

National Webinar

In case you missed the first in the series of Public Policy webinars, you can access

Exploring Tough Policy Issues Through an AAUW Lens: Political and Non-Partisan at

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/programs/webinars/>

The Public Policy team shared highlights of our proud non-partisan, yet very political, history. We reviewed how our current AAUW priorities are developed and how members can advocate those positions going forward.

Improving the Operation and Transparency of Government

Redistricting

The Pennsylvania redistricting maps have been issued for the PA House and Senate. Spotlight PA, an independent, non-partisan newsroom powered by The Philadelphia Inquirer in partnership with PennLive/The Patriot-News, TribLIVE/Pittsburgh Tribune-Review and WITF Public Media has set up a site you can search to see your old and new legislative districts.

The maps were drafted and given initial approval by the Legislative Reapportionment Commission, a five-person panel made up of the four top legislative leaders from both major parties and a nonpartisan chair selected by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

These maps are not final. They are currently under a 30-day public comment period and could be subject to legal challenges after the final vote in January.

Currently in the Pennsylvania House, Republicans hold 113 seats while Democrats hold 90. The new map decreases the number of districts where Republican candidates are projected to win based on past election results. It maintains the number of districts that aren't majority white.

In the Pennsylvania Senate, Republicans currently hold 28 seats while Democrats hold 21. There is one independent senator. The new map maintains the number of seats that Republicans are projected to win based on past election results. It also maintains the number of districts that aren't majority- white, while increasing the number of districts where minority communities account for 30%–40% of the voting-age population.

Each district whether House or Senate offers a percentage breakdown by party registration and race and ethnicity comparing the old and new map. Search for your district to see how it would change.

https://www.spotlightpa.org/news/2021/12/pennsylvania-redistricting-house-senate-districts-lookup-tool/?mc_cid=3dcda812aa&mc_eid=343f447f14

Running for Office

Pennsylvania Center for Women & Politics at Chatham University is offering FREE,

virtual Ready to Run PA sessions. You will meet elected officials and campaign experts from across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Below, is a list of speakers scheduled to present at Ready to Run PA 2022.

Program Agenda 2022
12:00 PM - 1:30 PM ET*
*Unless Otherwise Noted

Friday, January 21st
Celinda Lake

Keynote: "What Women Candidates Need to Know"

Celinda Lake is one of the Democratic Party's leading political strategists. Celinda and her firm, Lake Research Partners, are known for cutting-edge research on issues including the economy, health care, the environment, and education.

Monday, January 24th
Dana Brown, Ph.D.

Getting Started: What You Need to Know

Dr. Dana Brown is the Executive Director of the PCWP. Dana is a member of Governor Wolf's Pennsylvania Commission for Women. Dana has presented research on women in politics, political psychology, political media and political participation by women of color.

Tuesday, January 25th
Dr. Matt Merriman-Preston
Developing a Campaign Plan

Dr. Matt Merriman-Preston has owned and operated Ampersand Consulting since 2006. As a consultant, Matt provides a wide range of services to candidates, elected officials, and organizations.

Wednesday, January 26th
Jasmine Sessoms
Fundraising 101

Jasmine Sessoms is founder of She Can Win, a nonpartisan training program. Previously, she founded and served as CEO of J&S Strategies, a full-service fund development firm specializing in political and municipal fundraising.

Thursday, January 27th
Nell Callahan
Campaign Communications

Nell Callahan is founder of Frontwood Strategies, a strategic communications firm. She works with business leaders, advocates, and experts, to develop effective communication strategies. Nell also served as press secretary for Senator Jeanne Shaheen.

Friday, January 28th
TBA
How to Get on the Ballot

This how-to session will give practical information about getting on the ballot as a candidate.

Monday, January 31st
Navigating Pennsylvania's Political Parties

Bernadette "Bernie" Comfort was elected to serve as Vice Chairwoman of the Pennsylvania Republican Party in 2017. She is the Executive Director of the Anne B. Anstine Excellence in Public Service Series.

Rep. Valerie Gaydos serves as State Representative of PA's 44th Legislative District, in Allegheny County. Before running for office, Rep. Gaydos served as the first woman president of the Pennsylvania Angel Network.

Rep. Patty Kim serves as State Representative of PA's 103rd Legislative District, in Dauphin County. Before her election to the state House, Rep. Kim was a news anchor and reporter and served on Harrisburg City Council.

Dr. Nancy Patton Mills is Chairwoman of the Pennsylvania Democratic Party. She is a member of the Pennsylvania Commission for Women, the Moon Township Planning Commission and several nonprofit boards.

