

WOMEN'S POWER GAP STUDY SERIES MARCH 2019

# WOMEN'S POWER GAP DIVERSITY SNAPSHOT

## PUBLIC BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS IN MASSACHUSETTS



Women's  
Power Gap

Eos Foundation

**GENDER PARITY NOW**

# DIVERSITY BY DESIGN

Diversity of leadership is good for consumers and businesses, citizens and government; it leads to better decision making in all organizations. Studies have found that diverse boards and management teams are better governed, and corporations with diverse leadership are more profitable.<sup>1</sup>

Massachusetts leads the nation in human talent, and our pipelines are replete with women and people of color ready to serve. Yet this data shows we have a long way to go to reach gender parity and proportionate representation of people of color on our state boards and commissions, particularly among powerful leadership positions – CEOs and Board Chairs. **WHY?**

- **Network Limitations.** Behavioral research suggests that individuals tend to hire and promote people who are similar to themselves.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, leaders need to be deliberate to go beyond their immediate circles if they are truly committed to hiring diverse candidates. It will take time and they may need to re-open searches until they find a diverse candidate who meets the qualifications.
- **Reexamining the Criteria.** “We hired the most qualified person regardless of gender,” and “would you rather have us hire an unqualified woman over a qualified man?” are common refrains. They are false choices. There is not just one “most qualified” person for any position. Different people have different perspectives on who is most qualified. Are we systematically devaluing the candidacies of individuals with less traditional qualifications? With respect to boards, must everyone have the same skill set and professional background? If appointing authorities are unable to find diverse candidates to hire as CEOs and to serve on boards, it is time to **CHANGE THE CRITERIA**. The criteria itself is often the main structural obstacle to inclusion.
- **Unconscious Bias.** We are all subject to unconscious bias – social stereotypes about certain groups of people that form outside of our own conscious awareness. For example, when most people (both women and men) think of a “rainmaker” or a power broker, they envision a man. Studies that mask the gender and race on candidate resumes for job applications lead to more women and people of color getting interviews. Selection bias is a structural issue that can only be resolved with structural solutions.
- **Beware the “Rooney Rule.”** The Rooney Rule is an NFL policy that requires teams to interview “ethnic-minority” candidates for senior jobs. While this leads to diverse applicant pools, and takes the pressure off hiring bodies who “check the box” on meeting a fair hiring process, ensuring a diverse applicant pool is not enough. We interviewed a significant number of women and people of color who no longer

respond to search firm requests to apply for certain positions because they have interviewed repeatedly without success, feeling they are only asked to apply to ensure a diverse applicant pool. Of the last eight State University President searches in Massachusetts, women comprised nearly 40% of the finalist pool, yet got none of the top jobs.

## DIVERSITY SNAPSHOT OF PUBLIC BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

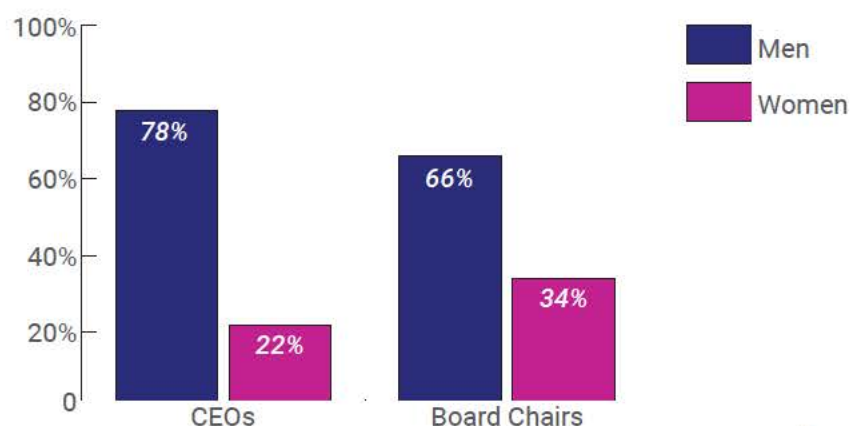
The WPG Initiative chose to focus on the 50 most prominent state boards and commissions because citizens should expect their public leaders to pave the way on diversity and inclusion.

