

Election 2014 Wrap-Up *(updated December 17)*

With the balance of power in the Senate in question, the 2014 congressional elections were among the most closely watched in recent years. Most predicted that control of the Senate would change hands. The election night results proved those predictions to be true, with the Republicans claiming 54 seats in the Senate and strengthening their majority in the House.

Two new Republican women will join the Senate in the 114th Congress: Sens.-elect Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) and Joni Ernst (R-IA). When Congress convenes in January, 20 women will be sworn-in. Of the women who will serve in the Senate, six will be Republicans and 14 will be Democrats. Sens. Kay Hagan (D-NC) and Mary Landrieu (D-LA) lost their reelection bids.

The Republicans claimed a 247-188 edge in the House of Representatives. A record number of women will serve in the House when the 114th Congress convenes in January. Of the 160 women who ran for seats in the House, 88 (including four non-voting delegates) will take the oath of office. This total represents a net increase of five seats over the number of women in the 113th Congress. Of the women who will serve in the House, 23 are Republicans and 65 are Democrats.

Rep. Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) vacated her seat for a successful Senate bid; Del. Donna Christensen also vacated her seat in an unsuccessful bid to become governor of the Virgin Islands. Reps. Colleen Hanabusa (D-HI) and Allyson Schwartz (D-PA) ran unsuccessful Senate and gubernatorial campaigns, respectively, while Rep. Gloria Negrete McLeod (D-CA) announced that she will leave Congress to run for county office in California. Reps. Michele Bachmann (R-MN) and Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY) announced they will retire at the end of the 113th Congress.

Women of color also will increase their ranks when the 114th Congress convenes in January. A record number of African American women will be sworn into the 114th Congress, including Reps.-elect Alma Adams (D-NC), Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ), Brenda Lawrence (D-MI), Mia Love (R-UT), and Del.-elect Stacey Plaskett (D-VI). This brings the total number of African American women serving in the House to 18; 14 African American women served in the 113th Congress.

Nine Latinas served in the 113th Congress. That number will remain the same in the 114th Congress, as Rep.-elect Norma Torres (D-CA) will replace outgoing Rep. Negrete McLeod.

Six Asian/Pacific American women served in the House during the 113th Congress. That total will remain the same in the 114th Congress, with loss of Rep. Hanabusa's seat and election of Del.-elect Amata Coleman Radewagen (R-AS). Sen. Mazie Hirono (D-HI) will continue to be the only woman of color serving in the Senate.

Women Newly Elected to the Senate

Sen.-elect Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) defeated Natalie Tennant (D) for the seat vacated by Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-WV). A former co-chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, Sen.-elect Capito first was elected to the House of Representatives in 2001. Previously, she served in the West Virginia House of Delegates and has been an advocate for health care, veterans, and financial services issues.

Sen.-elect Joni Ernst (R-IA) defeated Rep. Bruce Braley (D) for the seat vacated by Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA). Sen.-elect Ernst is a lieutenant colonel in the Iowa Army National Guard and recently commanded the largest battalion in Iowa. She previously served as Montgomery County Auditor and in the Iowa State Senate. Sen.-elect Ernst has been an advocate for veterans and reforming health care and the tax code.

Women Newly Elected to the House

Rep.-elect Alma Adams (D-NC) defeated Vince Coakley (R) for the seat vacated by Rep. Mel Watt (D-NC). Elected in a special election, Rep.-elect Adams will be sworn-in when Congress reconvenes in November. Rep.-elect Adams is a former chair of the North Carolina Women's Legislative Caucus and has served in the North Carolina State House for 20 years. She has focused on women's health and reproductive rights.

Rep.-elect Barbara Comstock (R-VA) defeated John Foust (D) for the seat vacated by Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA). Rep.-elect Comstock currently serves in the Virginia House of Delegates. She previously served as a congressional aide to Rep. Wolf and as chief counsel to the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee. During her career, she has focused on health care and tax relief for families.

Rep.-elect Debbie Dingell (D-MI) defeated Terry Bowman (R) for the seat vacated by her husband, long-serving Rep. John Dingell (D-MI). A former General Motors executive, Rep.-elect Dingell is the founder and past chair of the National Women's Health Resource Center and the Children's Inn at the National Institutes of Health. She has been an advocate of women's health and economic issues.

