

Women in State Government: Historical Patterns, Recent Trends and Future Prospects

By Susan J. Carroll

The movement of women into state-level offices has slowed in recent years after several decades of gains, and following the 2012 elections, the numbers of women in both state legislative and executive branch offices increased only slightly. Efforts to actively recruit women for elected and appointed positions will be critical in determining what the future holds for women in state government.

In the history of our nation, women are relative newcomers among state elected and appointed officials. Women first entered state-level offices in the 1920s following passage and ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which granted women suffrage. Significant growth in the numbers of women in office, however, occurred only after the contemporary women's movement emerged during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Since the mid-1970s, as data collected by the Center for American Women and Politics show,¹ women have greatly increased their numbers among elected and appointed officials in state government. Nevertheless, progress has slowed in recent years and nationwide statistics show a leveling off in the numbers of women serving in state-level offices since the turn of the century.

Women increased their numbers among state officeholders only slightly following the 2012 elections. The number of women serving in state legislatures increased slightly, but because the decrease following the 2010 elections was larger than this increase, fewer women now serve in state legislatures nationally than in 2009. Similarly, despite the loss of a gubernatorial seat, the number of women serving in statewide offices increased—but only by one—following the 2012 elections. Nevertheless, the number of female statewide elected officials serving in 2013 is less than the record number of women who held these offices at the turn of the century.

Governors

Since the founding of the United States, only 35 women—20 Democrats and 15 Republicans—have served as state governors (Table A), and only one woman has served as governor of a U.S. territory (Puerto Rico).² Almost half the states—24—have never had a woman chief executive. Arizona is the

only state to have had four women governors, as well as being the only state where a woman succeeded another woman as governor. Three different women have governed New Hampshire, although one of the governors—Vesta Roy—served for only seven days following the death of an incumbent. Connecticut, Kansas, Texas and Washington each have had two women governors.

The first woman governor, Nellie Tayloe Ross of Wyoming, was selected in a special election to succeed her deceased husband in 1925. Fifteen days later a second woman, Miriam “Ma” Ferguson, was inaugurated as governor of Texas, having been elected as a surrogate for her husband, a former governor who had been impeached and consequently was barred constitutionally from running again. Ferguson’s campaign slogan was “Two governors for the price of one.”³ The third woman to serve as a governor, Lurleen Wallace of Alabama, campaigned on the slogan, “Let George do it,” and was similarly elected to replace a husband who was prohibited by term limits from seeking an additional term in office.⁴

The first woman elected in her own right (i.e., without following her husband) into the governorship was Ella Grasso, who presided over Connecticut from 1975 to 1980. Twenty-four of the women governors, including Grasso, who have served since the mid-1970s were elected in their own right. The other eight became governor through constitutional succession; only three of these eight were subsequently elected to full terms.

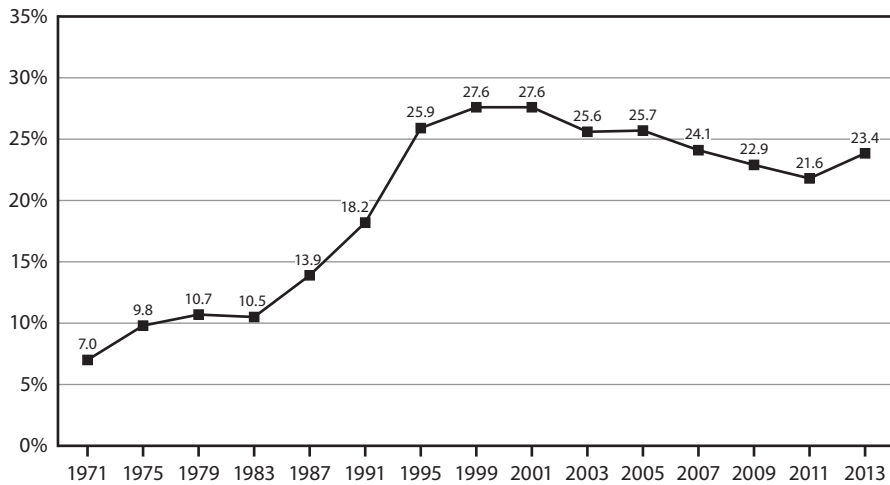
Five women—one Democrat and four Republicans—serve as governors in 2013, falling far short of the record nine women who served simultaneously in 2004 and again in 2007. With two women governors leaving office, one as a result of term limits and one by choice, the number of women governors decreased by one following the 2010

