

GOTV

The May 18 primary will include voting for the following offices.

Pa. Justice of the Supreme Court: One Opening, Four Candidates running

Pa. Judge of the Superior Court: One opening, Three Candidates on Democratic Ballot. Only one on the Republican ballot

Pa. Judge of the Commonwealth Court: Two openings, Six Candidates

At the County level you may be voting for Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, District Attorney, Sheriff, Prothonotary, Recorder of Deeds, or Controller.

At the municipal level you may be voting for School Board Directors, Township Supervisors, Township Auditor, Township Constable, and Township Tax Collector. All of these local and county offices have a greater impact on your daily life than national offices.

To find out who will be on your ballot go to <https://www.vote411.org/personalized-voting-info> where you can print your ballot after selecting candidates.

In addition to these public offices, there are four ballot questions, three of which are constitutional amendments.

One - At present, only the governor can end a disaster declaration, like the one for the coronavirus pandemic. Under state law the General Assembly has the option to pass a

resolution to terminate the declaration. Last year the state Supreme Court ruled that the governor still has the final say. This proposed **constitutional amendment** would allow a majority of lawmakers to terminate the declaration at any time, without the governor's consent. Certain support from the federal government such as the expanded food stamp allowance requires a disaster declaration. Approval of this amendment would end that expanded allowance.

Two – This **Constitutional amendment** would limit a disaster declaration to 21 days, and could only be continued with the consent of the legislature. Currently a disaster declaration lasts 90 days and can be renewed as many times as the governor deems necessary. This constitutional amendment would also prevent the governor from issuing a new disaster declaration based on the same or similar facts.

Three - This **Constitutional amendment** would enshrine discrimination protections for Pennsylvanians based on race and ethnicity.

Four - This statewide referendum would allow municipal fire departments or companies with paid personnel, as well as EMS companies, to apply for a loan through an existing state-run program for volunteer companies. The money can be used to modernize or purchase equipment.

Economic Security

Pay Equity

We have a new bill in the House. It is **HB 821** sponsored by Representative Donna

Bullock. It mirrors **HB 819**, the Sims/Davis bill with two exceptions. It says an employer may not discriminate on the basis of sex, race or ethnicity. HB819 only prohibits discrimination based on sex. HB821 raises fines on employers from \$50 to \$200 in the current law to \$2,500 to \$5,000. Otherwise, both bills cover all the items we would like to see in a pay equity bill.

HB819 now has 26 cosponsors, and HB821 has 32 cosponsors. All the sponsors are Democrats which makes it more difficult to get passage without bi-partisan support.

In the Senate, Senator Steve Santarsiero has introduced **SB547** which is the Senate companion bill to HB819. There are 12 cosponsors, all Democrats.

There are a few other bills that address some of equal pay issues. We certainly support them, but would prefer to pass one of the three listed above since they are the most comprehensive. Attached to the email is the chart comparing all the equal pay bills that have been introduced since January and approved by AAUW for our support. We have until December 2022 to pass pay equity.



Minimum Wage

If you missed the minimum wage webinar on April 14, you can see it on the AAUW-PA YouTube channel. <https://youtu.be/XG-a1MRieHA>.

During the webinar Q&A a question was raised about the minimum wage in neighboring states since Pennsylvania's is

lower than all our surrounding states. Here is a link where you can find that information. <https://www.paycor.com/resource-center/articles/minimum-wage-by-state/>

We are currently monitoring the status of the following bills.

SB12: *Comprehensive Modernization of the Minimum Wage 2021* - Sen. Christine Tartaglione, It would

- immediately raise minimum wage to \$12 for all PA workers, with a pathway to \$15/hr. by 2027
- eliminate preemption on municipal wage ordinances
- guard against wage theft by ensuring the Dept. 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 FLSA by allowing workers to receive damages, in addition to wages.
- **Requires the Dept. of Human Services to calculate and publish the impact of a minimum wage increase on its programs and mandate 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 wages.**

HB345: Rep. Patty Kim, Amends the Minimum Wage Act of 1968 This is the House version of SB12.

SB332: *Raise the Tipped Minimum Wage* -Sen. Christine Tartaglione,

This legislation would incrementally increase Pennsylvania's tipped minimum wage to 70% of the minimum wage of 2022, after which time the tipped wage would be linked to the minimum wage, rising as it rises.

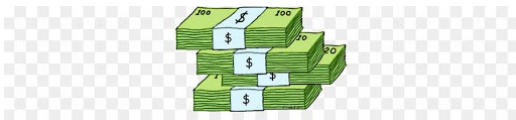
HB923: *Localized Minimum Wage* - Rep. Kevin J. Boyle

This legislation would allow municipalities to adjust their minimum wage based on factors that affect workers in these communities.

