

Co-President's Letter

Reproductive Freedom Update

Pat Higby, AAUW Iowa Co-President

Does everyone value freedom? This seems like a strange question to ask of Americans, but is it really a shared value? As women we are sadly aware of the fact that we may NOT have control over our own bodies. Laws in some states force women to give up their bodily autonomy rights when they become an incubator for a fertilized egg. The egg's rights are superior to the person whose body is being used. This update will review the health and economic consequences of these laws. To see the sources used in this review please follow the hyperlinks.



First, the number of abortions did not decrease after Roe was overturned in 2022. This [table](#) shows that the number of abortions provided had been declining after 1990, but began to increase in 2018. The overturn of Roe did not stop that increase. The most recent data from the Guttmacher Institute shows the number of abortions in 2023 was 1,032,100; the number in 2024 was 1,048,700. The laws did not decrease the number of abortions; it changed how they were facilitated. The number of women forced to travel increased, as did the distance and expense. There was also an increase in medication abortions via telehealth. Now 63% of all abortions in the US are via medication.

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Estimated number of abortions provided in the formal health care system in the United States, 1973–2023



Notes: 2023 estimate shown with accompanying 90% uncertainty interval. No comprehensive data available for 2021 and 2022. Source: Guttmacher Monthly Abortion Provision Study.

guttmacher.org

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There have been other significant consequences of depriving women of their reproductive freedom. The [Gender Equity Policy Institute](#) found that women living in states that banned abortion are almost twice as likely to die from pregnancy-related causes, compared to those living in states where abortion is protected. Another study found the number closer to three times as likely, as shown on the graph on the right. Women facing life threatening pregnancies have been denied abortions. Miscarriages occur in one out of 5 known pregnancies. In states with abortion bans women are denied D&C's following a miscarriage, sometimes with fatal results. It may also be more difficult to access maternity care resources in states that ban abortion. [Nearly one in four OB-GYNs have left Idaho](#) since 2022, leading to the closure of some hospital labor and delivery units. In states where abortion is legal [maternal mortality rates fell by 21%](#). The problem is the politics.

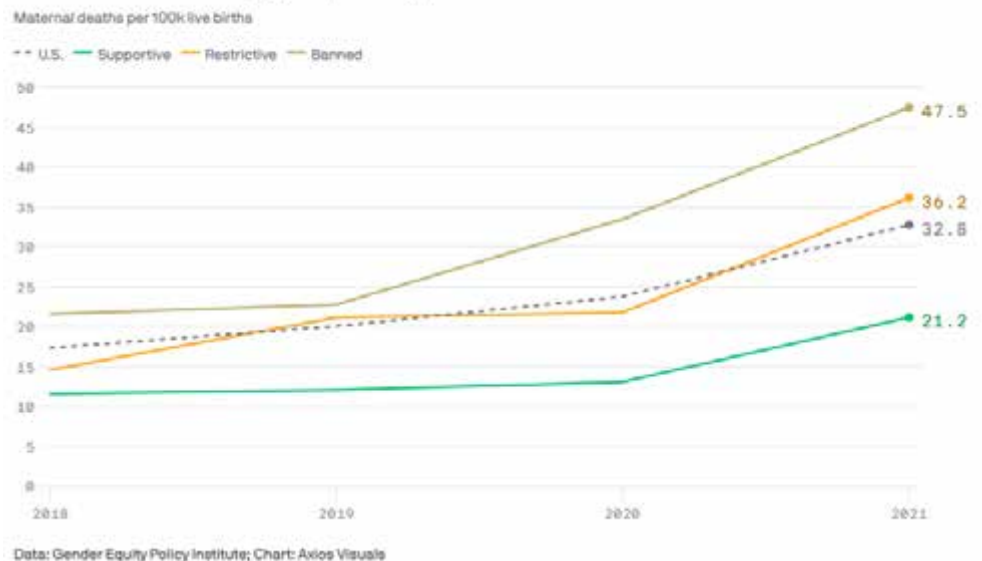
Politicians have been making every effort to close Planned Parenthood centers. In their place they are funding Crisis Pregnancy Centers (CPCs). [NBC News](#) reported: According to the [American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists](#), crisis pregnancy centers "represent themselves as legitimate reproductive health care clinics providing care for pregnant people but actually aim to dissuade people from accessing certain types of reproductive health care, including abortion care and even contraceptive options."