Table A: Women Governors Throughout History

<i>Name (Party-State)</i>	<i>Dates served</i>	<i>Special Circumstances</i>
Nellie Tayloe Ross (D-WY)	1925–1927	Won special election to replace deceased husband.
Miriam “Ma” Ferguson (D-TX)	1925–1927, 1933–1935	Inaugurated 15 days after Ross; elected as surrogate for husband who could not succeed himself.
Lurleen Wallace (D-AL)	1967–1968	Elected as surrogate for husband who could not succeed himself.
Ella Grasso (D-CT)	1975–1980	First woman elected governor in her own right; resigned for health reasons.
Dixy Lee Ray (D-WA)	1977–1981	
Vesta Roy (R-NH)	1982–1983	Elected to state senate and chosen as senate president; served as governor for seven days when incumbent died.
Martha Layne Collins (D-KY)	1984–1987	
Madeleine Kunin (D-VT)	1985–1991	First woman to serve three terms as governor.
Kay Orr (R-NE)	1987–1991	First Republican woman governor and first woman to defeat another woman in a gubernatorial race.
Rose Mofford (D-AZ)	1988–1991	Elected as secretary of state, succeeded governor who was impeached and convicted.
Joan Finney (D-KS)	1991–1995	First woman to defeat an incumbent governor.
Ann Richards (D-TX)	1991–1995	
Barbara Roberts (D-OR)	1991–1995	
Christine Todd Whitman (R-NJ)	1994–2001	Resigned to take presidential appointment as commissioner of the Environmental Protection Agency.
Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH)	1997–2003	
Jane Dee Hull (R-AZ)	1997–2003	Elected as secretary of state, succeeded governor who resigned; later elected to a full term.
Nancy Hollister (R-OH)	1998–1999	Elected lieutenant governor; served as governor for 11 days when predecessor took U.S. Senate seat and successor had not yet been sworn in.
Jane Swift (R-MA)	2001–2003	Elected as lieutenant governor, succeeded governor who resigned for an ambassadorial appointment.
Judy Martz (R-MT)	2001–2005	
Olene Walker (R-UT)	2003–2005	Elected as lieutenant governor, succeeded governor who resigned to take a federal appointment.
Ruth Ann Minner (D-DE)	2001–2009	
Jennifer M. Granholm (D-MI)	2003–2011	
Linda Lingle (R-HI)	2003–2011	
Janet Napolitano (D-AZ)	2003–2009	First woman to succeed another woman as governor. Resigned to become U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security.
Kathleen Sebelius (D-KS)	2003–2009	Father was governor of Ohio. Resigned to become U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services.
Kathleen Blanco (D-LA)	2004–2008	
M. Jodi Rell (R-CT)	2004–2011	Elected as lieutenant governor, succeeded governor who resigned.
Christine Gregoire (D-WA)	2005–2013	
Sarah Palin (R-AK)	2007–2009	Resigned.
Beverly Perdue (D-NC)	2009–2013	
Jan Brewer (R-AZ)	2009–present	Elected as secretary of state, succeeded governor who resigned.
Mary Fallin (R-OK)	2011–present	
Nikki Haley (R-SC)	2011–present	First Asian (Indian) American woman to be elected governor.
Susana Martinez (R-NM)	2011–present	First Latina to be elected governor.
Maggie Hassan (D-NH)	2013–present	

Source: Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University.

