February 16, 2017

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the over 170,000 members and supporters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), we urge you to use your oversight and appropriations role to ensure Title IX, its regulations, and guidance, continue to protect the nation’s students. This landmark civil rights law has improved the educational experience for all, especially girls. AAUW also encourages additional funding to the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, to support its efforts to assist schools with critical technical assistance about this gender-neutral law and to adequately respond to complaints on a range of issues, from athletics and STEM to sexual harassment and violence. These steps are critical to protecting civil rights and preserving a strong system of public education that promotes gender fairness and equity for all.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 was the first comprehensive federal law to prohibit sex discrimination in education. Title IX requires recipients of federal education funding to evaluate their current policies and practices, adopt and publish a policy against sex discrimination, and implement grievance procedures and appropriate due process providing for the prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee discrimination complaints. AAUW strongly supports the vigorous enforcement of Title IX and all other civil rights laws pertaining to education. We must protect Title IX, its regulations and guidance to ensure all students – irrespective of their race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability status – are afforded equity and opportunity in schools.

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Education has a long history of ensuring appropriate technical assistance and fair enforcement of federal civil rights laws, including Title IX. For decades, students and advocates have called on OCR to enforce long-standing Title IX statute and regulations from both Republican and Democratic administrations, as well as Supreme Court case law concerning sexual harassment and violence, protections for pregnant and parenting students, equity in career and technical education, athletics, transgender students, among others. AAUW believes OCR must receive adequate funding to maintain its support services and technical assistance to schools as well as to meet the demands necessary to protect students’ civil rights.

As we approach the 45th anniversary of Title IX (June 23, 2017), AAUW urges you to protect Title IX, its regulations and guidance, and support the efforts of the Office of Civil Rights to ensure that all students are afforded equal access to education in schools free of discrimination and violence. Cosponsorship and votes associated with this legislation may be scored in the AAUW Action Fund Congressional...
Voting Record for the 115th Congress. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 202/785-7720, or Anne Hedgepeth, senior government relations manager, at 202/785-7724, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Maatz
Vice President for Government Relations and Advocacy