

WOMEN IN POLITICS

# Margaret Chase Smith paved the way, but will the governor's mansion remain elusive?



AP FILE PHOTO

Dignitaries, including Maine Sens. Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins, applauded the unveiling of a portrait of former Maine Republican Sen. Margaret Chase Smith at the Capitol. While women have served in almost every office in Maine, one big one remains, so far, exclusively male.



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AUGUSTA, Maine — History books will always record the political barriers and gender walls that the late Sen. Margaret Chase Smith broke down during the three-and-a-half decades she represented Maine in the nation's capital:

The first woman to serve in both chambers of Congress. The first female senator elected on her own right in a general election. The first woman to run for president in a major party.

But in some ways, Smith's legacy is more visible in the halls of power of Augusta than in Washington.

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Ranking among state legislatures for the proportion of women:



New Hampshire (NH) is ranked 1st with 37.3%; South Carolina (SC) is 50th with 10.0%.

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