"Because the religious ideology of these centers' owners and employees takes priority over the health and well-being of the women seeking care at these centers, women do not receive comprehensive, accurate, evidence-based clinical information about all available options," says a paper published in the [American Medical Association Journal of Ethics](#).

In fact, CPCs purposefully [will NOT do ultrasound procedures if they suspect an ectopic pregnancy](#). I believe the number of pregnancy related deaths will continue to rise in states that ban abortions because of the decline in real health clinics and the rise in CPCs.

Some states have laws that prevent women who have had abortions from being prosecuted as criminals. Instead, *they are charged with abuse of a corpse for flushing the*

Maternal deaths, grouped by state abortion status



toilet or placing used feminine hygiene products in the garbage. Ironically, this only applies to home abortions resulting from abortion medications. Hospitals are not held to the same standard.

Do you know of a young family that wants to live in a state that bans abortions? That would be rare! The estimated cost of banning abortion is [\\$61 billion annually](#). There are many factors involved in this estimate. One is that employed women aged 15 to 44 would have [earned an additional \\$6.4 billion](#) in 2023 if they had been able to make their own reproductive choices. A second factor is the poor health outcomes for women and babies, totaling [\\$34.2 million in higher health costs per year](#). After the repeal of Michigan's abortion ban, [Gov. Gretchen Whitmer commented](#), "If you don't think abortion's about the economy, you might not have a uterus."

[Gina Raimondo, former US Secretary of Commerce stated](#), "Big companies are fighting a 'war for talent,' and particularly for female talent given that women make up a growing majority of new college graduates." Many companies in anti-abortion states are now [paying their employees travel expenses for abortions](#). It is a recruitment tool to attract young families to their organizations in spite of their location.

How can we, as an organization dedicated to helping women and girls, counter these health and economic attacks on females? First, it is important to elect people who will protect the rights of women. Second, we can personally support groups such as Planned Parenthood and the Family Planning Council of Iowa. Alone we may have little power, but when we act together in unison we can make an impact.



A Big Broken Promise to America's Students and Women

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Congress has passed a bill that will go down in history not as a beautiful promise fulfilled — but as a **big broken promise** to America's students, working families, and especially to women.

From early learning through graduate school, this bill deals a devastating blow to educational opportunities in America. It **slashes financial aid, eliminates vital student loan programs, and channels public dollars into private voucher schemes** — all while doing nothing to ensure that participating schools uphold civil rights protections. Instead of expanding access, it erects new barriers that will shut out millions of students, especially women, low-income families, and communities of color. This bill makes drastic cuts to Medicaid, it threatens reproductive freedom and the health and economic security of the very people who rely on education as a path to a better future.

For AAUW, this is personal. We are the nation's largest non-institutional funder of women's graduate education. For more than 140 years, we've fought to open the doors of higher education to all women — not just those who can afford it. And we know the truth: **when women lose access to education, they lose access to opportunity, economic security, and equity.**

This bill:

- **Undermines educational equity** by using tax breaks to fund private school voucher programs without requiring participating schools to follow Title IX, Title

VI, or disability laws — creating a loophole that permits legal discrimination against students.

- **Shuts women out of higher education** by eliminating Graduate PLUS loans and creating borrowing caps that disproportionately harm women of color, single mothers, and first-generation students.
- **Attacks reproductive health and health care access** by essentially defunding Planned Parenthood and making sweeping changes to Medicaid that will strip coverage from millions of women — leaving them without access to birth control, cancer screenings, and maternal care.

This bill does not reflect the values of fairness, inclusion, or opportunity. It is a deliberate rollback of hard-won rights, passed at the expense of women's futures and our nation's progress.

As the bill heads to the president's desk, AAUW calls on the administration to reckon with what this legislation truly means — and to recognize the irreversible harm it will cause to students, families, and our economy now and in years to come.

AAUW and our nationwide network of members and advocates will not stop fighting until every student — regardless of gender, race, income, or zip code — has full and equal access to education, civil rights, and opportunity.

