

January 10, 2017

Women in Statewide Elected Executive Office

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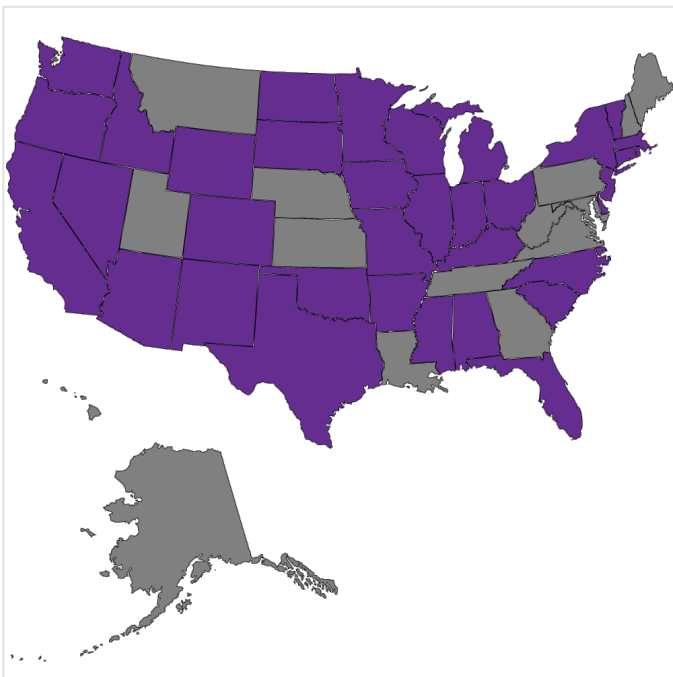
In 2017, 75 (32D, 42R, 1NP) women serve in statewide elected executive offices, comprising 24% of the 312 positions elected nationwide. This is the same as the total number of women who served in statewide elected executive office at the end of 2016. The current proportion of women in statewide elected executive office is below the previous high of 28.5%, set in 2000. Women currently serve in statewide elected executive offices in 36 states.

Women Governors, 2017
Kate Brown (D-OR)
Nikki Haley (R-SC)
Mary Fallin (R-OK)
Susana Martinez (R-NM)
Gina Raimondo (D-RI)

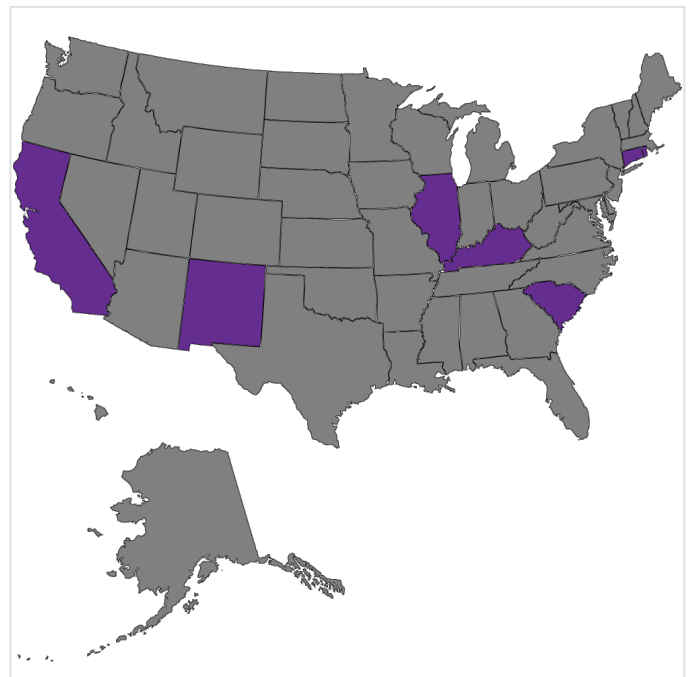
Five (2D, 3R) women serve as governors. Oregon Governor Kate Brown (D) was elected for the first time in 2016 after being appointed governor to fill a vacancy in 2015. She is the first openly LGBT woman to serve as a governor in the United States.

As of this week, there are two likely changes forthcoming in the number of women in statewide elected executive office, both at the gubernatorial level. South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley (R-SC) is likely to be appointed UN ambassador, to be replaced by Lieutenant Governor Henry McMaster. Another Republican woman, Iowa's Lieutenant Governor Kim Reynolds, will replace Governor Terry Branstad, should he be confirmed as ambassador to China. With these changes, the number of women governors will stay the same and the total number of women in statewide elected executive office will drop by one to 74 (23.7%).

