

# Historic Principles

1881-2007



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# Introduction

**F**or more than 125 years, the American Association of University Women has examined the fundamental issues of the times—educational, social, economic, and political—and taken courageous positions, often far ahead of popular opinion. During these 125 years of public participation at the local, state, national, and international levels, AAUW has evolved clear principles that underscore its mission of advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research. Basic to these principles—which form the body of policy that empowers the Association, its branches, divisions, and individual members—has been the conviction that true equality requires a balance between the rights of the individual and the needs of the larger community.

*Historic Principles* is distilled from the records of study and action by AAUW members, as reflected in Association legislative programs, resolutions, issues, statements of principle, AAUW Board of Directors positions and policies, and legislative actions. The Association public policy program, adopted at biennial conventions, identifies short-term federal policy priorities based upon their viability, critical need, strong member support, and potential for distinctive AAUW contribution. AAUW resolutions are adopted at biennial conventions to articulate evolving positions and address major issues requiring special emphasis. AAUW issues are program and policy initiatives adopted by the board of directors based upon member direction. Thus, the participation and priorities of AAUW members influence the course of study and action which, in turn, generates the cutting edge of evolving principles for the future.

Together with the Association legislative program, issues, and resolutions, these historic principles provide the means for the continuing evolution and focusing of AAUW's positions. Action on these principles and positions can be taken in the name of AAUW through implementing procedures outlined by AAUW board policy.

*N.B.: Unless stated otherwise, the following excerpts are statements of support.*



# Education

AAUW believes that public education is the foundation of a democratic society and that equity and excellence in education are not a choice but an imperative. AAUW advocates responsible financial support for education at all levels, a position firmly rooted in the principle of public funds for public schools, and opposes all diversions of public funds to private elementary and secondary schools.

AAUW advocates academic freedom, protection from censorship, and vigorous defense of the right to learn and to teach. AAUW advocates measures that strengthen the profession of teaching.

Recognizing that all individuals require lifelong access to appropriate and challenging educational and employment opportunities, AAUW has long supported early childhood education, adult and continuing education, vocational and technical education, and programs for students with special needs.

Born of the need to improve women's access to higher education, AAUW has been for more than a century an advocate of open access to postsecondary education, nondiscriminatory student financial aid, federal aid to higher education, and the elimination of sex bias on campus. To promote equality of opportunity and access for women on campus, AAUW established its fellowships program in 1888, which became the basis of the AAUW Educational Foundation in 1958. The AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund was established in 1981 with the goal of eliminating sex discrimination in higher education and became a program of the Educational Foundation in 2005.

**1921** and continually until department status was gained in **1979** “... [supports] a bill to create a Federal Department of Education.”

**1941** “Democratic education ... necessitates in the present emergency the development of a philosophy of education that recognizes the interdependence of educational institutions and the community; utilizes the heritage of differing groups; provides equal opportunity for all youth; and envisages the reconstruction of the world on a basis of respect for the dignity and worth of the individual.”

**1983** “... is committed to equity and quality in education.”

**1991** “... supports the right of all students and staff to an affirmative, positive, equitable, and safe educational environment.”

**1997** “... promotes gender fairness, equality, and diversity through all levels of education and supports equal access to all postsecondary institutions; and advocates for gender-fair distribution of financial aid.”

**2003** “... supports efforts to train women for the workforce demands

of the 21st century, equipping them with the tools to be economically self-sufficient.”

## Education of Women and Girls

**1898** “College training is a necessity and not a luxury for the average woman as well as for the average man.”

**1937** “... has as one of its important aims the intellectual advancement of women.”

**1941** “To build for the future, we need the trained mind and the enquiring spirit. The Association’s fellowship program to encourage gifted women scholars is therefore more than ever important.”

**1947** “... [opposes] all attempts to exclude or limit the enrollment of women, on the basis of sex, in professional schools or coeducational colleges.”

**1975** “... encourages the establishment of endowed professorships for women.”

**1983** “... measures that guarantee educational equity for women.”

**1985** “... [supports the] reinstatement and vigorous enforcement of Title IX and other measures that promote

educational equity for women and girls [and] nondiscriminatory student financial aid.”

**1987** “... [encourages the] preparation of women and girls for the full range of their responsibilities.”

**1989** “... will strive to increase the number of women involved in scientific and technological careers through programmatic efforts aimed at motivating and inspiring women and girls to pursue mathematical, scientific, and engineering studies.”

**1991** “... supports the United Nations goal of 100 percent worldwide literacy for women by the year 2000.”

**1998** “... believes single-sex education does not solve the problem of gender inequality. The long-term solution requires that we focus attention on providing the best educational conditions and practices possible to both girls and boys so that all students can succeed and develop to their full potential.”

**1999** “... believes efforts to achieve high academic standards in K-12 education will fail unless education reform focuses on the varying educational needs and learning styles of all students.”

“There ought to be one or two Alumnae at each State capital, whose duty it should be to oppose all education bills of a pernicious tendency. ... Nothing less than eternal vigilance will keep the educational standard even as high as its present unsatisfactory position.”

—Report of the Committee on Educational Legislation, Annual Meeting Association of Collegiate Alumnae (AAUW Predecessor), 1901

**2001**

“... implement strong policies to deter bullying and harassment to ensure a safe learning environment.”

**2003**

“... vigorous enforcement of Title IX and all other civil rights laws pertaining to education.”

“... increased support for, and access to, higher education for woman and other disadvantaged populations.”

**2007**

“As women continue to make gains in education and the workplace, it is important to remember that these successes do not come at the expense of men. ... that is the insidious implication underlying much of the recent assaults on Title IX that are in turn fueling erroneous notions of a “boy crisis.” ... AAUW maintains that education is not a zero sum game, and that the real issue is about girls doing better, not about boys doing worse.”

## Funding

**1939**

“... [supports] federal aid for free tax-supported public education, including libraries.”

**1941**

“... [supports] federal aid to states to equalize opportunity for public education.”

**1967**

“... [supports] financial aid to institutions of higher education to offset constantly increasing tuition costs to all students, in addition to programs of scholarship aid.”

**1971**

“... opposes further dilution of support for public elementary and secondary schools through appropriation of public funds for non-public schools.”

**1975**

“... [supports] adequate forward funding of educational programs at all levels.”

**1998**

“... [believes] an appropriate strategy to improve school systems is to direct additional resources to public schools rather than diverting public funds into private institutions.”

**1999**

“... has grave concerns over turning federal education funding into block grants.... Block grants will likely harm states’ and school districts’ efforts to provide quality educational services to

all children and are not needed to target federal funds more efficiently, nor to eliminate bureaucracy”

**2001**

“... opposes Educational Savings Accounts because they divert public funds to private or religious elementary and secondary schools.”

**2005**

“... critical policy changes like vouchers should not be considered in the context of disaster relief. ... A better way to distribute aid is through existing law, which provides a ready-made avenue for funding that has already cleared Congress and would not create unnecessary fights over the use of vouchers. Schools need to be reopened in affected areas as soon as possible so that children can get on with their education and their lives. Public

schools that have been doing such a good job in absorbing evacuated students need to receive additional funding as quickly as possible.”

**2007**

“... it is possible—and necessary—to maintain a commitment to high standards and greater accountability in our nation’s public schools.

