

Women's Representation in Michigan

Parity Ranking: 8th of 50

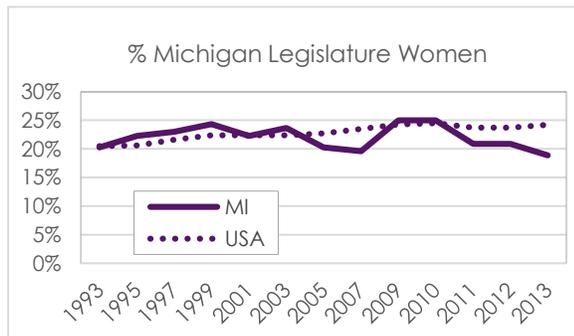
Score of 27: Ten points for former Governor Jennifer Granholm, 3 for the secretary of state, 8 points for U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow's two most recent elections, 1 points for its single woman House member, 4 points for its percentage of state legislators who are women, and 1 point for senate president pro tempore.

Quick Fact

In 2002, Michigan elected its third foreign-born governor and its first woman governor, Jennifer Granholm (D). Originally from Canada, Granholm became a naturalized American citizen at the age of 21. She served two terms.

Trending

In recent years, the Michigan state legislature has experienced large fluctuations in the percentage of seats held by women. Between 2008 and 2009, it increased 5.4 points, but has since decreased by 6.1 to 18.9%.



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

Levels of Government

Statewide Executives

Female governors: Jennifer Granholm (2003-2011)

Current female statewide elected executives: 1 of 4 (secretary of state)

Number of women to have held statewide elected executive office: 7, one of whom was appointed

Congress

U.S. Senate: 1 of 2 seats held by women, Debbie Stabenow (2001-present)

U.S. House: 1 of 14 seats held by women

In its history, Michigan has elected 7 women to the U.S. House, one of whom was also elected to the U.S. Senate.

State Legislature

Percentage women: 18.9%

Rankings: 36th of 50

Senate: 4 of 38 (10.5%) are women

House: 24 of 110 (21.8%) are women

Method of election: single-member districts

Local

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

Words of Wisdom

"I think it's important for women to serve, whether it's leadership in their community or political office – women have to be at the table. It's [an] important call, but it's not easy. Because it's hard, because times are ugly. My perspective as former Governor is that the most impactful people in the Legislature, and the people who really got stuff done, were women. Women are workhorses, not show horses and our nation needs really good public service at this time." – Jennifer Granholm, former governor of Michigan

Training, Recruiting, and Funding Women Candidates in Michigan

Michigan is home to at least two non-partisan organizations dedicated to promoting women's leadership in politics.



Ready to Run Michigan is an organization promoting education about women and gender. Its training program curriculum includes such topics as fundraising, media training, and developing a campaign plan.



The Women Officials Network offers two workshops biennially encouraging women to run for public office. In addition, they partner with organizations like the League of Women Voters and the Michigan Women's Commission to provide additional workshops and networking opportunities.

Elections to Watch

Senator Carl Levin will not seek re-election, creating an opportunity for Michigan to join a handful of states with two female U.S. Senators. Republicans may nominate former Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land, but Rep. Gary Peters is the frontrunner to win both the Democratic nomination and the seat.

Gov. Rick Snyder (R) is vulnerable, and Democrats are likely to nominate a man to challenge him, but other statewide executive offices may create opportunities for women candidates.

Candice Miller (R), the only woman in Michigan's House delegation, is likely safe in 2014. Nearly all male incumbents are safe, but Gary Peters' U.S. House seat will be open, and several other Republican seats may be as well.