Public Policy News

Diane Kearns, AAUW Iowa Public Policy Director

I hope everyone is having a great summer. It seems to be going fast. AAUW released the message above about the recently signed "Big Beautiful Bill" and its effect on women, students and others in general. AAUW calls it "A Big Broken Promise to America's Students and Girls!" It will slash financial aid, eliminate vital student loan programs and channel public dollars into private vouchers while doing nothing to ensure that participating schools uphold civil right protections. It erects new barriers that will shut out millions of students, especially women, low-income families and communities of color. It makes drastic cuts to Medicaid, threatens reproductive freedom. When women lose access to education, they lose access to opportunity, economic security and equity. To break this down, this bill:

- Undermines educational equity by using tax breaks to fund private school voucher programs without requiring participating schools to follow Title IX, Title VI or disability laws which permit discrimination against students.
- Shuts women out of higher education by eliminating Graduate PLUS loans and creating borrowing caps that harm women of color, single mothers, and first-generation students.
- Attacks reproductive health and health care access by essentially defunding Planned Parenthood and making sweeping changes to Medicaid that will strip coverage from millions of women, leaving them without access to birth control, cancer screenings and maternal care.

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The Iowa Gun Safety Coalition indicated there were a few bills which did not survive the funnel deadlines. However, HF294 which lowered the minimum age for acquiring a handgun from 21 to 18 was signed by the Governor April 18.

Our local labor organization has been holding weekly rallies on Sunday afternoon. This has been well attended and during the Nationwide rally a few weeks ago there were over 100 in attendance. Those attending carry signs

regarding the changes to Medicaid, No Kings, Hands Off DEI and many others.

This is an off-year election so stay informed regarding candidates and keep in mind our legislative priorities. The off-year elections include gubernatorial and state legislative elections in a few states as well as numerous mayoral races and a variety of other local offices on the ballot, such as school boards. Special elections to the United States Congress for newly vacant seats will also take place. Enjoy the rest of the summer.



AAUW July 15 Press Release

Blackwell: Mass Dept. of Ed Layoffs Are a Betrayal to Students

July 15, 2025

WASHINGTON, D. C. — The American Association of University Women (AAUW), the leading organization for gender equity in higher education, responded to the U.S. Supreme Court granting a request from the Trump Administration to proceed with a reduction-in-force affecting nearly 1,400 employees.

The following is a statement from Gloria L. Blackwell, AAUW's Chief Executive Officer:

"Secretary McMahon's claim that these layoffs 'will not directly' harm students and families is flatly false. These mass layoffs, the wholesale dismissal of thousands of civil rights complaints, the withholding of billions in federal funding, and the chaos imposed on borrowers are not mere administrative errors—they are deliberate tactics that threaten educational equity, student safety, and financial security."

We are already witnessing direct impacts on students:

- **Civil rights enforcement crippled:** The Office for Civil Rights dismissed 3,424 complaints between March 11 and June 27, shutting the door on investigations into discrimination across race, disability, sex, and national origin.
- **Borrowers in chaos:** Uncertainty over which agency will manage federal loan portfolios, coupled with servicers pausing the tracking of loan-forgiveness payments, has left millions of students unable to verify their progress toward relief
- **Critical programs cut off:** The Department has withheld nearly \$6.8 billion in formula funding—jeopardizing English learner services, after-school programs, and special education supports that students rely on to succeed.

All of these actions are a betrayal to our students, and AAUW will continue to fight to restore and defend their rights.

News from Public School Strong

Public School Strong asks for your help in spreading the word about public and private schools. You can help in three ways.

Sign an [electronic version of their petition](#) to fully fund public schools and phase out vouchers.

Download the [print version of that petition](#), and ask friends and neighbors to sign it, and present it to your local school board. The print version is designed for legal size paper, so you will need to change your printer settings under paper size.

Print and circulate their 1-pager (last two pages of the

newsletter) to help us talk to people about vouchers and public schools. It can be found on the Public School Strong website and is [linked here](#). Feel free to use this and post it far and wide (public library or community bulletin boards with permission).

Join a zoom meeting on August 5 at 6:30 pm for an update about the Public School Strong petition campaign. [Register for that meeting here](#).

Vouchers are going to cost over \$300,000,000 of Iowa public dollars this upcoming school year: [KCCI Investigates: Iowa Education Savings Account applications total 45,000-plus for 2025-26 school year](#)

Having Our Say: No Kings



Indianola



Marilyn Deal, Sandy Buchanan, Anne Johnston, and Jane Nettleton at the Kossuth County Courthouse.



Davenport-Bettendorf member Carol Wyenn sent this picture of herself and her daughter Diane from Pasadena.



Diane Kearns was one of 100 people in Keokuk.



