

18-20 Trinity St., Hartford, CT 06106 • 860/240-8300 • [pcsw@cga.ct.gov](mailto:pcsw@cga.ct.gov) • [www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw/](http://www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw/)  
CONTACT: Christine Palm, Communications Director at 860/240-8449; or 860/836-2145

## PCSW Named to National Group Working for Political Parity for Women

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 1-26-12

HARTFORD – The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) has been named to the leadership team of Political Parity, a national non-partisan group working to double the number of women at the highest levels of U.S. government by the year 2022.

Although comprising slightly more than half the population, women make up just 17 percent of the U.S. Congress and serve in six governorships, a fact which puts the United States behind such countries as Afghanistan and Ethiopia in terms of women's political representation. Political Parity, a program of Hunt Alternatives Fund, seeks to redress such under-representation through leadership development, strategy, research, donor cultivation and improving women's access to the political process.

Connecticut is the only state commission invited to be part of the Political Parity leadership team, owing to the success of the commission's Connecticut Government Appointments Project (ConnGAP), which tracked high-level political appointments by gender. The PCSW joins such national groups as the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Progressive Majority, the Women's Campaign School at Yale University, the National Organization for Women (NOW), the White House Project, the Christian Coalition of America, and the American Association of University Women (AAUW), among others. Political Parity is co-chaired by Swanee Hunt, former ambassador to Austria, who now serves as the Eleanor Roosevelt Lecturer in Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, and Kerry Healey, who served as lieutenant governor of Massachusetts from 2003 to 2007 and is now a fellow at the Kennedy School's Institute of Politics and Center for Public Leadership.

"We were the first state to elect a female governor in her own right (Ella Grasso), and we have elected women to Congress, so it's only fitting that Connecticut contribute to this effort," said PCSW Executive Director Teresa C. Younger. "And while Connecticut fares far better than most states in the percentage of women who serve in State government, we can do better. Currently, women make up 29.9% of the General Assembly and serve as half of our Constitutional Officers. This ranks us 9<sup>th</sup> among U.S. states. Given our state's generally progressive policies toward the rights of women, we would like to see the diversity of our elected officials here – and nationally – more closely resemble that of the people they serve. Political Parity is one way of raising awareness of – and advocating for – gender equity in politics. We need more women in leadership positions who are willing and able to serve in elected office."

*About the PCSW: The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women was formed in 1973 under Sec. 46a-1 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.*