



Atlanta Branch

1/28/2015

To AAUW Atlanta Branch Members:

The unexpected resignation of our Communications Intern, Ayesha Kirk, has left us needing to get the February 2015 newsletter information out to you but in a non-traditional format. There are some time-sensitive things included, so please carefully review the following pages.

AAUW ATLANTA BRANCH NEWSLETTER Volume 65, Number 7

President's Message for February: Myra Carmon

Welcome to the 2015-2016 Legislative Session in Georgia. The 40 day Georgia legislative session began on January 12, 2015. There are several items of interest to AAUW members, and I will give an overview of these bills, bills that AAUW has endorsed plus some other things of interest.

HB 92, the Family Care Act, is a bill that AAUW Georgia and the Atlanta Branch have supported over the past few years. This bill supports the use of sick days, if sick days are a benefit, for taking children or elderly parents to doctors' appointments without the fear of losing one's job. I attended the 9 to 5 Coalition meeting the second day of the session and the group believes the bill could pass out of the House if only a hearing could be scheduled. Republicans are introducing the bill and it will be heard in the House of Representatives. Please contact your representative to vote "yes" when the vote occurs. If you find a ""Yes" vote, please let me know. The coalition is counting votes to determine success when a vote occurs.

While not a bill, there is a proposal to amend the Official Code of Georgia to promote physician/pharmacist communication when providing substitutions of interchangeable biological products. This may be of interest if you take medications for arthritis, cancers or any chronic disease. Many Georgians suffer from chronic diseases and take medications for those conditions. For these persons, biologic medicines – drugs created from living cells- are providing hope for healthier lives. Biosimilars are interchangeable biological products that will be copies of biologic medicines approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. While chemically-based generics are identical copies of brand name products, biosimilars are highly complex versions that are similar but not identical. Thus a new pathway for biological substitution exists and this bill ensures that the pharmacists communicate with the prescribing physician who knows the patient and patient history prior to substituting. At a hearing I attended there was discussion and support voiced by many organizations. Representative Sharon Cooper is sponsoring this amendment.

Representative Tom Sabulis is leading the effort to legalize marijuana for medical purposes. This bill to help treat seizures in children and pain in patients with chronic diseases is gaining momentum this year.

Some of the legislative priorities of AAUW include: Gender pay gap, Retirement Security and Paid Sick Days and Work-Life Balance. The Paid Sick Days and Work-Life Balance is similar but not identical to the HB 290. This bill supports federal policies to update federal policies to update the Family and Medical Leave Act to ensure paid leave and paid sick days.

Of interest, President Obama is proposing that all companies give employees at least 7 sick days. The President has also proposed that all students to have access to a free education at a community college. While desirable, there are questions about funding.

Plan to come to the Capitol for Lobby Day. Lobby Day for 9 – 5 is January 29th. Also there is “Violence against Women” program at Central Presbyterian Church on February 3rd; for which you can register on-line.

Communicating with our legislators gives us a voice on issues that affect women, our health and well-being and issues of daily living. Legislators really need to hear from us about issues of concern, so call or email them about those things that are important to you and to the community.

February Branch Meeting: Annual Legislative Update

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the February 7 Branch meeting, to be held from 11 am to 2 pm at the Ansley Golf Club (196 Montgomery Ferry Drive, Atlanta 30309; phone 404.875.1687).

There will be a panel of representatives from Georgia Budget and Policy Institute and 9 to 5, plus District Attorney Dalia Racine addressing human trafficking issues.

Lunch will follow the panel presentation; cost of the lunch is \$25. Members of the Cobb and North Fulton Branches are also invited. Join AAUW members for an informative meeting and a great lunch in a beautiful setting! Please RSVP to hospitality@auwatlanta.org by January 28 or call Betty Arden if you have questions.

AAUW Travel Group Update: February Outing

Due to inclement weather, the AAUW Travel Group postponed their January trip one month. They will meet at 9:45 am on February 12th at the Ansley Mall Kroger Store to carpool to the new six-story Restoration Hardware Store at 3030 Peachtree Street. Restoration Hardware Atlanta is the company’s largest retail space in the United States. The location and grounds have been designed in the spirit of a modern Southern estate, hence the name RH Atlanta, The Estate in Buckhead. Following the visit to Restoration Hardware Atlanta, the group will enjoy lunch in the area.

Contemporary Literature Group

The Contemporary Literature group will meet Monday, February 2 at the home of Elaine North. We will discuss The Goldfinch by Donna Tartt. Gather about Noon for lunch followed by discussion. You are welcome even if you haven't finished reading this long book! Please call Kay Collins for details.

Note:

We are fortunate that our previous intern, Amira Saleh, has agreed to take over the newsletter and evites for the remainder of the Branch year. So for the March newsletter, please send your information to her at this address: publications@aauwatlanta.org and copy me communications@aauwatlanta.org

Thanks for your cooperation.