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Opinion | Republican Women Are in Crisis

The 2010s were a transformative decade for women in politics. But the biggest trend has been obscured by 2018's female-led Democratic wave in Congress: Republican women, at both the national and state levels, are on the brink of extinction.

Republicans will ring in the new year with only 13 women in the House of Representatives, the [lowest number](#) since 1993, and eight women in the Senate. (There are, for comparison, 88 Democratic women in the House and 17 Democratic women in the Senate.)

The prospects for Republican women looked quite different at the decade's start. Pundits heralded 2010 as the [Year of the Republican Woman](#). In a speech that spring, Sarah Palin, the 2008 Republican vice-presidential nominee, [promoted her endorsements](#) of "common-sense conservative women."

"Look out, Washington, because there's a whole stampede of pink elephants crossing the line," she said.

For a moment, it seemed that Ms. Palin and her pack of "[Mama Grizzlies](#)" would become the prime beneficiaries of Hillary Clinton's 2008 presidential campaign. Yet as 2020 begins, Republicans have Ms. Palin and her brand of right-wing populism — revived and carried on by Donald Trump — to blame for the endangered state of the Republican woman.

The first casualties of Ms. Palin's pro-woman campaign were some of the party's most influential and respected female leaders. Even though Ms. Palin declared herself the leader of a new conservative feminism, [she went on the attack](#) endorsing men against both Senator Kay Bailey