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President's Message

Now that we are post-election season, it is time to focus on the upcoming holidays and end of year projects. One of these focuses is often choosing charitable contributions. If your branch will be deciding on where to make a difference for AAUW, I hope that you will contribute to the Greatest Needs Fund. You may not be aware that this fund supports our lobbying efforts on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC., as well as the research that members of Congress and other not for profit organizations depend on for information about issues of importance to women and gender and pay equity. The most recent being “Deeper in Debt”. Education costs affect women more than men because of pay inequities and this affects their ability to provide for their families and their retirements. Public Policy initiatives are another area that is supported by this fund. These are just three of the ways that your support for the Greatest Needs Fund is critical to the mission of AAUW.

AJ Conroy has provided insight and perspective on the Equal Rights Amendment, which was passed by the needed states (including Illinois). She explains why it is not yet certified in our Constitution. You will be surprised (and upset?) by the reasons. If after reading her article, you would like additional information, you can go to the [Jane Addams website](#), for a recent program on this very topic as well.

We continue our series on the roles of the various State Board positions and this month we highlight the VPs of Programs. Not only do they lead the effort on the State Convention, but they also can provide support and guidance on programming at the branch level.

I wish all of you many reasons to be thankful and the comfort of family and friends as we prepare and enjoy Thanksgiving this year.

Donna Jean

Thank you to AAUW members in Illinois and all across the U.S. for voting and working to support reproductive choice and our democracy. Abortion access is supported by the majority of folks regardless of political party. All states where abortion rights were on the ballot, choice won!

Here in Illinois, two women that support reproductive choice were elected to our Illinois Supreme Court. And in Nevada, the voters voted to add an equal rights amendment to their state constitution. All causes for celebration and a reason to be thankful!

Enjoy your Thanksgiving holiday!

Our mission does not happen without Public Policy!

Thanks for all you do!

Tracey Sherman-Falcon and Paula Purdue

Public Policy Co-Chairs, AAUW IL

The ERA:Where Are We Now?

By AJ Conroy, ERA Illinois

At the start of 2020, Virginia became the 38th state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment.

Notice of Virginia's ratification was promptly sent to the National Archivist for certification. This ministerial task comes from a federal statute. It's merely record-keeping. If you want to keep track of documents, ask a librarian. This routine process was used without fuss by Nevada, Illinois, and all the states that ratified the belated "Madison Amendment" in the 1990s.

But this routine, ministerial task is newly controversial. Just before Virginia's ratification put the Equal Rights Amendment over the Article V threshold, Alabama, South Dakota and Louisiana filed a lawsuit to prevent the Archivist from doing his job and declaring our new amendment. The Archivist deferred to advice by the Department of Justice, and announced that he would not certify the 28th Amendment

The third strategy is pressuring the Biden-Harris Administration to fulfill its campaign promise to support the Equal Rights Amendment. Congress designated the Archivist to count and certify ratifications, but the Archivist deferred to the U.S. Department of Justice. Advocates hoped that the Biden Administration would revise this Trump Administration position. Instead, the Department of Justice continues to oppose the Equal Rights Amendment in court. As head of the Executive Branch, President Biden has made two statements supporting the Equal Rights Amendment and pointing to Congress as the responsible entity for its delay. The Archivist is a presidential appointee, as is the Attorney General.

What happens next?

There are several possibilities. Like so many things in recent history, nothing like this has happened before. The simplest outcome is for

Archivist's prior public statements.

In response, Illinois, Nevada and Virginia filed a separate lawsuit to compel the Archivist to certify Virginia's ratification and declare the Equal Rights Amendment as added to the US Constitution. Again, this is a clerical task assigned to the Archivist by Congress, not an extra hurdle in the ratification process.

Alabama, South Dakota and Louisiana, along with Tennessee and Nebraska, asked to join or "intervene" in the Illinois et al. lawsuit. The Illinois lawsuit was dismissed by the lower federal court for lack of standing. The district court reasoned that there was no injury to the states. The matter is currently on appeal to the Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit. AAUW-Illinois joined others in filing an amicus brief in support of our Attorney General Raoul. Oral arguments were heard in September 2022. All parties wait for a decision.

In the interim, the Archivist retired. There is both an acting Archivist (Debra Steidel Wall) and a nominated Archivist, Colleen Shogan. During Dr. Shogan's confirmation hearing, the Biden appointee declared she would not publish the ERA. Her appointment is stalled by a deadlocked committee. Also in the interim, a lawsuit was filed by the group Equal Means Equal (filmmakers) and others. This suit and its appeals were eventually dismissed for lack of standing.

