

**Father, Brother, Husband, Son, Vote for Amendment #1:
A Case Study on Women in Politics in York County**

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Introduction

It has been almost a century since women were guaranteed the right to vote when the 19th Amendment was passed on June 4, 1919 and ratified on August 18, 1920. The passage of the 19th Amendment was the culmination of a seventy-two year long fight for women's suffrage since the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848 (Mintz, 2017). Despite the efforts by suffragist leaders, there is still a gender gap between men and women in elective office. The United States became the 27th nation to grant women the right to vote, but has slowly fallen behind the rest of the world when it comes to female representation in government (Mintz, 2017). Currently women hold 105 of 535 congressional seats, or 19.6% of the United States Congress (Women in Elective Office, 2018). State legislatures as a whole are slightly ahead of the congressional average of female representation, where 25.4% of state legislators are women. While the number of women serving in state legislatures has more than quintupled since 1971, female legislators in some states account for less than 20% of the General Assembly (Women in Elective Office, 2018).

Pennsylvania ranks 39th out of the 50 states based on the number of women in state legislatures, where women hold only 19% of state seats. Despite the overall low number of female representation in Pennsylvania, female representation in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives from York County is an astounding 57%. Of the seven Representatives from York County, four are women and three are men. While there are numerous female Representatives from York County, none of the four state Senators from the area are women. When the four male Senators are included to indicate overall representation of York County, however, women still signify 36% of elected officials of York County, still well above the female Congressional representation (Find Your Legislator, 2018). Although York County is

an anomaly when it comes to female representation today, women did not earn the right to vote in Pennsylvania until the 19th amendment was passed and ratified in 1920. Despite the fact that women could not vote, there were many notable leaders of the suffrage movement in 20th century York County who paved the way for future women in politics.

Women's suffrage movements in the United States helped coordinate grassroots efforts in nearly all of the fifty states. Originally these campaigns focused heavily on state and local efforts, which is why state and countywide groups became a crucial aspect of the National Woman Suffrage Association. Pennsylvania and York County both contained strong suffrage groups advocating for Amendment #1 in 1915. Analyzing the broad national and state suffrage trends in addition to the trends of York County provide a more holistic view of the women's rights movement that helped shape the political culture of York County today, theoretically leading to the higher representation of women in government.

Women have played an important role in politics in York County, and have historically made strides towards more female representation. Despite the progress that has been made, it remains important to consider why women are less likely to hold elective office. Numerous research has been conducted on this topic, though none has focused solely on York County. The paper seeks to provide a historical background to women and their role in politics and government in York County, as well as analyze and apply broad trends of female representation to explain why York County could be an incongruity when compared to female representation throughout the United States as a whole.

The National Women's Suffrage Movement

The women's suffrage movement initially became successful in the western United States. Following the Seneca Falls convention of 1848, women's suffrage groups started

popping up all across America. Wyoming, which was a territory at the time, became the first government to allow women the right to vote alongside their male counterparts. Utah, Colorado, and Idaho followed Wyoming's lead and passed similar legislation allowing women the right to vote. This decision, however, wasn't entirely rooted in a fight for equality for all. Some westerners believed that giving women the right to vote would attract settlers to the region and make the area more civilized. Uniquely in Utah, women's suffrage was passed in an attempt to maintain a majority of Mormon voters (Mintz, 2017). Although Wyoming was the first state to allow women the right to vote, currently women only make up 11.1% of the Wyoming state legislature, which is the lowest among the fifty states. This shows that early action for women's rights is not necessarily a direct indication female representation in government today. Colorado, on the other hand, was also one of the first states to grant women the right to vote and currently ranks fourth for women serving in the state legislature, with 38% of the elected members being women (Women in Elective Office, 2018.)

