

**LEADERSHIP TEAM
2025 – 2026**



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September 15, 2025

Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor
State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 418; Health Plans/Insurers; Sex Discrimination

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the American Association of University Women of California (AAUW of California), we write to offer our strong support for SB 418 (Menjivar), which will explicitly 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.

AAUW California is the State’s most active and diverse organization for women with over 8,500 members in 116 branches, plus almost 2,000 members-at-large. We hold firm that all individuals deserve access to the healthcare and mental health care that they need regardless of their sex traits or gender identity.

In preventing discrimination in healthcare coverage, SB 418 would protect anyone who is subject to discrimination, generally, and sex stereotyping, specifically, from losing coverage or being denied benefits based on sex. Sex stereotyping includes the labeling of a person’s appearance and/or actions as problematic (e.g. “not feminine enough”) based on reductive and unscientific beliefs about sex and gender.

SB 418 protects coverage for gender affirming care, such as hormone therapy, cosmetic procedures, or psychological support, at a moment when the provision of this care may be newly challenged, based on federal attempts to re-litigate and limit the definition of sex.

Major medical organizations, including the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics, endorse gender-affirming care as essential for the well-being of transgender and nonbinary adults and young people. Numerous studies show that gender-affirming care significantly improves mental health outcomes for members of the transgender and nonbinary communities.

SB 418 aligns California with best practices and recommendations from leading health authorities, ensuring that our policies reflect the latest medical evidence and ethical standards.

Enactment of SB 418 will protect against discrimination in the coverage of health care based on sex, while also sending a powerful message of support to the LGBTQ+ community, affirming that their needs matter. Creating an environment where all individuals can express their identities without fear is foundational to a strong democracy.

AAUW California offers our strong support and gratitude for SB 418, and we respectfully request your signature on this important measure. If you have any questions regarding our position on SB 418, please contact our advocate in Sacramento, Kathy Van Osten, at 916-605-9293 or by email at kvanosten@mvmstrategy.com. Thank you in advance for your favorable consideration of this measure.

Sincerely,



Amy Hom
Public Policy Co-Chair
AAUW of California



Melissa Maceyko
Public Policy Co-Chair
AAUW of California

Cc: Senator Caroline Menjivar

