

# Year Of The Woman? Apparently Not

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by MARK MEMMOTT



Justin Sullivan/Getty

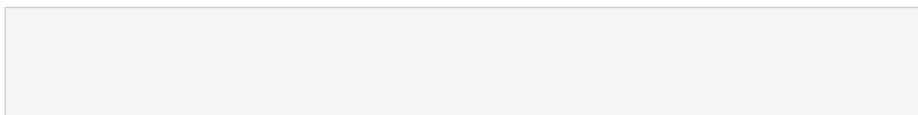
High-profile races and candidates? Yes -- such as the contest between Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-CA, (left) and Republican Carly Fiorina. But women won't make historic gains at the polls this year.

While reporting a story for Thursday's *Morning Edition* on women voters and what they're thinking this year, NPR's [Ari Shapiro](#) spoke with [Debbie Walsh](#), director of the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University.

As she told Ari, earlier this year there was much being written and

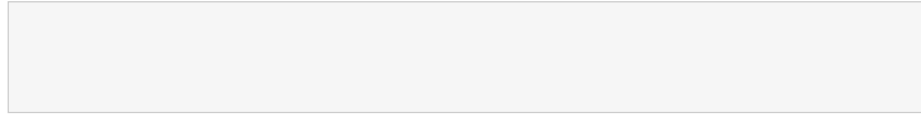
said about the 2010 elections marking something of a "year of the woman." But Walsh says things worked out differently. Here are some highlights from their conversation that may not end up on tomorrow's show, but that Ari passed along to us:

— "What's most interesting to look at ... is the 'win rate' for non-incumbent Democratic and Republican women. ... Among the non-incumbent Democratic women, 46% of those women won their primaries. But only 28% of the non-incumbent Republican women won their primaries. The Republican women, while they filed (for election) at really high rates, they had a much lower win rate at the end of the day."



— As for incumbents, "a number of the

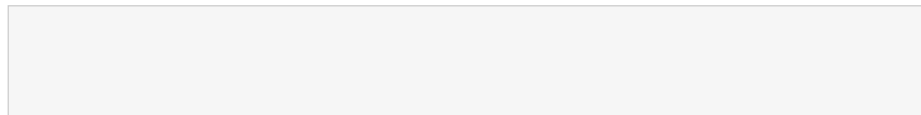
women who were recently elected were elected for the first time in '08 or even in '06 from districts that are marginally Democratic. .... Those women are much more vulnerable in this cycle. So there are quite a few of those races where we're seeing the potential for losses coming from women on the Democratic side side, and that's where the hit will come that will in fact have the potential to — for the first time in 30-32 years, to see a decline in the number of women serving in Congress."



Many Are In 'Vulnerable' Districts

— Having some high-profile women in politics, such as Secretary of State Hillary

Rodham Clinton, 2008 Republican vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin and Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, "gives this sense that the women are everywhere. But the reality still remains that we do not have a record number of women running this time around for the House. ... We're barely breaking a record for women serving in the Senate. ... No major breakthroughs in this cycle."



In The End, No 'Breakthroughs'

As we said above, Ari's report is due on [Thursday's Morning Edition](#). You can find an

NPR station that broadcasts or streams the show by [clicking here](#).

Contributing: Thomas Dreisbach