



Dear California Women Lead friend,

California Women Lead is proud to present our report on women’s representation in elected office in California; specifically focused on women serving as mayors and councilmembers for California’s 482 cities. This report includes the 2016 General Election results as well as 2017 Municipal elections.

The good news is; women serving at the local level increased their representation from the 2014/15 election cycle<sup>1</sup> by 67 council members and the City of Blue Lake, in Humboldt County, had an ALL FEMALE City Council. The number of cities with a majority of councilwomen decreased from 76<sup>2</sup> to 72, and 185 cities have only one woman on the board, which is an increase of 8 from the previous cycle.

California Women Lead is committed to providing the inspiration, network and tools to be successful candidates and elected officials to attain our goal of parity for women in elected office – at the local, state and federal level. California Women Lead continues to work statewide with our nonpartisan network to inspire women to consider public service. Through trainings, our LEADership Academies, appointments to boards and commissions and access to a statewide nonpartisan network of female leaders, it is our hope to see the number of women serving in elected office increase in the 2018 election cycle.

Please take a moment to review this report that analyzes the number of women in local city government, as well as women serving at the county, state and federal levels. We need to do more to empower women to run for office to create a more representative portrait on our city councils and other elected bodies across the state. Let’s work together to support more women aspiring to political leadership.

California Women Lead is proud to be the largest and most diverse nonpartisan women’s leadership association in California. The state board of directors - women from all political affiliations and levels of government - is committed to helping all women in our great state succeed in their leadership journey.

Please tell people to visit our website at [www.cawomenlead.org](http://www.cawomenlead.org), “Like” us on Facebook, “follow” us on Twitter, and tell your networks to do the same! Also, be sure to attend one of our upcoming LEADership Academies that includes our successful Appointment Training and then RUN FOR OFFICE OR APPLY FOR AN APPOINTMENT!

Together we can help increase the representation of women in government and in turn inspire more women to consider public service in all levels of government across the state.

In Leadership,

Rachel Michelin  
Executive Director/CEO

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<sup>1</sup> Election cycles include the November General Election as well as 2017 Municipal elections typically held in LA County

<sup>2</sup> Previous report can be accessed at [www.cawomenlead.org](http://www.cawomenlead.org)



**California Women Lead**  
ENGAGE • EMPOWER • ELECT

# THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT - 2017

Women are a driving force in California's economy – the 6<sup>th</sup> largest in the world. Women's impact on the economy is growing every year. The global incomes of women are predicted to reach a staggering \$18 trillion by 2018. Women drive 70-80% of all consumer purchasing through a combination of buying power and influence – meaning even when she isn't paying for something, she is often the influence or veto behind someone else's purchase. Women serve as primary caregivers for children and the elderly, buy on behalf of people who live in their households, as well as extended family (such as older parents and in-laws) and friends. This results in women being the economic driver in California's economy.

Yet, if women make up a significant portion of the economic base of California, shouldn't we be represented on California's elected and appointed boards and commissions at higher numbers? In the private sector, research shows that companies with gender-balanced teams have a higher Return On Investment (ROI) – shouldn't California strive for the same on our state's elected and appointed boards? And shouldn't those boards not only be gender and ethnically diverse, but also have diversity of thought and different perspectives?

