

November 6, 2019
For Immediate Release

Contact: Daniel De Simone
ddesimone@eagleton.rutgers.edu
848-932-8693

Election 2019: Mississippi Elects its First Woman Attorney General;

With House Control Flipped, Virginia Will Likely Have its First Woman Speaker

Elections were held yesterday for statewide executive and state legislative offices in Kentucky, Mississippi, New Jersey, and Virginia. Among last night's results: Mississippi elected its first woman attorney general, and Virginia will likely have its first woman Speaker of the House of Delegates, elected its first Muslim woman to the state senate, and is poised to move forward with the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. The [Center for American Women and Politics](#), a unit of the [Eagleton Institute of Politics](#) at Rutgers University–New Brunswick, provides results for women candidates in the 2019 elections.

KENTUCKY RESULTS

Elections were held for Kentucky's statewide executive offices, and women candidates competed in the general election races for lieutenant governor, secretary of state, auditor, and treasurer. Of these, Republican incumbent State Treasurer Allison Ball has won her election, and the state's joint-ticket race for governor and lieutenant governor remains too close to call, though Democratic candidates for governor and lieutenant governor Andy Beshear and Jacqueline Coleman have declared victory.

MISSISSIPPI RESULTS

The state elected its first woman attorney general, current State Treasurer Lynn Fitch, following the woman vs. woman contest between Fitch, a Republican, and Democrat Jennifer Riley-Collins. A woman also competed in the race for state treasurer but was not successful.

In Mississippi's state legislative elections, 27 (11D, 15R, 1I) women were elected to the legislature, with a record 12 (4D, 8R) women elected to the Mississippi Senate, breaking the previous record of 9 first set in 2016, and 15 (7D, 7R, 1I) women elected to the Mississippi House of Representatives. Mississippi fell short of its record for women serving in the House, (23, set in 2013) and its overall legislature (31, set in 2013). There are 4 (3D, 1R) candidates in races that remain too close to call.

MS Senate	Nominees			Winners		
	D	R	Total	D	R	Total
Incumbent	3	5	8	3	5	8
Challenger	2	0	2	0	0	0
Open Seat	1	3	4	1	3	4
Total	6	8	14	4	8	12

MS House	Nominees			Winners		
	D	R	Total	D	R	Total
Incumbent	5	5	11*	5	4	10*
Challenger	10	0	9	0	0	0
Open Seat	6	3	10	2	3	5
Total	21	8	30*	7	7	15*

*Includes 1 Independent Incumbent who ran and won re-election.

**There are 4 (3D, 1R) candidates in races that are too close to call

Mississippi set a record this year for the number of women nominated for seats in its legislature with 44 women nominated, beating the previous record of 40, set in 2011. It also beat records for women nominated for seats in each of its legislative chambers: 14 women were nominated for the Senate, beating the previous record of 13, and 30 women were nominated for the House, beating the previous record of 27.

NEW JERSEY RESULTS

The Garden State held elections for its lower house, the New Jersey General Assembly, yesterday. As of Wednesday, November 6th, 22 (17D, 5R) women have been elected to the Assembly, and there are 10 (7D, 3R) candidates in races that remain too close to call. There are a higher number of undecided races in this election than is typical for New Jersey, due to the large number of mail-in and provisional ballots stemming from [recently-passed legislation](#) to expand voting options.

The current record for women in the General Assembly is 28, set in 2009, and the record for the overall legislature is 37, first set in 2014. Whether that record is broken, matched, or stands remains to be determined. New Jersey did break the record this year for the number of women nominated for state Assembly seats with 60, besting the previous record of 54, set in 2013.

