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Record Number of General Election Races for U.S. Congress Feature Two Women Candidates

For the first time in history, at least 28 general election major-party match-ups in congressional races will be contested between women, according to data from the Center for American Women and Politics ([CAWP](#)). The previous record for these races, set in 2002, was 19. All-women general election races also hit individual high water marks for U.S. Senate (5) and U.S. House (23) races. A complete list of 2018 women vs. women races, as well as historical data going back to 1944, can be found [here](#).

Of the 28 contests in 2018:

- 23 races feature a woman challenging a woman incumbent
- 1 race is for an open seat being vacated by a woman
- 4 races are for open seats that are being vacated by a man, meaning that these races are guaranteed to contribute to a potential shift in women’s representation in the U.S. Congress

To date, there are no women-only contests in gubernatorial races this year. That record was set in 2010, with 2 races.

With primaries still to come in 9 states across the country, the number of these races could still rise.

“With more women running than ever before, it is not surprising that we would see more races in which both parties nominate a woman,” says CAWP director Debbie Walsh, “We look forward to the day when races such as these are as common place as all-male political contests.”

All-female races offer interesting insights into how gender shapes campaigns, reminding us that single-gender contests are far from gender neutral in the strategies candidates employ and the ways in which voters evaluate them. CAWP Scholar Kelly Dittmar offers more on this in her [latest post](#) for Gender Watch 2018, a project of CAWP and the [Barbara Lee Family Foundation](#).

For information about women candidates in 2018, see CAWP’s campaign coverage at [Election Watch](#), and more analysis of how gender and politics intersect at [Gender Watch 2018](#).

***An earlier version of this release stated that the previous record for all-women races was 17. The correct number, 19, is revised in this version.*