Fact Sheet
WOMEN IN THE NEVADA LEGISLATURE

PREPARED AND UPDATED BY
RESEARCH DIVISION
LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU

NOVEMBER 2013

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE

Total Number of Women to Serve as Legislators in Nevada: 123
Assemblywomen: 107 Democrats: 78
Senators: 28 Republicans: 46
(12 served in both houses) (1 switched parties)

Appointed: 11
  Replaced Husband: 5
  Reelected: 2

After First State Election in Which Women Voted (1916):
Regular sessions with no women: 1917, 1931, 1933, 1947
Number of regular sessions with only one woman: 8 (1961 was the last)
First regular session with more than one woman: 1923 (4)
First regular session with women in both houses: 1935
Regular session with the most women (both houses): 1999 (18 Assemblywomen, 5 Senators)
Regular session with the most women in the Assembly: 1999 (18)
Regular session with the most women in the Senate: 2003, 2009 (7 in each)

Longest Service:
Barbara Buckley (D-Clark), 8 regular and 10 special sessions (16 years in the Assembly, including 2 sessions as Speaker of the Assembly)
Maggie Carlton (D-Clark), 8 regular and 11 special sessions (16 years in both houses)
Barbara Cegavske (R-Clark), 9 regular and 11 special sessions (18 years in both houses)
Helen Herr (D-Clark), 10 regular and 5 special sessions (18 years in both houses)
Ann O’Connell (R-Clark), 10 regular and 3 special sessions (20 years in the Senate)
Dina Titus (D-Clark), 10 regular and 9 special sessions (20 years in the Senate)
Sue Wagner (R-Washoe), 8 regular and 3 special sessions, plus 2 sessions as Senate President and Lieutenant Governor (16 years in both houses plus 4 years as Senate President)
Valerie Wiener (D-Clark), 8 regular and 10 special sessions (16 years in the Senate, longest serving female native Nevadan)

Counties Represented by the Most Women: Clark (66), Washoe (26), Nye (10)

County Never Represented by a Woman: Douglas
## LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ASSEMBLY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Majority Floor Leader</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Assistant Majority Floor Leader</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Majority Whip</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Assistant Majority Whip for Procedure</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Chief Deputy Majority Whip</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Minority Floor Leader</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Assistant Minority Whip</strong></td>
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## LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP

### SENATE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Senator</th>
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| President                       | Lieutenant Governor Sue Wagner (R-Washoe), 1991, 1993  
| Assistant Majority Floor Leader | Valerie Wiener (D-Clark), 2011  
                                      Debbie Smith (D-Washoe), 2013 |
| Majority Whip                   | Sue Lowden (R-Clark), 1993  
                                      Valerie Wiener (D-Clark), 2009 |
| Assistant Majority Whip         | Sandra Tiffany (R-Clark), 2003, 2005  
                                      Sheila Leslie (D-Washoe), 2011 |
| Assistant Minority Floor Leader | Sue Wagner (R-Washoe), 1983  
                                      Valerie Wiener (D-Clark), 1999  
                                      Barbara Cegavske (R-Clark), 2011 |
| Minority Whip                   | Bernice Mathews (D-Washoe), 1999  
                                      Barbara Cegavske (R-Clark), 2009 |

## LEGISLATIVE FIRSTS

**First Woman Elected to Nevada Legislature:** Sadie Hurst (R-Washoe), elected to Assembly in 1918

**First Woman to Serve in Senate:** Frances Friedhoff (D-Lyon), appointed to serve the remainder of 1935 Session

**First Woman Elected to Senate:** Helen Herr (D-Clark), 1966

**First Woman Elected to Subsequent Term:** Ethel McGuire (D-Nye), Assemblywoman, 1926–1930

**First Assemblywoman Elected to Senate:** Helen Herr (D-Clark), 1966
**LEGISLATIVE FIRSTS (continued)**


**First All-Female Leadership Team, Senate:** Dina Titus (D-Clark), Minority Floor Leader, Bernice Mathews (D-Washoe), Assistant Minority Floor Leader, and Valerie Wiener (D-Clark), Minority Whip, 2001

