

Women's Representation in Pennsylvania

Parity Ranking: 46th of 50

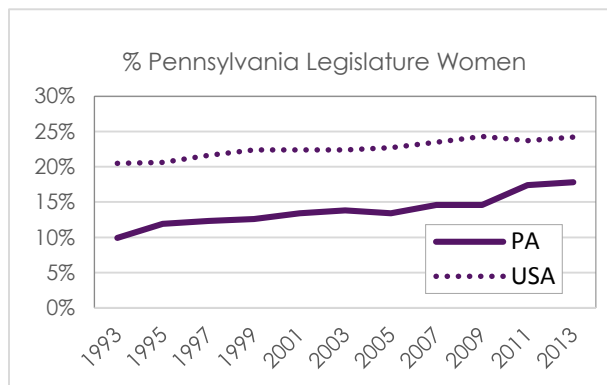
Score of 9: Three points for attorney general, 1 point for the state's single U.S. representative, and 5 points for the percentage of state legislators who are women.

Quick Fact

The first three Pennsylvania women to serve in the U.S. House won special elections following the deaths of their husbands.

Trending

The percentage of state legislative seats held by women has increased 7.9 percentage points in the last 20 years, a greater increase than the national increase of 3.2 percentage points. However, the state has consistently trailed the national percentage by more than six points.



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

Elections to Watch

Pennsylvania has never had a woman governor, but the state's lone congresswoman, Allyson Schwartz (D), is a frontrunner for the Democratic nomination against vulnerable Republican incumbent Tom Corbett. Former Rep. Marjorie Margolies is among candidates seeking Schwartz's open House seat, but male incumbents are favored in all remaining House seats. Brenda Alton (D) is a candidate for lieutenant governor.

Levels of Government

Statewide Executives

Female governors: None

Female statewide elected executives: 1 of 5 (attorney general)

Number of women to have held statewide elected executive office: 7

Congress

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

U.S. House: 1 of 18 seats is held by a woman

In its history, Pennsylvania has never elected a woman to the U.S. Senate and has elected only seven women to the House, three of whom were elected in special elections following their husbands' deaths.

State Legislature

Percentage women: 17.8%

Rankings: 39th of 50

Senate: 8 of 50 (16%) are women

House: 37 of 203 (18.2%) are women

Method of election: Single-member districts

Local

None of Pennsylvania's five largest cities and counties with elected executives has a woman mayor or county executive.

Words of Wisdom

"I'm running to be governor, not the 'first woman' governor, but the fact that I am the only woman in the congressional delegation and in a senior policymaking role, means people know I can beat the odds. I have brought a different perspective...it does change the dynamic." – Allyson Schwartz, U.S. representative from Pennsylvania