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Sullivan named "State Director" for NFWL



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By Cherise Madigan, Manchester Journal

MANCHESTER — Starting in 2018, local Rep. Linda Joy Sullivan will represent Vermont as a state director in the National Foundation for Women Legislators.

The organization, which has provided resources and support to elected women since 1938, includes over 5,000 women working at the state, county and municipal levels.

According to Sullivan, her leadership role in the organization will strengthen her resources as a state legislator.

"It's important for me to become involved with a vetted organization that is able to think across the lines," Sullivan said.

"I was aware of their policy topics, and I am familiar with some of the other State Legislators. When they asked me if I was willing to serve I was honored to represent Vermont."

Sullivan says that the organization "has a history of covering a wide variety of policy topic areas" through a bipartisan lens, and provides elected women with experts who share presentations and materials.

Those benefits also come with responsibility, however.

"As the State Director, I will be participating in the conferences and monthly telephonic meetings, and be responsible for bringing Vermont to the table," she explained. "It is my hope that other female Legislators from all parties will become members, [and] that we can intelligently discuss national and state politics."

Vermont will be "in the forefront" of those discussions according to Sullivan, who hopes to benefit not just from experts, but from her colleagues as well.

"To be able to discuss these matters with other State legislators and to be able to attend conferences with vetted speakers from around the U.S. raises the bar on the discussions and what will be brought back to Vermont," Sullivan said. "Networking with other State Directors on policy and issues can only be a driving catalyst for informed decisions."

Sullivan, who represents the towns of Dorset, Danby, Mt. Tabor, Peru, and Landgrove, says that she has maintained a focus on bipartisanship and ethics since her election to the legislature in 2016. Those principles can be strengthened by the inter-state networking provided by the NFWL, she says.

"It is my hope that future candidates and current Legislators in Vermont will not fear venturing outside of the state for vetted training and discussions where policy matters cross the lines," she said. "Ethics, accountability, education, various backgrounds, and similarities and differences among the States should open doors for men and women interested in politics. Sharing experiences and dialogue is my mantra."

That mantra comes to life each month, Sullivan says, as she meets with constituents in all of the towns in her district in the first two weekends of every month, minimum. Going forward, Sullivan hopes to bring her knowledge and experience from the NFWL to not just the legislature, but directly to her

constituents as well.

"I hope that they feel comfortable to follow my writings and communicate with me so that I may keep them informed with what I take away and bring to the NFWL," Sullivan said. "I am honored to have been asked to take this position, and I wish to share with fellow Vermonters as much as I can."

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