



8512 Battery Crest Lane,
Wake Forest, NC 27587
May 19, 2016

AAUW Diversity and Inclusion Task Force
1111 Sixteenth St NW
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Ms. Brocato and Ms. Gaston,

We are writing to you at the suggestion of AAUW President Patricia Ho regarding a local issue in North Carolina that now has national implications regarding gender equality.

On March 23, 2016 in a special called session the North Carolina General Assembly passed HB 2: The Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act and it was signed by our Governor. The special session had been called to overturn an ordinance passed by the Charlotte City Council that added marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression to its list of categories protected from discrimination in city contracting and public accommodation. Generally, the stated reason for HB 2 was the protection of young girls and women from attacks in bathrooms and for privacy in locker rooms.

However, the law went much further. It also removes access from state courts for people seeking redress from employment discrimination. It prohibits local municipalities from adopting any language stronger than the state law on discrimination. Finally, municipalities and counties may no longer approve local ordinances to raise minimum wages in excess of the state minimum wage.

As you might guess, there has been much discussion and action being taken by businesses and non-profits regarding the law, and multiple lawsuits and counter suits have been filed. At the AAUW NC state meeting in early April, we passed a resolution calling for the repeal of HB 2. (A copy of this resolution is attached and it has been shared with the public policy and legislative staff at National.)

So, why this letter to you now? In preparing the resolution, several members of AAUW NC researched the AAUW Diversity statement and discovered that neither gender identity or gender expression are included. The resolution was expanded to include a recommendation to the Board of AAUW to include the terms “gender identity and gender expression.”

Given the recent issuance of guidance by the Obama Administration on gender identity and schools, it is most likely that this area of civil rights will continue to be a topic of much discussion. AAUW has been fighting for the education and equality of girls and women since 1881. We ask that you continue this fight against discrimination by amending the AAUW diversity statement.

If you have any questions about this letter and our recommendations, please feel free to contact any of us for further information.

Sincerely,

Jean D'Addario, Co-president
AAUW NC

Sandra McLaurin, Co-President
AAUW NC

Denny McGuire, Chair, Public Policy