FEMME LEGALE

Congressional actions for and about women in the 111th and 112th congress

WOMEN'S RIGHTS
WOMEN'S EDUCATION
WOMEN'S HEALTH
CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN
WOMEN IN BUSINESS

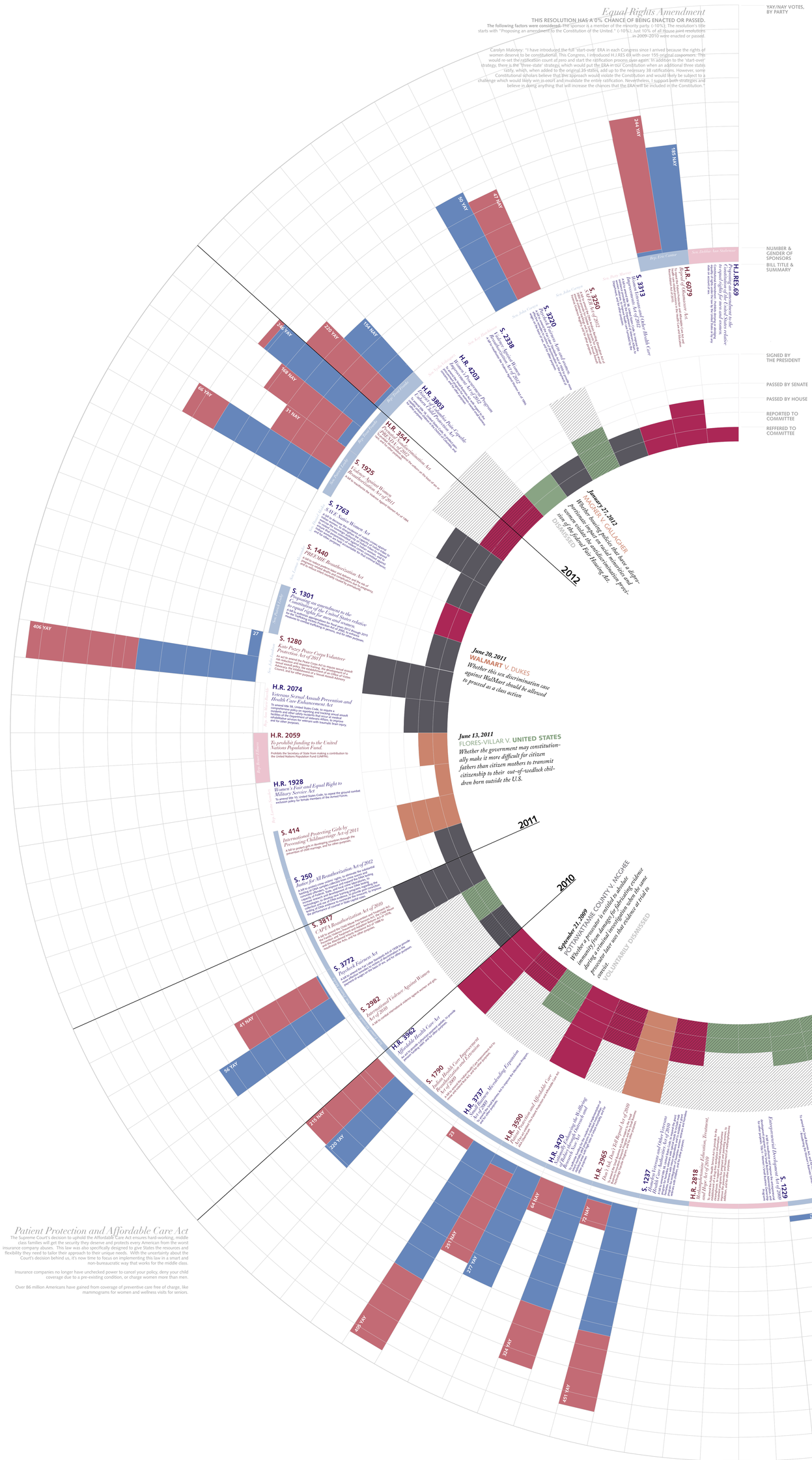
FAILED

The "War on Women" describes the legislative and rhetorical attacks on women and women's rights taking place across the nation. It includes a wide-range of policy efforts designed to place restrictions on women's health care and erode protections for women and their families. Examples at the state and federal level have included restricting contraception; cutting off funding for Planned Parenthood; state-mandated, medically unnecessary ultrasounds; abortion taxes; abortion waiting periods; forcing women to tell their employers why they want birth control, and prohibiting insurance companies from including abortion coverage in their policies.

But is congress really waging a War on Women?

Women make up 51% of the United States population and are a powerful voting bloc yet there are less than 100 women in the 112th Congress. Of the 43 bills tracked here, only 37% were sponsored by a female senator or representative.

This graphic reveals each law that impacts women that has been presented to the 11th and 112th congresses. The status of each law, as well as its description, sponsors and roll call votes have been represented here to quickly reveal the politics of women in congress.



S. 181
Lily Ledbetter fair pay act of 2009

The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act was a critical piece of legislation that corrected the impact of a 2007 Supreme Court decision that sharply limited workers' opportunities to challenge wage discrimination and undermined civil rights law that had been in place for decades.

The bill (H.R. 2831 & S. 1843) was defeated in April 2008 by Republicans in the Senate who cited the possibility of frivolous lawsuits in their opposition of the bill and criticized Democrats for refusing to allow compromises. The bill was re-introduced in the 111th Congress (as H.R. 11 and S. 181) in January 2009. It passed in the House of Representatives with 247 votes in support and 171 against. The vote was split along party lines, with two Republicans voting in favor and four Democrats voting against. The Senate voted 72 to 23 to invoke cloture on S. 181 on January 15, 2009.The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act passed the Senate, 61-36, on January 22, 2009. Those in favor included every Democratic senator, two independents who caucused with Democrats, and five Republican senators.

On January 29, 2009, Obama signed the bill into law. It was the first act he signed as president, and it fulfilled his campaign pledge to nullify Ledbetter v. Goodyear.