



# CAWP

## *Election Watch*

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**Real-time election results for women candidates will be posted  
on election night at [www.cawp.rutgers.edu](http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu)**

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### **Election 2006: Many New Women Expected in U.S. House**

The U.S. House of Representatives could welcome a significant number of women newcomers in the wake of the 2006 elections, according to the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP). At the same time, the U.S. Senate may post a new record number of women.

“We could see as many as 9-15 new women in the House,” noted CAWP director Debbie Walsh. “Women are running in some of the most hotly contested races across the country,” she added.

Walsh observed that 2006 may prove a banner year for women because polls show an unusually low approval rate for Congress overall, suggesting that prospects for change are strong. “When people think the system is broken, it’s good news for those who don’t look like the congressional candidate from central casting – and that includes women.”

With primaries all but completed, women have won a record number of nominations for Senate seats, one more than the previous record. The numbers of women who are general election candidates for House seats and governors of states may match, but will not surpass, earlier records.

#### **U.S. House of Representatives**

One hundred thirty nine women are general election candidates for the House, with two primaries involving women still to be decided in Louisiana.<sup>1</sup> Three incumbent Democratic women and a Republican challenger are candidates for delegate to Congress from American Samoa, the District of Columbia, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The record for women House candidates was set in 2004, when 141 won their primaries.

The House candidates include 97 Democrats and 42 Republicans. Among them are 65 incumbents seeking re-election (42D, 23R), as well as 18 candidates running in 17 districts for open seats (12D, 6R) and 56 challengers facing incumbents (43D, 13R). (The four Louisiana candidates, all Democrats, are all challengers.)

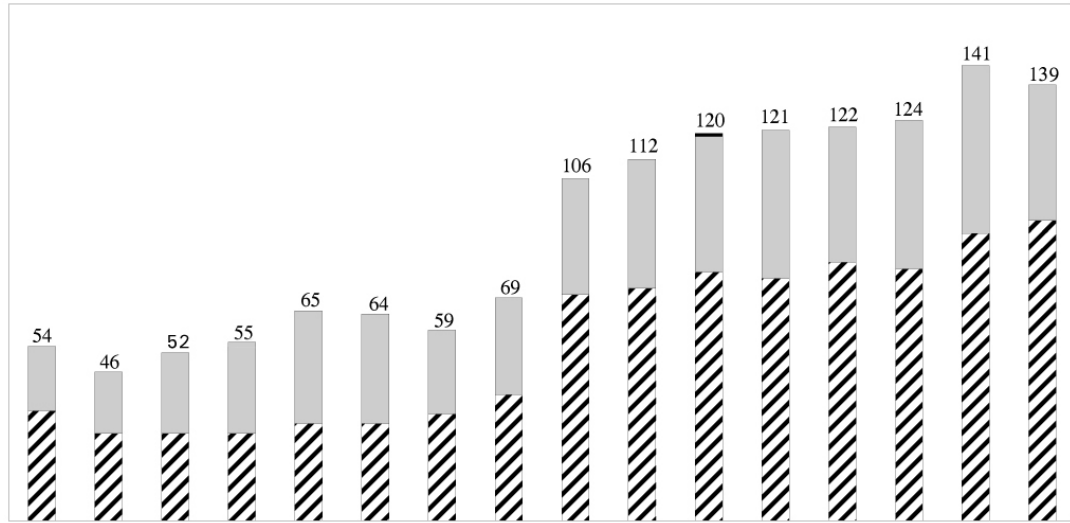
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<sup>1</sup> In Louisiana, primaries will be held on November 7; any candidate who wins more than 50% of the vote is elected, and in races where no candidate wins 50%, a December runoff between the top two vote-getters determines the winner.

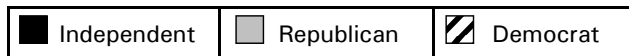
In nine districts, women oppose one another for House seats. Eight of these races feature incumbents facing female challengers, while one is for an open seat.

