

## Public Policy:

# *New Year's Reflections*

By Jeanne Delp

The New Year is a time to reflect on the past and plan for the future. That's exactly what both AAUW National and State have been doing. AAUW priorities and where to place our emphasis have changed in light of the election. We Public Policy Chairs attended two Zoom sessions that outlined these new perspectives. The following note from the Silicon Valley Branch will give you a snapshot of the redirected priorities. (Permission granted)

**PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES AT THE National Level:** (Meghan Kissell, Senior Director of Public Policy)

**MUST DO bills for this 119th Congress:** Major emphasis by National

1. Focus on Higher Education level: College-level grants are made for women studying for higher degrees:
  - concern money will be taken from the grants and placed at lower college level with focus on preparation for the work place
  - STEM to the exclusion of liberal arts and research
2. TITLE IX:
  - concern that TITLE IX protections for women stripped away to promote the very least that can still be described as protecting women
  - concern promote belief women lie about rape
3. Gender Equity under TITLE IX: concern testing the regulation of trans gender persons-- example: San Jose State Volleyball Team. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) is becoming weaponized
  - National and State to become more involved
4. Education Department under threat:
  - concern doing away with department and /or reducing staffing
5. BIBLES in classrooms: AAUW stands for separation of church and state
  - Local-level constituents have more control over what is taught in classrooms than National
6. BILL introduced: Concern
  - Withdraw Public monies to any college with students taking part in protest against Israeli/ Hamas War
  - AAUW National will follow but probably not involved

**PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES AT THE State Level:** (California Public Policy Committee)

1. State action: TITLE IX most forceful at the state and local level.
2. State priorities: revised/rewritten every two years based on National priorities—State received 680 responses with suggestions
  - January-Study and write suggested priorities