This 2019 Diversity Snapshot is intended to serve as a baseline for how women and people of color are represented among leadership of these groups, and aims to be the beginning of a positive and public dialogue among these boards and the individuals with appointing authority over them. We ask the state to work in partnership to collect more data, especially on racial/ethnic representation. Massachusetts can and should achieve gender parity and fair racial/ethnic representation on all state boards (with rare exceptions). Let’s work together and more forward as a commonwealth with bold and innovative change.

## MEASURING THE WOMEN’S POWER GAP

Women and people of color account for 51.5% and 28%, respectively, of the state’s population yet are significantly underrepresented in leadership positions. We define the Women’s Power Gap as the difference between the percentage of men and women in leadership positions.<sup>3</sup> Among 50 prominent public boards and commissions, men and women comprise 78% and 22% of CEO positions, respectively, which equates to a power gap of 56%. The statistics for board chairs show men and women with 66% and 34%, respectively, for a power gap of 32%. At the board level, men hold 61% of seats and women 39%, for a power gap of 22%.

### MEASURING THE WOMEN’S POWER GAP AMONG PROMINENT PUBLIC BOARDS IN MA



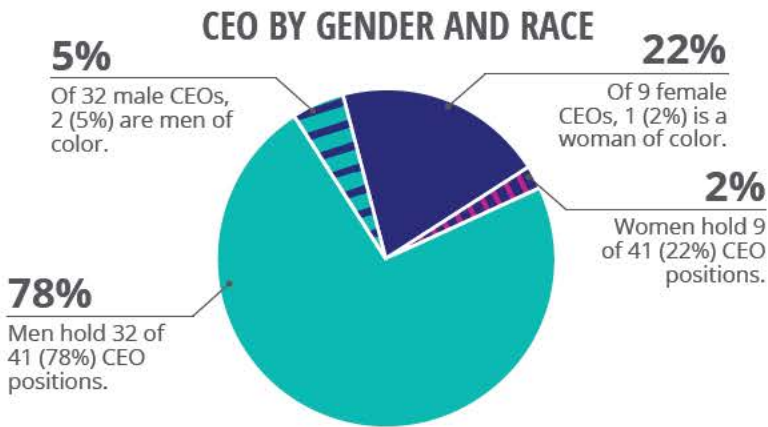
# KEY FINDINGS

Women and people of color account for 51.5% and 28%, respectively, of the state's population, but remain underrepresented in positions of leadership among our public, taxpayer funded boards and commissions. These data show:

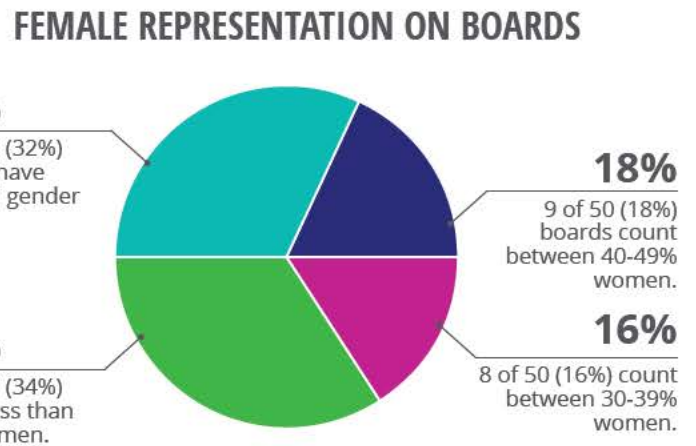
- **50% of the boards and commissions have less than 40% women board members. Only 32% have achieved gender parity.**
- **Women comprise 22% of CEOs, 34% of board chairs, and hold 39% of board seats.**
- **People of color comprise 7% of CEOs and 10% of board chairs;** data on board members of color was not available.
- **Women of color comprise 2% of CEOs and 6% of board chairs.**
- **Representation of women varies significantly among boards and often aligns with sectors traditionally considered female.** Women are scarce on many of the business and technology

boards. The Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation, MassVentures, Clean Technology Center, and Massachusetts Life Sciences Center all have under 30% women members.

