

WOMEN IN STATE LEGISLATURES 1997

In 1997, **1,604**, or **21.6%** of the 7,424 state legislators in the United States are women. Women currently hold **366**, or **18.4%**, of the 1,984 state senate seats and **1,238**, or **22.8%**, of the 5,440 state house or assembly seats. Since 1969, the number of women serving in state legislatures has increased more than five-fold.

Year	Women Legislators	% of Total Legislators
1969	301	4.0
1971	344	4.5
1973	424	5.6
1975	604	8.0
1977	688	9.1
1979	770	10.3
1981	908	12.1
1983	991	13.3
1985	1,103	14.8
1987	1,170	15.7
1989	1,270	17.0
1991	1,368	18.3
1993	1,524	20.5
1995	1,532	20.6
1996	1,539	20.7
1997	1,604	21.6

The party breakdown for women serving in state legislatures in 1997 is:

	Total Legislators		State Senators		State Reps.	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Democrats	945	58.9	214	58.5	731	59.1
Republicans	642	40.0	138	37.7	504	40.7
Nonpartisans*	13	0.8	13	3.5	---	---
Independents	4	0.3	1	0.3	3	0.2
Total	1,604	100.0	366	100.0	1,238	100.0

The ten states with the highest percentages of women state legislators are:

State	% Women	State	% Women
Washington	39.5	Minnesota	30.8
Arizona	37.8	New Hampshire	30.7
Colorado	35.0	Maryland	29.8
Nevada	33.3	Kansas	29.7
Vermont	33.3	Connecticut	28.9

The ten states with the lowest percentages of women state legislators are:

State	% Women	State	% Women
Alabama	4.3	Mississippi	12.6
Kentucky	9.4	South Carolina	12.9
Oklahoma	10.1	Alaska	13.3
Louisiana	11.8	Tennessee	13.6
Pennsylvania	12.3	West Virginia	14.9

In 1894, the first women state legislators were elected to serve in the United States. Three Republican women were elected to the Colorado House of Representatives: Clara Crossingham; Carrie C. Holly; Frances Klock. The first woman state senator, Democrat Martha Hughes Cannon, was elected to the Utah State Senate in 1896.**

* In Nebraska, where the legislature is unicameral, legislators are elected on a nonpartisan basis.

** Source: Utah Governor's Commission for Women.

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STATE	STATE RANK		SENATE		TOTAL WOMEN/ TOTAL SENATE	HOUSE		TOTAL WOMEN/ TOTAL HOUSE	TOTAL WOMEN/ TOTAL LEGIS.	% WOMEN OVERALL
	D	R	D	R		D	R			
AL	50		2	0	2/35	4	0	4/105	6/140	4.3
AK	43		1	2	3/20	1	4	5/40	8/60	13.3
AZ	2		4	4	8/30	9	17	26/60	34/90	37.8
AR	35		0	1	1/35	20	2	22/100	23/135	17.0
CA	24		6	1	7/40	17	3	20/80	27/120	22.5
CO	3		5	5	10/35	10	15	25/65	35/100	35.0
CT	10		5	4	9/36	32	13	45/151	54/187	28.9
DE*	15		3	4	7/21	2	7	9/41	16/62	25.8
FL	19		2	4	6/40	23	9	32/120	38/160	23.8
GA	36		6	1	7/56	22	10	32/180	39/236	16.5
HI	33		5	0	5/25	5	3	8/51	13/76	17.1
ID	18		2	4	6/35	4	15	19/70	25/105	23.8
IL	14		5	6	11/59	18	17	35/118	46/177	26.0
IN	28		7	7	14/50	6	8	14/100	28/150	18.7
IA	26		5	7	12/50	10	10	20/100	32/150	21.3
KS	9		4	10	14/40	15	20	35/125	49/165	29.7
KY	49		0	2	2/38	7	4	11/100	13/138	9.4
LA	47		2	0	2/39	12	2 (1 ind)	15/105	17/144	11.8
ME*	15		9	3 (1 ind)	13/35	23	11 (1 ind)	35/151	48/186	25.8
MD	8		7	1	8/47	37	11	48/141	56/188	29.8
MA	22		7	0	7/40	29	10	39/160	46/200	23.0
MI	23		2	1	3/38	17	14	31/110	34/148	23.0
MN	6		14	8	22/67	26	14	40/134	62/201	30.8
MS	45		3	0	3/52	15	4	19/122	22/174	12.6
MO	27		0	3	3/34	21	18	39/163	42/197	21.3
MT	21		8	1	9/50	15	11	26/100	35/150	23.3
NE	12		NONPARTISAN		13/49	UNICAMERAL		13/49		26.5
NV	4		3	2	5/21	10	6	16/42	21/63	33.3
NH	7		5	3	8/24	64	57 (1 ind)	122/400	130/424	30.7
NJ	39		1	1	2/40	8	9	17/80	19/120	15.8
NM	11		7	3	10/42	10	10	20/70	30/112	26.8
NY	29		7	1	8/61	23	8	31/150	39/211	18.5
NC	34		4	2	6/50	10	13	23/120	29/170	17.1
ND	38		2	4	6/49	7	11	18/98	24/147	16.3
OH	25		3	5	8/33	7	14	21/99	29/132	22.0
OK	48		4	2	6/48	6	3	9/101	15/149	10.1
OR	17		5	4	9/30	8	6	14/60	23/90	25.6
PA	46		3	3	6/50	12	13	25/203	31/253	12.3
RI	13		8	3	11/50	22	6	28/100	39/150	26.0
SC	44		2	1	3/46	8	11	19/124	22/170	12.9
SD	32		2	3	5/35	5	8	13/70	18/105	17.1
TN	42		3	0	3/33	12	3	15/99	18/132	13.6
TX	30		1	2	3/31	19	11	30/150	33/181	18.2
UT	37		1	0	1/29	6	10	16/75	17/104	16.3
VT	4		10	2	12/30	34	14	48/150	60/180	33.3
VA	40		6	1	7/40	10	4	14/100	21/140	15.0
WA	1		16	7	23/49	20	15	35/98	58/147	39.5
WV	41		2	2	4/34	11	5	16/100	20/134	14.9
WI	20		3	6	9/33	13	9	22/99	31/132	23.5
WY	31		2	2	4/30	6	6	12/60	16/90	17.8
			214	138	366/1,984	731	504	1,238/5,440	1,604/7,424	21.6
			(13 nonpartisans)			(3 independents)				
			(1 independent)							

* States with the exact same percentages are ranked the same (DE & ME, 15; NV & VT, 4); since there is a tie, no state is ranked 16th. States which round out to the same figure (FL & ID; HI, NC & SD; IA & MO; IL & RI; and MA & MI; and ND & UT), but are not exactly the same, are ranked differently.