However, that commitment cannot be in principle only—it must be accompanied by the federal commitment and financial assistance to make it a reality.”

“... Congress can ... make loan repayment more manageable for students. ... Loan repayment is an even more significant burden for women, who earn less on average over the course of their lives than their male counterparts.”

## Curriculum

**1921**

“... [supports] a bill to establish a nationwide program of physical education through the schools.”

**1947**

“... [supports] providing guidance and counseling services, facilities for recreation and social development.”

**1959**

“... [supports] programs in education for children under six [and] college programs which rest not only on an understanding of facts, but also on ideals and theories which elicit judgment.”

**1971**

“... [supports] vocational and technical education ... programs directed toward intergroup and interpersonal relations, necessary in an ethnically pluralistic society ... development and use of innovative programs, techniques and materials ... libraries, learning centers and related media.”

**1973**

“... [supports] the inclusion and incorporation of Women’s Studies into the curriculum of higher education.”

**1975**

“... [supports] environmental education ... programs related to the study of the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of citizenship in the national and world community ... enrichment programs as an integral part of day care curriculum for young children ... gifted and talented ... nontraditional forms of post-secondary education.”

**1977**

“... [supports] comprehensive family life and sex education programs in grades K-12.”

**1979**

“... [supports] education in the prevention of drug abuse.”

**1983**

“... [supports] programs that promote computer literacy and competence in mathematics,

science and money management [and] programs designed to meet special needs.”

**2005**

“... while testing is an important measure of success, it is not the sole indicator of student progress. High-stakes testing as the sole indicator of achievement is problematic and discriminatory.”

**2007**

“... supports comprehensive sexuality education or ‘abstinence plus’ programs that include information about both abstinence and contraception. ... federally funded [abstinence-only] programs ... limit young people’s information and choices [and] censor information on contraception, pregnancy prevention, and sexually transmitted diseases.”

“... promote and strengthen science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education, especially for girls and other underrepresented populations in the fields.”

## Vocational Education

**1921**

“... [supports] an amendment to the Vocational Act providing for increased appropriations for instruction in home economics.”

**1971**

“... [supports] vocational and technical education in cooperation with business, industry and labor.”



**1983**

“... [supports] bias-free opportunities for lifelong learning, including vocational, technical, career, re-entry.”

**1995**

“To break the cycle of poverty and promote economic self-sufficiency, women and girls must have access to education and job training.”

“... supports measures to make vocational education and career preparation available to all women.”

“... believes that welfare reform and job training consolidation deserve separate consideration to ensure that resources are dedicated to building a system that will serve all of those in need—welfare recipients, students, displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, and dislocated workers.”

**1997**

“... believes that high quality education programs must integrate academic learning with practical career

preparation, and expose all students to a full range of career choices.”

“... advocates conscious measures—from the classroom and guidance office to the state education department—to expand options for women and girls and prepare them to compete in the future work force.”

**2005**

“...[supports] strengthening programs, including welfare and vocational education, to improve post-secondary education access, career development, and earning potential.”

## **Academic Freedom**

**1949**

“... reaffirms our long-established support of academic freedom as indispensable to any form of creative activity in schools and universities.”

**1959**

“... believes that freedom to learn and freedom to teach are essential to

the maintenance of sound education, and we accept the responsibilities of constant vigilance in the preservation of these freedoms.”

**1981**

“... [supports] academic freedom and responsibility [and the] protection of the pursuit of knowledge and access to that knowledge.”

**1983**

“... resists any attempts, whether by special interest groups, branches of government, or other sources, to ban or censor books or other media.”

**1993**

“... supports intellectual and academic freedom and the right of individuals to self-determination. We urge states and branches to identify and challenge extremist groups, candidates for public office, and tactics that would restrict these rights.”



# Individual Rights

Both the Association of Collegiate Alumnae (founded in 1881) and the Southern Association of College Women (founded in 1903), the associations that merged in 1921 to form AAUW, were created with a concern for human dignity, a concern that extends throughout AAUW's public policy history.

AAUW supports constitutional protection for the civil rights of all individuals in the United States and human rights in their fullest dimension for all peoples of the world. AAUW opposes all forms of discrimination and supports affirmative action.

AAUW promotes the protection of First Amendment freedoms of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition; advocates freedom of choice in the determination of one's reproductive life; and affirms the right to privacy and the separation of church and state. AAUW believes that among the basic rights of all persons are freedom from violence and abuse, freedom of information, and the right to vote.

The civil and economic rights of women have been of particular concern to AAUW members for more than 125 years. A major portion of AAUW's public policy activity has been directed toward achieving equality for women in education, the law, and political life, as well as in homes, workplaces, communities, and the world. AAUW supports passage and ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and supported the Women's Suffrage Amendment. Since the turn of the century, AAUW has supported pay equity and adequate retirement income for women. AAUW advocates recognition and appropriate valuation of women's unpaid work as homemakers and volunteers.

# Individual Rights

**1939**

“... [supports] such measures as may be necessary to protect civil rights in the United States.”

**1945**

“The social and economic welfare of every individual regardless of sex, creed, or race underlies democratic philosophy and is necessary for the perpetuation of democratic government.”

**1947**

“... recognizing that the well-being of all, seeking to eliminate discrimination against minority groups, and accepting the principle that the desirable standard of living is one which permits the full development of the capacities of each individual.”

“... [supports] suffrage for the District of Columbia ... national representation in Congress, participation in the election of the President and Vice President ... some measure of the local sovereign government.”

**1951**

“The convention is assembled with the conviction that human freedom is our primary concern.”

**1952**

“We may lose our liberties by the very means employed to defend them. ... Our real enemy is an ideology, a point of view, a set of values and a way of doing things which threaten to

enslave the human mind. ... We oppose all attackers of human freedom in whatever guise they appear.”

**1955**

“We will recognize in our action on all problems affecting minorities that limitations on the rights and privileges of one group are threats to the rights and privileges of us all.”

**1959**

“... dedicates ourselves to study and action on the threat both to our internal unity and our leadership among free nations made by the denial of constitutional rights to minority groups.”

**1968**

“... that the Board of AAUW adopt a resolution to be sent to Mrs. Coretta Scott King, expressing our solidarity with the spirit of the march on June 19 and our appreciation and support for her call to women to assume leadership in a ‘campaign of conscience,’ dedicated to achieving a nation of one people and brotherhood for all.”

**1969**

“... [supports] elimination of discrimination in the selection of juries.”

**1971**

“... [supports] equal right to vote and representation ... right of privacy ... equal opportunity in education, training, employment and housing ... abolition of the death penalty

throughout the United States ... right of citizens to all forms of peaceful dissent without fear of official surveillance or reprisal.”

“... support[s] ... the legalization of abortion, withdrawal from the Vietnam War, abolition of the death penalty, admission of the People’s Republic of China to the United Nations, and improved conditions for migrant farm workers.

**1972**

“... opposes all measures (legislative or Constitutional amendment) designed to prevent the use of busing to achieve integration of schools. [AAUW] reaffirms its support of busing as one among several ways to achieve school integration.”

**1973**

“... urges that the Department of Health, Education and Welfare continue to require Affirmative Action guidelines and their implementation.”

