



**Statement of Curtis W. Copeland  
Specialist in American National Government  
Congressional Research Service**

**Before**

**The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform  
Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, Postal Service, and the District of Columbia  
House of Representatives**

**November 13, 2007**

**on**

**“SES Diversity in Legislative Branch Agencies”**

Chairman Davis and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to be here today to discuss data that the Subcommittee recently obtained from six legislative branch agencies regarding the extent of racial and gender diversity in their Senior Executive Service (SES) and equivalent positions (hereafter referred to simply as “SES” positions). Although CRS assisted in the collection and analysis of the data used in preparation of the Subcommittee’s report, neither CRS nor the Subcommittee verified the accuracy of the data that the agencies provided. My role today is to provide a factual presentation of the Subcommittee’s data.

The SES represents the most experienced and senior segment of the federal government’s career workforce, and provides needed continuity as presidential administrations and Congresses change. Racial, ethnic, and gender diversity in federal agencies’ SES ranks can bring a variety of perspectives and approaches to policy development and implementation. Many observers have found diversity in the leadership of public organizations to be a key organizational component for executing agencies’ missions, ensuring accountability to the American people, and achieving results.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, David W. Pitts, "Representative Bureaucracy, Ethnicity, and Public Schools:  
(continued...)"

Although the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and others have previously examined the extent of diversity in the executive branch SES,<sup>2</sup> no similar examination has previously been conducted regarding the SES in the legislative branch. Therefore, the Subcommittee's report breaks new ground in understanding the racial and gender composition of the senior levels of the six largest legislative branch agencies — GAO, the Library of Congress (LOC), the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), the Government Printing Office (GPO), the Architect of the Capitol (AOC), and the U.S. Capitol Police.

## The SES in Legislative Branch Agencies

According to the Subcommittee's report, the six legislative branch agencies had a total of 346 SES or SES-equivalent staff members during FY2007<sup>3</sup>. As shown in **Figure 1**, GAO had the largest number of SES officials (140), and the LOC had the next largest (104). Together, GAO and the LOC employed 70.5% of the senior executives in the six agencies. The other four agencies each employed a relatively small number of senior executives, ranging from 38 at CBO to 15 at AOC.

