



Public Policy News

A monthly dispatch from the AAUW California Public Policy Team

TRANS ALLYSHIP GUIDE

Learn how to have conversations and be an ally

The AAUW of California Public Policy Trans Allyship guide has finally launched! **Check it out by clicking [HERE](#).**

This guide is for anyone who wants to continue to ally with transgender and nonbinary people. It is meant to be a complement to existing guides, such as those produced by well-known gender equity and transgender and nonbinary support organizations such as The Trevor Project, PFLAG, GLAAD, HRC, and Amnesty International. While some of the existing guides already contain important information about inclusive language and terminology, **our guide is unique in that it specifically focuses on how to have everyday conversations about transgender and nonbinary social and policy issues**, offering sample responses to common questions that YOU, our members have encountered while engaging in allyship and advocacy work. **Please keep those questions coming as this is a living document!** We will update content regularly.

TAKE ACTION SPREADSHEET

Learn how to use the sheet to fight back!

Last month AAUW California launched the Take Action spreadsheet to offer a list of resources for resistance to the implementation of Project 2025, which runs counter to our values and Public Policy Priorities.

The Oregon Online Branch will be hosting a meeting featuring Malena Clark, one of AAUW California's amazing Public Policy Interns and the key architect of the Take Action spreadsheet. Malena will provide instruction on how to use this resource to take action and fight back. The meeting will be held on May 13, 2025 at 7:00pm Pacific. Click [HERE](#) to join the Zoom Meeting or copy and paste: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83763753968>

SCHOOL BOARD PROJECT Monitors & Observers Training

If you missed the April 24th training on how to be an effective school board monitor and observer, co-sponsored by AAUW California School Board Project and the Public School Defenders Hub, you can watch the recording [HERE](#).

BRANCH PUBLIC POLICY CHAIRS' MEETING

LAST MEETING OF THE YEAR
Thursday June 5, 2025
at 3:00pm Pacific



ZOOM LINK [HERE](#)

Click [HERE](#) for meeting information.



SIGN UP FOR ACTION ALERTS [HERE](#).

WHERE IS THAT?

Key links to your public policy resources:

- [Google Workspace](#)
- [Branch liaisons](#)
- Contact us at publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org
- Tell us about your branch public policy events by filling out this [form](#).

click here!

**2025
[Bill Tracker](#)**

Take Action in May

Focus: Be an Ally to the Trans Community



AAUW California has launched our own [action-items database](#)! However, we know that the spreadsheet casts a very wide net in terms of issue areas and resources, so **we want to continue to provide a short list of targeted action-items for you each month.**



We will continue to ask you to take action by choosing one self-focused, one other-focused, and one political-focused item from the list below. This month the topic area is...

Take Action: Be a Trans Ally



Self-Focused: Education

- [learn how to be a better ally](#) to and for transgender and nonbinary people
- read "Priority Legislation 2025: Why AAUW Will Be Standing Up for the Transgender Community" on p. 4 (originally published in the April 2025 issue of PP News)
- [watch John Oliver](#) in this informative episode about Trans Athletes



Other-Focused: Education & Connection

- tell a few people (2-10) why the infringement on trans rights is inseparable from broader attempts to restrict women
- tell a few people (2-10) to check out the John Oliver episode about Trans Athletes by copying and sharing this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f1SS1tjoxf0>



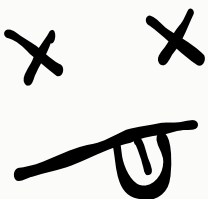
Politically-Focused: Outreach to Legislators (State/Federal)

- text SIGN PGNDGE to 50409 to contact legislators, urging them to oppose CA AB 600 which would allow parents or guardians to opt their child out from accessing information about transgender concepts in schools.

Follow [AAUW California's Petitions Page](#) on Resistbot

Join Us in Celebrating: AB 579 is DEAD!

Thank you to everyone who helped oppose this bill during Lobby Days!



AB 579 (Castillo), which would have protected negative parental behaviors that ignore a child's gender identification from interaction with the child welfare system, is dead. This measure was held in the Assembly Rules Committee and not referred to a policy committee, effectively killing the bill. AAUW CA lobbied against this measure during our Lobby Days, and are pleased this bill was held.

AAUW California Mobilizes to Advance Priority Legislation

By Amy Hom, Co-chair, Public Policy Committee

AAUW California advocates came out in full strength on April 8th and 9th to participate in Lobby Days 2025. A total of 197 people representing 66 branches, including our Public Policy Interns and other college students, turned out to advance our priority legislation. 84 people came to Sacramento on April 8th to meet in-person with legislative offices; 104 people held virtual meetings via Zoom on April 9th; and 9 people met with district offices. Because many offices prefer to keep their calendars open until the last minute, our committee worked furiously right up until the day of the event to schedule meetings. Meetings were requested with all 120 legislative offices, and 94 meetings were secured. In other words, we met with 78% of all legislative offices - a record for AAUW California!

Unsurprisingly there were a few hiccups, but a vast majority of the meetings went off smoothly. While most meetings were with staff, ten of the meetings were with legislators. Reports from the teams indicate that all of the meetings were courteous and cordial, including those with offices who did not agree with some of our positions. Many teams were received with enthusiasm and gratitude for AAUW's scholarships, activities, and programs such as Tech Trek. Some staffers expressed interest in joining AAUW, and one staffer generously shared information with our Public Policy Interns about a Fellowship program she participated in which ultimately led to her current job. Overall we successfully met with 94 offices to advance our key legislation and increase awareness about AAUW and all the things we do to advance gender equity.

