

YWCA 2019-2020 ADVOCACY AGENDA

Informed by YWCA's rich 160-year history and by the expertise of our nationwide network, YWCA advocates for practical solutions that meet the needs of women, girls, and marginalized communities to advance our intersectional mission to eliminate racism and empower women. YWCA is driving an inclusive agenda to protect and strengthen women's and girls' health, safety, and economic opportunity, and to address the underlying gender equity and racial justice tensions that are so deeply embedded in our nation.

Legislative Priorities in the 116th Congress

YWCA's top legislative priorities are:

- Reauthorization of the **Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)** and the **Family Violence Prevention & Services Act (FVPSA)**
- Advance opportunities to promote and support **economic security for survivors** of gender-based violence
- Passing the **End Racial (and Religious) Profiling Act (ERRPA)**
- Support **trauma-informed care** for children and families exposed to violence
- **Securing federal funding** to support YWCA **workforce development, gender-based violence, STEM, child care, and housing** programs

YWCA also supports federal legislation to advance our mission and advocacy goals in the areas of:

Economic Opportunity, Equal Pay & Workplace Fairness

Goal: Remove barriers to and expand opportunities for women

Racial Justice & Civil Rights

Goal: End the criminalization of people of color and protect the rights and safety of marginalized communities

Gender Based Violence

Goal: Prevent gender-based violence and protect survivors

Strength of the YWCA Network

Goal: Strengthen the health and vitality of the YWCA Network

Immigration

Goal: Ensure those seeking safety and opportunity in the US can arrive and live without fear, harm or discrimination

Health & Safety

Goal: Ensure that women, girls, and marginalized communities have access to quality, affordable, comprehensive, culturally competent health care

YWCA’s “What Women Want” Survey & Report

From historic firsts and record numbers of women running for — and winning — elected office, to our consistent presence at the ballot box on election day, to the steady and powerful leadership of women of color, the 2018 election made clear that women are driving an inclusive agenda for change—and that we expect our elected leaders to act.

The 2018 election results align with the findings of YWCA’s national survey of women in the U.S., which identified top public policy priorities of women and included an important focus on the voices of Black, Latina, Asian, Native, and millennial women. Commissioned by YWCA and led by [Celinda Lake](#) of Lake Research Partners and [Linda DiVall](#) of American Viewpoint, [What Women Want 2018](#) highlights that:

- The lives of women — across race, age, education, and party affiliation — are deeply connected around their needs and concerns for their families and their future. **Women’s top concerns** include gun violence, medical expenses, access to healthcare and health insurance, caregiving for children and aging relatives, paying for college, housing and other expenses, job security and flexibility, and access to mental health services and reproductive health care.
- There is **broad and deep support among women that Congress should act** on every policy we tested.

ECONOMIC	Strengthening equal pay laws
CIVIL RIGHTS	Passing legislation to end racial profiling
HEALTH AND SAFETY	Renewing the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)
	Protecting the Affordable Care Act
	Protecting Roe v. Wade
CAREGIVING	Passing legislation to meet the physical and mental health needs of women and girls
	Passing the Child Care for Working Families Act to expand access to affordable, high quality child care and invest in early childhood education professionals
IMMIGRATION	Passing paid family and medical leave legislation
	Ending family separation
	Passing the DREAM Act
	Passing comprehensive immigration reform
	Ending family detention

- **Discrimination continues to be a major issue for women**, with two of five women reporting that they have experienced discrimination because they are women (a nine percent increase over 2012), and women of color also reporting racial and ethnic discrimination.