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October 2021**

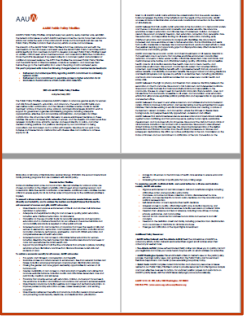


**AAUW Pennsylvania's
Public Policy and Advocacy**

To start, I need to mention two foundational elements that anchor our work—how are priorities are determined and the importance of being nonpartisan.

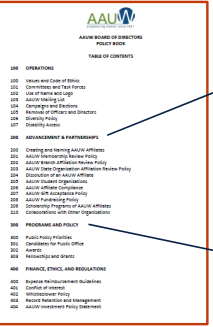
Gender Equity for All Women

2021–23 AAUW Public Policy Priorities
Adopted May 2021



<https://www.aauw.org/resources/policy/aauw-public-policy-priorities/>

AAUW Board of Directors Policy Book




<https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2020/03/Board-Policies-June-2019-nsa.pdf>

200 ADVANCEMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

208 AAUW Fundraising
210 Collaborations with Other Organizations

300 PROGRAMS AND POLICY



AAUW Pennsylvania and AAUW branches don't conduct public policy advocacy in a vacuum. We are part of a larger organization – AAUW – and work to support AAUW's mission of gender equity for all women. AAUW, AAUW Pennsylvania, and AAUW branch advocacy is guided and governed by the Public Policy Priorities and the AAUW Directors Policies and Procedures.

The AAUW Public Policy Priorities are adopted by members every two years. The process begins in the fall of even-numbered years when the AAUW Public Policy Committee (APPC) launches a process to solicit input from members, write a draft, seek comments, and present to the AAUW Board of Directors for review, amendment if necessary and approval. Finally, they go to the membership for a vote in the spring of odd-numbered years.

Our own Barbara Price, AAUW Pennsylvania Public Policy Co-Chair since 2016, is the APPC Chair. This means she works directly with AAUW public policy staff. She is your primary resource for all things public policy.

The strength of the AAUW Public Policy Priorities is that they originate and end with the membership. We, the members, provide input for their creation, we vote to approve, and use the Priorities to guide our grassroots advocacy.

The AAUW Directors Policies and Procedures outline all aspects of being an AAUW affiliate. The most used sections for states and branches are 200, especially 208 AAUW Fundraising Policy, and 300 Programs and Policy because that establishes the guidelines for our advocacy work.

Section 300 spells out AAUW's non-partisan position and provides guidance on how to interact with political candidates and politicians.

AAUW is Nonpartisan Political but Not Partisan

When members take advocacy actions in the name of AAUW, those actions must be political rather than partisan. Here are some things to keep in mind when determining if your actions are political or partisan:

DO

- Remain nonpartisan. Do not endorse candidates in partisan races.
- Work on issues guided by our values and mission, including taking positions on ballot initiatives that are in line with AAUW's Public Policy Priorities.
- Engage with candidates and elected officials from all major parties equally, making sure questions are phrased in a neutral manner.
- Encourage voter registration for everyone, regardless of their political persuasion.

DO NOT

- Expressly advocate for or endorse any particular partisan candidate.
- Encourage voter registration for a particular party.
- Share AAUW membership lists with campaigns or political parties.
- Fundraise for partisan candidates or coordinate any election activity with a campaign or political party.



The second foundation element is that AAUW is nonpartisan. Being nonpartisan means we focus on issues, not political parties, and will talk to anyone about our issues. We create social change through our public policy efforts. There is often confusion between nonpartisan versus political because our advocacy work is often done in the political world. Our work has always been political –yet never partisan. Being political is a way to influence legislation and regulation through government or public affairs, while partisan activities have a firm adherence to a party, faction, or person.

These are examples of nonpartisan political activities.