“... expresses its concern about the practice of corporal punishment in many schools and institutions and urges divisions and branches to work for laws and policies which will insure individual rights, deter physically and mentally abusive punishment and enhance mutual respect between schools and institutional personnel and students.”

**1977**

“... [supports] elimination of discrimination based on sex, race, color, creed, national origin, marital status, age, financial status or disability ... legal and human rights of children, the elderly, institutionalized persons and the handicapped ... right of all individuals to freedom from physical abuse ... adequate handgun control laws.”

**1981**

“... affirms the doctrine of separation of church and state.”

**1983**

“... [supports the] right to individual privacy and freedom from governmental and corporate intrusion [and the] right to public information.”

**1988**

Adopts a diversity statement that says, “There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability.”

**1989**

“... opposes all attempts to restrict civil rights on the basis of one’s proficiency in English.”

**1991**

“The Association, states, and

branches will commit time and resources to develop and implement a five-year plan to reduce barriers to underrepresented groups and to expand access to leadership opportunities with the intent of strengthening our diverse communities on a local, national, and global level.”

“... condemns and combats prejudicial harassment and violence against individuals based on sexual orientation, race, religion, creed, national origin, age, physical characteristics, disability, and gender.”

**“The world has the right to expect of institutions and organizations such as ours, moral courage, intellectual clarity ... and a candid and intrepid thinking about fundamental issues.”**

—AAUW President Susan B. Riley, *AAUW Journal*  
October 1952

**1993**

“AAUW states and branches are strongly encouraged to include the four AAUW vision priorities for diversity in their strategic plans: 1) reflect the demographics of the community in both membership and leadership at all levels, 2) foster open access to leadership, 3) enhance its

power and strength as the leading advocate for education and equity for all women and girls by making diversity a priority, and 4) welcome and affirm every member as a human being of worth and dignity.”

**1999**

“... supports affirmative action programs that establish equal opportunity for women and minorities; redress past gender, racial, and ethnic discriminations; and encourage diversity in the workplace, educational institutions, and businesses.”

“... [is] particularly concerned with gender-based hate crimes because they are not recognized by criminal law. AAUW believes that hate crimes against women are forms of sex discrimination, and that the federal government must have jurisdiction over gender-based hate crimes in certain cases in order to protect women.”

**2000**

“... believes that hate crimes are serious, well-documented problems that remain inadequately prosecuted and recognized. ... AAUW believes that while states continue to play the primary role in the prosecution of hate crime violence, the federal government must be able to address those cases in which local authorities are either unable or unwilling to investigate and prosecute.”

# Individual Rights

**2003**

“Encourages AAUW states and branches to analyze and discuss ways to balance the need to combat terrorism while protecting our vital civil liberties, and work to oppose legislation and administrative directives that threaten our civil liberties.”

“... believes true equity requires a balance between the rights of the individual and the needs of the community.”

“... vigorous protection of and full access to civil and constitutional rights.”

**2005**

“... while states should continue to play the primary role in the prosecution of hate crimes, the federal government must be able to investigate cases that local authorities are unable or unwilling to prosecute.”

## Equal Rights Amendment

AAUW's position on the Equal Rights Amendment evolved and was, in the first half of the century, bound up with the Association's alliance with labor unions around issues of protection for women and children in the workplace. The position evolved from clear opposition, to opposition unless workplace safeguards were guaranteed, to a position of neutrality, to unqualified support. In the 1970s, the amendment became the Association's top public policy priority.

**1922**

“... registers its opposition to the Blanket Amendment for removing all legal disabilities of women through an amendment to the federal constitution and through similar amendments to the constitutions of the various states.”

**1947**

“... [opposes] any equal rights amendment to the Constitution unless such amendment provides safeguards for the health, safety, and general welfare of women.”

**1953**

“... [is] in an entirely neutral position on the Equal Rights Amendment. It neither favors, nor does it oppose the amendment.”

**1968**

The AAUW Board of Directors launches “Action for a Unified Society,” a collection of community activities for civil rights.

**1970**

“... supports the discharge petition of Congresswoman Martha Griffiths to force the ERA out of the committee.”

**1971**

“... supports the Equal Rights Amendment for the United States Constitution without ... amendments.”

**1975**

“... assigns top priority to achieving ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and shall commit appropriate personnel and funds to that goal.”

**1977**

“... adopts the policy of not holding conventions in unratified states.”

**2003**

“... urges all states, branches, and members to take action to bring about ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment in three more states.”

## Women's Rights

**1917**

“... urges that appointments to the Federal Civil Service be made upon grounds of capability alone, without regard to sex.”

**1919**

“... [supports] equal pay for equal work in schools.”

**1921**

“... [supports] a bill providing the independent citizenship of married women ... reclassification of the Civil Service including a merit system ... revision of the salary scale without regard to sex.”

**1922**

“... opposes all bills that make any difference in the method of securing



men and women as party members or [on] any other committees or boards.”

“... desires introduction of women into diplomatic service.”

**1926**

“Votes for women have been achieved, but of course, we know that as yet equal political power is only barely potential. Equal jobs and full, equal, legal rights are still to be worked for.”

**1939**

“... [supports] full and free opportunity for women intellectually, socially, and economically, including the right to be employed according to abilities without regard to sex or marital status.”

**1945**

“... supports the principle of women’s fullest participation in all social, economic and political life.”

**1947**

“Both as individuals and as groups we undertake to seek out, endorse, and actively support qualified women for elective and appointive office.”

**1953**

“... supports measures for equal pay for equal work.”

**1955**

“... accepts the principle that the advancement of women depends primarily upon the continued and increased development of their own capacity to constructive leadership.”

**1969**

“... urges that women be represented on the Supreme Court.”

**1973**

“... [supports] equal opportunity for women in all aspects of life, including credit, mortgage funds, and insurance.”

**1975**

“... [will] initiate and work for change now in the economic and financial status of women, including the equal rights of women to all money earned and saved during the course of marriage ... support the U.S. National Women’s Agenda ... . AAUW urges focusing attention on the subject of voluntarism.”

**1977**

“... [supports] recognition of the rights and role of the homemaker.”

“... [urges] legal recognition of marriage as an equal partnership. ... Provide [women with] Social Security benefits and retirement and disability plans in their own right, and recognize homemaking and volunteer skills as valid employment qualifications.”

**1979**

“... endorses and urges its membership to pursue actively, the goals of the National Plan of Action [for women].”

**1981**

“... [supports] freedom from vio-

lence, abuse, and sexual harassment ... legislation to end all tax discrimination against married couples with two incomes ... a woman to serve as a justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.”

**1983**

“... [supports] measures to ensure legal recognition and financial benefits for unpaid work [and] measures to ensure equal pay for work of comparable value.”

**1985**

“... [supports] measures to ensure pay equity.”

**1987**

“... [urges] inclusion of the economic worth of homemaking and volunteer work in statistical measures ... equal access to capital, credit and insurance ... job protected family and medical leave ... adequate retirement income.”

**1995**

“... reaffirms its opposition to domestic violence ... encouraging states and branches to support inclusion of violence prevention skills in the pre-K–12 curriculum, and opposing discrimination against victims of domestic violence in insurance reform and health care reform.”

**1997**

“... encourages each branch in the nation to recognize the importance of the sesquicentennial of the Seneca Falls Women’s Rights Convention.”

