

## SCWLA ENDORSEMENT POLICY AND GUIDELINES

The mission of the South Carolina Women Lawyers Association (SCWLA) is to enhance the status, influence and effectiveness of women lawyers in the State of South Carolina. Our goals are to:

- encourage and promote the advancement of women in the profession of law;
- provide opportunities for the development of collegiality and mentoring among women lawyers;
- enhance the professional lives of women lawyers;
- increase the number of women in the judiciary; and
- provide a forum to consider and address issues unique to women in the legal profession.

Out of respect for the wide spectrum of positions, opinions and beliefs of our membership, SCWLA does not officially endorse candidates for political or judicial office. Nor does SCWLA provide a forum for select candidates to solicit support from its members.

SCWLA does, however, welcome the opportunity to inform and educate its membership about issues of common concern, which include educational opportunities, elections and appointments in our State. From time to time, SCWLA may choose to host debates or other forums for political and judicial candidates. The following guidelines shall apply to such events:

- If a position is contested, all candidates will be invited to participate in the debate or forum.
- SCWLA will endeavor to bring all candidates for the same position who wish to address its members together at one time.
- If bringing all candidates together at one time is impractical or if candidate(s) decline an invitation to participate, SCWLA may schedule those available candidates to address its members sequentially.

Regardless of the political position, increasing the representation of women in the ranks of elected and appointed officials advances SCWLA's mission. Therefore, the organization will share with its membership opportunities to support women candidates. The following guidelines describe our submission and review process for all requests for support:

- Any candidate identifying as female for State office or any SCWLA member may ask SCWLA to advise its membership of their candidacy.
- The request may be submitted by any written means, including electronic mail.
- Requests to share candidate information should be submitted to the Executive Director and current State Board President.
- As soon as practicable, SCWLA will advise its membership of the candidacy. The advisement shall include:
  - o The candidate's name and the State office or position sought by the candidate.
  - o If provided by the requestor, information on how to learn more about the candidate.
  - o A statement that SCWLA does not endorse any particular candidate or party.
- Any questions about our endorsement policy and guidelines may be directed to the current State Board President or President-Elect.

SCWLA welcomes the opportunity to inform and educate its membership about opportunities to run for office and to secure information and / or education in support of running for office without regard for

political party. The following guidelines describe our submission and review process for all requests to advise members of such opportunities:

- Any SCWLA member may ask the organization to advise the membership of 1) opportunities to run for office or 2) of opportunities for education / information in support of running for office
- The request may be submitted by any written means, including electronic mail.
- Requests to share such opportunities should be submitted to the Executive Director and current State Board President.
- As soon as practicable, SCWLA will advise its membership of the opportunity. The advisement shall include:
  - o A short statement about the opportunity provided.
  - o If provided by the requestor, information about how to learn more about the opportunity.
  - o A statement that SCWLA does not endorse any particular candidate or party.
- Any questions about our endorsement policy and guidelines may be directed to the current State Board President or President-Elect.
- SCWLA, through its State Board of Directors, reserves the right to decline to share information with its members if it deems the information or opportunity to be inconsistent with SCWLA's stated mission.