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Women's Caucus Achieves Benchmark toward Gender Parity, on Pace to Record 50 Seats in California Legislature

With the gains in this year's election, California will achieve a record number of women members in the State Legislature and is close to reaching gender parity, a goal that the Legislative Women's Caucus has been actively working toward since 2016. According to the most recent updates from the California Secretary of State's Office, women hold or are winning 50 legislative seats statewide and have already outstripped the current record total of 39 seats in the state Assembly and Senate. At the current pace, 42% of the 120 seats in both houses will be held by women when the new Legislature convenes on December 5.

During this election cycle, women competed in 65 of the 100 open Assembly and Senate races — also a record. The number of women seeking office and the success of women in California legislative elections this year, and in recent years, was no accident. The Legislative Women's Caucus along with organizations across the state dedicated to increasing the number of women in elected office actively recruited female candidates. To assist women candidates, women Senators and Assemblymembers made monetary contributions, hosted fundraisers, ran phone banks, knocked on voter doors, and worked to get other prominent endorsements.

"I am proud of the collective work we have done to encourage women of diverse backgrounds to run for office and secure the resources needed to win to increase the number of women in the State Senate and Assembly. I am confident that the more women we have at the table representing intersectional identities, the more likely our state is poised to pass legislation that lifts everyone. Today we celebrate and tomorrow we continue to push to ensure we reach parity, not only for us but for every young girl who is sitting back and watching these moments unfold, hoping to one day change the world," said Assemblymember Cristina Garcia (D-Bell Gardens), chair of the California Legislative Women's Caucus.

"The outstanding performance by women this year shows that California is well on its way to fulfilling the promise of the late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who rightly noted that 'women belong in all places where decisions are being made,'" said Senator Nancy Skinner (D-Berkeley), vice chair of the California Legislative Women's Caucus. "This overwhelming success is also not only a testament to the terrific women candidates up and down the state, but also to the Women's Caucus concerted effort over the past six years joined by other stakeholders to increase the number of women in public office, protect and expand women's rights, and ensure that women are in 'the room where it happens.'"

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