AAUW will work with politicians on an issue of mutual support, even though he or she differs with us on other issues in our Public Policy Priorities. **AAUW must have the reputation as a trusted, nonpartisan voice in the community.**

My branch plans community events and always in coalition with other organizations. There is one organization that says they are nonpartisan however, all their actions demonstrate otherwise. We do not work with them because it would taint our AAUW nonpartisan reputation.

I developed a relationship with my Pennsylvania Representative over equal pay. When attending a townhall, he took me aside and asked for information on a new education bill that he didn't understand. I scheduled a meeting with his chief of staff. The point is, he viewed me as a trusted source.

As an individual, you may belong to partisan organizations and express partisan views. However, when representing AAUW, our work must be nonpartisan.

Political Parties change platforms


AAUW Issues Have NOT

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.



Because our country has become so very partisan, it is often thought that AAUW favors one political party over another. That is not the case. Our focus is on the issues that we have supported for a very long time.

		Gender Equity for All Women Advocacy targets
AAUW Public Policy Priorities AAUW Policy and Procedures	AAUW	Federal legislation; Executive orders, regulations, policy US Senate US Congress Coalitions with national organizations
	AAUW Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania legislation; Executive orders, regulations, policy Pennsylvania Senate Pennsylvania Representatives Coalitions with Pennsylvania organizations
	AAUW Branches	Representative in US Congress Pennsylvania US Senators Pennsylvania Senators in Harrisburg Pennsylvania Representatives in Harrisburg Local government Local School Boards Coalitions with like-minded local organizations



This is how it all works together. Guided by the AAUW Public Policy Priorities and the AAUW Policy and Procedures, we all advocate for gender equity

AAUW Advocacy Resources

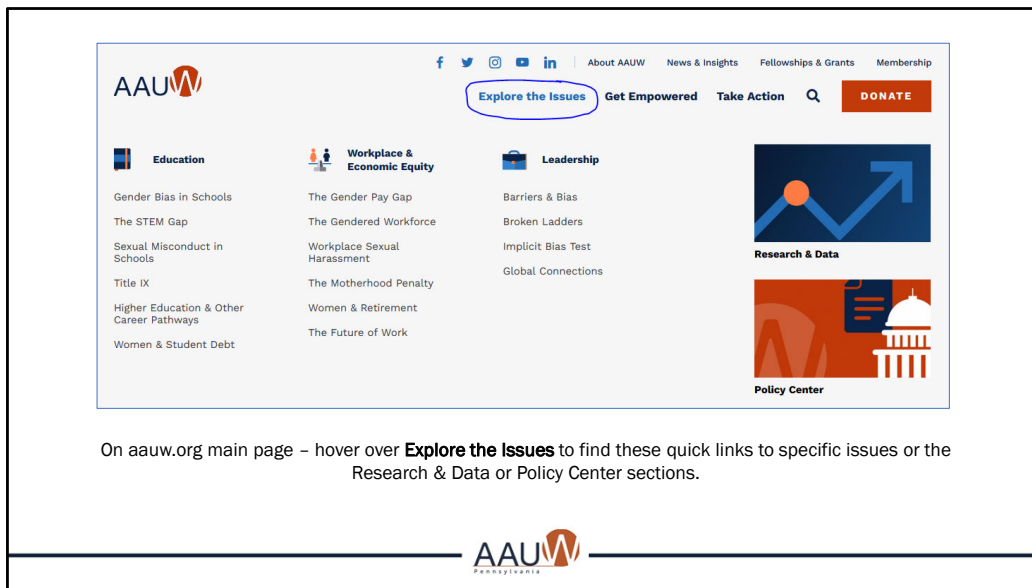


Public Policy is complex and can be overwhelming. Before joining AAUW in 2015, I occasionally responded to an action alert from organizations I supported – but nothing more. AAUW’s work on issues inspired me to become more knowledgeable and active. You don’t have to learn all this on your own.

There are plenty of resources to help you understand the issue and get ideas for advocacy. All you need is the curiosity to explore.