Rebecca Swainey in Indianola



From the Clinton protest, sent by Carol and Cammie McGuire



From Jan Creasman, Loess Hills, at the Council Bluffs No Kings event. It extended over the Missouri River to 10th Street in Omaha.



Linda Armitage and Sue Bennett, leadership Board members of Cedar Rapids Branch participated in No kings rally June 14th. Friend Jasmine Wu also in picture.



No Kings Rally in Cedar Rapids. Linda Armitage reported that there were 2-3 thousand protestors.



From Dev Kiedaisch from the Keokuk branch sent this photo from the No Kings event in Madison, WI.



Diane Kearns from the Keokuk branch was in the center of the AAUW Facebook post by AAUW on July 17, the day after the Good Trouble event.

Summer Human Trafficking Initiatives

Making an Impact in Iowa, America, and Abroad

AAUW Iowa Taskforce: Mary Ann Ahrens, Chair; Elle Sweborg

JULY 30th WORLDWIDE DAY AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Each year the United Nations designates **July 30 as World Day Against Trafficking in Persons** to raise awareness of this devastating global problem and to promote the protection of basic human rights. Trafficking continues to be a threat worldwide driven by organized crime. The **2025 U.N. Theme** is “*Human Trafficking is Organized Crime—End the Exploitation.*”

Keep in mind that in the last few years **ONLY 200,000** documented victims received help. It is the *tip of the iceberg* because people are being trafficked more every year with greater violence, for longer periods of time, and for greater profit.

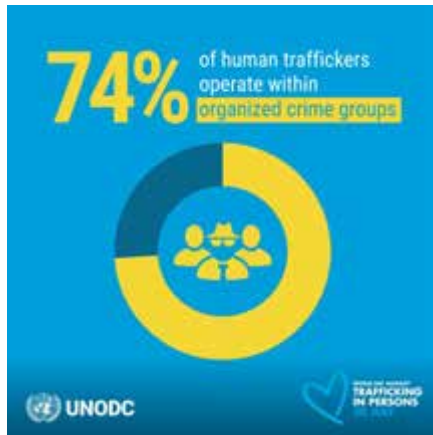
This includes forced labor, sexual exploitation, and coercion into criminal activities such as online scams. Despite some progress, criminal justice responses remain grossly inadequate in tackling this rapidly growing crime considering the worldwide conflicts!

Please make the global day against trafficking a day that YOU become part of the solution. This year’s campaign highlights the vital role of law enforcement and the criminal justice system in dismantling organized trafficking networks. Please refer to the July Iowa ACTION *Red Sand Project* information included in this communique, so you can consider participating to bring attention to the 50 million people being trafficked, so “*we won’t let them fall through the cracks.*” Each year **Iowa Chains Interrupted** in Cedar Rapids partners with the Red Sand organization. The Project is a great, simple, and fun summer project for friends, family, youth groups/camps, organizations, businesses, summer schools, and local groups!

22nd INTERNATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING & SOCIAL JUSTICE CONFERENCE

VIRTUAL

Iowa anti-trafficking advocates are invited to virtually connect with the growing community of global anti-trafficking advocates committed to social justice. The



Wednesday - Friday (September 17-19) conference will feature 115+ live and on-demand webinars to rewatch and access for up to three weeks after the conference. It will include the latest information from experts in the field of human trafficking and social justice, but will also feature virtual vendor booths, art exhibits, networking opportunities, and giveaways. *This event provides us with opportunities to learn, connect and collaborate with thousands more individuals worldwide.* Please help us spread the word by sharing their flyer with your friends, colleagues, and peers. [Register here!](#)

NATIONAL

TAKE IT DOWN Act (S.146) Federal legislation is SIGNED into LAW

Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) introduced the legislation which prohibits the nonconsensual online publication of intimate visual depictions of individuals, both authentic and computer-generated. The **Bill** requires certain online platforms to promptly remove such depictions upon receiving notice of their existence. They must be removed within 48 hours of notification or be subject to mandatory restitution and criminal penalties, including prison, a fine or both. Thanks go to Teresa Davidson, CEO of Chains Unlimited and Iowa NAHT board member and lead advocate who was invited to the White House to witness the President’s signature.

