

# *Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated*

*A Public Service Sorority Founded in 1913*

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## AUGUST ACTION MESSAGE: EMPOWERING WOMEN VOTERS

TO: Chapters & Members of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

FROM: Cynthia M. A. Butler-McIntyre, National President and The National Social Action Commission

DATE: August 6, 2012

RE: Empowering Women Voters

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On August 26, our nation will commemorate Women's Equality Day, the 92nd anniversary of the certification of the 19th Amendment, which gave American women the Constitutional right to vote.

We know that moving women to the voting booth has always been on Delta Sigma Theta's agenda. Our support for the political empowerment and engagement of women stretches back to our very first public act as a sisterhood—participation in the historic Washington D.C. suffrage march on March 3, 1913.

It is also no secret that women's issues have been front and center during this session of Congress and presidential campaigning. From laws designed to guarantee gender pay equity to health concerns like contraception, policy debates about women's issues are too often shaped by male politicians. As American women, we must use our political voices this election season to continue to define and defend women's rights.

Black women are emerging as a particularly important voting bloc. According to a study by the Pew Research Center, black women had the highest voter turnout among all groups in the 2008 election. This is encouraging news, but now is not a time for us to rest on our laurels.

This fall, Delta Sigma Theta chapters all over America will engage in voter education, empowerment and mobilization activities for the November 6 election. We won't restrict our political outreach to women, but we must acknowledge the important role that women play as political influencers and opinion shapers. As Delta chapters prepare to do voter outreach, they should consider partnerships and alliances with groups like the League of Women Voters, the National Congress of Black Women, National Women's Political Caucus and the National Council of Negro Women.

Delta's voice will be heard this election season, but our efforts must go beyond Sorority programs. Sorors need to build on the momentum of 2008 by becoming personal ambassadors for the voter empowerment of other women. No woman at a hair salon, book club meeting or Bible study class that is touched by a member of Delta Sigma Theta should escape the message that black women can't afford to skip this election.

Our Founders participated in the 1913 suffrage march because they understood that our nation would not reach its full potential without the political participation of all American citizens, regardless of gender. It was a radical view 99 years ago. Our Founders' activism is our heritage. We must not turn our backs on their commitment to the idea that women deserve a place at democracy's table.

For more information about women's groups that are engaged in political activism, visit these websites:

League of Women Voters: [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

National Council of Negro Women: [www.ncnw.org](http://www.ncnw.org)

National Congress of Black Women: [www.nationalcongressbw.org](http://www.nationalcongressbw.org)

National Women's Political Caucus: [www.nwpc.org](http://www.nwpc.org)