- **Women are woefully underrepresented among our key education boards, which is an urgent concern given the fact that women are 75% of teachers in K-12, 94% of childcare workers and 57% of all higher education students.** The Commissioners of the Board of Early Education and Care (EEC), Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), and Board of Higher Education (BHE), are all men. Only the EEC has a female board chair. Both the president and board chair of the University of Massachusetts (UMass) are men. At the board level, the EEC counts 82% women on the board, ESE counts 36%, the BHE counts just 18%, and UMass counts 29% of non-student trustees.

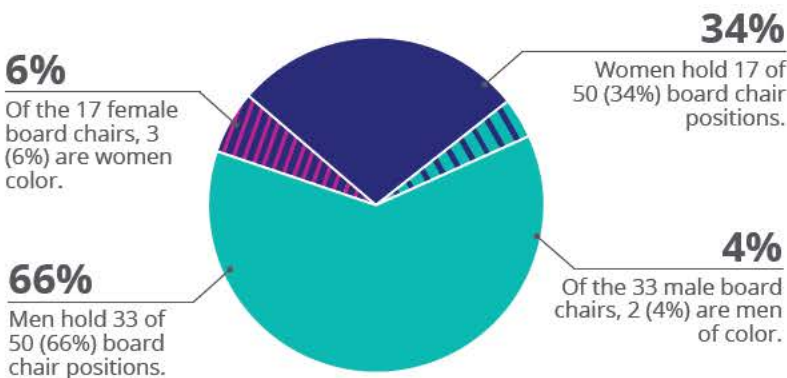


Note: Percentages reflect data of 41 public boards; 9 boards do not have a CEO structure.



Note: We used 50% for parity as a simple goal, though on small boards with odd numbers, it is fair to consider 40-49% parity.

### BOARD CHAIRS BY GENDER AND RACE



## ORGANIZATIONS' GENDER AND DIVERSITY DATA

NAME OF BOARD OR COMMISSION	CEO	BOARD CHAIR	BOARD MEMBERS	WOMEN ON BOARD
Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission (ABCC)	Ralph Sacramone, Male	Jean Lorizio, Female	3	3 (100%)
Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)	N/A	Sunila Thomas George, Female	3	3 (100%)
Board of Early Education and Care	Thomas Weber, Male	Nonie Lesaux, Female	11	9 (82%)
Cannabis Control Commission	Shawn Collins, Male	Steven Hoffman, Male	5	4 (80%)
Parole Board	Michael Callahan, Male	Paul Treseler, Male	7	5 (71%)
Massachusetts Cultural Council	Anita Walker, Female	Nina Fialkow, Female	17	12 (71%)
MassHire State Workforce Board	N/A	Donna Cupelo, Female	30	20 (67%)
State Board of Retirement	Nicola Favorito, Male	Deborah Goldberg, Female	5	3 (60%)
State Finance and Governance Board	N/A	Lourdes German, Female	5	3 (60%)
Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA)	Jack McCarthy, Male	Deborah Goldberg, Female	7	4 (57%)
Governor's Commission on Digital Innovation and Lifelong Learning	N/A	J.D. LaRock, Male	24	12 (50%)
Group Insurance Commission	Roberta Herman, Female	Valerie Sullivan, Female	16	8 (50%)
Massachusetts Department of Transportation Board	Stephanie Pollack, Female	Stephanie Pollack, Female	10	5 (50%)
Massachusetts Gaming Commission	Edward Bedrosian, Male	Cathy Judd-Stein, Female	4	2 (50%)
Massachusetts Health Council	David Martin, Male	Charlie Alagero, Male	18	9 (50%)
Supreme Judicial Nominating Commission	N/A	Lon Povich & Paul Dacier co-chairs, Male	12	6 (50%)
Commonwealth Corporation Board of Directors	J.D. LaRock, Male	Rosalin Acosta, Female	19	9 (47%)
Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCAA)	David Gibbons, Male	John McDonnell, Male	13	6 (46%)
Massachusetts Health Connector Board	Louis Gutierrez, Male	Marylou Sudders, Female	11	5 (45%)
Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency (MassHousing)	Chrystal Kornegay, Female	Michael Dirrane, Male	9	4 (44%)
Pension Reserves Investment Management Board (PRIM)	Michael Trotsky, Male	Deborah Goldberg, Female	9	4 (44%)
Massachusetts Port Authority	John Pranckevicius, Male	Lewis Evangelidis, Male	7	3 (43%)
Department of Transportation Fiscal and Management Control Board (FMCB)	Steve Poftak, Male	Joseph Aiello, Male	5	2 (40%)
State Ethics Commission	David Wilson, Male	Maria Krokidas, Female	5	2 (40%)
State Lottery Commission	Michael Sweeney, Male	Deborah Goldberg, Female	5	2 (40%)
Energy Facilities Siting Board	Andy Greene, Male	Matthew Beaton, Male	8	3 (38%)
Board of Elementary and Secondary Education	Jeffrey Riley, Male	Paul Sagan, Male	11	4 (36%)
Massachusetts Development Finance Agency	Lauren Liss, Female	Michael Kennealy, Male	11	4 (36%)
Massachusetts Technology Collaborative	Carolyn Kirk, Female	Michael Kennealy, Male	23	8 (35%)
Architectural Access Board	Thomas Hopkins, Male	Walter White, Male	9	3 (33%)
Judicial Nominating Commission	Sharon Shelfer Casey, Female	Paul Dacier, Male	21	7 (33%)
Massachusetts Broadband Institute	Edmund Donnelly, Male	Peter Larkin, Male	9	3 (33%)
Massachusetts Historical Commission	Brona Simon, Female	William Galvin, Male	16	5 (31%)
Board of Trustees of the University of Massachusetts	Marty Meehan, Male	Robert Manning, Male	17	5 (29%)
Firearms Licensing Review Board	N/A	Michaela Dunne, Female	7	2 (29%)
Massachusetts State College Building Authority	Edward Adelman, Male	David Elliz, Male	7	2 (29%)
Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation (MGCC) Board of Directors	Lawrence Andrews, Male	Michael Kennealy, Male	11	3 (27%)
MassVentures	Walter Bird, Male	Michael Kennealy, Male	11	3 (27%)

Continued on next page.

## ORGANIZATIONS' GENDER AND DIVERSITY DATA (CONTINUED)

NAME OF BOARD OR COMMISSION	CEO	BOARD CHAIR	BOARD MEMBERS	WOMEN ON BOARD
University of Massachusetts Building Authority	Patricia Filippone, Female	Victor Woolridge, Male	11	3 (27%)
Massachusetts Digital Healthcare Council	N/A	Michael Kennealy & Jeffrey Leiden, Male	38	10 (26%)
Massachusetts Sentencing Commission	N/A	Jack Lu, Male	12	3 (25%)
Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority	Thomas Graf, Male	Keith Shaughnessy, Male	9	2 (22%)
Civil Service Commission	N/A	Christopher Bowman, Male	5	1 (20%)
Board of Higher Education	Carlos Santiago, Male	Chris Gabrieli, Male	11	2 (18%)
Clean Energy Technology Center	Stephen Pike, Male	Matthew Beaton, Male	11	2 (18%)
Health Policy Commission	David Seltz, Male	Stuart Altman, Male	11	2 (18%)
Massachusetts Manufacturing Extension	John Killam, Male	William Sullivan, Male	11	2 (18%)
Massachusetts Life Sciences Center	Travis McCready, Male	Michael Heffernan & Michael Kennealy, Male	6	1 (17%)
Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA)	Frederick Laskey, Male	Matthew Beaton, Male	11	1 (9%)
Board of Fire Prevention Regulations	Richard Fredette, Male	Anthony Caputo, Male	16	0 (0%)

*Diversity data was not available via public sources and therefore is not represented here.*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Achieving diversity on boards and commissions is challenging due to the multiple appointing authorities for many of the seats. Consequently, collaboration between the administration, legislators, labor unions and other organizations that have designated seats on the boards is essential. Appointing authorities should communicate with each other to ensure there is intentionality in bringing and maintaining balance to each public board and commission. Further:

- Boards and commissions that have not achieved parity or fair representation of racial/ethnic candidates should fill all immediate vacancies with diverse candidates.
- Make the three education boards and the UMass Board of Trustees a first priority for gender balance given the vast number of women educators and students in the education sector.
- The administration and the boards should work together to appoint/hire more female and diverse CEOs/Commissioners until overall balance is achieved.
- The Governor should elevate more diverse candidates to serve as chairs.
- Each board should look broadly at the composition of its leadership and membership, set gender and diversity goals, and work with the appointing authorities to reach balance.
- The administration should report on diversity data for all boards and commissions on an annual basis and make the data transparent and easy to access.
- Boards and commissions should routinely require unconscious bias training for all members. The administration and board members should initiate a process of “debiasing” hiring and selection processes as discussed in the introduction to this report.
- There are a significant number of board chairs who hold their positions due to statute. For example, cabinet secretaries Matt Beaton and Michael Kennealy, and Treasurer Deborah Goldberg collectively chair 14 of the 50 profiled boards and commissions. Some positions, such as Treasurer, are elected, but others are cabinet secretaries appointed by the Governor. As such, we ask the Governor to strive for greater diversity among his cabinet members.
- Demystify the appointing process and create far greater awareness among the public about how to self-nominate or nominate others for these boards.
- Invest greater resources in the office that appoints members to boards and commissions. Add women and people of color who have experience working with diverse groups throughout the state to this office’s staff.
- Use the bully pulpit to make diversity and inclusion a number one priority.

# RESEARCH GOALS AND METHODOLOGY

The Eos Foundation reached out to Massachusetts Governor Baker's Office of Boards and Commissions asking the state to self-report the data captured here. Our request was denied. Therefore, we relied on public sources for all data. A comprehensive quality assurance process was instituted to ensure that the gender data were as accurate as possible. Comprehensive racial and ethnic diversity data are not publicly available and relevant findings are limited in this report. The anchor date for this data is February 15, 2019.

## ABOUT THE WOMEN'S POWER GAP

In 2018, the Eos Foundation introduced the Women's Power Gap Initiative, which aims to dramatically increase the number of women leaders, from a diverse set of backgrounds, across all sectors in Massachusetts. The Initiative conducts actionable research on prominent sectors of the state's economy, measures the extent of the power gap, and proposes solutions to reach parity. For more information visit [www.WomensPowerGap.org](http://www.WomensPowerGap.org).

## AUTHORS

This report was prepared by Andrea Silbert, President and Christy Mach Dubé, Director of Major Initiatives at the Eos Foundation. Research and data management by Kellie Marchant and Magdalena Punty of the Eos Foundation.

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2. Rivera, Lauren, "Hiring as Cultural Matching: The Case of Elite Professional Service Firms." <http://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/savvy/journals/ASR/Dec12ASRFeature.pdf> Downloaded March 12, 2019.
3. United States Census Bureau, July 1, 2017 estimate. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/ma>. Downloaded August 20, 2018.

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