# Individual Rights

**1999**

“... recognizes the sesquicentennial of the 1850 National Women’s Rights Convention, to address the unfinished agenda of equality for women.”

**2001**

“... continues to believe that pay equity—economic equity—is a simple matter of justice and strongly supports initiatives that seek to close the persistent and sizable wage gaps between men and women.”

**2003**

“... will support efforts to extend the legal statute of limitations in cases of gender discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.”

“... believes that ... what is necessary to ensure equal opportunity is vigorous federal enforcement of Title IX and its implementing policies at every level of education, not revisions to the standards that have moved our nation toward that equality.”

**2005**

“... supports efforts to create practical solutions to enhance collaboration between victim service organizations and civil legal assistance providers as well as to strengthen and improve the response of the criminal justice and legal systems for survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking.”

## Reproductive Rights

**1935**

“... [supports] legalizing the dispensing of information by physicians on contraception.”

**1969**

“... [supports] action programs designed to make available information and facilities for population control.”

**1971**

“... encourages its members and state divisions to work for repeal of restrictive laws on abortion, making abortion legal for those who wish it.”

**1977**

“... [supports the] right to individual choice in the determination of one’s reproductive life.”

**1998**

“Women should have access to a full range of reproductive health options, including the right to exercise their choice in the privacy of their doctor’s office, free from the intimidation and harassment.”

**1999**

“... supports grants to public and private nonprofit organizations to provide family planning and basic reproductive health care information and services to low-income women.”

**2003**

“... supports the right of every woman to safe and comprehensive reproductive health care.”

“... believes family planning and reproductive health programs are critical in helping combat unintended pregnancy, teen pregnancy, and sexually transmitted diseases.”

**2005**

“Every woman has the ability to make her own informed choices regarding her reproductive life within the dictates of her own moral and religious beliefs. ... AAUW believes that these deeply personal decisions should be made without governmental interference.”

**2006**

“... supports funding for international family planning that gives millions of women and families access to reproductive health care and information needed to plan the timing and spacing of pregnancies.”

**2007**

“Pharmacies that dispense other prescription drugs, services, and devices should be required to fill women’s prescriptions for contraception, as well as sell emergency contraception.”



# Government

Some of AAUW's earliest public policy statements were about the structure of government and citizens' access thereto. A fundamental belief in every person's right to representation has led AAUW through a century of advocacy for open, accountable, efficient, and responsive government.

Implicit in all of AAUW's public policy positions is the access of women to policy-making positions, support of governmental agencies administering programs, adequate appropriations, effective administration, and appropriate provisions for citizen participation.

AAUW advocates fair and equitable taxation; mixed public and private funding of elections, with spending limitations and full disclosure of funding sources; model employment practices by government; and protection of the system of checks and balances among the three coequal branches of government.

In periods of both stability and national emergency, whether that emergency arose from threat of war or economic disruptions, AAUW has maintained its priorities to education, research, and response to human needs in federal, state, and local budgets.



**1949**

“... [supports] measures to improve the quality of government and to increase public understanding with adequate appropriations for government research, personnel, and information.”

**1975**

“... calls for open, accessible, accountable government at all levels.”

## Efficiency

**1921**

“... [supports] reorganization of government departments to bring bureaus into logical relationship and to insure efficiency of government machinery.”

**1947**

“... [supports] measures to increase the efficiency of government and the quality of government services.”

**1977**

“... supports Congressional measures requiring positive decisions to eliminate unnecessary proliferation of agencies; reorganizing government oversight committees to pin-point and eliminate wasteful spending; and establishing finance procedures for government agencies, so that they can plan and operate more efficiently.”

## Citizen Participation and Lobbying

**1947**

“... [supports the] provision of adequate channels to increase public understanding of and participation in the formulation of domestic and foreign policy.”

**1951**

“... [urges a] provision for citizen participation.”

**1971**

“If our institutions are to play their indispensable role in resolving the problems ... of pressing issues, citizens must assume their public responsibilities and work together to make their institutions more responsive and responsible.”

**2006**

“... [the AAUW Capitol Hill Lobby Corps are] truly citizen lobbyists, with an emphasis on *citizen*. ... They're constant reminders to legislators of the voters whom they represent.”

## Elective and Appointive Office

**1950**

“Whether the state division or branch should ... work as a group to support a particular candidate ... is a matter for the division or branch to decide for itself. Nationally, the Association gives its support to individuals only when their election or appointment is to an office of national concern.”

**1973**

“... [supports] reform in conduct of election campaigns, especially in areas of funding and ethics.”

**1975**

“... supports full public disclosure of campaign expenditures and contributions. We support mixed public

and private funding of primary and general elections, with limitations on the candidates and contributions by individuals, regulated by an independent supervisory board.”

**1988**

“AAUW/branches/divisions may endorse or oppose candidates for *appointive* office ... may endorse candidates for *non-partisan elective* office ... may not endorse or oppose candidates for *partisan elective* office.”

**1997**

“... believes that the Senate has the obligation to consider the Administration's nominees on a timely basis, in order to avoid excessive disruptions in the functioning of federal agencies.”

**1999**

“... urges the Senate to consider qualified judicial nominees because federal judicial vacancies have reached a level that adversely affects the ability of federal courts to advance or protect equity for women and girls in education, employment, civil rights, and reproductive health.”

**2003**

“...support meaningfully campaign finance reform that will promote equitable participation and representation.”

**2005**

“We support a fair and balanced judiciary.”

## Amendment of the U.S. Constitution

1979

“... supports the time-honored process of amending the U.S. Constitution for single subject changes; therefore AAUW opposes the calling of a Constitutional Convention.”

2003

“... strongly opposes the notion that discrimination has any place in our country, and such discrimination should never be codified in that most sacred of democratic documents—the United States Constitution.”

## Spending Priorities

1927

“... [supports] adequate appropriations for the continued development of the Children’s Bureau and the Women’s Bureau, Department of Labor, and the Bureau of Home Economics, Department of Agriculture.”

1933

“[We are] facing a critical emergency unparalleled in our history ... essentially a financial one growing out of the current economic depression. ... This economic con-

“The machinery of democracy is a delicate thing. It is like a pair of scales in which a steady and continuous balance must be maintained between the powers of the people and the execution of those powers by its delegated representatives. A lax or uninformed people, an ambitious or indifferent representative body, and the necessary equilibrium is disturbed.”

—Editorial, *AAUW Journal*, Summer 1951

dition has resulted in a deplorable retrenchment in the field of education. ... [We urge] that the branches be encouraged to [take] an active part in supporting education programs ... that this Association convey to the President of the United States and to his advisers the imperative need for the continued support of essential research.”

1941

“... [urges] support of basic research by appropriate Federal agencies.”

1973

“... regards human needs in such areas as education, health, employment, housing, and environmental protection as the most critical issues facing our country and urges all

branches of the federal government to give these needs first priority by necessary budgetary appropriations.”

1985

“... [supports] funding for human needs with standards that ensure responsible distribution to those with the greatest need [and] reduction of the military budget.”

2001

“... believes that all entities, religious or secular, receiving

federal funds must comply with federal, state, and local anti-discrimination laws.”

