

Historical Highlights of the House



Women in the House

Prepared and Updated by
The Pennsylvania House of Representatives Archives

Number of Women Who Have Served Pennsylvania in the House since 1922:	183
Number of Democrats:	84
Number of Republicans:	97
Number of Other Political Parties:	1 - Lilith M. Wilson, 1931-1936, Berks County, Socialist
Number of Members Who Switched Political Parties:	1 - Patricia Carone, 1991-1998, Butler and Lawrence Counties, Democrat switched to Republican
Number of Counties that have had Female Representatives:	48 (out of 67)
First 8 Women Elected to the House in 1922:	Alice M. Bentley, Rosa Stein DeYoung, Sarah McCune Gallagher, Helen Grimes, Sarah Gertrude MacKinney, Lillie H. Pitts, Martha G. Speiser, Martha G. Thomas
First African American Woman Elected:	Crystal Bird Fauset, 1939-1940, Philadelphia
First Woman Elected to Leadership	Mary A. Varallo (Minority Caucus Chair, 1957-1958; Majority Whip, 1959-1960)
First Woman to defeat a Male Incumbent:	Sarah McCune Gallagher (1922 election, Cambria County, defeated William G. Griffith who was a two-term incumbent)
Number of Members Who Replaced a Spouse:	13 - Ruth Stover Donahue, Lourene W. George, Frances R Jones, Anita Palermo Kelly, Susan Laughlin, Katherine P. McHale, Jeanne McNeil, Marion L. Munley, Helen Odorizio, Martha G. Speiser, Leona G. Telek, Jean T. Wilson, and Elizabeth S. Wynd
Longest Serving Female Representatives:	Elinor Z. Taylor - 30 years Louise E. Williams Bishops and Babette Josephs – 28 years
Number of Sessions Without Any Female Representatives since 1923-1924 session:	2 - 1941-1942 and 1943-1944