

## AAUW-MN Public Policy Update - January, 2018

Jan Carey, AAUW-MN State Public Policy chair

2018 is here!

Last year, political change created a year of unrest, turmoil, resistance and protest. Will this atmosphere continue to affect AAUW's principles? If so, how will AAUW-MN and its branches react?

We will react through **ADVOCACY**.

ADVOCACY  
THROUGH  
EVENTS &  
PARTNERSHIPS

A number of branches have developed clear, constructive plans to combat changes to law that will affect women & girls. Some are developing concrete, pro-active events. For example, the Minneapolis branch is seeking an AAUW-MN partnership with the MN Rural Education Association. This partnership could aide AAUW-MN with its educational issues and address the concerns to a voucher and tax credit concept that may be proposed in the upcoming legislative session. MREA is the only organization exclusively dedicated to advocating for Greater Minnesota schools.

ADVOCACY  
THROUGH  
RELATIONSHIPS

There is also a proposal to initiate an *AAUW Day* at the state capital. Meetings with legislators would be arranged for individual members who have confirmed their participation. The target date would be a day in March. This proposal will be discussed at the State board meeting and information will be forthcoming. Regardless of the outcome from the board meeting, the Metro branches may move forward with a specific date and represent AAUW-MN.

Our collective work need not include formal resistance methods or protests. But to be effective, all branch public policy chairs should stay informed, stay connected, create partnerships and seek relationships, regardless of political party affiliation, with your district's representative or senator. Communicate the mission, values and public policy principles of AAUW. Lawmakers must be made aware of our commitment to AAUW's ideals.

ADVOCACY  
THROUGH  
MOBILIZATION

I recently read a column by Conor Friedersdorf, a contributing writer to the *Los Angeles Times* and staff writer at the *Atlantic*. His column entitled, "Not another year of protest", examines how the public displays of opposition were important in 2017. But 2018 may be the year for more effective and direct actions that can be taken to change the country's trajectory. He states, "Taking the country back from Trump is as simple as turning out opponents of his presidency in large enough numbers come November." He continues, "Doing that work effectively is more important than any protest, rally, march or hashtag." As AAUW members it is imperative we work for candidates who

believe in the mission, values, ideals and public policy principles of AAUW. It is one reason I am attending, in a non-partisan fashion, meet & greets for candidates running for any political office.

To all branch public policy chairs and/or contacts, in 2018 its time to:

- Prepare for anything and everything
- [Sign-up for Action Alerts and Washington Update from AAUW](#)
- Enroll and complete the [State Legislative Request Intake Form](#)
- Create action plans for your Branch
- [Seek partnerships](#)
- Develop legislative relationships
- [Develop voter turn-out strategies](#)
- Advocate for AAUW at every opportunity

Please share your plans with me. If you have any questions, contact me for assistance.

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Meanwhile, use these links to help your branch members to mobilize and advocate.

- <https://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/public-policy/>
- <https://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/public-policy/aauw-issues/>
- <https://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/public-policy/state-policy/>
  - <https://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/public-policy/state-policy/state-legislative-request-intake-form/>
  - <https://www.aauw.org/resource/upcoming-advocacy-activity-events-form/>
- <https://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/public-policy/two-minute-activist/>
- <https://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/public-policy/voter-education/>
  - <https://www.aauw.org/event/2016/08/2016-gotv-skill-trainings/>