2006

“It is crucial that the federal government maintain its commitment to funding quality education programs at all levels. ... AAUW believes these vital education and training programs play a central role in our nation’s strategy to ... prepare Americans for the 21st century workforce.”

2007

“Now is the time to invest in education and training programs to ensure that our nation will remain competitive in the global economy.”

# Labor, Health, and Human Services

AAUW was founded to increase women's access to higher education and encourage those women who had the privilege of higher education to take an active role in public life. But from its beginning, AAUW has worked to improve the health and welfare of all people, in the home, the community, the workplace, and the world.

Accordingly, AAUW's public policy statements have never been confined solely to education and have always included health and human needs priorities. In 1923, at the second convention of the merged American Association of University Women (see "Individual Rights"), the convention voted "to confine the Federal legislative activity of the AAUW to the educational field, with exceptions and emergencies," and went on to adopt a legislative program with such "exceptions and emergencies" as support of a maternity and infancy act, a child labor amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and transfer of the Interdepartmental Society of Hygiene Board to the Department of Justice.

AAUW promotes the social, economic, and physical well-being of all persons. AAUW advocates freedom from hunger and violence; access to health care; protection of the consumer; adequate labor standards; and social services, welfare and social security programs, and work and family policies that provide a measure of economic security for all.

# Labor, Health, and Human Services

**1937**

“... [supports] social and economic security to ensure the individual’s right to liberty and happiness.”

**1941**

“... [urges] coordination of the social welfare programs of the Federal Government, and extension to meet basic needs.”

**1965**

“... supports social and economic measures in the field of domestic policy to strengthen the American community.”

**1973**

“... [believes in] economic security with support for welfare reform, income maintenance programs, pension rights, and supportive social services.”

## Health

**1921**

“... [supports] a bill to establish a nationwide program of physical education through the schools, so as to develop all round efficiency and resistance to disease.”

**1933**

“... [supports] a measure promoting the general health of the rural population of the United States.”

**1935**

“... [supports] a measure promoting the general health of the population of the United States by providing for

prevention and control of disease, for the furtherance of sanitation, and for more extensive research to assist in the scientific knowledge needed for maintaining health.”

**1945**

“... [supports a] measure to enhance the health ... of the population, including ... rehabilitation programs for both veterans and civilians; an effective nutrition program; and federal funds, if necessary, for the extension of hospital and other public health facilities and personnel.”

**1971**

“... [supports] comprehensive health services, including mental health and family planning.”

**1979**

“... [urges] improved nutrition through educational programs and food services [and] comprehensive medical and dental health care services.”

**1985**

“... [supports] measures to improve the accessibility and affordability of quality health care.”

**1991**

“... believes that a national policy which reflects the needs of working families is long overdue in America.”

**1993**

“... advocates for appropriate measures in the public and private sectors

to prevent and cure HIV/AIDS, in women as well as in men, and for programs and funding to care for AIDS sufferers and their dependent children.”

“... supports health care reform that addresses the specific needs of women and includes access for all persons to affordable health care.”

**1997**

“... has long supported flexible workplace policies to address the family responsibilities of employees.”

**1999**

“... [believes that] the Patients’ Bill of Rights is the only legislation introduced that will significantly improve managed health care for all consumers, and especially for women.”

“... supports measures to improve the accessibility and affordability of quality health care for women and families.”

**2000**

“... believes that, in addition to providing unemployment benefits to new parents, the proposed regulation should be expanded to include other categories of family and medical leave as well.”

**2001**

“... will promote the establishment of meaningful gun violence prevention in the United States.”

**2005**

“... advocates increased healthcare and expansion of patients’ rights.”

### **Substance Abuse**

**1922**

“... [urges] control of the importation of narcotics ... arou[s] public sentiment to demand strict enforcement of our laws in regard to narcotics ... stringent laws restricting the importation of opium to the amount necessary for legitimate medicinal uses.”

**1953**

“... [supports] strengthening of existing federal penalties for the illegal sale and distribution of narcotics.”

**1971**

“... [urges] rehabilitation programs and other solutions to the problems of drug abuse.”

**1973**

“... [urges] solutions to the problems of drug abuse including alcoholism.”

**1979**

“... [supports] education in the prevention of drug abuse.”

**1983**

“... supports programs and

“Social need exists. The fact of its existence frowns at us from every street of our large cities; the consciousness of its existence plays through our philosophy. ... What is the actual relation which we, as college women, should bear to that need? We cannot refrain from this question, for it is part of the great question of our day.”

—Vida D. Scudder, Paper Presented to Association of Collegiate Alumnae, 1890

legislation to combat driving while intoxicated.”

**1997**

“... supports the promotion of comprehensive school-based health education, including effective tobacco use prevention curricula and measures to protect youth from purchasing tobacco products.”

### **Family Policy and Dependent Care**

**1953**

“... supports an amendment to the Internal Revenue Code to include a reasonable tax-deductible allowance for ... the care of minor children and/or care of aged or incapacitated dependents required to be made as a condition to the income-producing activities of the taxpayer.”

**1965**

“... [supports] family services, including day care.”

**1981**

“... [urges] reinforcement of the family unit through legislation, education, counseling, and support systems.”

**1985**

“... [believes in] accessible and affordable quality dependent care.”

**1987**

“... [supports] job-protected family and medical leave.”

**2003**

“... promotes the economic ... well-being of all persons. Essential to that well-being is an economy that provides ... paid family and medical leave.”

“... greater availability of and access to quality, affordable dependent care.”

**2007**

“Creating work environments that help employees balance the responsibilities of work and family is good public policy—good for workers, good for families, and good for business.”



## Children and Youth

**1923**

“... [urges] a child labor amendment to the Constitution of the United States.”

**1924**

“... [supports] adequate appropriation to the Children’s Bureau for collecting data on prostitution in its effect on the welfare of children.”

**1935**

“... [supports] provisions in the Social Security program for aid to dependent children, to crippled children, and to child welfare services.”

**1973**

“... [supports the] rights of minors.”

**1975**

“... [urges] comprehensive child protective laws and services, which include provision for reporting child abuse and maltreatment and provision for preventive and rehabilitative services.”

**1977**

“... [supports] juvenile justice programs which offer opportunities for prevention and rehabilitation.”

**1979**

“... urges the U.S. government to support the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child through legislation and programs insuring that all children enjoy these rights regardless of

race, color, sex, religion, and national or social origin.”

**1981**

“... [supports] programs that address special needs of adolescents.”

**1987**

“... [supports] measures which promote the prevention of teenage pregnancy.”

**1989**

“... [urges programs] to generate public awareness and action for teen pregnancy prevention.”

**1991**

“... urges the President of the United States to sign the ‘Convention on the Rights of the Child’ and send it to the U.S. Senate for its ratification.”

**1999**

“... supports safe and accessible reproductive health options for all women and opposes the so-called Child Custody Protection Act.”

**2005**

“Rather than making abortion more difficult and dangerous for young women, Congress should make abortion less necessary by enabling young women to make smart choices through comprehensive sex education and ensuring that young women have access to a range of effective contraceptives.”

## Aging, Social Security, and Retirement Income

**1945**

“... [urges] development of the Social Security program ... extension of old-age, survivors, and unemployment insurance coverage with adequate benefits ... financial aid to the states to provide public assistance for those who are not covered by present categories.”

