

Every Woman Counts



In October of 2010, RI-GAP committee members asked all four gubernatorial candidates to sign a pledge. The pledge read:

“I recognize the fact that women are far under-represented in state government, holding approximately 15% of appointed positions in Rhode Island. This is unacceptable.

I pledge that if I am elected governor I will work to more than double the percentage of women appointed to boards and commissions, as well as high-level staff and cabinet positions in my administration.

Further, I will appoint a senior member of my administration as the liaison to RI-GAP in order to enhance communications and information during the transition period and throughout the administration.”

Every candidate signed.



RHODE ISLAND GOVERNMENT
APPOINTMENTS PROJECT

The Process

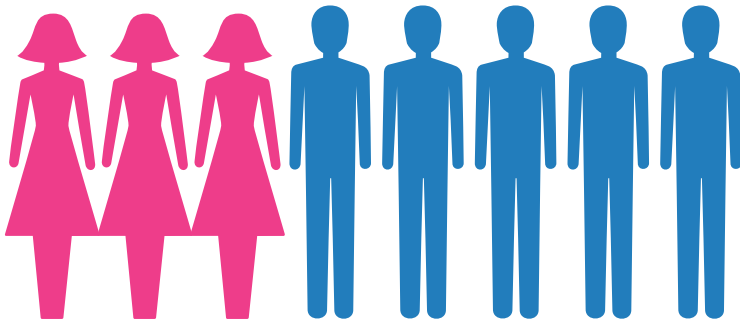
RI-GAP, a project of Women's Fund of Rhode Island, is a non-partisan effort aimed at increasing the number of women appointed by the governor to cabinet level positions, boards, and commissions in the public sector. RI-GAP created an electronic process for collecting resumes from women throughout the state interested in being appointed to a board, commission, or senior staff position. Over 350 resumes were collected and hand-delivered to Governor Chafee's transition team.

Since January 2011, Governor Chafee has made 622 appointments to over 500 boards and commissions. 269, or 43%, of those appointments are held by women.

RI-GAP now monitors 166 of the most active and influential boards and commissions and senior staff and agency directors appointed by the Governor. In order to do so, RI-GAP reviews the searchable database available on the Secretary of State website (sos.ri.gov). Researchers review each name to determine the gender of the appointee. When necessary, researchers also review secondary information (such as other websites and Providence Journal articles) to determine the gender of the appointee.

The Product

Senior Staff and State Agencies
As of April 1, 2012:

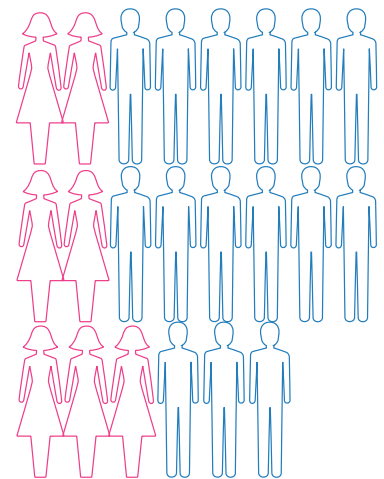


3 of the top 8 senior staff members in Governor Chafee's administration are female.

7 of the 22
directors appointed
by Governor Chafee
are female

**Departments with a female
director include:**

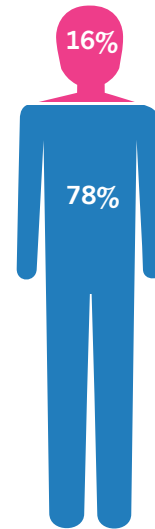
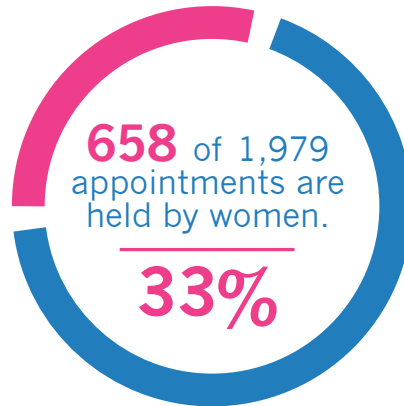
Child Advocate
Children, Youth and Families
Elderly Affairs
Environmental Management
Human Services
Motor Vehicles
Revenue



Boards and Commissions
As of April 1, 2012:

1,979

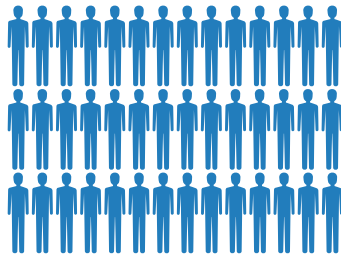
men and women
serve on the
166 Boards and
Commissions
reviewed by RI-GAP



16% of
boards and
commissions
maintain
gender equity
(where one
gender holds
no less than
40% and no
more than
60% of all
seats).

78% of
boards and
commissions
are 60%–
100% men.

42
boards and
commissions have
no women
serving on them.



1
board and
commission
has no men
serving on it.

209 of the 462 appointments made
by Governor Chafee are held by women.

209

253



116

of the 209 women are
appointments to the
newly created Healthcare
Reform Commission.

On all 166 boards and commissions
The same person may be appointed to multiple boards.
127 appointments are currently vacant.
454 appointments are expired.

An appointee may continue to participate in a board or
commission after his/her appointment expires if a new
appointment is not made to fill the position.

The Law

Title 28: Chapter 28-5.1 Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action

In 2007, the Rhode Island legislature passed a law requiring that “each person responsible for appointing one or more individuals to serve on any board or commission or to the governing body of any public authority or board shall endeavor to assure that, to the fullest extent possible, the composition of the board, commission, or governing body reflects the diversity of Rhode Island’s population.” The statute also requests that all boards, agencies, commissions, or authorities file a notification with the state equal opportunity office that lists all members and their race, gender, and date of appointment. The statute also instructs the general assembly and the governor to consider recommendations made through the Rhode Island Affirmative Action Professionals. Further, the statute requires a utilization analysis of appointments to be submitted twice a year by the Equal Employment Opportunity Administrator and that analysis should be available as a public document on the Secretary of State’s website.

Currently, the data available on the Secretary of State’s website only includes: the appointee’s name, name of board or commission, date of appointment and by whom, and date of term expiration (if applicable).

Recommendations:

Develop a plan for tracking demographic data by EEOA, as required by law.

Review expired appointments and vacancies on boards that have a disproportionate number of either men or women to create gender parity.

Continue appointing women in order to reach gender equality across all boards, commissions, and senior staff.



STEERING COMMITTEE:

Susan Farmer, Co-Chair
Sue Stenhouse, Co-Chair
Myrth York, Co-Chair

Kerrie Bennett
Susan Colantuono
Maria DeCarvalho
Maureen Moakley
Adelita Orefice
Lisa Pelosi

Lila Sapinsley
Deborah Smith
Anne Szostak
Linda Ward
Jennifer Wood

WOMEN'S fund
R H O D E I S L A N D

One Union Station Providence, RI 02903

www.wfri.org