Figure A: Proportion of Women Among Statewide Elective Officials



Source: Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University.

elections despite the election of a new governor, Maggie Hassan (D-NH). She joins four other women governors—Jan Brewer (R-AZ), Mary Fallin (R-OK), Nikki Haley (R-SC) and Susana Martinez (R-NM)—whose seats were not up in 2010. Martinez, a Latina, and Haley, an Indian American, are the first two women of color ever to serve as governor of a state.

Other Statewide Elected and Appointed Officials in the Executive Branch

The states vary greatly in their numbers of statewide elected and appointed officials. For example, Maine and New Hampshire have only one statewide elected official, the governor, while North Dakota, at the other extreme, has 12.

The first woman to hold a major statewide office was New Mexico’s Soledad C. Chacon, (D) who was secretary of state from 1923 to 1926;⁵ Delaware, Kentucky, New York, South Dakota and Texas also had women secretaries of state in the 1920s. The first woman treasurer, Grace B. Urbahns (R-IN), also served during this time period, from 1926 to 1932.

Several more years passed before a woman became lieutenant governor. Matilda R. Wilson (R) served briefly as lieutenant governor of Michigan

in 1940 when she was appointed to fill an expiring term. The first woman elected as a lieutenant governor, however, was Consuelo N. Bailey (R-VT) who served from 1955–56. An additional three decades passed before a woman became attorney general of a state; the first was Arlene Violet (R-RI) who served from 1985 to 1987.

As evident from Figure A, the proportion of women among statewide elective officials (including governor) has grown substantially since the early 1970s. From 1971 to 1983, the increases were small and incremental. Then, between 1983 and 2000, the number and proportion of women serving statewide almost tripled, reaching a record of 92 women constituting 28.5 percent of all statewide elected officials in 2000. Since 2000, the numbers and proportions have dropped notably. The number of women serving in statewide elective offices actually increased by one as a result of the 2012 elections, but fewer women—76⁶—hold statewide offices in 2013 than in 1995, when there were 84 women.

In early 2013, women held 23.4 percent of the 320 statewide elective positions.⁷ In addition to the five women governors, 11 women (4D, 7R) serve as lieutenant governors. This is considerably fewer

than the record high number of 19 women who served as lieutenant governors in 1995.

Other women statewide elected officials include:

- 12 secretaries of state, seven Democrats and five Republicans;
- Eight attorneys general, seven Democrats and one Republican;
- Eight state treasurers, six Democrats and two Republicans;
- Six state auditors, four Democrats and two Republicans;
- Six chief education officials, three Democrats and three Republicans;
- Four state comptroller/controllers, one Democrat and three Republicans;
- Four corporation commissioners, all Republicans;
- Three public service commissioners, one Democrat and two Republicans;
- Three public regulation commissioners, all Democrats;
- Two commissioners of insurance, one each Democrat and Republican;
- One commissioner of labor, Republican;
- One railroad commissioner, Republican;
- One agriculture and commerce commissioner, Republican; and
- One public utilities commissioner, Republican.

In addition to the two women of color who serve as governors, the women serving in statewide elective offices include three African-Americans (California's attorney general, Connecticut's state treasurer and Arizona's corporation commissioner); four Latinas (New Mexico's secretary of state, two public regulation commissioners in New Mexico and the Nevada attorney general); and two Native Americans (a public regulation commissioner in New Mexico and Montana's superintendent of public instruction).

Women may be slightly better represented among top appointed state government officials than among statewide elected officials, although it is not possible to know for certain since the most recent data available are from 2007. According to nationwide data collected by the Center on Women in Government and Civil Society at SUNY-Albany, in 2007 women constituted 32.2 percent of department heads with major policymaking responsibilities—including heads of departments, agencies, offices, boards, commissions and authorities— who

were appointed by governors. This proportion represented a substantial increase over 1997, when women constituted just 23.2 percent of department heads. Women were even better represented in 2007 among top appointed advisors in governors' offices, with women holding 41.9 percent of these positions—a slightly higher proportion than the 39.5 percent of these positions they held in 1997. Women of color were a rarity among appointed officials in 2007, with women of color constituting just 6.3 percent of all department heads and top advisors in governors' offices.