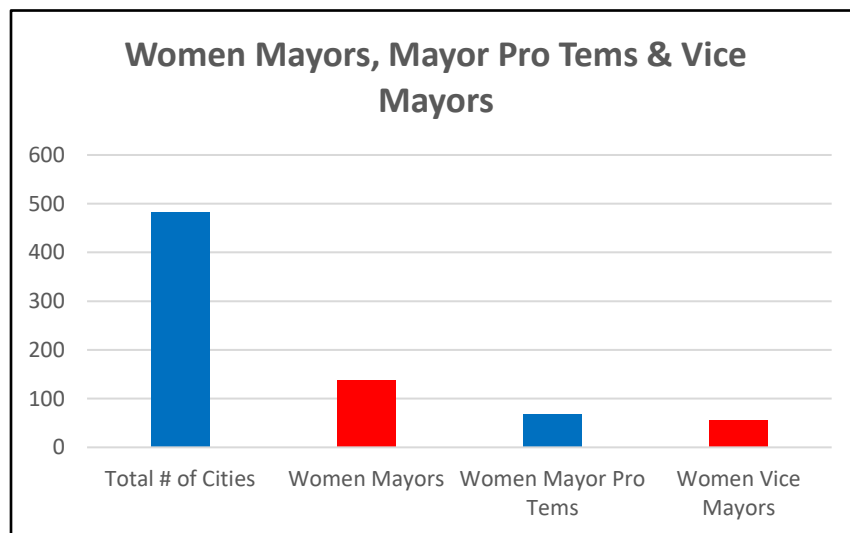
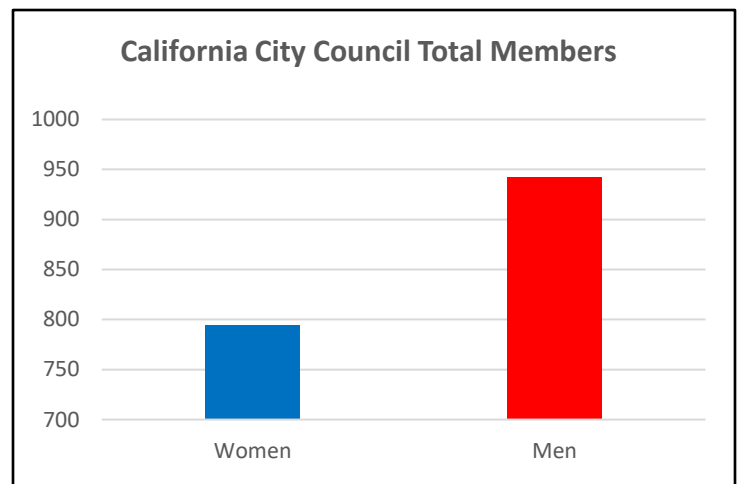
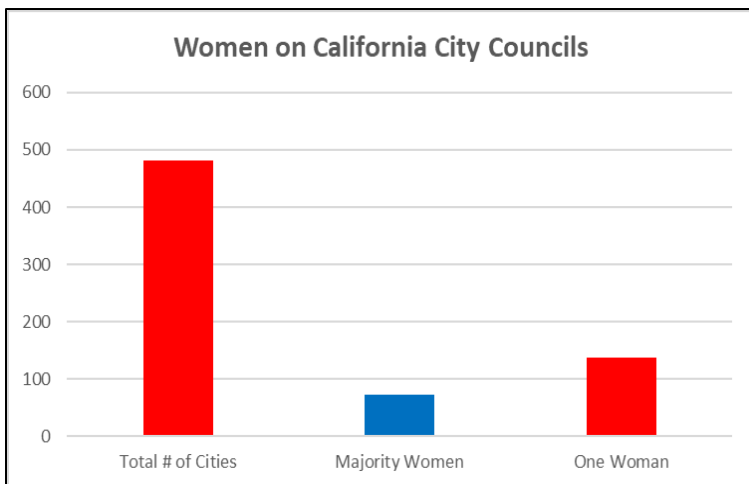
Term limits, the negativity of the election process, money, and time – are a few reasons why women are not running. California Women Lead knows we can do better and the state board of directors is committed to developing a farm team for women seeking elected or appointed office. If we want to realize a more representative portrait of the state on our elected and appointed boards, we need to do more to empower women to run for office or apply for an appointment

This report looks at where women in California stand in terms of serving in elected office at the local, state and federal levels. While women have yet to meet the 50 percent representation in elected office at any level, California Women Lead, in collaboration with the Brown Administration was able to reach 50 percent of women serving in Appointed Office at the state level in 2015. We know women make great public policy leaders, but we need to provide more opportunities, more training and more inspiration for women to consider political engagement if we ever hope to reach the same parity in elected office as we do on California's appointed boards.

