

Past CCAR, URJ and WRJ Resolutions on the issue of Pay Equity

From "Pay Equity in the Reform Movement: An Unfinished History of Policy and Action"

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NOTE: A fuller description of the evolution of these resolutions can be found in the article itself.

CCAR, 2918, a brief statement titled "Women in Industry" (p.25)

Where women are employed, safe and sanitary conditions must prevail. There should be in industry a maximum of an eight-hour day; they should receive equal pay with men for equal work.

CCAR Columbus Platform of 1937, under the section on Ethics (pp.25-26)

Social Justice. Judaism seeks the attainment of a just society by the application of its teachings to the economic order, to industry and commerce, and to national and international affairs. It aims at the elimination of man-made tyranny and slavery, of social inequality and prejudice, of ill-will and strife.... It champions the cause of all who work and of their right to an adequate standard of living, ...

WRJ Resolution, 1979, on "Women's Rights" (p.27)

WRJ called upon Sisterhoods to: "participate actively in efforts to implement acceptance of women as rabbis, cantors, educators and other professionals in congregations and Jewish communal agencies. Full acceptance means equal recruitment and employment opportunities, equal salaries and nondiscriminatory conditions of work, and promotional opportunity at all levels of responsibility, based on ability, not sex".

URJ Resolution, 1983 and CCAR Resolution, 1984 on "Economic Justice for Women" (p.28)

built-in inequities in the present economic system discriminate against women and their dependents at every level of income, ...

They committed themselves to "examine its practices and call upon the UAHC [now the URJ] and individual congregations to do likewise so as to eliminate any sex discrimination while applying the principle of economic equality for all'.

URJ Resolution, 1985, on “Wage Discrimination,’ a section on the feminization of poverty (p.29)

This kind of wage discrimination is less blatant than the provision of separate pay rates for the same work but results in equally costly damage to our society. Many of the women working in traditionally female jobs are single heads of households and the damage to them is cumulative. Wage discrimination deprives them of adequate medical care and their children of adequate day care, nutrition, and education. Because of such wage discrimination, they save less for retirement and receive lower pension and social security benefits, making it more likely that they will need public assistance in their declining years. Thus wage discrimination perpetuates the cycle of poverty and contributes directly to its feminization. ...

The resolution called upon Reform institutions to “set an example for the larger society by calling on our own national Reform organizations, as well as local synagogues and other Jewish agencies, to examine our compensation practices and implement recommendations that will insure equal pay for comparable work”.

WRJ Resolution, 1991, on “Equality for Women in the Rabbinate” (p.29)

The WRJ called upon Reform institutions and congregations to:

1. Implement a gender-free policy in interviewing, hiring and promoting rabbis.
2. Adopt a pay-equity policy regarding compensation of rabbis
3. Extend the principles of economic justice to cantors and other synagogue professionals and employees without regard to gender.
4. Implement programs and workshops to generate congregational sensitivity to the changes necessitated by the increasing participation of women as rabbis, cantors, professional employees and lay leaders in synagogue life.

CCAR Resolution, 1993, on “Women in the Jewish Workplace” (p.31)

The Central Conference of American Rabbis now urges congregations and other Jewish organizations to work toward compliance, implementing compensation policies which ensure equal pay for equal work and equal opportunity in their hiring practices.

URJ Board of Trustees Resolution, 2008, on “Ethical Employment Practices” (p.32)

The resolution begins by noting that “the Talmud tells us that the first question a person will be asked by the heavenly court after he or she dies will be: ‘Did you deal honestly in business?’” (Shabbat 31a)

The resolution continues, “As a Movement dedicated to fair labor practices, evidenced most recently by the Resolution on Workers’ Rights adopted in Houston in 2005, we must routinely examine our own internal practices and policies. Our congregations are best served as sacred communities when our employment practices – including contracts, job expectations, training, family leave policies, hiring and transitioning procedures – reflect Jewish values. Employees and members are engaged in a sacred partnership with a shared commitment to maintaining a thriving, vibrant, and holy congregation. The business operations of our institutions should reflect this holiness as well.

WRJ Resolution, 2015, on “Pay Equity” (p.32)

Given the profound injustice of unequal pay, Women of Reform Judaism reaffirms its commitment to achieving pay equity and calls upon its sisterhoods to... urge swift adoption of legislation that would provide women who face sex-based wage discrimination with a straightforward, accessible path for recourse... [and] work with synagogue leadership to enact just compensation policies for clergy and staff at all levels, ...

CCAR Resolution, 2017, on “Affirming our Commitment to Women’s Rights” (p.33)

Many women today are speaking out more candidly about their experiences of discrimination, name-calling, and other forms of misogyny, especially when safe spaces are provided. Now, more than ever, men and women need to join together in speaking out about the particular concerns and challenges faced by women. The safe spaces and respect we show one another can galvanize our advocacy for the rights and consideration for men and women. In this current climate, it is critical that we reaffirm our commitment to women’s rights and continue the work that has been set forth in previous CCAR resolutions on women’s health (1992 and 1993), violence against women (1990), pay equity (1984), and international women’s rights (1994).