There are currently 67 women in the House (43D, 24R), along with the three women delegates from the District of Columbia, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

**WOMEN CANDIDATES FOR U.S. HOUSE SEATS: 1976-2006**  
**Number of Candidates by Major Party**



	'76	'78	'80	'82	'84	'86	'88	'90	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'06
Open seat	6 3D 3R	6 3D 3R	6 4D 2R	12 6D 6R	4 2D 2R	7 4D 3R	4 4D	8 7D 1R	39 26D 13R	16 10D 6R	14 9D 4R 1I	17 12D 5R	16 11D 5R	18 10D 8R	20 11D 9R	18 12D 6R
Challenger	32 20D 12R	25 13D 12R	31 13D 18R	26 12D 14R	41 17D 24R	38 16D 22R	32 17D 15R	37 17D 20R	41 27D 14R	52 28D 24R	65 41D 24R	54 29D 25R	54 32D 22R	52 31D 21R	64 41D 23R	56 43D 13R
Incumbent	16 11D 5R	15 11D 4R	15 10D 5R	17 9D 8R	20 11D 9R	19 10D 9R	23 12D 11R	24 15D 9R	26 17D 9R	44 34D 10R	41 27D 14R	50 34D 16R	52 37D 15R	54 37D 17R	57 37D 20R	65 42D 23R
Total	54 34D 20R	46 27D 19R	52 27D 25R	55 27D 28R	65 30D 35R	64 30D 34R	59 33D 26R	69 39D 30R	106 70D 36R	112 72D 40R	120 77D 42R 1I	121 75D 46R	122 80D 42R	124 78D 46R	141 88D 53R	139 97D 42R



**U.S. Senate**

Twelve women (8D, 4R) have won their parties' nominations for the U.S. Senate this year, beating the record set in 1992 and tied in 2002. The candidates include:

- six incumbents seeking re-election (4D, 2R): Maria Cantwell (D-WA); Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY); Dianne Feinstein (D-CA); Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX); Olympia Snowe (R-ME); and Debbie Stabenow (D-MI).
- one woman seeking an open seat (1D): Amy Klobuchar (D-MN).

- five challengers (3D, 2R): Jean Hay Bright (D-ME); Katherine Harris (R-FL); Claire McCaskill (D-MO); and Barbara Ann Radnofsky (D-TX); Cynthia Thielen (R-HI).

If all incumbents and at least one more woman win their races, a record 15 women will serve in the Senate. Fourteen women currently serve there.

Both the Maine and Texas races feature women incumbents facing women challengers. The first-ever woman-versus-woman senate race also took place in Maine, in 1948.

There are Senate races in 33 states this year.

### **Governor**

Ten women have won major-party nominations in the 37 states with gubernatorial elections in 2006, matching the record number of general election candidates set in 1994 and repeated in 2002. The candidates include:

- five incumbents: Jennifer Granholm (D-MI); Linda Lingle (R-HI); Janet Napolitano (D-AZ); M. Jodi Rell (R-CT); and Kathleen Sebelius (D-KS).
- three women seeking open seats: Kerry Healey (R-MA); Sarah Palin (R-AK); Dina Titus (D-NV).
- two challengers: Lucy Baxley (D-AL); Judy Baar Topinka (R-IL).

There are currently eight women governors.

### **For more information**

The specifics for this year's elections, presented in the Election Watch section of CAWP's award-winning website, include **summary statistics**, **comparisons with record-setting years**, and **state-by-state lists of women candidates for federal and statewide offices**, with links to candidate websites when available. On Election Night, CAWP staff will gather and post election results for federal and statewide races featuring women as they become available.

### **About CAWP**

The Center for American Women and Politics, a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, is a university-based research, education and public service center. Its mission is to promote greater knowledge and understanding about women's changing relationship to politics and government and to enhance women's influence and leadership in public life. CAWP is a leading authority in its field and a respected bridge between the academic and political worlds.

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