



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Tuesday, August 13, 2019

Bilen Mesfin, 510-681-5978, Bilen@change-llc.com

Layla Crater, 310-804-3107, Layla@change-llc.com

Women of Color Poised to Play Pivotal Role in 2020 Elections, Shaping Policy through Civic Engagement

Joint report by AAPI Civic Engagement Fund and Groundswell Fund reveals unprecedented mobilization by women of color in 2018 Midterms; demonstrates women of color's influential role in setting nation's policy agenda

Los Angeles, CA – Today, the AAPI Civic Engagement Fund and Groundswell Fund jointly released a new report, ***Ahead of the Majority: Foregrounding Women of Color***, which finds that women of color are poised to play a pivotal role in the 2020 elections, shaping policy through a variety of civic engagement activities and contributing to the changing makeup of the American electorate. Since 2008, the population of women of color has increased by 18% while their voter registration rates have jumped by 25%. Their overall rate of civic engagement has also increased, demonstrating women of color's influential role in setting the nation's policy agenda.

"With the 2018 Midterms, the nation witnessed a sea change in American politics led by women of color," said **EunSook Lee, Director of the AAPI Civic Engagement Fund**. "This is a story of Black women on the frontlines of democratic demands for progressive change and social justice, turning out to the polls, made more impactful by the participation of Latinas and Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) women. The data points to the potential for substantive policy change when strategies and resources are centered on women of color."

"***Ahead of the Majority*** examines the unprecedented and often ignored role of women of color in the 2018 Midterm elections," said **Taeku Lee, Managing Director of Asian American Decisions**. "By focusing on Black, Latina, and AAPI women (and, where data are available, Native American women), the report fills two critical gaps: first, the story of women of color as an emerging force to be reckoned with takes center stage and, second, the report takes a fresh new look at existing data sources along with original data we collected in the 2018 American Election Eve Poll."

"2018 marked a milestone for women of color reaching their potential as a powerful electorate," said **Vanessa Daniel, Executive Director of Groundswell Fund**. "We urge funding institutions and donors to reassess their funding and investment decisions to recognize the

growing value of women of color in setting the nation’s policy agenda. We encourage philanthropy to course correct on their historical underinvestment by supporting more women of color-led, and serving, organizations.”

Key report findings and data include:

- Women of color were central to the massive 2018 Midterm turnout: Overall turnout in 2018 increased by a massive 30 million voters from 2014, representing a 33% increase. Most significantly, turnout among women of color increased 37% with AAPI (Asian American and Pacific Islander)¹ women showing up to the polls at an increase of 48%, Black women at 28%, and Latinas at 51%.
- Turnout fueled by women of color mobilizing friends and family: Most women voters in 2018 talked to and encouraged friends and family to vote. Black women led the way with 84% mobilizing friends and family, followed by 76% of AAPI women, 72% of Native American women, 70% of Latinas, and 66% of white women.
- Mobilization in 2018 was unprecedented for a Midterm: Voters in 2018 were contacted to register and turnout at rates comparable to, if not exceeding, mobilization in presidential election years. The rates of being contacted were the lowest for white Americans (just 32% for white men) and the highest among African Americans (55%) and AAPIs (54%).
- People of color engaged voters beyond the ballot box: An extraordinarily high estimate of 1 of 8 Americans engaged in protest politics in 2018. Participation in protests was highest among Black men (24%), Native American women (21%), Native American men (18%), and Asian American Pacific Islander women (17.5%).

Released on the heels of the latest presidential candidate debates and jointly published by AAPI Civic Engagement Fund and Groundswell Fund, the report offers an in-depth analysis of the women of color electorate in 2018, and sets this key moment against the backdrop of movements for change since 2008 and beyond.

Full report available at <https://aapifund.org/report/woc/>

###

ABOUT AAPI CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FUND

The Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Civic Engagement Fund is a national initiative established in 2014 to foster a culture of civic participation within AAPI communities by supporting the growth of AAPI groups as leaders in organizational movement and power building to achieve specific policy, systems, and transformational change. We were formed with the belief that AAPIs must be an integral part of strengthening America’s democracy, in advocating for improving the quality of life for all, and in creating vibrant multiracial communities. Visit <https://aapifund.org>.

¹ AAPIs include people of East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, the Philippines, and the Pacific Islands.

ABOUT GROUNDSWELL FUND

In the U.S., the majority of people support reproductive justice but the majority of policies and systems do not. This gap can only be bridged when the people organizing a strong grassroots base to hold decision makers accountable receive the resources they need to succeed.

Groundswell Fund gives donors and foundations a way to strengthen movements for reproductive and social justice by resourcing intersectional grassroots organizing and centering the leadership of Black women, Indigenous women and other women of color, including transgender women of color. Visit <https://groundswellfund.org>.