

Wisconsin Women in Local Government

Take Action! Checklist



TAKE ACTION: SUPPORT WOMEN OFFICE HOLDERS IN YOUR COMMUNITY!

County ■ City ■ Village ■ Town ■ School District

Getting elected is only the first step. To succeed, the women we elect need ongoing support and assistance from their community. Use this Checklist to Take Action today and support diversity in local government.

Visible/Vocal Support

I attend local government meetings to provide visible and vocal support to the women we elect. I recognize that women office holders may feel isolated – particularly where there are few, if any, other women – and visible constituent support sends a strong positive message to them and their colleagues.

Outreach and Networking

I invite elected officials to speak to social and civic groups I belong to and allow time for them to give their positions and get feedback. I use my contacts to bring greater awareness and exposure to women officials, allowing them to spread their base and find additional support for initiatives.

Communication

I develop ongoing relationships by communicating year-round with the women we elect – not just at election time or when there is a particularly controversial topic. I acknowledge when officials take positions that I support and provide feedback when I have questions or concerns.

Hold Local Governments Accountable

I know what local governments in my community are doing to support diversity on elected and appointed boards. I visit their web sites and talk with local officials.

Financial Support

I recognize that money is a reality when running for office and women are often uncomfortable fundraising. I step up to support women in this way by giving to campaigns of candidates I support, hosting fundraising parties and volunteering my time.

Share Expertise

I let my elected officials know about my areas of expertise and interest so they are prepared when asked to nominate people to serve on boards and commissions or when seeking expertise on issues.

Build the Pipeline

I identify women leaders in my community. I encourage and support women that express interest in running for office, or who seem knowledgeable and interested in local issues, such as women active in school, civic and social activities who may be great candidates for local elected offices. I also work to identify leaders among current elected officials and encourage them to run for state and national offices.

"If running for office is not for you, help someone who can run — offer to babysit her children while she does doors, take dinner over to the family once a week, stuff envelopes or make phone calls, as her employer work out a reasonable and flexible schedule, write a check to her campaign or a letter of support to the editor, and encourage!" State Rep. Sue Dickenson (Montana)

WHAT DOES THE FACE OF GOVERNMENT LOOK LIKE IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

Learn more. Visit the Women's Council's database of women office holders in Wisconsin local government. It is easy to use and available online at: <http://womenscouncil.wi.gov>. For more information contact the Wisconsin Women's Council at 608/266-2219 or by email at womenscouncil@wisconsin.gov.