



IOWA INITIATIVE

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Co-President’s Letter

Pat Higby, AAUW Iowa Co-President

Are you depressed by the changes made in Iowa over the last four years? Public money to private schools, control over books in libraries, easy access to guns, guns in schools, limiting abortion services, and more to come. I think the best solution is to take action! The Iowa AAUW Board is looking for leaders for ad hoc committees to coordinate with other organizations to add our voices to their calls for change. These duties are for 1 to 2 years. You would participate in meetings with other organizations, then inform our Board and members of available activities that help promote our public policy goals. Our work getting petitions for Reproductive Freedom with the Iowa ACLU was one example. Another is the assembly and distribution of Repro Kits in collaboration with the Family Planning Council of Iowa. There are a number of organizations working on gun safety. Would you be willing to coordinate with them? Or if your focus is on education, we need someone in this area as well. I was the lead on reproductive freedom, but my new duties as Co-president keep me from continuing. Please contact me if you are willing to lead or join one of these ad hoc groups. Thank you. patricia.a.higby@gmail.com

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The New World of AAUW Dues

Dev Kiedaisch, AAUW Iowa Treasurer

I am a 50+ year member of AAUW and remember the times when dues for all AAUW members were due at the same time, June 30 of every year. Currently, dues are due based on when you paid them the previous year. To find when your dues are due, go to aauw.org and log in. Your membership information will appear and the site will tell you when your dues are due. To pay your dues, you may pay them on the AAUW website you are on by scrolling down to the orange box that says RENEW, clicking on it and following the instructions. I believe all branch treasurers will also accept a check for your dues. National

dues are \$72 (totally tax deductible), Iowa State dues at \$10, and dues for branches vary from branch to branch.

For branch treasurers, if members pay you, you can designate that on the aauw.org website when you enter the National dues, then enter Iowa state dues or send AAUW Iowa dues of \$10 per member to: Dev Kiedaisch, 1025 Grand Ave, Keokuk, IA 52632. Also, if Members-At-Large want to support AAUW Iowa, we welcome your dues in one of the two same ways.

If you have any questions, please contact me at devkiedaisch@mac.com, (319) 524-3935 or (319) 520-6724.

Public Policy News

Diane Kearns, AAUW Iowa Public Policy Director

Summer is certainly slipping away and with that the political arena is heating up with elections coming in November. My article this time is going to focus on hosting a candidate forum.

Everyone must remember that AAUW does not endorse a candidate for elective office. If there are two or more candidates running for elective office, those candidates must all be invited to the Forum. The moderator for the Forum must be a respected member of the community who will remain neutral during the proceedings.

The moderator will open the Forum with short remarks such as “Welcome to tonight’s Candidate Forum, sponsored by AAUW (name your branch.) I am Jane Doe, an AAUW member and I will be the moderator this evening. We have prepared (insert a specific number) questions for the candidates. We request that audience members not applaud or in other ways respond to candidate’s remarks.” Each candidate is then introduced and will have 1-2 minutes for an opening statement.

After about an hour of questions, the candidates will each have 1-2 minutes for closing remarks.

In August or early September determine which races to cover. Branches in smaller towns may want to cover courthouse races and Iowa legislative races. If you don’t know who is running, contact your County Auditor’s office.

1. Send out letters of invitation to candidates as soon as possible since their schedules may be very busy.
2. Secure a meeting place.
3. Ask someone to moderate the forum.
4. Send an announcement of the forum to the local media.
5. Have bottles of water for candidates, name tents, paper and pencils.
6. Timer to indicate when their time is up.
7. If plan allows for questions, have cards available for questions from the audience to be collected for the moderator to use to ask the questions.

Sample Questions (others may be added if needed.)

1. Are you in favor of the voucher system that diverts public fund to private schools?
2. Do you support vigorous enforcement of Title IX and other civil rights laws that pertain to education and prohibit discrimination?
3. How would you support pay equity and fairness in employment?
4. Do you support increasing the minimum wage?

5. Do you support workplace benefits such as paid family leave, medical and sick leave and provisions for pregnant workers?
6. What is your position on the right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices?
7. What is your position regarding measures that facilitate, protect access to, and expand the right of all citizens to vote?
8. What is your position regarding collective bargaining rights for public or private sector employees and the right of workers to unionize without employer intimidation or reprisal?
9. What steps, if any, should be taken to curb gun violence in our country?
10. What is your position with regard to rigorous enforcement of laws against human trafficking and support for programs to aid trafficking victims?

