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Has women in politics changed?

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The 2010 election results for women mirrored the national swing to Republics, according to the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP).

Once the new Congress is seated, just 16 percent of the seats will be women.

A record number of women ran for both the US Senate and the House of Representatives this year. For the Senate, 36 women filed surpassing 1992's record of 29 women.

Has the percentage of women in elective offices changed in 2010? According to data done by [Cawp.Rutgers.edu](#), 11 percent of statewide elected women held office in 1979. In 2010, that percentage doubled to 22 percent.

"The number of women in politics has changed drastically," said LeAron A. Foley, a senior public policy major.

Political science student Angeliki Verros claimed that Myra Bradwell was the cause of the drastic increase because she was the first female attorney who caused women to have a voice both politically and socially.

In 2010, women hold 17 of the 100 seats in the Senate (13 are Democrats, 4 are Republicans), and 73 of the 435 seats in the House of Representatives (56 are Democrats and 17 are Republicans).

The number of female governors declined when three states elected women as governors. After taking office, they will bring the number of women governors to six. According to CAWP, the US currently has 24 states where women have never served as governor.

Colorado has the largest percentage of women in state legislature with 38 percent, followed by Vermont and New Hampshire with 37 percent each.

"It is clear that women have made important gains in politics," said Dr. Megan Sholar, a political science professor. "Figures like Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin have brought attention to women's issues."

She added that an increase in women in politics can attract more women to run for office.

Foley claimed that Congresswomen Shirley Chisholm and Barbara Jordan, as well as retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor and Meg Whitman, set an example for women going into politics because no longer is Washington all-male.

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