

Political Participation of Rural NC Women

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Overview

- How many women are there in legislatures?
- How does CEDAW relate to this issue?
- How do women in government affect its function?
- How does the US compare to the world?
- What kinds of challenges do rural women in government face?
- Meeting some rural women
- Lillian's List as a best-practice model

CEDAW

- Article 7:
- States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right:
 - (a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies;
 - (b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;
 - (c) To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.

The Woman Effect

- Women affect the issues raised in the legislative process: equality, education, childcare, integration of gender into discussions of work and pay
- Women affect the agenda issues and decisions made
- Including the perspective of women = more complete democracy

Why Women?

- Women's political participation is critical to the empowerment of women everywhere.
- Women face physical and social obstacles that must be considered in policy decisions
- Women are best poised to make such decisions
- Worldwide upward trend in women in government

Women in Government

- Only 19% of legislators serving in law making bodies worldwide are women
- Only 17% of the members of the US Congress are women
- Only 22% of the NC Legislature is composed of women

How the US Compares

- Rwanda – 58% of legislators are women
- Andorra – 50% of legislators are women
- Sweden – 45% of legislators are women
- United States – 17% of legislators are women
– ranked 90th in the world with respect to women in governance.

Rural Women in Government

- Few women serve in elected positions
- Face difficulties in raising funds, networking, and being taken seriously



Melanie Wade Goodwin

- Former Representative



Rockingham, NC



Lindy Brown

- Former Social Worker and Wake County Commissioner
- Candidate for NC House

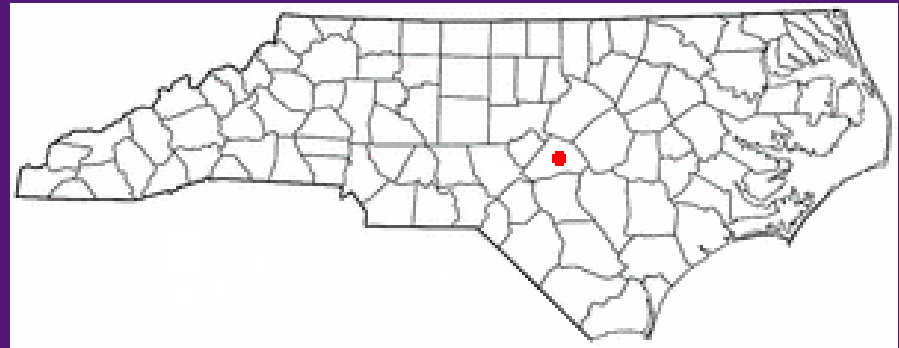


Hamlet, NC



Elaine Marshall

- First Female Secretary of State – NC



Lillington, NC

Lillian's List

- Recruits, trains, and fundraises for selected featured candidates
- Carefully vets candidates based on election realities
- Trailblazers: Big donors
- Sponsors: hold fundraisers
- Contributed \$80,000 directly to candidates last year

The Future

- Women have unique needs
- This is how we move toward a more complete democracy