

Highest Proportion of Women in Australian Political History in the Legislative Council of Western Australia

The Legislative Council of Western Australia has achieved the highest proportion of women members of parliament in Australian political history at 47% or 17 out of 36 members.

The 17 female members range in age, with many of the Members holding prominent positions within the House, such as Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries, Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Ministers.

Noting that the theme of International Women's Day 2010 is '*Equal rights, equal opportunity: Progress for all*', I am delighted to say that the Legislative Council has achieved this result which is near to half the Council membership.

The Upper House has moved closer to being a mirror of the demographic make-up of Western Australia by this achievement.

The Legislative Council has also reached the milestone of close to 50% female members, with a vacancy filled in the East Metropolitan Region by the newly sworn-in the Hon. Linda Savage. This is the first region to be represented solely by female members.

The proportion of women in the Western Australian Parliament has grown slowly. In 1974, there was only a single woman in the Western Australian Parliament. The 1970's marked the beginning of a steady growth in the number of women members.

Noting that history has been made, I am pleased to advise the Parliamentary History Committee will be producing a revised and expanded publication documenting the progress and achievements of women in the West Australian Parliament.

It is important that the Parliament reflects the community it represents. The increase in women members helps in that process and I believe it strengthens the Legislative Council's ability to act as 'House of Review' for the Western Australian community.



Picture: The President, Hon Barry House, surrounded by 14 of the 17 female Members of the Legislative Council.