



# Advocacy Update

Sent October 3, 2012

## **Sukkot: Z'man Simchateinu**

In our liturgy, Sukkot is referred to as "z'man simchateinu"-literally, the time of our happiness. We are supposed to use this week to truly enjoy and appreciate one another's presence through our time in the sukkah, and to reflect on God's presence in our lives. Sukkot at WRJ is also a time to think about those in our community who are less fortunate, and to really embody the mitzvah of "*hachnasat orchim*," welcoming the stranger. Review the RAC's [Sukkot Guide](#) for additional ways to translate the values of Sukkot into meaningful social justice programming for you, your families, your congregations, and your community.

## **Paycheck Fairness for Women**

The more things change, the more they stay the same. Such a statement shouldn't be true in the arena of gender equity, where the commonplace perception is that, as history progresses, we are moving closer and closer to full equality among men and women. Unfortunately, last month's census data suggests that, at least in terms of the pay gap, things are very much the same: women working full-time year-round are paid only 77 cents for every dollar earned by their male counterparts.

The Paycheck Fairness Act would make a dent at addressing this pressing social injustice. It would strengthen the outdated Equal Pay Act of 1963 by prohibiting employers from penalizing employees for sharing information about their salaries with coworkers, authorizing the Labor Department to develop voluntary guidelines to enable employers to evaluate job categories based on objective criteria, and strengthening the ability of employees to bring class action claims against employers who violate the Equal Pay Act.

WRJ has advocated for equal pay for equal work for women for many decades, and is still committed to achieving this important goal. [Click here](#) to participate in current advocacy efforts to support the Paycheck Fairness Act.

## **Helping Our Country's Servicewomen**

More than 400,000 women serve in the Armed Forces, and receive their health insurance from the Department of Defense's Military Health System. But the health insurance available to servicewomen differs significantly from every other health insurance plan provided by the federal government in that it does NOT cover abortion services in the cases of rape or incest. Rather, servicewomen can only receive insurance coverage for abortion services if their lives are in danger.

Women who risk their lives and make sacrifices on behalf of our country should receive the same benefits that we provide civilian women who also rely on the federal government for their health care. Moreover, our Jewish values affirm the rights of women to be moral decision makers, capable of making responsible choices about their reproductive health.

Make your voice heard: Contact your Members of Congress and urge them to support military access to reproductive care!