IOWA

IOWA NAHT CELEBRATES 20th ANNIVERSARY

On June 23, Iowa NAHT (Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery) celebrated its 20th anniversary. Please consider honoring this milestone by supporting Iowa’s **ONLY** statewide non-profit, all-volunteer organization fighting human trafficking. Help them reach their \$20,000 goal by [tapping here](#) to make a gift. Supporters to date have donated \$8,797 toward the goal. Thank you for your support! **NAHT Vision:** “*An Iowa without human trafficking and modern slavery.*”

IOWA NAHT LEGISLATION

The Iowa NAHT legislative task force met on July 8 to review the 2025 progress made legislatively and to identify legislative priorities for 2026. Among those tentatively planned will be training for casino employees in addition to the hotel/motel training which has been taking place. Watch for more news on next year’s legislative priorities which they are currently preparing.

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The 2025 Iowa Legislature provided \$150,000 for trafficking victim services which is a first in providing any state funds in addressing their needs. A couple of other pieces of legislation passed: HF 572 creates a new felony offense for human smuggling; HF 649 strengthens the laws by expanding the definition of human trafficking and victim, increasing penalties for soliciting sexual services from minors thereby providing more tools for law enforcement and creating broader legal definitions and clearer pathways for prosecution.

****RED SAND PROJECT**

You are probably wondering what sand has to do with human trafficking prevention. Those grains of red sand have a very important message to visually send to those in your community. Each year, Chains Unlimited in Cedar Rapids partners with The Red Sand Project in honor of World Day Against Human Trafficking. Molly Gochman, artist and activist, created this participatory artwork by using sidewalk interventions and earthwork installations to create opportunities for people to question, connect with an organization, and inspire action against Human Trafficking and exploitation. It involves pouring environmentally friendly red sand into the cracks of sidewalks parking lots, etc. to raise awareness about human trafficking and those who “fall through the cracks” in this heinous crime. It has been done in all 50 states and 70 countries with more than one million participants.

Chains Interrupted enhances this awareness effort with sidewalk chalk (an option) messages (approved messages) and invites us to conduct our own Red Sand project in our community. It is an easy way to raise awareness about HT and those who “fall through the cracks.” Who wouldn’t wonder about red sand in cracks or sidewalk messages within your community!! For more information on participation:

Contact Office@Chainsinterrupted.com **to receive the details** (including the approved list of sidewalk chalk messages (if you choose to use this).

Gather people, location(s), necessary permissions (don’t let this scare you), and supplies. The sand is free, but they ask you to pay for shipping. If you are close to Cedar Rapids you can arrange to obtain the sand and other materials, including yard signs, from Chains Interrupted.

Host your event between now and July 30 is suggested. *The Iowa Task Force, however, advises those interested to extend the date through the rest of the summer.* Other recommendations/options include offering education on human trafficking at your event, distributing printed materials such as brochures, handouts, or yard signs.



Share your experiences. Make sure you take photos and videos of your sidewalk transformation (no face photos of minors unless you have permission) and share them on social media. They can be sent to Chains Interrupted but that must be done by July 25 for a collective video. Please send any event information to your branch newsletter chair, local papers, on social media and to the AAUW Iowa HT Task Force (maahrens@mchsi.com ellesweborg@gmail.com) for inclusion in the *Iowa Initiative*.

Chains interrupted indicate “that this is a powerful opportunity to spark important conversations about human trafficking—and just how close to home it truly is. Last, year, individuals from across Iowa, throughout the U.S. (including California, Florida, and Nebraska), and even internationally (like Kosovo) joined our initiative. Let’s see how far we can expand it together this year!” In Iowa during Equal Pay Day at the Capitol, hosted by AAUW Iowa, a group of people from Kosovo came to our HT table display and took several of our brochures to share with others after conversations indicating the importance of the issue in Kosovo. Together we can and are doing this. We are better together! Have a great HT Prevention summer to make a difference in your community.

The following Opinion piece by Melody Stone appeared earlier this year in an Iowa newspaper and is an excellent example of stimulating advocacy, awareness, and action. Contact Melody at prairiemelody@gmail.com to arrange for sharing with other newspapers/outlets.



AAUW Iowa Spring Conference
April 25, 2026
Diamond Event Center in Cedar Falls

Iowa Needs to increase support combatting human trafficking

Melody Stone, MA, LMHC, North Iowa Coalition Against Human Trafficking Founder

Human trafficking is the fastest growing worldwide criminal enterprise, surpassing illegal drugs and weapons and it's in your backyard. The harsh reality is that Human Trafficking has increased in Iowa according to the U.S. State Department. Extrapolating the numbers of reported calls suggests that more than 100,000 Iowans are victims of human trafficking. The National Human Trafficking Hotline and the Iowa Victim Service Call Center report a rise in reports however these numbers represent less than half a percent of all human trafficking cases. According to a dark web study conducted by Creighton University Human Trafficking and Social Media Initiative, there are 320 trafficking victims in Iowa at any given time. This number should alarm Iowans and send an urgent message to policy makers and elected officials to earmark critical funds specifically for victims of human trafficking.

