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REFLECTIVE DEMOCRACY CAMPAIGN CALLS ON DEMS AND GOP TO DIVERSIFY CANDIDATE POOL

On the eve of party conventions, Call for Action: Open the Gates! asserts why and how Republicans and Democrats alike must recruit candidates who reflect the American people

San Francisco, CA – July 14, 2016 – Today, on the eve of the Republican and Democratic national conventions, the Reflective Democracy Campaign released its *Call for Action: Open the Gates!* challenging both major parties to diversify the pool of candidates they recruit and support for public office. Citing the powerful gate-keeping role parties play in determining who runs for elected office, the *Call for Action: Open the Gates!* urges the parties to establish goals, systems, and accountability mechanisms for promoting candidates who reflect the full range of the American people.

The campaign's 2015 report, *Who Runs (In) America?*, shows that the demographics of both parties' candidates, up and down the ballot, are severely out of balance with the American electorate. While the nation's population is almost 40% non-white, 96% of Republican candidates are white, as are 84% of Democrat candidates. Women represent 51% of the population yet constitute only 24% of Republican candidates and 33% of Democrat candidates. Overall, white men are 2/3 of all candidates and 2/3 of all elected officeholders.

"The political parties are selecting candidates who in no way reflect 21st century America," said Brenda Carter, Reflective Democracy Campaign Director. "Voters can't elect people who aren't on our ballots. It's long past time for the parties to produce candidates who represent the full range of talent and experience in our society."

Find the Call for Action, research reports, and more at WhoLeads.Us.

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ABOUT THE REFLECTIVE DEMOCRACY CAMPAIGN

The Reflective Democracy Campaign reimagines a political system that engages America's full range of talent and experience. The campaign conducts groundbreaking research, engages the public in crucial dialogue, and makes catalytic investments in leaders and organizations working towards a Reflective Democracy. Learn more at WhoLeads.Us.

ABOUT THE WOMEN DONORS NETWORK

The Women Donors Network is a community of progressive women philanthropists who contribute to a more just and fair world through collaborative learning and action. Learn more at womendonors.org.