Let's work together to support more women aspiring to become strong civic leaders.

## Key findings for California's 482 cities:

- The total number of women on city councils is 796 compared to 1734 men (31%)<sup>3</sup>
- There is a total of 482 cities in California<sup>4</sup>
- Women are 50% of the population (2015)<sup>5</sup>
  - 72 cities (15%) have a majority of women serving on the council
  - 184 cities (38%) have ONE woman on the council
  - 56 cities (12%) have NO women serving on the council
  - 137 (28%) of cities have a woman serving as Mayor
  - 69 women representing 14% of cities are serving as Mayor Pro Tem
  - 55 women representing 11% of cities are serving as Vice Mayor
  - In California, there is ONE city council, Blue Lake in Humboldt County, with an all women council



<sup>3</sup> There are 4 vacancies on city councils through the state at the drafting of this report

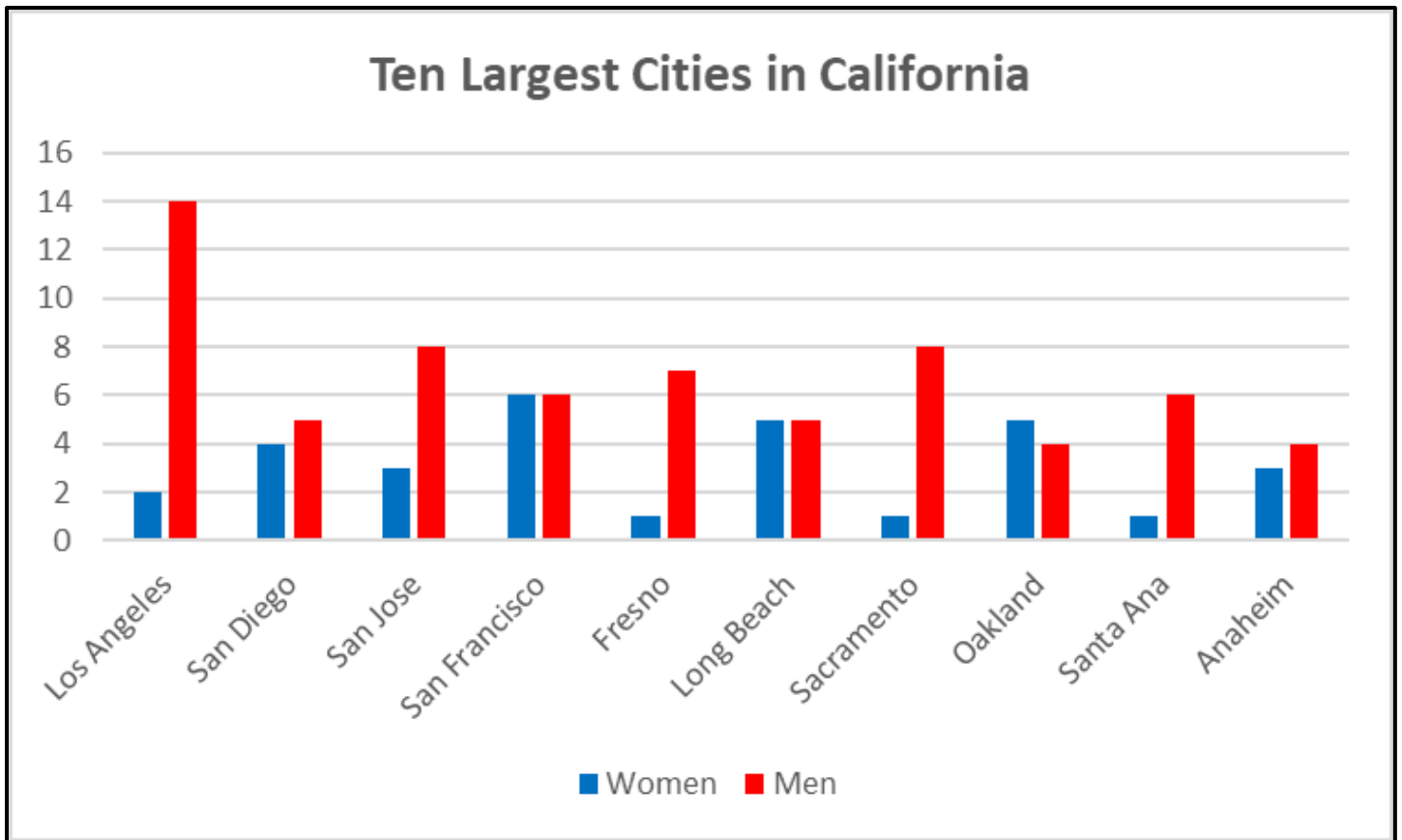
<sup>4</sup> Per data from the League of CA Cities

