

Equal Pay Lobby Day - April 4, 2017

Please register now for Equal Pay Lobby Day. [Registration](#) is required for accurate planning. Next

- Set up an appointment with your legislator or their staff for April 4 after 12:30pm. A letter you can send to your legislator asking for an appointment is included in this email. Find your members Harrisburg address and email for the [House](#) and [Senate](#) here.
- At 9:00 am, our room in the Irvis Office Building, room 302 IOB, will be open if you arrive early and need a place to pass the time.
- 10:30 to 11:30 Rally in capitol rotunda. Join AAUW members and our friends from BPW-PA (Business and Professional Women Pennsylvania) to raise our voices for equal pay. Dot McLane, President AAUW-PA is one of the featured speakers along with representatives sponsoring the new legislation.
- AAUW Lobby Day 11:30am to 4:00pm. Return to the Irvis Office Building for lunch (our treat) and a briefing to review material in the packets for your legislators and discuss talking points on pay equity and how to respond if they have questions or objections.

What has been happening in Harrisburg on Equal Pay? You may have heard that an Equal Pay bill (SB241) quickly passed the senate on February 8. While Pennsylvania has some equal pay protections, they are incomplete. Unfortunately, SB241 is not the best remedy. Pennsylvania's act prohibiting discrimination in rate of pay because of sex was enacted in 1959. As it was amended in 1967, it substantially reduces the number of people covered, excluding anyone subject to the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). SB241 does not protect employees from retaliation for inquiring, sharing, and disclosing their wages and does not clarify bona fide factors for a pay differential allowing an employer defense that a pay differential is based on a "factor other than sex."

Amendments to include all those employed in Pennsylvania and clarify the "factor other than sex" were voted down. An even bigger problem is the preemption amendment added on February 7 that says this bill supersedes any local ordinance or rule concerning pay equity. This would eliminate the Philadelphia law recently passed unanimously prohibiting employers from asking about salary history which of course perpetuates the pay gap. You can find out how your state senator voted on SB241 and what pay equity legislation they supported last year in [Where Your Senator Stands on Pay Equity](#) that is attached.

That means we have our work cut out for us. Which is why you need to join us in Harrisburg on April 4 for equal pay lobby day. We anticipate Representative Brian Sims and Senator Anthony Williams will be introducing pay equity legislation that will address all of these issues. It is currently in review and may be introduced on April 4 or sooner. We prefer a positive approach in support of the Sims/Williams legislation instead of just opposition to SB241. A list of House members who supported pay equity legislation last year is attached.

Redistricting Reform to End Gerrymandering

Big news to report. On February 16, PA State Senators Lisa Boscola (D-18, Lehigh/Northampton) and Mario Scavello (R-40, Monroe/Northampton) introduced [Senate Bill 22](#) (SB22), bipartisan

legislation that would establish an independent commission to draw up Pennsylvania's congressional and state legislative district maps.

SB22 would amend the state constitution to establish an 11-member independent commission with four individuals registered with the largest political party in Pennsylvania, four registered with the second-largest party, and three people not affiliated with either major political party. Commission members would not be allowed to hold political or party office, be related to those who hold office, or work for those who hold office. A majority vote of seven would be required for a plan to win approval. Click [here](#) for a summary of the bill.

AAUW-PA is an endorsing organization of [Fair Districts PA](#), the grassroots, all volunteer organization promoting redistricting reform in Pennsylvania. Because redistricting reform requires a constitutional amendment and Pennsylvania has incredible hurdles for changing the constitution, work must be begin now. Here is what you can do.

- Go to www.fairdistrictspa.com and sign-up for alerts. Also, like them on Facebook.
- Watch [PA Message from Jerry Mandering](#), a short video created in partnership with redistricting reform groups in several other states. Share it as widely as you can and encourage others you know to join us in our public education efforts.
- Contact your Senator and ask him/her to co-sponsor SB22. Contact your Representative and ask for a pledge to support redistricting reform. This page has samples and talking points. <http://www.fairdistrictspa.com/ask-your-legislator>
- Request a speaker for one of your branch programs or as an open sponsored community event. Attendance is well over 100 for recent events. <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeRLGZEv9tmtB2oqa64-HKK9MZ0m2ahvtZ2d-gCpfnvFRg7nw/viewform?c=0&w=1>
- Check to see if your local government passed a resolution in support. If not, urge them to do so. Toolkit is available at <http://www.fairdistrictspa.com/resolutions-in-support>
- Educate yourself on the topic. The Fair Districts PA website has lots of material. Fair Districts Chair, Carol Kuniholm says, "When people tell me this is a long shot, my response is: I'm from the League of Women Voters. It took us fifty years to get the vote. We're creative, and we're persistent."

Reproductive Rights

Big news to report on this subject, too. Senate Bill 3 (SB3) was fast tracked in 4-session days to pass the Senate on February 8. Read about the Senate debate [here](#). The bill was sent to the House Health Committee. Representative Rapp (Northwest PA) [introduced](#) House Bill 77 (HB77) on February 21st. Details of the bills are:

- "Medical consultation and judgment" required. (SB3 and HB77)
- Abortions limited to less than 20 weeks (note: ultra sound done at 20-weeks is when fetal abnormalities are usually discovered). (SB3 and HB77)
- Abortion is performed in a hospital using a procedure "which provides the best opportunity for the unborn child to survive" and a second physician present to take control of the fetus upon complete extraction for "medical care to preserve the life and health". (HB77)
- Outlaws D&E procedure with two physicians making judgment for life or death of the mother exceptions. (SB3 and HB77)
- Physician is charged with third degree felony if s/he violates this ban. (SB3 and HB77)

Here is what you can do.

- Find out how your Representative voted on last year's version [HB1948 vote](#). They will probably vote the same on HB77.
- Write/call your Representative to register your opposition and urge them to vote NO.
- Find out if your Representative is a [co-sponsor](#) and write/call to register your opposition to the bill.
- Find out what [committee](#) your Representative is on. If House Health Committee, write/call to urge a NO vote.
- Find out how your state [Senator voted](#) and write/call to register discontent or offer thanks for vote.

Education Legislation in U.S. House

Several people have inquired about [HB610](#) introduced in late January. The title is: Choices in Education Act of 2017. Its intent is to distribute Federal funds for elementary and secondary education in the form of vouchers for eligible students and to repeal a certain rule relating to nutrition standards in schools.

AAUW is not in favor of this bill because it is clearly not in line with AAUW's policy position on vouchers. Members are welcome to convey AAUW's firm opposition to school vouchers and any bill that would advance them to their legislators. AAUW will be sending an Action Network alert soon.

Here is what you can do.

- Find out if your U.S. Representative is a member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce and write/call to register your opposition.
- Act on the Action Network email sent by AAUW.

Annual Convention

We are looking forward to meeting you at the [Annual Convention](#) April 21-23 at the Heritage Hills Golf Resort in York, PA. We want to bring these public policy items to your attention.

- Seating for lunch on Saturday will be by counterparts. That means all BPPCs (Branch Public Policy Chairs) will sit with Barbara and Ann to meet one another and share successes. It would be so cool if there were so many BPPCs attending the convention that we needed two tables! 😊
- The AAUW representative attending our convention this year, is Elizabeth Holden, Grassroots Manager from the Public Policy department. This is a great opportunity to meet someone well versed in public policy advocacy.
- One of the Saturday afternoon concurrent sessions is focused on public policy. *It's All About the Bill* will focus on how legislation is passed in Pennsylvania and what we can do to influence it.