



OCTOBER 2025 | ISSUE 24

Public Policy News

A monthly dispatch from the AAUW California Public Policy Team

GET OUT THE VOTE (GOTV)!

ALL the resources for voting and educating on Prop 50

Check out our new [Proposition 50 and Get Out the Vote \(GOTV\) 2025 Guide](#)! It is a comprehensive toolkit with over 25 resources to support GOTV efforts, including a Prop 50 Messaging Guide, Overview, FAQ, Flyer, Election Timeline, and more. We encourage you to use these resources to conduct GOTV outreach for the special election on November 4, 2025 and to educate voters on the positive impacts of [Proposition 50](#) with reliable, nonpartisan information. **See page 5 for more.**

LEG AGENDA UPDATE

Legislative session closes soon!

Of the 26 bills we supported on our Legislative Agenda, 13 are still on the Governor's desk. **Scroll down to page 5 to learn more about these bills--and how you can help us urge the Governor to sign them!** See the bill tracker for status updates.

Upcoming Events

Mark Your Calendars!



AAUW California Public Policy Webinar - Project 2025 Impacts on AAUW Values - One Year Later: How to Stop Ongoing Implementation. **Oct 7, 2025 7:00-8:00pm.** Register [HERE](#)

AAUW California Webinar - Harnessing the Power of AI. **Nov 1, 2025 10:00-11:30am.** Register [HERE](#)

AAUW Silicon Valley Branch Program on Higher Education at Risk - And How You Can Help Protect It - featuring Meghan Kissell, AAUW Senior Director of Policy. **Dec 3, 2025 4:00-5:00pm.** SAVE THE DATE - registration link coming soon.

AAUW California School Board Project Half Day Symposium - **Saturday Jan 31, 2026 9:00am-12:00 noon** via Zoom. SAVE THE DATE - registration link coming soon.

BRANCH PUBLIC POLICY CHAIRS' MEETING

NEXT PEER GROUP MEETING

Friday Oct 10, 2025

at 1:30pm Pacific

ZOOM LINK [HERE](#)



Click [HERE](#) for meeting information.



Peer Group Meetings will be bi-monthly on Fridays at 1:30pm.

All are welcome!

2025-2026 Meetings:

Fri Oct 10 at 1:30pm

Fri Dec 5 at 1:30pm

Fri Feb 6 at 1:30pm

Fri Apr 3 at 1:30pm

Fri Jun 5 at 1:30pm

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

WHERE IS THAT?

Key links to your public policy resources:

- [Google Workspace](#)
- 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](#)

Three Steps to Take Action in October

Focus: All About Proposition 50



Taking action is as easy as 1-2-3! Each month we provide you with a short list of targeted action-items focused on a topic-area that we care about. This month our focus is on GETTING OUT THE VOTE & PROPOSITION 50.

If you want more options for action, please visit the [AAUW California public policy website](#), stop by our peer group meetings, or visit the [Take Action!](#) spreadsheet (soon-to-be website for easier navigation).

Take Action: Proposition 50 - Educate and GOTV

STEP 1: Self-Focused: Education



- Learn more about Proposition 50 by checking out our newly launched guide*.
- Learn how Proposition 50 combats efforts to further advance Project 2025! The AAUW CA Public Policy Team will be facilitating a one-hour webinar on October 7 at 7:00 pm. Register [HERE](#).
- Check your voter registration to be sure it's current. (CA Secretary of State website: <http://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov>)
- Be on the lookout for your ballot. (Ballots will be mailed on October 6.)
- Vote early! Media will be monitoring and reporting on turnout. Robust early turnout encourages others to vote. Information on how to return your completed ballot will be available on October 6 at the Secretary of State's website: <http://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov>.

1

STEP 2: Other-Focused: Education & Connection



- Connect with your CA friends, family, neighbors and colleagues to share information about Proposition 50, including background on the proposition, how to check voter registration status, and how to return your completed ballot.
- Dedicate time at your October branch meeting to discuss Proposition 50 with members and the community.

2

STEP 3: Politically-Focused



- Use the [AAUW California Prop 50 GOTV Branch Sign Up Sheet](#) as a centralized online spot where members document their commitments to take action (e.g. discuss Proposition 50 with one's personal network of CA voters and/or canvass, phonebank, text).
- Go for it! Let's help Get Out The Vote!

3

*There is Proposition 50 information throughout our recently launched AAUW California GOTV & Prop 50 guide, including in the Overview, FAQs, Objections & Responses, Flyer, and Messaging Guide.

CLICK [HERE](#) TO ACCESS THE AAUW CA PUBLIC POLICY WEBSITE

Investing in Our Democratic Future: Non-Partisan Voter Education Around Prop 50

By Sue Miller, Member AAUW California Public Policy Committee

We are currently seeing and experiencing creeping authoritarian efforts to undermine fair representation, trusted information, and democratic norms in our country. This unprecedented condition, paired with overwhelming federal encroachment, presents a significant threat to many of the things that we care about, including AAUW's mission of advancing equity for women and girls: although California continues to maintain strong protections for women and girls, marginalized peoples, free speech, accurate history, sound science, and democratic norms, we are still subject to the laws, rules, and enforcement actions of the federal government. As such, as part of this year's GOTV campaign, AAUW California will be providing information-centered messages on the potential benefits of Proposition 50 for all Californians.

