

Economic Security

Pay Equity

Exciting news! We have a bill in the House. It is HB 819 sponsored by Representatives Brian Sims and Tina Davis. While the text is yet to be posted on the state legislature web site, we expect it will be the same as the one from last session. The other cosponsors are Representatives Kenyatta, Sanchez, Dellosa, Schlossberg, D. Miller, Isaacson, Hohenstein, Kinsey, Freeman, McNeill, A. Davis, Hill-Evans, Lee, Warren, Madden, Deasy, Rozzi, Schweyer, O'Mara, Ciresi, Kinkead, and Sturla.

Senators Steve Santarsiero and Maria Collett will be introducing the companion bill, **Modernizing Pennsylvania's Equal Pay Law** in the Senate.

Action is needed. Here is what you can do to help. Please send the attached sample letter/email to your state representative or state senator to ask them to sign on as cosponsors. Include with your email/letter the chart of the pay gap in Pennsylvania by congressional district (also attached). It would be great if we could get more legislators to sign on by Equal Pay Day, March 24th. You can also use the sample as a script if you would prefer to call your legislator.

You can find your legislator's office information and how to contact them on the state web site <https://www.legis.state.pa.us>. Click on the tab for Senate or House. The menu lists senators or representatives by district number or alphabetically. Click on their name, and you can then see the bills they are sponsoring.

The other big news is that AAUW-PA has been asked to speak at a **virtual press conference on March 24th at 10am on Equal Pay Day**. Rep Bullock, O'Mara, Davis, Simms and Deputy Whip Melissa Schusterman will be hosting the event. It is still being organized, but we will send you a link once we have one.

Here are all the Equal Pay Days for 2021 with the national pay gap numbers for every dollar paid to white men across the country.

- **March 9, Asian American and Pacific Islander Women's Equal Day** (85 cents)
- **March 24, All Women's Equal Pay Day** – (82 cents) Pennsylvania is 79 cents.
- **June 4, Mother's Equal Pay Day** (70 cents)
- **August 3, Black Women's Equal Pay Day** (63 cents)
- **September 8, Native American Women's Equal Pay Day** (60 cents)
- **October 21, Latina's Equal Pay Day** (55 cents)



Minimum Wage

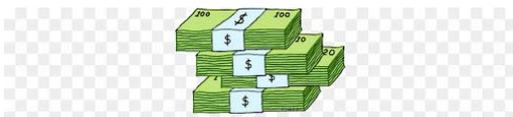
Sen. Christine Tartaglione reintroduced **SB12, Comprehensive Modernization of the Minimum Wage**. It was referred to the Senate Labor and Industry Committee, on February 22, 2021. The other cosponsors are Senators Fontana, Kearney, Haywood, Blake, Collett, Street, Santarsiero, Brewster, Costa, Schwank, Kane, Hughes, Cappelletti, Saval, Comitta, L. Williams, Muth, Sabatina and A. Williams

SB12 would immediately raise Pennsylvania's minimum wage to \$12 per hour for all Pennsylvania workers, with a pathway to \$15/hour by 2027.

It modernizes protections and enforcement standards in the law by:

- Eliminating the preemption on municipal wage ordinances, which ties the hands of our local governments.
- Guards against wage theft by ensuring that the Department of Labor & Industry may recover wages and penalties for all violations of the act, not only when a complaint is filed.
- Brings enforcement in line with the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act by allowing workers to receive damages, in addition to wages.
- Requires the Department of Human Services to calculate and publish the impact of a minimum wage increase on its programs, and mandates that savings be used to increase childcare and home and community-based services to ensure that these providers are able to pay the increased minimum wage.

Representatives Patty Kim and Stephen Kinsey intend to present a companion bill to SB12, **One Fair Wage**, on March 15, 2021.



Paid Leave

The lead sponsors, Senators Dan Laughlin and Maria Collett and Representatives Wendi Thomas and Dan Miller, will soon formally reintroduce the Family Care Act in the 2021-22 session. Their renewed commitment to bring paid family and medical leave to the working families of PA comes at a time when Pennsylvanians need it most.

The FCA will establish a paid family leave insurance program that working Pennsylvanians can access when they face a health crisis and need to take time off work. As the ongoing pandemic makes painfully clear, at some point, we will ALL need to take time to care for a family member or ourselves when serious health conditions arise.

Before the sponsors reintroduce the bills, we are asking all their colleagues who cosponsored the Family Care Act last session to join once again as cosponsors in the 2021-22 session. [Send an email today](#) to urge these legislators to continue to fight for paid leave.



Education

From our friends at Education Voters PA:

Gov. Wolf's proposed state budget for 2021-2022 demonstrates his understanding of the extensive unmet needs in Pennsylvania's public schools and his commitment to fixing the unfairness of our current funding system.

Gov. Wolf's proposed historic investment of \$1.5 billion in public K-12 education would substantially increase resources available to students in the commonwealth's most profoundly underfunded schools and make significant progress toward closing the resource and opportunity gaps that harm our most vulnerable children and threaten Pennsylvania's future workforce, tax base, and economy. *This budget provides additional basic and special education funding to all school districts and would create more than \$229 million in savings on charter tuition payments for districts.*

You can find more details about school funding at either of the web sites below.

<https://educationvoterspa.org/>

<https://paschoolswork.org/>

Improving the Operation and Transparency of Government

Redistricting

From our friends at Fair Districts -

The transparency bills, [House Bill 22](#) and [Senate Bill 222](#), also called the [Legislative and Congressional Redistricting Act \(LACRA\)](#), are now officially introduced with co-sponsors from both parties. It's time to invite more co-sponsors and ask support for a vote.

Fair Districts has launched a *March toward Transparency*: a campaign to talk with every PA state legislator about the need to pass LACRA quickly. Latest events and updates can be found at <https://www.fairdistrictspa.com/>

Election

The May 18 Primary will elect judges, school boards and some municipal offices. The last day to [register to vote](#) is **May 3, 2021**. The last day to [request a mail-in or absentee ballot](#) is **May 11, 2021**. If you voted by mail in 2020, you need to request to do so again for this year.

There are also three questions on the ballot.

- Proposed Constitutional Amendment, Article III, Section 9 addresses the governor's emergency powers, including requiring legislative approval to continue beyond 21 days.
- Proposed Constitutional Amendment, Article IV empowers the legislature to extend or terminate an emergency declaration by resolution.
- Proposed Constitutional Amendment, Article I prohibits denial or abridgement of rights on account of an individual's race or ethnicity.

Keep in Touch

Let us know when you have virtual or phone meetings with legislators. It is possible to still do public policy in the midst of a pandemic. Perhaps it is even more important to do so, since the virus has had a significant impact on women, especially women of color.

As always, we are here to answer your questions and are only an email away. Hopefully this finds you all well and staying safe.

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