

Women's Representation in Maryland

Parity Ranking: 15th of 50

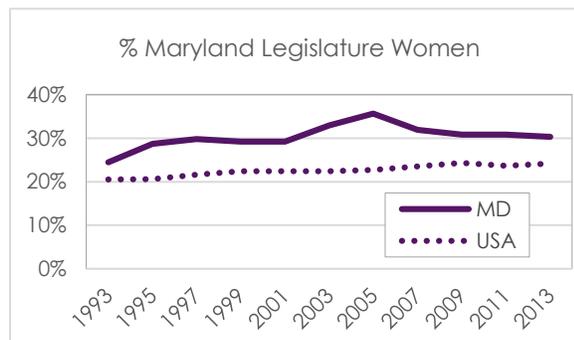
Score of 21: Seven points for Senator Barbara Mikulski's two most recent terms, 2 points for the state's one female U.S. House member, 8 points for its percentage of state legislators who are women, and 4 points for Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake (D) of Baltimore and County Executive Laura Neuman (R) of Anne Arundel.

Quick Facts

From 1979 to 1992 Maryland had at least three female Representatives in Congress, but since 1995, no more than one member of the state's U.S. House delegation has been a woman. In the state legislature in 2013, the percentage seats held by women two- and three-member districts is more than double the percentage of seats held by women in single-member districts (37% vs. 15%).

Trending

The percentage of women in Maryland's state legislature peaked in 2005 at just under 36%, and has declined gradually since then, though it remains higher than the national average.



Source: Center for American Women and Politics, Rutgers University.

Levels of Government

Statewide Executive

Female governors: None

Current female statewide elected executives: 0 of 4 positions.

Number of women to have held statewide elected executive office: 1

Congress

U.S. Senate: 1 of 2 seats is held by a woman, Barbara Mikulski (1987-present)

U.S. House: 1 of 8 seats is held by a woman

In its history, Maryland has elected eight women to Congress, one of whom was elected to both the House and Senate

State Legislature

Percentage women: 30.3%

Rankings: 9th of 50

Senate: 11 of 47 (23.4%) are women

House: 46 of 141 (32.6%) are women

Method of election: Each single-member senate district elects three seats in the House of Delegates. Most delegates are elected at-large, while the rest are elected in one-seat and two-seat districts.

Local

Two of Maryland's five largest cities and counties with elected executives have women executives: the City of Baltimore and Anne Arundel County.

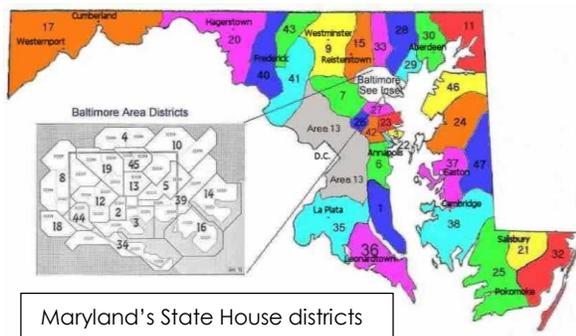
Words of Wisdom

"The women of the Senate are like the U.S. Olympic team: we come in different sizes, but we sure are united in our determination to do the best for our country!" – Barbara Mikulski, U.S. senator from Maryland

The Use of Multi-Seat Legislative Districts in Maryland

Maryland currently ranks ninth for its percentage of state legislators who are women (30.3%), and is also one of ten states that elects members of one or both of its state legislative chambers with multi-member districts, an electoral structure that has been shown to improve the likelihood of women running for and winning elected office. In multi-member districts, constituents elect multiple legislators to represent them, while in single-member districts, which are more common in the United States, constituents elect only one legislator to represent them.

Each of Maryland's 47 districts for its House of Delegates elects three delegates. Most districts use at-large elections, while others use a combination of one or two seat elections. 46 of the 141 members of the Maryland House of Delegates are women.



The percentage of women delegates in two- and three-member districts is more than double the percentage of women delegates elected in single-member districts (38% vs. 14%). Research suggests that the use of multi-member districts encourages the election of female candidates because it provides constituents with the option to vote for both male and female candidates instead of having to choose one.

Elections to Watch

Gov. Martin O'Malley (D) will not seek re-election in 2014, providing an opportunity for Maryland to elect its first female governor. State delegate Heather Mizeur is one of three major candidates seeking the Democratic nomination, but trails her two male opponents. Frontrunner Anthony Brown has selected a man as his running mate, while Attorney General Doug Gansler has selected a woman,

Among Republicans, Anne Arundel County Executive Laura Neuman was a prospective candidate, but has decided to run for re-election. Hartford County Executive David Craig is seeking the Republican nomination and has chosen state delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio as his running mate.

Men are expected to win the state's other two elected executive offices, attorney general and comptroller. Absent unforeseen primary challenges or open seats, the U.S. House delegation is expected to remain the same, with one female House member.

Notable Recent Elections

Rep. Donna Edwards won re-election in the 4th congressional district with over 77% of the vote. Only one other woman ran for the U.S. House from Maryland in 2012: Nancy Jacobs, in the 2nd congressional district. Jacobs, a Republican, received 31.1% of the vote in a heavily Democratic district.

Several cities elected mayors in 2013. Mayor Phyllis Marcuccio of Rockville, the state's third largest city, did not seek re-election; Bridget Donnell Newton was elected to fill the open seat.