

National Organization for Women of New Jersey



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National Organization for Women of New Jersey applauds addition of Laura Matos to Legislative Apportionment Commission

Representation matters and addition of a Latina will give important voice to New Jersey's women and minorities at the Redistricting Table

National Organization for Women of New Jersey (NOW-NJ) applauds New Jersey Democratic State Committee Chairman LeRoy J. Jones, Jr. for his selection of Laura Matos to the 2021 Legislative Apportionment Commission. The appointment of Ms. Matos to replace former Senate President Sweeney heeds our earlier calls (in [May 2020](#) and [October 2021](#)) to increase gender parity and minority representation on the commission. Ms. Matos, a native of Burlington County, has served on staff with three New Jersey governors in positions ranging from deputy director of scheduling to director of operations and now leads the Pinelands Commission. She will be an invaluable and extremely qualified addition to the Democratic delegation.

As we have noted before, the Commission charged with redrawing state legislative districts quite literally shapes the future of NJ politics for the coming decade. [Statistics published by the Center for American Women and Politics](#) show that even with recent increases, New Jersey ranks 17th (down from 9th in 2014) among all states in the proportion of women serving in its legislature. In an [opinion piece for the Star Ledger](#), Director Debbie Walsh pointed out that “the negative impacts of the [last redistricting disproportionately](#) affected women.”

The 2011 Apportionment Commission included three women out of the eleven members. Until this announcement, the number of women serving on the current Commission in 2021 was two. “The fact is that the addition of Ms Matos merely brings us up to the 2011 number.” said Anjali Mehrotra, President of NOW-NJ. “It’s not satisfactory but at least it is not a step back. It’s clear that New Jersey still has a long way to go in terms of gender parity and representation at all levels of power and we will continue to work and push to correct the gender imbalance in NJ politics.”

About National Organization for Women of New Jersey (NOW-NJ)

The purpose of NOW New Jersey is to take action through intersectional, anti-racist grassroots activism to promote feminist ideals, lead societal change, eliminate discrimination, and achieve and protect the equal rights of all women and girls in all aspects of social, political, and economic life.

For more information about NOW New Jersey, please visit www.nownj.org.

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Media Contact- Anjali Mehrotra | president@nownj.org | 908-379-3642