<sup>5</sup> <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/04000US06-california/>

Of the ten largest cities in California, the City of Oakland has the highest percentage of women serving (55%) and Los Angeles, Fresno, Sacramento, and Santa Ana have only one woman on the council.

Of the ten largest in California, only ONE (Oakland) has a woman serving as Mayor.

Los Angeles	2/16 (13%)	Long Beach	5/10 (50%)
San Diego	4/9 (44%)	Sacramento	1/9 (11%)
San Jose	3/11 (27%)	Oakland	5/9 (55%)
San Francisco	6/12 (50%)	Santa Ana	1/7 (14%)
Fresno	1/8 (13%)	Anaheim	3/7 (43%)



**Mayor Libby Schaff (D), City of Oakland**

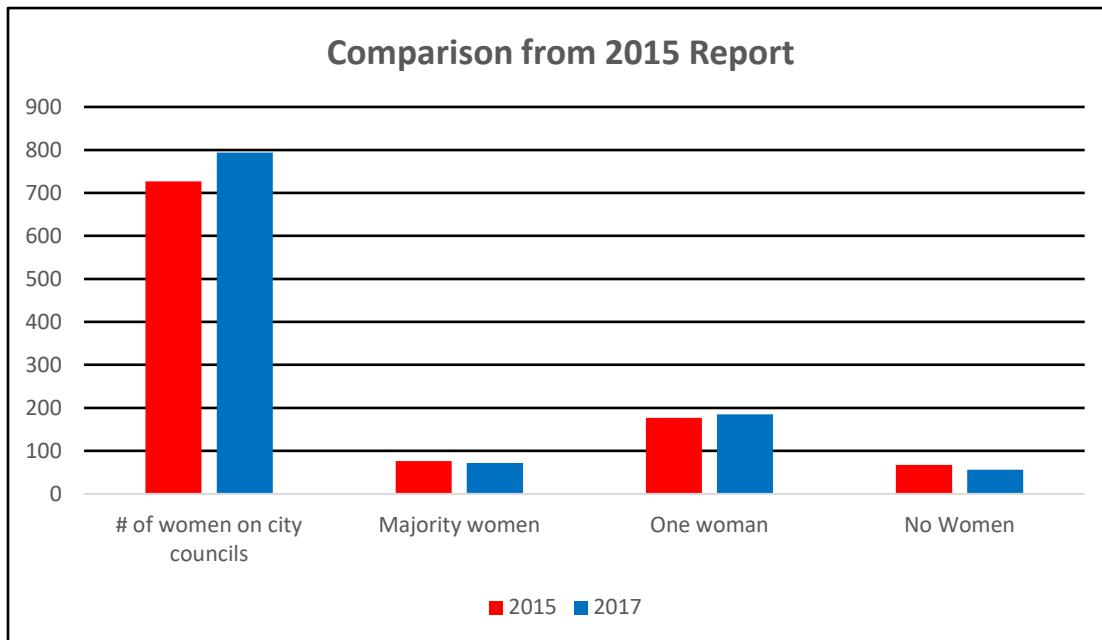
## COMPARISON FROM LAST ELECTION CYCLE (2014/15):<sup>6</sup>

