



COMPLIANCE@WORK

An educational resource for Legislative Branch employees and employers to help understand workplace rights and legal responsibilities under the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995

CELEBRATING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

The Office of Compliance joins the Legislative Branch community in recognizing Women's History Month and celebrating the contributions of women to events in history and contemporary society. In 1987, Congress passed Pub. L. 100-9, designating the month of March 1987 as Women's History Month, and since 1995, presidents have issued [proclamations](#) declaring the theme each year.



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This year's [National Women's History Month](#) has been designated as "Working to Form a More Perfect Union: Honoring Women in Public Service and Government."

[Senator Barbara Mikulski \(MD\)](#)



Senator Barbara Mikulski has represented Maryland voters since 1977.

Maryland's Senator Barbara Mikulski was nominated as the 2016 National Women's History Month Honoree. She is being honored for her advocacy of critical issues such as equal pay and increased funding for medical research in the area of women's health care. As part of her legislative successes, Senator Mikulski introduced legislation that reauthorized the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, providing grants to states to help low-income parents find child care for their children. She also introduced the Paycheck Fairness Act that proposed to strengthen the Fair Labor Standards Act's protections against pay inequalities based on gender.

Senator Mikulski, who is self-appointed and unofficially known as "dean of the Senate women," has been a mentor to other women Senators, and has worked to form bipartisan coalitions throughout her career. Mikulski was elected to the House of Representatives in 1977 and to the Senate in 1987. Mikulski is the longest serving woman in Congress, as well as the first woman ever to chair the Senate Appropriations Committee. Of these milestones, she says, "It's not about how long I serve, but about how well I serve my state and my nation."

[Congresswoman Candice Miller \(MI-10\)](#)

Congresswoman Candice Miller has served Michigan's 10th Congressional District since 2003. As the Chair for the Committee on House Administration, she is the only woman chair of a committee in the House of Representatives. She serves as the Chair for the Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security and Vice Chair of the powerful Committee on Homeland Security. In Congress, Representative Miller has been a leader in protecting the Great Lakes and in promoting Michigan's industries. Like Senator Mikulski, Representative Miller is not seeking reelection this fall.



Representative Miller is the only woman Chair of a Committee in the House.

Office of Compliance
110 Second Street, SE
John Adams Building
Room LA 200
Washington, DC
20540-1999
P: 202.724.9250
F: 202.426.1913
@LegBranch_OOC

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Women Legislators on Capitol Hill

Since 1917, when Representative Jeannette Rankin of Montana became the first woman to serve in Congress, a total of 313 women have served as Representatives, Delegates, or Senators. One hundred and eight of the 313 women who have served in Congress are current Members – 88 in the House and 20 in the Senate. In total, there have been 278 women Representatives and 46 Senators. In fact, eleven women have served in both chambers. Other notable Congressional “firsts” include:



1964 – [Congresswoman Patsy Takemoto Mink](#) (HI): First Asian–American woman elected to the House

1968 – [Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm](#) (NY-12): First African-American woman elected to the House



1978 – [Senator Nancy Landon Kassebaum](#) (KS): First woman elected to a Senate seat that was not first held by her husband

1992 – [Senator Carol Moseley Braun](#) (IL): First African-American woman elected to the Senate



Freedom from Discrimination Based on Gender and Sex in the Legislative Branch

As a proponent of rights for all Legislative Branch employees, many of whom live in her state, Senator Mikulski voted to enact the Congressional Accountability Act in 1995 (CAA). The law applies Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to the Legislative Branch and makes it illegal for any Legislative Branch employer to discriminate against an individual on the basis of sex or gender. The law covers issues of hiring, firing, and other terms and conditions of employment, including promotions, raises, and other job opportunities. In other words, Legislative Branch employees may not be treated differently in their employment specifically because of gender. The Office of Compliance administers an [alternative dispute resolution program](#) to process claims of gender and sex discrimination.

The Office of Compliance trains and counsels Legislative Branch employees and employers with respect to their rights and responsibilities under the Congressional Accountability Act. The goal of the Office is to achieve a Legislative Branch that is free from unlawful discrimination.

For more information on the Congressional Accountability Act, discrimination on the basis of sex or gender, or your rights and responsibilities as a Legislative Branch employee, please contact the Office of Compliance at (202) 724-9250 or visit www.compliance.gov.