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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, only four would receive excellent marks, and three would flunk. Progress on electing women mayors is even worse, with just two counties exceeding 25 percent, and the rest 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.**)

Burlington County, where three of five freeholders (60%) are women, leads the way; Bergen (42.9%), Essex (44.4%) and Cape May (40%) follow. At the opposite end of the scale, Atlantic, Ocean and Warren Counties have no women among their freeholders.

At the mayoral level, only in Mercer County (33.3%) and Warren County (27.3%) are women more than a quarter of all mayors. Cumberland and Salem Counties have no women among their mayors, and the remaining counties have between 4.5% and 19.0% 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 director Debbie Walsh. "Unfortunately, at the county and municipal levels, women are still largely missing from the picture. To have reasonable balance at the county and local levels, more women must run, and both parties must do their part to create government that better reflects the population."

Stone Harbor Mayor Suzanne Walters recognizes the importance of women's representation, serving in a borough where women hold the majority of council seats as well as the mayor's office. Walters, who just completed a term as president of the New Jersey League of Municipalities, observes, "Women in Stone Harbor and across the state bring distinctive talents and experiences to government. We need their voices and leadership to make our towns and counties work for everyone."

Walsh 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 13-14 in New Brunswick. "Many talented women across the state haven't considered running or don't know how to explore that option," she commented. "Ready to Run® will give them essential tools to take the next steps."

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

## Proportion of Women Freeholders by County

County	Total Freeholders	Women Freeholders	%	County Rank
Burlington	5	3	60.0%	1
Essex	9	4	44.4%	2
Bergen	7	3	42.9%	3
Cape May	5	2	40.0%	4
Monmouth	5	2	40.0%	4
Union	9	3	33.3%	6
Camden	7	2	28.6%	7
Cumberland	7	2	28.6%	7
Mercer	7	2	28.6%	7
Middlesex	7	2	28.6%	7
Salem	7	2	28.6%	7
Hunterdon	5	1	20.0%	12
Somerset	5	1	20.0%	12
Sussex	5	1	20.0%	12
Gloucester	7	1	14.3%	15
Morris	7	1	14.3%	15
Passaic	7	1	14.3%	15
Hudson	9	1	11.1%	18
Atlantic	9	0	0.0%	19
Ocean	5	0	0.0%	19
Warren	3	0	0.0%	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>24.8%</b>	

Source: Center for American Women and Politics, drawing on data from N.J. Association of Counties.

### 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 Mayors by County

County	Total Mayors	Women Mayors	%	County Rank
Mercer	12	4	33.3%	1
Warren	22	6	27.3%	2
Union	21	4	19.0%	3
Passaic	16	3	18.8%	4
Burlington	40	7	17.5%	5
Middlesex	25	4	16.0%	6
Hunterdon	26	4	15.4%	7
Ocean	33	5	15.2%	8
Bergen	70	10	14.3%	9
Camden	37	5	13.5%	10
Monmouth	53	7	13.2%	11
Cape May	16	2	12.5%	12
Sussex	24	3	12.5%	12
Somerset	21	2	9.5%	14
Atlantic	23	2	8.7%	15
Gloucester	24	2	8.3%	16
Hudson	12	1	8.3%	16
Morris	39	3	7.7%	18
Essex	22	1	4.5%	19
Cumberland	14	0	0.0%	20
Salem	15	0	0.0%	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	

Source: Center for American Women and Politics, drawing on data from N.J. League of Municipalities.