

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?