Throughout this presentation, I share my favorite resources. They are all listed on the supplemental sheet I will provide to Barbara and Phyllis.

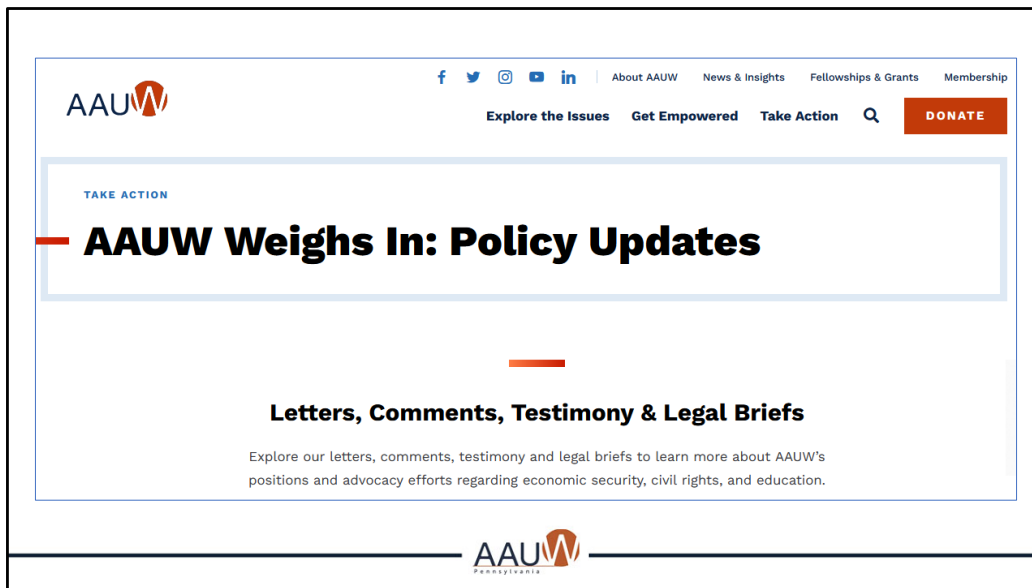
AAUW website is the best place to start.



On aauw.org main page – hover over **Explore the Issues** to find these quick links to specific issues or the Research & Data or Policy Center sections.

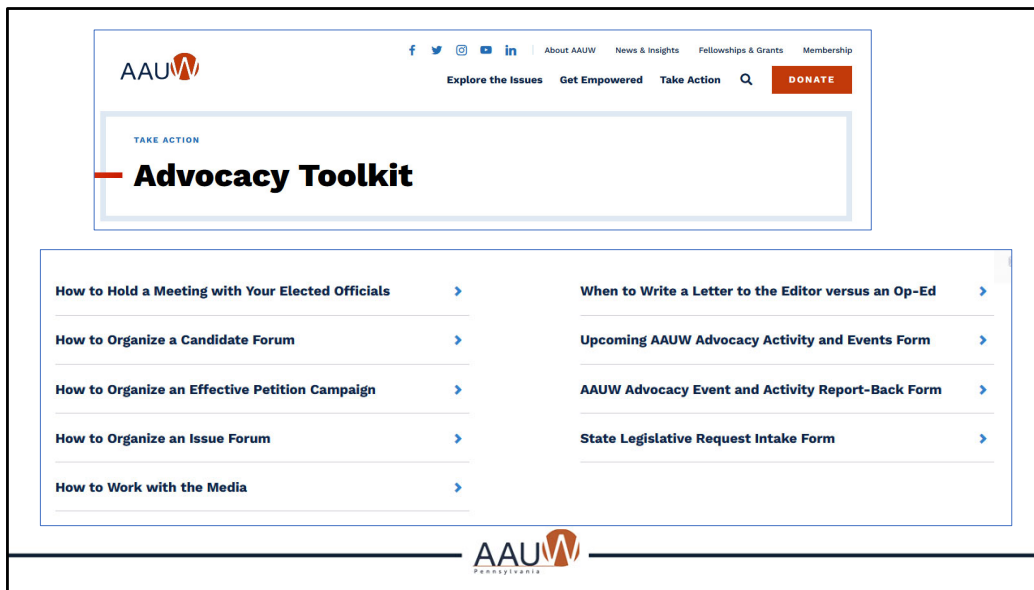
At aauw.org, hover on Explore the Issues – and everything is at your fingertips.

