

June 15, 2017

For immediate release

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**Women Candidates Step Forward in NJ and VA:  
Record Number of Women Run for NJ Legislature**

Just two states, New Jersey and Virginia, have statewide and state legislative elections in 2017. But they could foreshadow candidacies of women in 2018, when many more states will hold elections.

Both states feature Republican women on statewide tickets. New Jersey's GOP candidate for governor is Lieutenant Governor Kim Guadagno. In Virginia, businesswoman Jill Vogel is the party's candidate for lieutenant governor.

In New Jersey, where both houses are up for election, a record number of women seeking state legislative seats won their primaries. Virginia, where only the House of Delegates is up, has not yet published a complete candidate list including those who faced no primary opposition, so characterizing the results is not yet possible.

"We've seen a surge in women seeking candidate training across the nation in the wake of the 2016 election," notes Debbie Walsh, director of the Center for American Women and Politics, a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. "This is the first indication that the early interest is translating into candidacies."

Final candidate numbers and lists are posted [on CAWP's website](#) as they become available.

**NEW JERSEY RESULTS**

New Jersey will hold elections for both houses of its legislature for the first time since 2013. A record 25 women (16D, 9R) are general election candidates for the State Senate, and 53 (31D, 22R) are seeking Assembly seats. All of the women who filed for the Senate won their primaries. Most of the growth in the number of New Jersey candidates is accounted for by women running for the State Senate as challengers, facing incumbent senators.

Previous records were:

- 20 Senate candidates (in 2011)
- 52 Assembly candidates (in 2013)

Current numbers of women in the NJ legislature are:

- 36 women in total (30% of 120 members)
- 11 senators (27.5% of 40 members)
- 25 assemblywomen (31.3% of 80 members).

New Jersey ranks 14<sup>th</sup> among the 50 states for the proportion of women in its legislature.

NJ SENATE	Filed			Winners		
	D	R	Total	D	R	Total
Incumbent	8	2	10	8	2	10
Challenger	8	6	14	8	6	14
Open Seat	0	1	1	0	1	1
Total	16	9	25	16	9	25

  

NJ ASSEMBLY	Filed			Winners		
	D	R	Total	D	R	Total
Incumbent	17	6	23	17	6	23
Challenger	11	13	24	7	11	18
Open Seat	9	5	14	7	5	12
Total	37	24	61	31	22	53

In the Garden State gubernatorial race, Lt. Gov. Guadagno will square off against Democratic candidate Phil Murphy. Candidates for governor select their running mates, and neither has yet announced who will run alongside them for lieutenant governor. There are no other elected statewide posts in New Jersey.

## VIRGINIA RESULTS

**PLEASE NOTE: The number of candidates in Virginia does not yet include those who had no primary opposition; that list has not yet been released by the Virginia Department of Elections. In addition, one woman primary candidate is in a race still too close to call.**

VA DELEGATES	Filed			Winners		
	D	R	Total	D	R	Total
Incumbent	3	0	3	3	0	3
Challenger	15	0	15	8	0	8
Open Seat	6	2	8	3	1	4
Total	24	2	26	14	1	15

Virginia candidates for lieutenant governor run independently of gubernatorial candidates. Republican gubernatorial candidate Edward Gillespie and lieutenant governor candidate Jill Vogel are opposed by Democrats Ralph Northam and Justin Fairfax. The only other statewide office on the ballot in the Old Dominion is attorney general, and no women are seeking that office.

### About CAWP

The [Center for American Women and Politics \(CAWP\)](#), a unit of the [Eagleton Institute of Politics](#) at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, is nationally recognized as the leading source of scholarly research and current data about American women's political participation. Its mission is to promote greater knowledge and understanding about women's participation in politics and government and to enhance women's influence and leadership in public life. CAWP's education and outreach programs translate research findings into action, addressing women's under-representation in political leadership with effective, imaginative programs serving a variety of audiences. As the world has watched Americans considering female candidates for the nation's highest offices, CAWP's over four decades of analyzing and interpreting women's participation in American politics have provided a foundation and context for the discussion.

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