The approval of Proposition 50 by California voters in November 2025 will approve redistricting efforts in California for the next election cycles (until maps are redrawn after the next census in 2030). With the passage of Proposition 50, we will experience a short-term loss of state democratic and people-centered control of an important aspect of democracy: redistricting. This effort will also seemingly have partisan benefits.

However, a short term loss of people-centered redistricting can also be seen as an investment in a democratic future in the long term, one in which we can have more, not less, of the will of the people recognized - all of the people, regardless of who they are. Furthermore, partisanship may be seen as a reductive label when the choice has become one of supporting authoritarianism or preserving functional democracy.

Redistricting should be in the hands of the people. Gender equity should be a consistent priority so that the dreams of a pluralistic democracy are one step closer to being realized. None of this is possible if our state is operating in a federal system in which democracy is no longer functional, listing instead toward an authoritarian system that puts troops in our streets, that censors our speech, that erases historical facts, that does not rely on sound science in decision-making, that directly endangers the wellbeing of women and girls, and that dehumanizes important and valued members of our communities.

Our goal in this campaign is to provide reliable information as a trusted resource to voters in California, and the wider public, about the potential ramifications and potential benefits of Proposition 50's passage and dispel misinformation about partisanship and redistricting in this political moment. We will also encourage and assist voters to go to the polls for this special election to vote as individuals on whether the proposed redistricting should be approved. Providing this encouragement to get out and vote and information about Proposition 50, including about potential benefits, is acting in alignment with our mission and our nonpartisan commitments, as we are advancing a pro-democracy message: we seek to support any and all efforts to preserve and advance democracy and our public policy priorities in the face of a growing authoritarian threat.

Let's all join in working together to advance our public policy priorities in moving California forward.

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

School Boards - The Overlooked Frontline of Democracy

By Kathi Harper, Chair, Public Policy School Board Project



Last month, Seena Trigas from the Public Policy School Board Project team, submitted an excellent article reminding members of the crucial role that public education plays in our democracy. The current – and seemingly never-ending – assaults on that institution gave rise to the School Board Project, which is now entering its third year.

When we started this project, our main focus initially was to encourage members to actively participate in identifying, recruiting and supporting candidates to run for school boards whose education values were in line with ours at AAUW California. For a number of reasons, our focus shifted to an emphasis on encouraging and training members to attend school board meetings and let us know what they are seeing in their districts. We had a remarkable response, and we want to thank all our members who have answered that call.

As we enter our 3rd iteration of the project, we want to continue that momentum, but narrow the scope to watching for and speaking out against violations of California's protective laws; add a new component of learning how to make a greater impact by working in coalition with other public education supportive organizations; and swing back to where we started with re-engaging and increasing our efforts to ensure district board majorities that support all students and the free flow of ideas. In this last regard, we have recently discovered an organization called the School Board Integrity Project, and I can't say it better than their Executive Director, Kyrstin Schuette, as stated in an Op-Ed she wrote on September 3, 2025 in The Courier:

"The redistricting battle is important and we shouldn't minimize it, but it's equally important that we pursue local pathways to power to protect our families and our neighbors from the extremism sweeping our country. The solution lies in recruiting, training, and electing school board members who will practice good governance, pursue academic freedom and excellence, and foster schools where every student belongs."

We encourage you to read Kyrstin Schuette's full article and learn more about her organization, the School Board Integrity Project. Front and center on their webpage you will find a statement with which we fully agree:

"The future we choose for our public schools is the future we choose for our country."



Read Kyrstin's full article: [Kyrstin Schuette: The Overlooked Frontline of Democracy.](#)



Learn more about Schuette's organization: [the School Board Integrity Project.](#)

Time Sensitive Actions

Legislative and GOTV Action Opportunities in October



Action
Creates
Change

GOTV/Proposition 50

If you haven't yet done so, **please check out the resources that were launched last week and commit you/your branch to at least one effort** (e.g. phone banking; tabling; etc). You can find the resources [HERE](#) or on the AAUW California home page ([HERE](#)). You can also share the resources with more people by reposting AAUW California Public Policy's social media messages from Bluesky about important GOTV dates ([HERE](#)) and Prop 50 ([HERE](#)). You can repost through your personal Bluesky account or copy the post-links above to re-post on your personal accounts on other platforms (e.g. Facebook).

California Legislative Agenda

15 of our 26 support bills have made it to the governor's desk! As of this writing, the Governor has signed 2-both important bills.