Justices on Courts of Last Resort

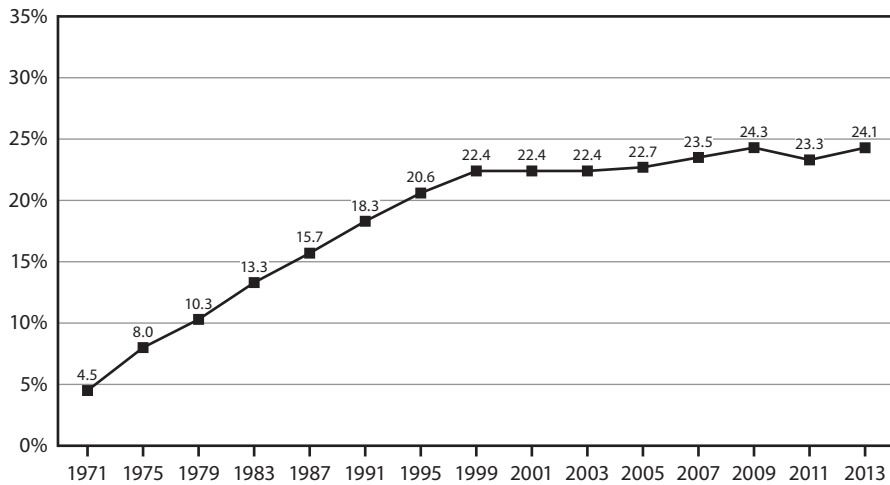
The first woman to win election to a state court of last resort was Florence E. Allen, who was elected to the Ohio Supreme Court in 1922 and re-elected in 1928. Nevertheless, it was not until 1960 that a second woman, Lorna Lockwood of Arizona, was elected to a state supreme court. Lockwood's colleagues on the Arizona Supreme Court selected her in 1965 to be chief justice, making her the first woman in history to preside over a state court of last resort.⁸ She was followed by Susie Sharp of North Carolina, who in 1974 became the first woman to be elected by popular vote to be chief justice of a state court of last resort.⁹

In 2003, Petra Jimenez Maes of New Mexico, who currently serves as an associate justice, became the first Latina chief justice of a state supreme court. Similarly, in 2005, Leah Ward Sears of Georgia became the first African-American woman to preside over a state court of last resort.¹⁰

According to the National Center for State Courts, 120—or 34.7 percent—of the 346 justices on state courts of last resort in early 2013 were women.¹¹ Of these courts' 53 chief justices, 18—or 34 percent—were women. Women comprise a majority of justices on courts of last resort in eight states—California, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas,¹² Washington and Wisconsin—and the District of Columbia. Women constitute at least 40 percent of the justices, but less than a majority, on an additional 17 courts of last resort.

Legislators

Even before women won the right to vote across the country in 1920, a few women had been elected to legislatures in states that had granted the franchise to women. The proportion of women serving in state legislatures across the country had grown to 4.5 percent by 1971, and over the years this proportion has increased more than fivefold.

Figure B: Proportion of Women Among State Legislators

Source: Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University.

As Figure B illustrates, the proportion of women legislators grew steadily throughout the 1970s and 1980s. The rate of growth slowed in the 1990s, however, and similar to the pattern for statewide elected officials, the numbers and proportions of women legislators nationally have leveled off since the late 1990s. Following the 2012 elections, the number of women legislators actually increased slightly, making a recovery from a fairly dramatic decrease following the 2010 elections.