As a state, Iowa has always been known for its hard working, dedicated people who share a strong sense of community. A decade ago, there were virtually no programs within the state addressing the need to support victims of human trafficking. Through dedicated efforts and sacrifices from within the private sector, Iowa has now established an infrastructure of nine organizations providing residential programs, meeting the unique needs of trafficking survivors. These nonprofit organizations have struggled to survive, and some have been forced to cut services due to a lack of resources. The sad reality is, until July 1, 2025, there was no state funding for trafficked victim services. For the first time the 2025 Legislature established a \$150,000 fund for trafficked victim services. It is a starting point but the Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking continues to ask for \$1 million to specifically support victims of human trafficking in Iowa. This situation leaves nonprofit organizations constantly struggling to stay afloat, hampered by the increased need for services and continual short fall in resources.

Shared Hope International, is a well-respected organization dedicated to ending human trafficking. In the fall of each year, they issue a report card to each state grading them on 6 issue areas. Since 2011, Shared Hope has established an advanced legislative framework, providing a comprehensive analysis and assessment of all state statutes relating to and impacting child and youth sex trafficking in all 50 states and D.C. Year after year, Iowa has continued to receive an "F" grade on the national report card. This dismal score is reflective of the low priority by policy makers and a pervasive attitude that human trafficking is not occurring in Iowa. Our former state senator, Maggie Tinsman, is zealously combating

human trafficking and is a strong advocate for legislative reforms. When people question Maggie about this issue in Iowa, she responds by saying, "Iowa is perfect for human trafficking. We have a giant rural area to safeguard and protect it and mainly an attitude that it is not happening here. That's exactly where it is!" In a state known for its strong sense of responsibility within our communities we simply must prioritize our efforts, combining the private and public sectors to effectively intervene in human trafficking. Collaboration is essential, offering victims a way out, and providing comprehensive support and services for their healing and recovery.

Melody Stone is a trauma trained counselor, prevention education specialist, professional trainer, and Ambassador with Shared Hope International. She is also the founder of North Central Iowa Coalition Against Human Trafficking, incorporating 23 counties. Melody networks with and supports the efforts of many anti-trafficking organizations and abolitionists across Iowa including the Network Against Human Trafficking, NAHT. She serves on the Iowa Human Trafficking Legislative Committee and strongly supports priority targeted recommendations for each legislative session.

With each passing year Iowa must not lose ground in addressing the critical needs of victims who have become ensnared in the fastest growing criminal enterprise, human trafficking. These children and adults are targeted and trapped online or in person for sex, labor, or sextortion schemes. On behalf of North Central Iowa Coalition Against Human Trafficking, NCICAHT and other abolitionists across our state, I continue to make an urgent appeal to our legislature to take decisive actions in 2026 to continue supporting human trafficking prevention in partnership with concerned Iowans to increase our victim services fund to \$1 million dollars and support the 2026 human trafficking legislative agenda being developed as we speak.

For more information, contact the Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery at www.iowanah.org. If you are interested in joining NCICAHT, North Central Iowa Coalition Against Human Trafficking, or to inquire about no-cost prevention education, professional training or presentations please contact Melody Stone at praiiemelody@gmail.com

Together we can make Iowa the least hospitable state for human trafficking to exist and provide comprehensive services for victims who are most deserving of our support and care!

How AAUW and the United Nations Interact

Kathleen Laurila, International Relations Director

Kathleen Laurila represented the International Federation of University Women at the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations from 2000-2019.

Iowa AAUW primarily focuses our programs and advocacy on the issues we face in our state that affect Iowa women and girls. But we also understand that actions by the federal government affect policies and programs in Iowa. Likewise, albeit more remotely, the policies and services of the United Nations can impact Iowa as well.

The U.S. was the primary nation in forming this global body in 1945 - now numbering 193 member nations. As we may remember from AAUW history, Professor Virginia Gildersleeve, the Dean of Barnard College and AAUW member co-founded the



International Federation of University in 1919 together with the organizations in the UK and Canada. Later, Professor Gildersleeve was the sole woman delegate from the U.S. which negotiated the Charter establishing the United Nations.

