

## Other Female Candidates, Politics, Senate, US House News

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### Will Women Lose Ground in National Politics in 2010?



Photo Courtesy - ABC News

(WASHINGTON) -- Record numbers of women filed to run for the U.S. House and Senate during the primaries, and a record-tying 10 will appear on ballots for governor in eight states. While it's likely that female candidates will make inroads in some corners this year, the net result for women in national elective office could be a loss, experts say.

"For the first time in 30 years, we could see a decline in the number of women in Congress," said Debbie

Walsh, who runs the nonpartisan Center for American Women in Politics at Rutgers University, which tracks female candidates nationwide.

A bleak election outlook for Democrats and incumbents, which includes a majority of women on ballots this year, has set the stage for women to give back some seats to men, particularly in swing districts where Democratic women were swept up in the excitement surrounding President Obama in 2008 or elected during a down year for Republicans in 2006.

Seventeen women currently serve in the U.S. Senate, and while 11 are not up for re-election this year, women need to win six seats to maintain their presence, a number that seems far from guaranteed.

Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand of New York and Barbara Mikulski of Maryland -- Democratic incumbents -- and Republican candidate Kelly Ayotte of New Hampshire, are likely to defeat their male challengers on November 2. But with less than a week to go, female candidates in 10 other Senate races face less certain prospects, according to the latest ABC News ratings on the races.

Meanwhile, 91 Democratic women and 47 Republican women are running for the U.S. House, which many political prognosticators believe will ultimately come under Republican control.

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