The proportion of women in legislatures increased from 23.7 percent in 2012 to 24.1 percent in January 2013. Women now hold 406—or 20.6 percent—of all state senate seats and 1,370, or 25.3 percent, of all state house seats across the country. Nevertheless, the number of women who served in state legislatures at the beginning of 2013 is slightly fewer than in 2009 and only somewhat greater than the number of women who served in 1999.

Great variation exists across the states in the proportion of legislators who are women. (See Table B) Colorado ranks first among the states with 41 percent of its legislators women, followed by Vermont (40.6 percent), Arizona (35.6 percent), Minnesota (33.3 percent) and New Hampshire (32.5 percent). With the exception of Minnesota and Illinois, all the states ranked in the top 10 in the proportion of

women in their legislatures are located in the West or the Northeast. Despite this geographic concentration, however, there is no easy explanation for why these states have risen to the top, and scholars who have statistically examined the variation among the states have found no simple patterns.¹³

At the other extreme, Louisiana—with only 11.1 percent—ranks last among the 50 states in the representation of women among its legislators. Accompanying Louisiana in the bottom five states are South Carolina (12.9 percent), Oklahoma (13.4 percent), Alabama (13.6 percent) and Utah (16.3 percent). Seven of the 10 states with the lowest proportion of women are Southern or border states. Only one Southern state—Florida, ranked 23rd with 25 percent women—is above the national average. As these rankings make clear, the South as a region lags behind the rest of the country in the representation of women within its legislatures.

Nationwide, Republicans outnumber Democrats among state legislators, with 53.4 percent of all legislators Republican.¹⁴ The opposite, however, is true among women where Democrats outnumber Republicans by a sizeable margin. Among women state senators nationwide, 63.3 percent are Democrats; among women state representatives, 63.9 percent are Democrats.

Table B: Women in State Legislatures

State	Senate			House			Legislature (both houses)	
	Democrats	Republicans	% Women	Democrats	Republicans	% Women	% Women	State rank (a)
Alabama.....	4	0	14.3(b)	9	5	13.3	13.6	47
Alaska.....	1	3	20.0	4	9	32.5	28.3	13
Arizona.....	7	6	43.3	11	8	31.7	35.6	3
Arkansas.....	3	3	17.1	7	10	17.0	17.0	41
California.....	8	2	25.0	14	7	26.3	25.8	19
Colorado.....	12	2	40.0	18	9	41.5	41.0	1
Connecticut.....	8	1	25.0	29	17	30.5	29.4	10
Delaware.....	5	1	28.6	8	2	24.4	25.8	19
Florida.....	6	6	30.0	15	13	23.3	25.0	23
Georgia.....	7	1	14.3	29	17	25.6	22.9	28
Hawaii.....	8	0	32.0	13	3	31.4	31.6	7
Idaho.....	2	3	14.3	8	14	31.4	25.7	21
Illinois.....	11	4	25.4	31	11	35.6	32.2	6
Indiana.....	3	5	16.0	12	11	23.0	20.7	33
Iowa.....	6	4	20.0	19	7	26.0	24.0	25
Kansas.....	4	8	30.0	15	12	21.6	23.6	26
Kentucky.....	3	4	18.4	10	8	18.0	18.1	37
Louisiana.....	3	1	10.3	9	3	11.4	11.1	50
Maine.....	7	0	20.0	33	13	30.5	28.5	12
Maryland.....	10	1	23.4	34	12	32.6	30.3	8
Massachusetts.....	12	0	30.0	33	6	24.4	25.5	22
Michigan.....	2	2	10.5	16	8	21.8	18.9	36
Minnesota.....	15	8	34.3	28	16	32.8	33.3	4
Mississippi.....	2	6	15.4	15	6	17.2	16.7	43
Missouri.....	5	0	14.7	19	19	23.3	21.8	30
Montana.....	5	5	20.0	23	8	31.0	27.3	17
Nebraska (c).....	...Nonpartisan...	...	20.4Unicameral.....	20.4	34
Nevada.....	3	1	19.0	11	2	31.0	27.0	18
New Hampshire.....	6	3	37.5	96	33	32.3	32.5	5
New Jersey.....	8	3	27.5	15	9	30.0	29.2	11
New Mexico.....	3	3	14.3	15	10	35.7	27.7	15
New York.....	6	4	15.9	31	5	24.0	21.6	32
North Carolina.....	4	4	16.0	17	12	24.2	21.8	30
North Dakota.....	3	5	17.0	7	9	17.0	17.0	41
Ohio.....	5	3	24.2	11	12	23.2	23.5	27
Oklahoma.....	2	2	8.3	5	11	15.8	13.4	48
Oregon.....	6	1	23.3	13	5	30.0	27.8	14
Pennsylvania.....	5	3	16.0	16	21	18.2	17.8	38
Rhode Island.....	9	0	23.7	20	2	29.3	27.4	16
South Carolina.....	0	1	2.2	11	10	16.9	12.9	49
South Dakota.....	1	5	17.1	6	12	25.7	22.9	28
Tennessee.....	3	4	21.2	8	8	16.2	17.4	39
Texas.....	3	3	19.4	16	15	20.7	20.4	34
Utah.....	3	2	17.2	8	4	16.0	16.3	46
Vermont.....	7	2	30.0	48	12	42.7(d)	40.6	2
Virginia.....	5	1	15.0	11	7	18.0	17.1	40
Washington.....	10	6	32.7	18	10	28.6	29.9	9
West Virginia.....	0	1	2.9	11	10	21.0	16.4	45
Wisconsin.....	5	4	27.3	17	7	24.2	25.0	23
Wyoming.....	1	1	6.7	2	11	21.7	16.7	43