Tuesday, February 1st
Women of Color in Pennsylvania Politics

Judge-Elect Nicola Henry Taylor was elected in November 2021 to the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas. Prior to her election she founded Henry-Taylor Law, PC.

Rep. Summer Lee serves as State Representative of PA's 34th Legislative District, in Allegheny County. Before her election, Rep. Lee worked as a dedicated organizer, activist, and advocate in her community.

Register at
<https://www.chatham.edu/pcwp/education/readytorun/pennsylvania2022.cfm>

Education

Pennsylvania's school funding lawsuit has begun. Weekly updates of what has happened in the court is posted on the AAUW PA Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/AAUWPennsylvania>

Information on the court case can also be found at **Education Voters PA**
<https://edvoterspa.org>

Fund Our Schools PA
<https://www.fundourschoolspa.org/>

Equality and Individual Rights

What You Need to Know About Abortion Rights in Pennsylvania from our friends at the Women's Law Project

We have a unique situation unfolding here in Pennsylvania. While the U.S. Constitution notoriously does not have an Equal Rights Amendment, Pennsylvania's state constitution has an equal rights provision, as well as an equal protection clause.

Currently, the Women's Law Project is representing Pennsylvania abortion providers in a case challenging Pennsylvania's discriminatory Medicaid abortion coverage ban, which was implemented in 1985. In addition to arguing that the Medicaid ban violates the Pennsylvania constitution and seeking a lift of the ban, we're also asking the court to affirm the right to abortion in Pennsylvania.

This means is that there is an opportunity for the Pennsylvania Supreme Court to affirm and protect reproductive rights in Pennsylvania just as the U.S. Supreme Court is expected to further undermine or even outright reverse *Roe*.

The case is called *Allegheny Reproductive Health Center v. Pa. Department of Human Services*.

In 2019, the Women's Law Project, along with Planned Parenthood and other organizations, sued the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services over the state's restrictions on using Medicaid funding for abortions...

Taking on the Medicaid ban on abortion is a health and social justice issue — and the litigants in the case are arguing that Pennsylvania's prohibition violates the state constitution's Equal Rights Amendment and Equal Protection Clauses.

“What we are seeking in this litigation is a declaration that abortion is a fundamental right protected under the state constitution and the suspension of the ban on Medicaid funding for abortion in Pennsylvania,” said Susan J. Frietsche, senior attorney with the Women's Law Project.

This recent op-ed in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* stated, “Importantly, the litigants are asking the court to recognize the right to abortion under the Pennsylvania Constitution. If the court recognizes this right — which it has not previously recognized — then even if Roe is overturned, the Pennsylvania Constitution will step up to protect the right to abortion in our state.”

Even if Pennsylvania Supreme Court affirms reproductive rights in Pennsylvania, there’s already another challenge.

Worried about a victory for reproductive rights in Pennsylvania Supreme Court—they are explicitly telling their supporters they expect to lose—anti-abortion lawmakers in the Pennsylvania Legislature have introduced a constitutional amendment (SB986) designed, if it makes it into law, to effectively leapfrog over both the courts and the Governor’s office by restricting reproductive rights in Pennsylvania by amending the state Constitution.

Gateway to Equity Awards offered by branches can be submitted through the same on-line portal as all the other branch awards. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AAUWPAAwards>.

Branches can download a certificate they can use for their local awards at <https://aauw-pa.aauw.net/awards/state/gateway-to-equity/>. Scroll down to find the link for the certificate.

Time to Update AAUW-PA Public Policy Priorities

Every two years members have the opportunity to suggest revisions to the state public policy priorities. Priorities for 2020-2022 are available at <https://aauw-pa.aauw.net/policy/priorities/>. The update

will be for 2022-2024 and will be voted on at the April annual meeting. Please send suggestions by January 7, 2022 to AAUW-PA Public Policy Chairs, Barbara Price, aauwppapp1@gmail.com or Jacqui Rogers, aauwppapp2@gmail.com.

Question

It has been suggested that we reach out to the chair of the Women in NAACP state committee to discuss working with us on issues affecting women citing our branches who may be already working with their local NAACP branches. Before doing so, it would be helpful to know how many of our AAUW branches are working with their local NAACP and on what issues. Please let Jacqui and Barbara know if this includes your branch.

Did You Know – A History Moment

In 1913 AAUW’s forerunner, the Association of Collegiate Alumnae (ACA) began its pay equity efforts with a report on U.S. Civil Service job classifications and compensation. No surprise, women were not earning what men were earning.

Questions? Contact Barbara Price, aauwppapp1@gmail.com or Jacqui Rogers, aauwppapp2@gmail.com.