

## NPR Examines Growing Number Of Female GOP Candidates

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On Thursday, NPR's "[Morning Edition](#)" reported on the increased number of female Republican candidates in this year's elections, a trend that suggests the "gap is closing" between the number of Democratic and Republican women seeking public office.

Female candidates are the frontrunners in the Republican senatorial and gubernatorial primaries in California, according to "Morning Edition." In Nevada, the two leading candidates for the Senate Republican primary are women, and one of them will face Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) in November.

Ruth Mandel, a senior scholar at Rutgers University's [Center for American Women and Politics](#), said the growing number of conservative female candidates is the natural progression of early feminist efforts to "keep the door wide for all kinds of women," despite the fact that most early female candidates were Democrats.

The rise of GOP women candidates also is partly due to the prominence of former Alaska Gov. and 2008 Republican vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin, who is the "self-appointed den mother" of women in the party, according to "Morning Edition."

Marjorie Dannenfelser -- president of the [Susan B. Anthony List](#), which works to get antiabortion-rights women elected -- called Palin the "wind in the sails" of the trend. She noted that in this election cycle, there are 107 women running for House seats, 61 of whom are Republican women, compared with 54 female candidates in the last cycle, 18 of whom were Republicans.

According to "Morning Edition," there also is a trend of wealthy, self-financed Republican women seeking office. Mandel said the change reflects women's success in business, giving more women the ability to finance their own campaigns -- something male candidates have been doing for years (Liasson, "Morning Edition," NPR, 6/3).

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