

## A Call to Action

### **WCD Challenges Every Leader to Actively Help Bring More Women onto Corporate Boards, and to Build Diverse Boards that are Multi-Gender, Multi-Skilled, Multi-National, Multi-Ethnic, and Multi-Generational**

#### **1. Build the Pipeline Through Advocacy and Mentorship**

Each Board Director and corporate leader should help identify senior women in their companies and help them gain the visibility and responsibility necessary to become a Board Director: Identify; Coach; Promote; Advocate

#### **2. Assure Every Director Slate Includes at Least One Woman**

Board Nominating Committees, Executive Search firms, Succession Planners and Boards themselves must commit to including at least one woman on every slate. We can learn from the NFL's highly effective "Rooney's Rule," which assures an African-American coach is considered in each coach search.

#### **3. Declare Board Diversity a Necessary Component of Good Governance**

Regulatory agencies, stock exchanges, and governance communities around the world should encourage nominating committees to secure diverse directors and to explain their Board selection process in their proxies.

#### **4. Turn CEOs into Champions and Change Agents**

Engage the men and women who run companies to champion and promote the business case for women on boards and in senior positions.

#### **5. Expand the Pool**

Even while developing clear and consistent methodologies for evaluating the potential of board and executive candidates, companies should look beyond sitting or retired CEOs for Directors. Executives with expertise in global branding, supply chain, strategic talent, risk, IT, and manufacturing in China or India can make excellent Directors.

## **6. Provide Specific Board Training**

Encourage qualified women to participate in Board training programs, and then move through the pipeline of Advisory Board service to Director positions.

## **7. Sponsor More Research**

Counting does matter. We need more research on the performance of global companies with diverse boards, and with women leading in the boardroom – how they can outperform their peers, connect their strategies to their communities, and create innovative strategies.

## **8. Report and Write About the Issue**

More media and op-ed attention should be focused on the business case for women on boards and in the executive suite, domestically and globally.

## **9. Refer Women to Board Seats**

Every woman and man who chooses not to accept a Board position that has been offered to them should recommend women with the needed expertise for the seat.

## **10. Exercise all of your rights as a shareholder**

- a. Vote “no” or withhold your votes from corporate board nominees in companies that fail to include women directors
- b. Write to the CEOs, board chairs and nominating committees of those companies explaining your action
- c. Attend annual shareholder meetings and raise questions about the board’s composition
- d. Support shareholder resolutions and seek greater board diversity
- e. Monitor the actions of your mutual funds and hold fund managers accountable for proxy voting guidelines and votes in board elections that do not promote inclusion of women on boards of companies in which they invest
- f. Consider companies’ board and leadership composition before you decide to make an investment

**The future of diverse corporate boards can no longer be some place we are going, but one we create together now. If each of us takes action there will not only be more qualified women on corporate and large privately held boards, but they will make a difference around the table, in the world and for the world.**