

LORETTA WEINBERG
MAJORITY LEADER
SENATOR, 37TH DISTRICT

VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE
DEPUTY SPEAKER
ASSEMBLYWOMAN, 37TH DISTRICT

May 13, 2020

Via email and U.S. Mail

John Currie, Chairman
Peg Schaffer, Vice Chairwoman
New Jersey Democratic State Committee
194-196 West State Street
Trenton, NJ 08608

Dear Chairman Currie and Vice Chairwoman Schaffer,

As Democratic women legislators, we urge you to ensure that at least one woman is appointed to serve on the five-member Democratic team that will represent us on the critically important Legislative Redistricting Commission.

Women are the backbone of the Democratic Party. It was our votes that enabled Democrats to sweep four seats in the 2018 congressional election, including sending Mikie Sherrill to join Bonnie Watson-Coleman in the House.

Women now hold 37 seats in the 120-member New Jersey Legislature – which is both a sign of record progress, but also a sad commentary in that New Jersey’s 31% of women in the Legislature still ranks just 21st in the nation.

It would be unconscionable for New Jersey to have only one woman serving on the 10-member Legislative Redistricting Commission, and it is ironic that she is an appointee of a Republican Party whose national record on women’s issues is so reprehensible.

As Debbie Walsh, director of the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University, put it succinctly: “I know this isn’t high-level math, but one out of 10 is not exactly 50 percent.”

Various redistricting reform proposals were put forward several years ago that would have required appropriate representation on the basis of gender, race/ethnicity and geography, recognizing the importance of drawing fair district boundaries in providing opportunity to broaden opportunities for new voices to emerge in the political process.

To have our political futures – and the political futures of all New Jersey women – to be determined by a 10-member commission that includes just one Republican woman is unacceptable and wrong.

This is especially the case today when the public is increasingly aware of the toxic culture of harassment, sexual abuse and side-lining of women that has pervaded the New Jersey and American political culture.

We call on you to guarantee the appointment of at least one Democratic woman to the Legislative Redistricting Commission.

Thank you for your attention. We expect your support in advancing opportunities for women in the political process.

Sincerely,

Shirley Turner,
Senator, District 15

Teresa Ruiz
Senator, District 29

Sandra Cunningham
Senator, District 31

Nia Gill
Senator, District 34

Nellie Pou
Senator, District 35

Loretta Weinberg
Senator, District 37

Joann Downey
Assemblywoman, District 11

Verlina Reynolds-Jackson
Assemblywoman, District 15

Annette Quijano
Assemblywoman, District 20

Linda Carter
Assemblywoman, District 22

Mila Jasey
Assemblywoman, District 27

Eliana Pintor Marin
Assemblywoman, District 29

Angelica Jimenez
Assemblywoman, District 32

Annette Chaparro
Assemblywoman, District 33

Valerie Vainieri Huttle
Assemblywoman, District 37

