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No room for conservative women in Women's March movement

By Andrea Seastrand

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A few weeks ago [here in San Luis Obispo](#) and across the nation, women took to the streets to protest and to encourage more women to run for political office. The Women's March claims to represent "all women" and there certainly are a number of issues that can unite us across country.

However, the hypocrisy of the march's organizers and their narrow agenda is making it evident that it is not about promoting women's rights or more female elected officials; it's about promoting a liberal political agenda.

Last year, [pro-life groups were barred](#) from being partners in the Washington, D.C., Women's March because access to abortion is a key policy plank for the march. Planned Parenthood remained one of the key organizers for the 2018 march and made it clear their views would be the only ones represented.

After the marches ended, Meghan McCain, who is far from being a right-wing conservative, [slammed](#) the D.C. Women's March as "being for all women, except for conservative pro-life women." She rightly pointed out that pro-life women who support things like equal pay and equal treatment are excluded from the feminist movement solely because of their stance on abortion. This is shameful.

We see the same mentality here in San Luis Obispo where we have two female county supervisors, Debbie Arnold and Lynn Compton, serving in positions of great importance for the community. Yet, they are regularly berated with unprofessional conduct by their "progressive" male colleague Adam Hill. I have not seen feminists running to their defense despite Hill's [chauvinist behavior](#).

In fact, instead of helping to get more women elected to public office, local progressives are moving in the exact opposite direction. With the backing of Democrats, [Jimmy Paulding is running against Supervisor Lynn](#)

[Compton](#) to take her seat on the San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors. So much for promoting more gender balance in political offices.

When I was in Congress and one of just a handful of women serving, Walter Capps ran against me with support of local feminists. This bares an ugly truth about the aims of the Women's March. There is no place for conservative women like Supervisors Compton and Arnold or myself within this movement. We are excluded. The issues we feel are important as women do not meet the litmus test that feminists and progressives have staked out on behalf of our entire gender.

Access to good paying jobs, freedom to choose the best school for our children to attend, keeping the cost of living affordable for families and religious freedom are important to millions of women across the country. However, under the banner of the Women's March these issues have no place. The concept of "tolerance" is a one-way street in modern progressivism. Either you agree with their views with no deviations or you are the intolerant one. It was telling when pro-life groups were denied an organizing role in the Washington, D.C., Women's March because it made it clear that there is an agenda far beyond uniting women and getting them elected to positions of importance.

There are plenty of non-partisan issues that could unite us. We should be fighting against sexual harassment by the Harvey Weinsteins of the world. We should be promoting equal treatment for women in the workplace and in society. And there is no excuse for women to be paid less than men for the same work. These are things that all women would agree with and should be the focus of the Women's March movement — not divisive issues like abortion.

It is likely that the Women's March will continue in the future and whether it succeeds in getting more women into elected office will be interesting to see. The movement does itself a great disservice by excluding conservative women and sadly reveals the same cynical politics that so many people have grown tired of. No person who attended the San Luis Obispo Women's March and supports Jimmy Paulding's campaign to take Supervisor Compton's seat can say they are truly working to get more female representation in government. There are many issues that can and would unite *all* women. Let's focus on those issues instead of excluding

some because they have different beliefs. Then you can truly call it the “Women’s March.”

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