In 2015, CA Women Lead released a report with the following findings:

- 727 women were serving on City Councils (28.6%)
- 76 (15.7%) of City Councils had a majority of women
- 177 (37%) of City Councils had one woman on the council
- 67 (14%) of cities had NO women serving on the council

In 2017, there has been some gains, and losses, in terms of women's representation in city government:

- More women are serving on City Councils in California - 68 more women
- 72 cities have a majority of women on the council – down 4 from the previous report
- 184 cities have one woman on the council – 7 more than the previous report
- 56 cities have no women on the council – down 11 from the previous report
- In 2014/15, one city – Eureka – had an ALL WOMAN City Council; that is not the case now.
- Currently, there are ZERO cities in California with an all women council



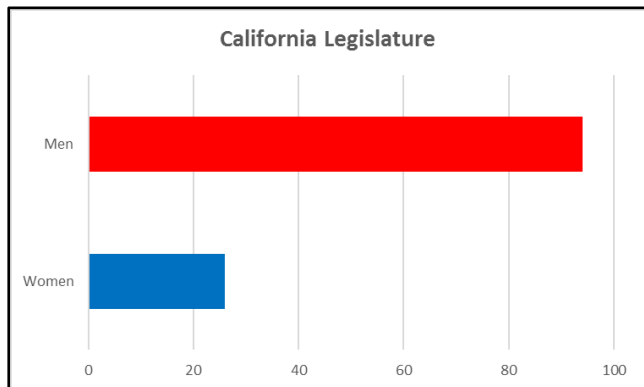
California Women Lead would like to thank the League of California Cities Women's Caucus for their support of this project by providing the raw data that was the basis for the analysis for the City Council numbers.

<sup>6</sup> Based on preliminary report written and released by CA Women Lead; 2015 available at [www.cawomenlead.org](http://www.cawomenlead.org)

## *Other statistics for women in elected office in California:*

### **STATE LEGISLATURE**

There are 26 women serving in the California State Legislature making up 22 percent of the Legislative body. Nine women serve in the California State Senate and 17 the in California State Assembly. Currently, one women serves in a leadership position – Senate Minority Leader Patricia Bates (R).



**Senate Minority Leader Patricia Bates (R)**

### **STATEWIDE OFFICE**

California has eight statewide offices of only one woman is occupying – State Controller Betty Yee. Women represent 13 percent of statewide offices. California has never elected a woman to the position of Governor or Insurance Commissioner.

California has elected:

- One woman Attorney General (Kamala Harris '10 to '16);
- One woman Superintendent of Public Instruction (Delaine Eastin '95 to '03);
- Two women State Controller (Betty Yee – '10 to present & Kathleen Connell '95 to '03);
- Two women Secretary of State (Debra Bowen '07 to '15; March Fong Eu '75 to '93);
- Three women State Treasurer (Kathleen Brown '95 to '03; Elizabeth Whitney '87 to '89; Ivy Baker Priest '67 to '74)
- California had a woman Acting Lieutenant Governor (Mona Pasquil '09 - '10)
- Only one woman from the California Republican Party has been elected statewide in California History – Ivy Baker Priest – 1967. The remainder of the women who have served in statewide office have been Democrats.

### **CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION**

California was the first state in the nation to elect two women to the United State Senate.

- Dianne Feinstein (D) – 1992 to present
- Barbara Boxer (D) – 1993 to 2017

In 2016, Senator Barbara Boxer retired from the U.S. Senate and was replaced by Kamala Harris (D).



