



# CAWP

## *Election Watch*

For immediate release  
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Revised 11/5  
(reflecting Murray Senate win and  
Ellmers House race now in recount)  
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### **Republican Women Follow National Winning Pattern: Newcomers Take Many House Races, But Only One New Senate Seat, Three New Governors; Many Democratic House Incumbents Fall**

The 2010 election results for women mirrored the national swing to Republicans, 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.

One new woman, Republican Kelly Ayotte (NH), won a Senate seat. At least seven new Republican women, including one woman of color, will join the House of Representatives, matching the previous record of seven Republican newcomers in a single election. All three new women governors are Republicans, including two who won woman-versus-woman races. Two of the new governors are women of color, the first women of color to head state governments.

For Democrats, the picture was less rosy. Notably, the Democratic loss of control of the House means Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) will lose her leadership role as Speaker of the House. As Speaker, Pelosi has been the highest-ranking elected woman in U.S. history. At least nine Democratic House incumbents lost their races, and no new Democratic women became senators or governors.

Four Democratic newcomers will join the U.S. House of Representatives. All are women of color, including three African-American women and one Asian-American woman.

Depending on the outcomes of remaining races, women could lose ground in Congress. The number of women in Congress has not dropped since 1979 and has not stayed level since 1987; either of those outcomes is possible this year. The number of women in the Senate has risen or stayed level every year since 1979.

"This was a winning year for Republican women, as it was for Republicans in general," noted CAWP director Debbie Walsh. "Even though several of the most talked-about Republican women – Meg Whitman and Carly Fiorina in California, Sharron Angle in Nevada, and Christine O'Donnell in Delaware – lost their races, the overall Republican gains were significant."

Walsh observed that Republican women could have done even better if more of the record number who ran in primaries had won. "With a powerful Republican tide, more women could have been swept in, had there been more candidates."

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## **U.S. Senate**

When the new Congress convenes, depending on the outstanding race in Alaska, a total of 16-17 women (12 D, 4 or 5 R) will serve in the Senate. A total of 5-6 women won Senate races. One new woman, Kelly Ayotte (R-NH) won an open seat. She joins at least four incumbents who won re-election: Barbara Boxer (D-CA); Barbara Mikulski (D-MD); Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY); and Patty Murray (D-WA). Results are pending in one additional race involving an incumbent woman, Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), who lost her primary but ran as a write-in candidate. Also remaining in the Senate are 11 women (8D, 3R) who were not up for election this year. One incumbent woman senator lost her seat: Blanche Lincoln (D-AR).

In 2010, there were 17 women (13D, 4R) in the Senate. None chose to retire.

## **U.S. House of Representatives**

When the new House is seated, there will be at least 70 women (48D, 22R), with an additional three women (1D, 2R) in races not yet called. At least 11 new women (4D, 7R) have been elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

The women serving in the U.S. House as of January, 2011 will include:

- 59 (44D, 15R) re-elected incumbents (with one additional Democratic incumbent in a race still too close to call)
- 6 (1D, 5R) women who defeated incumbent members of Congress (with an additional two Republican challengers in races still too close to call)
- 5(3D, 2R) women who won open House seats.

In addition, three non-voting delegates from Guam, the Virgin Islands, and Washington, DC were re-elected.

The new women in the U.S. House are: Martha Roby (R-AL); Terri Sewell (D-AL); Karen Bass (D-CA); Sandy Adams (R-FL); Frederica Wilson (D-FL); Colleen Hanabusa (D-HI); Vicky Hartzler (R-MO); Nan Hayworth (R-NY); Kristi Noem (R-SD); Diane Black (R-TN); Jaime Herrera (R-WA).

The new House members include five women of color (4D, 1 R): Sewell, Bass, Wilson, Hanabusa and Herrera.

Hawaii elected women to both of its U.S. House seats, making it the first state (other than states with only one district) to have an all-woman House delegation.

Nine incumbent Democratic congresswomen lost their seats. They are: Ann Kirkpatrick (AZ); Betsy Markey (CO); Suzanne Kosmas (FL); Debbie Halvorson (IL); Dina Titus (NV); Carol Shea-Porter (NH); Mary Jo Kilroy (OH); Kathy Dahlkemper (PA); Stephanie Herseth Sandlin (D-SD). No Republican women in the House lost their seats.

The women in races still too close to call are incumbent Melissa Bean (D-IL) and challengers Renee Ellmers (R-NC) and Ann Marie Buerkle (R-NY).

In 2010, there were 73 women in the House (56D, 17R), along with three women serving as non-voting delegates from Washington, DC, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Guam. Four incumbent women were not general election candidates for the House. Ginny Brown-Waite (R-FL) and Diane Watson (D-CA) are retiring; Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick (D-MI) was defeated in her primary; and Mary Fallin (R-OK) ran for and won election as governor of Oklahoma.

## **Governor**

Three new women were elected governors: Susana Martinez (R-NM); Mary Fallin (R-OK); Nikki Haley (R-SC). Martinez, a Latina, and Haley, an Indian-American, are the first two women of color to serve as governors. The newcomers join one incumbent who was re-elected, Jan Brewer (R-AZ), and two holdover incumbents who were not up for re-election: Beverly Perdue (D-NC) and Christine Gregoire (D-WA). The total number of women governors as of 2011 will be six (2D, 4R).

Ten women (5D, 5R) were candidates for governor in eight states; there were woman-versus-woman races in New Mexico and Oklahoma. This year's four women winners is not a record; six is the largest number of women to win gubernatorial races in one election year (2006). The largest number of women to serve simultaneously as governors is nine, which occurred in 2004 and again in 2007. The new governors in New Mexico, Oklahoma and South Carolina are the first women to head the governments in those states.

## **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.