

WOMEN IN THE U.S. SENATE 1922 - 2011

Seventeen women (12D, 5R) serve in the United States Senate in the 112th Congress. Five incumbents who ran in 2010 won re-election, **Barbara Boxer** (D-CA), **Kirsten E. Gillibran** (D-NY), **Barbara Mikulski** (D-MD), **Lisa Murkowski** (R-AK)*, and **Patty Murray** (D-WA); and one, **Blanche Lincoln** (D-AR), lost her election. In addition, one new woman was elected, **Kelly Ayotte** (R-NH).

To date, a total of 39 women have served in the Senate, including 25 Democrats and 19 Republicans.

Two states (LA, ME) have sent three women to the Senate; twelve states (AL, AR, CA, KS, MN, MO, NC, NE, NH, NY, SD, WA) have been represented twice by women in the Senate; eleven other states (AK, FL, GA, IL, MD, MI, NC, ND, NH, OR, TX) have sent one woman to the Senate each. California was the first state to send two women (Boxer (D) and Feinstein (D)) to the Senate simultaneously; since that time, four other states have been represented by two women simultaneously (KS, ME, NH, WA). Currently, four states (CA, ME, NH, WA) are represented by two women.

The first woman to serve in the Senate was **Rebecca Latimer Felton** (D-GA); appointed in 1922, she served for one day. The first woman elected to the Senate was **Hattie Wyatt Caraway** (D-AR). She was appointed to fill the vacancy caused by the death of her husband, and was subsequently elected to complete his term; Caraway went on to be elected for two more terms. **Margaret Chase Smith** (R-ME) was the first woman elected to the Senate without having first been appointed to serve. Smith had first come to Congress when she was elected to fill her deceased husband's House seat; she then went on to be elected to the Senate in her own right. **Kassebaum** was the first woman to have been elected to the Senate without having previously filled an unexpired Congressional term; **Mikulski** is the first Democratic woman to do so. **Smith** was the first woman to serve in both houses of Congress; **Boxer**, **Cantwell**, **Gillibrand**, **Lincoln**, **Mikulski**, **Snowe**, and **Stabenow** did so subsequently. **Carol Moseley Braun** (D-IL), an African American, was the first woman of color to serve in the Senate.

The first woman ever to chair a major Senate committee was **Kassebaum**, who chaired the Senate's Labor and Human Resources Committee in the 104th Congress. **Caraway** chaired the Senate Committee on Enrolled Bills during the 73rd-78th Congresses. In the 111th Congress, **Boxer** chairs the Environment and Public Works Committee, **Feinstein** chairs the Select Committee on Intelligence, and **Landrieu** chairs the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee.

How Women First Entered the Senate

First entered through **Regular Elections** (20)

- 2011 - Kelly Ayotte (open seat)
- 2009 - Hagan (challenger); Shaheen (challenger)
- 2007 - Klobuchar (open seat); McCaskill (challenger)
- 2003 - Dole (open seat)
- 2001- Clinton (open seat); Cantwell (challenger); Stabenow (challenger)
- 1999 - Lincoln (open seat)
- 1997 - Collins (open seat); Landrieu (open seat)
- 1995 - Snowe (open seat)
- 1993 - Boxer (open seat); Moseley Braun (defeated incumbent in primary); Murray (open seat)
- 1987 - Mikulski (open seat)
- 1981 - Hawkins (open seat)
- 1978 - Kassebaum (open seat)
- 1949 - Smith (open seat)

First entered through succession to unexpired terms:

Appointments (14)

- 2009 - Gillibrand
- 2002 - Murkowski
- 2001 - Carnahan
- 1996 - Frahm
- 1992 - Burdick
- 1978 - Allen; Humphrey
- 1972 - Edwards

Special Elections (5)

- 1993 - Hutchison
- 1992 - Feinstein
- 1960 - Neuberger
- 1954 - Abel
- 1938 - Pyle

* Lisa Murkowski lost her primary but ran as a write-in candidate in the general election.

WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES SENATE
(listed in order of date first entered)

<u>Women Senators</u>	<u>Routes to Office</u>	<u>Dates Served</u>
Rebecca Latimer Felton (D-GA)	Educator, writer, lecturer, and reformer. Appointed to fill vacancy caused by death. Resigned when successor was elected.	11/21/22–11/22/22
Hattie Wyatt Caraway (D-AR)	Appointed to fill vacancy caused by death of her husband; later elected to complete his term and subsequently to two full terms before losing bid for re-election. Chairwoman, committee on Enrolled Bills (73rd–78th Congresses).	12/8/31–1/2/45
Rose McConnell Long (D-LA)	Appointed and subsequently elected to fill vacancy caused by death of husband.	2/10/36–1/2/37
Dixie Bibb Graves (D-AL)	Civic leader and activist. Appointed by husband (who was governor) to fill vacancy caused by resignation. Resigned when a successor was appointed.	8/20/37–1/10/38
Gladys Pyle (R-SD)	State legislator and secretary of state; ran for governor in 1930. Elected to fill vacancy caused by death. Never sworn in because Congress was not in session.	11/9/38–1/3/39
Vera Cahalan Bushfield (R-SD)	Appointed to fill vacancy caused by death of her husband, but did not take seat because Congress was not in session; resigned when successor was elected.	10/6/48–12/27/48
Margaret Chase Smith (R-ME)	Businesswoman and congressional aide. Elected to House of Representatives to fill vacancy caused by death of husband; served 4 full House terms, then elected to 4 full terms in Senate; lost bid for re-election.	1/3/49–1/3/73
Eva Kelly Bowring (R-NE)	Rancher and party activist. Appointed to fill vacancy caused by death of Dwight Griswold; served until Hazel Hempel Abel was elected to complete term.	4/26/54–11/7/54
Hazel Hempel Abel (R-NE)	Educator, businesswoman, and party activist. Elected to fill vacancy caused by death of Dwight Griswold; resigned when successor was elected.	11/8/54–12/31/54
Maurine Brown Neuberger (D-OR)	Educator, state legislator, writer, and lecturer. Elected to fill vacancy caused by death of husband; simultaneously elected for ensuing full term.	11/8/60–1/3/67
Elaine Schwartzburg Edwards (D-LA)	Appointed by husband (who was governor) to fill vacancy caused by death; resigned when successor was appointed.	8/7/72–11/13/72
Muriel Buck Humphrey (D-MN)	Appointed to fill vacancy caused by death of her husband; resigned when successor was elected.	2/6/78–11/7/78
Maryon Pittman Allen (D-AL)	Journalist, educator, writer, and lecturer. Appointed to fill vacancy caused by death of her husband; lost bid for re-nomination and resigned when her successor was elected.	6/12/78–11/7/78
Nancy Landon Kassebaum (R-KS)	Maize School Board member, congressional aide, and radio station executive. Won general election, then appointed to fill vacancy caused by resignation of predecessor; won two sub-sequent terms in 1984 and 1990. Chaired Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources in 104th Congress. Retired.	12/23/78–1/7/97
Paula Hawkins (R-FL)	Businesswoman and public service commissioner. Won general election, then appointed to fill vacancy caused by resignation of predecessor; lost bid for re-election.	1/1/81–1/3/87
Barbara Ann Mikulski (D-MD)	U.S. representative; social worker; Baltimore city council member. Won general election after serving five terms in U.S. House of Representatives.	1/3/87–present
Jocelyn Birch Burdick (D-ND)	Civic activist. Appointed to fill vacancy caused by death of her husband. Resigned when successor was chosen in special election.	9/16/92–12/14/92
Dianne Feinstein (D-CA)	San Francisco mayor and San Francisco Board of Supervisors member and president. Ran unsuccessfully for governor in 1990. Won special election to fill vacancy caused by resignation; seat had been filled temporarily by appointee. Won full term in 1994.	11/10/92–present
Barbara Boxer (D-CA)	U.S. representative, Marin County Board of Supervisors member and president, stock-broker, and journalist. Won open seat in general election after serving five terms in U.S. House of Representatives.	1/5/93–present
Carol Moseley Braun (D-IL)	Attorney, Cook County Recorder of Deeds, and state representative. Defeated incumbent in primary and went on to win open seat in general election.	1/5/93–1/6/99