- [AB 260](#), which protects medication abortion by establishing that the current standard of care for the use of mifepristone will remain legal in this state, protecting providers that legally provide mifepristone, requiring the continuation of existing coverage for medication abortion, and expanding access to reproductive health care through telehealth ([press coverage here](#)).
- [SB 627](#), a first in the nation bill that makes it a crime for law enforcement officers to wear facial coverings during their duties, except in certain situations ([press coverage here](#)).

We're asking for your help to get a few more over the finish line in early October: we need you to take action on two of our priority bills that are waiting for Governor Newsom's signature, SB 771 and AB 418.

- [SB 771](#), which addresses the problematic ways that major social media platforms have altered their content moderation practices—specifically allowing AI and algorithms to amplify credible threats and intimidation targeting historically marginalized groups. SB 771 holds these platforms accountable under existing California law.
- [SB 418](#), which prevents sex discrimination in healthcare coverage in CA, specifically protecting anyone subject to discrimination, generally, and sex stereotyping, specifically, from losing coverage or being denied benefits in California based on sex.

Here is what we need you to do...

Go To Resistbot. Please sign on to the Resistbot petitions [HERE](#) and [HERE](#). You can, and should, send these at least once, and feel free to repost every day to encourage others.

(Re)Post on Social Media. Please repost AAUW CA Public Policy's Bluesky posts [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

You can use the resistbot messages as scripts if you prefer to call the governor's office. Also, reminder that you can repost the Bluesky messages through your personal account on Bluesky or copy and paste the links to each message to share them through your personal account on another platform (e.g. Facebook).

Help us amplify these messages and boost outreach to the Governor's office. And thank you for your activism!

CLICK [HERE](#) TO ACCESS THE PROPOSITION 50 & GOTV GUIDE (2025)

GET TO KNOW YOUR PPP COMMITTEE MEMBERS!

ASHA BAJAJ

She/Her/Hers

Branch: Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek

Membership in AAUW: 32 years

Member of AAUW California

State Public Policy Committee: 5 years

What do you find most important about Public Policy and Public Policy work?

"Staying abreast of the issues, legal advocacy work, and being a part of the solution."



NANCY BREMEAU

She/Her/Hers

Branch: Silicon Valley

Membership in AAUW: 6 years

Member of AAUW California

State Public Policy Committee: 2 years

What do you find most important about Public Policy and Public Policy work?

"What I love about AAUW is that it centers the rights and well-being of women and girls which is a lifelong passion of mine. I am particularly interested in advocating for policies that support women and girls at the state and national level."



ERICA DIAS

She/Her/Hers

Branch: California Online

Membership in AAUW: 3 years

Member of AAUW California

State Public Policy Committee: 2 years

What do you find most important about Public Policy and Public Policy work?

"As an equity researcher, I have studied the unrivaled power of engaged voters and committed activists. We can all do something to advance the mission of AAUW. The Public Policy Committee's efforts will positively impact future generations. Here's to all those who came before us, all those in the fight, and to a brighter, more equitable, and accessible future for everyone."



Branch: Silicon Valley, California Online

Membership in AAUW: 5 years

Member of AAUW California

State Public Policy Committee: 5 years

What do you find most important about Public Policy and Public Policy work?

"I used to believe that our nation would continually make positive progress in equity, diversity, and democracy. Instead I have watched the clock being turned back on reproductive freedoms, voting rights, LGBTQ rights, and diversification in higher education. Public Policy is the most impactful way that we have to advance equity, fairness, and social and racial justice for all members of our society."



MALENA CLARK
She/Her/Hers

Branch: California Online

Membership in AAUW: First year

Member of AAUW California

State Public Policy Committee: First year (interned last year)

What do you find most important about Public Policy and Public Policy work?

"I believe that public policy is crucial in creating social equity, particularly in creating rights for minority groups, gender equity, and climate protections. Effective policy can create lasting, systemic change and ensure that all communities are respected and protected."



DONNA KINDSCHUH
She/Her/Hers

Branch: Visalia Sequoia

Membership in AAUW:

Member of AAUW California

State Public Policy Committee: 2 years

What do you find most important about Public Policy and Public Policy work?

"I like to build community and I like advocacy for young women."



SUE MILLER

She/Her/Hers

Branch: Roseville-South Placer

Membership in AAUW: 52 years

**Member of AAUW California
State Public Policy Committee:** 15 years

What do you find most important about Public Policy and Public Policy work?

"It can change women's lives for the better!"



OGIE STROGATZ

She/Her/Hers

Branch: Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek

Membership in AAUW: 4 years

**Member of AAUW California
State Public Policy Committee:** 2 years

What do you find most important about Public Policy and Public Policy work?

"I welcome the opportunity to be a vigorous advocate for AAUW CA's Public Policy Priorities. Public Policy work offers a terrific opportunity to be a force for good with wide-ranging impact -- at local, state, and federal levels."



SEENA TRIGAS

She/Her/Hers

Branch: Carlsbad-Oceanside-Vista

Membership in AAUW: 14 years

**Member of AAUW California
State Public Policy Committee:** 2 years

What do you find most important about Public Policy and Public Policy work?

"Carrying forward our mission statements by taking action when they are threatened."