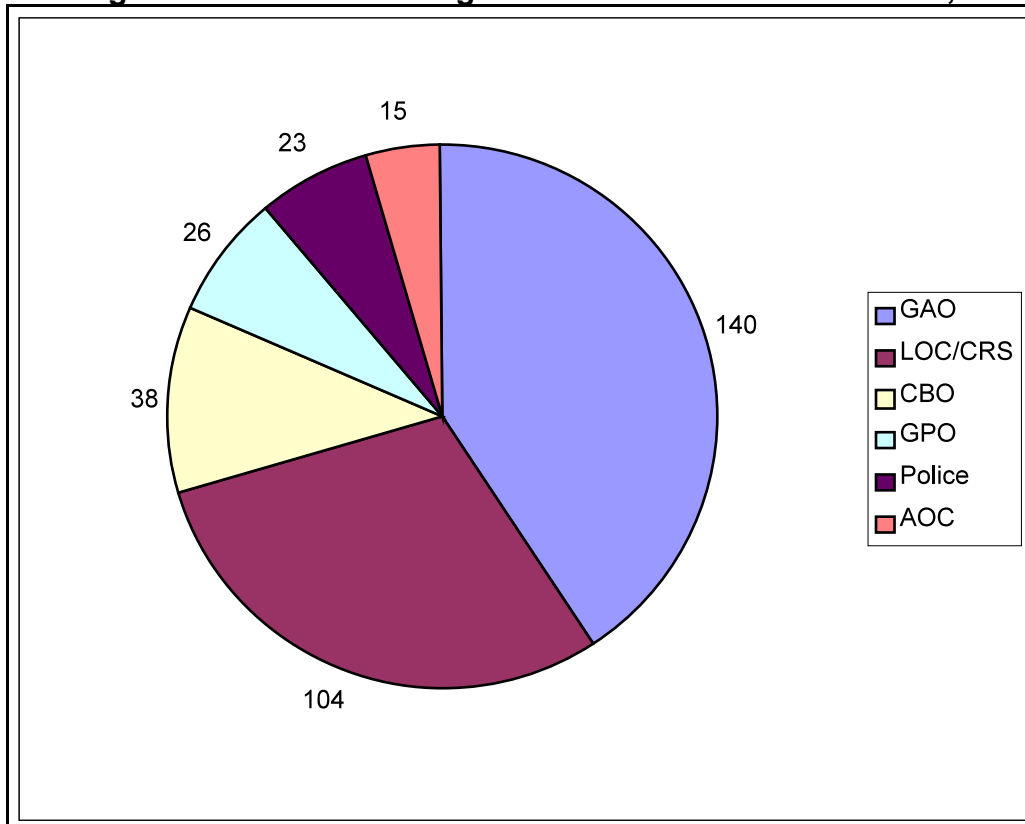
---

<sup>1</sup> (...continued)

Examining the Link Between Representation and Performance," *Administration & Society*, vol. 39 (July 2007), pp. 497-527; and Morgen S. Johansen, "The Effect of Female Strategic Managers on Organizational Performance," *Public Organization Review*, vol. 7 (Sept. 2007), pp. 269-280.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, U.S. General Accounting Office, *Senior Executive Service: Enhanced Agency Efforts Needed to Improve Diversity as the Senior Corps Turns Over*, GAO-03-34, Jan. 17, 2003; and U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Human Capital: Diversity in the Federal SES and the Senior Levels of the U.S. Postal Service*, GAO-07-838T, May 10, 2007.

<sup>3</sup> The data provided by the agencies include on-board strength at any point during a fiscal year. Therefore, for example, if an SES official was employed by an agency for only a portion of a fiscal year, that official would be counted the same as if the employee had worked at the agency for the full fiscal year.

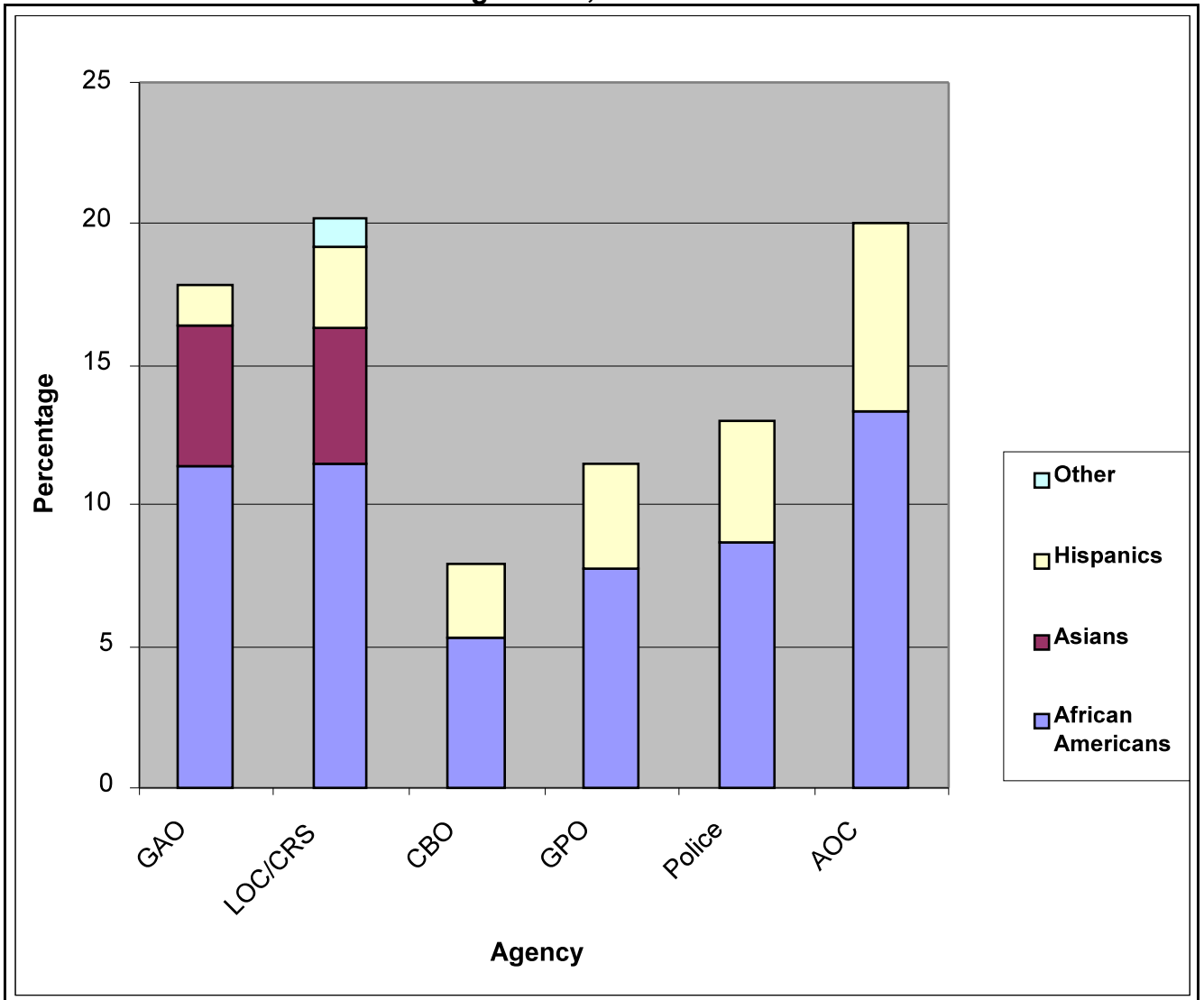
**Figure 1: Number of Legislative Branch SES Officials, FY2007**

