



### **AAUW Iowa Public Policy Program 2022-2024**

The Mission of AAUW is to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education and research.

AAUW Iowa endorses the AAUW Public Policy Program and Biennial Action Priorities, which can be found online at [www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org).

AAUW Iowa is a nonpartisan organization that strives to take positions that are fact-based. Its Public Policy Program is intended to **complement** that of AAUW and to be a focus of active educational and advocacy efforts for our members. The program can be found online at <http://aauw-ia.aauw.net/publicpolicy/public-policy-program>

**To promote a strong system of public education and lifelong learning 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 Iowa advocates**

1. Adequate and equitable funding of public education, early childhood through postsecondary; including full funding of mandated programs, as well as programs such as counseling and the visual and performing arts
2. Affordable public community college, college, and university tuition and provision of programs that help women or disadvantaged students access higher education, including alleviating the debt burden that disproportionately impacts borrowers of color and exacerbates the racial wealth gap.
3. Availability and adequate funding for programs that expand opportunity for girls, including science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education, and comprehensive sexual health education
4. Vigorous enforcement of Title IX and other civil rights laws that pertain to education and prohibit discrimination or harassment at all levels of education; making schools safe for all students, regardless of gender, race, religious affiliation, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression
5. 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
6. Opposition to use of public funding for elementary and secondary non-public, charter, or home schools that do not meet the civil rights and accountability standards required of public schools and educators

### **To achieve economic security for all women, AAUW of Iowa advocates**

1. Pay equity and fairness in public and private employment compensation and benefits
2. An increased state minimum wage sufficient to allow workers to earn a living wage
3. Equitable opportunities for workplace advancement, including training and leadership opportunities and enforcement of employment discrimination and harassment statutes
4. Workplace benefits and policies that include paid family, medical, and sick leave, flexible hours, quality affordable dependent care, and provisions for pregnant workers or new mothers
5. Collective bargaining rights for public or private sector employees and the right of workers to unionize without employer intimidation or reprisal
6. Funding for facilities and programs designed to transition women from the criminal justice system back to their communities, including employment training and education
7. Protecting and strengthening retirement benefits and programs, including state run retirement programs
8. Opposition to privatized Medicaid

### **To guarantee gender equality, individual rights, and social justice for a diverse and inclusive society, AAUW of Iowa advocates**

1. Measures that facilitate, protect access to, and expand the right of all citizens to vote
2. Equitable representation of women and minorities in elected, appointed, policy making, and judicial positions
3. Freedom from violence and fear of violence, including gun violence and hate crimes, in homes, schools, the workplace, and communities, and services to address the needs of victims of violence
4. Rigorous enforcement of laws against human trafficking and support for programs to aid trafficking victims
5. Access to public education and basic health and safety programs, without requirements for proof of citizenship or other provisions beyond those included in Federal law
6. Universal access to quality, affordable health care, including mental health care, comprehensive family planning services, prescription medication coverage, and addictive substance education, prevention, and treatment programs
7. Self-determination of one's reproductive health decisions and opposition to targeted regulation of abortion providers
8. Protection of the elderly through strict enforcement of nursing home regulations and stiff fines for violators
9. Freedom in the definition of self and family, including protection from discrimination and a guarantee of civil rights for all family structures.