Rep.-elect Gwen Graham (D-FL) defeated incumbent Rep. Steve Southerland (R-FL). Following law school, Rep.-elect Graham worked in the private sector on energy and environmental issues. After working as a stay-at-home mom for several years, she served in several positions with the Leon County School Superintendent's office. The daughter of former Sen. Bob Graham (D-FL), she has been an advocate for education and preserving Medicare.

Rep.-elect Brenda Lawrence (D-MI) defeated Christina Barr (R) for the seat vacated by Rep. Gary Peters (D-MI). Rep.-elect Lawrence was the first woman and first African American mayor of Southfield, MI. During her tenure as mayor, Rep.-elect Lawrence has focused on paid sick leave, gun control, and early childhood education. Prior to her election as mayor, Rep.-elect Lawrence worked for the US Postal Service.

Rep.-elect Mia Love (R-UT) defeated Doug Owens (D) for the seat vacated by Rep. Jim Matheson (D-UT). Rep.-elect Love is the first African American Republican woman elected to Congress. She is a former mayor and member of the Saratoga Springs City Council. The daughter of Haitian immigrants, Rep.-elect Love has been an advocate for limited government and restraints on business.

Rep.-elect Martha McSally (R-AZ) defeated incumbent Rep. Ron Barber (D-AZ). Rep.-elect McSally is a retired Air Force colonel and the first woman to fly combat missions. A former legislative fellow for Sen John Kyl (R-AZ), she also served as a professor of national security studies at the George C. Marshall Center in Germany. She has been an advocate for limited government, health care reform, and national security issues.

Del.-elect Stacey Plaskett (D-VI) defeated Vincent Emile Danet (R) for the seat vacated by Del. Donna Christensen (D-VI). Del.-elect Plaskett is an attorney who previously worked as a congressional staffer on the House Committee on Ethics. She served as a prosecutor in the Bronx, NY and as senior advisor at the Justice Department. Del.-elect has been an advocate for health care, veterans' benefits, and voting rights.

Del.-elect Amata Coleman Radewagen (R-AS) defeated incumbent Del. Eni Faleomavaega (D-AS). Del.-elect Coleman Radewagen serves as a National Committeewoman for the Republican National Committee. A former congressional staffer, she was appointed by President George W. Bush to the White House Commission for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. She is the first woman elected to Congress from American Samoa.

Rep.-elect Kathleen Rice (D-NY) defeated Bruce Blakeman (R) for the seat vacated by Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY). Rep.-elect Rice served in the Brooklyn District Attorney's office before moving to Philadelphia to serve as an assistant U.S. attorney. She became the Nassau County district attorney in 2005, where she was known for her tough prosecution of DWI cases. Rep.-elect Rice has been an advocate for stricter gun laws and college affordability.

Rep.-elect Elise Stefanik (R-NY) defeated Aaron Woolf (D) for the seat vacated by Rep. Bill Owens (D-NY). At age 30, Rep.-elect Stefanik is the youngest woman ever elected to Congress. She previously served as part of President George W. Bush's Domestic Policy Council staff and in the chief of staff's office. A small businesswoman who currently works in her family's plywood business, Rep.-elect Stefanik has focused on health care, tax reform, and veterans and military families.

Rep.-elect Norma Torres (D-CA) defeated Christina Gagnier (R) for the seat vacated by Rep. Gloria Negrete McLeod (D-CA). Rep.-elect Torres was elected to the California State Senate in 2013 after serving in the California State Assembly. She also has served as mayor of Pomona, CA and in the Pomona City Council. Rep.-elect Torres has focused on homeownership issues, public safety, and the military.

Rep.-elect Mimi Walters (R-CA) defeated Drew Leavens (D) for the seat vacated by Rep. John Campbell (R-CA). Rep.-elect Walters currently serves in the California State Senate. She previously served in the California State Assembly and as mayor and council member of Laguna Niguel. Rep.-elect Walters is the founder of the California Women's Leadership Association and has been an advocate for lower taxes, fiscal responsibility, and property rights.

Rep.-elect Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ) defeated Alieta Eck (R) for the seat vacated by Rep. Rush Holt (D-NJ). Rep.-elect Watson Coleman is member of the New Jersey General Assembly, where she became the first African American woman to serve as Majority Leader. She previously established the Office of Civil Rights in the New Jersey Department of Transportation and has been an advocate for civil rights, education, and gun control.