**AAUW MN Public Policy Update – May 2020**

Jan Carey, AAUW-MN VP Public Policy

Greetings AAUW MN Branch Public Policy chairs,

I don’t need to express the dismay we all feel at this time in Earth’s history. But I can express the need to maintain routines and interests in all things important in our lives, including our families, friends and ideals. Our ideals keep us motivated and strong for the protection of our families and friends. That said, AAUW is standing its ground to its ideals and has provided solid, proactive plans to bring about the results needed to meet the challenges of our future.

To that end, AAUW continues to advocate via technical methods of communication. I have been attending numerous ZOOM meetings, webinars and reviewing resources available on the [**new** AAUW website](https://www.aauw.org/).

On March 24 and April 21, I posted information regarding voter rights. I hope you reviewed the information or joined one of the AAUW webinars. As a continuation of the theme, this update contains AAUW specific resources and links to information and archived webinars that you can utilize and communicate to your branch members. In this update you will find:

* **Advocacy-November Election**
* **Voter Issue Guide**
* **Voter Issue Templates, Equity Network Resources**
* **Changing Voter Laws: a message from Missouri**
* **a Message from the Action Network**

**ADVOCACY: NOVEMBER ELECTION**

AAUW is gearing up for the national election cycle and needs member assistance to elect candidates who align with AAUW ideals. AAUW public policy and communications staff have completed the 2020 Voter Issue Guide, Voter Guide templates and instructional webinars. Zoom videos are too big to send via email. So you can access the video via Zoom here, and make sure to enter the corresponding password:

**Meeting Recording**: <https://zoom.us/rec/share/-8pFcYzN8GpJXJ3X0xrkW498NJ7seaa8gSkbq_EKmU13wUfj5B0Dx7eQ2SoxahzM>

**Access Password**: Equity-68764

This ZOOM meeting examines and reviews state and area activity and provides resources you might need. Access complementary resources below.

* [2020 Voter Issue Guide](https://www.aauwaction.org/voter-education/voter-issue-guide/)
* [Head-to-head Voter Guide templates](https://www.aauwaction.org/voter-education/voter-guides/) (both State and Federal)
* the recording of last night's member webinar, "[2020 Election Voter Access & Education During the COVID-19 Pandemic](https://youtu.be/iJIaiDCSCBs)"
* a social media tool kit for "get out the vote" and voter education effort

 VOTER ISSUE GUIDE

Between now and Election Day, AAUW members need to start conversations about the issues that affect our families and communities. We need to ask tough questions, jumpstart the discussion, and determine where our candidates stand. The Voter Issue Guide provides nonpartisan information about the policy concerns that are critical to women and their families. Use it to prompt conversations with neighbors, family, friends, and fellow voters about what’s at stake in this election. Take it to virtual town halls and candidate forums to follow along with the debate. Consult it to develop questions to ask your candidates and your elected officials to get them on the record on the issues that matter most.

As the 2020 Election Day approaches, consider candidates through the lens of these six key gender equity issues:

1. Voting Access

2. Pay Equity

3. Paid Sick and Family Leave

4. College Affordability

5. Campus Sexual Harassment and Violence

6. Health Care Access and Reproductive Rights

Above all, make your voice heard on Election Day — and beyond.

FEDERAL ELECTION VOTER ISSUE TEMPLATE

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **[Candidate Name] [D/R]** **[Challenger]** | **Where the candidates stand on:**  | **[Candidate Name] [D/R]****[Incumbent]** |
| **Economic Security** |
|  | Passing the Paycheck Fairness Act to strengthen existing employment discrimination laws aimed at closing the gender pay gap |  |
|  | Passing the FAMILY Act to create a national paid family and medical leave insurance program |  |
| **Education** |
|  | Defending and strengthening Title IX protections |  |
|  | Increasing funding for college affordability programs like Pell Grants and student loan forgiveness programs |  |
| **Civil Rights** |
|  | Ensuring women’s access to contraception withoutco-pay or cost-sharing, no matter where they work or go to school |  |
|  | Strengthening the Affordable Care Act or Expanding Medicaid |  |
|  | Supporting the Voting Rights Advancement Act to restore and expand voting access  |  |

*This guide is a public service and is not intended to be an endorsement of any candidate or political party.*

*Candidates’ positions were determined using their legislative records, public statements, and campaign position papers, as well as published information from credible sources.*

**Support:** Candidate has explicitly stated their support for this policy position on the record with no ambiguity, through statements, co-sponsorship, and/or votes.

