



CAWP

Election Watch

For immediate release
November 3, 2010
Revised 11/23 to reflect final election results

Contact: Debbie Walsh
732/932-9384, ext 227

Republican Women Follow National Winning Pattern: Newcomers Take Many House Races, But Only One New Senate Seat, Three New Governors; Many Democratic House Incumbents Fall

The 2010 election results for women mirrored the national swing to Republicans, 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.

One new woman, Republican Kelly Ayotte (NH), won a Senate seat. Nine new Republican women, including one woman of color, will join the House of Representatives, breaking the previous record of seven Republican newcomers in a single election. All three new women governors are Republicans, including two who won woman-versus-woman races. Two of the new governors are women of color, the first women of color to head state governments.

For Democrats, the picture was less rosy. Notably, the Democratic loss of control of the House means Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) will lose her leadership role as Speaker of the House. As Speaker, Pelosi has been the highest-ranking elected woman in U.S. history. Ten Democratic House incumbents lost their races, and no new Democratic women became senators or governors.

Four Democratic newcomers will join the U.S. House of Representatives. All are women of color, including three African-American women and one Asian-American woman.

Women will lose ground in Congress this year, the first time the number of women in Congress has dropped since 1979. The number of women in the Senate has risen or stayed level every year since 1979.

"This was a winning year for Republican women, as it was for Republicans in general," noted CAWP director Debbie Walsh. "Even though several of the most talked-about Republican women – Meg Whitman and Carly Fiorina in California, Sharron Angle in Nevada, and Christine O'Donnell in Delaware – lost their races, the overall Republican gains were significant."

Walsh observed that Republican women could have done even better if more of the record number who ran in primaries had won. "With a powerful Republican tide, more women could have been swept in, had there been more candidates."

U.S. Senate

When the new Congress convenes, a total of 17 women (12D, 5R) will serve in the Senate. A total of 6 women won Senate races. One new woman, Kelly Ayotte (R-NH) won an open seat. She joins five incumbents who won re-election: Lisa

RUTGERS
THE STATE UNIVERSITY
OF NEW JERSEY

Center for American Women and Politics
Eagleton Institute of Politics
191 Ryders Lane, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8557
Phone: (732) 932-9384 • Fax: (732) 932-0014
www.cawp.rutgers.edu

Murkowski (R-AK); Barbara Boxer (D-CA); Barbara Mikulski (D-MD); Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY); and Patty Murray (D-WA). Senator Murkowski lost her primary but won as a write-in candidate. Also remaining in the Senate are 11 women (8D, 3R) who were not up for election this year. One incumbent woman senator lost her seat: Blanche Lincoln (D-AR).

In 2010, there were 17 women (13D, 4R) in the Senate. None chose to retire.

U.S. House of Representatives

When the new House is seated, there will be 72 women (48D, 24R). 13 new women (4D, 9R) have been elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

The women serving in the U.S. House as of January, 2011 will include:

- 59 (44D, 15R) re-elected incumbents
- 8 (1D, 7R) women who defeated incumbent members of Congress
- 5 (3D, 2R) women who won open House seats.

In addition, three non-voting delegates from Guam, the Virgin Islands, and Washington, DC were re-elected.

The new women in the U.S. House are: Martha Roby (R-AL); Terri Sewell (D-AL); Karen Bass (D-CA); Sandy Adams (R-FL); Frederica Wilson (D-FL); Colleen Hanabusa (D-HI); Vicky Hartzler (R-MO); Ann Marie Buerkle (R-NY); Nan Hayworth (R-NY); Renee Ellmers (R-NC); Kristi Noem (R-SD); Diane Black (R-TN); Jaime Herrera (R-WA).

The new House members include five women of color (4D, 1 R): Sewell, Bass, Wilson, Hanabusa and Herrera.

Hawaii elected women to both of its U.S. House seats, making it the first state (other than states with only one district) to have an all-woman House delegation.

Ten incumbent Democratic congresswomen lost their seats. They are: Ann Kirkpatrick (AZ); Betsy Markey (CO); Suzanne Kosmas (FL); Melissa Bean (D-IL); Debbie Halvorson (IL); Dina Titus (NV); Carol Shea-Porter (NH); Mary Jo Kilroy (OH); Kathy Dahlkemper (PA); Stephanie Herseth Sandlin (D-SD). No Republican women in the House lost their seats.

In 2010, there were 73 women in the House (56D, 17R), along with three women serving as non-voting delegates from Washington, DC, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Guam. Four incumbent women were not general election candidates for the House. Ginny Brown-Waite (R-FL) and Diane Watson (D-CA) are retiring; Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick (D-MI) was defeated in her primary; and Mary Fallin (R-OK) ran for and won election as governor of Oklahoma.

Governor

Three new women were elected governors: Susana Martinez (R-NM); Mary Fallin (R-OK); Nikki Haley (R-SC). Martinez, a Latina, and Haley, an Indian-American, are the first two women of color to serve as governors. The newcomers join one incumbent who was re-elected, Jan Brewer (R-AZ), and two holdover incumbents who were not up for re-election: Beverly Perdue (D-NC) and Christine Gregoire (D-WA). The total number of women governors as of 2011 will be six (2D, 4R).

Ten women (5D, 5R) were candidates for governor in eight states; there were woman-versus-woman races in New Mexico and Oklahoma. This year's four women winners is not a record; six is the largest number of women to win gubernatorial races in one election year (2006). The largest number of women to serve simultaneously as governors is nine, which occurred in 2004 and again in 2007. The new governors in New Mexico, Oklahoma and South Carolina are the first women to head the governments in those states.

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.