We may not think about the United Nation often, but as an organization of educators and advocates, *what we do has been guided* in many ways by policies agreed to by the nations of the world, and we should acknowledge the value of its objective as written in 1945: “...*maintaining international peace and security, fostering friendly relations among nations, and promoting global cooperation to solve economic, social, and humanitarian problems.*”

The United Nations consists of six main organs:

1. General Assembly (all member nations),
2. Security Council (five permanent nations including the U.S. + a rotation of an additional ten nations; provides for a peacekeeping force staffed and funded by member nations, often referred to as the “blue helmets”),
3. ECOSOC (Economic, Social and Cultural Organization) (the largest UN body and has agencies that include gender equality, education and health),
4. Secretariat (Executive Administration headed by a Secretary-General),
5. Trusteeship Council (ensures that territories are treated fairly), and the

6. International Court of Justice or World Court (settles legal disputes between nations, and advises about legal questions referred to it by any UN body) Note: the International Criminal Court ICC is a separate non-UN entity which investigates and tries individuals charged with such crimes as genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.

AAUW is most directly affected by UN member policy agreements of the ECOSOC agencies, which includes UNESCO (UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). As a Non-Governmental Organization, AAUW is an accredited organization of ECOSOC which allows our representatives to have interaction at the UN wherein our voice and ideas are heard.

The UN has formally recognized that women’s rights are human rights, and within UNESCO the work is led by UN Women, the agency that is the global champion for gender equality, delivering programs, policies and standards that uphold women’s rights.

Other programs of ECOSOC to which we can relate include our focus on access to quality education. We also focus on women’s health especially as it relates to reproductive health and violence against women, currently through our human trafficking focus, which, indeed, crosses all national boundaries. UNESCO’s Department of Education, the World Health Organization and the International Labor Organization are agencies of ECOSOC, each of which has developed global agreements which address issues we care about.

Other areas that are addressed by ECOSOC that impact Iowans, if not directly on AAUW policy priorities, include our agriculture industry, our work force dependency on migrants and refugees, spread of epidemics and diseases, and science and technology exchange.

Although the U.S. is a member of the UN, it does not participate nor fund all the agencies as each Congress can determine that. Nationally, AAUW has long had a legislative priority to fully fund all dues to which the U.S. has agreed to fund, currently in distressing arrears. The U.S. Senate must vote to ratify any agreements made by the UN General Assembly even if the U.S. President has signed the agreement. Thus, the Convention on the Elimination of All Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) has remained unratified since 1979, as well as the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Nevertheless, in both cases, AAUW embraces the tenets of those two Conventions.

AAUW Membership and Dues

Nancy Henderson, AAUW Iowa Treasurer and Becky Ahrendsen, AAUW Iowa Membership Vice President

AAUW membership is open to anyone with an associate (or equivalent, e.g., RN) degree or higher from an accredited educational institution. Membership runs from July 1st through June 30th.

Individuals can join the national AAUW without having to join a state and branch...but by joining at the state and branch level, too, you can serve in leadership roles, sponsor community action projects, and lobby on priority issues like pay equity and Title IX reform.

Dues can be paid electronically at the AAUW national website: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/why-join/>

Dues can also be paid to your branch treasurer or membership chair. Contact your branch for specific information.

- Individuals who join AAUW pay national, state, and local branch dues. Currently, national dues are \$74.00 (fully tax-deductible). Iowa state dues are \$10. Branch dues vary by branch.
- Dual members of an Iowa branch and the Iowa E Network would pay branch dues for both.
- Paid-life members are exempt from national dues, but must still pay state and branch dues.
- Honorary life members - 50-year members and others honored – are exempt from national and state dues. Some members choose to help out the state by paying state dues. Branch dues may or may not be exempt – please check with your branch for direction.
- Undergraduates or degree-seeking graduates enrolled in full-time or part-time programs can join AAUW at a special low rate and enjoy a range of benefits to help them succeed on campus and after graduation. AAUW national dues are fully tax deductible.
 - ◇ Student Membership Dues (College/University

Member School): FREE

- ◇ Student Membership Dues (Non-College/ University Member School): \$18.81/annual
- ◇ Students would pay \$5.00 for Iowa state dues. Branch dues vary by branch.

