

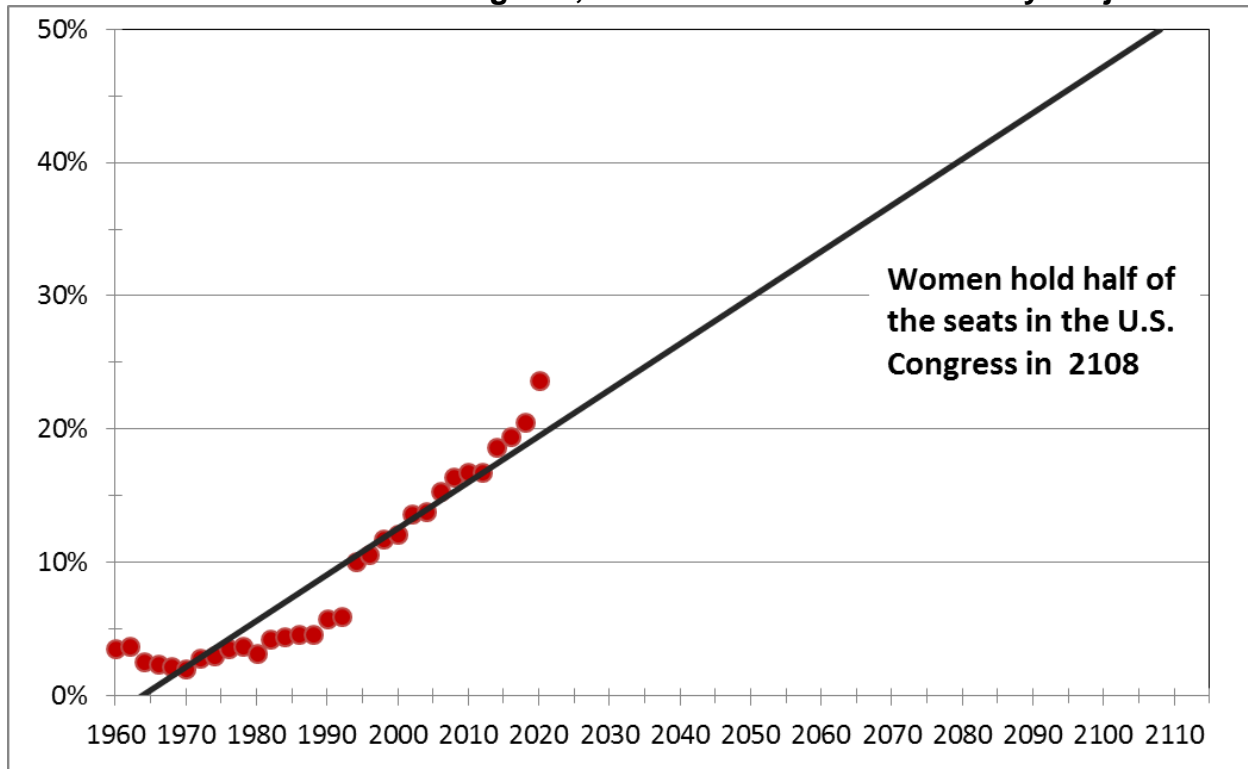
QF #078

March 5, 2020

## Gender Parity in the U.S. Congress: Women Will Wait 88 Years before Achieving Equal Representation

Women are a vital and integral part of building strong communities, and equal participation of women in elective office is crucial to a fair and equitable democracy. By running for office, women shape laws, policies, and decision-making in ways that reflect their interests and needs, as well as those of their families and communities. In 1979, women held only 3 percent of seats in the U.S. Congress. Today, the share of seats held by women is almost eight times larger (23.7 percent) and women are a powerful force in the electorate, informing policymaking at all levels of government. Although women have become increasingly active in U.S. politics, the majority of members of congress are still male. If the current rate of progress remains the same, women will not reach parity with men in the U.S. Congress until 2108 – a wait of 88 years.

### Women's Share of Seats in Congress, 1960-2020 and Political Parity Projection



Source: IWPR analysis of data from *History of Women in the U.S. Congress*. 2020. Fact sheet from Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University. (<http://cawp.rutgers.edu/history-women-us-congress>)