These are just some sample questions. Others may be added of particular interest.

On another topic: As I am sure everyone is aware that an Iowa judge has ruled the state’s strict abortion law will take effect, Monday, July 29, at 8:00 a.m. This law will prevent most abortions after six weeks of pregnancy, before many women even know they are pregnant. The law passed last year, but a judge blocked it from being enforced. Lawyers representing abortion providers asked for notice before allowing the law to take hold, saying a buffer period was needed to provide continuity of services. This is a sad time in Iowa for women and girls.

An additional item of concern is Project 2025. This is a rather lengthy document but of concern for AAUW members is the restriction of women’s rights. There are brief summaries available of some of the provisions. The Des Moines AAUW branch is going to host a program on Project 2025 presented by Jillian Gaeta, Founder of Roots to Revolution. This will be August 27 at 7:00 p.m. and will be available on Zoom. Her presentation will be non-partisan.

Enjoy the remainder of the summer. Everyone needs to work to get out the vote keeping in mind AAUW’s public policy priorities and where the candidates stand on our important issues.



Des Moines Branch Invites You to Join in on a Project 2025 Presentation

Ann Gale, President, AAUW Des Moines

The Des Moines branch will host a presentation on Project 2025 on August 27 at 7pm using zoom. All members are invited to join in and encourage interested friends to join in as well. Our speaker is Jilian Gaeta, co-founder of Roots to Revolution. She has taught American and global history in grades 5-12 in New York City. Currently she is the Associate Director of History for Achievement First middle schools. See her summary of the content from Project 2025 below. Use this link to join:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2017201809?pwd=WXcyREhjcjI0ZlNQMUtmZjlCU0RQQT09&omn=87812983043>

Project 2025 is a conservative coalition's plan for a future Republican U.S. presidential administration. If voters elect Donald Trump over Democrat Kamala Harris in November 2024, the coalition hopes the new president will implement the plan immediately. The Project 2025 document is over 900 pages long. Jillian's summary of the main points from Project 2025 is below.

Standing Against Project 2025

The Mandate for Leadership is a 920 policy document put together by the Heritage Foundation that outlines policy goals the next president should adopt. The Heritage Foundation is working closely with the Trump/Vance campaign. Many authors of the Mandate for Leadership were members of the Trump's 1st Administration.

Four Stated Goals of Project 2025

1. Restore the family as the centerpiece of American life and protect our children.
2. Dismantle the administrative state and return self-governance to the American people.
3. Defend our nation's sovereignty, borders, and bounty against global threats.
4. Secure our God-given individual rights to live freely—what our Constitution calls “the Blessings of Liberty.”

Project 2025 promotes unitary executive theory giving the president full control over independent agencies like the justice department.

Policy Recommendations in Project 2025

Education

- Eliminate the federal department of education and title 1 funding.
- Require students to take a military entrance exam in high school.

Immigration:

- Increase the power of ICE to arrest, detain and place

immigrants in concentration camps. Eliminate 14th amendment rights for children born of immigrants.

Free Press:

- Eliminate all funding for NPR and PBS. Increase surveillance of foreign journalism

Environment:

- Eliminate the ability of USAID to provide relief for people suffering from climate change
- Reduce funding and personnel for the EPA
- Reduce the FEMA budget (FEMA provides relief after natural disasters)

Women's Rights:

- Revive the Comstock laws of the 1870's (prohibits mailing information about birth control)
- Eliminate Title IX
- Give embryos 14th Amendment rights

Economy:

- Eliminate progressive income tax, lower corporate tax rate to 18%.
- Increase tariffs on foreign goods which would increase inflation

LGBTQIA+ Rights

- Eliminate the language of prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender discrimination, gender identity from law.
- Ban marriage equality.

Benefits and Social Services:

- Decrease funding for veterans benefits.
- Eliminate contributions to Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid

For more information visit us at Roots to Revolution or email jillian@rootstorevolution.org.



Jilian Gaeta

You Matter.Period

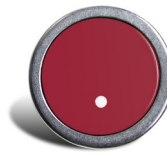
Marti Andersen, You Matter.Period Ad Hoc Chair

AAUW is launching **You Matter.Period**, a crucial initiative that aims to support girls and women who face challenges in working and attending school during their periods due to the cost and accessibility of period products. The American Medical Women's Association defines "Period Poverty" as "inadequate access to menstrual hygiene tools and education, including but not limited to sanitary products, washing facilities, and waste management."

