

## AAUW of Michigan Public Policy Priorities 2023-2025

*AAUW is non-partisan but not values-neutral. We fight to remove barriers and biases that stand in the way of gender equity. Public Policy Priorities underscore AAUW's mission to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. AAUW of Michigan (AAUWMI) public policy positions are shaped by our commitment to being non-partisan and fact-based, and to acting with integrity.*

AAUWMI Public Policy Priorities are developed by the AAUWMI Public Policy Committee in alignment with National AAUW Public Policy Priorities (2023-2025) and approved by the AAUWMI Board.

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/policy/aauw-public-policy-priorities/>

### **Education**

To support and strengthen a high-quality system of public education that promotes gender fairness, equity, diversity and inclusivity, and to address the barriers and implicit biases that hinder the advancement of women and girls, AAUW of Michigan advocates

- Strengthening vigorous enforcement of Title IX and all other civil rights laws pertaining to education
- Adequate and equitable funding for and access to a quality public education that is free of harassment, bullying, and sexual assault for all students
- Opposition to the use of public funds for nonpublic elementary and secondary education and to charter schools that do not adhere to the same civil rights and accountability standards as required of other public schools

- Increased support for academic freedom, civic education, protection from censorship, bias-free education, and responsible funding for all levels of education, including early childhood education and programs for students with disabilities
- Support of equal and unfettered access to public information, media, and literature
- Increased support for and protection of programs that meet the needs of girls and women in elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education, including strong promotion of science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) education and comprehensive sexual health education
- Increased support for and access to affordable higher education for women, including alleviating the debt burden that disproportionately impacts borrowers of color and exacerbates the racial wealth gap
- Support for practices that halt the flow of students from schools to prisons, including reforming school disciplinary practices that disproportionately punish girls and students of color

### **Economic Security**

To achieve economic security for all women, AAUW of Michigan advocates

- Pay equity and fairness in compensation and benefits
- Equitable access and advancement in employment, free from systemic barriers and biases, including vigorous enforcement of employment discrimination statutes
- Closing the gender and race gaps in leadership opportunities for women of all backgrounds
- Increasing the number of women, and the diversity of backgrounds they represent, including race, ethnicity, age, income, gender, and sexual identity, in policy-making and other decision-making positions

- Greater availability of and access to a high standard of benefits and policies that promote work-life balance, including quality and affordable dependent care and paid family, medical, and sick leave
- Programs that provide women with education, training, and support for success in the workforce, including nontraditional occupations and women's entrepreneurship
- Strengthening programs, including welfare and career and technical education, to improve postsecondary education access, career development, and earning potential
- Increasing the number of quality jobs that pay a living wage
- Strengthening retirement benefits and programs, including pension improvements

### **Equality, Individual Rights, and Social Justice**

To guarantee equality, individual rights, and social justice for a diverse and inclusive society, AAUW of Michigan advocates

- Adoption and certification of the Equal Rights Amendment into the US Constitution
- Vigorous enforcement of and full access to civil and constitutional rights, regardless of ethnicity, race, economic status, gender identity, or other marginalized peoples
- Expanding voting rights and removing barriers to voting access through support for open and fair elections that are broadly accessible to all voters

- Complete, accurate, and timely collection of data, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender identity to inform policy decisions and the apportionment of political representation
- Full access to and self-determination of one's reproductive and gender related health decisions
- Universal access to quality, affordable health care and comprehensive family planning services, including expansion of patients' rights
- Freedom from violence and fear of violence, including domestic and partner violence, hate crimes and gun violence, in homes, schools, workplaces, and communities
- Support for gun safety regulations because AAUWMI recognizes that gun violence is a public health issue and a safety crisis
- Freedom in the definition of self and family, including protection from discrimination and a guarantee of civil rights for all gender identities and family structures
- Targeted legislation and vigorous enforcement to end human trafficking