



April 10, 2026

Dear Senator,

On behalf of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) and our members and supporters nationwide, I urge you to cosponsor the Congressional Review Act resolution overturning the U.S. Department of Education's final rule that politicizes and undermines the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program.

Why This Matters to AAUW

Since 1881, AAUW has worked to expand access to higher education, advance women's economic security, and protect essential civil rights. As the nation's largest non-institutional funder of women's graduate education, we know firsthand how much a college degree, and especially an advanced degree, can shape a woman's future. We also know how quickly that promise can be undermined when student debt becomes a lifelong burden.

Women make up about two-thirds of the nonprofit workforce and hold a disproportionate share of the nation's student loan debt. Women of color, in particular, are more likely to carry higher debt burdens while facing persistent pay inequities and greater repayment challenges. For many borrowers, PSLF is not an abstract benefit. It is one of the few tools that makes a career in public service financially possible.

What the Rule Puts at Risk

Congress created PSLF on a bipartisan basis to help recruit and retain talented people in public service. But this final rule puts that purpose at risk. Published on October 31, 2025, it authorizes the Secretary of Education to determine whether an employer qualifies for PSLF based on whether it engages in activities the Department considers to have a "substantial illegal purpose." The rule takes effect July 1, 2026.

AAUW joined hundreds of organizations in warning that this framework is vague, ideological, and ripe for abuse. It creates uncertainty for nonprofit employers and for the people who work there. It pressures organizations to pull back from lawful services and advocacy simply to avoid scrutiny, while asking borrowers to bear the consequences for decisions entirely outside their control.

Why This Is Dangerous

The rule also creates a new Education Department certification process layered on top of existing nonprofit oversight. Although it provides notice and an opportunity for employers to respond, it still gives the Secretary sweeping authority to revoke qualifying-employer status, with no clear independent external appeal process for borrowers or employers. The result is a chilling message to people considering careers in education, health care, legal services, social services, and other public-interest fields: your financial future may depend on whether those in power approve of your employer's mission.



Today, this rule could be used against immigrant-rights organizations, reproductive health providers, LGBTQ+ affirming service organizations, and civil rights groups. Tomorrow, it could be used against any nonprofit whose work a future administration disfavors. AAUW believes that is fundamentally at odds with both the intent of PSLF and the role nonprofits play in serving communities and strengthening our democracy.

Why Congress Should Act

For these reasons, I strongly urge you to cosponsor the Congressional Review Act resolution overturning the Department of Education's final rule on PSLF eligibility. To join as a cosponsor, please contact Rebecca Howard at rebecca_howard@kaine.senate.gov in Senator Kaine's office.

Cosponsorship and votes associated with this legislation 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 purple ink that reads "Meghan Kissell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Meghan Kissell, MSW
Senior Director, Policy & Member Advocacy