



Bills We Support for the 2026 Florida Legislative Session

Special Emphasis: Domestic and Dating Violence

WHY: Reported domestic violence incidents in Florida have increased recently. Women are disproportionately affected, making up about 70% of reported victims. Domestic violence is a significant factor in homelessness. Safe, affordable, trauma-informed housing is critical.

HB 269 (Gossett-Seidman), SB 296 (Berman): Victims of Domestic Violence and Dating Violence

- Feasibility study to establish HAVEN (Helping Abuse Victims Escape Now) with a dynamic database enhancing response times and privacy, and a Coordinating Council within the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE).
- **WHY:** Abuse victims need protection from abusers who can potentially access the existing reporting systems.

HB 107 (Johanna Lopez), SB 142 (LaVon Bracy Davis): Termination of Rental Agreement by Victim of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Violence, or Stalking

- If a tenant has been victimized as above, landlord cannot evict them but must allow them to break their lease or change locks if they remain.
- Landlord cannot refuse to rent to a potential tenant because they have been victimized.

We support related HB 277/SB 682, Domestic Emergency and Batterers Reform and Accountability Act.

HB 59 (Hart), SB172 (Jones): Pregnant Women in Custody

- Offers option for an arrestee to have a pregnancy test and, if sentenced, the court may postpone incarceration for 12 weeks after delivery.
- **WHY:** Prisons and jails do not have adequate facilities for childbirth or infant care. Healthy outcomes for children should be an interest of the state.

HB 235 (Driskell), SB 252 (Jones): Prohibited Discrimination Based on Hairstyle

- Prohibits discrimination based on "protected hairstyles," defined as those historically associated with race, in Florida's K-20 public education system and in private schools participating in state scholarship programs.
- **WHY:** Studies from Duke University and national CROWN Act show that Black individuals with natural hairstyles face prejudice, including being rated as less professional or capable.

HB 361 (Skidmore), SB 414 (Bracy Davis): Use of Campaign Funds for Child Care Expenses

- Would allow candidates to use campaign funds for costs associated with the care of a candidate's dependent child due to campaign activities. Not for expenses that would have been incurred if there were no campaign.
- **WHY:** AAUW advocates for women in leadership including elective office. Since women are still the primary caregivers for young children, those costs are a deterrent for them.

HB 157 (Yvonne Hinson), SB 182 (Shev Jones): School Teacher Training and Mentoring Program

- A School Teacher Training and Mentoring Program within the Dept. of Education would recruit qualified current and retired teachers to mentor new classroom teachers and those needing special help.
- **WHY:** AAUW supports strong public schools.

HB 825 (Carlos Smith), SB 220 (Harris, Driskell, Campbell): Paid Parental Leave

- Provide Career Service state employees with 12 weeks of fully paid parental leave following the birth or adoption of a child. Currently they have only unpaid parental leave.
- **WHY:** Women, typical caregivers, are financially disadvantaged by the lack of paid leave.