



AAUW Advocacy Toolkit

Meeting Your Members of Congress

At AAUW, advocacy is central to our mission to advance gender equity. Meeting directly with elected officials is one of the most effective ways to influence public policy. You can meet face-to-face or virtually via Zoom or a phone call. All are great ways to develop a relationship and influence the positions they take on issues affecting AAUW's Public Policy Priorities.

Whether you're a seasoned advocate or just getting started, this guide will help you prepare, engage, and follow up with confidence.

Step 1: Request a Meeting

Find Your Legislator: Visit aauw.quorum.us/officials or call the Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121.

Contact the Office: Say you're a constituent and AAUW member, briefly state your issue (e.g., education, civil rights, pay equity), and request a 15–30 minute meeting.

Be Flexible: Recess weeks are ideal for in-district meetings or town halls. Offer date options and be open to meeting with staff — they're influential too.

No time for a meeting? Ask about upcoming town halls or public events you can attend.



Step 2: Prepare With Purpose

Set Your Goal: Choose one issue and make a clear, specific ask — like supporting a bill.

Know Your Story: Use talking points to stay focused and share how the issue affects you or your community — personal stories leave a lasting impact.

Do Your Homework: Review the legislator's positions and have a few key facts ready about how the issue affects women or marginalized groups.

Plan Your Team: You can go solo or bring others, especially voices directly impacted by the issue.

Bring Materials: A one-page handout summarizing your ask is useful to leave behind.



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Step 3: Show Up and Speak Up

Be Professional: Dress neatly, arrive early, and thank them for their time. Introduce yourself as a constituent and AAUW member.

State Your Ask: Start strong: *“I’m asking Sen. Jones to co-sponsor the Gender Equity in Education Act. As a former educator, I’ve seen firsthand how sex discrimination in school continues to impact women and girls.”*

Stay Focused: Share your story, include 1–2 facts, and repeat your ask at the end. Meetings are more effective when you are focused and remain nonpartisan.

Listen, Too: Give the legislator or staffer a chance to respond or ask questions. Take notes. Don’t worry if you don’t have all the answers — saying *“That’s a great question, let me follow up with more information”* is a strategic and thoughtful response.

Take Photos (if permitted): Share your advocacy online and with AAUW at advocacy@aauw.org.



Step 4: Follow Up

Send a Thank-You Note within 48 hours, restating your ask and sharing any follow-up materials.

Compare Notes: Confirm the information shared by the elected official or staffer with the rest of your group, and share what you heard with AAUW National at aauw.quorum.us/log.

Stay Engaged with the office, attend town halls, and respond to AAUW alerts to build a relationship.

You Have the Power to Make a Lasting Impact

As a constituent and AAUW member, your voice carries weight. What matters most is showing up, speaking sincerely, and staying engaged.

Every conversation matters. Your voice makes a difference.

For additional resources, visit www.aauw.org/act



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