Source: Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University. Figures are as of January 2013.

Key:

(a) States share the same rank if their proportions of women

legislators are exactly equal or round off to be equal (CA, DE; FL, WI; GA, SD; MO, NC; NE, TX; AR, ND; MS, WY).

(b) Includes one Independent.

(c) Nebraska has a unicameral legislature with nonpartisan elections.

(d) Includes four members of the Progressive Party.

About one-fifth of women state legislators—20.5 percent—are women of color. Of the 90 minority women senators and 274 minority women representatives serving in legislatures in early 2013, all but 22 are Democrats.¹⁵ African-American women hold 64 seats in state senates and 176 seats in state

houses in 44 states. Latinas are concentrated in 22 states; they hold 17 senate and 62 house seats. Asian-American women count among their numbers eight senators and 24 representatives in 10 states, while Native American women hold one senate and 12 house seats in six states.

Looking Toward the Future

Although women have made substantial progress over time in increasing their presence in state government, the leveling off among state legislators and decline among statewide elective officials since the turn of the century are troubling developments. At a minimum, these developments provide evidence that increases over time are not inevitable.

The lack of growth in numbers has implications for women's representation not only among state legislators and nongubernatorial statewide officeholders, but also among governors and members of Congress. Probably the most striking positive development for women in state government in recent years has been the increase in women governors. Of the 35 women governors across the entire history of our country, 21 have served all or part of their terms during the first few years of the 21st century. Of the five sitting governors, two held statewide elective office before running for governor, one as lieutenant governor and one as secretary of state. In addition, four of the current women governors served in their state legislatures.

Similarly, many of the women who have run for Congress gained experience and visibility in state government before seeking federal office. Of the 78 women members of the U.S. House in the 113th Congress, 37 served in their state houses, 20 in their state senates and three in statewide elective offices. Of the 20 female U.S. senators, seven served in their state houses, five in their state senates, four in statewide elective offices and two in appointed state cabinet posts.

Activists who are interested in increasing the number of women serving in office often refer to a political pipeline through which potential women candidates for higher office come forward from among the pool of women who have gained experience at lower levels of office. Clearly, the pipeline has worked well in recent years in the case of governors and members of Congress. But what if the pool of women candidates in statewide and state legislative offices continues to stagnate or decline? Then, the number of politically experienced women with the visibility and contacts necessary to run for governor or a seat in the U.S. House or Senate also is likely to stagnate or decline.