The next advancement for women's suffrage came in 1890, when the National Woman Suffrage Association and the American Woman Suffrage Association combined their efforts to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association. The western states continued to pave the way for women's suffrage when seven other states passed legislation to allow women the right to vote (Mintz, 2017). Outside of the western states, only two other states, New York and Michigan, granted suffrage to women prior to the passage of the 19th Amendment. The presence, or lack thereof, of suffrage movements did not necessarily guarantee the success of the women's suffrage movement in each state. For example, there was no organized movement for suffrage in Wyoming prior to the passage of a woman's right

to vote. Similarly in Utah, there were also no organized campaigns for suffrage before 1870. Outside of the western states, every state contained an organized suffrage movement, but only two of those states passed legislation prior to 1919. While it is unclear to the extent in which state and local suffrage movements influenced a vote on women's suffrage, these movements still had a sizable impact on society and encouraged women to advocate for equality. (McCammon, Campbell, 2001).

Some of the key female influencers of the national women's suffrage movement were Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, founders of the National Woman Suffrage Association, Lucy Stone, founder of the American Woman Suffrage Association, and Alice Paul, leader of the National Woman's Party, a more radical group which utilized protests and hunger strikes to get their message across. These groups were the keystones to successful grassroots efforts. The national organizations would encourage participation at any level through flyers and word of mouth. One such flyer titled *What to Do* begins by saying, "If you believe in Votes for Women, do something." The flyer then details actions to take, including joining or starting a suffrage association, buying suffrage literature and distributing it through friends, clubs, letters, and meetings; using "Votes for Women" rubber stamps, asking ministers to preach about suffrage, writing letters to or interviewing legislators, and distributing material near voting polls. These flyers and other publications were distributed to help get more women and even some men involved in grassroots suffrage efforts (What to Do).

The Women's Suffrage Movement in Pennsylvania

The first action towards women's suffrage in Pennsylvania was not until 1869, when suffragists gathered for a meeting in Philadelphia. Because of the large Quaker influence in Philadelphia, the suffrage movement began here as people in favor of the anti-slavery

movement took interest in helping women obtain the right to vote. Here the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association was founded and this meeting became known as the state's first women's suffrage convention. The goal of the group was largely educational, focused on holding meetings, writing articles for newspaper and magazines, and circulating literature. An annual state convention was held each year in different cities across the state. While some states granted women partial suffrage, allowing them to vote for offices such as school board, it was more challenging to pass suffrage legislation in Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania legislature required an amendment to secure women the right to vote. This resolution must also pass two successive sessions, pass both chambers with a majority vote, and then be ratified by a majority of voters during the general election (Roessing, 1914).

The first action to starting this legislative process to pass suffrage legislation began on March 14, 1911, with a joint hearing (Roessing, 1914). The resolution was reintroduced again in January of 1913 as House Bill 185. The description of the legislation states, "A resolution to submit to the people the question of amending the state constitution, in order that women may be granted the right to vote." (Woman Suffrage Referendum H.B. 185). The resolution passed the House of Representatives with a vote of 131 to 70. The Senate did not reach a clear consensus at first. On two occasions, it received a tied vote. On April 1, 1913, SB 231 (the Senate version of HB 185) received a vote of 21-21, with the Lieutenant Governor voting in the affirmative and on April 7 with a vote of 22-22, which again required a deciding vote from the Lieutenant Governor. The bill received final passage on April 22, 1913 with a vote of 26-22 (Woman Suffrage Referendum H.B. 185). After passage, the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association literature department purchased \$3,000 worth of literature and supplies to circulate in 1914 and 1915. Other departments organized for the campaign for women's

suffrage in Pennsylvania included finance, publicity, organization, and a speaker's bureau. Their efforts spanned from public meetings, booths at county fairs, poster and essay contests, and debates. Numerous other organizations, like as the Women's Christian Temperance Union, The Pennsylvania Farmers Alliance, and The Pennsylvania Federation of Labor all passed suffrage resolutions in support of the women's suffrage movement (Roessing, 1915).

