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Sept. 28, 2014

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Study Reveals that Women Represent Less than 40 Percent of California City Council Members

Sacramento— Despite statistical gains made nationally for women in elected office, the number of women in California serving in elected office, particularly on city councils, does not reflect California's female population, according to a report released jointly by California Women Lead and the Women's Caucus of the League of California Cities. The report shows a continued need for increased representation by elected women on city councils across the state.

The report, entitled "Snapshot on the Status of Women in City Government," reveals that the number of California women serving on City Councils is not as high as one would suspect, and did not mirror the gains women made in other parts of the country.

According to the report, which will be updated following the November election, just 706 women serve on California city councils, making up only 39 percent of the elected seats. Significant statistics from the study include:

- Women comprise 50.3 percent of California population, but only 39 percent of city council seats;
- 61 cities in California have a women majority council;
- 71 cities have no women on the councils;
- 40 percent of cities have only one woman on the council;
- Of the 12 highest populated cities in the state —Riverside, does not have any women on the council; Los Angeles, Fresno and Bakersfield have only one woman.

"This report is a call to action for women in politics in California," said San Jose Councilmember Rose Herrera and Women's Caucus President. We need to elect more women on city councils throughout the state. Especially alarming is the low percentage of women on the city councils of California's 12 largest cities."

"This report shows that women serving in city government is trending a bit higher than women serving in the Legislature or on county boards of supervisors, but is far from representing the total number of women who live in California. There is much work to be done to empower and inspire more women to consider serving on city councils throughout the state," said Rachel Michelin, executive director of California Women Lead. "Women are more likely to seek office when they receive the right support, so California Women Lead continues its efforts to encourage, train and mentor women to be leaders in their communities and beyond, reminding them, 'if not you, then who?' We are focused on increasing the number of women candidates, and the number of women who are elected, in the 2014 and 2016 election cycles."

To help counter the apparent lack of parity for California women running for — and being elected to — local and state office, California Women Lead conducts workshops with the goal of focusing attention on the need for the effective leadership that women uniquely provide, whether it's serving on a school board, as a county supervisor, as a state

legislator, or in the halls of Congress; and to offer support and guidance to those women who respond to the call for effective leadership that is so desperately needed.

[For an on-line version of the report, click here.](#)

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About California Women Lead – California Women Lead is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to providing leadership training, policy discussion forums, and networking opportunities for women holding – or interested in holding – elected or appointed office. The report was written by Rachel Michelin, Executive Director/CEO, California Women Lead. For more information about the California Women Lead, its programs to encourage and train women to be leaders in their community and state or to support California Women Lead financially, please visit www.cawomenlead.org.

About The League of Cities Women’s Caucus – The Women's Caucus is a diversity caucus organized within the League of California Cities. The Women's Caucus endorses and supports the League of California Cities (LCC) mission to restore and protect local control for cities through education and advocacy in order to enhance the quality of life for all Californians and to support policies that directly promote the development and redevelopment of safe and healthy cities. Our mission, as a bipartisan and multicultural group of elected or appointed officials and their colleagues, is to support women in public office, support issues that affect and benefit women, and provide a network of support for both men and women at the local level who are working to overcome barriers for women.