We have been in touch with two Iowa programs currently working on the issue of "Period Poverty."

In 2020, Manya Pandey was a 15-year-old student at Waukee High School when she learned about women and girls right here in Iowa who struggled to work and go to school during their periods due to the cost and accessibility of period products. She learned women in prison often have inadequate menstrual products available to them. So, she founded **Love For Red**. Today, Manya is majoring in Public Health on the Pre-Medicine track at the University of Iowa. She continues to serve as President of **Love for Red**, a 501(c)(3) non-profit that works to uplift women and girls crushed by the hardships of period poverty. **Love for Red** operates in Des Moines and Iowa City.

The Waterloo-Cedar Falls Branch of AAUW is also aware of period poverty and took action to make a difference. They created a program called **Gotcha Covered. Period**. They provide products to school nurses in Cedar Falls and Waterloo public middle, junior, and high schools to help girls stay in school. Maureen White of the Waterloo-Cedar Falls AAUW Branch is the Project Chair of **Gotcha Covered. Period**. Maureen says, too many girls miss a class, an entire school day, or extracurricular activities due to lack of menstrual products. AAUW can discretely make a difference for each of them.



The truth is that feeling clean and having dignity during a period should not be a privilege only some girls and women can afford and find. Providing menstrual products to those unable to purchase the

necessities ensures that girls and women can live with dignity while on their period, no matter where they live.

As AAUW Iowa takes on this new focus, we are calling on our members and Branches to brainstorm solutions for period poverty. We believe that by pooling our collective knowledge and resources, we can make a significant impact.

Cedar Rapids Branch

Co-Sponsors

Women's Equality Day

Women's Equality Day, August 26, is the anniversary of women gaining the right to vote. The Cedar Rapids branch is working with the League of Women Voters and other members of the Women's Equality Coalition to celebrate Women's Equality Day on August 26, 2024 at the Hiawatha Community Center. There will be a social hour with light refreshments from 6-7pm, followed by a panel discussion with local doctors and health care specialists.

Admission is a women's feminine hygiene product.

Women's Equality Coalition

WE'RE SERIOUS ABOUT WOMEN'S HEALTH

JOIN US FOR WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY 2024

Monday, August 26
Hiawatha Community Center
101 Emmons Street, Hiawatha
6:30 PM Social
7:00 PM Program

PERIOD.

A panel of local experts will discuss the most pressing women's health concerns they see among local women. There will be an opportunity for audience members to ask questions.

Please bring a box of tampons or pads to be donated to women in need.

World Day Against Trafficking in Persons

Mary Ann Ahrens, ad hoc Human Trafficking Committee Chair, AAUW Iowa

Kathleen Wood Laurila, Des Moines and eNetwork member, long-time AAUW leader in International Affairs, and a member of Graduate Women International (formerly International Federation of University Women), shared GWI information on global human trafficking with us. AAUW Iowa's Human Trafficking Prevention issue priority will continue over the next two years. Because of the huge increase in global conflicts, as emphasized in prior *Iowa Initiative* issues, the issue and prevention efforts are even more concerning. This is part of the reason AAUW's Public Policy Priorities include increased advocacy for human trafficking prevention. Ten years ago, the United Nations established **World Day Against Trafficking in Persons as July 20** to raise awareness for human trafficking internationally, with a focus on identifying the underlying socioeconomic and cultural issues that create vulnerability, enabling trafficking to thrive. This year GWI joins the United Nations and other organizations in calling upon member states to recognize the atrocities of human trafficking and enhance their efforts to prevent this inhumane process. This year's theme is **LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING!**

Thousands of men, women and children end up in the hands of traffickers every year, often through being tricked and misled to believe that they are being taken to work that will make their family better, or through force, kidnap, or even through very poor families selling children in order to survive. **"I did not want to work like this from the beginning. The only reason I had to do this work is because I needed the money."** -Malee, Human Trafficking Survivor from Thailand

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime share the following Statistics to provide global perspectives.

