

# OCTOBER HIGHLIGHTS

Hello Advocates!

It has been a busy fall but we need to focus on some very important items this month! We will be having a Public Policy Counterpart meeting on October 26, 2023 at 7 pm. Zoom link will be sent soon. Please save the date!

*Election Time!!* Mail-in ballots have started to arrive around the state and there are critical elections on the ballot this fall.

General Election Information from the League of Women Voters:



<u>Judicial Races</u>: This year, we have important statewide judicial offices up for election and retention. These judges have ruled on important priorities of AAUW

PA in the past few years from school funding and elections. We could be facing more of these battles in the coming months so it is essential that we all pay attention to these races. Please research the topic and you can start with this story that was recently updated: <u>Pa. election 2023: A complete guide to who is on the ballot, when to vote, how to vote & more - pennlive.com</u>. This tool arrived today and I hope that it gives everyone some items to consider: <u>Pa. election 2023: New interactive tool illustrates why judges matter and how they shape policy in our state | Election | dailyitem.com</u>

Spotlight PA has put together a dedicated Election Center website where you can find nonpartisan guides and resources. Check it out at <u>spotlightpa.org/elections</u>. Here are the links for the specific judicial elections.

Pa. election 2023: A complete guide to the candidates for state **Supreme Court** <u>https://www.spotlightpa.org/news/2023/09/pennsylvania-election-2023-supreme-court-candidates/</u>

Pa. election 2023: A complete guide to the candidates for **Commonwealth and Superior Courts** 

https://www.spotlightpa.org/news/2023/09/pennsylvania-election-2023-commonwealth-superior-court-candidates/

Pa. election 2023: What to know about the judicial **retention questions** on the November ballot

https://www.spotlightpa.org/news/2023/09/pennsylvania-election-2023-judicial-retentionsuperior-court-common-pleas/

For personalized voting information you can go to <u>https://www.vote411.org/pennsylvania</u> Here you can see

- What's On Your Ballot
- Check Your Voter Registration
- Find Your Polling Place
- Discover Upcoming Debates and Forum in Your Area

<u>School Board Elections</u>: We have all been hearing about the censorship and targeting of books and students who are most vulnerable in our schools. The School Board Directors play a key role in protecting everyone's freedom to read and their freedom to be their authentic selves. Research your school board

candidates and Education Voters of PA has guidance about the elections and what to look for in a candidate's profile. There are several blogs and resources here:

You searched for school boards - Education Voters PA (edvoterspa.org)

#### SCHOOL BOARDS - Education Voters PA (edvoterspa.org)

**Education Update**: The Basic Education Funding Commission is holding hearings throughout the Commonwealth. The Governor has stated that he believes that this commission is the table to reach the resolution to the school funding lawsuit. Visit here to watch the hearings and to submit public comments: <u>Basic Education Funding Commission | Home</u>. Also, visit PA Schools Work to learn about the work that advocates are doing around the Commission: <u>Basic</u> <u>Education Funding Commission - PA Schools Work</u>.

#### Pennsylvanians for Welcoming and Inclusive Schools (PA WInS):

The PA WInS Coalition is now accepting organizations to sign on as members and the Coalition continues to support parents and advocates around the state by sharing information and resources as they continue to battle the extremism that is occurring in our schools. The new website will be up shortly and will be shared in the next Keystoner.

There is a new report on book bans that covers some of the culture wars. <u>Moms</u> <u>for Liberty: Where are they, and are they winning? | Brookings</u>

*Fix Harrisburg*: Fix Harrisburg released their newest report at an event in Harrisburg on October 3rd. The report reviewed the work of our General Assembly for the first six months of the year. Visit the website to endorse their work: <u>FixHarrisburg | Reform the Rules | Pennsylvania | #Fix Harrisburg</u> and the report can be found here: <u>e99b5e\_76f0b259d8b54bb0b7d567b584daec24.pdf</u> (fixharrisburg.com).

**Paid Leave**: Children First released a report in September that outlines the benefits and support for Paid Leave in Pennsylvania. This report outlines the successes in nearby states and how employers have embraced the program as it is implemented. <u>CF paid family leave report (childrenfirstpa.org)</u>

### Pay Equity

We do not have new data by state detailing the wage gap. Here is where Pennsylvania stands as of March 2023 according to the National Women's Law Center. These numbers are based on date from 2021. Pennsylvania is ranked 24<sup>th</sup> out of all the states. AAUW along with all the groups working on pay equity are now including part-time and part-year workers in the comparisons. This is significant because the labor market shifted dramatically in 2020 as a result of the pandemic. The data shows what women make compared to the dollar that men make.

	Full-time year-round workers	Part-time & Part-year
workers		
All women	.81	.71
Black women	.65	.39
Latinas	.56	.49
Asian Women	.91	.68

The Family Care Coalition is having an event with Senator Collett and other guest speakers. It will be held in Lansdale on November 2 at the Cardinal Hollow Winery.

Senator Collette is one of the sponsors of the Family Care Act. For those in the area, <u>Register here</u>

## ERA Update:

Kathy Gates, AAUW member attended the Zonta Club District 3 Conference. One of the highlights was a presentation of the ERA NOW and the panel of advocates for passing the Equal Rights Amendment into the Constitution. The panelists were Carolyn Maloney - NY Congresswoman who for years has been an advocate for the ERA movement, Eleanor Smeal - Former NOW President, Lisa Sales - Current NOW President for Virginia, and Zakiya Thomas -President of the ERA Coalition and Fund for Woman's Equality.

They encouraged all of us to sign the petition to support the Equal Rights Amendment. Now is the time to get this included in the Constitution. If you would like to support this effort, see Sign4ERA.org.

See <u>here</u> for full October Highlights with pictures!