

## **National Update**

We are often asked about the issues AAUW is addressing. Currently AAUW advocates for the following Public Policy Priorities at the federal level.

### **Workplace & Economic Equity**

- Pass a Budget with Paid Leave & Child Care
- Pass the Paycheck Fairness Act – pay equity
- Pass the FAMILY Act – paid leave
- Raise the Federal Minimum Wage
- End Pregnancy Discrimination
- Pass the BE HEARD Act - workplace harassment
- Support the EMPOWER Act - workplace harassment
- Support the Healthy Families Act – sick leave

### **Education**

- Share Your Title IX Story
- End the Student Debt Crisis
- Support the Gender Equity in Education Act

### **Civil Rights**

- Support the For the People Act – voter’s rights
- Support the Voting Rights Advancement Act
- Ratify the Equal Rights Amendment
- Pass the Equality Act

- Fight the Attacks on Reproductive Rights
- Support Immigrant Youth

Details of these bills can be found on the AAUW Action Alert website page.

<https://www.aauw.org/act/two-minute-activist/>

AAUW’s Statement on the Supreme Court Ruling on the Texas Law Restricting Reproductive Rights can be found at <https://www.aauw.org/resources/news/statement-on-supreme-court-ruling-on-texas-law-restricting-reproductive-rights/> AAUW has also signed onto an amicus brief by the Women’s Law Center in the case before the Supreme Court challenging the Mississippi law banning abortions after 15 weeks. Updates on the above bills or other policy issues can be found in Washington Update that comes out on the first Thursday of the month.

## **Economic Security**

### **Pay Equity**

On September 14, 2021, the [U.S. Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics released data](#) indicating that, in 2020, women were paid 83 cents for every dollar paid to a man. While the numbers show that the gender pay gap closed slightly amidst the chaos of COVID-19, this data point is highly misleading. The unfortunate story behind the statistic is that the pandemic has been devastating for women and their families, reversing the progress women have made in recent decades.

Unfortunately, because of Covid, the American Community Survey was not done this year. That means AAUW staff are not able to calculate the pay gap by congressional district which we have used for years to raise this issue with our state legislators. See the full statement and explanation by Kate Nielson, AAUW Public Policy Director at <https://www.aauw.org/resources/news/statement-on-pandemics-effect-on-the-gender-pay-gap/>

AAUW did update The Simple Truth About the Gender Pay Gap which includes the national information. Download it at [https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2021/09/AAUW\\_SimpleTruth\\_2021\\_fall\\_update.pdf](https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2021/09/AAUW_SimpleTruth_2021_fall_update.pdf)

October 21 will be Latinas Equal Pay Day. AAUW's new research report, Pandemic Inequity: Latinas and the COVID-19 Experience, can help with our advocacy on this issue. The research project documents the health and economic repercussions — and outlines policy priorities to aid in the recovery. Access the [Latina Initiative](#).

Hope you were able to join our webinar with the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV) to learn about their pay equity report and the connection to risk factors for intimate partner violence. You can access the report at <https://www.pcadv.org/resources/pay-equity-report-fact-sheet/>.

### **Livable Wage**

In spite of all the evidence pointing to the need for an increase in the PA minimum wage no action has been taken by the legislature in Harrisburg. Groups that have taken the lead, like We the People and Raise the Wage Pa are focusing on the three bills that may have some chance of being heard in upcoming sessions.

SB672 - Increasing the Minimum Wage, sponsored by Sen. Dan Laughlin(R-Erie) and Sen. Pat Browne(R-Lehigh) proposes a one-time increase to \$10. Further increases would be dependent on inflation. Tipped wage would be 40% of the minimum wage.

SB12- Comprehensive Modernization of the Minimum Wage, sponsored by Sen. Christine Tartaglione (D-Phil) proposes an immediate increase to \$12 with yearly increases reaching \$15 by 2027. Tipped wage would be eliminated.

HB345- One Fair Wage is the House companion bill to SB12. The main sponsors are Rep. Patty Kim (D-Dauphin County) and Stephen Kinsey (D-Phil).

