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*Unfinished Business: Women Running in 2018 and Beyond*

A Report from the Center for American Women and Politics

Gender disparities in American politics were not upended in a single cycle, but the 2018 election marked sites of progress as well as persistent hurdles for women candidates. Evaluating the 2018 election in the context of both past and present offers key insights into the gendered terrain that candidates will navigate in 2020 and beyond. That is the work done in a new report released this morning by the Center for American Women and Politics, a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University–New Brunswick.

In Unfinished Business: Women Running in 2018 and Beyond, CAWP combines its unmatched data with a review of the latest research on gender, candidacy, and representation to analyze an unprecedented year for women in American politics, identify sites for both destruction and durability of barriers to women, and offer a guide for gender and intersectional dynamics to watch for in election 2020.

*Unfinished Business* was written with support from Pivotal Ventures, an investment and incubation company founded by Melinda Gates.

Presented online via a navigable microsite, womenrun.rutgers.edu, *Unfinished Business* includes dozens of visualizations of CAWP data on women's representation and the 2018 election, analysis of and links to the latest research on gender and elections, as well as interactive multimedia that illustrates key findings in the report. In the coming weeks, CAWP will highlight key data points and takeaways from *Unfinished Business* on our Twitter account, @CAWP_RU, and through brief media advisories.

The report contains four sections:

- **By the Numbers:** Women ran for and were elected to office in record numbers in the 2018 election, but not all women achieved record levels of success in 2018 and women remain underrepresented across levels of office. This section draws from CAWP's rich historical and 2018 election data to illustrate both points of progress and persistent hurdles to gender parity in political representation.
- **Why & How Women Run:** There was no single story for why women ran for office in unprecedented numbers in 2018, but negative emotions like anger and perceived threat appeared influential to at least some women candidates. This section details what motivated

women to run last year, as well as various ways they upended traditional modes of campaigning and what that means for the future.

- **Barriers to Progress:** This section evaluates the durability and destruction of gendered and intersectional barriers to candidacy and campaign success, drawing upon the latest scholarship and its application to elections 2018 and 2020. Among these barriers are structural, cultural, and political hurdles to women's emergence as candidates and electoral success.
- **Looking Ahead:** Early signs from the 2020 cycle indicate that women will continue to disrupt U.S. electoral politics. We conclude the report by looking ahead, noting what to watch for and what we still don't know about the terrain that women candidates are navigating as we enter 2020 and beyond.

An executive summary outlining key findings from each of these sections is available here. In addition, the report microsite includes a full data repository where you can find and share more than 40 data visualizations that help to tell the story of gender in election 2018. The full report is available online at womenrun.rutgers.edu. As always, stay up to date with CAWP analysis of women's political participation and election 2020 by signing up for our newsletter and following us on Twitter.

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**About CAWP**

The Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers-New Brunswick, 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 nearly five decades of analyzing and interpreting women's participation in American politics have provided a foundation and context for the discussion.