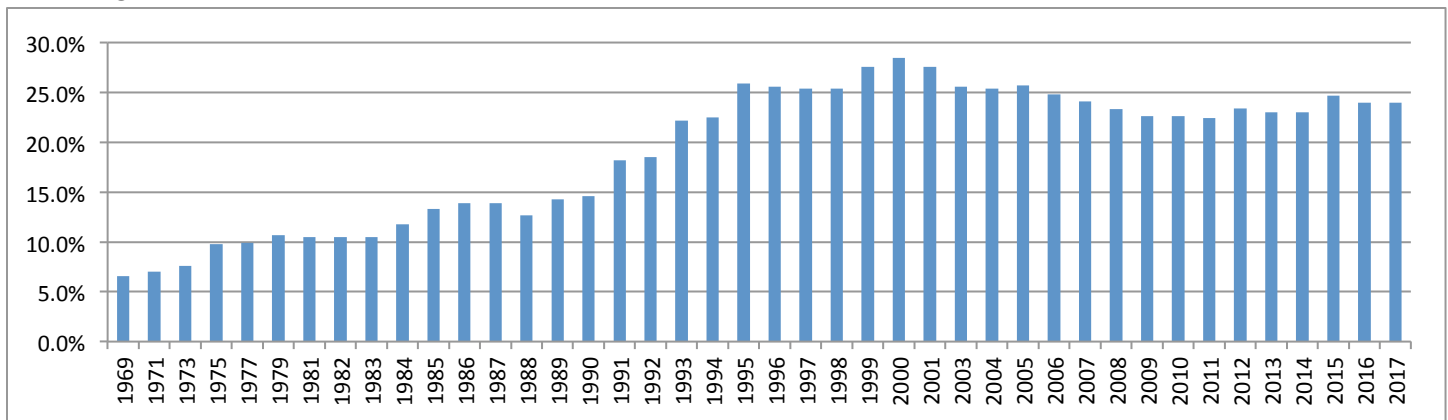
States with Women in Statewide Elected Executive Office, 2017



States with Women of Color in Statewide Elected Executive Office, 2017



Percentage of Women in Statewide Elected Executive Office, 1971-2017



Source: Center for American Women and Politics, Rutgers University

Note: Data reflects the percentage of women in statewide elected executive office at the end of each year.

Women in Statewide Elected Executive Office 2017, by office	
Attorney General	7
Commissioner of Agriculture	1
Commissioner of Insurance	1
Commissioner of Labor	1
Commissioner of Lands	1
Comptroller	2
Corporation Commissioner	1
Governor	5
Lieutenant Governor	14
Public Service Commissioner	2
Public Utility Commissioner	1
Railroad Commissioner	1
Secretary of State	13
State Auditor	9
State Treasurer	8
Superintendent of Public Instruction	8

Source: Center for American Women and Politics, Rutgers University

New Women Elected to Statewide Executive Offices

Eight (5D, 3R) new women were elected to statewide elected executive office in six states in 2016. Five of those women competed in general election contests against other women nominees. In Washington, Pat McCarthy (D) is the first woman to serve as state auditor. Hillary Franz (D) is now the second woman to serve as that state's commissioner of lands. Bethany Hall-Long (D) is the second woman to serve as Delaware's lieutenant governor, joining 13 other women lieutenant governors nationwide. That number includes Suzanne Crouch (R), who this year began her first term as Indiana's lieutenant governor, the fourth woman to hold that position. Indiana also elected Jennifer McCormick (R) for the first time in 2016; she now serves as the state's superintendent of public instruction.