**1953**

“... [supports] measures to provide adequate appropriations for and to preserve the administrative integrity of the Social Security program.”

**1957**

“... [believes] that attention be given to the creative use of the skills and abilities of the aging, to their care and housing, and to the maintenance of retirement income.”

**1961**

“... [supports] a creative program for the elderly.”

**1971**

“... [urges] improvement of the social and economic status of the elderly [and] economic security, including continued support of Social Security.”

**1977**

“... [supports the] recognition of homemakers to provide Social Security, retirement and disability plans in their own right.”

**1987**

“... [supports] adequate retirement income.”

**1999**

“... [is] committed to a Social Security program that improves the social status and economic security of the elderly.”

“Social Security must enhance, not hurt, the economic security of women and families. ... AAUW members are committed to holding Women’s Summits on Social Security across the country in order to educate women on this vital issue.”

“... opposes a system of individual retirement accounts as a replacement for current Social Security benefits. However, AAUW supports individual retirement accounts if they are established outside of and in addition to Social Security in an effort to increase the stability of retirement income.”

**2005**

“... supports the legislation to address improved retirement security and promote economic self-sufficiency for women.”

**2006**

“Federal incentive programs to encourage private retirement savings accounts should not, however, come at the expense of Social Security. Motherhood may last a lifetime, but mothers should be able to retire with dignity.”

**2007**

“Social Security is not just a retirement program. It provides much needed income protections throughout one’s lifespan. Social Security’s long-term solvency needs to be strengthened, not dismantled.”

### **Urban Development, Transportation, and Land Use Planning**

**1967**

“... [urges the] rehabilitation of cities [and] urban renewal.”

**1968**

“... views with grave concern the conditions in American cities that perpetuate inequality, impair health, and hold back so many of our people.”

**1969**

“... recognizes that the major domestic problem of the U.S. is the quality of life in American cities. ... AAUW supports measures specifically designed for the cities, encouragement of councils of government, mass transit and creative solutions to ghetto problems.”

**1971**

“... [supports] comprehensive and coordinated planning for the orderly development of the total environment in rural, suburban, urban, and regional areas.”

**1973**

“... [urges] transportation reform, including alternatives to the private automobile such as adequate public transportation and facilities for pedestrians and bicycles.”

**1979**

“... [urges] increased support and public funding for mass transportation.”

### **Housing**

**1945**

“... [supports] coordination of federal housing functions ... measures to reduce the cost of housing production by private enterprise ... provision for public housing for low-income families for which private industry is unable to provide.”

**1947**

“... [urges] maintenance of the authority to control rents while housing remains short, with the provision that it be ... fair to owner and tenant.”

**1949**

“... [urges] reduction of high housing costs through research, low-cost financing, and elimination of monopolistic practices.”

**1967**

“... [supports] equal opportunity in housing.”

**1968**

“... supports open housing.”

**1973**

“... [believes we should make] decent housing available to everyone.”

**1977**

“... [supports] improved accessibility to housing for the elderly, the eco-

# Labor, Health, and Human Services

nomically disadvantaged, minorities and middle-income families.”

**1989**

“... supports branch and division efforts which address the problem of homelessness with emphasis on the status of women and children.”

**2005**

“... promotes the economic ... well-being of all persons. Essential to that well-being is an economy that provides ... decent and affordable housing.”

## Employment and Labor Standards

**1939**

“... [urges] adequate appropriations for ... [the] Wage and Hour Division to insure fair and uniform enforcement of the Fair Labor Standards Act.”

**1941**

“... [supports] appropriate legislation to improve the general welfare of the migrant.”

**1947**

“... [supports] measures to maintain and improve labor standards, including protection against industrial hazards; strengthening of wage and hour protection for substandard groups ... more effective control of child labor.”

**1971**

“... [supports] legislation to improve conditions of migrant farm workers, including the extension of child labor laws to agriculture.”

**1972**

“... supports extending coverage [of the minimum wage], tying increases to the cost-of-living index, and opposes exemptions for youth and students.”

**1987**

“... [supports] job-protected family and medical leave.”

**1991**

“... supports periodic increases in the minimum wage to ensure that the income of women and girls keeps pace with inflation.”

**1995**

“... is dedicated to true welfare reform that breaks the cycle of poverty and promotes self-sufficiency.”

“... believes that women with dependent children living below the poverty line are entitled to minimum public assistance while preparing for a job in the private sector.”

**2006**

“AAUW strongly supports raising the minimum wage.”

**2007**

“Women’s clear educational achievements have not resulted in equal pay, even when they have the same major and work in the same field as their male counterparts. ... It is past time that we address the persistent gender wage gap for all women.”

## Consumer Protection

**1935**

“... [supports] revision of the Federal Food and Drug Act.”

**1937**

“... supports legislation in the interest of the consumer ... and the protection of the consumer against unfair trade practices.”

**1939**

“... [urges the] development of standards of quality and performance for consumer goods [and] opposition to laws authorizing price-fixing.”

**1945**

“... [supports] control of inflation, maintenance of consumer purchasing power [and] consumer participation in appropriate policy-making bodies.”

**1953**

“... [urges] protection against injurious products and misrepresentation.”

**1974**

“... supports the Equal Credit Opportunity Act ... making illegal discrimination in granting credit on the basis of sex, race, creed, marital status, or national origin.”

**1977**

“... [urges] continuing research by industry and federal agencies in order to determine the cumulative effect of food additives, and urges that results of the research and full ingredient food product labeling be available to the consumer.”



The background of the page is a light blue, semi-transparent image of Georgia O'Keeffe's artwork 'Banana Flower No. 2'. The artwork depicts a close-up of a banana flower, with its large, overlapping, pointed petals and central stem rendered in various shades of blue and white. The overall effect is a soft, artistic backdrop for the text.

# Arts and Humanities

AAUW is committed to the arts and humanities as a means of developing and preserving the human, aesthetic, and cultural values that perpetuate civilization; enhancing our pluralistic heritage; and providing effective advocacy.

AAUW advocates a mixture of public and private funding for the arts and humanities, protection of the rights of artists, and preservation of historic and cultural heritage. In keeping with its priorities of education and the rights of the individual, AAUW advocates educational use of the media and the elimination of stereotyping and portrayals of violence.

"Banana Flower No. 2," by Georgia O'Keeffe, crayon on paper, 1933,  
part of an AAUW traveling art show in the mid-1940s

**1945**

“The better realization of our culture demands growth in understanding the arts as a universal language, exploration of their content, meaning, and function, and support [of] them as part of the undiscovered power of free speech.”

**1959**

“The extent to which he is free to sharpen his awareness marks the richness of man’s culture.”

## Arts and Cultural Heritage

**1939**

“Opportunity for ... the enjoyment of aesthetic experience as embodied in the creative arts, [is] a part of the inalienable right of the individual to the pursuit of happiness, and [is] favorable to the development of national culture.”

**1941**

“The arts are essential to a proper knowledge of our heritage and of contemporary life.”

**1965**

“... supports a National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities.”

**1971**

“... [supports] the cultural enrichment of our pluralistic society.”

**1973**

“... [urges the] preservation of our historical and cultural heritage ... restoration and renovation of

museums ... financial assistance in establishing indigenous art and craft businesses.”