At this time, the bill having the best chance of being brought up for consideration is SB672, the \$10 bill.

### **Paid Leave**

Covid made it painstakingly clear how the lack of paid family and medical leave could result in the economic destruction of families, workforces, businesses, and regional economies. Women, and especially women of color, were more likely to be frontline workers, were at greater risk of catching the virus, and yet continue to have minimal access to paid family or medical leave as they juggle work with caregiving responsibilities. As a result, four times as many women left the workforce in 2020 than men.

The Family Care Act Coalition is focusing on getting **the bipartisan Family Care Act (HB 1200)** introduced by State Rep. Wendi Thomas (R-Bucks) and Rep. Dan Miller (D-Allegheny) and **(SB 580)** sponsored by Sen. Maria Collett and Sen. Dan Laughlin in the Senate out of the Labor and Industry Committees by the end of the year. Thank you to Carlisle and Allentown branches for reaching out to their representatives who

serve on Labor and Industry to move HB1200.

***Time to Care***, the short film follow-up to *Zero Weeks* is ready for you to do sneak peek screenings! Ky Dickens has completed the 20-minute #TimetoCare film, a follow-up to *Zero Weeks*, and it's fabulous! Huge thanks to Ky and her team and especially to Danielle Atkinson for the idea of going to TikTok to meet caregivers/people needing care.

This will be a terrific tool to use as we maximize our power to get comprehensive, inclusive paid leave for all over the finish line! Go to [timetocarefilm.org](http://timetocarefilm.org) to find links for:

[#TimetoCare Screening Request](#) (or request to be invited to a virtual screening) or see the [trailer](#).

## **Education**

AAUW PA passed a resolution in support of Pennsylvania's school funding lawsuit and sent copies to Governor Wolf, PA Secretary of Education Noe Ortega, Senate Majority Leader, Jake Corman, House Majority Leader, Brian Cutler, and John Fetterman, President Pennsylvania Senate. As a courtesy we also copied by email, Joanna McClinton, Floor Leader, Pennsylvania Senate and Jay Costa, Minority Leader Pennsylvania House of Representatives.

The trial in the historic school funding lawsuit has been delayed until Friday, November 12 as a result of an unforeseen medical emergency for an attorney representing a legislative respondent in the case. It will take place in Harrisburg.

Below are the three organizations AAUW PA relies on for strategic guidance, information, and tactics regarding issues in Pennsylvania public schools. You can find up to date information on what is happening with school funding and the lawsuit at any

of these websites. AAUW PA has worked with Susan Spicka of Education Voters PA for a number of years, and she was a recipient of our Gateway to Equity Award. We are also an endorsing organization for PA Schools Work.

**Education Voters PA** -- is our general resource as Susan Spicka is watching many issues. This is where to go for research on the race horse industry and public-school funding as well as charter reform. <https://edvoterspa.org/>

**PA Schools Work** -- is a fabulous resource about the public-school budgets and school choice-- their webinars are outstanding. <https://paschoolswork.org/>

**Fund Our Schools PA** -- is THE place to go for background and up-to-date information on fair funding. <https://www.fundourschoolspa.org/>

## **GOTV**

The deadline to register to vote in November's general election is Oct. 18. You can preview your ballot at [Vote 411](#).

The Pennsylvania Department of State has announced a new website URL for voter information: [vote.pa.gov](http://vote.pa.gov).

You can expect the same excellent, trustworthy content at the new location now with enhanced cyber security protections.

## **Did You Know** – A History Moment

In 1898 AAUW's forerunner, the ACA established its first legislative committee – on educational legislation. By the early 1900's, it was advocating for child labor laws, compulsory education, juvenile courts, and funding for public schools and libraries.

Questions? Contact Barbara Price, [aauwpapp1@gmail.com](mailto:aauwpapp1@gmail.com) or Jacqui Rogers, [aauwpapp2@gmail.com](mailto:aauwpapp2@gmail.com).