**First Woman to Serve in Leadership in Both Majority and Minority Parties, Senate:** Valerie Wiener (D-Clark), Assistant Minority Floor Leader, 1999; Assistant Minority Whip, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007; Majority Whip, 2009; and Assistant Majority Floor Leader, 2011

**First Woman to Serve in Leadership in Both Houses:** Sandra Tiffany (R-Clark), Assembly Speaker pro Tempore, 1995; Senate Assistant Majority Whip, 2003, 2005

**First Woman to Chair a Legislative Committee:** Ruth Averill (R-Nye) chaired two Assembly Committees in 1921: Engrossment and State Library

**First Committee in Each House With Female Majority:** Assembly Committee on the State Library, 1923 (but not chaired by a woman); Senate Committee on Commerce and Labor, 1995 (also not chaired by a woman)

**First Woman to Serve on the Money Committee in Each House:** Maude Frazier (D-Clark), Assembly Ways and Means, 1955; Diana Glomb (D-Washoe), Senate Finance, 1991

**First Woman to Chair the Money Committee in Each House:** Bernice Mathews (D-Washoe), Co-Chair, Senate Finance, 2009; Debbie Smith (D-Washoe), Chair, Assembly Ways and Means, 2011

**First General Election Race Between Two Female Candidates:** 1922, Mineral County, Rita Millar (D) defeated Genevieve H. Sperling (R), Assembly

**First Woman to Defeat a Male Incumbent:** Alice S. Towle (R-Churchill), Assembly, 1922

**First Female Legislator Who was a Native of Nevada:** Ruth Averill (R-Nye), born September 19, 1897, in Virginia City; elected to Assembly, 1920

**First African-American Female Legislator Elected in Each House:** Bernice Mathews (D-Washoe), Senate, 1994; Dina Neal (D-Clark), Assembly, 2010

**First Hispanic Female Legislators Elected in the Assembly:** Teresa Benitez-Thompson (D-Washoe); Irene Bustamante Adams (D-Clark); Olivia Diaz (D-Clark); and Lucy Flores (D-Clark), 2010
LEGISLATIVE FAMILIES


Senator Joseph M. Neal, Jr. (D-Clark, 1972–2004), father of Assemblywoman Dina Neal (D-Clark, 2010–2014)


Assemblyman A.A. Towle (R-Churchill, 1928-1930), father of Assemblywoman Alice S. Towle (R-Churchill, 1922-1924)


Assemblyman Wales Averill (R-Storey, 1874-1876), father of Assemblyman Mark Averill (R-Esmeralda, 1903), father of Assemblywoman Ruth Averill (R-Nye, 1921)


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1 SD, Silver Democrat
WOMEN IN STATE LEGISLATURE

FIRST AND LAST STATE TO ELECT WOMEN TO STATE LEGISLATURES*

First Women Elected to a State Legislature: Carrie Clyde Holly, Clara Cressingham, and Frances S. Klock (all Republicans), Colorado House of Representatives, 1894

First Woman Elected to a State Senate: Martha Hughes Cannon (Democrat), Utah, 1896

Last State to Elect a Female Legislator: Louisiana, 1936

By the end of the 19th century, 16 women legislators had served, all in Colorado, Idaho, and Utah. By the time the national women’s suffrage was ratified in 1920, 69 women had served in 12 states, including Nevada.


FEMALE STATE LEGISLATORS 2013 STATISTICS**

Female Legislators as a Percent of Total Legislators: 24.2 percent of all legislators in the United States and 27.92 percent of legislators in the Western states

States With Highest Percentages of Female Legislators: Colorado (41.0), Vermont (40.6), Arizona (35.6), Minnesota (33.3), New Hampshire (33.0), Illinois (32.2), Hawaii (31.6), Washington (30.6), Maryland (30.3), Connecticut (29.4)

States With Lowest Percentages of Female Legislators: Louisiana (11.8), South Carolina (12.9), Oklahoma (13.4), Alabama (14.3), Mississippi (16.1), Utah (16.3), West Virginia (16.4), Wyoming (16.7), Arkansas (17.0), North Dakota (17.0)

**Source: “Women in State Legislatures 2013,” Center for American Women and Politics, Rutgers University, May 2013