

AAUW of OR State Public Policy Update February 2019

I have an Agenda, which I set forth below, but this is a call for **YOU** to join in AAUW of OR Public Policymaking. As I hope you know, I do all I can to advance our goals in the legislature, as does the State Public Policy Committee, but our achievements are based on the fact that we represent an organization constituted of people who read, write, vote and care. Our success counts on your affirmative support. The reason I mention this now is that of our priority bills for this Session is one that deals with age discrimination and I am collecting personal stories about any experiences you or others you know have had in this area.

Here's our Agenda:

- 1. Your stories about age discrimination are needed**
- 2. Lobby Day Update**
- 3. Where we stand with AAUW of OR legislative priorities**
- 4. Did you have any second thoughts about filing a sexual harassment complaint, but by the time you got the courage, it was too late?**

1. Your stories about age discrimination are needed - Right now, even if age is the primary factor in a negative employment decision and the employer can come up with one reason other than age to justify it, it can avoid any liability for age discrimination. This bill says if age is a factor, it's discrimination, and employers can't discriminate on the basis of age. As you may be aware, age discrimination is increasingly becoming a reason that older workers lose jobs and are bypassed when new jobs or career advancements are available. These barriers are particularly significant for women. For example, attached below my signature is an article that describes how IBM would "correct seniority mix" by cutting almost three-quarters of its employees and "replacing a substantial share with younger, less-experienced and lower-paid workers and sending many positions overseas." We also know that many of the early pioneers in the tech industry were women [Access an NPR article at <https://www.npr.org/sections/alltechconsidered/2014/10/06/345799830/the-forgotten-female-programmers-who-created-modern-tech>]. This *Washington Post* article refers to studies demonstrating that "a majority of workers over the age of 50 are likely at some point to be shoved out of their jobs, either via an overt firing or resignation under pressure of demotions, loss of future benefits or deteriorating work conditions."

This discrimination isn't anything new. I would genuinely appreciate hearing from you if you, or anyone you know, has experienced — or believes they have experienced — discrimination in employment on the basis of age. As we did with the Pay Equity bill, I will gather these stories for the purposes of written, or if it would work out, in-person testimony before the Committee. The hearing on this bill is **March 13th at 8:00 a.m.** before the House Committee on Business and Labor so I need to collect this information ASAP !!! AAUW of

OR and Gresham Branch member Representative Carla Piluso is the champion for this bill. Yay Carla !!

I will also be following up with an email SALSA blast asking you to send in letters of support.

PLEASE SEND ME YOUR STORIES ABOUT EXPERIENCES OF AGE DISCRIMINATION ASAP

2. Lobby Day Update - Vice Chair of AAUW of OR Public Policy Shilpi Banerjee is doing a great job at getting Lobby Day up and running. And, yes - NOW is the time to register. All the information you need in order to register is in the Convention edition of *OR News*, which is also available via our website [<https://aauw-or.aauw.net>]. Lobby Day this year will be held on April 11th from 12:30 - 5:30, which is the afternoon before our State Convention. Because of construction at the Capitol, we had to move to another location, although it is right across from the Capitol. This location is Basement A, Department of Education building (255 Capitol St NE, Salem, OR 97310).

The them of our 2019 Lobby Day is Student Success. We could not have a more dedicated or prestigious panel, and our panel members are truly the "movers and shakers" in Oregon's educational policy making. The panel includes Representative Margaret Doherty - Chair of the House Education Committee, either Oregon Department of Education Superintendent Colton Gill or Deputy Director Carmen Urbina, Morgan Allan - Deputy Executive Director of Policy and Advocacy, Confederation of Oregon School Administrators (COSA) and Laurie Wimmer - Government Relations Consultant of the Oregon Education Association. I surely hope you can attend this Lobby Day — we need to demonstrate to these individuals how much we really do care about education in Oregon.

As you may have been reading, there is a lot that has been happening with educational policy in Oregon. Our top legislative priority also relates to education in that it seeks to increase OR Department of Education funding for Title IX compliance / enforcement in our K - 12 schools..

I will also add that Shilpi and I will be making a presentation on "*AAUW of Oregon Public Policy: Putting our Values into Action*" at the State Convention, on Saturday, April 12, 3:15 to 4:15 slot. At least one of the items we will be talking about is how AAUW of OR decides on what legislation we will support or oppose. This includes whether we will serve as the primary mover, actively support or oppose with in-person or written testimony to a Committee, or generally track a bill in order to determine whether we should be more active. Take a look at the list below to see what bills the Committee has decided to take a stand on. In particular, I note SB 2251 which relates to firearms safety legislation. Discussing our choice to support this bill may make for some interesting discussion !!