HB15: *Expanding One Fair Wage to protect vulnerable members of the workforce* - Rep. Christopher M. Rabb,

This legislation will increase the minimum wage over time to \$15/hr., abolish the sub-minimum wage, protect the gratuities of workers from wage theft, and expand the universe of beneficiaries to include gig workers, incarcerated workers, and workers with severe intellectual disabilities.

Some good news. President Biden signed an executive order this week raising the minimum wage paid by federal contractors to \$15 an hour. This could affect hundreds of thousands of workers.



Paid Leave

Following a hearing last year in the Senate on the Family Care Act, some issues that were raised seemed to need clarification. A committee of the Family Care Act Coalition made some minor adjustments to the language. These adjustments do not significantly change the bills. The lead sponsors are preparing to submit the House & Senate versions of the bill (updated to include almost all of the suggested changes) within the coming days. Hopefully the bills will be reintroduced soon. The sponsors continue to seek support through their memorandum about the bills. Currently there are 34 House co-sponsors and 11 Senate Cosponsors

AAUW recently released their new research report, *Factory Flaw the Attrition and Retention of Women in Manufacturing*. One

of the major causes of why women leave manufacturing is sexual harassment. However, another cause has to do with parental policies and paid leave. This is just another reason why we need paid leave. You can download the full report at <https://www.aauw.org/resources/research/factory-flaw/>



Education

Understanding Pennsylvania's School Funding Lawsuit

Get a behind the scenes, insider's perspective, of the lawsuit filed in 2014 by the Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia and Education Law Center- PA on behalf of individuals, school districts and organizations, making the complaint that the funding system in Pennsylvania is not only wrong, it violates the state Constitution.

The lawsuit is tentatively set to go to trial in PA Commonwealth Court on September 9th, 2021. Join attorneys from the Public Interest Law Center and Education Law Center for an overview of the Pennsylvania's school funding lawsuit.

**The PA School Funding Lawsuit
Tuesday, May 18th at 7:00 pm
via Zoom**

The webinar will provide general information about the lawsuit and be an opportunity for AAUW members to hear directly from attorneys in the case about ways to support the lawsuit in their communities. Registration is required at:

<https://krc-pbpc-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEqcOGrrzMqHt3SVLrx3WSmTUwv0I6-DBmg>

Improving the Operation and Transparency of Government

Redistricting

From our friends at Fair Districts - States learned this week how many congressional delegates they'll have for the next decade. Pennsylvania was one of seven states that lost one seat. Attention now turns to preparation for redistricting. Recently the four legislative leaders on the PA Legislative Reapportionment Commission heard statements from applicants to be chair of that commission. This means time is short to pass redistricting reform.

Is your legislator not a co-sponsor? Send a simple email to ask why. [House Bill 22](#) now has 67 co-sponsors (47 Democrats and 20 Republicans). [Senate Bill 222](#) has 18 co-sponsors (12 Democrats, 5 Republicans, and 1 Independent.)

Check to see if your legislators have signed on. If not? Send a short, quick email asking why. Keep it simple: *"I'm your constituent. I support LACRA (HB22/SB222). You haven't co-sponsored it. I would like to know why."*

Heads UP

No action is required on your part, but we wanted you to know about legislation being sponsored by five state Representatives, Barbara Gleim (R., Cumberland), Dawn Keefer (R., York), Valerie Gaydos (R., Allegheny), Stephanie Borowicz (R., Clinton), and Martina White (R., Philadelphia). The bill bans high school and college athletes who were assigned male at birth from playing on teams with other girls and women.

The sponsors see it as a way to enhance gender-based protections under Title IX. They say it is in response to an executive order President Biden signed in the first hours of his presidency that affirmed the right of trans students to play on teams that represent their gender. The executive order reaffirms and builds on a U.S. Supreme Court decision that found protections against workplace discrimination on the basis of "sex" should also apply to gender identity or sexual orientation.

Both the PIAA and the NCAA have policies addressing the fair inclusion of transgender students in interscholastic sport. AAUW does not support this legislation. Gov. Tom Wolf has vowed to veto the measure.

A Great Reason to Engage in Public Policy

An AgeLab survey of adults ages 85 and up found that those who remained sharp into late old age were interested in social and political issues. So, stay socially vibrant, not just with friends but by being aware of the larger social world. Your public policy team is here to help you do just that.

Let us know when you have virtual or phone meetings with legislators. It is more important than ever to stay engaged, since the pandemic has had a significant impact on women, especially women of color. 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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