



## **PUBLIC POLICY HIGHLIGHTS FEBRUARY 2023**

### **NATIONAL NEWS:**

**Extended time to comment on By-Laws and Public Policy Priorities:  
Great flyer with information for you from Easton's Randi Blauth!**

[Dear Easton Members Bylaws National.docx - Google Docs](#)

### **Election News:**

Primary Election: PA is having its municipal elections this cycle and there are important positions up for election.

School Board: Most school boards will have at least 5 seats up for election and please note that the primary is a very important process for school boards since most candidates cross-file – meaning they are on both ballots.

Supreme Court Justice: Due to the death of a member in the fall, there is one seat on the Pennsylvania Supreme Court that needs to be filled. This seat is important for all of us to consider as so many AAUW issues such as education and reproductive rights are finding their way into the judicial system.

Here is an article for your review: [Pennsylvanians Can't Afford to Ignore Judicial Elections in 2023 - Bucks County Beacon](#)

## EDUCATION NEWS:

2023 is an election year for School Board Director positions, and there is no better time to watch, listen, and act locally. Over the past years, several school board directors started to take actions to implement book bans, curriculum interference, and sports bans.

These issues are front and center locally in your school boards. School boards often operate under the radar because of insufficient scrutiny or news coverage. The Central Bucks School District exploded into national news. AAUW Doylestown members are now attending school board meetings and advocating locally.

Here are four actions your branch can take now.

- Educate members on the topics mentioned above to gain an understanding of the wave hitting Pennsylvania school boards. Identify the school districts represented in your branch and research their past actions on these issues. Exploration can begin at <https://edvoterspa.org/2022/10/new-poll-finds-74-of-parents-feel-that-politicians-are-using-kids-in-school-as-political-pawns/> and <https://edvoterspa.org/2022/10/can-they-really-do-that-know-your-rights-about-school-board-policies-and-more/>.
- Identify members in the school districts to become school board monitors. Because local news coverage is sometimes non-existent at school board meetings, many communities don't know what is happening. Ed Voters PA launched a School Board Monitoring program. Learn more about the program and the support you will receive from Ed Voters PA [here](#). On this webpage, you will find the handout that contains more information and the form to register as a monitor.
- Become involved in the School Board Director elections. Primary is May 16 and General Election is November 7.
  - Which positions will be open?
  - Who is running and what are their positions on these topics?
  - Hold a candidate forum. Some school districts have all at-large Directors and this makes it easier to hold a forum. AAUW Carlisle has held a forum in 2017, 2019, and 2021.
  - Attend candidate forums and ask questions
  - Publish a voter's guide.
- Educate the general public. Letters to the Editor, Op-Eds in the local newspaper, use social media, join the coalition that is spearheading activism in your area.

Let's make noise this election season!

**Ann Pehle**  
**Education Issue Specialist**

## ECONOMIC SECURITY NEWS:

### Pay-Gap Analysis Highlights Disturbing Trends

AAUW published a recent update to the Simple Truth, its signature report on the gender pay gap. The analysis shed light on the devastating effect of the pandemic on women's economic security. In 2021, (the most recent data available) all women workers took home only 77 cents for every dollar all men workers did. It was agreed by all groups working on pay equity to include those in full- and part-time roles in calculating the pay gap. In addition, more women than men worked part-time (59% vs 41%), positions that earn less per hour and have reduced access to family-friendly benefits like paid leave. You can download the full report at [Simple Truth 2022 Update](#).

We still do not have the break down of the pay gap by congressional districts due to limited staff. However, we do have some specific Pennsylvania data as reported by the National Women's Law Center in The Wage Gap, State by State. Pennsylvania is ranked 24<sup>th</sup> among all the states. Pennsylvania men earned \$62,096 in 2021. Women earned \$50,272 for a pay gap of 81 cents for all women. Comparing the pay rate for specific groups to every dollar of a white non-Hispanic man, we find the following percentage gaps in Pennsylvania.

Asian women	Black women	Latina	Native American	white non-Hispanic women
85.3	66.2	55.5	64.5	78.5

The calendar for all Equal Pay Days for 2023 is still not available. However, Equal Pay Day for all women will be Tuesday, March 14, 2023, which symbolizes how far into the year women must work to make as much as men during the previous year. The PA Senate will not be in session that day. The PA House is currently adjourned until February 27 and has not adopted rules, so no calendar is available and no bills can be introduced.

On the Senate side one pay equity bill, **SB 36**, was introduced by Senator Tartaglione (D-2) on January 18, 2023, with the following senators as cosponsors: Haywood (D-4), Hughes (D-07), Fontana (D-42), Kearney (D-26), Kane (D-9), Schwank (D-11), Collett (D-12), Dillon (D-5), Street (D-3), Costa (D-43), Cappelletti (D-17) and Santarsiero (D-10). It was referred to Labor and Industry the same day. This is the same bill that Senator Tartaglione introduced last session. While we do not oppose this bill, it does not include all of the changes we would like to see in a pay equity bill.

