

# Fact Sheet 2011



## Women in the Florida Legislature

### U.S. Facts

In 2011, 1,730 or 23.4% of the 7,381 state legislators in the United States are women. Women hold 422, or 21.4%, of the 1,971 state senate seats and 1,308, or 24.2%, of the 5,411 state house seats. Since 1971, the number of women serving in the state legislatures has more than quintupled.

### Florida Rank

Florida Ranks 20th among all states for the proportion of women in state legislature.

Florida elected its first female Attorney General in 2011.

### Data

There are a total of 160 seats in the State Legislature (40 Senate & 120 Assembly). Source for historical figures: Center for American Women and Politics

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The number of women in the Florida State Legislature increased following the highly anticipated November 2010 general election, from 38 in 2009 to 40 in 2011. In recent years, the total percentage of seats held by women in the Florida legislature modestly increased after a continual 23.1% from 2007 to 2009 (see table). In 2011, the total percentage of seats held by women is a surprising 25%.

Women gained 4 seats in the Senate, losing a seat in the Assembly. Two women unseated incumbents to gain seats in the Assembly and one woman returns to the Senate after not seeking reelection after her term ended in 2008.

Among Incumbent Legislatures (Senate and Assembly), 12 women ran in contested elections, of which 10 (83%) were re-elected to their seats.

### Women in the Florida State Legislature, 1975-2011

Year	Senate	House	Total
1975	1	12	13
1977	2	16	18
1979	3	15	18
1981	4	13	17
1983	9	19	28
1985	9	22	31
1987	10	23	33
1989	10	16	26
1991	10	20	30
1993	6	22	28
1995	6	25	31
1997	6	32	38
1999	7	31	38
2001	7	31	38
2003	10	29	39
2005	9	30	39
2007	10	27	37
2009	9	28	38
2011	13	27	40

### SENATE

Women were elected to serve in 13 (33%) of the 40 Seats in the Florida State Senate for 2011, up from 9 seats in 2009. Three new women and a returning Senator were elected to the Senate:

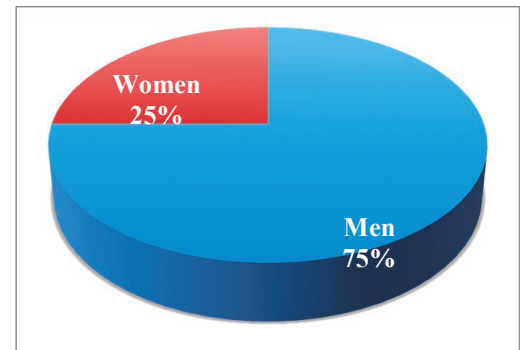
- 3 women ran in contested open seat elections, including the returning Senator (see below).
- 1 woman ran in an uncontested election.

Among the 9 female members of the prior (2008-2010) Senate, 3 seats were on the November 2nd ballot:

- 2 women sought a seat at the Senate, choosing to not seek reelection as state representatives
- 1 woman, previously a member of the Florida Senate from 2003-2008, reenters the Florida Senate after not being elected as Miami-Dade County Property Appraiser in 2008.

Findings are based on uncertified election results from November 2, 2010, Florida Division of Elections.

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### HOUSE

Women were elected to serve in 27 (22.5%) of the 120 Seats in the Florida State House for 2011, losing a seat since 2009. While the overall number of House women has slightly decreased, 10 new women were elected to the Assembly:

- 5 women ran in contested open seat elections.
- 2 women ran in uncontested elections
- 2 women ran in contested elections defeating incumbents.
- 1 woman ran in a contested special legislative election

Among the 27 Assembly seats held by women in the prior (2008-2010) Legislature:

- 11 women were re-elected in contested elections.
- 6 women were re-elected in uncontested elections.
- 5 women left the Assembly to seek higher office, (one gained seat as Lieutenant Governor and 3 gained State Senate Seats), 3 of the 5 seats were filled by men.
- 5 women could not run for re-election due to Florida term limits, 4 of these 5 seats were filled by men.

As a result, the overall number of seats held by women in the Assembly has dropped by one since 2009.