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**“20 PERCENT IN 2012” CAMPAIGN SEEKS
BIGGEST SPIKE FOR WOMEN IN OFFICE SINCE 1992**

NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ and PALO ALTO, CA, September 4, 2012 -- With a record number of women now running for seats in both the U.S. House and Senate, The 2012 Project today launches “20 Percent in 2012.” The 2012 Project is a national, nonpartisan campaign of the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) at Rutgers University.

To get to 20% (a total 107 women in the House and Senate) would require a 3 percentage point jump from the current 17 percent women in Congress. That would mean the largest rate of growth since 1992, known widely as the “Year of the Woman.”

“It’s an ambitious goal,” said CAWP director Debbie Walsh, “but it’s within reach – so we’re putting out the word that it’s possible. The task is converting a record number of candidates into a record number of winners.”

With women still on the ballot in four states that have not yet held congressional primaries, there are already 160 women nominees for House seats. The previous record was 141 women set in 2004.

“We need to accelerate the pace of progress,” said Mary Hughes, founder and director of The 2012 Project. “It’s time. Women are ready.”

To reach 20 percent women in the House, or 87 women, The 2012 Project is counting on:

- 56 women incumbents certain to win;
- 3 women incumbents likely to win;
- 10 new women candidates almost certain to win;
- and 27 incumbent women and new candidates running in competitive seats, of whom two-thirds would need to win.

To learn about candidates in their state and across the country, people can go online to the 2012 Project Women’s Election Tracker: http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/site/pages/election_tracker.php

CAWP and The 2012 Project are hosting a free public leadership summit on September 13 in Atlanta to share the latest research and messaging to elect women. Media and the public can register at <http://the2012project.us>

The 2012 elections follow post-census redistricting when every congressional and state legislative district is redrawn and open seats are created. Women and other newcomers have more success winning open seats, and the increased voter turnout in presidential years further boosts women candidates. This year, a record 297 women filed to run for US House seats, shattering the previous record of 262 women set in 2010.

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.

The 2012 Project is a national, non-partisan campaign of CAWP to increase the number of women in Congress and state legislatures by taking advantage of the once-in-a-decade opportunities of 2012. Learn more and follow the 2012 Women's Election Tracker at the 2012project.us.

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