A flyer printed by the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association in April 1915, titled "Facts Worth Knowing," detailed reasons to vote in favor of the woman suffrage amendment on November 2, 1915. The first fact listed pertains to the "protection for the young" and compares legislation for an "Eight-Hour-Day " law for minors in states with suffrage and states with men 's suffrage, which shows higher percentages of workers under the age of fifteen in states with men 's suffrage. Equal guardianship was included on the flyer and stated that in twenty-five male suffrage states, the father was the sole guardian and in six male suffrage states the father could take the child from the mother without her consent. Further, the flyer explained existing laws about the age of consent and commercialized vice in states with suffrage and male suffrage. One of the more shocking facts was that there was an "Eight-Hour-Day " limit for working men in twenty male suffrage states, but no such legislation exists for women in any male suffrage states. (Facts Worth Knowing).

During this time, popular slogans came about such as "Father, Brother, Husband, Son, Vote for Amendment # 1." The Justice Bell also became a symbol of the women's suffrage movement. The Justice Bell was a gift from Katherine Wentworth Ruschenberger of Strafford Pennsylvania. Mrs. Ruschenberger paid to have the 2,000 lb. bell constructed as a replica of the Liberty Bell, which instead has "Establish Justice" inscribed on the bell in order to "call attention to the battle for women's suffrage" (The Story of the Justice Bell). The clapper of the

Justice Bell was chained to its side so that it could not ring. The message of the Justice Bell was that it would not ring until women were guaranteed the right to vote. From June to November of 1915 the Justice Bell traveled to each of the 67 counties of Pennsylvania, advocating for women's suffrage. The bell remained silent until 1919, when the clapper was unchained and the bell rang in celebration of the passage of the 19th Amendment (The Story of the Justice Bell).

The vote for women's suffrage in Pennsylvania was placed on the ballot on November 2, 1915. Despite the determination of the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association and other local and county efforts, the referendum failed by 55,686 votes out of 826,382. Of the sixty seven counties in Pennsylvania, thirty-three voted in favor of the referendum (Kashatus, 2010). Pennsylvania was one of four states to hold a vote on women's suffrage in November 1915, along with New York, New Jersey, and Massachusetts. Of those four states, no suffrage initiatives passed that year (Lloyd, 2018). In spite of the disappointing outcome, women advocating for their rights in Pennsylvania did not give up. In a press release from the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association, Mrs. Frank M. Roessing, President of the Association said:

“So, although suffrage has been delayed in this state for five years, we are not depressed. Three hundred and thirty thousand men of the Keystone State have shown us that they believe our cause is just. Three hundred and thirty thousand of them have proven by their votes that they believe in fair play for women as well as for men. With their support as the foundation of our new campaign, we cannot help but win next time” (Roessing, 1915).

Despite the defeat of Amendment #1, the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association remained hopeful of future efforts and did not cease advocating for a vote for women.

The Women's Suffrage Movement in York County

York County was not one of the thirty-three counties in Pennsylvania that contained a majority of voters in favor of the Pennsylvania amendment, which would give women the right to vote. In York, 5,348 men voted in favor of women's suffrage, while 12,090 men voted against the amendment (The Map, 1915). Only about 30% of male voters in York County voted for the amendment despite the efforts of the advocates for suffrage. Similar to the state level, York County contained its own local chapter of the National Woman Suffrage Association. Mrs. Frank M. Roessing of the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association credited the defeat in these counties to the power of the "Machine" and its influence on public opinion. In spite of the influence of the "Machine" the York County Committee of the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Party remained vigilant in the fight for women's suffrage (Roessing, 1915). Powerful female leaders in York County paved the way for women in politics today. Without the courage, influence, and leadership of female suffragists in the 20th century, women in York County might not be afforded the political opportunities they are today.

York County Committee of the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Party

The York County Committee of the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Party was created on February 8, 1914. The organization started with 167 members, most of which learned about the organization at the York Fair, which was held the first week of October in 1913. County fairs played an important role in gaining new members and handing out literature in the hopes of gaining more support for the suffrage movement (Report of the

Chairman of York County Committee). The key aspect to the success of countywide suffrage movements came from the leadership of a good chair. The Chairman of the York County Woman Suffrage Party was Anna Dill Gamble, who reluctantly agreed to lead the effort for suffrage in York County in 1914, when she was 37 years old (Lloyd, 2018).