Source: Legislative branch agencies' data.

### Differences in Diversity by Agency

In FY2007, minorities held 58 of the 346 SES positions in the six legislative branch agencies (16.8%), and women held 124 of the positions (35.8%). As **Figure 2** and **Table 1** indicate, the agencies differed substantially in the percentages of their SES corps who were minorities and women. For example, minorities were 7.9% of the SES at CBO, but more than 20% of the SES at the LOC. GPO's SES was 11.5% female, whereas women represented more than 40% of the workforce at the LOC and GAO. The agencies also differed in the composition of their minority workforces. For example, as Figure 2 shows, four agencies (CBO, GPO, AOC, and the Capitol Police) had no Asian SES officials in FY2007. Five of the six agencies (all but the LOC) had no "Other" SES officials (e.g., Native Americans).

**Figure 2: Percentage of SES Who Were Minorities in Legislative Branch Agencies, FY2007**



Source: Analysis of legislative branch agencies' data.

**Table 1: Number and Percentage of SES Who Were Minorities and Women Within Legislative Branch Agencies, FY2007**

Agency	Minorities in the SES		Women in the SES	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>GAO</b>	25	17.9	57	40.7
<b>LOC</b>	21	20.2	46	44.2
<b>CBO</b>	3	7.9	7	18.4
<b>GPO</b>	3	11.5	3	11.5
<b>Capitol Police</b>	3	13.0	6	26.1
<b>AOC</b>	3	20.0	5	33.3

Source: Analysis of legislative branch agencies' data.

It is important to recognize that, because of the relatively small size of the agencies' SES corps, a small increase or decrease in the number of minorities or women in the SES can substantially affect resulting percentages. For example, if CBO, GPO, the Capitol Police, and AOC each had three additional minorities in their SES corps, the percentage of minorities in the agencies' SES would have doubled. Also, as **Table 1** illustrates, although those four agencies had the same number of minorities in their SES, the percentages of their workforces who were minorities were different because the sizes of the agencies' SES corps differed.

### **Comparison to the Agencies' Workforces as a Whole**

One way to put the legislative branch agencies' SES diversity data into context is to compare the representation of minorities and women in the agencies' SES corps to those groups' representation in the agencies' workforces as a whole. As shown in **Table 2**, the SES corps in all six agencies was less diverse in terms of minorities than their workforces as a whole, and the SES was less diverse in terms of women in four of the six agencies. The data also indicate that the agencies varied in the diversity of both their workforces as a whole and their SES.

