



Women Lead

February 2022 Highlights

We don't normally publish an issue of Highlights in February, but a lot has been happening. This is a quick news update. Also sending along an announcement of the **Public Policy Webinar on Paid Leave on February 24**. Anyone is welcome to attend, but must register first.

Supreme Court news: AAUW CEO Gloria Blackwell made a statement about Justice Breyer's retirement announcement [here](https://www.aauw.org/resources/news/mediapress-releases/statement-on-retirement-of-supreme-court-justice-stephen-breyer/)
[<https://www.aauw.org/resources/news/mediapress-releases/statement-on-retirement-of-supreme-court-justice-stephen-breyer/>]

Equal Pay Day will be observed on Tuesday, March 15. The different demographic dates are forthcoming.

Amicus in Support of OSU Survivors

AAUW joined the National Women's Law amicus brief to the Sixth Circuit in support of two groups of Ohio State University male athletes who were sexually abused by Dr. Richard Strauss in *Moxley v. Ohio State University* and *Snyder-Hill v. Ohio State University*.

A district court in Ohio recently dismissed the athletes' Title IX claims as untimely, ruling they should have brought this lawsuit within 2 years of when they were abused (1978-1998) or when they graduated from or dropped out of OSU. The court rejected the athletes' arguments that they did not understand that they had been sexually abused and that OSU had been deliberately

indifferent to their abuse until 2018-2019, when allegations of OSU's coverup surfaced in the press and independent investigators determined that Strauss's procedures were medically inappropriate and unnecessary.

NWLC's brief explains that sexual assault is pervasive, especially on college campuses, and that failure to recognize sexual abuse is also a pervasive and insidious problem.

Pennsylvania's mail voting law ruled unconstitutional, but remains in place as Wolf appeals

by Angela Coulombis of Spotlight PA | Jan. 28, 2022

HARRISBURG — An appellate court ruled Friday that Pennsylvania's mail voting law — passed in 2019 with bipartisan support — is unconstitutional, but it will remain in place as Gov. Tom Wolf's administration pursues an appeal to the state Supreme Court.

The [ruling by Commonwealth Court](#) comes in response to suits filed by Bradford County Commissioner Doug McLinko and a group of Republican state representatives — many of whom voted for Act 77, the law that expanded no-excuse mail voting in Pennsylvania.

Governor Raises Minimum Wage for Commonwealth Employees

On January 25, Governor Tom Wolf announced that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania would fulfill its commitment to raise the minimum wage for

commonwealth employees to \$15 per hour by January 31, 2022.

Gov. Wolf [signed Executive Order 2016-02](#) in March of 2016 to raise the minimum wage for commonwealth employees under the governor's jurisdiction to \$10.15 per hour. The governor [amended that executive order in 2018](#) to increase pay for employees under the governor's jurisdiction to no less than \$12 an hour on July 1, 2018, with provisions to raise the wage by 50 cents a year until reaching at least \$15 an hour in 2024. The governor [amended the executive order](#) once more to accelerate that timeline, effective January 31, 2022, for employees under the governor's jurisdiction.

A complete guide and amendment tracker for proposed changes to Pennsylvania's Constitution

by Danielle Ohl of Spotlight PA | Jan. 26, 2022

Amending the constitution, though cumbersome, does not involve the governor. Instead, proposed constitutional amendments, after passing both chambers of the General Assembly two sessions in a row, become referenda that voters can approve or reject in the following election. If a majority of voters approve an amendment — and it [survives any legal challenges](#) — it goes into effect and becomes part of the constitution.

Since 1968, the year Pennsylvania's current constitution went into effect, voters rejected only six of 49 proposed amendments that reached them. Only 14 of those ballot questions appeared during presidential or gubernatorial election years, races that typically see higher turnouts.

Since the latest two-year session began in January 2021, Democratic and Republican legislators have proposed more than 70 changes to the state constitution.

Spotlight PA scoured this session's bills to identify all the changes legislators want to

make to the state constitution. We'll update the database when new proposals are introduced and as existing ones move through the process.

https://www.spotlightpa.org/news/2022/01/pennsylvania-constitution-amendments-tracker-complete-guide/?mc_cid=de38237999&mc_eid=343f447f14

Groundhog Day 2022

Punxsutawney Phil sees his shadow 6 more weeks of winter.



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