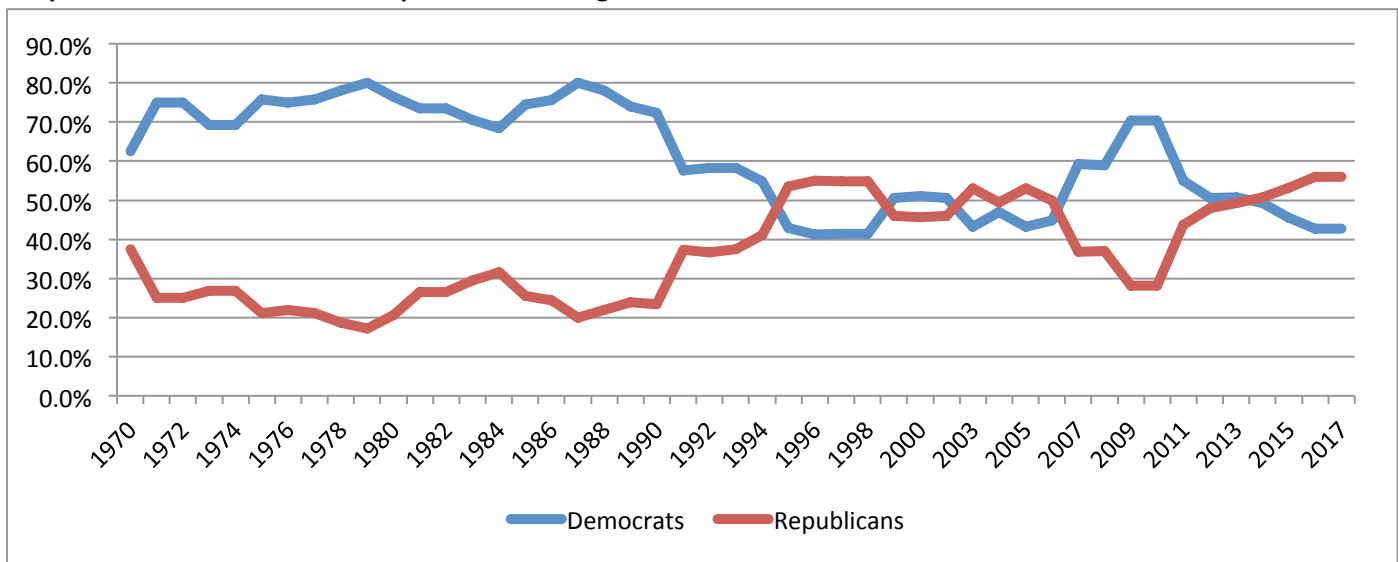
The first woman ever to serve in statewide elected executive office in Illinois was Dawn Clark Netsch (D), who was elected as state comptroller in 1990. This year, Susanna Mendoza (D) serves as Illinois' fifth female state comptroller, defeating an incumbent woman, Leslie Geissler Munger (R), in the fall election.

An extraordinary twenty women have served as New Mexico's secretary of state, with the first woman taking the office in 1923. This year, Maggie Toulouse Oliver (D) becomes the twenty-first woman to serve in that position. Elsie Arntzen (R) will be the tenth woman superintendent of public instruction in Montana, with the first Montana woman taking that office in one hundred years ago.

Partisan Differences in Women's Representation in Statewide Elected Executive Offices

In contrast to Congress and state legislatures, Republican women outnumber Democratic women in statewide elected executive offices. This year, 56% of women in statewide elected executive office are Republicans and 42.7% are Democrats; North Dakota's superintendent of public instruction, Kirsten Baesler, serves in a non-partisan position. While the women elected to statewide executive office were more likely to be Democrats for nearly two decades between 1970 and 1990, the partisan balance of women in these positions has alternated in recent years.

Proportion of Democrats and Republicans Among All Women in Statewide Elected Executive Office, 1970-2017



Source: Center for American Women and Politics, Rutgers University

Women of Color in Statewide Elected Executive Office

Of the 75 women in statewide elected executive office, eight (4D, 4R) are women of color. They include two women governors – Nikki Haley (R-SC) and Susana Martinez (R-NM) – who were elected in 2010 as the first women of color to serve as governors in the U.S. Two women of color, both Republicans, serve as lieutenant governors this year as well; Evelyn Sanguinetti (R-IL) and Jenean Hampton (R-KY).

Denise Nappier (D-CT) is now serving her 18th year as Connecticut’s state treasurer, one of just two African American women in statewide elected executive office nationwide. Nellie Gorbea (D-RI), the first Latina elected to statewide office in New England, became secretary of state in neighboring Rhode Island in 2015. Until this year, she was the only Latina Democrat serving in statewide elected executive office nationwide. Now, she is joined by Illinois Comptroller Susanna Mendoza (D).

If Governor Haley is confirmed United Nations ambassador under President-elect Donald Trump, California comptroller Betty Yee (D) will be the only Asian-American woman serving in statewide elected executive office this year.

Women of Color in Statewide Elected Executive Office, 2017	
Asian-American Women	
Governor	Nikki Haley (R-SC)
Comptroller	Betty Yee (D-CA)
Black Women	
Lieutenant Governor	Jenean Hampton (R-KY)
State Treasurer	Denise Nappier (D-CT)
Latinas	
Secretary of State	Nellie Gorbea (D-RI)
Governor	Susana Martinez (R-NM)
Comptroller	Susanna Mendoza (D-IL)
Lieutenant Governor	Evelyn Sanguinetti (R-IL)

For More Information

Find more information about the women in statewide elected executive office and to keep track of the latest numbers of women in elective office at all levels at <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu>. There you can also find historical data on women candidates and officeholders.

Follow CAWP on Facebook ([facebook.com/womenandpolitics](https://www.facebook.com/womenandpolitics)) and Twitter ([@CAWP_RU](https://twitter.com/CAWP_RU)) for the latest news and data on women’s political representation.