We asked the legislative offices to support SB 771 and SB 418, and oppose AB 579. SB 771 (Stern) "Social Media Platforms Endangering Californians", sponsored by AAUW California, would hold social media platforms liable if their algorithms or AI aid or abet users to intimidate and threaten marginalized groups. SB 418 (Menjivar) "Ensure Equal Access to Care for All" would prohibit a health plan or a health insurance provider from denying coverage or denying benefits to a person based upon their race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex - including sex characteristics such as intersex traits, pregnancy, and gender identity. AB 579 (Castillo) "Yaeli's Law", which we opposed, would prohibit parental denial of support for youth self-identity from being considered as child abuse and the basis for custody or removal decisions.

Our positions on SB 418 and AB 579 are protective of the rights of transgender people, meeting the challenges of the current moment. A number of the offices expressed support for our positions with empathy and personal stories about legislators' family members who are transgender.

Shortly after our Lobby Days event, we learned that AB 579 was not referred by the Rules Committee; in other words, it was killed before being heard in committee. We quickly replaced AB 579 with AB 1098 (Fong) "Title IX and the California Sex Equity in Education Act" as our third "A" priority bill. AB 1098 would expand protections for pregnant graduate students and institute protections for pregnant undergraduate students, prohibiting postsecondary educational institutions from discriminating against a student based on their current, potential, or past pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions.

We invite you to track the progress of our top 3 bills, and all of the bills on our Legislative Agenda, by viewing the [2025 Bill Tracking Report](#). The report will continue to be updated as the bills move through the legislative process, so you can always check back to see the latest status.



For online outreach to CA representatives on A-bills, follow [AAUW California's Petitions Page on Resistbot](#)

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS A TEXT-BASED COPY OF THE NL ARTICLE](#)

Priority Legislation 2025: Why AAUW Will Be Standing Up for the Transgender Community

By Missy Maceyko, Co-chair, Public Policy Committee

As you look at our legislative agenda for 2025, you will notice that we have many bills that focus on protecting the rights of transgender people, including our top priority legislation. We want to say a bit more about why AAUW is standing up for the transgender community, and why it is particularly critical to do so in this moment.

Popular campaigns, executive orders, and federal and state legislation have increasingly targeted transgender and nonbinary people, who make up a very small portion of the US population (estimates range from 0.5% to 1.6%). These campaigns, orders, and pieces of legislation have been intensive, politically strategic, and largely motivated by animus, or hostility.

Anti-trans popular campaigns, executive orders, and legislation are not, then, based on neutral laws. Laws do sometimes **legally** discriminate against historically marginalized groups. They can only do this if and when it is absolutely necessary to discriminate to benefit a general public interest--for instance, you cannot fire someone for having an accent you do not like, which would be illegal discrimination (based on animus and with no real benefit to the public); however, you can fire someone for having an accent if they are a 911 operator and their accent makes them non-comprehensible to most of the public callers). Much of the currently proposed legislation discriminates against trans and nonbinary people, but does not show a clear benefit to the public: as one federal judge has noted, they are “soaked in animus.” In other words, these campaigns, orders, and pieces of legislation are driven not by neutrality, attempts to only narrowly target rights, and the goal of benefitting the wider public, but by open hostility toward trans and nonbinary people.

Furthermore, many of these legislative, popular, and political attacks draw on longstanding dominant sex and gender norms to create fear and moral panic. **They are not just targeting the transgender community, generally, but transgender women and girls, specifically.** This is not surprising, as the regulation of transgender and nonbinary bodies is frequently **focused on trans women and on regulating femininity**--not on the regulation of trans men--as we see in the reasoning provided for attempts to keep trans and nonbinary women and girls out of certain bathrooms, locker rooms, and sports.

AAUW’s mission is to advance gender equity for ALL girls and women as girls and women have historically been marginalized on the basis of gender. But feminized and gender-based forms of marginalization are intersectional, which means that, for some, marginalization occurs in many ways at the same time. For trans women and girls--they must, **at the very least**, deal with the same kinds of misogyny that many cis women face on a daily basis **AND**, at the same time, deal with the kinds of hatred and erasure that comes along with being trans and nonbinary in the United States in this political moment.

Because of intersecting and compounding forms of marginalization, we do not all need the same things to be liberated. There are often specific members of our community who need different kinds of support--and at times extra support. Right now, that is the trans and nonbinary communities--trans women and girls and feminized people--who are currently facing a great deal of animus, socially and legally.

When AAUW says that we support ALL girls and women, that means we always support transgender girls and women, and that we offer them extra support right now, at a time when their need is greatest.

And at the same time, supporting trans rights is supporting and protecting many of the rights that this organization, AAUW, has fought for many years to attain and retain. **The infringement on trans and nonbinary rights is inseparable from broader attempts to restrict women based on gender stereotyping**--regulating your ability to access certain spaces (e.g. bars) or get a business loan without someone else’s (a man’s) signature or minimizing the likelihood that you will be promoted--all based on assumptions about your (women’s) emotions and abilities or judgments about whether or not you/they/we are “feminine” enough (or “too feminine”).