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For immediate release

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### **Help Wanted: More Women Needed in NJ County and Municipal Elected Offices**

If New Jersey counties were graded on their efforts to elect women as freeholders, six would receive honors marks (40 percent or better), and two would flunk with scores of zero. Progress on electing women mayors is even worse, with just three counties at or exceeding 25 percent, most below 20 percent. Only one county can boast having more than a third of its city or town council seats filled by women (Mercer, with 38%). Five other counties have over a quarter of women on councils, and two counties, Atlantic and Cumberland, are at the bottom with less than 15% of their councils comprised of women.

These are the year-end findings of the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University. CAWP compiled 2016 data on both numbers and percentages of women freeholders and mayors in New Jersey's 21 counties. (**Detailed tables attached.**)

Essex County, with 44 percent women among its freeholders, leads the way; Bergen and Morris (both at 43%), Burlington, Cape May and Monmouth (all at 40%) follow. At the opposite end of the scale, Sussex and Warren Counties have no women on their Freeholder boards. In Ocean County, Virginia Haines is only the second woman ever to serve as freeholder; the first, Hazel Gluck, served from 1977-79.

At the mayoral level, Hunterdon County leads the way at 27 percent, followed by Mercer and Sussex Counties (25%) and Union County (24%). Cumberland County has no women among its mayors, and the remaining counties have between 3% and 20% women mayors.

"New Jersey has made significant strides in recent years at the state legislative level, where we're now 11<sup>th</sup> in the country for women's representation," noted CAWP associate director Jean Sinzdak. "Unfortunately, in most counties women lag far behind. Where county party chairs hold the keys to ballot lines, they have the power to position women to win and create government that better reflects the population."

Sinzdak invited Garden State women to learn more about running by attending Ready to Run<sup>®</sup>, CAWP's non-partisan campaign training for women, which takes place March 10-11, 2017 in New Brunswick. "This year we've seen an enormous surge of interest from women in running for office," she commented. "Ready to Run<sup>®</sup> will give them essential tools to take the next steps. We need women's voices at the table now more than ever."

Information and registration is available [on the CAWP website](#).

#### **About CAWP**

The Center for American Women and Politics, a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey is a university-based research, education and public service center. Its mission is to promote greater knowledge and understanding about women's changing relationship to politics and government and to enhance women's influence and leadership in public life. CAWP is a leading authority in its field and a respected bridge between the academic and political worlds.

## Proportion of Women Freeholders by County - 2016

Source: N.J. Association of Counties.

County	Total Freeholders	Women: Freeholders	%	Rank
Essex	9	4	44.4%	1
Bergen	7	3	42.9%	2
Morris	7	3	42.9%	2
Burlington	5	2	40.0%	4
Cape May	5	2	40.0%	4
Monmouth	5	2	40.0%	4
Union	9	3	33.3%	4
Camden	7	2	28.6%	8
Cumberland	7	2	28.6%	8
Mercer	7	2	28.6%	8
Middlesex	7	2	28.6%	8
Salem	7	2	28.6%	12
Hunterdon	5	1	20.0%	13
Ocean	5	1	20.0%	13
Somerset	5	1	20.0%	13
Gloucester	7	1	14.3%	16
Passaic	7	1	14.3%	16
Atlantic	9	1	11.1%	18
Hudson	9	1	11.1%	18
Sussex	5	0	0.0%	20
Warren	3	0	0.0%	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>26.3%</b>	

## Proportion of Women Mayors by County - 2016

Source: N.J. League of Municipalities.

County	Total: Mayors	Women: Mayors	%	Rank
Hunterdon	26	7	26.9%	1
Mercer	12	3	25.0%	2
Sussex	24	6	25.0%	2
Union	21	5	23.8%	4
Burlington	40	8	20.0%	5
Somerset	21	4	19.0%	6
Camden	37	7	18.9%	7
Monmouth	53	9	17.0%	8
Middlesex	25	4	16.0%	9
Warren	22	3	13.6%	10
Bergen	70	9	12.9%	11
Passaic	16	2	12.5%	12
Cape May	16	2	12.5%	12
Gloucester	24	3	12.5%	12
Ocean	33	3	9.1%	15
Essex	22	2	9.1%	15
Atlantic	23	2	8.7%	17
Hudson	12	1	8.3%	18
Salem	15	1	6.7%	19
Morris	39	1	2.6%	20
Cumberland	14	0	0.0%	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>14.5%</b>	

## Proportion of Women Council Members by County - 2016

Source: Center for American Women and Politics

County	Total:	Women:	%	Rank
Mercer	68	26	38.2%	1
Union	135	39	28.9%	2
Camden	203	57	28.1%	3
Hudson	76	21	27.6%	4
Middlesex	149	39	26.2%	5
Cape May	74	19	25.7%	6
Bergen	408	101	24.8%	7
Monmouth	276	67	24.3%	8
Hunterdon	133	32	24.1%	9
Warren	101	24	23.8%	10
Essex	131	31	23.7%	11
Salem	69	16	23.2%	12
Passaic	104	24	23.1%	13
Burlington	201	45	22.4%	14
Somerset	121	27	22.3%	15
Ocean	180	40	22.2%	16
Gloucester	136	30	22.1%	17
Sussex	119	26	21.8%	18
Morris	233	50	21.5%	19
Atlantic	128	17	13.3%	20
Cumberland	61	8	13.1%	21
<b>Totals</b>	<b>739</b>	<b>3, 106</b>	<b>23.8%</b>	