- One in three victims globally is a child.
- Children are 2x as likely to face violence during trafficking than adults.
- 77.5% of trafficking victims suffer either forced labor or sexual exploitation.
- Victims of trafficking by age group/gender: 42% women; 23% men; 18% girls; and 17% boys.
- Detected victims of trafficking originate from a

country in conflict by region of citizenship: 73% Sub-Saharan Africa, 6% Americas, 11% North Africa and Middle East, 7% Asia, and 3% Eastern Europe & Central Asia.

Four of the UNs Sustainable Goals point to trafficking:

- **Goal 5:** Promoting gender equality by working to end violence against women and girls by eliminating human trafficking in all forms.
- **Goal 8:** Eliminate forced labour of all kinds, especially the worst forms of child labour.
- **Goal 10:** Policies should pay attention to the needs of disadvantaged people throughout the world in order to mitigate vulnerability to human trafficking, and
- **Goal 16:** End all forms of abuse/exploitation by working to end organized crime/illicit arms flows.

Advocacy Ideas shared by UNODC are reflected by the work of AAUW Iowa, the Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery, the Iowa Office to Combat Human Trafficking, and other groups and continue to be relentlessly pursued.

1. Promote human trafficking awareness and training programs to identify and aid victims in need.
2. Encourage local schools to promote protocols and courses to increase awareness of human trafficking to inform younger generations on how to identify and report possible victims.
3. Understand how vulnerable communities are susceptible to and impacted by human trafficking.
4. Expand awareness on social media platforms by promoting human trafficking risk factors and warning signs.
5. Encourage local and national governments to increase trafficking victims' protections and allow victims a platform to contribute to policy discussions.

Questions for Members: What needs do you/branch observe in your community? What can you do/continue to do? Who can you contact to address the needs and/or advocate for the necessary education and legislation? How can AAUW Iowa help? Other groups? Request more AAUW Iowa brochures in English and Spanish?

Thank you for your continuing work to eradicate this global human atrocity!

We are all in this together and partners in progress!

Information from Graduate Women International and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes was used for this article.



Statement on the decision of the Supreme Court in *Donald J. Trump v. the United States*

David W. Blight, President, for the OAH

Trump v. United States: Another View

Recently many Americans were shocked to learn that the United States Supreme Court decided in a 6 to 3 vote to declare that presidents had at least some immunity for “official acts.” For some background on this issue and the current debate, see the statement below, reprinted with permission from the Organization of American Historians. The OAH, founded in 1907, is the largest professional society dedicated to the study of American history. I have been a member of the OAH for 48 years, and I can assure you that the authors of this piece are among the most knowledgeable and well-respected American historians. As a 30 year member of AAUW, I know that our members value informed dialogue on current topics of debate. I suggested that the *Iowa Initiative* reprint this article. We may not all agree with the OAH’s position, but we can all recognize the importance of the issue and learn from it.

Joanne Page
Member, Des Moines Branch



historians and teachers of our nation’s past. It ushers into near oblivion a fundamental American creed—that we are a nation of laws and not of “men,” and that no person, not even the chief executive, is above the law. If “civics” is and ought to be a primary core of teaching about America’s national and constitutional history, what are instructors at all levels now to tell their students?

In *Common Sense*, Thomas Paine argued in early 1776 that “in America the law is king. For as in absolute governments the king is law, so in free countries the law ought to be king, and there ought to be no other.” With fierce belief and pride, Paine thought he had arrived in a country with a historical new beginning, an experiment that had begun to escort monarchy and all its trappings and corruptions into a dustbin of history.

In the *New York Times Magazine*, the legal scholar and journalist Emily Bazelon exposed an older Constitutional theory now employed vigorously by conservative judges across the lower federal courts, as well as the Supreme Court. Known as the “history and tradition” test, the conservative majority on the high court has advanced this new “standard,” allowing “judges to set aside modern developments in the law to restore the precedents of the distant past.” In three major rulings in 2022—on abortion, gun regulation, and religious freedom—they have selectively used this doctrine, born of their vaunted theory of originalism, to alter American life.

In this past term, the Court employed this theory in a rather perverse way with decisions about section three of the Fourteenth Amendment in *Colorado v. White*; January 6 prosecutions in *Fischer v. United States*; administrative regulation in *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo*; and presidential immunity in *Trump v. United States*.

