



QUICK FACTS

retirement benefits and programs, including pension improvements and protecting Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid from privatization.

Women face a gender pay gap that starts early in their careers and continues throughout their lifetimes. Women who work full time, year-round earn [83 cents](#) on average for every dollar men earn, and the pay gap is even wider for women of color. Over a career—defined as 47 years of full-time work—women's total estimated [earnings loss](#) compared with men is \$700,000 for a high school graduate, \$1.2 million for a college graduate, and \$2 million for a professional school graduate.

Continuing pay inequity results in women having less savings, lower Social Security benefits, and lower (if any) pension benefits, leaving them on an unequal retirement footing. Women have [only 70%](#) of the overall retirement income and only 32% of the wealth that men do. At the same time, women typically live longer than men, meaning they will face higher costs in retirement—both in terms of daily living expenses and health care costs.

AAUW in Action

All public policy actions take direction from the AAUW [Public Policy Priorities](#), voted on by members every two years. AAUW is a nonpartisan organization—but nonpartisan does not mean “non-political”. Since its first meeting in 1881, AAUW has been a catalyst for change. Together, through our coordinated and strategic advocacy, we've enacted invaluable legislation at the federal, state, and local levels. The 2021-2023 Public Policy priorities directly identify strengthening retirement benefits and programs.

The public policy team engages in many efforts on this key issue, including but not limited to:

- Working in coalition with other gender equity and civil rights organizations, including the [Employment Task Force](#) of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and leading the Paycheck Fairness Act Coalition.
- Mobilizing AAUW advocates and members through targeted calls to action on important legislation, like the [Paycheck Fairness Act](#), the [FAMILY Act](#), and the [Healthy Families Act](#).
-