Several other senators have posted memorandums seeking cosponsors for bills they intend to introduce which are the same as bills they sponsored last session.

12-01-2022 Sen. Steven J. Santarsiero (D-10) and Sen. Maria Collett (D-12)

#### **Modernizing Pennsylvania's Equal Pay Law**

*To combat unequal pay in the workplace, this legislation is meant to update Pennsylvania's antiquated Equal Pay Law as follows:*

- *Broaden the scope of current law to include more employees and fringe benefits;*

- *Protect employees from retaliation when inquiring about wage information, ensuring wages are based on bona fide factors; and*
- *Provide workers the ability to collect unpaid wages when an employer is found to violate the law.*

This bill contains all the changes we want.

December 5, 2022 11:41 AM Senator Judith L. Schwank (D-11)

### **Pay history restrictions**

*The same as SB 389 from last session, restricting the right of prospective employers to ask applicants and employees about prior wage history. The bill would prohibit employers from: requiring job applicants to disclose or otherwise provide their prior wage histories, using wage histories to set workers' wages, and from prohibiting workers from discussing their own or co-workers' pay.*

AAUW PA does not oppose this bill, but it is limited to salary history.

A memorandum was also posted by past sponsors in the House but will not move until the House reconvenes and establishes rules.

December 9, 2022 Representative Donna Bullock (D-195), Rep. Melissa L. Shusterman (D-157), and Rep. Jennifer O'Mara (D-165)

### **Equal Pay**

This bill is similar to the senate bill proposed by Senators Santarsiero and Collett

*It prohibits employers from discriminating and paying workers less because of their gender, race, or ethnicity. The bill will also place new penalties on employers using such discriminatory wage practices. It further creates the Equal Pay Commission to investigate and study factors causing pay disparity.*

### **Paid Leave – The Family Care Act**

AAUW PA supports efforts to pass paid leave in Pennsylvania. We continue to work with the Family Care Coalition to achieve this goal. At this point the Family Care Act has not been introduced in the senate and no memorandum have been issued by the previous senate sponsors, Senator Dan Laughlin (R-49) and Senator Maria Collett (D-12).

On the house side memorandums seeking cosponsors have been issued by Representative Dan L. Miller (D-42), the prime Democratic sponsor from last session and Representative Kathleen C. Tomlinson (R-18) who is taking over as the Republican prime sponsor from the former sponsor, Representative Wendy Thomas, who did not run for reelection. Again, this will all have to wait until the House reconvenes.

Barb Price

## **FIX HARRISBURG NEWS:**

Harrisburg has had historical issues with a lack of bipartisan working relationships and this year, there is a chance for citizens to speak about the concern. The new House Speaker Rozzi is hosting a listening tour around the state that is permitting citizens to speak about the rules that affect the success of many initiatives in Harrisburg. Here are the links from Fix Harrisburg webpage that will provide you with the chance to participate:

### **Speaker Rozzi's Listening Tour--State College**

Wednesday, February 1st, 2023 | 2:00pm-4:00pm State College, PA

#### **VENUE INFORMATION**

[Eric J. Barron Innovation Hub](#)

123 Burrows St

State College, PA

**EVENT TYPE** Hearing

#### **LOCAL GROUP AFFILIATION**

[Centre County](#)

#### **EVENT DESCRIPTION**

Speaker Mark Rozzi is turning to the public for ideas on ending partisan gridlock. He has launched a statewide listening tour to hear directly from the people of Pennsylvania.

Testimony and comments can be provided in person or in writing.

Participants will be able to sign up at the event prior to its beginning and speakers will be taken on a first come, first served basis as time allows

[Click here to provide written comment.](#)

# Speaker Rozzi's Listening Tour: Wilkes-Barre

Thursday, February 2nd, 2023 | 6:00pm-8:00pm Wilkes-Barre, PA

## VENUE INFORMATION

[Snyder Room 3rd Floor of the Sheehy Farmer Campus Center](#)

Kings College

116 N Main Street

Wilkes-Barre, PA

## EVENT TYPE

Hearing

## LOCAL GROUP AFFILIATION

[Luzerne County](#)

## EVENT DESCRIPTION

Speaker Mark Rozzi is turning to the public for ideas on ending partisan gridlock. He has launched a statewide listening tour to hear directly from the people of Pennsylvania.

Testimony and comments can be provided in person or in writing.

[Register here to be heard and/or to provide written comment.](#)

## **PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE:**

**If you are interested in public policy and want to join the committee as an issue specialist, please reach out to us! [smiller2043@gmail.com](mailto:smiller2043@gmail.com)**