**1975**

“... [believes in the] protection of the property rights of artists in their creative products.”

**1979**

“... [urges the] encouragement and support of the arts through both public and private funding ... favorable role models for prevention of sex-role stereotyping in all media presentations ... protection for the retention in broadcasting principles of the fairness doctrine, affirmative action, and the public interest.”

**1983**

“... [supports] all appropriate means to eliminate [the] portrayal of violence against women and children in all forms of the media ... [the] right to public information ... measures that ensure public access and community control of telecommunication services.”

**2001**

“... [believes we should] have a statue of a woman who is not of European origin placed in the United States Capitol Building.”

“... [urges everyone to] eliminate the use of the derogatory word ‘squaw’ in geographic names and replace [it] with other neutral or inoffensive names.”

**2005**

“... requests that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) exercise its powers over all broadcast licenses to assure the fair presentation of objective, comprehensive coverage and discussion of all important political, social, scientific, and environmental issues facing the country including full coverage of local, national, and world news events.”

## Arts and Education

**1933**

“... [supports] radio and television as media for the advancement of education ... are destined to become increasingly valuable ... urges state divisions and local branches to be alert to conserve these agents for the purposes of education and culture, and to protect them and the public from undesirable development and exploitation.”

**1945**

“... [supports] appropriate federal regulation of media of communication in ways which provide for their availability to educational agencies and promote their educational use.”

**1947**

“... [urges an] expanded program of exchange of students, teachers, scientists and artists.”

**1949**

“... shall continue our work in public art education.”

**1953**

“... recognize the important effect which the mass media of communication have upon the education of American children, youth and adults, and we will work to extend and improve the educational and cultural use of libraries, films, radio and television.”

**1973**

“... [support] creative programs in the arts that encourage the development of aesthetic values beginning in early childhood.”

**1977**

“... [support] long-range financing of public broadcasting with adequate funding and encouragement of public affairs features and programs appealing to those of diverse cultural backgrounds.”

“Members are being encouraged to alter the original image of ‘arts as the mirror of society’ to ‘arts as the mender of society.’”

—Guidance for Redirection of the Topic Society’s Reflection in the Arts in Response to the Call for “Action for Unified Society,” *AAUW Journal*, October 1968

# Global Interdependence

AAUW believes that peace in an interdependent world requires education; national and international policies that promote justice and human rights; social, political, and economic development; and security for all people.

AAUW advocates arms control and the restriction to peaceful purposes of the exploration and use of outer space.

Understanding that issues such as food, energy, natural resources, and population are interrelated, AAUW advocates international cooperation in ensuring social, economic, and physical well-being through promotion of a clean and healthful environment, education and services to control population growth, and appropriate development and use of the world's resources.

AAUW supports the United Nations and other international and regional organizations and alliances working toward international understanding, peace, human rights, and comprehensive resource planning. AAUW advocates citizen participation in the formulation of foreign policy.

# Global Interdependence

**1939**

“... [supports] the development of an immediate and long-range foreign policy based on international cooperation.”

**1945**

“To foster a world society in which individuals and nations may live in security, dignity, and peace, we must emphasize international cooperation as a practical test of domestic and foreign policies, and we must work at the continuing task of establishing and maintaining international organizations.”

**1989**

“... urges the United States government to give full support for the work of [the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women] and the implementation of the *Forward Looking Strategies* and to provide adequate funds and staff resources for the U.S. delegation. AAUW will work with other U.S. women’s organizations to reinforce the local, state, national and international collaboration on the *Forward Looking Strategies*.”

**2003**

“We affirm our commitment to the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).”

## Environment and Energy

**1947**

“... [urges] United Nations control of the development of atomic ener-

gy to prevent its military [use] and encourage its constructive uses.”

**1948**

“... supports the Water Pollution Act of 1948.”

**1963**

“... recognizes that the demands of an expanding population necessitate the development of our total social and economic resources; we recognize further that this development must take place within the framework of modern conservation methods.”

**1965**

“... [urges] development of the physical environment including the orderly allocation of open space, transportation, housing, and control of environmental hazards such as contamination of air, water, and soil.”

**1971**

“... [urges] control of environmental pollution, conservation and wise utilization of our resources ... [supports] the principle of zero population growth”

“... [believes] that the United Nations [should] establish an international seabed resources authority; that this authority [should] act as trustee of the seabed, supervise its use, and guide its development and exploration to conserve and protect the marine environment.”

**1973**

“... supports comprehensive state land use policies ... programs of environmental education ... protection and preservation of the natural shorelines and coastal boundaries ... new energy sources with due regard for human safety and environmental protection ... restor[ation of] unclaimed land and [the] require[ment] that henceforth all applications for permits to strip mine must guarantee control, strip costs and reclamation ... adoption of a national energy policy ... international cooperation in the development and utilization of world resources with particular regard for the energy crisis and energy conservation.”

**1975**

“... [urges] international cooperation emphasizing the interrelationships of food, energy, natural resources and population. ... AAUW realizes that enforcement of strict energy conservation programs and growing scarcity of food may adversely affect many lifestyles, particularly those persons with low and moderate income, and endorses measures which will minimize regressive effect.”

**1977**

“... urges strict enforcement of regulations which affect water quality ... conservation measures as the primary energy requisite ... development of alternate sources of energy and recognize the significant contributions that local sources can make



... stringent limitations on the use of nuclear reactors ... nuclear energy should be considered only as an interim source of electrical power.”

**1979**

“... opposes the issuance of permits for new construction of nuclear power facilities for two years.”

**1981**

“... [supports] a program of conservation of all energy resources, directed at maximum efficiency and aimed at both users and suppliers, that addresses the appropriateness of the energy source for the use intended ... stringent regulations for the safe management of hazardous and radioactive wastes ... policies that recognize that the community has the right and responsibility to be involved in local siting of hazardous and radioactive waste management facilities.”

**1989**

“... will work with the United Nations and the International Federation of University Women to promote global acceptance of sustainable development in order to address present needs without compromising future resources. AAUW also will advocate working in local and regional coalitions to adopt laws, practices, and lifestyles that respect the environment and promote sustainable development.”

**1991**

“... promotes waste minimization through reduction, reuse, and recycling.

... AAUW encourages branches and states to participate in community education efforts.”

“... supports the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.”

## Peace and Arms Control

**1922**

“... supports progressive reduction of world armaments towards the status of police forces ... reduction of the Army and Navy to a point required for police purposes only.”

**1927**

“... [support] ratification by the Senate of the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating Poisonous or other Gases, and Bacteriological Methods of Warfare.”

**1931**

“... [supports] a treaty providing for consultation and conference in case of threatened war ... a measure for the limitation and reduction of land, air, and naval armaments by international agreement at the General Disarmament Conference in 1932.”

**1935**

“... [urges] federal control of the manufacture of and traffic in arms and munitions.”

**1961**

“... [supports an] international agreement to restrict to peaceful

purposes the exploration and use of outer space.”

**1971**

“... opposes the military use of such new chemical and biological agents as herbicides and defoliants ... supports withdrawal of the U.S. from the Southeast Asia war ... favors establishment by the U.N. of a permanent peacekeeping force.”

