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PCSW Announces Connecticut Government Appointments Project (ConnGAP)

Press Conference and Kick-Off Sept. 8 10:00 Old Judiciary Room, State Capitol

HARTFORD – The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) will kick off the Connecticut Government Appointments Project (ConnGAP), part of a national collaboration aimed at ensuring more women are appointed to high-level government positions, on Wed., Sept. 8 at 10:00 in the Old Judiciary Room of the State Capitol.

ConnGAP seeks to achieve political parity for women by providing Connecticut's newly elected governor with a pool of women qualified for about 75 high-level paid appointed positions. Women will be recommended for any position for which they are qualified, regardless of their stands on particular issues and/or party affiliation. In order to achieve this, ConnGAP will:

- 1) ask all gubernatorial candidates to pledge to name women to 50% of high-level appointments;
- 2) create a pool of resumes of Connecticut women interested in – and qualified for – appointments in the next administration;
- 3) hold the Executive Branch accountable by tracking the governor's appointments; and
- 4) report annually on the governor's progress in keeping the pledge.

“Although women comprise 51% of the state's population, they make up only 37% of top offices in State agencies, including those of commissioner, executive director and chief advocate,” said PCSW Executive Director and ConnGAP Chair Teresa C. Younger. “While Connecticut residents can be proud of this track record, there's still work to be done. True political parity for women means that women should make up half the population of government office-holders and appointed employees.”

Since being appointed to a high-level government position is often a conduit to running for elective office, ConnGAP will afford more women an opportunity to gain the credibility and experience to enter politics.

“It’s critical that we, as a society, do not move backward – that we not only retain the roughly one-third of government positions held by women, but that Connecticut actually increase that percentage to more accurately reflect the population as a whole,” said Younger. “Connecticut’s governor-elect will have the opportunity to recognize that women are a largely untapped resource for professional and dedicated government service.”

ConnGAP is advised by a Steering Committee whose members are: Teresa Younger, PCSW Executive Director & ConnGAP Chair; Marilyn Alverio, Ethnic Marketing Solutions; Sharon Cappetta, Community Foundation for Greater New Haven; Lisa Crutchfield Diggs, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.; Nancy DiNardo, Connecticut Democratic Party; Carrie Gallagher, Commissioner, Permanent Commission on the Status of Women; Christine Horrigan, Connecticut League of Women Voters; Pamela Mazzarella, American Association of University Women, CT Chapter; Catherine Marx, Connecticut Republican Party; Alice Pritchard, Connecticut Women’s Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF); Jessica Fenner, National Organization for Women, CT Chapter; Helene Robbins, Wells Fargo Private Bank; Patricia Russo, Women’s Campaign School at Yale University; and Charlotte Suhler, Fairfield County Women & Girls Fund.

The committee has sent out an invitation for organizations throughout the state to join ConnGAP’s non-partisan coalition. In addition, the Executive Search Committee will begin accepting resumes on Sept. 8.

Connecticut is one of 11 states in the nation with a women’s government appointments project, the concept of which was supported by the Hunt Alternatives Fund, a family foundation based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In addition to Connecticut, the following states are working with Hunt Alternatives to ensure political parity in state government: California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Michigan, New Jersey, Oklahoma, South Carolina and Texas.

About the PCSW: The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women was formed in 1973 under Sec. 46a of the Connecticut General Statutes to study and improve Connecticut women’s economic security, health and safety; to promote consideration of qualified women to leadership positions and to work toward the elimination of gender discrimination. As a non-partisan arm of the General Assembly, the agency monitors, critiques and recommends changes to legislation in order to inform public policy, and assesses programs and practices in all State agencies for their effect on the state’s women. The PCSW serves as a liaison between government and its diverse constituents, and convenes stakeholders, including the business, non-profit and educational communities, local governments, and the media, in order to promote awareness of women’s issues.