While several different factors may be responsible for the recent leveling off in the number of women in elective offices in the states, a lack of effective recruitment certainly is one of the most

important. Statistics on the number of female candidates over time seem clearly to point to a problem with recruitment. For example, 2,445 women were general election candidates for the more than 6,000 seats up for election in state legislatures in 2012, which means more seats were uncontested by a woman than were contested. Moreover, there were 92 fewer female candidates in 2012 than in 2010 and only 70 more women than in 1992.¹⁶ Clearly, then, a major factor contributing to the leveling off in the number of female officeholders is a lack of greater numbers of female candidates.

Research has found that women who run for office are less likely than their male counterparts to be self-starters. Women more often than men seek office only after receiving encouragement from others. In a 2008 nationwide study of state legislators, scholars at the Center for American Women and Politics found that only 26 percent of female state representatives, compared with 43 percent of their male counterparts, said it was entirely their own idea to run for their first elective office. In contrast, 53 percent of women state representatives, compared with 28 percent of men, said they had not thought seriously about running for office until someone else suggested it.¹⁷ Similarly, a study of major party candidates in state legislative races conducted a few years earlier found that only 11 percent of women, compared with 37 percent of men, were self-starters who said that it was entirely their own idea to run for the legislature; in contrast, 37 percent of women, compared with 18 percent of men, reported that they had not seriously thought about running until someone else suggested it.¹⁸ Another recent study of people in the professions from which political candidates are most likely to emerge (i.e., law, business and education) found that notably fewer women (43 percent) than men (59 percent) had ever considered running for office.¹⁹

Findings such as these suggest that the future for women in state government will depend, at least in part, upon the strength of efforts to recruit women for both elected and appointed positions. Legislative leaders, public officials, party leaders and advocacy organizations can help by renewing their commitment and augmenting their efforts to identify and support potential women candidates, especially in winnable races with open seats or vulnerable incumbents. Recruitment efforts may well be key to determining whether the number of women officials continues to stagnate or again begin to move steadily upward as it did in earlier decades.

Table C: Women Statewide Elected Officials 2013

<i>State</i>	<i>Governor</i>	<i>Lieutenant Governor</i>	<i>Attorney General</i>	<i>Secretary of State</i>	<i>Treasurer</i>
Alabama.....	★	w	★	w	★
Alaska.....	★	★	★		
Arizona.....	w		★	★	★
Arkansas.....	★	★	★	★	w
California.....	★	★	w	w	★
Colorado.....	★	★	★	★	★
Connecticut.....	★	w	★	w	w
Delaware.....	★	★	★		★
Florida.....	★	V	w		★
Georgia.....	★	★	★	★	
Hawaii.....	★	★			
Idaho.....	★	★	★	★	★
Illinois.....	★	w	w	★	★
Indiana.....	★	w	★	w	★
Iowa.....	★	w	★	★	★
Kansas.....	★	★	★	★	★
Kentucky.....	★	★	★	w	★
Louisiana.....	★	★	★	★	★
Maine.....	★				
Maryland.....	★	★	★		
Massachusetts.....	★	★	w	★	★
Michigan.....	★	★	★	w	
Minnesota.....	★	w	w	★	
Mississippi.....	★	★	★	★	w
Missouri.....	★	★	★	★	★
Montana.....	★	★	★	w	
Nebraska.....	★	★	★	★	
Nevada.....	★	★	w	★	w
New Hampshire.....	w				
New Jersey.....	★	w			
New Mexico.....	w	★	★	w	★
New York.....	★	★	★		
North Carolina.....	★	★	★	w	w
North Dakota.....	★	★	★	★	w
Ohio.....	★	w	★	★	★
Oklahoma.....	w	★	★		★
Oregon.....	★		w	w	★
Pennsylvania.....	★	★	w		★
Rhode Island.....	★	w	★	★	w
South Carolina.....	w	★	★	★	★
South Dakota.....	★	★	★	★	★
Tennessee.....	★				
Texas.....	★	★	★		
Utah.....	★	★	★		★
Vermont.....	★	★	★	★	w
Virginia.....	★	★	★		
Washington.....	★	★	★	w	★
West Virginia.....	★		★	w	★
Wisconsin.....	★	w	★	★	★
Wyoming.....	★			★	★