The Policy Center is always a first stop because here AAUW’s position and advocacy strategy for each issue is explained. Many of the issues have a Quick Facts document. AAUW has a reputation for excellent Research & Data so make sure you check out AAUW research when building position statements. Click directly on an issue for a deep dive into issue and our advocacy position.



AAUW is not silent on issues. Our letters and testimony is here.

And the Two Minute Activist content is here. Many times, those are great resources for statistics and AAUW's perspective on the issue.



And the AAUW Advocacy Toolkit is a set of resources to guide you in advocating for women and girls through a variety of tactics and actions.

AAUW Top Priorities – Federal

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

Learn about the legislation

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

Scroll down for the Two Minute Activist Action Alerts



These are the issues AAUW is monitoring. To learn more about the specific legislation, go to the two minute activist page and scroll down for all the AAUW Action alerts. As I mentioned earlier, the alerts are a great resource to understand the reasoning for our position.

AAUW Pennsylvania

The Issues We Are Paying Attention To



So, what issues is AAUW Pennsylvania paying attention to?

First, I will review resources. Then, outline each of the issues along with advocacy information and resources.

AAUW Pennsylvania Resources



<https://aauw-pa.aauw.net/>

- Our Priorities
 - Priorities
- Newsletter
 - Highlights
- General Advocacy
 - Advocacy and Lobbying
 - Resources and Tools
- Specific Issues
 - Advocacy in a Box
 - Education
 - Equal Pay Events

Pennsylvania General Assembly

<https://www.legis.state.pa.us/>

Information about

- Legislation
- Committees
- Districts
- Legislators



We try to keep the public policy pages of our website updated and our intention is to provide a one-stop experience for members. While not updated, it is still a good place to start to gain an understanding of how we view an issue.

Our public policy priorities are a subset of the national priorities based on what is happening in Pennsylvania.

Bookmark the PA Legislative site because it is full of important content.

Procedural note: before AAUW Pennsylvania advocates on Pennsylvania legislation, we must submit the bill to AAUW for review and authorization to oppose or support.

AAUW Pennsylvania Approach to Advocacy

- We are volunteers
- We rely on coalitions for policy creation and advocacy strategy
- We educate our members and encourage grassroots advocacy

**Our success in Pennsylvania
depends on your advocacy!**



These issues are complex.

The legislative process is complex and fast moving (when it wants to be). There is a web of organizations and paid lobbyists advocating for or against issues.

We are a member organization with volunteers who have an interest, but perhaps not an expertise, in our issues or the legislative process. We don't have paid staff developing the policies or the money to hire lobbyists. What we do have is a grassroots organization of members across the state who are able to amplify issues locally. This is our asset.

Recognizing our limitations, we do not develop policy, legislation, or strategy for getting legislation passed. Instead, AAUW Pennsylvania partners with the full time organizations managing the issues and offer to them our grassroots advocacy network. AAUW Pennsylvania has joined several coalitions and are represented by either Barbara Price and Jacqui Rogers or me. We learn about the issues and advocacy strategy.

Then we educate members and suggest/plan/implement grassroots strategies for our members.

I am not overstating this. Our issues get attention because we advocate.

As we explore the issues AAUW Pennsylvania is paying attention to, you will see the names of the coalition leaders. I will conclude with ideas for your grassroots advocacy as an individual and a branch.

