



# CAWP

## Election Watch

PRESS RELEASE  
September 19, 2007

Contact: CAWP (732) 932-9384  
Debbie Walsh, Director, x227

### **NJ Women Now Hold Record Number of Assembly Seats; Elections Could Mean Even Greater Gains**

With the swearing in of two new assemblywomen this week, New Jersey has jumped to 28<sup>th</sup> among the states when ranked by proportion of women lawmakers, according to the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP). A record number of women candidates in the 2007 legislative elections offers the prospect of additional gains in a state long noted for its poor record in electing women.

The two new women – Assemblywomen Eleese Evans (D-35) and Mila Jasey (D-27) – were named to open seats created by resignations of two men. Their presence brings to 18 the total number of women in the Assembly, including 13 Democrats and 5 Republicans. Women now hold 22.5 percent of New Jersey Assembly seats, up from 19.2 percent before the latest appointments. Ranked as low as 43<sup>rd</sup> in the nation in recent years, New Jersey was 34<sup>th</sup> before this week.

“County party leaders had the opportunity to make a big difference – and they did it,” notes CAWP director Debbie Walsh. “CAWP has pointed out the lack of women in New Jersey politics for three decades, and we’ve been training women candidates in the state for ten years. It’s great to see a positive response from those with the power to create change.”

Even more growth is possible because of the record number of women tapped for major party candidacies in the November legislative elections. Forty-four women (29D,15R) are vying for Assembly seats, besting the previous record of 39 set in 2001. Seventeen women (11D, 6R) have senate nominations, topping the previous high of 12 in 2001.

#### **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. Since 1998, CAWP has conducted *Ready to Run*<sup>™</sup>, a bi-partisan effort to recruit and train New Jersey women to run for all levels of office. Among the 61 women running for the New Jersey legislature this year, 16 have attended *Ready to Run*<sup>™</sup>.

-over-



*Center for American Women and Politics*  
Eagleton Institute of Politics  
191 Ryders Lane, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8557  
Phone: (732) 932-9384 • Fax: (732) 932-0014  
[www.cawp.rutgers.edu](http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu)

Year	NJ Women Assembly Candidates in General Election				NJ Women Senate Candidates in General Election				Offices Elected in This Year
	Incumbents	Open Seats	Challengers	Total	Incumbents	Open Seats	Challengers	Total	
2007	17 (13D, 4R)	16 (9D, 7R)	11 (7D, 4R)	44 (29D, 15R)	6 (5D, 1R)	4 (4D)	7 (2D, 5R)	17 (11D, 6R)	Senate, Assembly
2005	11 (9D, 2R)	6 (2D, 4R)	16 (7D, 9R)	33 (18D, 15R)	--	--	--	--	Assembly, Governor
2003	13 (8D, 5R)	5 (4D, 1R)	16 (4D, 12R)	34 (16D, 18R)	5 (3D, 2R)	2 (2R)	5 (4D, 1R)	12 (7D, 5R)	Senate, Assembly
2001	12 (8D, 4R)	6 (3D, 3R)	21 (10D, 11R)	39 (21D, 18R)	3 (1D, 2R)	2 (2D)	7 (3D, 4R)	12 (6D, 6R)	Senate, Assembly, Gov.
1999	16 (9D, 7R)	0	14 (7D, 7R)	30 (16D, 14R)	--	--	--	--	Assembly Only
1997	14 (7D, 7R)	1 (1R)	22 (13D, 9R)	37 (20D, 17R)	2 (1D, 1R)	1 (1D)	6 (5D, 1R)	9 (7D, 2R)	Senate, Assembly, Gov.
1995	14 (6D, 8R)	4 (2D, 2R)	15 (12D, 3R)	33 (20D, 13R)	--	--	--	--	Assembly Only