**Table 2: Percent Minority and Percent Female in Legislative Branch Agencies' Workforces as a Whole and SES, FY2007**

Agency	Size of Agency Workforce	Percent Minority		Percent Female	
		Workforce	SES	Workforce	SES
<b>GAO</b>	3,114	30.4	17.9	55.9	40.7
<b>LOC</b>	3,688	46.0	20.2	55.0	44.2
<b>CBO</b>	227	15.9	7.9	42.7	18.4
<b>GPO</b>	2,291	59.9	11.5	42.4	11.5
<b>Capitol Police</b>	2,001	38.7	13.0	23.5	26.1
<b>AOC</b>	2,011	53.5	20.0	28.6	33.3

Source: Analysis of legislative branch agencies' data.

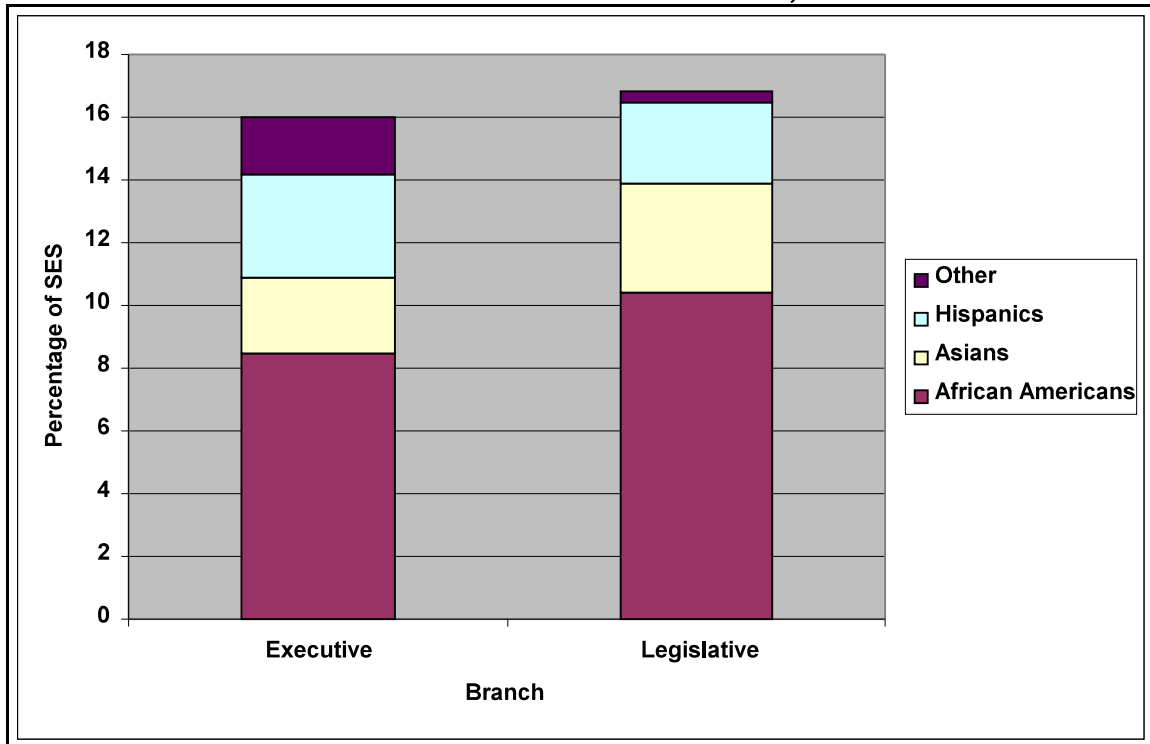
## Comparison of Legislative and Executive Branches

Another way to provide context is to compare the diversity of the SES in the legislative branch agencies to the diversity of the career SES in the executive branch. As **Figure 3** shows, the legislative branch SES had a slightly higher percentage of minorities in 2007 than did the executive branch SES — 16.8% versus 16.0%, respectively.<sup>4</sup> The percentage of particular minority groups represented also varied slightly between the branches. The legislative branch SES had a somewhat higher percentage of African Americans and Asians than did the executive branch SES, but the executive branch had a somewhat higher proportion of Hispanics and “Other” races (e.g., Native Americans). The legislative branch agencies also had a higher percentage of women in their SES ranks in 2007 — 35.8% compared to 28.9% in the executive branch.

---

<sup>4</sup> Executive branch career SES data were drawn from the Office of Personnel Management's FedScope database, available at [<http://www.fedscope.opm.gov>]. The most recent data available through FedScope are as of June 30, 2007. Therefore, the data are reported here and in Figure 3 on the next page as “2007” rather than “FY2007”. As noted previously, the legislative branch data are as of any point during the fiscal year.

