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Contact: Debbie Walsh
848-932-8799
walsh@eagleton.rutgers.edu

No Breakthrough at Top of Ticket, But Women of Color Gain in Congress

History was not made at the presidential level, the number of women in Congress will remain static, and as of January, the number of women governors will drop by one. The only landmark for women's participation is the election to Congress of more women of color than ever before, according to the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

In the 115th Congress, 104 women (78D, 26R) will serve. The party breakdown of the current (114th) Congress is 76D, 28R.

- Twenty-one women will serve in the Senate (16D, 5R).
- Eighty-three women (62D, 21R) will serve in the U.S. House.

Nine new women of color, all Democrats, will enter Congress: three in the Senate and six in the House. A total of 38 women of color will serve in the 115th Congress.

New Hampshire will once again be represented by an all women congressional delegation, as it was 2013-2015, with two women in the Senate and two in the House. All of the Granite State women are Democrats.

Only one woman won a gubernatorial race: incumbent Kate Brown (D-OR).

U.S. Senate

A total of six women have won Senate races. The totals include four newcomers, all Democrats, and two incumbents (1D, 1R) winning re-election. Also remaining in the Senate are 15 women (11D, 4R) who were not up for election this year.

- The newcomers include two women who won open seats: Kamala Harris (D-CA) and Catherine Cortez-Masto (D-NV); and 2 women who defeated incumbents: Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Maggie Hassan (D-NH).
- Two incumbents won re-election: Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) and Patty Murray (D-WA).
- The three new women of color are Cortez-Masto (Latina), Duckworth (Asian-Pacific Islander), Harris (Black and South Asian). Cortez-Masto is the first Latina ever to serve in the Senate and the first woman to represent Nevada in the Senate.
- The new women of color quadruple the number of women of color who will serve simultaneously to four (4D), compared to the previous record of one. The total number of women of color ever elected to the Senate rises to five, all Democrats, including former Senator Carol Moseley Braun (D-IL) along with incumbent holdover Mazie Hirono (D-HI) and the three newcomers.
- Duckworth is the first military veteran elected to the Senate as a Democrat; she joins holdover Joni Ernst (R-IA), the first woman veteran elected to the Senate.
- The Senate will continue to have three all-women delegations representing California, New Hampshire and Washington. Both of New Hampshire's senators are former governors of the state.

In 2016, there were 20 women (14D, 6R) in the Senate. Two Democratic women (Barbara Boxer, D-CA and Barbara Mikulski, D-MD) did not run for re-election.

U.S. House of Representatives

A total of 10 new women (8D, 2R) have been elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, joining 73 incumbents who won re-election. There will be one less woman in the House than the number currently serving. No incumbent women were defeated in the general election.

When the 115th Congress convenes, the House will include six new women of color, bringing the total number of women of color there to a new high of 34 (31D, 3R). Among the new women in the House:

- Delaware's first woman in either chamber of Congress, Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-DE-AL), a Black woman. This leaves two states—Mississippi and Vermont—that have never sent a woman to either house of Congress.
- The first Indian American woman in Congress, Pramila Jayapal (D-WA-7).
- Two returning former House members: Colleen Hanabusa (D-HI-1), an Asian-Pacific Islander, and Carol Shea-Porter (D-NH-1).
- A new Latina from Southern California, Nanette Barragán (D-CA-44).
- Liz Cheney (R-WY-AL), the first woman elected to the House seat previously held by her father.

The women serving in the U.S. House as of January 2017 will include:

- 73 (54D, 19R) re-elected incumbents
- 2 (2D) women who defeated incumbent members of Congress
- 8 (6D, 2R) women who won open House seats.

In addition, three non-voting delegates from Guam, the Virgin Islands, and Washington, DC, all Democrats, were re-elected. Results from two other races for non-voting delegates were not available.

In addition to the women mentioned above, the new women in the U.S. House are: Democrats Stephanie Murphy (FL-7), an Asian-Pacific Islander; Val Demings (FL-10), a Black woman; and Jacky Rosen (NV-03). Also: Republicans Claudia Tenney (NY-22) and Liz Cheney (WY).

The House will now include a record 34 women of color: 18 Black women (17D, 1R); 7 Asian-Pacific Islander women (7D); 9 Hispanic women (7D, 2R).

In 2016, there were 84 women in the House (62D, 22R), along with four women (3D, 1R) serving as non-voting delegates from American Samoa, Washington, DC, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Eleven were not general election candidates for the House: Ann Kirkpatrick (D-AZ), Loretta Sanchez (D-CA), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Donna Edwards (D-MD) ran for the U.S. Senate; Janice Hahn (D-CA) ran for county supervisor; Lois Capps (D-CA); Gwen Graham (D-FL); Candice Miller (R-MI); and Cynthia Lummis (R-WY) are retiring; Corrine Brown (D-FL) and Renee Ellmers (R-NC) lost their primaries.

Governor

The total number of women governors as of 2017 will be 5 (2D, 3R). Two Democratic women were nominees for governor; Kate Brown (D-OR) won and Sue Minter (D-VT) lost. Brown rejoins Republican women holdovers in NM, OK, and SC and a Democratic holdover in RI.

About CAWP

The Center for American Women and Politics, a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey is a university-based research, education and public service center. Its mission is to promote greater knowledge and understanding about women's changing relationship to politics and government and to enhance women's influence and leadership in public life. CAWP is a leading authority in its field and a respected bridge between the academic and political worlds.

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