

Women's Representation in Montana

Parity Ranking: 38th of 50

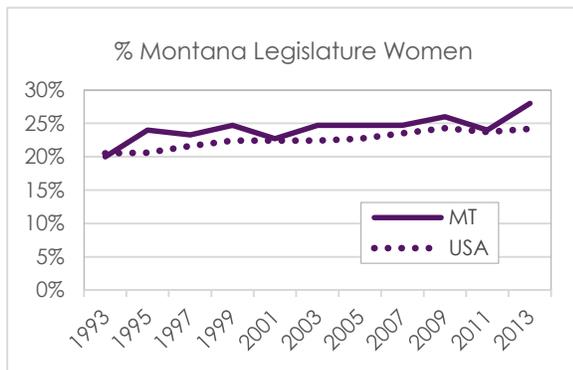
Score of 12: Five points for secretary of state, auditor, and superintendent of public instruction. 7 points for the percentage of state legislative seats held by women.

Quick Fact

Montana has not elected a woman to Congress since it elected Jeannette Rankin to the House in 1940. Rankin, first elected in 1916 to one of Montana's two at-large U.S. House districts, was the first ever woman elected to Congress. She served two terms, one from 1917-1919 and one from 1941-1943.

Trending

Six new female state legislators were elected in 2012, the biggest increase in 20 years. The legislature now ranks above the national average.



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

Elections to Watch

In 2014, Montana will fill its first open U.S. Senate seat since the 1970s. Several prominent women of both major parties have declined to run. The state's U.S. House race will likely be competitive if incumbent Steve Daines (R) runs for U.S. Senate. Other statewide offices are only elected in presidential election years. In Billings, the state's largest city, no women are running for mayor in 2013; no women ran when the seat was open in 2009 either.

Levels of Government

Statewide Executives

Female governors: Judy Martz (2001-2005)

Current female statewide elected executives: 3 of 6 (secretary of state, state auditor, superintendent of public instruction)

Number of women to have held statewide elected executive office: 15, plus one associate public service commissioner

Congress

U.S. Senate: 0 of 2 seats held by women

U.S. House: 0 of 1 seats held by women

In its history, Montana has elected one woman to the U.S. House and none to the Senate.

State Legislature

Percentage women: 28%

Rankings: 16th of 50

Senate: 10 of 50 (20%) are women

House: 32 of 100 (32%) are women

Method of election: single-member districts

Local

None of Montana's five largest cities with an elected mayor has a woman mayor.

Words of Wisdom

"How shall we answer the challenge, gentlemen? How shall we explain to them the meaning of democracy if the same Congress that voted to make the world safe for democracy refuses to give this small measure of democracy to the women of our country?"
— Jeannette Rankin, former U.S. representative from Montana