



# BARBARA LEE

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POLITICAL OFFICE

The [Barbara Lee Political Office](#) advances women's equality in American politics by recruiting, electing, and supporting progressive, pro-choice, pro-equality women candidates. The Barbara Lee Political Office has nationwide reach, as our founder and namesake, Barbara Lee, has personally helped elect 118 women to office.

We achieve this by:

- **providing** women with critical resources and knowledge to meet the challenges of campaigning;
- **working** to elect a progressive woman President by building a pipeline of women governors and U.S. Senators; and
- **investing** in the next generation of women leaders by recruiting women to run, funding political training programs, and offering strategic support to women candidates.

The Political Office is a leading resource for progressive women candidates with a proven record of success in electing women to office. Our work reflects our core belief that electing progressive women strengthens our democracy, promotes social justice, and builds a more representative, productive, and responsive government.

We welcome press inquiries. To request information or an interview, please contact:

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## Why vote for women?

Women are 51% of the American population, but only 18% of the United States Congress.

Women are a critical voting bloc, deciding key races from Massachusetts to Alaska. But women do not have an equal voice in our government.

American women are vastly underrepresented in politics at the state and national levels. But electing more women is about more than numbers. It's about more than gender. It's about equality, social justice, and building a more responsive government.

[Research shows](#) that women legislators significantly impact how the interests of women and families are represented in state legislatures. More women lawmakers at the state level means increased focus on legislation affecting women and families, and an approach to policy making based on a broader cross-section of life experiences.

Advancing women's equality in government also advances the equality of underrepresented and economically disadvantaged groups. Women legislators give our most vulnerable communities greater access to the legislative process. They also tend to take more progressive positions on social justice issues, including reproductive rights and marriage equality.

[Another study shows](#) that on average, women in the U.S. Congress introduce more bills, attract more co-sponsors, and bring home more federal money for their districts than their male counterparts—meaning that women legislators help make government more productive, cooperative, and responsive public needs.

So why *not* vote for women?

## Women candidates, by the numbers:

### One-third

Of women who do run for office, one-third of them report being discouraged from running. It is usually an officeholder or political party official who discourages them.

### Six

The number of times that a woman needs to be asked to run for office before she will give it serious consideration.

### 18

Women comprise only 18% of Congress.

### 50

Women are 50% less likely than men to consider running for political office.

### 82

In comparing the number of women serving in national legislatures, the U.S. ranks 82<sup>nd</sup> in the world.

### Equal

Women who do run for office win at rates equal to those of men.

## Barbara Lee, Founder and President

Barbara Lee is a national leader in advancing women's equality in American politics. She founded and leads the Barbara Lee Political Office and the [Barbara Lee Family Foundation](#). Her impact has nationwide reach: she has personally helped elect 104 women to office.

Inspired by her grandmother's stories of suffragists marching on New York City's Fifth Avenue in the early 1900s, Barbara has worked to elect women since she co-founded the White House Project in 1998.

Today, through strategic advice, candidate training, direct support, and voter mobilization, Barbara has helped elect every sitting Democratic woman governor and U.S. Senator. Through the Foundation's nonpartisan [governors research](#) and qualitative and quantitative [research on women candidates](#), she gives women candidates at all levels essential tools to meet the challenges of campaigning.

With an exceptional eye for emerging leadership, Barbara also works to cultivate the next generation of women candidates. She serves as Advisory Council Chair for [Emerge Massachusetts](#), an intensive political training program for Democratic women and a program Barbara brought to the Commonwealth. Through the Foundation, Barbara has endowed a [nonpartisan training program for women at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government](#) and an [internship program at the Massachusetts State House for Simmons College students](#).

Boston Magazine has included Barbara among "The 100 People Who Run This Town" and she is listed among their 50 most powerful people in Boston. Women's eNews ranks her among the "21 Leaders for the 21st Century."

An advocate for Boston's cultural life and advancing women's representation in contemporary art, Barbara is Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees of the [Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston](#). She earned a master's degree from the Boston University School of Social Work and her bachelor's degree from Simmons College.

### Board memberships

*Advisory Council Chair*, Emerge Massachusetts

*Vice Chair*, Institute for Contemporary Art Boston

*Member*, Women's Leadership Board of Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government

## **Adrienne Kimmell, Executive Director**

Adrienne Kimmell is a political strategist and policy expert who has dedicated her career to empowering and advocating for women. As Executive Director, Adrienne leads the Political Office's efforts to engage women in the political process and to support progressive, pro-choice, pro-equality women candidates and political organizations across the country.

With experience on a broad range of national and local campaigns, Adrienne brings keen political and strategic insight to our work advancing women's political equality.

A career advocate for reproductive justice, Adrienne served as the executive director of the Florida Association of Planned Parenthood Affiliates and the Florida Alliance of Planned Parenthood Affiliates, where she led Planned Parenthood in advancing their public policy agenda through legislation, organizing, and electoral work.

Before her work in Florida, Adrienne managed state policy initiatives for the Planned Parenthood Federation of America in Washington, DC, designing model laws and policies and developing legislative strategy to advance reproductive justice at the state and local level. In earlier work with the Planned Parenthood Action Fund, Adrienne developed and implemented state and national political and electoral strategy. She began her career as a grassroots organizer and, later, a lobbyist for the Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts.

Adrienne is a board member of Emerge Massachusetts, a political training program for Democratic women candidates. She holds a Bachelor's degree from St. Lawrence University and a Master's degree in public policy from Tufts University.

### **Board memberships**

*Board Vice-Chair, Emerge Massachusetts*