As Bazelon carefully shows, the Supreme Court’s majority seeks to make the past, “however archaic,” a “real command over the present.” “How much will the scope of American liberty change,” asks Bazelon, “as conservative judges impose the past on the present?” We now have many disturbing answers: they will do so especially when they seek to change the law more than interpret it. In effect, the Court in *Trump v. U.S.* “amended” section two of the Constitution and gave us a newly and dangerously powerful presidency.

Continued on next page

On July 1, 2024, the U.S. Supreme Court, in a 6-3 decision, sent shock waves through the American public, and especially through the community of historians and legal scholars. Stepping much further than the case merited, the Court’s majority ruled that a president—and in this case a former president—possesses wide ranging immunity for “official acts” committed while in office. The Court also severely constrained the ability of the legal system to address a president’s quasi-official or non-official acts. In so doing the Court greatly expanded presidential power and rendered former President Trump unaccountable for all manner of deeds and allegedly illegal acts. Lest anyone forget, he is under indictment for attempting to overturn the legitimate outcome of the 2020 presidential election.

Moreover, we take special objection to Justice Clarence Thomas’s concurring opinion in the immunity case. Beyond his authority in the moment, Thomas argued that history supposedly rejects the very idea of the special counsel and that it should not exist. This is not only patently ahistorical and wrong, but the issue had not even been briefed, it was not before the Court, and thus only demonstrates Thomas’s role as a political actor and not a judge. A Supreme Court justice, like former presidents, is not above the law either.

This decision should be deeply disturbing to American

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In an amicus brief submitted to the Supreme Court in anticipation of *Trump v. United States*, the Brennan Center for Justice at the New York University Law school assembled an array of accomplished constitutional historians to argue that, based on history and tradition, “the Constitution does not expressly confer any presidential immunity, even though it does for members of Congress in limited cases.” Citing and reflecting the work of distinguished American historians of the founding era, including Bernard Bailyn, Holly Brewer, Michael Klarman, Jill Lepore, Jack Rakove, Gordon Wood, and many others, the Brennan Center brief shredded the premises of the Court’s decision. As historians, we have strong reasons to be concerned about the Supreme Court’s failure to engage with these and other historical arguments.

According to the Brennan Center scholars, the historical evidence from the Framers themselves (from the Constitutional convention through ratification and beyond) point to five fundamental conclusions. First, the Framers exhibited “deep antipathy to and distrust of executive power.” Second, at Philadelphia in 1787 they created a new kind of executive “without powers and privileges of a king.” Third, the president is to have no power whatsoever in the “conduct of elections.” Fourth, no form of presidential immunity was established in either the Constitutional convention or the ratification process. Fifth, during the robust intellectual outpouring of ideas in the ratification process, the Framers expressly argued that the president, much less a former president, was not immune from prosecution for criminal acts. In others words, contends the Brennan brief, the “weight of history”

overwhelmingly rejects the very idea of presidential immunity.

The Framers, in part by inclusion of the impeachment clause but especially by explicitly rejecting presidential immunity (in contrast to their treatment of congressional legislators), invented an “accountable 2 presidency.” The Supreme Court on July 1, 2024, invented a potentially new and unaccountable presidency. In his Notes from the convention, James Madison warned that presidential corruption can lead to a “scheme of speculation and oppression,” and “might be fatal to the republic.” Even Alexander Hamilton, who favored a stronger executive, believed that a president should be “subject to removal and prosecution.”

Above all else, historians believe in the quest for evidence, which we assess with an eye on change over time and the ethics of our craft. Part of our ethics is to try in every way we can to not let a quest for power overwhelm our rules of the archives and of the printed page. The U.S. Supreme Court has at best overlooked, and at worst abused, the evidence of the significance of the founding era in understanding our Constitution. Practitioners of American history need to call them out in the most public ways possible. With respect for historical evidence and argument, we dissent.

David W. Blight, President
Annette Gordon-Reed, President Elect
Marc Stein, Vice President
Anthea M. Hartig, Immediate Past President
Erika Lee, Past President
Beth English, Executive Director



AAUW Discounts and Perks

Have you ever explored discounts and perks you can get as an AAUW member? It is worth the time to check them out. A few examples include discounts from Avis and Budget Car Rental, a free year subscription of Ms. Magazine, and UPS shipping. Find more information at <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/why-join/discounts-and-perks/>

Shop AAUW clothing, accessories, stationery, and other items at <https://aauw.source4.com/b2c/Sites/AAUWMember/Home.asp>