Workplace & Economic Equity

Equal Pay – (see May 2021 Highlights for overview)

- HB 819
- HB821
- SB547

Women's Law Project
Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Minimum Wage – (see May 2021 Highlights for overview)

- HB345
- HB923
- HB15
- SB12
- SB332

Raise the Wage PA
We the People
Bucks County Women's Advocacy Coalition
Keystone Research

Family Care Act (paid leave) – (see October 2021 Highlights for overview)

- HB1200
- SB580

Family Care Act
MomsRising (for federal paid leave)



Pay Equity, Minimum Wage and Family Care Act are the three primary issues we are watching. An overview of the legislation is in the noted Highlights. Why so many bills for one issue? Some are companion bills in the House and Senate—meaning they are the same. Others vary in scope. AAUW Pennsylvania does not support every piece of legislation on a topic. For example, there are several equal pay bills that we do not promote because they do not meet our criteria. See the May Highlights for more information. The exact bills are on the PA legislative page.

Our coalition partners are in the text box. Explore their sites for information, resources, etc. Pick the issues that are of greatest interest, and sign up for their alerts to stay informed.

You will notice the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence as a coalition partner. They received a grant from the CDC to look at risk factors for Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). They have just published a report that found that pay inequity impacts these risk factors which increases the likelihood that violence can and will occur among individuals or within relationships, communities, and society. They relied heavily on AAUW's Simple Truth pay equity research. We held a webinar for members on September 29 for PCADV to share their findings. We are now exploring ways to work together to advocate for equal pay.

Of the legislation on this page, the Family Care Act is the most likely to be passed. It is the Pennsylvania legislation for paid leave. There is a federal bill called Paid Family and Medical Leave that AAUW is supporting. See the policy center on the AAUW website for Quick Facts on this bill.

Education K-12

Budget

- Annual budget for public school funding
- Special Education
- Race Horse Development Fund
- Tax Payer Funded Vouchers

Charter School Reform


Cyber Charter School Funding

Fair Funding Lawsuit

Title IX

Education Voters PA
 PA Schools Work
 Teach Plus Pennsylvania

Fund Our Schools PA
 Education Law Center
 Public Interest Law Center



The issues are complicated, move quickly, are unpredictable, and never stop. We rely heavily on our coalition partners who set the strategic agenda and do all the heavy lifting. Our role is to be educated on the issues and nimble enough to react when needed. Susan Spicka, Executive Director of Education Voters PA is a good friend of AAUW Pennsylvania. Her work on cyber charter school funding and the Race Horse Development Fund is creative and bold – looking for budget dollars in current line items, not just adding more to the budget. AAUW Pennsylvania honored Susan with our 2020 Gateway to Equity award.

Many branches advocated for fair funding over these past several years. The lawsuit that was filed in November 2014 is being heard in Commonwealth Court on November 12th. Fund Our Schools is the source for current information on this issue and wonderful resources. Even a map that shows the impact for each of Pennsylvania’s school districts.

AAUW Pennsylvania passed a resolution supporting the historic fair funding lawsuit. You will find it on our website.

Education – Higher Education

Budget

- Annual Pennsylvania budget for higher education funding

PASSHE campus consolidation

Student Loan Dept

Campus Sexual Assault (Title IX)

It's On Us



We are watching the PASSHE consolidation – wrote a letter in June 2020 expressing our concerns, which you will find on our website.

You may remember that the Education Department under Secretary DeVoss rewrote the Title IX regulations on how schools are to deal with campus sexual assault. AAUW was vocal then and now is participating in the rewriting of the Title IX regs.

Civil Rights

Redistricting

Fair Districts PA

Pennsylvania League of Women Voters

Election Reform

Voting Rights

Violence against Women

Reproductive Rights

Human Trafficking

LGBTQ Rights



Redistricting is important to AAUW issues. The foundation of a democratic government is legislators elected in competitive districts so they are able to represent their constituents instead of a political party. We need a well-run legislature to get our issues heard and acted upon. Gerrymandering by either political party is harmful and we will not support it.

