

Notable Facts from *The State of Women's Representation 2013-2014*

Representation 2020's Parity Index shows need for change: Representation 2020 supports efforts to achieve gender parity in elected office, which we define as an equal likelihood for men and women to hold any elected office and a majority of seats in any legislature. Our Parity Index measures the representation of women in the elected offices of governor and other statewide executives, U.S. senator, U.S. representative, state legislator, and chief executive of local jurisdictions (mayors and county executives). A state with gender parity in representation would receive a score of 50 out of 100 points in our analysis. By this measure, every state falls short of gender parity in elected office. Following the November 2013 elections, only six states received more than 30 points in the Index: New Hampshire, Washington, Hawaii, California, Arizona, and Minnesota. Learn more about our Parity Index on page 28.

In 2013, only six states received more than 30 points (out of 100) in our Gender Parity Index.

New Hampshire leads the nation: New Hampshire ranks highest in our 2013 Parity Index with a score of 47.5, very close to parity. New Hampshire is the first state in the nation to send an all-female delegation to Congress. Additionally, its current governor is a woman, one third of its state legislators are women, and the mayor of the state's second largest city, Nashua, is a woman. New Hampshire was also the first state in the nation to have a majority-female state legislative chamber (state senate from 2009 to 2010).

Virginia ranks last: Virginia received the lowest Parity Index score in the nation: 4.5. Virginia has never elected a woman governor or U.S. senator and has ranked among the bottom 15 for its percentage of state legislative seats held by women for the last 35 years.

High to low in state legislatures: According to the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University, the state that ranked highest for its percentage of state legislators who are women at the end of 2013 was Vermont, at 41.1%. Ranked lowest was Louisiana, at 11.8%. In 1993, the range was from 39.5% (Washington) to 5.1% (Kentucky) – showing advances for the lowest-ranking states, but little improvement for states at the top.

Six of the ten states with the highest portions of state legislative seats held by women use multi-member legislative districts.

Electoral structure matters: In state legislative chambers that elect at least some members from multi-member districts, women held an average of 31.0% of seats after the November 2013 elections.¹ In state legislative chambers that used only single-member districts, women held 22.8% of seats. Six of the 10 states that rank highest for their percentage of state legislative seats held by women use multi-member

districts. As detailed in our report, this finding is consistent with the longstanding hypothesis that the use of multi-member districts increases women's representation.

Partisan differences in women's representation at the state level: According to the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University, 55.8% of female state legislators were Democratic and 44.2% were Republican in 1981. Today, 63.6% of female state legislators are Democratic and 35.6% are Republican.ⁱⁱ To combat this difference, in June 2013 the Republican State Leadership Committee announced its new program "Right Women, Right Now," which aims to recruit 300 new Republican women to run for state-level office.

Partisan differences in women's representation at the federal level: In 2013, only four of the 20 women in the U.S. Senate and 19 of the 79 women in the U.S. House were Republican. To address this deficit, the National Republican Congressional Committee has launched a new initiative called Project GROW, which aims to recruit and support more Republican women candidates for Congress.

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Women reach record high in U.S. Senate: In 2012, women won a third of all U.S. Senate elections – eleven total – bringing the number of women in the Senate to 20 in 2013. In 1991, only two women served in the Senate, meaning women now hold ten times as many Senate seats as they did during Clarence Thomas' Supreme Court confirmation, which helped trigger the "Year of the Woman."ⁱⁱⁱ

Number of elected female executive officials stalled: Only five of our states' 50 governors are women, and 24 states have never had a female governor.^{iv} The percentage of elected state executive positions held by women has barely increased since 1993, from 22% to just 23% today.^v Locally, only twelve of our nation's 100 largest cities have women mayors.

Elected officials combine service and motherhood: Congresswomen Cathy McMorris Rodgers and Jaime Herrera Beutler are rising Republican stars from Washington State. Rep. McMorris Rodgers, who delivered the official Republican Party response to President Obama's 2014 State of the Union address, was elected Chair of the House Republican Conference in 2012, while Rep. Herrera Beutler is the only woman Vice-Chair of the National Republican Congressional Committee. This year they demonstrated that high-achieving legislators need not choose between politics and family. McMorris Rodgers, already the first member of Congress to give birth to two children while in office, gave birth to her third child in November 2013. Rep. Herrera Beutler's first child, born in July 2013, was diagnosed with a serious condition known as Potter's Syndrome. Both women have received widespread public support, showing that constituents and fellow legislators are now more accepting of the idea that mothers can balance political office and family commitments.

Leader in training female candidates closes doors: While many organizations continue to train, fund, and recruit women candidates, one of the most influential training organizations of the past decade, the White House Project, closed its doors in January 2013.

The United States' relative ranking drops: According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, as of December 1, 2013, the United States ranks 98th in the world for the percentage of its national legislature (both chambers) that is female, down from 59th in 1998.^{vi}

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- ⁱ Figures calculated using data from the Center for American Women and Politics, Rutgers University. Retrieved Dec. 2013 from www.cawp.rutgers.edu
- ⁱⁱ Women in State Legislatures 2013. (2013, Sept.). *Center for American Women and Politics, Rutgers University*. Retrieved September 25, 2012 from http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/fast_facts/levels_of_office/documents/stleg.pdf
- ⁱⁱⁱ Women in the U.S. Senate 1922-2013. (2013, Jan.). *Center for American Women and Politics, Rutgers University*. Retrieved September 25, 2012 from http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/fast_facts/levels_of_office/documents/senate.pdf
- ^{iv} Statewide Elected Executive Women 2013. (2013, Sept.). *Center for American Women and Politics, Rutgers University*. Retrieved September 25, 2013 from http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/fast_facts/levels_of_office/documents/stwide.pdf
- ^v Facts on Statewide Elected Executive Women: 1969-2012. (2013, Feb.) *Center for American Women and Politics, Rutgers University*. http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/fast_facts/levels_of_office/documents/stwidehist.pdf
- ^{vi} Women in National Parliaments. *Inter-Parliamentary Union*. (12/1/13) <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>