**Oppose:** Candidate has explicitly stated their opposition to this policy position on the record with no ambiguity, through statements and/or votes.

**Unknown:** The candidate has not explicitly stated their support or opposition to this policy position on the record.

**Mixed:** The candidate has made conflicting statements and/or has taken conflicting votes on this policy position.

STATE ELECTION VOTER ISSUE TEMPLATE

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **[Candidate Name] [D/R]** **[Challenger]** | **Where the candidates stand on:**  | **[Candidate Name] [D/R]****[Incumbent]** |
| **Economic Security** |
|  | Closing loopholes and expanding protections in existing employment discrimination laws aimed at closing the gender pay gap |  |
|  | Requiring employers to provide earned,paid sick days to all employees |  |
| **Education** |
|  | Expanding rights and protections for students, including LGBT and gender-nonconforming students, who face bullying and harassment |  |
|  |  Prohibiting the use of taxpayer dollars to fund private or religious schools through voucher programs or education savings accounts |  |
| **Civil Rights** |
|  | Protecting access to abortion care, family planning programs, and medical providers |  |
|  | Restoring or expanding citizens’ right to vote |  |

*This guide is a public service and is not intended to be an endorsement of any candidate or political party.*

*Candidates’ positions were determined using their legislative and/or executive record, public statements, and campaign position papers, as well as published information from credible sources.*

**Support:** Candidate has explicitly stated their support for this policy position on the record with no ambiguity, through statements, co-sponsorship, and/or votes.

**Oppose:** Candidate has explicitly stated their opposition to this policy position on the record with no ambiguity, through statements and/or votes.

**Unknown:** The candidate has not explicitly stated their support or opposition to this policy position on the record.

**Mixed:** The candidate has made conflicting statements and/or has taken conflicting votes on this policy position.

EQUITY NETWORK: is an inclusive learning community with a single goal: Equity for all.

EQUITY NETWORK

This AAUW website page will help you build your network, enhance your professional development and work alongside others to advocate for change. The Equity Network advances the conversation and leads the charge to achieve equity for all. Connect with individuals who share your commitment to inclusion on our campuses, in our workplaces and in our communities — and who want to do something about it.

Being part of the Equity Network community provides access to:

* Equity Express newsletter
* Priority registration for AAUW events
* Learning sessions
* Leadership forums

AAUW is conducting a series of webinars exclusive to the Equity Network.

Join others and engage with the issues that matter most and share helpful resources for taking action. From negotiating your salary and benefits to advocating for change in your own community, the Equity Network will help your branch succeed.

Check out past webinars @

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/events/equity-network/events>

AAUW ACTION NETWORK

A posting from Robin Lucas, AAUW Advocacy, published in the latest edition of AAUW Action Network.

 *As we approach this Mother's Day, AAUW is committed to supporting paid leave for all.*

*When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, over 32 million people in the United States did not have access to a single paid sick day. When Congress passed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act in March and promised two weeks of emergency paid sick and family leave, loopholes cut out as many as 106 million workers from these protections. Among those left out are health care workers, essential workers, and employees of big business.*

*This Mother's Day—and every day—we urge you to take action to support paid leave for all. Before, during, and after a pandemic, we all need access to paid leave, and the Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act (H.R. 1185/S. 463) would do that. This legislation would create a national paid leave insurance program, providing wage replacement and protections from retaliation to workers.*

*Your members of Congress need to hear that women and families cannot afford to wait any longer for a comprehensive, inclusive paid family and medical leave program. Urge them to support and co-sponsor the FAMILY Act (H.R. 1185/S. 463)!*

*Not having paid leave means women and caregivers leave the workforce, families struggle to make ends meet, businesses lose valued employees, and our economy suffers. In a public health crisis, paid leave is the difference between health and safety and being forced to prematurely return to work. Paid leave saves our lives and livelihood.*

*Tell your members of Congress to support and co-sponsor the FAMILY Act today!*

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

All of this information may seem daunting. It may seem less urgent to advocate amid so much uncertainty. However, when this world event passes, people just might decide to work together to use our ideals to recreate an environment in which cultures of ingenuity, equality, respect, innovation, and common good will exist and flourish.

Please communicate activities your branch plans to implement during this election cycle. I’ll share your plans with other branches. Reply to me at: jmcfree@aol.com

*Together – Moving Forward for AAUW*