



FOR RELEASE:

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**With Record Number of Women Running for Office,
New Project Launches to Examine the Role of Gender in 2018 Elections**

CAMBRIDGE, MA—The Barbara Lee Family Foundation (BLFF) and the Center for American Women in Politics (CAWP) at Rutgers University are proud to announce the launch of [Gender Watch 2018](#), a new non-partisan project to track, analyze, and illuminate gender dynamics in election 2018.

“Since the Women’s March last year, we’ve witnessed an unprecedented wave of political activism and participation powered by women,” said Barbara Lee, President and Founder of The Barbara Lee Family Foundation. “This year, women are running for office in record numbers, and Gender Watch 2018 will follow their journeys, offering real-time analysis and insight into the impact of gender on this historic election year.”

“Gender is at play in all aspects of political campaigns, from the messages and behavior of candidates to the ways in which media and voters evaluate candidates and engage with campaigns,” said Dr. Kelly Dittmar, Gender Watch 2018 Project Director and CAWP Scholar. “Gender Watch 2018 will provide expert analysis of these sometimes overlooked sites for gender influence in races across the country this year.”

Gender Watch 2018 will draw upon the research and expertise of both partner organizations, as well as contributing scholars and practitioners, to inform the public dialogue and enhance public understanding of the myriad ways in which gender shapes political campaigns and campaigning.

“Together, CAWP and BLFF bring over six decades of experience with and research on women candidates,” said Debbie Walsh, CAWP Director. “We look forward to teaming up again in 2018.” The organizations previously joined forces to offer real-time, expert gender analysis of the 2016 presidential election with [Presidential Gender Watch](#).

Resources on the new website include analysis and commentary from political strategists and academics, information about women candidates, relevant research summaries and reports, and more to bridge the divide between scholarship and political practice. Regular expert contributors to Gender Watch 2018 include:

- Dr. Christina Bejarano, Associate Professor of Political Science, University of Kansas
- Dr. Sayu Bhojwani, President and Founder, New American Leaders
- Dr. Erin Cassese, Associate Professor of Political Science, West Virginia University
- Dr. Rosalyn Cooperman, Associate Professor of Political Science, University of Mary Washington
- Dr. Melissa Deckman, Louis L. Goldstein Professor of Public Affairs, Washington College
- Dr. Pearl Dowe, Associate Professor of Political Science, University of Arkansas
- Christine Jahnke, President, Positive Communications

- Christine Matthews, President, Bellwether Research
- Dr. Anna Sampaio, Director and Associate Professor of Ethnic Studies and Political Science, Santa Clara University
- Whitney Smith, Founder, W.T. Smith Consulting
- Dr. Wendy Smooth, The Ohio State University

Gender Watch 2018 team experts are also available to press throughout the election cycle:

- Barbara Lee, President and Founder, The Barbara Lee Family Foundation
- Dr. Kelly Dittmar, Project Director; Assistant Professor of Political Science, Rutgers-Camden; Scholar, Center for American Women and Politics
- Debbie Walsh, Director, Center for American Women and Politics
- Nicole Carlsburg, Executive Director, The Barbara Lee Family Foundation
- Amanda Hunter, Communications Director, The Barbara Lee Family Foundation
- Dr. Susan Carroll, Professor of Political Science, Rutgers-New Brunswick; Senior Scholar, Center for American Women and Politics
- Dr. Ruth Mandel, Director, Eagleton Institute of Politics
- Dr. Kira Sanbonmatsu, Professor of Political Science, Rutgers-New Brunswick; Senior Scholar, Center for American Women and Politics

Biographies of all our experts are available at www.genderwatch2018.org. The experts at the [Barbara Lee Family Foundation](#) can be contacted through Amanda Hunter (617-234-0355). Experts at the [Center for American Women and Politics](#) can be reached through Kelly Dittmar (848-932-8314).

Email us at info@genderwatch2018.org, and find us on social media [@GenderWatch2018](#).

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