



**Future of AAUW Connecticut
OPTION 3 – DISBAND STATE LEVEL**

The following option will be presented and discussed at **September 12, 2009 AAUW Connecticut State Board Meeting**. Please review the information advance of the meeting.

SUMMARY:

According to the 2009 AAUW Bylaws, the branches in a state ultimately decide if they wish to continue to have a state structure. Option 3 allows for disbanding our state structure and focusing time, money, and effort into branch level activities.

Proposed focus of CT AAUW at the state level:

There would be no state level organization. Branches would work directly with AAUW.

What would change:

Over the past year, AAUW has been putting structures in place to work directly with the branches, primarily through email communication. This effort is continuing. Option 3 makes this direct connection the only means of communication between the branches and AAUW.

Proposed Board Positions: None

What is Required:

According to Article X. States (of the 2009 Bylaws of AAUW), Section 3 Contact “Each state or multi-state organization shall provide AAUW with a designated contact for administration and finance. If a state elects not to have a state organization or be included in a multi-state structure, the AAUW Board of Directors, in consultation with the branches in the state, will appoint an administrative contact.”

History and Explanation of the Proposal

History:

Like many organizations, AAUW has been working over the last few years to find ways to:

- Simply the organization to enable it to be more nimble and able to change
- Connect the members directly to the national organization requiring less administrative overhead.
- Tightening the links between members and the Association, to allow the association can be more responsive to members and to allow the association to directly reach out to all members.

To accomplish this, AAUW has streamlined the Bylaws and is allowing states and branches a lot of flexibility in changing their bylaws. As we undertake this process, AAUW has noted:

We strongly encourage you and your board or branch to spend time assessing your branch or state needs, purpose, and goals before any changes to your structure. (Source: AAUW Structure Transition Summary Briefing, www.aauw.org)

Rationale for *this* Proposal:

AAUW has recognized that their former structure was administratively complex, requiring a lot of hierarchical levels and administrative procedures. With the advent of new processes and procedures, many of the state level positions are no longer needed. For example, they now have a pilot project to allow branch members to directly renew their membership directly on the AAUW website, and branch members can print off lists of their members. Similarly, there are numerous ways for AAUW to quickly share their latest policy updates or to collect Educational Foundation funds. Members can even update their own records!

AAUW has begun to provide some excellent resources for branches to use to develop programs. From “Program in a Box” to Voter Education Campaign packages to Leadership Training programs, AAUW is not only providing research, but helping provide the materials we need to get it out to the membership. Moreover, AAUW has been developing multiple means for connecting with other members. Facebook and LinkedIn – two of the largest social media groups – allow you to connect with more AAUW members than ever before. Moreover – they allow AAUW to share information rapidly: something that is essential for today’s organizations.

As more of these programs are added at the national level, we hear more questions regarding what value the state organization really offers. Moreover, as our members are busier, we are finding that we are often going to the same members to provide multiple functions. In fact, over the last few years we have had difficulty getting volunteers for state positions. While we have tried to alter state programs in response to the stated needs of our members, attendance has been lower than hoped.

Most members seem committed to the goals of AAUW. Feedback sessions have shown that members want to network with like-minded women and to further the rights of women. We want to create a structure that will allow women to put their focus on the activities that they are passionate about, the activities that drew them to AAUW. Structural changes that allow us to focus on what works well with AAUW may require some adjustment, but also offer the opportunity for reenergizing AAUW's future.

Rationale for Changing the State Structure:

The terms of all the officers listed in our current bylaws have expired. Some have been filled by outgoing officers who volunteered to continue to serve. We had no success in trying to fill these offices through our usual nominating process. Although we have operated with alternative, interim organizational structures through adoption of resolutions, we cannot exist as an organization without new leadership coming forth and without revision to our bylaws and adoption of the new ones.

The passage of new AAUW Bylaws at the 2009 Convention allows state (and branch) organizations a great deal of flexibility. State organizations may function with the two required officers for administration and finance, may join with other states, or may chose not to continue. AAUW/CT has to decide its future.