



# CAWP

## *Election Watch*

### **Summary of Women State Legislative Candidates 2004**

#### **Number of women state legislative candidates down**

The number of women candidates for state legislatures in 2004 is slightly lower than, but similar to, figures from recent years, according to the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

The 2,220 (1344D, 863R, 2I, 7NP, 4Prg.) women seeking state legislative seats in 2004 reflect a slight decrease from the most recent comparable election year, 2000, when 2,228 women ran for state legislatures.\* The largest number of women candidates for legislatures was in 1992, when 2,375 women ran. A summary of the numbers of women candidates for state legislatures since 1992 is available here.

“We’re disappointed that the number of women candidates seems stuck,” says CAWP director Debbie Walsh. “We need women’s voices in state policymaking and in higher offices. It all begins at the state legislative level, so we’re sorry not to see more women stepping forward to run.”

Regular state legislative elections will take place in 46 states this year. Four states (LA, MS, NJ and VA) hold state legislative elections in odd-numbered years. A total of 5,805 seats are up for grabs this year out of the 7,382 state legislative slots across the country.

\* Because some states hold legislative elections only every four years, comparisons between elections held at four-year intervals generally reflect the same overall number of races, except when redistricting has changed the total number of seats. Elections held two years apart do not reflect a comparable number of races.