

# 8. Congress Is More Female Than Ever — Thanks To Democrats

By The Washington Post / Jan 3 2019

On January 3rd, 2019, the most heavily female House of Representatives in U.S. history selected a woman (Nancy Pelosi) as its leader for the next two years, setting a new high-water mark in the gender diversity of the House and Congress as a whole.

That shift is entirely a function of newly elected Democrats — and means that the percentage of women on Capitol Hill is still less than half of the percentage of women in the United States.

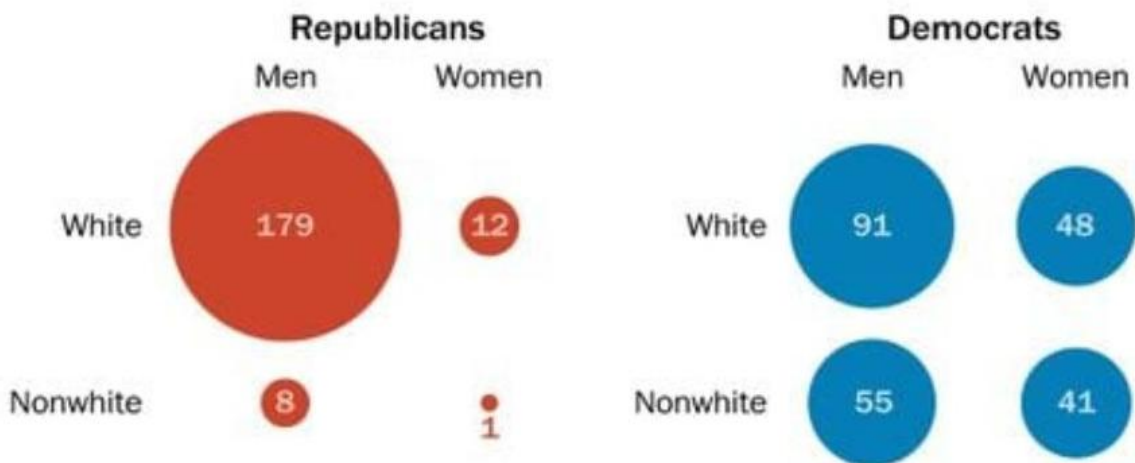
That said, the past 30 years have seen a big spike in the number of women in the House and the Senate, as data from the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University shows. What's remarkable, though, is how that growth has been driven mostly by the addition of new Democratic women.

Since 1989, the number of Republican women in the Senate increased from one to eight. But the number of Democratic women in the Senate grew from one to 17. In the House, the difference was much more stark: The number of Democrats grew from 16 to 89 and the number of Republican women didn't change at all.

The result is a remarkable divergence in what the two parties' House delegations look like.

## Composition of House caucuses, 116<sup>th</sup> Congress

Post analysis of 2018 midterm results.

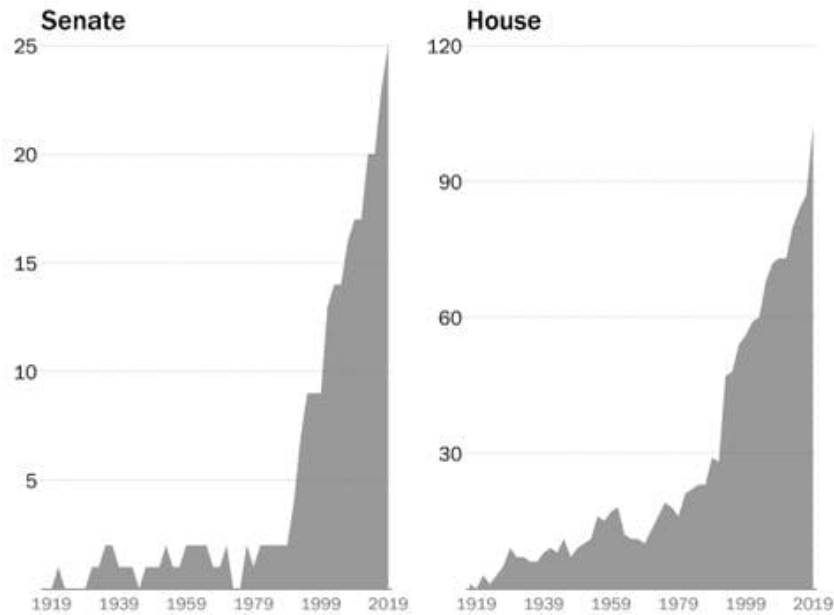


There are seven times as many women who are Democrats as Republicans and 41 times as many women of color who are Democrats.

Over time, the party split of women on Capitol Hill has increasingly gotten more blue. Eighty years ago, women in the House were about even split between Democrats and Republicans. Now, the percent of female House members who are Republican (12.7 percent) is nearly as low as that figure was in 1973 (12.5 percent), when there were 16 women in the House in total.

### Number of women in Congress

Center for American Women and Politics, Rutgers University.



**Overall, 23.7 percent of the 535 members of Congress are now women, the highest percentage in history.**

But compared with the population on the whole, that is still seriously unequal

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