A History of Women in the Indiana Legislature, 1921-1992

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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Abstract

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This honors thesis is an historical look at the women who have served in the Indiana General Assembly since the ratification of the 19th Amendment by the Indiana Legislature in 1920.

This perspective is written chronologically and broken down into chapters relative to movements that occurred in Indiana women's history. These chapters identify the women who have served, their backgrounds, and the issues that they faced during these periods.

The information contained within these pages was found in the 'women in politics' and 'women in the Indiana Legislature' clipping files located on the first floor of the Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, IN.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

I had not originally considered writing a history of the women who have served in the Indiana Legislature. It wasn't until I became an intern for Ball State University Vice President of Business Affairs, Dr. Robert T. Perry, and his assistant, Michael McDaniel, that my interest in women and their role in politics began.

Working in a world of men as I did, I began to wonder how women ever became a part of this "old boys network." I became very curious as to how long and arduous this process must have been. I was also very privileged to have worked alongside a past female legislator, the Honorable Marilyn F. Schultz, Bloomington. She now serves as governmental liaison to Indiana State University, but was able to share with me some of her experiences as a legislator for 14 years.

Representative Schultz was the reason for this paper. She was a very active and controversial legislator during her years of service, and her decision not to run for re-election in 1986 came as a shock to many of her supporters.

Representative Schultz was the first woman appointed to the House Ways and Means Committee in 1974, and she was the only woman on the tax-writing and budget-making panel, until she was joined by Representatives Vaneta Becker and Mary Kay Budak.

Above and beyond her highly respected senior membership, Representative Schultz also championed many of her own personal
causes and those that affected women throughout Indiana including the Equal Rights Amendment.

Through her incredible legacy of achievement I have developed my own aspiration of becoming a legislator and an interest in the Indiana political system.

I did all of my research at the Indiana State Library by digging through two large clipping files on women in Indiana politics that spanned the last eight decades. I was amazed to find that there has never been any historical perspective provided for women in the Indiana Legislature. I did find a list of 12 biographies, compiled by Caroline Dunn in 1938, for the first women that served in the legislature, and about a hundred articles that had appeared in three Indianapolis newspapers beginning in 1921.

From this information I was able to organize this project into five time periods based upon the issues and the numbers of women who served. These time periods are chapters contained herein: the 1920’s-1950’s, the 1960’s, the 1970’s, the 1980’s and finally the 1990’s.

I divided the articles and clipping information into these five chapters and proceeded to trace the women who served during these periods and their significant issues. I did not include in the paper the names of every single woman that served; however, I did provide a chronological history of names (see Appendix A), at the end of the paper, and the biographies of the first twelve women to serve (see Appendix B).

This was a very large project. What I hope I have done is
provide a very basic historical perspective that collates all the information available of which I was aware. I plan to send a copy of this to the Indiana State Library for their clipping file, so that the next person that comes along will have an outline of female political participation in Indiana.

Hopefully, women will have a formal historical perspective in place, someday, on the shelves of the Indiana State Library.
Chapter 2
The 1920's through the 1950's

The idea of women's suffrage did not originate with the adoption of the 19th Amendment in 1919. Women's suffrage was first considered in Maryland in 1647, and the Quakers were the first to recognize the diverse abilities of women, who were capable of taking care of their homes and families, and capable of making decisions for the rest of the Quaker community by participating in town government. The idea of women's suffrage had been under consideration for at least 100 years before its final acceptance and adoption.

In June 1919, the 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States was adopted by Congress. It reads:

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.

The 19th Amendment was ratified and confirmed by the General Assembly of Indiana in a special session, January 16, 1920. It was adopted in name only until three-fourths of the states in the U.S. had adopted the amendment. On August 26, 1920, after three-fourths of the states adopted the 19th Amendment, the Secretary of State proclaimed it in affect in Indiana also.

With the advent of women's suffrage, a substantial increase in the popular vote was cast. In Indiana in 1916, the last presidential election before women's suffrage went into the
affect, 718,851 men voted. In 1920, the popular vote which included women rose 544,113 to 1,262,964; an increase of 75 percent in the State of Indiana. (1)

Women really did not waste any time entering the Indiana General Assembly. However, the first woman that served didn’t run. In 1921, Julia D. Nelson (R-Muncie) was the first woman to serve in the Indiana House of Representatives. She did not run for the spot, but was appointed to the position after the death of Republican State Representative Clark D. McKinley. She served a full term, but never held a public office after that time. She did continue to be active in politics and suffrage work. When she died in 1936, she was 73 years old.

The legislative topics which Representative Nelson was concerned with in the 1921 session were not that much different from the legislation that is headed for the House in 1993. Some of the legislation that was passed into law in 1921 concerned teachers’ pensions, city zoning, school lunches, the establishment of Riley Hospital, school attendance and financial assistance to public health nursing associations.

In 1923 Representative Elizabeth Rainey (R-Marion) was the second woman to serve in the House. She was the first woman popularly elected to her seat. Unlike Representative Nelson, Rainey was a very educated woman for 1923. She had graduated from high school, attended business school and then finally received her J.D. from Benjamin Harrison Law School. During her term in the House, she authored the law that designated the tulip (poplar) as the state flower and tree. And after her term, she became an attorney and office manager of Cox, Conder, Bain & Cox of
Indianapolis, until her death in 1935.

In the 1925 session, two women held seats, Representative Elizabeth Hunt Daugherty (R-Wabash) and Representative Antoinette Hagenwald (R-Vigo). Representative Hagenwald was a housewife with no formal education, but Representative Daugherty had attended Valparaiso Normal School, State Normal School at Terre Haute, and graduated in 1897 from the Indianapolis Business University. According to a biographical blank that Representative Daugherty filled in for the State Library's records, she said, "The session of 1925 has been one of the most pleasant experiences of my life. I hope the future women members may fare as well." (2)

In the 1927 session women held two seats, and in 1929 women held three. These representatives were Ella Van Sickle Gardner (R-Marion) and Clara A. Mason (R-Vigo) in 1927 and Representative Lettie M. Ferguson (R-Allen), Representative Aeola Hershey Misener (R-Laporte) and Representative Bertha A. Zimmerman (R-Vigo) in 1929.

Beginning in 1931, women lost their previous foothold of three seats and held only one seat each year until 1939. The beginning of the war years in 1941 was the beginning of increased participation by women in the House. The first woman served in the Senate in 1943; Arcada Balz (R-Johnson, Marion).

Senator Balz said in an article in the Indianapolis Times, "Schools, welfare, marriage and better housing will be the legislation on which I will be most likely to speak." (3) She served on the advisory committee to the Indiana Commission for the Northwest Territory Celebration, and she won much praise for her work to restore New Harmony as a memorial. She worked on
reconditioning Indiana's marriage laws with a state committee and also was a member of the governor's committee on public safety.

The 1943 session marked the beginning of women taking over seats left by husbands called to duty. Representative Elizabeth Downing (R-Marion) found herself in this situation unexpectedly when her husband was drafted into the Navy. She was a representative by day, and ammunition maker by night. "She represents the kind of family that is going to win the war. And while she probably won't be jumping up to make speeches, she will just sit quietly on the sidelines and vote as she puts it, 'as honestly as I know how.'"(4)

Due to World War II, Indiana women increased their interest and activity in the election of 1944. They cast more than fifty percent of the votes, and they elected more women to public office than in former years. While Senator Balz remained the only woman in the Senate, a record number of seven women served in the House in the 1947 session. However, while the number of women serving in the legislature was increasing, their status among their male counterparts was not as reported in an excerpt from an article found in the Indianapolis Star.

Seven legislators who took seats last Thursday when the Indiana General Assembly convened won't be playing a very prominent role in smoke-filled Claypool Hotel rooms in coming weeks as cigar-waving legislators enliven, with lusty conversation, the business of making laws. But the outnumbered seven—the women of the 1947 Assembly—even though barred by the nature of things from most of the male secret sessions, nonetheless again this year will make their presence felt in the more formal atmosphere of the House and Senate chambers.(5)
As the male secret sessions continued, women did start making their mark in the more formal sessions in the mid to late 1940’s by introducing legislation in the areas of welfare, social security, schools, children and state institutions. These issues were dealt with mainly by women because these were issues that were seen to be associated with their types of outside experience. While it may seem somewhat discriminatory for women to be assigned solely to these committees, these issues had not been previously addressed until women began serving in the General Assembly.

Political writer Ralph Brooks discussed this paradoxical role that women were playing in the legislature and outlined a fear that was beginning to surface about women having the ability to become a political threat to the “old boy network.” Brooks conceded that politics was quickly becoming a “woman’s game.” “Even now without a woman’s party,” Brooks said, “women actually control elections. From controlling elections to creating a political party is only a short step, and that step could be taken easily.” This rather progressive theory for 1948 came three decades before an equal rights amendment would be introduced. And what else did Mr. Brooks predict in 1948?

Today they (women) are strong enough to form their own party if they want to. Whether they do it is up to them, and the prospect is something the old-line male politician doesn’t even like to catch himself thinking about. (6)

There was a change of focus for women legislators in the 1950’s. While a women’s party was never formed, nor even a women’s
caucus, women were becoming more involved in issues that had previously been male dominated. For instance, Representative Fern E. Norris (R-Marion) was very involved in legislation that created the Marion County Sewage System, the belt highway around the city (the precursor to I-465) and the Indiana Veteran's Administration. She was also past vice-chairman of the State Republican Committee.

One of Representative Norris' female counterparts, Representative Nelle B. Downey (R-Marion), was very involved in the 1951 amendment regarding probation officers and intake workers. She introduced an adoption bill as a freshman lawmaker that provided a model for use all over the United States.

In 1951, Senate members saw a dramatic change in the issues women began pursuing. Topping the lists of both Senator Dorothy Gardner (R-Fort Wayne) and Senator Mary Garrett (R-Marion) was a "sound, adequate civil defense plan for the state." After the civil defense issue, both women were very interested in legislation that addressed the Juvenils Court system, the government's merit system, and patient care in Indiana state mental hospitals. None of these issues had been pursued by women previously.

Representation became a concern again for women in the early 1950's. The number of women legislators decreased in the 1951 session from six to four. The number of women legislators remained at a four, until the 1955 session where the number doubled to eight. Four of these eight women were Senator Dorothy Gardner (R-Allen) an authority on mental health, Representative Naomi Kirk (D-Floyd) a political novice that defeated her former pupil, Representative Mildred Churilla (D-Lake) a legislator's
widow, and Representative Betty Malinka (D-Lake) a legislator serving her sixth term and one of three Democrats from Lake County.

The remaining four included Representative Elsie Barning (D-Vanderburgh), Representative Alice Mathias Brown (D-Lake), Representative Anna P. Smelser (D-St. Joseph) and Representative Harriet Stout (R-Marion). On the agenda for this session were many of the same issues that had been discussed previously including mental health institutional reform, teacher pensions, public health, welfare and public safety.

The 1957 Senate session was a landmark for one woman in Indiana politics. Senator Dorothy Gardner (R-Allen) began the second half of her third term in the Senate, the longest term held by a woman. Gardner also had the distinction of being the second woman to serve in the Senate, the first Senator Balz, and the first woman to be re-elected.

In the 1957 session, Senator Gardner sought legislation that would provide a study commission to look at the needs of retarded children. She hoped that this information would be used to coordinate services for the mentally retarded and provide adequate personnel in retarded children homes.

Her female partner in the Senate, Senator Martha Burnett, was the head of an insurance company as well as the mother of two. She was the author of legislation, that still stands today, mandating re-examination for driver’s licenses. Although successful in the legislature, she didn’t feel as knowledgeable about other Senators.

I feel rather lucky,” she said with a smile. “Perhaps I don’t know the senators as well as Dorothy. But I know most of
their wives from my days in the State Assembly Women’s Club. And I can get to the men through their wives.(8)

The political involvement of women began in the 1920’s, one year after the ratification of the 19th Amendment by Indiana. In the years that followed, more and more women participated initially in traditional women’s legislation and then in the post-war years, women became more focused on the meaty issues, e.g., sewer installations and freeways. But this was only the beginning of political participation for women. The struggle was to get much tougher in the ensuing years.
Chapter 3

The 1960's

In the early sessions of the 1960's, the number of women legislators was at an all time low. While the number of women filing to run for legislative positions were increasing, 23 for the House and 5 for the Senate in 1961, the numbers of women popularly elected were declining.

In the 1961 election, of the 28 women who filed, only one woman, Martha Burnett (R-Marion), was elected to the Senate. Of the 25 women that filed for the House of Representatives, only four were elected: Elsie Barning (D-Vanderburgh), Mildred Churilla (D-Lake), Marion Hawthorne (R-Marion) and Anna Maloney (D-Lake). Two of the female representatives elected were incumbents. Representative Churilla (D-Lake) had previously served three terms, and Representative Barning (D-Vanderburgh) had served a term in 1949 and 1955 before running again in 1961.

The 1962 election saw much the same results as in 1961. Twenty-eight women filed for seats in the legislature, but the result was even worse than the previous year, with only two women, both incumbents, winning seats.

Newspaper reporters wrote of the tiny minority and commented on the fact that maybe women were realizing that they couldn't make any headway in politics and were beginning to become discouraged. However the large number of women filers proved this theory wrong. It was just a matter of time before women would not only file in large numbers, but be elected in large numbers as well.

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It was unfortunate that women were under-represented in this session because there were two key pieces of legislation that directly affected women introduced into the Assembly. One of these pieces had to do with a bill that called for compulsory equal pay for women when performing work “comparable” to that of men. This piece of legislation died in the House. The theory of equal pay for equal work was, however, a precursor to the Equal Rights Amendment of the 1970’s.

The other piece of legislation that pertained to women was reapportionment. According to the laws present in 1963, the reapportionment of seats was based only on the male population of counties. This policy was in flagrant violation of the 19th Amendment, and was hard fought on both sides; the traditional conservative male republicans versus the more liberal male (and two female) democrats. The reapportionment was restructured, and the results were evident in the 1965 election.

The gerrymandering efforts of the 1963 reapportionment battle were very fruitful for women in 1965. Seven women were elected to the legislature, one in the Senate and the other six in the House. For the first time in the history of the Indiana General Assembly the seven women met as a group to discuss their roles in the legislature and changes they wanted to see made in committee assignments.

Never before had women legislators met as a group on a regular basis. Through these weekly meetings at the Claypool Hotel, the seven legislators decided to aim for more influential committee positions, such as Ways and Means, Benevolent and Penal Institutions, and Conservation Committees. They all formally
agreed to be heard more on the floors of their respective chambers. While this may seem like a very small effort in the 1990’s, it was really the catalyst that began the collective effort of women in the legislative sessions following.

In 1967 there were only three new faces among the seven women serving, the rest were incumbents.

It was the 1969 session, however, that addressed some of the most controversial women's issues ever. Seven women participated in the 1969 session. Senator Joan Gubbins (R-Marion), was the lone woman in the Senate. Three Republican women were re-elected: Representative Wilma Fay (Marion), Representative Harriette Bailey Conn (Marion), and Representative Frances Gaylord (Tippecanoe). Two new faces in the House were Republicans: Helen Achor (Anderson) and Doris Dorbecker (Marion). The only female Democrat was incumbent Anna Maloney (Lake), who had served eight years.

The issues of the 1969 session were varied and controversial. The most involved woman of the seven was Representative Hariette Bailey Conn (R-Marion). Not only did Representative Conn co-author the legislation to modernized the Indiana Constitution, she was the author of the 1969 abortion law that passed both the House and Senate, but was vetoed by then Governor Roger D. Branigan. Because of the veto, the House proposed a legislative committee to evaluate the abortion statute. The proposal for 1969 stated that “no change in the existing statutes concerning abortion at this time should be made. However, further study should be given to changes in the law to reduce the incidence of criminal abortions.” (9)

Other issues of the 1969 session included legislation for punishment of student protestors, regulation of adoption policies,
and funding for school systems.

At the end of the 1960's female participation was up, as was controversial legislation that touched on some very progressive ideas, e.g., legalization of abortion and the changing of Indiana's Constitution.
Chapter 4

The 1970's

Basic themes for all of the sessions during the 1970's for female candidates was ecology and equality, or the ban of phosphate soap and the Equal Rights Amendment.

In 1971 the number of women in the legislature stood at a record number of eight seats. That number increased to nine in 1973, and for the first time in the history of the Indiana Senate, three women served in its chambers. One of the three senators was the first Afro-American woman to serve in the Indiana legislature, Senator Julia M. Carson (D-Indianapolis).

The women that were elected in 1973 campaigned on ERA issues and ecological reform. It was a period of "up with women" and these issues began to create a schism between two factions of women, not only in Indiana, but in the nation as well.

To say that the Equal Rights Amendment was highly controversial would perhaps be an understatement to many of the women who fought bitterly on both sides of the issue both inside and outside of the General Assembly. In the 1973 election both political parties in Indiana ran on a platform for the ERA. Hence, all of the eight female legislatures were on the record as being in support of the legislation. However, things began to change once these women were elected to office. A large number of mailings began to come in from some of the constituencies that were opposed to the ERA. The authors of these letters were mostly women.

Representative Frances Gaylord (R-Tippecanoe) said in an
Indianapolis Star article, "My mail is about even. There are specific women's groups in my area opposing it (ERA), so I will have to weigh both the pros and cons when it comes time to vote." (10)

Representative Lucille Wooffendale (R-Boone, Carroll, Clinton, Hamilton, Tippecanoe) relayed her misgivings as well in the same article, "My mail is 99 to one against equal rights. I did pledge that I was for it because it was in the Republican platform, now, it is with reservation. I am for women 100 per cent and I want them to have equal rights, but I will be governed by my constiuents." (11)

One freshman member of the House, Representative Marilyn Schultz (D-Bloomington) felt her letter writing constituents were misinformed. "There are not many letters against the ERA that are at all logical. For instance, I can't believe that people think the ERA ratification is going to legalize rape." Representative Schultz was the first woman in 1974 to be appointed to the House Ways and Means Committee. (12)

The ban on phosphate laundry detergent was more successful in 1973 than was the Equal Rights Amendment. And the road ahead wasn't going to get any easier. The 1974 session brought only more problems for women to face in the legislature with the energy crisis, dramatically increased inflation, and a rise in unemployment figures that struck at the heart of jobs held by women and minorities.

Arguments continued against ERA by groups such as STOP ERA led by Illinois housewife, Phyllis Schlafly. She advocated "the freedom of every woman to be a full-time wife and mother supported
by her husband or to go into the work force.” (13)

On the other hand women were making tremendous headway without ERA as well. Women employees marched on the Indiana Department of Correction and the Governor’s office, protesting their lack of equal pay. The march resulted in women employees gaining extra pay. Purdue University began to pay its women coaches, and Hoosiers voted to approve a constitutional amendment to allow women to join the National Guard.

Women also gained more foothold in the legislature. Representative Donnabelle Mahoney (D-Hammond) was sworn in as a new member, succeeding her husband, the late John Mahoney. Equal Rights topped the agenda for all ten of the women legislators, as did mental health, energy, ethics, sovereign immunity, collective bargaining, no fault insurance, racial balance in public schools, welfare, and the definitions of pornography and phosphates.

One concern of the three senators was Resolution 1 which would have amended Article 1 of the Indiana Constitution “to provide equal rights regardless of sex.” Senator Marie Lauck (D-Marion) commented in an Indianapolis News article that she was concerned.

If that resolution passes, then I think state senators will feel that they have fulfilled their obligation to women. We need more than that. We need the ERA for women all over the nation. (14)

However Senator Lauck was not too positive that the ERA could pass.

We have the same senators who defeated it (ERA) last year, and unless a good many of them have a change of mind, I think
we'll have to wait until next year for passage.(15)

Senator Lauck's statement about ERA turned out to be very prophetic. During the 1977 session, the legislation was not even introduced to be defeated. Instead, the issues that headlined concerned the moral standards of teaching materials, public care for the aged and the aging, funding for public education, and increases in police and firemen pensions. The tide of equal opportunity was beginning to turn and in its place surfaced more localized issues pertinent to the constituencies of female legislators.

While the 1970's may have been winding down in the 1979 session, there were three freshman legislators that were just winding up to serve what would be three of the longest terms in the history of the Indiana Legislature. The first, Representative Mary J. Petterson (D-Hammond), played an integral role in land management. She maintained a very progressive view on state finances and earned much respect as a member of the Urban Affairs Committee.

The second freshman legislator of the three still serves in 1992. Representative Phyllis J. Pond (R-New Haven) was and still is an educator, and she was named to the education, judiciary, and the elections and apportionment committees.

The final of the three freshman legislators was Representative Carolyn J. Mosby (D-Gary). Only the third Afro-American woman to be elected to the Indiana General Assembly, she had been an administrative assistant in the Graduate School of Economics at the University of Chicago. Because of her background,
Mosby was very knowledgeable in the area of budgets and grants, hence her committee assignments to human relations and government reorganization.

These three women were to be very representative of the type of woman that would be continually elected to the legislature in the ensuing years. These Woman had extensive educational backgrounds and immense expertise in particular areas that would serve them well in competition with their male counterparts.

So while the 1970’s came in with the promise of feminine reform, it ended on a calmer note and a lack of finality over ERA. On the horizon, however, was the promise of knowledgeable and experienced women running for the General Assembly.
Chapter 5
The 1980's

In the Indiana General Assembly during the 1980's very little headway was made by women, even though there was an increasing minority. The Indianapolis newspapers were not interested in what female legislators were doing in the 1980's. Unlike previous years, there were only three specific articles on female legislative activity over a 9-year period.

In 1981 there were twelve women in the Legislature. Combined, these twelve women represented twenty-five years of previous legislative service. And yet in this session, ERA was still not ratified by the State of Indiana, nor was there any particular legislation that concerned women or minorities.

The numbers in the House went up by one in the 1982 session with the addition of Representative Vaneta G. Becker (R-Vanderburgh). The number in the Senate, four, remained the same. Based on the 1980 census there were a little over 2.82 million women in Indiana, or 52% of the 5.49 million residents. But in the 1982 Legislature women accounted for only 12% of the 150 members.

The 1982 session was landmark, however, for one woman legislator, Senator Lillian M. Parent (R-Boone, Hendricks, Morgan), who was appointed as assistant majority floor leader. Senator Parent was the first woman to be appointed to any floor leadership position in the history of women in the Legislature. While this marked tremendous progress for women, her appointment did not come about by the efforts of her fellow GOP senators.
Senator Parent was appointed by Senate President Pro Tempore Robert Garton (R-Columbus). This was a "token female" gesture by the President Pro-Tem.

One experienced female legislator, Representative Marilyn Schultz (D-Bloomington), was becoming rather disillusioned with the system in the 1980's after serving through the tumultuous 70's.

In the legislature as a whole, there is still a lot of residual sexism, a feeling that women should not go into non-traditional roles, she said. (16)

While Representative Schultz was the first women to serve on the House Ways and Means Committee, women today still have not made much other advancement in either powerful committee assignments or committee leadership positions. Representative Schultz was also the only woman appointed to the House tax-writing and budget-making panel until Republicans Vaneta Baker, Evansville, and Mary Kay Budak, Michigan City, joined her.

Also in the House, Representative Doris Dorbecker (R-Indianapolis) was the only woman committee chairwoman heading the panel on Interstate Cooperation. There were no women heading Senate Committees in 1982. And even Representative Schultz, the most senior Democratic woman in the House, opted not to run for a leadership position in the 1983 session because she saw her role on the Ways and Means and the State Budget Committees as being more influential.

Women were not voting together on women's issues. Women legislators had become more influenced by their own political
party than by their own gender. Women legislators were not organized as a group, so it was rare to see them vote as a group.

In 1983 the numbers of women improved quite dramatically. Four continued to remain in the Senate, but in the House, the number of women legislators grew to 14. It was becoming clear that while women were increasing their legislative participation, they were not as concerned with political issues that involved women.

One such legislator, Representative Janet L. Hibner (R-Wayne) said that because the number of women in the legislature had grown, it was easier for women to be selective when it came to issues and committee appointments.(17)

Hibner herself was totally removed from committees that dealt with any women's issues. She was chairwoman of the 12-member House Elections Committee, and she had written several bills involving the elective process, i.e. Indiana's presidential preference primary. She did serve on one committee that affected women indirectly, Child Support Division Advisory Committee of the Indiana Department of Public Welfare.

In this committee Hibner helped to support a bill that would give tax breaks to employers who provided day care for children of employees. However the bill did not make it out of committee. Hibner reasoned, "Each of us (women) picks and chooses certain issues," she said. "We are not stuck totally with what for lack of a better term are called 'women's issues'."(18)

Throughout the rest of the 1980's the number of women Representatives remained steady, 13 in 1985, 14 in 1986 and down to 11 in 1987 where it remained until the 1991 session. The Senate became a different story at the end of the 1980's. The
numbers began to climb from four women in 1983 to six in both the 1985 and 1986 sessions, to eight in both the 1988 and 1989 sessions and then in 1990 to the highest number ever in the history of the Senate, eleven.

But even with the dramatic increase in numbers, women's issues were still not being addressed. Women were becoming more and more interested in the general issues. The radical feminist days of the 1970's had passed. Women began to understand that to gain respect and power in either house, they had to be as knowledgeable as male legislators in powerful positions. Such respect would not be forthcoming on committees that introduced legislation concerning women and minorities.
Chapter 6
The 1990’s

In the two sessions of the 1990’s that have met so far, women legislators represented 24.5% of the total Senate body and continued to hold eleven and fifteen seats, respectively, in both sessions of the House. The number of women serving in the Senate has doubled in the last five years from six in 1976 to twelve in 1991. Why are so many women running for and serving in the Senate than ever before?

There are a variety of advantages and disadvantages that political scientists, and campaign specialists like Mike McDaniel of Ball State University, have found to affect a woman running for any office. These are:

Disadvantages:
1. They must work harder to convince voters of their qualifications.
2. They find it is more difficult to raise money.
3. They receive extra attention on their private lives by the media and the public.

Advantages:
1. Women are trusted more readily than men.
2. Women are viewed as more caring than men.
3. Women are generally more idealistic politically.
4. It is more difficult for a man to run against a woman.
5. Early publicity is easy to obtain for a woman.
The most important disadvantage concerns the difficulty women have raising money. This could be a major factor for the increasing number of women that choose to run for the Senate as opposed to the House. And this could be the reason for the switch that is sometimes made by representatives to the Senate, e.g., Senator, formerly Representative, Earline Rogers (D-Gary).

By being a member of the Senate, one only has to run every four years as opposed to every two years in the House. It is a lot less expensive for a woman candidate who has a harder time raising money, because politics still tends to be an "old boys network." For a woman to break through that network and gain donations at the same time is still a rarity. Campaigning is not easy either, for that matter. So it is easier for a woman with a family to campaign every four years.

Besides increased participation in the Senate, women held more floor and committee leadership positions in the 1990 and 1991 sessions. In 1990 Representative Esther M. Wilson (D-Portage) and Senator Anita O. Bowser (D-Michigan City) were elected assistant majority whip and deputy speaker pro tempore, respectively. Their reactions to their appointments were markedly different however.

Representative Wilson was very pleased with her appointment, "I'm on solid ground with the men."(19)

Senator Bowser, on the other hand, was not. "I think it was a tokenism. I understood what it was. I was a little miffed, and I thought it was a little demeaning."(20)

Senator Bowser believed that women will not be on equal footing until there is parity in both houses. While this may not happen for some time, there is some opinion in the Senate that a
woman's caucus is needed. Senator John J. Day (D-Indianapolis) believed that women legislators would have more power in a group. People don’t know how strong they can be if they’re not organized. Just think if the women went to the speaker and said, ‘Pal, if you want a budget, we want the following.’ But they don’t recognize their strengths.(21)

However this was much easier said than done according to Senators Blankenbaker and Simpson. Simpson said that she and Blankenbaker tried to organize a women’s caucus, but it never worked.

We are just as different as the men. There is no reason to expect us to agree, Simpson said. We are very diverse, from very conservative to very liberal.(22)

In terms of committee leadership women continued to gain footholds in 1990. In the House, only one woman headed a committee. Representative Claire M. Leuck (D-Fowler) is chairwoman of the Agriculture Committee. In the Senate, three women chair committees--Senator Patricia L. Miller (R-Indianapolis), environmental and consumer affairs; Senator Virginia Blankenbaker (R-Indianapolis), health and human services; and Senator Sue Landske (R-Lake), interstate cooperation and transportation. Miller was also the chairwoman of the Senate redistricting committee which will be involved in redrawing legislative and congressional districts based on new census figures.

In 1991, the number of women in committee leadership positions increased even more. In the House, women held four leadership positions--Representative Anita O. Bowser (D-LaPorte), vice-chairwoman of Courts Committee; Representative Shelia J.
Klinker (D-Tippecanoe), vice-chairwoman of Human Affairs Committee; Representative Pat Eddy (D-Muncie), vice-chairwoman of Education Committee; and Representative Claire M. Leuck, chairwoman of Agriculture Committee. In the Senate, Senators Blankenbaker, Landske and Miller held the same positions from the year before.
Chapter 7
Summary and Conclusions

Women have now been participating in the Indiana General Assembly for 71 years. The first year after the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified a woman appeared on the ballot, but she was not elected. In 1921, Mrs. Julia D. Rainey was appointed to take the place of her late husband. From then on women, even in their small numbers, were a presence with which to be reckoned. In the 50's and 60's, a unified woman's legislative group was at the forefront of much important legislation and was constantly fighting to change the homemaker image that followed them into the Statehouse. In the 70's women were a small but mighty force with hopes of a women's caucus and the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment in the early 1980's.

But then, in the 1980's, something happened. Women began to forget about legislating as a group and turned to the interests of their constituencies. In order to respond to their own constituencies, they found it less beneficial to stick with female issues only. It was necessary for women to listen to district voters.

With this change in attitude, women's issues, and those of children and minorities were minimally addressed in legislation that was produced in following sessions. The results: the end of ERA and the idea of a woman's caucus!

And while the numbers of female legislators continued to increase in the 1990's, it seems women legislators are continuing
to concentrate on constituency issues. They are gaining more leadership positions on both committees and on the floor, but at a very slow pace. And there is a question in a few legislators’ minds as to why these appointments were made.

What will it take for women to feel credible in the eyes of the largely dominating male legislative population? Parity? Perhaps, but it is not very realistic at this rate. A woman’s caucus? Possibly, but proponents of the idea say that women legislators are just too diverse to lump them all into one group. Party line women’s caucuses? At this point, this is the best idea.

Women, no matter what party, need to be supporters of women getting involved; however, if women are just too diverse, then a party line caucus is the way to go. These party women’s caucuses should be recruiting long and hard to fill vulnerable seats. Women need to become less timid and more competitive to support women who are willing to run for highly contested seats.

Women need to look at politics as a viable career option. It is wonderful that women have helped to bring about social change and fight to make a difference, but things won’t really begin to change in Indiana until women become lawmakers themselves. It is up to the women of today to expand the legacy of those female legislators who have worked so hard to make a difference in the State of Indiana.
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1970’s


1980’s


1990's


Appendix A

Women in the Indiana Legislature

1921-1991*

1921
House
Julia D. Nelson (R); Delaware

1923
House
Elizabeth Rainey (R); Marion

1925
House
Elizabeth H. Daugherty (R); Wabash
Antoinette C. Hagenwald (R); Vigo

1927
House
Ella V. Garnder (R); Marion
Clara A. Mason (R); Vigo

1929
House
Lettie M. Ferguson (R); Allen
Zeola Hershey Misener (R); LaPorte
Bertha A. Zimmerman (R); Vigo

1931
House
Tella C. Haines (D); Sullivan

1933
House
Bess Robbins (D); Marion

1935
House
 Roberta West Nicholson (D); Marion

*(Every other year is listed as this will encompass all two year and four year term holders. In some places every year is listed because of an appointment of a legislator is case of death, resignation etc..)
1937
House
Bess Robbins (D); Marion

1939
House
Bess Robbins Kaufman (D); Marion

1941
House
Clara Van Coons (R); Montgomery
Nelle Downey (R); Marion

1943
Senate
Arcada Balz (R); Johnson, Marion

House
Clara Van Coons (R); Montgomery
Nelle Downey (R); Marion
Elizabeth Downing (R); Marion
Mabel L. Lowe (R); Marion
Bernadine Malinka (D); Lake
Ida R. Wison (R); Posey. Vanderburgh, Warrick

1945
Senate
Arcada Balz (R); Johnson, Marion

House
Katherine W. Atkins (R); Marion
Clara Van Coons (R); Marion
Nelle Downey (R); Marion
Irma S. Lynch (D); Posey, Vanderburgh, Warrick
Bernadine Malinka (D); Lake
Emma M. May (D); Vigo
Margaret L. Wyatt (R); Marion

1947
Senate
Arcada Balz (R); Johnson, Marion
Dorothy Gardner (R); Allen

House
Clara Van Coons (R); Montgomery
Nelle Downey (R); Marion
Bernadine Malinka (D); Lake
1949

**Senate**
Dorothy Gardner (R); Allen
Mary Garrett (D); Marion

**House**
Elsie C. Barning (D); Vanderburgh
Mabel A. Dunn (D); Marion
Jane Ann Noble (D); Howard, Tipton
Grace E. Roach (D); Ripley, Switzerland

1951

**Senate**
Dorothy Gardner (R); Allen
Mary Garrett (D); Marion

**House**
Nelle B. Downey (R); Marion
Bernadine Malinka (D); Lake
Fern E. Norris (R); Marion

1953

**Senate**
Dorothy Gardner (R); Allen

**House**
Nelle B. Downey (R); Marion
Bernadine Malinka (D); Lake
Anna P. Smelser (D); St. Joseph

1955

**Senate**
Dorothy Gardner (R); Allen

**House**
Elsie Barning (D); Vanderburgh
Alice Mathias Brown (D); Lake
Mildred Churilla (D); Lake
Naomi Kirk (D); Floyd
Betty Malinka (D); Lake
Anna P. Smelser (D); St. Joseph
Harriet Stout (R); Marion
1957

**Senate**
Martha Y. Burnett (R); Johnson, Marion
Doroth Gardner (R); Allen

**House**
Mildred Churilla (D); Lake
Clara Van Coons (R); Montgomery
Naomi J. Kirk (D); Floyd
Harriet Stout (R); Marion

1959

**Senate**
Martha Y. Burnett (R); Marion, Johnson

**House**
Mildred Churilla (D); Lake
Lucille Currie (D); Marion
Marie Theresa Lauck (D); Marion

1961

**Senate**
Martha Y. Burnett (R); Johnson, Marion

**House**
Elsie Barning (D); Vanderburgh
Mildred Churilla (D); Lake
Marion M. Hawthorne (R); Marion
Anna Maloney (D); Lake

1963

**Senate**
Martha Y. Burnett (R); Johnson, Marion

**House**
Elsie Barning (D); Vanderburgh
Anna Maloney (D); Lake

1965

**Senate**
Marie Theresa Lauck (D); Marion

**House**
Victoria Caesar (D); Lake
Katherine Fruits (D); Marion
Daisy Riley Lloyd (D); Marion
Cecilia M. Logan (D); Marion
Anna Maloney (D); Lake
Marvel Ricketts (D); Marion

1967
Senate
Marie Theresa Lauck (D); Marion

House
Elsie Christine Barning (D); Vanderburgh
Victoria Caesar (D); Lake
Harriette Bailey (R); Marion
Wilma J. Fay (R); Marion
Frances Gaylord (R); Tippecanoe
Anna Maloney (D); Lake

1969
Senate
Joan M. Gubbins (R); Marion

House
Helen Achor (R); Marion
Harriette Bailey (R); Marion
Doris L. Dorbecker (R); Marion
Wilma J. Fay (R); Marion
Frances Gaylord (R); Tippecanoe
Anna Maloney (D); Lake

1971
Senate
Joan M. Gubbins (R); Marion

House
Elsie Christine Barning (D); Vanderburgh
Victoria Caesar (D); Lake
Janiece L. Crimmins (R); Blackford, Grant
Doris Dorbecker (R); Marion
Wilma J. Fay (R); Marion
Frances Gaylord (R); Tippecanoe
Anna Maloney (D); Lake

1973
Senate
Angeline Allstatt (D); Marion
Joan M. Gubbins (R); Marion
Marie T. Lauck (D); Marion

House
Julia M. Carson (D); Marion
Janiece Crimmins (R); Delaware, Grant, Madison
Doris Dorbecker (R); Marion
Frances Gaylord (R); Tippecanoe
Marilyn F. Schultz (D); Monroe, Owen
Lucille Wooffendale (R); Boone, Carroll, Clinton, Hamilton, Tippecanoe

1975

**Senate**
- Angeline Allstatt (D); Marion
- Joan M. Gubbins (R); Marion
- Marie T. Lauck (D); Marion

**House**
- Julia M. Carson (D); Marion
- Katie Hall (D); Lake
- Donnabelle Mahoney (D); Lake
- Marilyn F. Schultz (D); Monroe, Owen
- Maryann Seyfried (D); Marion
- Catherine E. VanArsdale (D); Marion

1977

**Senate**
- Julia M. Carson (D); Marion
- Joan M. Gubbins (R); Marion
- Katie Hall (D); Lake

**House**
- Doris Dorbecker (R); Marion
- Janet Hibner (R); Wayne
- Lillian M. Parent (R); Hendricks
- Marilyn F. Schultz (D); Monroe, Owen
- Esther Wilson (D); Lake, Porter
- Marna Jo Worman (R); Allen

1979

**Senate**
- Julia M. Carson (D); Marion
- Joan M. Gubbins (R); Marion
- Katie Hall (D); Lake
- Lillian M. Parent (R); Boone, Hendricks, Morgan

**House**
- Anita Bowser (D); St. Joseph
- Doris Dorbecker (R); Marion
- Esther L. Fifield (R); Lake
- Janet Hibner (R); Wayne
- Carolyn Brown Mosby (D); Lake
- Mary J. Pettersen (D); Lake
- Phyllis J. Pond (R); Adams, Allen, Wells
- Marilyn F. Schultz (D); Monroe, Owen
- Esther Wilson (D); Lake, Porter
1981
Senate
Virginia M. Blankenbaker (R); Marion
Julia M. Carson (D); Marion
Katie Hall (D); Lake
Lillian M. Parent (R); Boone, Hendricks, Morgan

House
Mark Kay Budak (R); LaPorte, St. Joseph
Doris Dorbecker (R); Marion
Esther L. Fifield (R); Marion
Janet L. Hibner (R); Wayne
Carolyn M. Brown (D); Lake
Mary J. Petterson (D); Lake
Phyllis J. Pond (R); Adams, Allen, Wells
Marilyn F. Schultz (D); Monroe, Owens

1982
Senate
Virginia M. Blankenbaker (R); Marion
Julia M. Carson (D); Marion
Katie Hall (D); Lake
Lillian M. Parent (R); Boone, Hendricks, Morgan

House
Vaneta G. Becker (R); Vanderburgh
Mary Kay Budak (R); Marion
Doris Dorbecker (R); Marion
Esther L. Fifield (R); Lake
Janet L. Hibner (R); Wayne
Carolyn M. Brown (D); Lake
Mary J. Petterson (D); Lake
Phyllis J. Pond (R); Adams, Allen, Wells
Marilyn F. Schultz (D); Monroe, Owens

1983
Senate
Virginia M. Blankenbaker (R); Marion
Julia M. Carson (D); Marion
Carolyn Brown Mosby (D); Lake
Lillian M. Parent (R); Boone, Hamilton, Hendricks, Putnam, Montgomery

House
Vaneta G. Becker (R); Spencer, Vanderburgh, Warrick
Anita O. Bowser (D); LaPorte, Porter
Mary Kay Budak (R); LaPorte, Porter
Doris Dorbecker (R); Marion, Johnson
Barbara L. Engle (R); Adams, Allen, Noble, Whitley
Esther L. Fifield (R); Lake
Janet L. Hibner (R); Wayne
Sheila A. Klinker (D); Tippecanoe
Patricia L. Miller (R); Marion
Mary J. Petterson (D); Lake
Phyllis J. Pond (R); Adams, Allen, Noble, Whitley
Earline S. Rogers (D); Lake
Marilyn F. Schultz (D); Monroe, Owens
Esther M. Wilson (D); Lake, Porter

1985

**Senate**

Virginia M. Blankenbaker (R); Marion
Julia M. Carson (D); Marion
Dorothy Landske (R); Lake
Patricia L. Miller (R); Johnson, Marion
Carolyn Brown Mosby (D); Lake
Vi Simpson (D); Brown, Greene, Monroe

**House**

Vaneta G. Becker (R); Spencer, Vanderburgh, Warrick
Anita O. Bowser (D); LaPorte, Porter
Mary Kay Budak (R); LaPorte, Porter
Barbara L. Engle (R); Adams, Allen, Noble, Whitley
Ester L. Fifield (R); Lake
Janet L. Hibner (R); Wayne
Sheila J. Klinker (D); Tippecanoe
Mary J. Petterson (D); Lake
Phyllis J. Pond (R); Adams, Allen, Noble, Whitley
Earline S. Rogers (D); Lake
Katie L. Wolf (D); Lake
Marilyn F. Schultz (D); Monroe
Esther M. Wilson (D); Lake, Porter

1986

**Senate**

Virginia M. Blankenbaker (R); Marion
Julie M. Carson (D); Marion
Dorothy Landske (R); Lake, Newton, Porter
Patricia L. Miller (R); Johnson, Marion
Carolyn Brown Mosby (D); Lake
Vi Simpson (D); Brown, Greene, Monroe

**House**

Vaneta G. Becker (R); Spencer, Vanderburgh, Warrick
Anita O. Bowser (D); LaPorte, Porter
Joyce E. Brinkman (R); Hendricks, Marion
Mary Kay Budak (R); LaPorte, Porter
Barbara L. Engle (R); Adams, Allen, Noble, Whitley
Ester L. Fifield (R); Lake
Janet L. Hibner (R); Wayne
Shelia J. Klinker (D); Tippecanoe
Mary J Pettersen (D); Lake
Phyllis J. Pond (R); Adams, Allen, Nobel, Whitley
Earline S. Rogers (D); Lake
Marilyn F. Schultz (D); Monroe
Esther M. Wilson (D); Lake, Porter
Katie L. Wolf (D); Benton, Carroll, Newton, Pulaski, White

1987

Senate
Virginia M. Blankenbaker (R); Marion
Julia M. Carson (D); Marion
Sue Landske (R); Lake, Newton and Porter
Patricia J. Miller (R); Johnson and Marion
Carolyn Brown Mosby (D); Lake
Vi Simpson (D); Brown, Greene and Monroe
Kathy Smith (D); Clark and Floyd
Katie L. Wolf (D); Benton, Carroll, Jasper, Newton, Pulaski, Starke, Tippecanoe, Warren and White

House
Vaneta G. Becker (R); Spencer, Vanderburgh and Warrick
Anita O. Bowser (D); LaPorte and Porter
Joyce E. Brinkman (R); Hendricks and Marion
Mary Kay budak (R) LaPorte and Porter
Barbara L. Engle (R); Adams, Allen, Noble and Whitley
Esther Fifield (R); Lake
Sheila A. Kilinker (D); Tippecanoe
Claire M. Leuck (D); Benton, Carroll, Newton, Pulaski, White
Phyllis J. Pond (R); Adams, Allen, Noble and Whitley
Earline S. Rogers (D); Lake
Esther M. Wilson (D); Lake and Porter

1988

Senate
Virginia M. Blankenbaker (R); Marion
Julia M. Carson (D); Marion
Sue Landske (R); Lake, Newton and Porter
Patricia J. Miller (R); Johnson and Marion
Carolyn Brown Mosby (D); Lake
Vi Simpson (D); Brown, Greene and Monroe
Kathy Smith (D); Clark and Floyd
Katie L. Wolf (D); Benton, Carroll, Jasper, Newton, Pulaski, Starke, Tippecanoe, Warren and White
1989

**Senate**
Virginia M. Blankenbaker (R); Marion
Julia M. Carson (D); Marion
Beverly J. Gard (R); Hancock, Henry and Madison
Sue Landske (R); Lake, Newton and Porter
Betty N. Lawson (D); Kosciusko, LaPorte, Marshall and St. Joseph
Jean A. Leising (R); Decatur-Fayette, Franklin, Rush and Shelby
Patricia L. Miller (R); Johnson and Marion
Carolyn Brown Mosby (D); Lake
Vi Simpson (D); Brown and Greene and Monroe
Kathy Smith (D); Clark and Floyd
Katie L. Wolf (D); Benton, Carroll, Jasper, Newton, Pulaski, Starke, Tippecanoe, Warren and White

**House**
Vaneta G. Becker (R); Spencer, Vanderburgh and Warrick
Anita O. Bowser (D); LaPorte and Porter
Joyce E. Brinkman (R); Hendricks and Marion
Mary Kay Budak (R); LaPorte and Porter
Barbara L. Engle (R); Adams, Allen, Noble and Whitely
Esther Fifield (R); Lake
Sheila A. Klinker (D); Tippecanoe
Claire M. Leuck (D); Benton, Carroll, Newton, Pulaski and White
Phyllis J. Pond (R); Adams, Allen, Noble and Whitely
Earline S. Rogers (D); Lake
Esther M. Wilson (D); Lake and Porter

1990

**Senate**
Virginia M. Blankenbaker (R); Marion
Julia M. Carson (D); Marion
Beverly J. Gard (R); Hancock, Henry and Madison
Sue Landske (R); Lake, Newton and Porter
Betty N. Lawson (D); Kosciusko, LaPorte, Marshall and St. Joseph
Jean A. Leising (R); Decatur, Fayette, Franklin, Rush and Shelby
Patricia L. Miller (R); Johnson and Marion
Carolyn Brown Mosby (D); Lake
Earline S. Rogers (D); Lake
Vi Simpson (D); Brown, Greene and Monroe
Kathy Smith (D); Clark and Floyd
Katie Wolf (D); Benton, Carroll, Jasper, Newton, Pulaski, Starke, Tippecanoe, Warren and White

House
Vaneta G. Becker (R); Spencer, Vanderburgh and Warrick
Anita O. Bowser (D); LaPorte and Porter
Joyce E. Brinkman (R); Hendricks and Marion
Mary Kay Budak (R); LaPorte and Porter
Barbara L. Engle (R); Adams, Allen Noble and Whitely
Esther Fifield (R); Lake
Sheila J. Klinker (D); Tippecanoe
Claire M. Leuck (D); Benton, Carroll, Newton, Pulaski and White
Phyllis J. Pond (R); Adams, Allen, Noble and Whitely
Esther M. Wilson (D); Lake and Porter

1991

Senate
Rose A. Antich (D); Laek
Virginia M. Blankenbaker (R); Marion
Billie J. Breaux (D); Marion
Beverly J. Gard (R); Hancock, Henry and Madison
Sue Landske (R); Lake, Newton and Porter
Betty N. Lawson (D); Kosciusko, LaPorte, Marshall and St. Joseph
Jean A. Leising (R); Decatur, Fayette, Franklin, Rush and Shelby
Patricia L. Miller (R); Johnson and Marion
Earline S. Rogers (D); Lake
Vi Simpson (D); Brown, Greene and Monroe
Kathy Smith (D); Clark and Floyd
Katie L. Wolf (D); Benton, Carroll, Jasper, Newton, Pulaski, Starke, Tippecanoe, Warren and White

House
Vaneta G. Becker (R); Spencer, Vanderburgh and Warrick
Anita O. Bowser (D); LaPorte and Porter
Joyce E. Brinkman (R); Hendricks and Marion
Mary Kay Budak (R); LaPorte and Porter
Susan R. Crosby (D); Clay, Putnam and Vigo
Patricia Eddy (D); Delaware
Barbara L. Engle (R); Adams, Allen, Noble and Whitley
Gloria J. Goeglein (R); Allen
Shelia J. Klinker (D); Tippecanoe
Claire N. Leuck (D); Benton, Carroll, Newton, Pulaski and White
Phyllis J. Pond (R); Adams, Allen, Noble and Whitley
Sue W. Scholer (R); Tippecanoe and Warren
Vanessa Summers Brown (D); Marion
Esther M. Wilson (D); Porter and Lake
Sarah M. Wolf (D); Hancock and Rush
Appendix B

Women Who Have Served in the Indiana Legislature, 1921-1938

(Indiana State Library clipping file, "Women in Indiana Legislature.")

Compiled by Caroline Dunn, 1938

Julia D. Nelson (Mrs. Edward F.)
Representative of Delaware County in the 1921 session
Republican
Born in Mooresville, Ind., December 11, 1863
Daughter, Thomas C. And Mary J. Reynolds
Married to Edward F. Nelson, an employee of the Indianapolis
News. Liven in Indianapolis for 16 year until Mr.
Nelson became employed in Muncie, where they lived until
his death in 1923. He had a high school education.
At the death of Clark D. McKinley, Republican state
representative in 1921, Mrs. Nelson was named as his
successor. She served a full term, the first woman ever
to hold the office. She had never held public office
before, and did not hold an elective post after that
time, but was active in politics and suffrage work.
She lived in Indianapolis after the death of her husband.
Presbyterian; member of the Order of the Eastern Star
and the Indiana State Assembly Women's Club.
She died Mary 27, 1936. Buried in Crown Hill Cemetery,
Indianapolis.
(Indianapolis News, May 28, 1936)
(Indianapolis Star, May 28, 1936, p.3)

Elizabeth Rainey
Representative from Marion County, 1923.
Republican
Born in Russellville, Illinois
Lived in Vincennes until she was 10 year old; removed from
there to Waynetown, where she attended the public
schools, high school. Later attended business school
and Benjamin Harrison Law School. She taught in
Montgomery County schools for 4 years before she came to
Indianapolis in 1894.
She was active in the work of the Republican party and a
pioneer in organizing clubs for business and
professional women in the state. She was one of the incorporators of the Mutual Service Foundation, an organizer of the A.O.T. Birthday Club, a member of the Indianapolis Business and Professional Women's Club, president of the Business Women's Credit union of Indianapolis and a director of the Indiana State Credit Union League. She was a life-member of the Woman's Department Club. Member of Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce.

Member of Christian Church.

Listed occupation at time of legislative service as "office manager and law student."

Was author of the law designating the tulip (poplar) as state flower and tree.

An attorney, and office manager of the law firm of Cox, Conder, Bain & Cox, Indianapolis.

Died April 24, 1935, after illness of 3 months. Buried at Crown Hill Cemetery, Indianapolis.

Elizabeth Hunt Daugherty (Mrs.)
Representative from Wabash County, 1925.
Republican
Born at LaFontaine, Indiana, May 9, 1868.
Graduate of the common schools of Liberty township, Wabash County; short course at Valparaiso Normal School; State Normal at Terre Haute; graduate of the Indianapolis Business University, class of '97.

Had never held public office before.

Lists occupation as "housewife, farmer's wife."

Member of Christian Church at Treaty, Indiana.

Residence: Treaty, Indiana

On the biographical blank which she filled in for the State Library's records, she says "The session of 1925 has been one of the most pleasant experiences of my life. I hope the future women members may fare as well."

Antoinette C. Hagenwald
Representative from Vigo County, 1925.
Born April 19, 1877, in Jennings County, Indiana.
Father, French; Mother, American
Republican

Had never held public office before

Occupation: Housewife

Residence: 2008 Locust St., Terre Haute
Member of Liberty Ave. Methodist Episcopal Church

Ella Van Sickle Garner (Mrs. Thomas M.?)
Representative from Marion County, 1927.
Republican
Born Mahalasville, Morgan County, Ind., August 12, 1870
Daughter of George Whitfield and Sarah Elizabeth Parker Van Sickle  
Education: Martinsville High School; attended special lectures and special classes at Cornell University  
Occupation: Housewife  
Church Affiliation: Methodist  
Member W.C.T.U.; Women's Department Club, Public Health Nursing Association  
Address: 814 East 23rd Street, Indianapolis, Ind.

Clara A. Mason (Mrs.)  
Representative from Vigo County, 1927.  
Republican  
Born Collinsville, Illinois, March 28, 1879  
Daughter of Joseph P. and Louise Esterline Leitz  
Education: Common school; special instructions in public speaking and parliamentary law.  
Had not held other public offices  
Occupation: Housewife  
Address: Terre Haute  
Church affiliation: Presbyterian  
Member of Order of the Eastern Star, W.C.T.U., Child Welfare Association

Lettie M. Ferguson (Mrs.)  
Representative from Allen County, 1929  
Republican  
Born Dover Hill, Indiana, July 5, 1883  
Daughter of John C. and Letha A. Yarnell McCave  
Education: public school; Shoals High School; Terre Haute Normal College  
Church Affiliation: Congregational  
Past Grand Matron of Order of the Eastern Star; member of Daniel Brooks Chapter D.A.R., and many others  
Occupations: Housewife  
Address: Fort Wayne

Zeola Hershey Misener (Mrs.)  
Representative from LaPorte Co., 1929  
Republican  
Born October 22, 1878, West Salem, Ohio  
Daughter of John and Carrie Stevenson Hershey  
Education: Graduate of Westerville, Ohio, High School; 3 years Otterbein University; graduate of King's School of Pittsburgh  
Had not held public office before  
Occupation: Homemaker  
Church affiliation: Congregational
Bertha A. Zimmerman (Mrs.)
Representative from Vigo County, 1929
Republican
Born Parke County, 1881
Daughter James W. and Louise Lawrence Good
Education: High school and one year of college
Had never held public office before. Prior to her election founded the Hamilton Club, an organization of Vigo County Republican Women.
Church Affiliation: Methodist
Occupation: Homemaker
Address: Terre Haute
Died July 18, 1935, after an illness of more than a year.
(Indianapolis News, July 19, 1935, p. 3)

Tella C. Haines
Representative from Sullivan County, 1931, and Special Session 1932
Democrat
Born in Oblong, Crawford County, Illinois, April 28, 1895
Daughter of George P. and Sarah Lydia Newlin Haines
Education: 2 years Union Christian College, Merom, Ind.; 1 and 1/2 years at Indiana University
Had never held public office before
Occupation: Attorney
Church affiliation: First Christian Church, Sullivan
Member of Business and Professional Women's Club; Psi Iota Xi
In 1933 she was appointed Librarian of the Supreme Court Law Library, Indianapolis, which position she now holds.
Has L.L.B

Bess Robbins
Representative from Marion County, 1933, 1937, & Special Session., 1938
Democrat
Education: Graduate Emmerich Manual Training High School, Indianapolis, and Indiana Law School
Attorney
Home: Indianapolis

Roberta West Nicholson (Mrs. Meredith, Jr.)
Representative from Marion County, 1935 and Special Session, 1936
Democrat
Born in Cincinnati, Ohio, January 17, 1903
Daughter of Robert Henry and Nelda C. Windisch West
Education: Private Schools; University of Cincinnati
Church affiliation: St. Paul's Episcopal, Indianapolis
Address: Indianapolis