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RECORD NUMBER OF WOMEN SEEK NJ STATE LEGISLATURE SEATS; FOUR OTHER STATES WILL ALSO HOLD 2011 STATE ELECTIONS

The 68 women running for the New Jersey legislature constitute a new record, according to the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. Twenty women (12D, 8R) are seeking State Senate seats, while 48 (27D, 21R) are running for the Assembly. (For a complete candidate list, see www.cawp.rutgers.edu.)

Women are candidates for 17 of the state's 40 Senate seats. In Assembly races, where two members are elected from each of the 40 districts, women are running in 33 districts. Details, including candidate numbers for elections since 1995, are included in the table below.

"Even with a record number of women candidates, there's no guarantee of a record number of winners", said CAWP director Debbie Walsh. "Seven incumbent women are leaving the legislature, so we have considerable ground to make up. And not every race is truly competitive, so while some candidates are heavily favored, others face tough battles in November."

The previous record was set in 2007, the last time that both Senate and Assembly seats were at stake, when 61 women ran – 17 for the Senate (11D, 6R) and 44 for the Assembly (29D, 15R).

Women currently hold 34 seats in the New Jersey legislature: 10 (7D, 3R) in the Senate and 24 (15D, 9R) in the Assembly. With 28.3 percent of the state's legislative seats held by women, New Jersey ranks 12th in the nation, tied with California. Nationally, women make up 23.5 percent of all state legislators.

The most women ever to serve in Trenton was 36 (30 percent), a peak achieved in 2009 with 8 senators and 28 assemblywomen.

New Jersey legislative elections take place according to an irregular pattern, with Senators elected in years ending in 1, 3 and 7 while Assembly members run every two years. The earlier records were set in 2007, the most recent year completely comparable to 2011, when there were races for Senate and Assembly but not for Governor.

OTHER STATE ELECTIONS IN 2011

Kentucky

Kentucky holds statewide elective executive races only this year, not state legislative elections. Two women are on the ballot: Alison Lundergan (D), running for an open secretary of state post; and K.C. Crosbie (R), a challenger running for state treasurer.

Louisiana

Statewide and state legislative offices are at stake in Louisiana. Primary elections will be held on Saturday, October 22, with run-offs on Saturday, November 19 in races where no candidate wins more than 50 percent of the votes.

While two Democratic women have filed as challengers in the gubernatorial race -- Tara Hollis and Niki "Bird" Papzoglakis -- neither is considered a top contender. In fact, a prominent Louisiana news source, nola.com, reported that "the [Democratic] party did not field a single major [emphasis added] candidate for statewide office."

In state legislative races, 11 women (6D, 5R) are running for the State Senate and 31 (20D, 11R) for the State House. Details are included in the table below.

Mississippi

Both statewide and state legislative races are on this year's ballot in Mississippi. Four women are candidates for statewide elective executive office. Lynn Fitch (R) and Connie Moran (D) are contenders for the open state treasurer position. Cindy Hyde-Smith (R) is running for the state's agricultural commissioner, an open seat. Addie Green (D) is running for an open public service commissioner seat.

42 Mississippi women are running for the state legislature: 13 (5D, 8R) for the Senate and 29 (18D, 11R) for the House. Details are included in the table below.

Virginia

Virginia is holding only state legislative elections. Twelve women are running for the Senate (7D, 5R) and 23 for the Assembly (16D, 7R). Details are included in the table below.

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.

New Jersey Legislative Candidates 1995-2011

Year	NJ Women Assembly Candidates in General Election				NJ Women Senate Candidates in General Election				Offices Elected in This Year
	Incumbents	Open Seats	Challengers	Total	Incumbents	Open Seats	Challengers	Total	
2011	17 (11D, 6R)	15 (10D, 5R)	16 (6D, 10R)	48 (27D, 21R)	10 (7D, 3R)	1 (1D)	9 (4D, 5R)	20 (12D, 8R)	Senate, Assembly
2009	26 (17D, 9R)	6 (3D, 3R)	9 (3D, 6R)	41 (23D, 18R)	--	--	--	--	Assembly, Governor
2007	17 (13D, 4R)	16 (9D,7R)	11 (7D,4R)	44 (29D, 15R)	6 (5D, 1R)	4 (4D)	7 (2D, 5R)	17 (11D, 6R)	Senate, Assembly
2005	11(9D,2R)	6 (2D, 4R)	16 (7D, 9R)	33 (18D, 15R)	--	--	--	--	Assembly, Governor
2003	13 (8D, 5R)	5 (4D, 1R)	16 (4D, 12R)	34 (16D, 18R)	5(3D,2R)	2 (2R)	5 (4D, 1R)	12 (7D,5R)	Senate, Assembly
2001	12 (8D, 4R)	6 (3D, 3R)	21 (10D, 11R)	39 (21D, 18R)	3(1D,2R)	2 (2D)	7 (3D, 4R)	12 (6D, 6R)	Senate, Assembly, Governor
1999	16 (9D, 7R)	0	14 (7D, 7R)	30 (16D, 14R)	--	--	--	--	Assembly Only
1997	14 (7D, 7R)	1 (1R)	22 (13D, 9R)	37 (20D, 17R)	2 (1D, 1R)	1 (1D)	6 (5D, 1R)	9 (7D,2R)	Senate, Assembly, Governor
1995	14 (6D, 8R)	4 (2D, 2R)	15 (12D, 3R)	33 (20D, 13R)	--	--	--	--	Assembly Only

2011 Women State Legislative Candidates in Louisiana, Mississippi and Virginia						
	Senate			House/Assembly		
	Incumbents	Open Seats	Challengers	Incumbents	Open Seats	Challengers
Louisiana	6 (5D, 1R)	3 (1D, 2R)	2 (2R)	9 (8D, 1R)	14 (8D, 6R)	8 (4D, 4R)
Mississippi	4 (2D, 2R)	5 (1D, 4R)	4 (4R)	19 (14D, 5R)	5 (3D, 2R)	3 (3R)
Virginia	6 (5D, 1R)	3 (2D, 1R)	3 (3R)	18 (12D, 6R)	2 (1D, 1R)	3 (3D)