With Anna Dill Gamble's leadership, shortly after the creation of the York County Woman Suffrage Party, the first "Votes for Women" rally was held in York County of February 11, 1914. The first rally was covered by the *York Daily*, the *York Gazette*, and the *York Dispatch*. These newspapers reported that the event was well attended by both men and women. Throughout the next year, the York County Woman Suffrage Party maintained their presence in the community and regularly attended local fairs. The suffrage booth at the York Fair was decorated in yellow with "Votes for Women" plastered on the booth. Interest in the suffrage movement increased as the ballot vote for Amendment #1 drew closer. Anna Dill Gamble and other suffragists regularly attended community events and participated in debates with anti-suffragists. Some local newspaper headlines illustrated the success of the York County suffrage movement, which said "Suffrage Rally a Brilliant Success" and "Suffragists Pleased: York County women see result of their work in recent general election"(York Newspapers, 1915). It had been said "with one event after another, the public did not have a chance to forget about the local women's campaign "(Lloyd, 2018). Fundraising for the local women's suffrage movements was an obstacle but did not limit the group's ability to have an impact. The York County Woman Suffrage Party distributed 12,000 pieces of literature at the York Fair in 1915. All of this literature had to be purchased from the statewide association. Sales of "Vote for Women" merchandise helped raise some money, along with membership dues, but most was raised in unique ways by the suffragists. Some women sewed, tutored, and

sold handmade items to contribute to the local efforts. It was important to raise a lot of money for the suffrage movement during the summer of 1915, which was a key time for advocacy, as the vote for woman suffrage would take place later that year (Raising Funds For Suffrage Campaigns, 1915).

The Anti-Suffrage Movement in York County

The efforts of the York County Woman Suffrage Party competed with the anti-suffrage movement, which advocated against suffrage in York. The anti-suffrage movement was not as strong or as well organized but attended the same events and fairs as the suffragists. On April 3, 1914 some of the local newspapers covered an anti-suffrage meeting held at the York County courthouse. The sponsor of the event was the Pennsylvania Society Opposed to Woman Suffrage. Two female speakers and one male speaker, who represented the anti-suffrage movement, addressed the meeting. The two female speakers argued that only small minorities of women were "clamoring for suffrage." (York Newspapers, 1915). They continued and said that the majority of women did not want to vote. One particular article from the *York Labor News* was very critical of the meeting and claimed that the anti-suffrage speakers had the opposite effect and made some of the listeners sympathetic to the suffrage movement due to the superficial nature of the speaker's arguments. Following the rally in a letter to the editor, Mrs. M. M. Small, a local York anti-suffragist, argued that the meeting served the purpose to disprove the false statements of the women's suffrage movement. She claimed that "sensible" women were disgusted with the suffragists who wanted freedom from their home and family. Anna Dill Gamble quickly responded with a letter to the editor. Gamble called the claims of anti-suffragists against the home and family "A libel on the religious and highly respected movement." Mrs. Small once again responded, and said her

intent was not to be discourteous and she did not wish to correspond anymore on the matter (Lloyd, 2018). While not as organized at the women's suffrage movements, the anti-suffrage movement successfully persuaded some voters, hindering the success of the York County Woman Suffrage Party.

The Final Months of the York County Suffrage Efforts Before The Vote on Amendment # 1

Anna Dill Gamble secured the visit of the Justice Bell for the first week in October, which was also the week of the York Fair and just a few weeks before men in Pennsylvania would vote on women's suffrage. Local newspapers provided coverage of the Justice Bell's visit. The bell resided in York County for five days in October 1915. The Justice Bell made its first appearance in Hanover, before traveling to New Oxford, Abbottstown, Spring Grove and finally, York. After the visit of the Liberty Bell, Dr. Anna Shaw, president of the National Association for Woman Suffrage visited York County and delivered a speech at the York Opera House on Sunday, October 10, 1915 (Lloyd, 2018). The *York Gazette* reported that on the evening of the vote, the York County Woman Suffrage Party would gather at the residence of Anna Dill Gamble and wait for the results. The Committee would receive word from the headquarters once the votes from each county had been tallied (York Newspapers, 1915).

