

November 6, 2014

PCWP Report: 2014 Midterm Leaves Pennsylvania with No Women in Congress

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PITTSBURGH—The [Pennsylvania Center for Women in Politics \(PCWP\)](#) at Chatham University reports that in the wake of the 2014-midterm elections, the U.S. Congress has reached an important milestone where 100 women will serve in the U.S. House of Representatives (the first time in U.S. History) and twenty women (a record set in 2012) will likely continue to serve in the U.S. Senate. However, none of these women will be representing the state of Pennsylvania.

A handful of other states also have no women in their delegation, but Pennsylvania is the most populous. The absence of women is counter to a national trend that has seen an increase in the number of women running and winning congressional offices in states all over the country. The 2014 mid-term elections saw Iowa elect its state's first woman to Congress, Republican Joni Ernst, and in 2012, New Hampshire famously elected an entirely all-female delegation.

While women challenged incumbents in six of the state's 18 U.S. House Districts, none of them were successful. Democrat Allyson Schwartz, who was the lone woman in the state's congressional delegation, chose to (unsuccessfully) seek her party's nomination for governor rather than seek re-election to Congress. Pennsylvania's two U.S. Senators are men.

“Unfortunately, Pennsylvania will not be sending any women as part of its congressional delegation to Washington. While women are 51% of the population they will not be present at the congressional table. This matters not just for the sake of democracy, but it may have policy implications, as we know that women bring different perspective to governing,” said Pennsylvania Center for Women and Politics Executive Director Dana Brown.

In Pennsylvania's General Assembly, levels of women's representation remained stagnant. In the state Senate, three incumbents—Christine Tartaglione (D-2nd), Lisa Boscola (D-18th), and Lisa Baker (R-20th)—retained their seats. Current state representative Michele Brooks (R-17th) successfully ran for an open seat in the senate and a fifth woman, newcomer Camera Bartolotta (R-46th) successfully challenged incumbent Senator Tim Solobay. Five additional women, all Democrats, were defeated in their bids.

In the House, 68 women candidates were on the ballot—42 Democrats, 25 Republicans, and one Libertarian. Of these, the Republican women fared much better, as 22 of the 25

were successful. Brown noted, “While the Democratic gubernatorial candidate Tom Wolf won by a large margin, this support did not translate to Democrats farther down the ballot. Republican candidates in Pennsylvania seem to have continued the trend that we saw nationally, in which female GOP candidates also did well.” Only 14 of the 42 Democrats won their races. As a result, the incoming General Assembly will continue to have one of the lowest levels of women’s representation in the country—a mere 17.8%. There will be nine women in State’s Senate (currently eight) and 36 (currently 37) in the State House.

Brown emphasized the importance of encouraging women of both parties to seek political office, “The key is to have more women candidates running for office at all levels in Pennsylvania. By doing so, PA will have a stronger pipeline of potential women candidates to run for higher office.”

Research shows that when women run, they win at the same rates as men. Thus, if the state is going to increase the number of women holding public office, it needs more women candidates. The Pennsylvania Center for Women and Politics supports women considering seeking elective office with the Ready to Run™ Campaign Training For Women programs. Since 2012, the PCWP has hosted these campaign trainings in both Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, giving women with an interest in seeking political office the education, insights, and skills they need to embark on a successful campaign. The next training will be held January 31, 2015 at Chatham University in Pittsburgh.

For more information about the PCWP at Chatham University or Ready to Run™ Campaign Training for Women, visit www.chatham.edu/pcwp/ or please contact Dana Brown, Executive Director at 412-365-2725 or dbrown@chatham.edu.