SHAPE THE FUTURE: The Shape the Future membership campaign is a tool that branches can use to recruit and retain members. With this campaign, branches can offer 50% off national dues when prospective members join AAUW at an event or meeting. A “new member” is someone entirely new to AAUW or an individual who rejoins after two or more years of lapsed membership.

Branches also earn one free national membership for every two new members they recruit, with a maximum of three free memberships annually

Hold an event or meeting and offer the discounted membership rate to attendees. Co-sponsor with local community colleges or colleges and universities, and community organizations such as the Girl Scouts or the YWCA. Spotlight local issues that will allow you to collaborate with other groups, including those with different membership bases.

Invite participants to join on the spot to receive 50% off national dues. Remember: All national dues are tax deductible.

Have the participant complete your membership form and pay the discounted national dues, plus state and branch dues in total to the branch finance officer. The finance officer should process the membership and payment within 10 days of the event.

More specific information can be found at the national website: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/leader-resources-tools/state-branch/shape-the-future-campaign/>

Des Moines Water Works Tour

Would you like to learn more about the effect of nitrates on drinking water, and the nitrate removal process? The Des Moines branch has scheduled a tour of the DM Water Works for August 19 at 10. There are limits for tour sizes and they need a list of participants ahead of time, so contact Ann Gale if you would like to join the tour. 515-320-4404 or ann.gale9@gmail.com. She will send you more information.



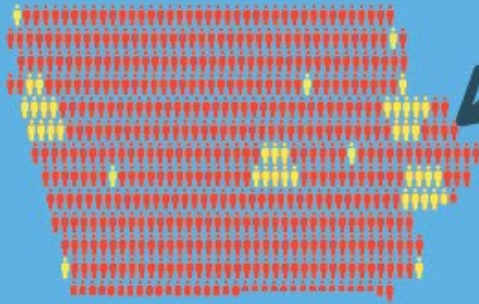
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



PUBLIC SCHOOLS EDUCATE

92%

OF IOWA'S CHILDREN



PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE ACCOUNTABLE.

- ✓ ALL CHILDREN ACCEPTED
- ✓ ELECTED SCHOOL BOARDS
- ✓ PUBLIC AUDITS
- ✓ PUBLIC BUDGETS
- ✓ ASSESSMENTS TO TRACK PROGRESS
- ✓ CURRICULUM INPUT

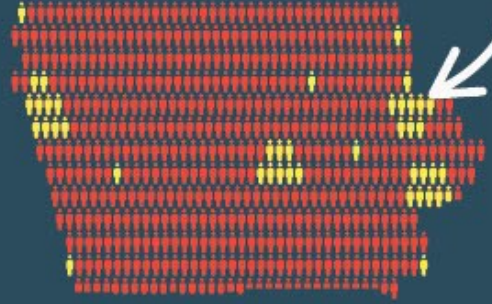
PRIVATE SCHOOLS



PRIVATE SCHOOLS
EDUCATE ONLY

8%

OF IOWA'S CHILDREN



PRIVATE SCHOOLS ARE NOT ACCOUNTABLE.

- NOT ALL CHILDREN ACCEPTED
- NO ELECTED SCHOOL BOARDS
- NO PUBLIC AUDITS
- NO PUBLIC BUDGETS
- NO ASSESSMENTS TO TRACK PROGRESS
- NO CURRICULUM INPUT

PUBLIC FUNDS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS!

TO LEARN MORE AND WAYS TO TAKE ACTION, VISIT:

IOWACCI.ORG/PSS



We are a multiracial, multigenerational group of parents, educators, students and community members who are organizing for fully funded public schools that teach the truth of our history, uphold the dignity of individuals of all races and backgrounds, and have the resources to unlock the full potential of all students so they can be leaders of tomorrow.



DID YOU KNOW?

- Private school vouchers are projected to siphon off **NEARLY \$1 BILLION** OF IOWA'S public school dollars in just 4 years with no accountability for how the public money is spent.
- Private schools **RAISE** tuition to soak up taxpayer dollars and turn vouchers into coupons for the wealthy.
- Public money goes mostly (**85%**) to people who have **ALREADY** chosen private schools and vouchers are **NOT** based on need with no income caps in place.
- Independent studies in Indiana, Louisiana, Ohio, and Washington DC show that student performance and achievement **GO DOWN** as private voucher programs **EXPAND**.

