

The Paul Hastings Gender Parity Report

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Paul Hastings presents the fifth edition of *Breaking the Glass Ceiling: Women in the Boardroom*, a comprehensive survey of the legislative, regulatory, and private sector developments impacting the representation of women on corporate boards globally.

Here is an excerpt from the section on the U.S.:

Studies have also looked at the root causes of underrepresentation of women in the boardroom. The United States Government Accountability Office (“GAO”) – the nonpartisan U.S. agency often called the “congressional watchdog” – found that there were several factors that hinder increases in women’s representation in the board room, including “boards not prioritizing diversity in recruitment efforts; lower representation of women in the traditional pipeline for board positions; and low turnover of board seats.”

The corporate pipeline problem was also identified in a 2017 study entitled “Women in the Workplace” (the “WiW Study”), a comprehensive study of the state of women in corporate America conducted by a partnership of McKinsey & Company and [LeanIn.Org](https://leanin.org/). The objective of the WiW Study was to “give organizations the information they need to promote women’s leadership and foster gender equality.” The WiW Study surveyed 222 companies in the United States that employ over 12 million people; more than 70,000 employees completed the survey which focused on their experiences regarding gender, opportunity, career and work-life issues. According to the WiW Study, “Women remain significantly underrepresented in the corporate pipeline. From the outset, fewer women than men are hired at the entry level, despite women being 57 percent of recent college graduates. At every subsequent step, the representation of women further declines, and women of color face an even more dramatic drop-off at senior levels. As a result, one in five C-suite leaders is a woman, and fewer than one in thirty is a woman of color.” The WiW Study concludes that, “Until we treat gender diversity, and diversity more broadly, like the business imperative it is, true progress will be hard to achieve.”

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