



February 26, 2026

Dear Senator,

On behalf of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), representing members in your state and across the nation, I urge you to **oppose the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act (S. 128) and related legislation that would require documentary proof of U.S. citizenship to register to vote in federal elections.** AAUW is a long-standing advocate for voting rights and believes in open and fair elections that are accessible to all voters. S. 128 would require individuals to provide documentary proof of U.S. citizenship when registering to vote in federal elections.

Why AAUW opposes S. 128

Over the past decade, various state-level voting laws have created new hurdles for certain voters, including older Americans, veterans, and those living in impoverished and rural communities. While we must remain vigilant in upholding election integrity, it is equally important to ensure that all legally eligible voters have fair and reasonable access to the ballot box.

Many Americans—especially seniors, veterans, citizens and service members overseas, and those in rural areas—rely on flexible voting options such as online voter registration, early voting, and mail-in ballots. Restrictive policies and paperwork mandates disproportionately impact those who have served our country, those with disabilities, and those who live in areas with fewer government services. Ensuring their access to the ballot is a matter of civic inclusion and democratic agency.

The bill is unnecessary — and creates barriers for eligible U.S. citizens

Noncitizen voting in federal elections is already illegal. Yet S. 128 would prohibit states from accepting and processing a federal voter registration application unless the applicant presents documentary proof of U.S. citizenship.

While intended to prevent voter fraud, requiring documentary proof of citizenship would place undue burdens on millions of eligible U.S. citizens who may not have immediate access to required documents like passports or birth certificates. Research shows that more than 21 million Americans lack ready access to those documents.

Implementation problems: immediate disruption and confusion

Beyond the barriers created by the requirement itself, these proposals are designed to take effect immediately after enactment or within a short implementation window, forcing state and local election officials to overhaul registration systems and processes on a rushed timeline.

That kind of sudden shift would inject confusion for voters, create administrative backlogs, and increase the risk that eligible citizens are wrongly turned away simply because election offices cannot implement new rules overnight.



Who is harmed most

This proposal would be especially harmful for:

- **Older voters and rural residents** who may face real difficulty obtaining or replacing documents.
- **Women who have changed their names** due to marriage or divorce, who can face bureaucratic hurdles when documents don't match—delaying or preventing timely registration updates.
- **Voters with disabilities, military families, and voters of color**, who are more likely to face barriers when registration systems require in-person paperwork and specific documents.

Election security and accessibility must go hand in hand

Election security and accessibility must go hand in hand. Congress has the responsibility to implement policies that strengthen our electoral system without placing undue hardships on eligible voters. However, the SAVE Act is not the way to achieve this. It would undermine voter accessibility and weaken public trust in the electoral system by creating barriers for eligible voters while suggesting a problem that election experts have found to be exceedingly rare.

AAUW urges you to oppose S. 128 and related proof-of-citizenship legislation and help ensure that all eligible American citizens can make their voices heard and access the ballot box without unnecessary paperwork barriers.

Co-sponsorship associated with this issue may be scored in the AAUW Action Fund Congressional Voting Record for the 119th Congress. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 202-728-3300 or kissellm@aauw.org with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Meghan Kissell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Meghan Kissell, MSW
Senior Director, Policy & Member Advocacy