In 2011, one new governor was elected in one of the four races — Mississippi’s Phil Bryant. As noted earlier, in a 2011 special election, West Virginia’s successor Gov. Earl Ray Tomlin was required to win the voters’ approval to fill out former Gov. Joe Manchin’s remaining term, which he did by a narrow margin. And in the two other elections in 2011, both incumbents won their second terms. In sum, in the 41 governor’s elections in 2010–11, 27 new governors were elected (65.9 percent), while 14 incumbent governors won another term (34 percent).

2000 to 2009. So, during the first few years of the previous decade, 70 new governors were sworn into office, continuing the 1.4 rate per state.

In the 2010 and 2011 elections, considerable turnover among governors continued. In 2010, 26 new governors were elected in 37 races, and two other new governors succeeded to the office upon the resignation of the incumbent to take over as one of the state’s new U.S. senators. In 2011, one new governor was elected in one of the four races...
The New Governors

During the 2008–11 gubernatorial elections and resignations, new governors took several routes to office. Twenty-one had previously held an elective office. These include:


- Five attorneys general: California Gov. Jerry Brown (who also served as governor from 1975 to 83), Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon and New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo—all Democrats; and Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett and Virginia Gov. Robert McDonald—both Republicans;


- One secretary of state: Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer, a Republican, who succeeded to office upon the resignation of Gov. Janet Napolitano in 2009;

- Three U.S. senators: Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback, a Republican; Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton, a Democrat; and Rhode Island Gov. Lincoln Chafee, an Independent;


Fourteen new governors had previously held elected or appointed sub-state offices. These include:
