



INVEST IN WOMEN. INVEST IN DEMOCRACY.

The Ascend Fund is committed to accelerating the pace of change toward gender parity in U.S. politics. Because while women are 51% of the U.S. population, they still make up less than 30% of our country’s elected leaders—even accounting for recent and historic gains. 

WHEN WOMEN RUN, WOMEN WIN

But for women, the current pathway to elected office is often unclear, riddled with barriers and diversions, or worse, altogether inaccessible. As a collaborative fund, The Ascend Fund pools philanthropic capital and invests in nonpartisan, nonprofit organizations. Increased investment, in historically underfunded organizations, help them more effectively. Without additional investment, it could take more than 100 years to achieve gender parity in U.S. politics. We have a plan for women to reach 50% representation in all 50 states by 2050.

ESTABLISH A PATHWAY **01**

for more women to see themselves as candidates and normalize women’s leadership.

BRIDGE THE GAP **02**

by providing women with the tools, training, and resources to successfully run for office.

TRANSFORM THE SYSTEM **03**

by dismantling roadblocks so elected officials reflect the diversity of the population.

WHEN WOMEN LEAD, OUR NATION IS TRANSFORMED

The Ascend Fund is committed to realizing a representative democracy within 30 years, not merely because we believe it’s what’s fair – but because we believe it’s what’s smart. When women win elections, they:

CHANGE THE AGENDA

and are more likely to prioritize legislation that benefits women, children, and families.

GOVERN DIFFERENTLY

by building coalitions, working across the aisle, and reaching compromise on divisive issues.

DISRUPT SYSTEMS

and normalize women’s leadership which positively affect the political ambitions of young women and women of color.

THE FUTURE PACE OF PARITY

2138

The year women would reach parity if we were to **continue at the rate seen over the last century.**



2072

The year women could reach parity if we continue to **progress at the same rate as the past 20 years.**



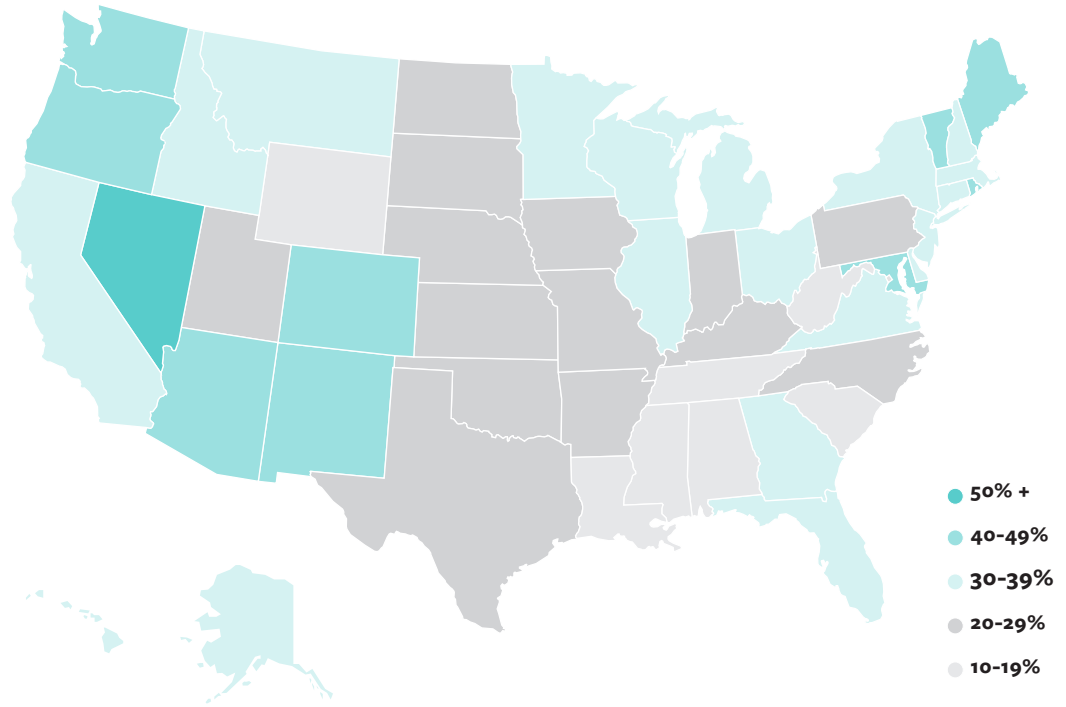
2050

Our accelerated target for achieving parity. Together, we are committed to **realizing a representative democracy within 30 years.**

THE MOMENTUM STARTS WITHIN THE STATES

RANKING THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN AMONG STATE LEGISLATURES

Critical policy decisions are made in state legislatures, yet in 40 states, women hold less than 40% of the seats.



PARTNERS IN PROGRESS

The Ascend Fund works with organizations to improve the gender composition of state legislatures. Our national partners work in all 50 states and we recently launched a three-state pilot in Michigan, Mississippi, and Washington. By investing in state legislatures, we're investing in a critical pipeline to propel women to parity in all levels of government.



VAST POTENTIAL

There are 8,000 elected officials serving at the state level, compared to 535 members of Congress.



CRITICAL GROUND

Powerful policy decisions happen at the state level and they have cascading influence upward and across our communities.



COMPOUNDING EFFECT

State legislative campaigns operate on smaller budgets than congressional ones, so dollars stretch farther and impact more seats.

The Ascend Fund is uniquely committed to supporting women across the political spectrum. Why? Because if we're going to ascend, we must rise together. We are creating state-specific strategies to reach this ambitious goal by 2050 and have already invested more than \$6 million in organizations committed to accelerating the pace of gender parity. Learn more at www.theascendfund.org.

"GETTING MORE WOMEN IN OFFICE STARTS WITH GETTING MORE WOMEN TO RUN. THE ASCEND FUND PROVIDES ESSENTIAL SUPPORT FOR ORGANIZATIONS ON THE FRONT LINES OF THIS IMPORTANT MISSION."

— MELINDA GATES