Source: Data for elected officials are current as of January 2013 and have been provided by the Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University.

Key:

★ — Denotes that this position is filled through a statewide election.

w — Denotes that this position is filled through a statewide election and is held by a woman.

V — This office is vacant following the resignation of Jennifer Carroll on March 13, 2013.

Notes

¹All statistical information in this essay, unless otherwise noted, has been provided by the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University. Additional information is available at www.cawp.rutgers.edu. This essay would not be possible

without the tireless efforts of Gilda Morales who oversees the collection of data on women officeholders for CAWP. In addition to Gilda, I would like to thank Linda Phillips from CAWP and Joan Cochet from the National Center for State Courts for their assistance with the data for this essay.

DEMOGRAPHICS

²Sila Calderon (Popular Democratic Party) served as governor of Puerto Rico from 2001 to 2004.

³Martin Gruber, *Women in American Politics* (Oshkosh, WI: Academia Press, 1968), 189.

⁴Gruber, 190.

⁵Women did serve as superintendents of public instruction in a few states earlier than this.

⁶These 76 women serving in statewide elective office include 38 Democrats and 38 Republicans.

⁷These numbers do not include: officials in appointive state government positions; officials elected to executive posts by the legislature; officials elected as commissioners or board members from districts rather than statewide; members of the judicial branch; or elected members of university Boards of Trustees or Boards of Education.

⁸Gruber, 190, 192.

⁹“Susie Sharp (1906–1996),” North Carolina History Project. <http://www.northcarolinahistory.org/encyclopedia/40/entry>.

¹⁰Information provided by the National Center for State Courts.

¹¹Unlike all the other statistics in this essay, these numbers from the National Center for State Courts include the District of Columbia as well as the 50 states.

¹²Texas has two courts of last resort, the Court of Criminal Appeals for criminal cases and the Supreme Court for civil cases. Women constitute a majority of justices on the Court of Criminal Appeals but not on the Supreme Court.

¹³See, for example, Barbara Norrander and Clyde Wilcox, “The Geography of Gender Power: Women in State Legislatures,” in Sue Thomas and Clyde Wilcox, ed., *Women and Elective Office: Past, Present, and Future* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

¹⁴This proportion is calculated from data in a table entitled “Party Composition of State Legislatures,” on the website of the National Conference of State Legislatures, <http://www.ncsl.org/legislatures-elections/elections/state-vote-charts.aspx>, accessed on 2/19/13.

¹⁵One is nonpartisan and 21 are Republicans.

¹⁶There were 2375 women candidates for state legislative seats in 1992; 2285 in 1994; 2277 in 1996; 2280 in 1998; 2228 in 2000; 2348 in 2002; 2220 in 2004; 2429 in 2006; 2337 in 2008; and 2537 in 2010.

¹⁷Kira Sanbonmatsu, Susan J. Carroll, and Debbie Walsh, *Poised to Run: Women’s Pathways to the State Legislatures* (New Brunswick, NJ: Center for American Women and Politics, 2009), 8. <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/research/reports/PoisedtoRun.pdf>.

¹⁸Gary Moncrief, Peverill Squire, and Malcolm Jewell, *Who Runs for the Legislature?* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 2001), Table 5.5, 102.

¹⁹Jennifer L. Lawless and Richard L. Fox, *It Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don’t Run for Office* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 44.

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