3. Where we stand with AAUW of OR legislative priorities - Thanks to our State Public Policy Committee, we have a number of bills that we are actively supporting and/or tracking. It's quite a list!! Here they are. The bills are more or less ordered on the basis of our level of activity.

HB 2562 – Increases funding to OR Department of Education to raise state Title IX Coordinator position from .25 FTE (current status) to 2 FTE's. Title IX is the federal law that prohibits gender based discrimination in schools, such as sexual harassment / bullying, rules regarding girls-only after school programs, athletic opportunities, etc. We are the primary advocate on this bill.

HB 2818 – Age discrimination. We are working with AARP. Tell me about your experiences [See Item 1 above] !!!!

SB 794 - Requires public colleges, universities and community colleges to collect information about parental status in their demographic forms. How are we ever going to determine the rate of graduation or assess additional service needs of our student parents without knowing how many student parents are actually attending post-secondary educational institutions? We are the primary advocate on behalf this bill.

SB 726 - Bans non-disclosure and no rehire provisions in sexual harassment settlement and pre-employment agreements. We are actively working with a coalition.

Paid Family / Medical Leave or the FAMLI Equity Act. This bill was just filed so I don't have a copy of it to refer you to.

HB 2767 - Increases minimum legal marriageable age to 18. The underlying purpose of the bill is to ban child marriages.

SB 669 - Requires private agency caregivers providing personal care services to complete specified training. Prohibits retaliation against in-home caregiver for making a complaint.

HB 2251 - Bans transfer of handguns or assault weapons to persons under 21. Persons subject to certain court protective orders are prohibited from possessing firearms if they had opportunity to be heard and failed to request a hearing. Requires courts to order relinquishment of firearms when a person is convicted of certain domestic violence offenses or is subject to certain court orders. Requires hospitals to submit data concerning patients with injuries caused by firearms to the Oregon Health Authority. Creates crime of endangering a minor by allowing access to a firearm, and a minor may lawfully possess firearm only with permission of a parent or guardian.

HB 2542 – Requires high school students to demonstrate civics proficiency. I include this bill here for your information, but the bill isn't going anywhere. The rationale for that is: what will you do for students who don't or can't demonstrate that proficiency, and there is already a civics curriculum which school districts can choose to highlight or not. This may be an area suitable for some local and Branch public policy attention!

HB 2344, 2515, 2350, 2768 - Requires correctional facilities / OR Housing and Community Services / OR Health Plan to provide feminine hygiene products, including

both sanitary napkins and tampons, and diapers at no cost. Right now incarcerated women have to purchase tampons.

HB 3020 - Requires public schools to make available, at no cost, menstrual products in at least 50 percent of bathrooms at schools with students in any grade from grade 7 through 12.

HB 3028 - Increases the Earned Income Tax Credit benefit from 8% to 20% for families and 11% to 25% for families with children under the age of 3. This is a bill that has long been needed to benefit our lower wage population. AAUW of OR is a member of the EITC Coalition.

SB 123 - Extends application of provision prohibiting salary history inquiries to include employment agencies

SB 793 - Extends the statute of limitations [time period in which a lawsuit has to be filed] for adult survivors of sexual assault to bring a civil lawsuit.

HB 2879 – We oppose this bill. It creates an income tax credit for attendance by a taxpayer dependent of private school, home school or virtual public charter school. This is a school voucher bill.

I do believe that's the list. There is one bill that relates to sexual harassment at the K - 12 level which I anticipate will be filed. If it is filed in its current format, I'm not at all sure I would recommend that we support it. There are clearly some last minute changes being made, however.

4. Have you ever have any second thoughts about filing a sexual harassment complaint, but by the time you got the courage, it was too late? As you can see from the above list, SB 793 extends the time period within which one can file a lawsuit based on sexual assault. Were you ever the victim of sexual assault but were too ashamed to come forward? Did you ever wish you could have done something about it, but it was too late? If so, please let me know. I know the proponents of this bill are looking for personal stories about these experiences. I can certainly keep these disclosures confidential and we can discuss how to do that.

Conclusion

I look forward to receiving your communications about age discrimination. Hope all is well with you and yours!

Best,

Trish

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