

Statement on the End of the Presidential Primary for Women Candidates

The 2020 presidential campaign began with six women candidates running in the Democratic primary, a record level of participation, including four U.S. Senators, a four-term U.S. Representative, and a successful entrepreneur.

Now there are none.

From the beginning, the 2016 campaign loomed over 2020 and one question was repeated continuously throughout the primary: Can a woman win? It has become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

[Women can win](#). Hillary Clinton showed this in 2016 when she won an overwhelming popular vote victory. Women at all levels, in all kinds of districts, showed this in 2018 when they set records for political representation in the Congress and around the country.

As we've discussed throughout this election cycle, women are forced to run [dual campaigns](#): a traditional campaign to show that they are the best person for the job and an additional campaign appealing to political analysts, donors, and the media, as well as voters, to prove that they are "electable" at all.

Someday a woman will be President of the United States. But it won't happen in an environment where women are hobbled by different, and greater, expectations than their male counterparts.

It's time to change the way we talk about women candidates.

-Debbie Walsh, Director of the Center for American Women and Politics

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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 under-representation 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.