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Aggressive Analysis

Gregoire on White House lists

By Adam Wilson | The Olympian • Published June 05, 2008
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Gov. Chris Gregoire is on the list of contenders to be the United States' first female president, a roster receiving new attention Wednesday in the aftermath of Sen. Hillary Clinton's defeat in the Democratic nomination race.

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Women hold eight governorships and 86 seats in Congress, according to the Center for American Women and Politics.

Women in those positions often mentioned as potential future presidents include Govs. Kathleen Sebelius of Kansas and Sarah Palin of Alaska, and Sens. Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas and Claire McCaskill of Missouri.

Gregoire, Washington's second female governor, was mentioned Wednesday as a prospect in The Times of London, following similar citations in the Chicago Tribune and Web sites such as Slate and Monsters and Critics.

The Democrat isn't looking to leave the governor's mansion, said her campaign spokesman, Aaron Toso. Gregoire is in the midst of a re-election campaign against her 2004 rival,

Republican Dino Rossi.

Washington is the only state with two female U.S. senators and a female governor. But Sens. Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell haven't been listed as presidential material as often as Gregoire, the state's former attorney general and director of the Department of Ecology.

Paul Berendt, former chairman of the Washington State Democratic Party, said Gregoire has won national attention for her skills in running state government. But Cantwell and Murray could be considered presidential contenders as well, he said.

"I wouldn't doubt for a moment that the first woman nominee for a major political party would come from Washington," Berendt said.

Unlike the state's senators, who backed Clinton, Gregoire endorsed the evident Democratic nominee, Sen. Barack Obama, in his bid for the White House this year.

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- These Times

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- High School Sports
- College Sports
- Motor Sports
- Golf
- Winter Sports
- Seahawks
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