VIRGINIA RESULTS

Elections for both houses of the Virginia General Assembly were held yesterday, and 39 (30D, 9R) women were elected to the state's legislature, with 11 (7D, 4R) women elected to the Senate of Virginia and 28 (23D, 5R) women elected to the Virginia House of Delegates. Currently, 3 (2D, 1R) candidates are in races that remain too close to call. Virginia set records for the number of women in its overall legislature (previous record: 38, set in 2018), as well as the number of women in its Senate (previous record: 10, first set in 2017), and it matched the record for women in the House of Delegates (first set in

2018). In the state’s previous state legislative elections for the House of Delegates in 2017, women running as challengers to incumbents saw a remarkable 30% win rate. In the 2019 elections, every single woman elected as a challenger in 2017 retained her seat. Challengers in this cycle, however, seem to have returned to the status quo for challenger win rates, with only 1 woman of the 28 women who ran as challengers for the House of Delegates winning their election thus far and 2 of these races still too close to call.

VA Senate	Nominees			Winners		
	D	R	Total	D	R	Total
Incumbent	6	3	9	6	3	9
Challenger	10	2	12	1	0	1
Open Seat	1	1	2	0	1	1
Total	17	6	23	7	4	11

VA Delegates	Nominees			Winners		
	D	R	Total	D	R	Total
Incumbent	20	4	24	20	3	23
Challenger	22	6	28	1	0	1
Open Seat	6	4	10	2	2	4
Total	48	14	62	23	5	28

*There are 3 (2D, 1R) candidates in races that are too close to call.

In addition, with the control of the House of Delegates moving from Republican to Democratic, current Minority Leader Eileen Filler-Corn is likely to become the new Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates, making her the first woman to hold that position. Currently, 7 (6D, 1R) women serve as House speakers in statehouses around the country. Virginia also remains among the states that have yet to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment; with the partisan shift in the chamber, the state could ratify the ERA, which would then cross the three-fourths threshold for adoption. The deadline for ratification would then need to be extended by the U.S. Congress to ensure final passage.

“Over the last two cycles, Democratic women candidates, by winning and retaining seats, have contributed to the shift in the partisan control of the Virginia General Assembly, echoing the role that women candidates played in flipping the US House during the 2018 congressional election cycle. As a result, Virginia will likely see its first woman House speaker and advance the ERA,” said CAWP Director Debbie Walsh. “As we have watched more women running, winning, and having an impact, we are reminded that much of the success for women candidates has been on the Democratic side. We remain hopeful that Republican women will see the same levels of support that have driven recent gains for Democratic women.”

Virginia also set records for women nominees for state legislative races this year. The overall record for women nominees from the last election that included both chambers,

in 2015, was 45. This year, 85 women were nominated for state legislative seats in Virginia, with 23 women nominated in races for the Senate, beating the previous record of 14, first set in 2007, and 62 women nominated in races for the House, beating the previous record of 52, set in 2017 (that number, it should be noted, also bested the state's previous overall record).

LOUISIANA

Louisiana holds elections this year for its statewide executive offices and the state legislature, with the run-off election scheduled for November 16th. In the first stage of its jungle-primary style election held on October 12th, 6 (3D, 3R) women have already won state Senate races and 1 (1D) woman has advanced to a run-off contest, and, in the state House, 13 (4D, 9R) women have already won their elections and a further 14 (11D, 3R) women advanced to run-off elections. For statewide elected executive offices, Democrat Gwen Collins-Greenup advanced to a run-off for secretary of state. If she wins, Collins-Greenup will be the first woman secretary of state in Louisiana since 1930 as well as the first woman of color elected statewide in Louisiana history.

CAWP will continue to provide updated results for elections held this week, as well as the run-off in Louisiana.

About CAWP

The Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers-New Brunswick, is nationally recognized as the leading source of scholarly research and current data about American women's political participation. Its mission is to promote greater knowledge and understanding about women's participation in politics and government and to enhance women's influence and leadership in public life. CAWP's education and outreach programs translate research findings into action, addressing women's under-representation in political leadership with effective, imaginative programs serving a variety of audiences. As the world has watched Americans considering female candidates for the nation's highest offices, CAWP's nearly five decades of analyzing and interpreting women's participation in American politics have provided a foundation and context for the discussion.