

CHAPTER 21 / Women in the Legislature, 1971–2007

There were 19 women out of 100 delegates to the constitutional convention. The 1972 Constitution established a Senate made up of 50 members elected to four-year terms and a House of Representatives made up of 100 members elected to two-year terms. Review the information in the chart below, and then answer the following questions.

Women Legislators 1971–2007

	'71	'73	'75	'77	'79	'81	'83	'85	'87	'89	'91	'93	'95	'97	'99	'01	'03	'05	'07
Senate	1	2	4	2	1	4	3	5	6	6	8	8	9	8	8	7	8	7	9
House	1	7	10	12	13	13	16	17	17	21	22	21	27	26	29	26	29	30	29

- What *percentage* of senators were women in 1971? In 2007?
- What *percentage* of representatives were women in 1971? In 2007?
- Which part of the legislative branch had a greater increase in the *percentage* of women members over the period shown in the chart?
- What *percentage* of delegates to the convention were women?
- Compared to the 1971 and 1973 legislative sessions, do you think the number of women at the constitutional convention was surprising? Why or why not?

Critical Thinking

What factors do you think are most important to explaining the increase of women in the legislature?