



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 5, 2019
Contact: Terry O'Neill, Executive Director
(415) 296-7629
toneill@nelahq.org

**Statement Of NELA Executive Director Terry O'neill
In Support Of The EMPOWER Act**

“Day in and day out, NELA lawyers stand up for employees who are waging their own fight against sexual harassment and/or other forms of workplace discrimination to which they were subjected. Today we are proud to support the Ending the Monopoly of Power Over Workplace Harassment through Education and Reporting Act (“EMPOWER Act”), a bipartisan bicameral bill introduced by Senators Harris and Murkowski and Representative Frankel.

The EMPOWER Act would lift the all-too-prevalent, employer-mandated secrecy surrounding workplace harassment and discrimination. The bill would establish a confidential tip line allowing the EEOC to collect data on where in the country and in what industries workplace harassment is occurring. The bill would also require publicly traded companies to disclose information about workplace harassment settlements, which will promote greater transparency, safer work environments, and more accountability on the part of those in power.

“Harassment and discrimination persist because employers have virtually unlimited power to silence employees who speak up about illegal treatment on the job. The EMPOWER Act would stop employers from silencing survivors of workplace abuse, and end the tax penalty on those who succeed in holding their employers accountable. NELA applauds Senators Harris and Murkowski and Representative Frankel for introducing this important legislation and calls on Congress to move swiftly to enact it into law.”

#

The National Employment Lawyers Association (NELA) advances employee rights and serves lawyers who advocate for equality and justice in the American workplace. NELA provides assistance and support to lawyers in protecting the rights of employees against the greater resources of their employers and the defense bar. It is the country's largest professional organization exclusively comprised of lawyers who represent individual employees in cases involving employment discrimination and other employment-related matters. NELA and its 69 circuit, state, and local affiliates have more than 4,000 members around the country.