Women in the United States Senate (continued)
(listed in order by date first entered)

<u>Women Senators</u>	<u>Routes to Office</u>	<u>Dates Served</u>
Patty Murray (D-WA)	State senator, citizen lobbyist. Won open seat in general election.	1/5/93–present
Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX)	State treasurer, businesswoman, state representative, TV newscaster, attorney. Won special election to fill vacancy caused by resignation; seat had been filled temporarily by appointee. Won full term in 1994.	6/14/93–present
Olympia Snowe (R-ME)	U.S. representative, state senator and state representative, member of Auburn Board of Voter Registration. Won open seat in general election after serving eight terms in U.S. House.	1/4/95–present
Sheila Frahm (R-KS)	Lieutenant governor and secretary of administration, state senator and senate majority leader, State Board of Education member and vice chair, Colby School Board member, farmer. Appointed to fill vacancy caused by resignation of predecessor, lost primary bid.	6/11/96–11/8/96
Susan Collins (R-ME)	Businesswoman, regional Small Business Administration Administrator, state cabinet member. Won open seat in general election.	1/7/97–present
Mary Landrieu (D-LA)	State treasurer, state representative, unsuccessful candidate for governor in 1995. Won open seat in general election.	1/7/97–present
Blanche Lincoln (D-AR)	U.S. representative; congressional staff member; legislative affairs specialist. Won open seat in general election.	1/6/99 -1/4/11
Maria Cantwell (D-WA)	U.S. representative; state representative; technology executive. Defeated incumbent by narrow margin to make Washington 4th state to send two women to the U.S. Senate simultaneously.	1/3/01–present
Jean Carnahan (D-MO)	Children’s advocate; author. Appointed to a two-year term to fill her husband’s seat after he was elected posthumously.	1/3/01–11/23/02
Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY)	Only First Lady elected to public office; first woman from New York elected to the U.S. Senate; attorney; author; children’s advocate. Won open seat in general election.	1/3/01–1/16/09
Debbie Stabenow (D-MI)	U.S. representative; state senator; state representative; first woman chair of Ingham County Board of Commissioners; social worker. Defeated incumbent to win general election in 2000.	1/3/01–present
Lisa Murkowski (R-AK)	State house majority leader; state representative; state Republican committeewoman; community activist; attorney. Appointed by her father to fill vacancy created when he resigned to become governor.	12/20/02–present
Elizabeth Dole (R-NC)	Presidential candidate; presidential cabinet member and staff member; federal trade commissioner; president of the American Red Cross; national director of education and information for Hospice. Won open seat in general election.	1/7/03–1/6/09
Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)	Hennepin County attorney; president of the Minnesota County Attorneys Association; prosecutor; attorney.	1/4/07–present
Claire McCaskill (D-MO)	State auditor; county prosecutor; state representative; law clerk, state Court of Appeals.	1/4/07–present
Kay Hagan (D-NC)	State senator; attorney; community activist; vice president of North Carolina’s largest bank.	1/6/09-present
Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH)	Governor; state senator; director of Harvard University’s Institute of Politics; high school teacher.	1/6/09-present
Kirsten E. Gillibrand (D-NY)	U.S. representative; special counsel to the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; law clerk; attorney. Appointed to fill a vacancy.	1/27/09-present
Kelly Ayotte (R-NH)	New Hampshire state attorney general; deputy attorney general; attorney. Won open seat in general election.	1/4/11-present