

Why Gender Balance Is Needed in Government and Business

By Rachel Garver, Candidate for Lancaster County Treasurer

My candidacy for Lancaster County Treasurer is about bringing honesty, intelligence and integrity back to the Office of Lancaster County Treasurer. Government is the example we all live by. When our elected officials are less than honest, we all suffer. Government is also our collective role model for inter-racial harmony, for inclusion of individuals with disabilities in daily life, and for equitable and fair treatment of women in the workplace. The latter issue has had a plethora of revelations in the last eight months, and government has not fared well regarding the treatment of women in the workplace.

For many men, the difficulties experienced by women in navigating a hostile work environment are something of surprise. But for women, the secretive lawsuits of Congress, Hollywood, auto factories, and more are sadly not a surprise. In fact, we need to ask ourselves, why did it take so long for us to speak up? Again, women know the answer to that question, too.

When management is skewed toward men, sometimes without regard to talent, intelligence or accomplishment, it becomes difficult for women to be taken seriously. Particularly when the person who needs to be questioned is the one with the power of hiring and firing.

We cannot change the business world within a year or two. But we can use our precious votes to create change within a relatively brief period by electing qualified, talented women to governmental leadership. It's not a matter of control, but rather of equity. When local, state and federal elective offices start to reflect its citizenry by electing a commensurate percentage of women, then governmental offices serving the public and even Congress will start to change. The era of sexual harassment would come to an end because women are more likely to be believed by other women. Men who want to believe women and want to change the politics of gender in the workplace will also experience a cultural change, allowing them to support their female peers. The off-color jokes would end. The pressure tactics for a date and more would end. Women's credibility and hard work would be taken seriously. And, most importantly, our daughters and sons would witness a visible example of female leadership in action.

Gender balance in the workplace is not just a women's issue. Gender balance in the workplace will allow the full potential of all women and men to be realized. All girls and boys will have the opportunity to be who they are, and not a stereotype.

In closing, I believe by electing me to the Office of Lancaster County Treasurer, we have another opportunity to break the glass ceiling, end the old boys' club, and provide an example of good governance.

