



October 2024 Clearinghouse on Women's Issues (CWI)
Meeting Invitation and Newsletter
<https://womensclearinghouse.org>

Building Feminist Political Power

Tuesday, October 22, 2024 (12:00 noon-1:00 pm ET)

Zoom Meeting Registration Link

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZApdumorjwiHtRC2_MZGFCpNQz79Kah67k5

This pre-election CWI meeting will focus on how feminists can increase their success in the 2024 election at all levels of government from the White House to local school boards across the Nation. By increasing the number and success of feminist candidates a goal should be gender parity (and other kinds of representation) and a feminist policy focus that can drive policy change more quickly. The interactive panel of experts will define feminism in the political context and identify feminist issues, and look at resources and organizations that recruit, train and help elect feminists to office, both women and men. It will also explore how to identify voters who are likely to support feminist issues and suggest how to communicate with them.

Connie Cordovilla CWI Board member will serve as moderator. Expert Panelists include: **Karen Humphrey** a local, CA state and national leader from the National Women's Political Caucus and former TV reporter and first woman mayor of Fresno, CA; **Tamaya Dennard**, State Partnerships Manager from Represent Women; and **Jan Erickson**, Government Relations Director, National Organization for Women and Co-President of CWI. They will take a lead in answering questions about feminist candidates, feminist voters, and organizations to help them work together.

Question 1. In the US political arena, what are the key feminist issues?

Question 2. What do we know about feminist candidates for this. 2024 US Election?

- What do we know about the gender gap in elections?
- What do we know about characteristics of non-feminist and feminist-candidates?
- Are there different obstacles for women political candidates than for actively feminist candidates?
Does holding strong feminist views or actions affect the election or re-election of the candidate?
- What is the status and effect of political partisanship on success for feminists?
- What reforms and resources might encourage feminist women to enter politics and succeed?

Question 3. What do we know about women voters and women or men feminist voters?

- What drives gender gaps in voting?
- What percent of women and men consider feminist issues in deciding who to vote for?
- Are certain demographic groups of voters likely to be feminists?

Question 4. What is the status and role of feminist organizations in supporting the successful cooperation of feminist candidates/officials and their feminist voter allies?

- How do feminist voters find out if candidates have feminist views and records?
- What organizations identify and support feminist candidates (or feminist women) and how do they inform the public?
- How can 501(c)(3) organizations encourage voters to support feminist candidates without violating their non-profit tax status?

Time permitting meeting attendee questions and comments will be encouraged.

The next CWI Zoom meeting is scheduled for January 28, 2025 at noon ET.

Summary of September 24, 2024 CWI Meeting

“ARE WE READY FOR THE 2024 GENERAL ELECTION?”

The two presenters **Alice Clapman**, Senior Counsel for Voting Rights from the Brennan Center’s Voting Rights Program and **Colin Seeberger** Senior Advisor for Communications at the Center for American Progress gave detailed and informative presentations as can be seen and heard in the linked video of the zoom meeting moderated by CWI Board members, Kathy Chiron and Jan Erickson. [September2024 – “ARE WE READY FOR THE 2024 GENERAL ELECTION?”](#) or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ieITMFNAaFA2024.09.24 – CWI Presentation.pptx>

Liz Howard, Director of Partner Engagement from the Brennan Center did not join the meeting but apologized for missing the meeting and submitted the following summary of what she had planned to say to start off the meeting.

“The typical election official is a 50-64 woman who makes about \$50k/year. (See [Stewards of Democracy](#).) Her office remains underfunded and under-resourced after she was informed that she is responsible for protecting our election infrastructure against foreign enemies, such as China and Iran. Threats against our election officials

have spiked since 2020, with 70% of election officials (according to our [local election official survey](#)) indicating threats have increased since 2020. 38% of election officials report that that they have experienced threats, harassment, or abuse simply for doing their job. These threats are contributing to the high attrition rates we're seeing. In good news, our current corps of dedicated election officials remain undaunted in the face of these challenges. 92% of EOs have made election security improvements since 2020, and an increasing percentage of EOs are reporting threats to law enforcement. They are also expanding their collaboration with law enforcement. One important project that we support (along with R Street Institute, Protect Democracy, and The Elections Group) is the [Committee for Safe and Secure Elections](#), which works to build relationships between law enforcement and election officials, so both communities can work together to help keep election officials and voters safe.” Elizabeth included her slide deck which is worth a careful examination. It contains tables from the Brennan Center May 2024 “Local Election Officials Survey” and other information and can be seen here [2024.09.24 – CWI Presentation.pptx](#).



“**Alice Clapman** talked about key ways federal and state law and policymakers have strengthened election systems since 2020 to protect free and fair elections and the peaceful transfer of power, and about some of the remaining challenges and risks. The 2020 election exposed various pressure points in our elections, as bad actors tried to use these points to overturn the results. Since then, Congress has enacted the Electoral Count Reform Act, which sets some baseline protections for state and federal election "certification" processes. ("Certification" is the term for the legal process by which local and state officials and Congress sign off on the completion of election results.") Several states have gone further, clarifying their laws to ensure that state results are certified based solely on vote totals and that individual bad actors cannot obstruct the process. A few states have put in place new protections for absentee ballots, to ensure they're not rejected based on minor technicalities and that, when ballots are defective, voters have a meaningful opportunity to fix them. They've made improvements in protecting voters and election workers from intimidation, including 7 new state laws banning guns around polling places and other election sites and new election official protections in 17 states plus DC. They've strengthened election security and cybersecurity and gotten better at fighting disinformation and putting out accurate election information that increases public trust. Unfortunately, these improvements

are not uniform throughout the country (or even within each state), and some battleground states like North Carolina and Georgia are backsliding in important respects instead of advancing. It will take a broad, coordinated effort to ensure the 2024 elections are free and fair.



Colin Seeberger provided an overview of the Heritage Foundation Project 2025 and explained slides as he covered many of the threats to democracy and our many freedoms if the Project plans are enacted by the Republican allies of the Heritage Foundation either under a potential new Trump administration or otherwise. Many of his points focused on the dangerous impact on women. His slides are **here**. [From Colin Seeberger – Clearinghouse on Women’s Issues Project 2025](#)

Jan Erickson provided the following useful Links to Resources on Project 2025:

Ms. Magazine

[Misogynist Manifesto: Project 2025 Says Yes to ‘Biblically Based Marriages’ and No to Reproductive Rights - Ms. Magazine \(msmagazine.com\)](#)

Guttmacher Institute

[How Project 2025 Seeks to Obliterate Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights | Guttmacher Institute](#)

**Americans United for Separation of Church and State,
Project 2025: The Christian Nationalist Plan Take Over America**
<https://www.au.org/project2025/>

Media Matters

Project 2025

<https://www.mediamatters.org/project-2025>

CWI’s newsletter is endowed in loving memory of our previous longtime editor, Roslyn Kaiser

Newsletter edited by Sue Klein

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