

MASSACHUSETTS

STATE RANKING **9**
out of 50

GENDER PARITY SCORE 26.8 out of 100 points

A Gender Parity Score of 50 indicates a state has reached gender parity in elected office. Gender parity is defined as the point at which women and men are equally likely to hold elected office in the state.

- 8.3 of 30 points (U.S. Congress)
- 7.5 of 30 points (Statewide Executive Offices)
- 8.5 of 30 points (State Legislature)
- 2.5 of 10 points (Cities and Counties)

26.8 of 100 points (Gender Parity being 50)

Women in Congress

In its history, Massachusetts has elected six women to Congress. Three of those six women serve today.

Number of U.S. Congress seats held by women		
	114th Congress	State History
Senate	1 of 2	1
House of Representatives	2 of 9	5

Women Statewide Executives

Maura Healey became the Democratic Attorney General of Massachusetts in 2014, becoming the first LGBT woman elected to that office in the U.S.

Number of statewide executive offices held by women		
	2015	State History
Governor	0	1
Statewide executive offices	4 of 6	9

Massachusetts has elected at least one woman to every office in the statewide executive except secretary of state (called “secretary of the commonwealth”). Outgoing attorney general Martha Coakley narrowly lost her gubernatorial bid in 2014.

Women State Legislators

The percentage of women in the state legislature has not significantly changed in the last 20 years, mirroring the slow pace of advancement for women’s representation nationally.

Number of state legislative seats held by women		
	2015	1993
Senate	12 of 40 (30%)	9 of 40 (23%)
House	38 of 160 (24%)	37 of 160 (23%)
Total	25%	23%

Cities and Counties

Nine (17.0%) of Massachusetts’ 53 cities with populations over 30,000 have female mayors. Bristol and Plymouth counties both had a female commission chair in 2014.

Analysis

In 1993, Massachusetts ranked 30th in the nation, with a Gender Parity Score of 8.6.

Did you know?

Boston has never elected a female mayor. By contrast, in nearby Cambridge, two of the last four people to occupy the Mayor’s Office were female. It is no accident that Cambridge uses a fair representation voting system — in which voters rank candidates and candidates seek broad support — rather than the plurality systems used in most other cities, which tend to encourage polarized and negative campaigning.

State Legislature’s Gender Parity Ranking: 21st

Method of election: Single-winner districts