**1983**

“... [supports] a verifiable freeze on all testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weaponry, missiles, and delivery systems by all nations ... a ban on chemical, biological, and laser research application for military uses ... a ban on the deployment by all nations of military weaponry in space.”

“... supports the establishment of a U.S. Academy of Peace.”

## Military Service

**1935**

“... supports federal legislation which will make military training in secondary schools, colleges, and universities elective and not compulsory.”

**1941**

Throughout the war years, AAUW supports the establishment of women's units of the armed services and calls for equal pay and rank for women.

# Global Interdependence

**1947**

“... went on record in March in favor of drafting women for the women’s branches of the military service ... the principle of ‘equality for women’ being construed as meaning equality of responsibility as well as equality of rights.”

**1953**

“... [supports] measures by the Federal Government to afford education, housing, and essential community services for military and civilian personnel actively engaged in defense and related enterprises.”

**1980**

“... supports equity for women; therefore, women must be included in any proposal for military registration. (Note: the above statement addresses the registration issue only. If a military draft were proposed, the Association would have to consider and formulate a position statement on the draft at that time.)”

## International Organizations

**1919**

“On July 10th last, in London, there was created under the joint auspices of the ACA and the Federation of University Women of Great Britain, an International Association of University Women.”

**1922**

“... [supports] the participation of the United States in a permanent court of international justice.”

“... supports all steps toward an ultimate effective world organization that shall replace war as a method of settling international differences.”

**1923**

“... petitions, urges, and requests the President of the U.S. at the earliest possible date to present to the Senate of the United States the Covenant of the League of Nations.”

**1941**

“... [urges] development of a closer international collaboration to be begun now among the peoples resisting the Axis powers, and expanded as rapidly as possible into suitable international institutions.”

**1945**

“... [supports] a constructive American foreign policy and full United States participation in world organization.”

“To promote mutual assistance and understanding among university women of all lands, we must maintain and strengthen our work in the International Federation of University Women.”

**1946**

After acting as an early and influential advocate of the United Nations, AAUW is accorded permanent U.N. observer status.

**1955**

“... reaffirms our faith in the United Nations as a flexible and viable institution for the achievement of international cooperation. We will support measures to make the U.N. and its affiliated agencies more effective, but will oppose measures which would impair their present strength.”

**1979**

“... [supports] the U.N. ... the Organization of American States, and other regional alliances in the Western Hemisphere.”

**1987**

“... supports the United Nations and its affiliated agencies, including full assessed funding by the United States.”

**1993**

“... [promotes] public awareness of the 1995 Fourth World Conference for Women.”

**2003**

“... encourages national federations and associations to urge their governments to encourage national and international financial institutes and governments at all levels to include women in economic decision making positions.”

## Human Rights, Immigration, and Refugees

**1935**

“... [supports the] formulation and maintenance of a foreign policy by the United States of America ...

predicated on the assumption that human life and civilization are more important than material interests.”

**1947**

“... [supports] an International Refugee Organization under the United Nations.”

**1955**

“... [urges] modification of the immigration laws to permit freer movement of persons.”

**1971**

“... condemns in [the] strongest terms the repressive and cruel treatment of prisoners and petitions the government of North and South Vietnam and all Southeast Asian forces holding prisoners to observe the International Accords of the Geneva Convention.”

**1975**

“... [urges the development of] an appropriate plan to enable AAUW to assist in the sponsorship of Vietnamese refugees.”

**1977**

“... [supports] equal participation of women in economic, social and political development ... international cooperation in punishing terrorists.”

**1979**

“... [supports] human rights in their fullest dimensions for all people.”

“... urges Congress and the President to support fully the aims of the World Conference of the UN Decade for Women of 1980 in order to continue vigilance on behalf of women’s rights and efforts to pursue these rights in all countries.”

“... urges the U.S. government to support the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child ... insuring that all children enjoy these rights regardless of race, color, sex, religion, and national or social origin.”

**1981**

“... supports the development of a consistent policy toward refugees that acknowledges their social, economic, and political needs, and supports those local programs which facilitate the transition of refugees into American life.”

“... [supports] ratification of the Convention on Genocide, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and other conventions on human rights.”

**1983**

“... [urges] formulation of a just and humane immigration policy.”

**1993**

“... urges AAUW members collectively and individually to demand that rape not only be explicitly defined as a war crime ... but that systematic rape and violence be vigorously prosecuted as a war crime.”

**1999**

“... advocates support for United Nations programs that address human rights and women’s and girls’ concerns. AAUW has endorsed the ratification of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) since 1981.”

## **International Commerce**

**1939**

“... [urges] removal of restrictions on international trade—support of the present Reciprocal Trade Agreements Program.”

**1945**

“... [supports] the promotion of economic cooperation and reconstruction [and] the expansion of world trade.”

**1947**

“... supports the International Trade Organization, International Labor Organization, ... World Bank and [International] Monetary Fund, and continued support of the principle of reciprocal trade agreements.”

**1955**

“... [urges] liberalizing international trade.”

**1979**

“... [supports] international cooperation for the establishment of a code of conduct for the operation



of the multinational corporations ... encouragement of the fullest international cooperation in establishing a sound world monetary policy.”

## Foreign Aid and International Exchange

**1939**

“... [urges] development of international cultural relations and intellectual cooperation.”

**1947**

“... [supports giving] encouragement to gifted women by maintaining and developing our program of Fellowships and International Study Grants and by supporting Reconstruction Aid as long as the need continues.”

“... [believes] the Marshall Plan is the most crucial immediate issue confronting our nation today.”

**1951**

“... [supports] expansion of the program of exchange of students, teachers, and other professional groups ... send[ing] wheat to India ... full appropriation for the Voice of America.”

**1971**

“... [urges] effective foreign economic aid to developing states with increased emphasis on the use of multilateral agencies.”

**1975**

“... recognizes that food is a basic human need rather than a political issue and recommends support of measures to cope with world hunger which will minimize use of food as a political tool, insure more efficient distribution beginning with establishment of worldwide food reserve programs and the sharing of technological agricultural assistance.”

**1981**

“... [supports] economic aid that focuses on development.”

**1983**

“... [supports] U.S. foreign assistance programs that perceive both world poverty and military power as threats to national security.”

**1985**

“... [supports] measures that provide for the funding and implementation of development programs designed to promote education and equity for women in all countries.”

**1987**

“To implement the ‘Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies,’ AAUW supports international exchanges promoting equity for women.”

“If down the ages, after each war, women had been hauled before a judgment bar and asked: ‘What have you done to make an enduring peace?’—they could have said: ‘We had no vote, we had no money, we had no strength after the day’s work was done, we could only do our daily tasks and hope and pray. There is no guilt upon us.’

If after this war that same question were to be asked, would we have to answer: ‘We could vote, we could hold office, we were rich in money and goods, our bodies were strong, our minds trained, well informed, we could speak with voices reaching to every land, yet we did nothing to cure this world sickness.’”

—Lucy Somerville Howorth, Member of AAUW Committee on the Economic and Legal Status of Women; Senior Attorney in the Office of Legislative Counsel, Veterans Administration; Speech to “How Women May Share in Post-War Policy-Making” Conference Reprinted in *AAUW Journal*, Summer 1944

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# Historic Principles

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In principle and practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class.