Complementing the litigation strategy is a concurrent legislative strategy to have Congress remove its artificial deadline. Good news! In March of 2021, the House of Representatives passed a resolution removing the Congressional ratification deadline. The Senate version (SJRes

the posture of those lawsuits would change for the better. A second possibility is for the Senate to reform the filibuster for Congress to officially remove the time limit, after which the Archivist would publish. A third path is for the Court of Appeals to reverse the District Court, after which the Archivist would publish. Regardless, there will be litigation. Fear of lawsuits should not hinder progress. Certification by the Archivist is similar to publishing a new statute in that it provides notice. The ERA is ratified, but without publication, it is difficult for attorneys to use it in court. Think of an unrecorded deed. It transfers property, but without public notice, it can be hard to enforce.

What to do during this purgatory? ERA advocates should both call on the White House to publish, and on Congress to affirm the 28th Amendment (SJR1/HR891). Either way, we know that all the requirements of Article V have been met. Never before has an amendment been ratified by three-fourths of the states and not been eventually recognized as part of our US Constitution. This current uncertainty existed during Reconstruction, and after the suffrage amendment.

Our grandchildren will look back at this period and wonder how anyone doubted the ERA was not part of the US Constitution.

Stay up-to-date by following Facebook pages for ERA Coalition, VoteEqualityUS and ERA Illinois (@ERAillinois).

DO ONE THING

Call your state representative about [HJRes94](#). Ask that they co-sponsor this resolution affirming

fillibuster. Undaunted, the House introduced HRes891 this year, a resolution which affirms the 28th Amendment is ratified, similar to a resolution passed after the 27th's belated ratification. HRes891 needs only a simple majority in the House to pass.

In Case You Missed It...

AAUW has extended the membership renewal grace period deadline in Community Hub to extend through November 30th. This ensures continuity of membership for those who are still renewing, but does not change their expiration date for 2023 (ie: if you have an expiration date of 6/30/22 and you renew on 11/1/22, your expiration date will be 6/30/23 - if you renew 12/30/22, which is past the grace period, your expiration date will be 12/29/23).



Meet the State Board

Program Co-Vice Presidents

Becky Glimco and Peg Gallagher

As VPs of Programs, our goals for 2022-23 include: (1) engage IL AAUW members in a rich, mission-focused spring convention and (2) connect with branches regarding programs.

The 98th AAUW-IL spring convention is set for May 5 and 6 at the Embassy Suites in East Peoria. Recognizing the need to support those who live in the middle or down state IL, we will be gathering in East Peoria this spring. As program VPs, we are responsible for clarifying the topics, selecting the speakers, and coordinating the on-site arrangements. We hope that when you attend the State Convention, you will enjoy catching up with like-minded friends while also delving into issues that are critical to the mission of

to reach out to us if you have suggestions for speakers or topics for discussion aauwilprograms@gmail.com

In an effort to support branch programming, we are also eager and willing to connect with branches as requested. Our dialog via zoom at the fall conference allowed us to interact with branches on successful programs and share ideas with branch leaders. We are developing an online way for branches to report and seek program ideas. Please reach out if you think we can help your branch in any way.

We're on the web! Because some of you have asked, the current and past issues of *Connection* are now on the website. There's also a link to subscribe to *Connection*--in case you have branch members who aren't receiving it every month.

[AAUW IL Website](#)

[Branch News & Notes](#)

EMPOWERMENT, PROGRESS, AND DETERMINATION: ADVOCATING FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

An event in solidarity with #LatinaEqualPayDay, the last Equal Pay Day of the year, and economic justice for women all year round.

Thursday, December 8th

Location: 300 S. Wacker, 8th Floor, Chicago To RSVP: visit equalpaydaychi.xyz

Program: 4:00 - 5:00 p.m. CT

Opening Remarks and Emcee

- Starr De Los Santos, Senior Coalition Manager, Women Employed

Panel

- **Moderator** Nancy Andrade, Chair and Commissioner, Chicago Commission on Human Relations, City of Chicago
- Lizzy Diaz-Ortiz, VP, Senior Manager, Latinx Segment, BMO Harris Bank
- Yolanda Carrillo, General Council, Illinois Department of Labor
- Linda Xóchitl-Tortolero, President and CEO, Mujeres Latinas en Acción

Action Items

- Izzy Dobel and Ely Bahena, Trabajadoras Fellows, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA)

Closing Remarks

- Sharmili Majmudar, Executive Vice President of Policy and Organizational Impact, Women Employed
- Barb Yong, Founder of the Equal Pay Day Chicago Coalition and Partner, Golan Christie Taglia LLP

Reception: 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. CT

- Appetizers and refreshments provided by Pizza y Pan Pa' Ya, and Platter Me Up Chi.

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If your branch has a program or recognition or an idea you'd like to share, please [email Jennifer Urish](mailto:jennifer.urish@equalpaydaychi.xyz) by the 14th of each month.

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