Unfortunately, men in York County could not be persuaded to vote in favor of women's suffrage on November 2, 1915. Anna Dill Gamble said that the anti-suffrage interests concentrated more effort in York than in most other counties, aside from Philadelphia and Allegheny. Gamble also credited the defeat to the high illiteracy rate of men in York County, who merely voted as they were told. Despite the defeat, Anna Dill Gamble stressed that the men and women who supported women's suffrage would not give

up. A local newspaper in York published an article titled "Not Discouraged over Suffrage Vote: Some observations of Miss Gamble on Vote in York County -Ten Districts Vote "Yes. "The article states, "The York women do not seem the least discouraged. On the contrary they say they are going to keep up the fight, with 5,103 men in the county to help them"(Not Discouraged Over Suffrage Vote, 1915).

It wasn't until June 4, 1919 that the York County Woman Suffrage Party could celebrate success. On September 11, 1919, the Suffrage Victory Dinner was held at York's Green Tea Restaurant. Anna Dill Gamble led the toast and the attendees enjoyed a meal of chicken and waffles (Program of the Suffrage Victory Dinner, 1919). Ms. Anna Dill Gamble and other notable suffrage leaders in York County expanded the Pennsylvania woman suffrage efforts to the local community. While these women paved the way, other notable figures in the history of politics in York County continued their efforts and fought for equality among women in politics.

Notable Female Leaders in York County History

Early female advocates helped inspire and encourage future generations of female leaders. Those women would soon become the first women to hold elective office in York County. The first woman to be elected to serve in the state legislature from York County was Jane Alexander, of Dillsburg Pennsylvania. She was elected in 1964 and served until 1968. Alexander was no stranger to being the first woman in the room. She was the only woman in the York County Bar Association for almost 20 years, the first female member of the Dillsburg Borough Council and the first female Deputy Secretary of Agriculture in the state. She managed all of these accomplishments while raising four children and maintaining an active law practice. Alexander stated it was not her intention to become the first woman to

achieve her accomplishments and that "a lot of things happen by accident." Similar to those who came before her, Jane Alexander inspired other women in the community that it is possible to be a woman and a mother and have an impact in politics (McClure, 2008).

Racial tensions following the Civil Rights Movement were high in York in 1970. The city's population dropped from 59,704 in 1950 to a little over 50,000 in 1970. This change and disruption made it possible for people of color to join the discussion in leadership positions throughout York. During this time, Mattie Chapman was elected as the prothonotary and became the first black elected county official in York County. Mattie Chapman inspired a wave of minority leaders, both women and people of color to run for elective office, such as school board and city council, and hold other community positions (McClure, 2016).

Following the changing culture of York city in the early 1970s, Elizabeth "Betty" Marshall became the first woman to be elected to the York City Council. In 1974, Marshall was elected as City Council President and in 1978, she was elected as the first female mayor for the city of York (Wilt, 2013). It had been said that Betty Marshall "held the city together and moved it ahead." The leadership of Mattie Chapman, Betty Marshall and other leaders at the time helped to inspire thoughtful change during a pivotal time in history (McClure, 2013). In 2010, Kim Bracey became the first black mayor of the city of York after a landslide victory. In 2016, Carol Hill Evans became the first African American man or woman to be elected to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives from York County. Prior to being elected as state Representative, Hill-Evans was the first black woman to serve on the York City Council and Council President (McClure, 2016).

Research Conducted on Women in Politics in Pennsylvania

Four women currently represent York County in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives alongside three male representatives. Those women are Representative Kate Klunk, Representative Kristin Phillips-Hill, Representative Dawn Keefer and Representative Carol Hill-Evans who have served the legislature since 2015 and 2017 respectfully. York County is tied for second among the 67 Pennsylvania counties for the most female representatives in the state house. While York is a pioneer for female representative in elective office, Pennsylvania is ranked as one of the worst states in regards to females in office. An advocacy group called Represent Women ranked Pennsylvania 49th in the nation for gender parity of elected officials. The advocacy group is committed to fair representation of both genders in office and created a formula to rank each state. The Represent Women report for 2018 gave Pennsylvania an 'F' after receiving a score of 6.2 out of 100. The point criteria is based on the amount of women holding seats in the U.S. Congress and Senate, women serving as statewide executives, female state legislators, and cities and counties with female mayors and county commissioners. The overall score for Pennsylvania for 2018 has declined since 2014 and is lower than gender parity score in 2003, which was 6.5 (2018 Gender Parity Index).