**Figure 3: Percentage of SES Officials in the Executive and Legislative Branches Who Were Minorities, 2007**

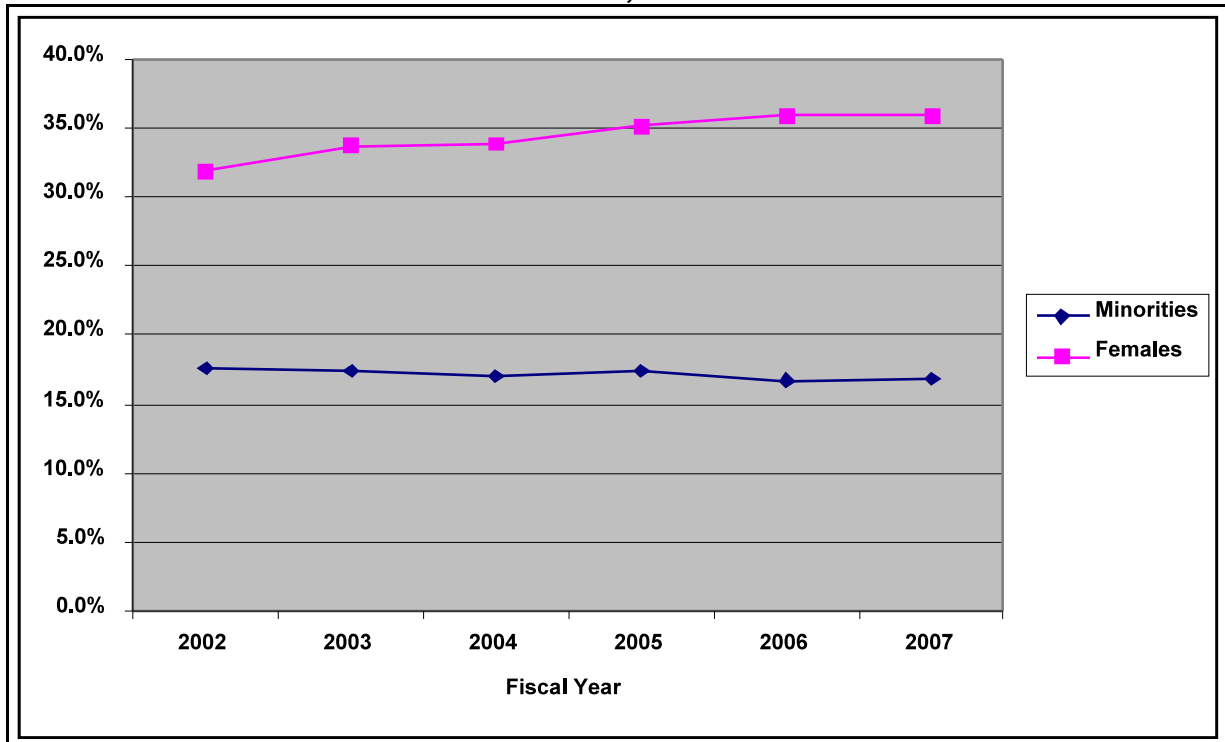


Source: Executive branch data obtained through the Office of Personnel Management's Fedscope website and legislative branch data provided by the legislative branch agencies.

## Trends in Legislative Branch SES Diversity

Another way to view the diversity of the legislative branch SES is in terms of trends — i.e., whether the number or percentage of minorities has been going up, going down, or staying the same in recent years. As shown in **Figure 4**, the percentage of the legislative branch SES who were minorities has declined slightly in recent years — from 17.5% in FY2002 to 16.8% in FY2007. In terms of numbers, the decline was from 59 SES officials in FY2002 to 58 in FY2007. On the other hand, the number of women in the legislative branch SES increased by 17 between FY2002 and FY2007 (from 107 to 124), raising the percentage of the SES who were women from 31.6% to 35.8%.

**Figure 4: Percentage of the Legislative Branch SES Who Were Minorities and Women, FY2002- FY2007**



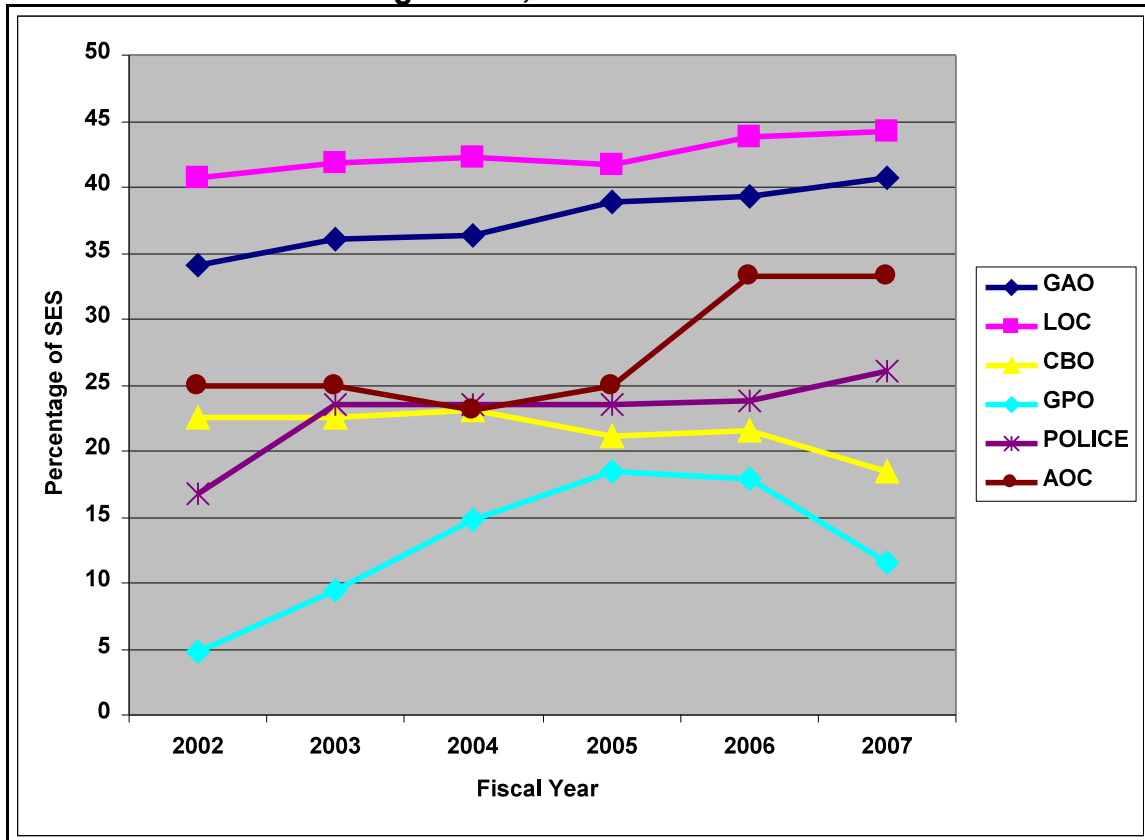
Source: Analysis of legislative branch agencies' data.

The trends in the six agencies during this period were not the same. In some agencies, the SES became slightly more diverse (e.g., GAO's SES went from 23 minorities in FY2002 to 25 minorities in FY2007, an increase from 16.5% minority to 17.9% minority); other agencies became slightly less diverse (e.g., the LOC's SES went from 23.1% minority to 20.2% minority, a decline from 25 to 21 minorities).

As **Figure 5** shows, female representation in the SES increased between FY2002 and FY2007 in most of the legislative branch agencies. For example, the number of women in GAO's SES increased from 47 in FY2002 to 57 in FY2007, raising the percentage of SES officials who were women from less than 34% to nearly 41%. At the LOC, the number of women in the SES increased by two during this period (from 44 to 46), which, combined with a slight drop in the size of the agency's SES corps, caused its percentage of the SES who were women to increase from 40.7% to 44.2%. At GPO, the number of females in the SES rose from one to three while the number of total SES in the agency rose from 21 to 26, thereby causing the percentage of the SES who were women to rise from 4.8% to 11.5%. At AOC in FY2002, 3 of 12 in the SES were women, but by FY2007, 5 of 15 in the SES were women. As a result, the percentage of women in the SES went from 16.7% to 26.1%. In FY2002, 3 of 18 SES officials at the Capitol Police were women (16.7%), but by FY2007, 6 of 23 in the SES were women (26.1%). In contrast, the number of female senior executives in CBO's workforce declined from nine to seven, and the size of the agency's SES corps fell from 40 to 38, thereby dropping its percentage of women in the SES from 22.5% to 18.4%.



