

January 8, 2019  
For Immediate Release

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

## **Results: Record Number of Women Elected to State Legislatures Nationwide**

***NOTE: Following a handful of party defections, party breakdowns have changed following the election. The full number of women serving in state legislatures will now be 2,112 (1,433D, 658R, 13NP, 4I, 4P), the number in state senates will be 503 (324D, 165R, 13NP) and in state houses will be 1,609 (1,108D, 493R, 4I, 4P).***

***UPDATED 4:00pm ET on 1.8.19.***

A record number of women have been elected to state legislatures nationwide, according to data from the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University.

In 2019, 2,112 (1,431D, 660R, 13NP, 4I, 4P) women will serve in state legislative offices around the country. This includes 1,834 (1,271D, 551R, 4NP, 4I, 4P) women who won on November 6th, as well as seats held by women legislators who were not up for re-election this year. The previous record for women serving simultaneously in state legislatures was 1,879 (1,144D, 708R, 14NP, 1WFP, 7I, 5PRG), set in 2018.

In 2019, the proportion of seats in state legislatures held by women will be 28.6%, an increase from the current level of 25.4%. The proportion of women in state legislatures has stubbornly hovered between 23 and 25 percent for more than a decade.

“We are very encouraged by these results. This is the largest increase in women’s representation in state legislatures we’ve seen in some time, after more than a decade of relative stagnation,” said CAWP Director Debbie Walsh. “The only question that remains is whether 2018 was a one-off or a new norm.”

503 (324D, 166R, 13NP) women will serve in upper chambers in 2019, beating the previous record of 450. Meanwhile, 1,609 (1,107D, 494R, 4I, 4P) women will serve in lower houses, beating the previous record of 1,425.

Women in the Democratic Party made sizable gains in state legislatures in the 2018 elections, increasing their overall representation in state legislatures by 287 seats. Democratic women have gained 224 seats in lower chambers and 63 in upper chambers. Republican women, by contrast, will see their representation in state legislatures decline in 2019. The number of state house seats held by GOP women will decline by 38, while their representation in state senates will fall by 7 seats.

For the first time in history, a state legislature has reached parity in women’s representation. Following the 2018 election, and a series of vacancy appointments, women will hold 50.8% of seats in the Nevada legislature next year. Colorado’s legislature, the second highest state for women’s representation behind Nevada, will see women holding 45% of seats in their next session.

Only one state legislative *chamber* has ever reached or surpassed parity, when 13 of 24 seats in the New Hampshire Senate were held by women in 2009-2010. Not anymore. Nevada's State Assembly and Colorado's State House have both surpassed the 50% threshold, with women winning 54.8% of seats in the Nevada Assembly and 50.8% of seats in the Colorado House.

Women will make up more than 40% of state legislators in four states (Colorado, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington). Meanwhile, eleven states will see women's proportion in their legislatures increase by more than 5 percentage points: Nevada (+12.7%), Michigan (+10.8%), Oklahoma (+8.7%), Oregon (+7.8%), Colorado (+7.0%), Alaska (+6.7%), Connecticut (+6.4%), Rhode Island (+6.2%), Iowa (+6.0), Kentucky (+5.8%) and Pennsylvania (+5.5%).

The work of tracking women's successes in state legislatures is just beginning. Stay tuned to CAWP for new information added to this release, our updated [state rankings](#), and a status report for women of color in state legislatures.

---

#### **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 over four decades of analyzing and interpreting women's participation in American politics have provided a foundation and context for the discussion.