

**GovernHers:** Twenty-five states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, have elected thirty-six women as governors of their state. The six of those states which have elected more than one woman governor, their cumulative fifteen women governors profiled below, are: Arizona 4, New Hampshire 3, Texas 2, Connecticut 2, Washington 2, and Kansas 2.

Arizona tops the list, having elected four women governors.

Rose Mofford, as Arizona's first woman governor, returned stability to state politics after she was sworn into office in 1988 following the tumultuous impeachment of her predecessor, Evan Mecham. She did not run for reelection.

Jane Dee Hull, Arizona's second woman governor, completed the term of another male governor dishonorably removed from office when Governor Fife Symington was convicted of a felony and had to resign. Hull was sworn into office in 1997 by the first woman U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, herself an Arizonian. Hull's successful reelection in 1998 was historic because for the the first (and last) time in the 224-year history of the United States all five of the top elected executive offices in one state were held by women: Hull; Betsey Bayless, secretary of state; Janet Napolitano, attorney general; Carol Springer, treasurer; and Lisa Graham Keegan, Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction. Limited to eight consecutive years in office, Hull was constitutionally barred from running for a second full term in 2002 and was succeeded by Janet Napolitano.

Janet Napolitano was Arizona's third woman governor from 2003 to 2009. She was the the first woman to succeed a woman governor and the first woman governor to win re-election. Earlier, in 1991, Napolitano was an attorney for Anita Hill's sexual harassment testimony against Clarence Thomas in his U.S. Supreme Court appointment proceedings. In 2009 after Napolitano was confirmed as the first woman secretary of Homeland Security, her term as governor was completed by Arizona Secretary of State Jan Brewer.

Jan Brewer, Arizona's fourth and third consecutive woman governor, went on to win the 2010 gubernatorial election with 55% of the vote and currently serves as Arizona's governor.

New Hampshire has elected three women governors.

Vesta Roy, as president of the state senate assumed the governorship when Governor Hugh Gallen died in office. She served as acting governor for basically one month until governor-elect John H. Sununu's inauguration in January, 1983.

Jeanne Shaheen served as the first "elected" woman governor of New Hampshire from 1997-2003. She is the first woman in U.S. history to be elected both as a Governor and a U.S. Senator. Shaheen was narrowly defeated by John Sununu in her first U.S. Senate campaign in 2002. Criminal allegations of phone jamming Shaheen's campaign party lines that led to convictions and jail time against several men in Sununu's party, may have contributed to her narrow loss. In her 2008 campaign Shaheen defeated Sununu in a rematch and currently is New Hampshire's senior U. S. Senator.

Maggie Hassen began her career in public service in 1999 when Governor Shaheen

appointed her a citizen advisor to the Advisory Committee to the Adequacy in Education and Finance Commission. Hassen, sworn into the New Hampshire Governor's office for a two-year term in January 2013, is the last of the thirty-six women governors to date elected in America.

Texas has elected two women governors.

Miriam "Ma" Ferguson was the 29th and 32nd governor of Texas. Her colorful bio can be readily researched. First elected in 1925 and then again in 1932, she almost was the first United States' woman governor. But Nellie Taylor Ross of Wyoming had been sworn into the office two weeks prior after winning a special election to complete the term of her husband who died during his term as governor.

Ann Richards was elected by the women and men of Texas as their second woman governor in 1991, sixty-six years after the governorship of "Ma" Ferguson. Richards came to national prominence with a keynote speech at the 1988 Democratic National Convention in which she mentioned both George Bushes, H.W. and W. Her colorful quotes can be readily researched.

Connecticut also has elected two women governors.

Ella Grasso the first Connecticut woman governor began her first term in 1975 and was reelected to a second term in 1978. However, on December 31, 1980, she resigned due to her ovarian cancer and died several weeks later at age 61.

M. Jodi Rell became Connecticut's second woman governor when Connecticut's Governor John G. Rowland resigned during another governor-corruption investigation in 2004. In 2005, Rell signed into law a bill that made Connecticut the first state to adopt civil unions for same-sex couples without being directed to do so by a court. In 2009, Rell signed into law a gender neutral marriage statute that also provided for civil unions to be automatically transformed into marriages on October 1, 2010.

Washington also has elected two women governors.

Dixy Lee Ray elected in 1976 served one term. Ray was a marine biologist appointed by Richard Nixon in 1973 as the first and only woman to chair the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission. When Mount St. Helens' volcanic activity began after 123 years of dormancy, Governor Ray issued an executive order on April 3, 1980 that restricted area access. Her order later credited by Forest Service responders to a post-eruption 'Warning and Response Survey' that kept between 5,000 and 30,000 potential fatal victims out of the blast area when the volcanic eruptions began in May of 1980 and ended 6 years later.

Christine Gregoire elected as Washington's second woman governor (2004-2013) supported a number of important measures on car emission standards and unemployment benefits. Governor Gregoire brokered new bipartisan transportation legislation and gave cost of living increases to state employees who hadn't received raises in "many years," and funded voter-approved initiatives to raise the pay of schoolteachers. It was suggested in the press that these groups gave money to fund her 2004 campaign. She signed a law granting same-sex couples domestic partnership rights on April 21, 2007 during her second term as Washington's governor.

Kansas also has elected two women governors.

Joan Finney in 1991 was the first woman in the United States to defeat an incumbent Governor in a general election. Kansas' oldest governor at age 65, she was one of the few pro-life Governors of the time and did not seek reelection.

Kathleen Sebelius was the second woman governor of Kansas, and with her former governor of Ohio father, became the first father/daughter governor pair in the United States. Sebelius left her Kansas state senate seat when elected as the state Insurance Commissioner. For that campaign she refused contributions from the insurance industry. She blocked the proposed merger of Blue Cross Blue Shield, Kansas' largest health insurer, with an Indiana-based company. It was the first time BC/BS was rebuffed in its acquisition attempts. Governor Sebelius served from 2003-2009 when she became the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services.

States that have had one woman governor are: Alabama, Kentucky, Vermont, Nebraska, Oregon, New Jersey, Ohio, Massachusetts, Montana, Puerto Rico, Delaware, Hawaii, Michigan, Utah, Louisiana, Alaska, North Carolina, New Mexico, South Carolina, Oklahoma, and Wyoming previously mentioned as the First.

States yet to have a woman governor, yet to be decided by their men and women voters, are: Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Main, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, New York, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

TOTAL NUMBER OF U.S. GOVERNORS	1776 TO PRESENT: 2,734
TOTAL NUMBER OF MALE U.S. GOVERNORS	1776 TO PRESENT: 2,698
TOTAL NUMBER OF FEMALE U.S. GOVERNORS	1776 TO PRESENT: 36

Sources: [http://governors.rutgers.edu/usgov/gov\\_archive.php](http://governors.rutgers.edu/usgov/gov_archive.php)  
<http://www.nga.org/cms/home.html>; <http://www.loc.gov/index.html>  
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