**California State Controller Betty Yee (D)**

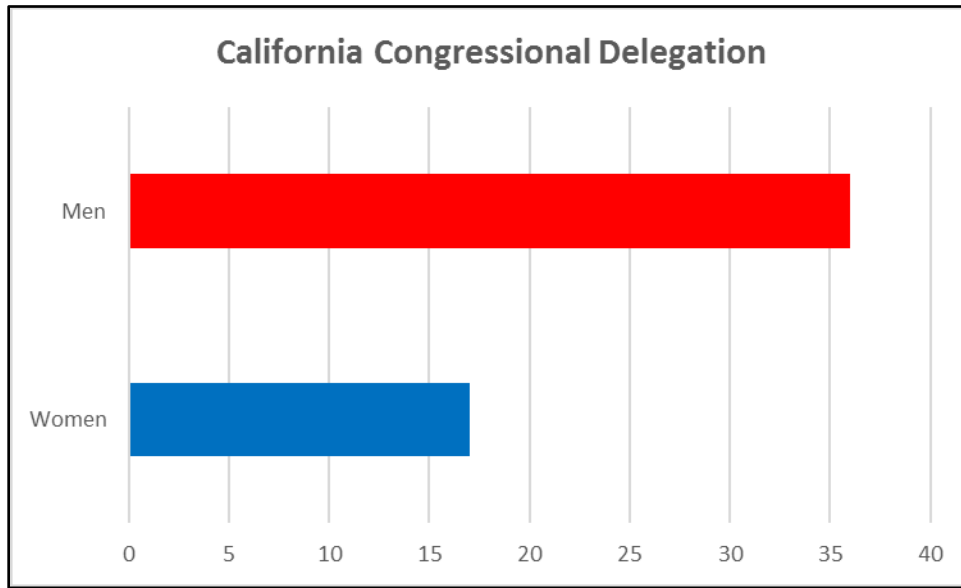


**Senator Dianne Feinstein (D)**



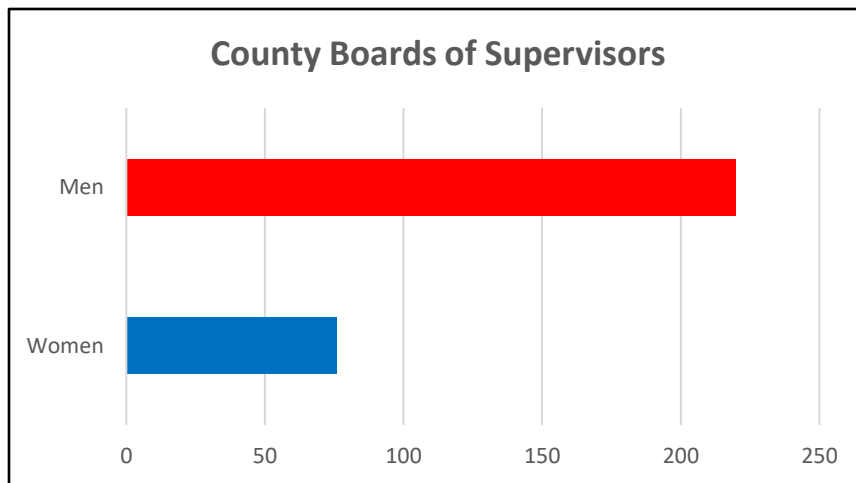
**Senator Kamala Harris (D)**

Currently there are 17 women serving in the 53 member Congressional delegation (32%). Seventeen are Democrats; one is a Republican.



### COUNTY BOARDS OF SUPERVISORS

- Women hold 76 of 296 County Boards of Supervisors in California, making up 25.6 percent of elected county seats.
- Five Counties -- Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Marin, San Francisco & Sonoma have a female majority on the county board.
- Currently, 14 counties have no female representation on the county board.



Our mission is increasing the number of women in elected and appointed office at all levels of California government – state, county and city. We are a statewide non-partisan network of citizen, business and government leaders. Our successful programs include our statewide LEADership Academies and our California Women State Appointments Project that resulted in the Governor making at least 50 percent of his appointments female. For more information about our mission and programs, please visit [www.cawomenlead.org](http://www.cawomenlead.org)