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For Immediate Release

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## **Stalled Progress: Another Status Quo Year for New Jersey Women**

### **CAWP's 2021 New Jersey County Report Card**

New Jersey has shown minimal progress over the past year for women's representation in local and county offices, according to a new analysis from the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University. Union County retains the top spot in an overall ranking based on an average rank of women's representation on local councils, mayoralities, and commissionerships. Mercer, which shared the top rank with Union in 2020, dropped to fourth place in the overall rankings, while continuing to lead New Jersey in women's representation on town councils. Union also leads the state in women's share of mayoralities and county commissionerships.

The state continues to see incremental progress in women's overall representation in these offices. Women gained eight mayoralities between 2020 and 2021, an identical change as 2019 to 2020, while women gained two seats on county commissions, one more than in the previous report card. As for seats on city councils and similar offices, women gained just 15 seats since the last time CAWP compiled this data; CAWP's [2020 New Jersey County Report Card](#) showed a gain of 68 council seats. Women now hold 18% of mayoralities, 35% of county commissionerships, and 30% of city council seats. According to CAWP's recently-released data collection, [Women in Municipal Office](#), which tracks women in mayoral and city council offices in incorporated cities and towns with populations over 10,000 (but does not include county commissions), New Jersey ranks 25th in the nation for women's representation in municipal office.

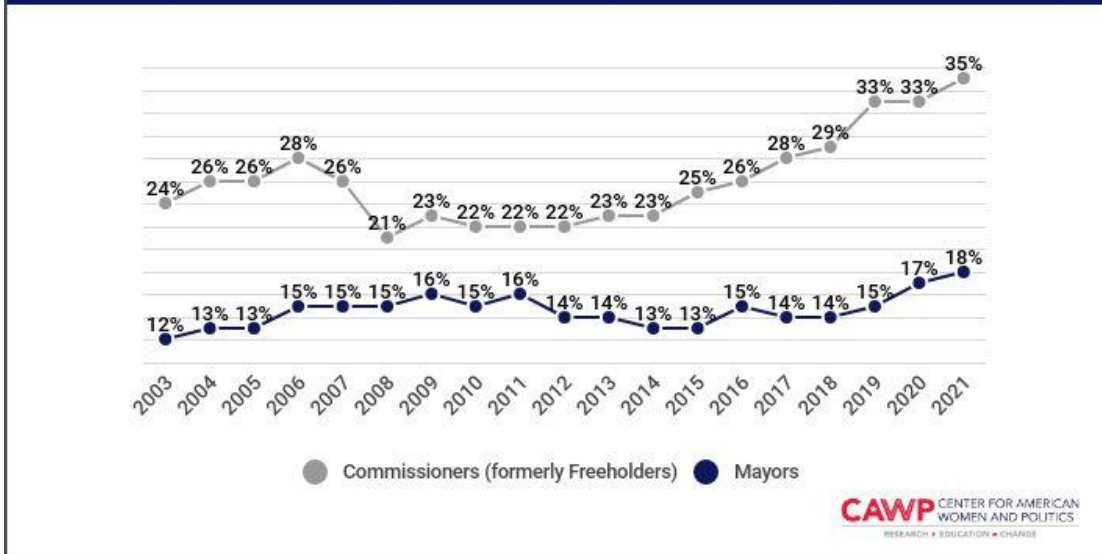
"It's discouraging to see such plodding progress for women here in New Jersey," said CAWP Associate Director Jean Sinzdak, "but in a state where political opportunities are so tightly controlled by the parties, it's really incumbent upon party leaders to redouble their efforts in candidate recruiting and support to help make New Jersey's governing bodies representative of the communities they serve."

Sinzdak also encouraged women in New Jersey to take advantage of the many programs, events, and resources that the Center makes available for women interested in pursuing a career in politics, including our campaign training program, [Ready to Run](#)<sup>®</sup> and our programs that encourage and highlight the political participation of women of color: the [Senator Wynona Lipman Chair in Women's Political Leadership lecture](#) and the campaign training programs [Elección Latina](#), [Rising Stars](#), and [Run Sister Run](#).

The sluggish pace of change in women's representation over the past two decades is captured in the following graph that shows women's proportion of mayoralities and county commissionerships from 2003 to 2021.

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## Women as a Percentage of NJ Mayors and Commissioners: 2003-2021



Union continues to lead New Jersey counties in women’s share of mayor’s offices, with 9 mayoralities (43%) held by women. Burlington is the second-highest-ranked county for women mayors, with 11 (28%) mayoralities held by women. Warren County, which has just one woman mayor in 2021, ranks last. In 16 counties, men hold 80% or more of mayoral offices in the county.

Union also leads the state in women’s proportion of county commissioners, with 6 of 9 (67%) seats held by women. Women are also the majority of county commissioners in Somerset (60%) and Bergen (57%). Salem County continues to have zero women on its board of commissioners. Warren County, which also had zero women commissioners in 2020, gained a woman on its three-member county board. Men hold 80% or more county commission seats in six New Jersey counties.

Mercer is the top-ranked county in the state for women’s representation in town councils, with women holding 44% of council seats. It is the only county in which women make up more than 40% of town council members. Cumberland County ranks last for women’s share of town council seats, with just 13% of seats held by women. Women hold less than one-third of town council seats in 15 New Jersey counties.

