



THE VOICE OF MIDLIFE AND OLDER WOMEN

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **OWL'S Statement on *Wal-Mart v. Dukes* Supreme Court Ruling**

WASHINGTON, DC – Yesterday's ruling by the United States Supreme Court in favor of Wal-Mart, the world's largest retailer, was a major setback for women who seek to challenge gender discrimination in their jobs.

The plaintiffs – a group of women who worked at Wal-Mart stores – claimed that Wal-Mart engaged in company-wide discrimination practices by paying women less than men, promoting fewer women to management positions, and promoting male employees more quickly. The Court ruled, 5-4, that the plaintiffs could not band together as a class to bring pay and promotion discrimination claims against Wal-Mart.

"The Court's action has placed a roadblock before women everywhere who seek justice and equality in the workplace," said Bobbie Brinegar, OWL's Executive Director.

OWL was one of 32 organizations with longstanding commitments to civil rights and workplace equality that joined the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Women's Law Center in filing the brief.

A pay gap – unrelated to factors like experience or education – exists between men and women in all industries. Last year, for example, female workers in sales and related occupations including retail earned only 64 percent of their male counterparts' wages.

Yesterday's ruling gives women fewer rights to challenge pay and promotion discrimination in the workplace.

The outcome of this case underscores the need for Congress to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would strengthen pay equity laws, block retaliation against employees who discuss their pay, and improve remedies to overcome pay discrimination.

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