our union must continue to take steps in ensuring that bullying is eradicated from our union and the industries we represent. We have to fight to end the toxic culture that ignores and allows workplace bullying to continue.

By increasing awareness among CWA members regarding the differences between harassment, discrimination and workplace bullying, and ensuring that an anti-bullying policy be drafted and adopted by CWA, we can help end this epidemic. We must protect the most vulnerable amongst us and provide the knowledge, skills and protections under the law, to fight back against bullies. There is an ongoing grassroots campaign to introduce a bill entitled the “Healthily Workplace Bill” (HB.2062) that will help end workplace bullying. CWAers should support and volunteer to help the campaign’s state coordinators to move this bill forward. Ending workplace bullying begins with us.

Gender Wage Disparity and Its Impact on Women's Pension

On a percentage basis, a woman earns only 79 percent of what a man earns according to the U.S. Joint Economic Committee. According to the National Women's Law Center, that wage disparity compounds over time. This disparity not only affects women during their active years in the work-force but the consequences of a lifetime of unequal pay also follow women into their retirement years.

Inequalities women experience in their pensions is one glaring example of the long-term effects of gender wage inequity. Because of that wage disparity, women's retirement income amounts are decreased and their pensions tend to be smaller. This is also due to the fact that payments from retirement plans are typically based on a worker's tenure and salary. Women's median income from company or union pensions is 53 percent of men's median income from those same sources. Some are ineligible because they do not meet the minimum criteria for employer-sponsored retirement plans because of the wage disparity or working in occupations that do not offer retirement.¹³

CWA has a fierce record of activism and advocacy for women's equity in the workplace. In 2009, CWA was at the forefront of lobbying and mobilizing members to push Congress to pass the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. In November 2018, CWAers worked tirelessly to get representatives who champion workers' rights elected to Congress. This was a right step in a series of steps involved in getting laws such as the Pay Check Fairness Act passed. The Pay Check Fairness Act would address several significant holes in the Equal Pay Act of 1963 which enables discriminatory pay practices to continue.

¹ "World Female Imprisonment List (fourth edition) | World Prison Brief". www.prisonstudies.org. Retrieved 2019-03-22.

² Solinger, Rickie (2010). *Interrupted Life: Experiences of Incarcerated Women in the United States*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press. p. 6.

³ Solinger, Rickie (2010). *Interrupted Life: Experiences of Incarcerated Women in the United States*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press. p. 6.

⁴ Solinger, Rickie (2010). *Interrupted Life: Experiences of Incarcerated Women in the United States*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press. p. 13

⁵ <https://www.prisonerhealth.org/educational-resources/factsheets-2/incarceration-and-women/>

⁶ Family Caregiver Alliance. (2001). *Selected Caregiver Statistics (FACT SHEET)*. San Francisco, CA

⁷ AARP (2011). *Valuing the Invaluable 2011 update*. assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/ppi/ltc/i51-caregiving.pdf

⁸ MetLife Mature Market Institute, National Alliance for Caregiving, & The National Center on Women and Aging. (1999, November). *The Metlife juggling act study: Balancing caregiving with work and the costs involved*.

⁹ Family Caregiver Alliance. (2006).

¹⁰ workplaceethicsadvice.com

¹¹ Forbes.com

¹² University of Oregon

¹³ Joint Economic Committee, Ranking Democrat: Carolyn B. Maloney United States Congress April 2016