

OUR VIEW: Correcting a legislative wrong

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More women serve in the Alabama Legislature than ever before, but it's still not an equitable playing field. Combined, the Alabama House and Senate have 140 members and only 19 are female. While that's progress — only 18 females served in the Legislature before the November elections — there's still a long way to go, and that was evident when the five women in the Senate complained that seven of the Senate's 20 major committees had no female members.

Alabama now ranks 48th in terms of the number of women serving in the Legislature, according to the Center for American Women and Politics. Of the 35 senators, five are women. Only 14 of the House's 105 members are women. The state does have more women elected to statewide non-judicial positions — Lt. Gov. Kay Ivey, Public Service commissioners Lucy Baxley and Twinkle Cavanaugh, Secretary of State Beth Chapman and Auditor Samantha Shaw — than our Southern neighbors, but the imbalance in the Legislature is hard to overlook.

Senate President Pro Tem Del Marsh, R-Anniston, added women to several committees Tuesday, but it took a second meeting with the female senators to get someone named to the Judiciary Committee, which had been of critical concern to the women because of domestic violence and other issues that affect women and children.

Marsh should be commended for responding to the concerns of the female senators, but the idea that women were omitted from seven Senate committees just shows that Montgomery still exemplifies the essence of the term "good ol' boy network." The Senate should not have started its work with such glaring omissions in the makeup of its committees.

PAY ATTENTION TO WEATHER

It's storm season in Alabama and it seems each week brings at least one threat of potentially dangerous conditions. This week is no exception, with especially dire predictions in place for today.

States west of us already have been battered by strong storms, and more are expected Wednesday. It would be wise to keep an eye on the sky if you're out and about today. Even if you're indoors all day, being alert to weather warnings and taking proper safety precautions is important. Be safe — and that means not taking unnecessary chances with hazardous weather.