A study completed in 2017 by the Pennsylvania Center for Women and Politics titled, *The Few but Mighty: Women and Bill Sponsorship in the Pennsylvania General Assembly*, looks at the effectiveness of female legislators in Pennsylvania. The study reports that numerous American political scholars have found that women bring a different perspective, life experiences, and skill set to the table. Women legislators have been found to govern differently than their male counterparts because they generally pay more attention to

women's issues, which are often underrepresented in comparison to men's issues (Few but Mighty). This trend was historically illustrated in the "Facts Worth Knowing" flyer printed by the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association, in which there were no laws pertaining to an eight-hour work day for women, when those same laws existed for men in states with male suffrage (Facts Worth Knowing). Despite differences in female legislators, including race, party, religion, education, and more, there remained a common interest in women's issues. In this study, these broad trends were applied to Pennsylvania and remained consistent. During the 2013-14 legislative session, of the bills sponsored by women, 40.6% were related to women's issues, while 32.8% of bills introduced by men fell into the same category. While women are more likely to introduce this type of legislation, the legislators interviewed in this study note that women's issues are not their primary focus, but that they consider the needs of all their constituents no matter their gender.

Aside from subject matter, female legislators are also thought to have a more collaborative approach that is more focused on their constituencies than male legislators. Female leadership styles typically value relationships and emphasize cooperation and compromise. Male leadership styles are thought to be more formal, have a win-lose mentality, and involve conflict and dominance (Few but Mighty). This analysis of the differing behaviors and leadership styles of men and women illustrates the need for both perspectives in the Pennsylvania General Assembly. This collaborative sense of leadership is displayed by the amount of co-sponsors on legislation. While the difference is minimal, it was found that female legislators had more co-sponsors on their legislation than male legislators. Generally, women are also more likely to collaborate across party lines. When analyzing co-sponsored

legislation women were more likely to co-sponsor bills that were prime sponsored by the opposing party than male legislators.

Finally, this study found that Pennsylvania's female legislators were more effective at moving legislation through the process. Different female legislators credit the ability of women to multitask, their strong work ethic, and pragmatism, as the key to their success (Few but Mighty). This study appropriately identifies the advantages to having a balance of male and female legislators in office, which begs the questions, why don't we elect more women? However, the answer is not that simple. Much research has been done on this topic to try to explain why women are less likely to run for public office.

Most studies remain consistent that despite the gender gap of men and women as candidates for public office there are no inherent disadvantages for women who run. Richard Seltzer, Jody Newman, and Melissa Voorhees Leighton conducted one study of this topic in 1997. Their book, *Sex As a Political Variable* looks at voting patterns and found that the gender of a candidate does not affect his/her chance of winning an election and made the claim that gender has nothing to do with the result (Seltzer, Newman, Leighton, 1997). Other scholars have pointed to the fact that there are just fewer female candidates who run for elected office. In 2008, Jennifer Lawless and Richard Fox sought to answer the question, "Why are women still not running for public office?" This study alluded to previous research that when women run for office, they perform just as well as men, but remain underrepresented. One of the main reasons they credit to the gender disparity in public office is because women are less likely to demonstrate ambition to run for elected office than men. Some other factors that remain important are that women are less likely to want to endure a rigorous campaign, women are less likely to be recruited, women are more likely to be

inhibited by family obligations, women are less likely to feel they are qualified to run, and finally women perceive an unfair political environment. The study did find that we are moving closer towards gender equality in elected office. Women surveyed were more likely than men to be inspired by female political leaders.

The authors stated, "It may take time for the presence of women in such high levels of political power to trickle down to the candidate eligibility pool and inspire future candidates."(Lawless, Fox, 2008). This theory can be applied to York County in the way Mattie Chapman inspired other minorities to run for public office as well as the influence of the strong leadership of women during the women's suffrage movement.

