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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.

These are the findings of the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University. CAWP compiled 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, appointed to fill a vacancy, 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 11th 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[®], CAWP's non-partisan campaign training for women, which takes place March 18-19 in New Brunswick. "Many talented women across the state would make great candidates but haven't been encouraged to run or don't know how to explore that option," she commented. "Ready to Run[®] will give them essential tools to take the next steps. We hope county party chairs will send their best potential candidates to the program so they can get ready to run."

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

Source: N.J. Association of Counties.

FREEHOLDERS

2016

	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%	3
Cape May	5	2	40.0%	3
Monmouth	5	2	40.0%	3
Union	9	3	33.3%	4
Camden	7	2	28.6%	5
Cumberland	7	2	28.6%	5
Mercer	7	2	28.6%	5
Middlesex	7	2	28.6%	5
Hunterdon	5	1	20.0%	6
Ocean	5	1	20.0%	6
Somerset	5	1	20.0%	6
Salem	6	1	16.7%	7
Gloucester	7	1	14.3%	8
Passaic	7	1	14.3%	8
Atlantic	9	1	11.1%	9
Hudson	9	1	11.1%	9
Sussex	5	0	0.0%	10
Warren	3	0	0.0%	10
Total	136	35	25.7%	

Proportion of Women Mayors by County

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%	3
Union	21	5	23.8%	4
Burlington	40	8	20.0%	5
Somerset	21	4	19.0%	5
Camden	37	7	18.9%	6
Monmouth	53	9	17.0%	7
Middlesex	25	4	16.0%	8
Warren	22	3	13.6%	9
Bergen	70	9	12.9%	10
Passaic	16	2	12.5%	10
Cape May	16	2	12.5%	10
Gloucester	24	3	12.5%	11
Ocean	33	3	9.1%	12
Essex	22	2	9.1%	12
Atlantic	23	2	8.7%	13
Hudson	12	1	8.3%	14
Salem	15	1	6.7%	15
Morris	39	1	2.6%	16
Cumberland	14	0	0.0%	17
Total	565	82	14.5%	

*Salem will likely have only six freeholders rather than the usual seven this year due to a tie.

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