Full tables of the overall county ranking and the rankings for mayoralities, county commissions, and town councils follow on pages 3 and 4 of this release.

For additional information about women in New Jersey politics, including previous county report cards, milestones, and women officeholders currently and over time, visit the [New Jersey Facts](#) page on the CAWP website.

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## County Rankings for Women's Representation 2021

Source: Center for American Women and Politics

County	Commissioner Rank	Mayor Rank	Council Rank	Average of Rank	Overall Rank
Union	1	1	5	2.3	1
Somerset	2	8	2	4.0	2
Middlesex	4	6	3	4.3	3
Mercer	4	11	1	5.3	4
Burlington	7	2	12	7.0	5
Bergen	3	14	6	7.7	6
Camden	14	8	7	9.7	7
Hunterdon	16	3	10	9.7	7
Sussex	7	5	18	10.0	9
Essex	10	15	7	10.7	10
Hudson	10	19	3	10.7	10
Monmouth	7	11	14	10.7	10
Atlantic	10	4	19	11.0	13
Morris	15	10	11	12.0	14
Gloucester	19	11	12	14.0	15
Passaic	19	16	9	14.7	16
Cumberland	4	20	21	15.0	17
Warren	10	21	15	15.3	18
Salem	21	6	20	15.7	19
Cape May	16	16	17	16.3	20
Ocean	16	18	16	16.7	21

## Proportion of Women Mayors by County 2021

Source: Center for American Women and Politics

Data as of April 2021

County	Rank	Women Mayors	Total Mayors	% Women	# Change since 2020
Union	1	9	21	43%	-1
Burlington	2	11	40	28%	+2
Hunterdon	3	6	26	23%	+1
Atlantic	4	5	23	22%	+1
Sussex	5	5	24	21%	+1
Middlesex	6	5	25	20%	-
Salem	6	3	15	20%	-
Camden	8	7	37	19%	+1
Somerset	8	4	21	19%	+1
Morris	10	7	39	18%	-1
Gloucester	11	4	24	17%	-
Mercer	11	2	12	17%	-1
Monmouth	11	9	53	17%	-1
Bergen	14	11	70	16%	+3
Essex	15	3	22	14%	+1
Cape May	16	2	16	13%	-
Passaic	16	2	16	13%	-
Ocean	18	4	33	12%	+1
Hudson	19	1	12	8%	-
Cumberland	20	1	14	7%	+1
Warren	21	1	22	5%	-1
<b>Total</b>		<b>102</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>+8</b>

## Proportion of Women Commissioners by County 2021

Source: Center for American Women and Politics

Data as of January 2021

County	Rank	Women Commissioners	Total Commissioners	% Women	# Change since 2020
Union	1	6	9	67%	+1
Somerset	2	3	5	60%	-
Bergen	3	4	7	57%	-
Cumberland	4	3	7	43%	+1
Mercer	4	3	7	43%	-
Middlesex	4	3	7	43%	-
Burlington	7	2	5	40%	-
Monmouth	7	2	5	40%	-
Sussex	7	2	5	40%	-
Atlantic	10	3	9	33%	-1
Essex	10	3	9	33%	-
Hudson	10	3	9	33%	+1
Warren	10	1	3	33%	+1
Camden	14	2	7	29%	-1
Morris	15	2	7	29%	-
Cape May	16	1	5	20%	-
Hunterdon	16	1	5	20%	-
Ocean	16	1	5	20%	-
Gloucester	19	1	7	14%	-
Passaic	19	1	7	14%	-
Salem	21	0	5	0%	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>47</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>+2</b>

## Proportion of Women Council Members by County 2021

Source: Center for American Women and Politics

Data as of April 2021

County	Rank	Women	Total	% Women	# Change since 2020
Mercer	1	30	68	44%	+1
Somerset	2	47	121	39%	+5
Hudson	3	27	76	36%	-
Middlesex	3	54	148	36%	+2
Union	5	46	135	34%	+1
Bergen	6	134	407	33%	-1
Camden	7	65	201	32%	+4
Essex	7	42	133	32%	-1
Passaic	9	33	105	31%	-2
Hunterdon	10	40	135	30%	-2
Morris	11	67	231	29%	-2
Burlington	12	55	200	28%	-
Gloucester	12	38	136	28%	-
Monmouth	14	75	276	27%	+3
Warren	15	26	101	26%	+1
Ocean	16	46	181	25%	+2
Cape May	17	17	72	24%	+1
Sussex	18	28	121	23%	-1
Atlantic	19	28	132	21%	+4
Salem	20	14	69	20%	-1
Cumberland	21	8	61	13%	-1
<b>Total</b>		<b>920</b>	<b>3109</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>+15</b>

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## About CAWP

The [Center for American Women and Politics](#) (CAWP), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, is nationally recognized as the leading source of scholarly research and current data about women's political participation in the United States. Its mission is to promote greater knowledge and understanding about the role of women in American politics, enhance women's influence in public life, and expand the diversity of women in politics and government. CAWP's education and outreach programs translate research findings into action, addressing women's underrepresentation in political leadership with effective, intersectional, and imaginative programs serving a variety of audiences. As the world has watched Americans considering female candidates for the nation's highest offices, CAWP's five decades of analyzing and interpreting women's participation in American politics have provided a foundation and context for the discussion.