Current York County Female Legislatures

The Fox and Lawless study noted the obstacle of family obligations for women when deciding to run for office. It was precisely these apprehensions that hindered Representative Dawn Keefer and Representative Kristin Phillips-Hill from running for office until their children were older. Rep. Phillips-Hill called her choice to run for office a "waiting game," but commended her colleague Representative Klunk for her ability to balance having a young daughter and serving her constituents as a legislator. It has been said that Representative Klunk even made calls while in labor to make sure a bill passed before the end of the legislative session. In regards to balancing a young family and being a legislator Klunk said, "It's a little bit more of a challenge... for women, but if you're willing to put in the work and be committed and have a family and circle of support around you, you'll be able to do it." Rep. Hill-Evans finds having other female colleagues provides "comfort in numbers," which can be beneficial when considering running for office. All of the female legislators serving York County agreed that gender was not an obstacle for them when running for office. Representative Phillips-Hill stated,

"I think that York County voters are really intelligent and really savvy. They judge the candidate based on their record of accomplishments, the policies they've supported and what they're capable of achieving." York County does not just have a high proportion of women in the state legislature, but there are also women serving as the president commissioner, coroner, treasurer, prothonotary, and recorder of deeds. This past election cycle, two female judges from York County were elected to the bench (Levy, 201). The number of women holding public office in York County is truly unprecedented and shows it is possible to be a successful female elected official despite the obstacles women face when running for public office.

The Outlook for Women in Politics

The female legislators of York County agreed that there is a positive outlook for women in politics and that seeing more women run for office will give others the inspiration to run themselves (Levy, 201 8). The broad trends of why women are less likely to run for public office remain present in York County. However, each of the four female legislators overcame these obstacles and successfully ran for elective office.

There is a positive outlook for women running for public office in the 2018 elections. As of April 2, 2018, of the almost 100 candidates who entered Congressional races, 23 were women. There are 98 female Democrats registered to run for the state House and 13 for the state Senate. There are less female Republicans registered to run, but still a fair amount with 47 women who are running in legislative races in 2018. Nationally there are a large number of women running for public office with around 390 running for the U.S. House and 49 for the U.S. Senate. These numbers show an increase in the amount of female candidates from 2016, where 167 women ran for the U.S. House and 16 ran for the U.S. Senate. While the influence for some was based on the #MeToo and #Times Up movement and resistance from President

Trump, other candidates say they are running due to the lack of female representation. While these factors caused some women to run for public office, others cite it merely felt like the right time. It appears there is a bright future for women in politics, with 2018 being the tip of the iceberg for more female representation (DeJesus, 2018).

Conclusion

The road to women's suffrage was paved with numerous struggles and victorious triumphs. Despite the efforts of suffragists and their fight to guarantee women the right to vote there has been little improvement for female representation in government since then. Year after year the United States constantly ranks far below other nations in regards to women in public office. In 2018, less than 20% of the United States Congress was represented by women and state legislatures were not much better off (Women in Elective Office, 2018). However, one county in particular did not coincide with the low trends of female representation. In York County, 36% of state legislators are women. In the House of Representatives alone, women make of 57% of the delegation from York County (Find Your Legislator, 2018). Not only that, but numerous public offices are held by women, including president commissioner, coroner, treasurer, prothonotary, and recorder of deeds, as well as two female judges (Levy, 2018).

York County maintains a rich history of female leadership, which stems back to 1913. Leaders such as Anna Dill Gamble and others who were apart of the York County Committee of the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Party gave women a voice by fighting for their right to vote. Although Pennsylvania did not grant women the right to vote prior to the passage of the 19th Amendment, suffragists played an important role in female representation in government today. The courage and influence of female leaders in the history of women in

politics in York County has allowed opportunities for current public officials who continue to inspire and encourage future generations of female leaders. While York County is an anomaly when it comes to female representation in public office, broad national trends and obstacles inhibiting women from running remain the same. York County is a prime example of what can happen when women overcome the unique obstacles that come with being a woman and running for office.

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