We continue to follow Fair Districts PA for the twists and turns and continued redistricting efforts to get the most fair maps drawn in Pennsylvania.

We watch other issues on this list and when something pops up – usually a bill that we have to oppose – Barbara and Jacqui will alert branch public policy chairs.

Now, let's talk about what you can do as an individual and a branch.

Individual Advocacy

Stay informed

- Join coalition mailing lists

Sign up for AAUW Two Minute Activist

Become a subject matter expert and assist Barbara and Jacqui with state advocacy

Become THE point of contact for a legislator

- Visit the office at least three times a year to discuss an AAUW issue or two
- Learn their objections to or reasons for supporting
- Subscribe to legislator newsletters; Attend their events; Get to know their staff

Attend candidate forums and ask questions from the AAUW voter guides

Write Letters to the Editor



These final slides are ideas for Individual and AAUW branch Advocacy. Some you may already be doing. Or, some may be new ideas and catch your interest. Here are advocacy actions for you, as an individual.

When you sign up for AAUW Two Minute Activist, you will receive action alerts for federal and Pennsylvania issues. If you want to get more involved, work with Barbara and Jacqui on a specific issue.

Another need is for legislator points of contact. Our wish is to start a Lobby Corp, members who have signed up to be THE point of contact for their Pennsylvania Senator or Representative. Our vision is that Barbara Price and Jacqui Rogers will provide training and specific action requests. First, we need to know there is interest from members.

Attend candidate forums. One of the biggest impacts you can make is to insert our issues into the pre-election conversations. Challenge all candidates to include platform statements on our issues.

Write Letters to the Editor as an individual. Submit from the branch under the President or Public Policy Chair signature.

AAUW Branch Advocacy

Know your elected officials

- Keep a list of US Congress and Pennsylvania Senator and Representative for each member. Note the District # and Name and Committees they serve on. This will help to target your actions if needed.

Equal Pay

- Plan and coordinate visit to legislators' local office on Equal Pay Day
- Work in collaboration on a community event to acknowledge other Equal Pay Days
- Hold a community event to explore PCADV's research

Family Care Act

- Hold a community event to watch and discuss Time to Care, the short film follow-up to Zero Weeks (see October 2021 Highlights)
- Collaborate with local chamber of commerce to distribute, hold forum to discuss, AAUW's research *Factory Flaw the Attrition and Retention of Women in Manufacturing*



The final two slides focus on ideas for the branch to create a bigger community presence on public policy topics.

While tedious to set up, having a spreadsheet of members and their elected officials is very helpful. And easy to keep updated with new/or relocating members and election changes. There are many times, a well placed call or letter to a committee is more beneficial than an email blast.

As you look at this list, you will see the focus is on holding community events. Of course, member education comes first. However, you make a name for yourself when advertising and holding a community event.

My branch, AAUW Carlisle, has implemented several of these ideas on this slide and the next. We always work in collaboration with other organizations on community events. This way, we hear diverse opinions, gain access to new audiences, and share the burden of planning and implementing.

AAUW Branch Advocacy

Education -- Fair Funding Lawsuit

- Pass a resolution to show support (August 2021 Highlights)
- Follow the lawsuit via Fund Our Schools and take action as recommended

School board

- Pay attention to issues and act as necessary
- Hold candidate forums for the community

Voter Registration

- Seek underrepresented populations
- Collaborate with organizations to reach their staff, constituents, and community

Voter Education

- Publicize Voter guides and scorecards on AAUW issues
- Explain importance Municipal offices
- Constitutional amendments – provide clear information



Carlisle is unique in that all director positions on the Carlisle Area School Board are at-large. We decided to create a name for ourselves by holding school board candidate forums—not a debate. Our goal is to educate voters. They are well attended and covered by the local newspaper. And, the candidates enjoy them because our questions are always relevant and well researched.



Advocate for Gender Equity Issues
It is what AAUW members do!

I hope my remarks today have provided some new information, removed fears or hesitations, and inspired you to advocate!