**Figure 5: Percentage of SES Who Were Women in Legislative Branch Agencies, FY2002-FY2007**



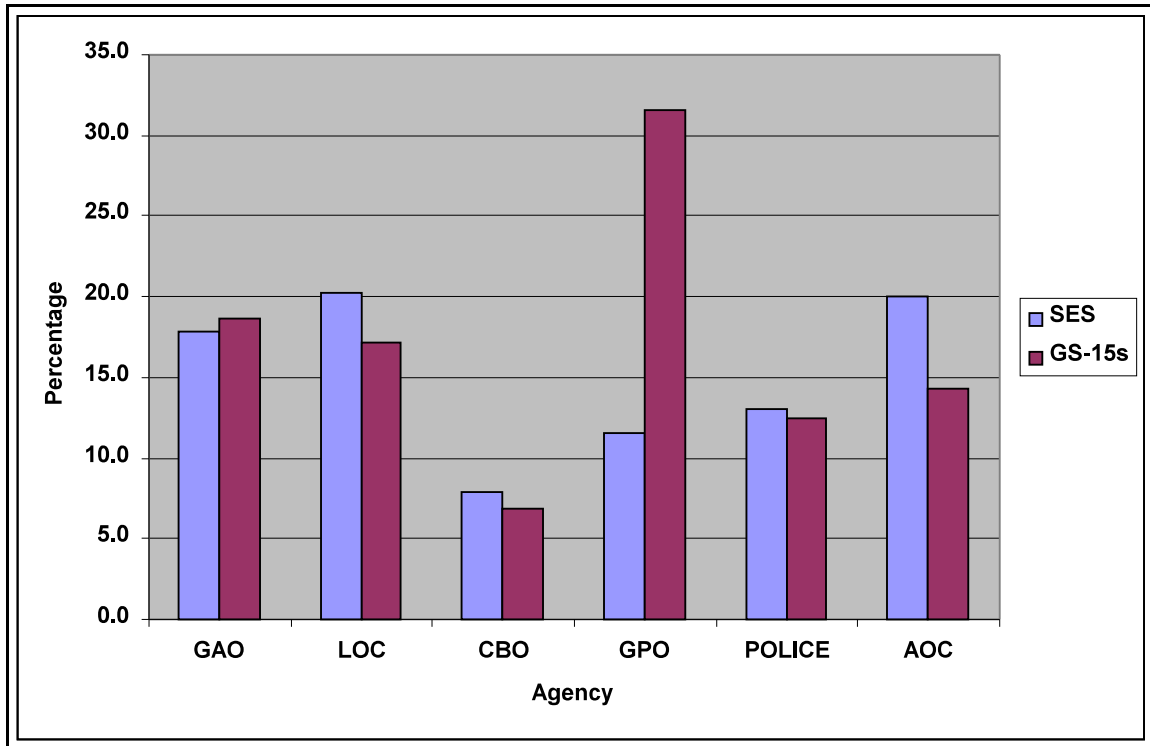
Source: Analysis of legislative branch agencies' data.

## GS-15 "Successor Pools" Were Often Less Diverse Than SES

In the executive branch, many SES members are drawn from the agencies' GS-15 ranks.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, if agencies select officials for the SES in proportion to the minority and female representation at the GS-15 level, the diversity of those "successor pools" can provide an indication of how diverse the SES ranks might be in the future. The Subcommittee's data indicated that, in FY2007, four of the legislative branch agencies (the LOC, CBO, AOC, and Capitol Police) had smaller percentages of minorities at the GS-15 level than in their SES. (See **Figure 6** below.) GPO was the most notable exception to this trend, with the percentage of GS-15s who were minorities nearly three times that of the agency's SES.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. General Accounting Office, *Senior Executive Service: Enhanced Agency Efforts Needed to Improve Diversity as the Senior Corps Turns Over*, GAO-03-34, Jan. 17, 2003.

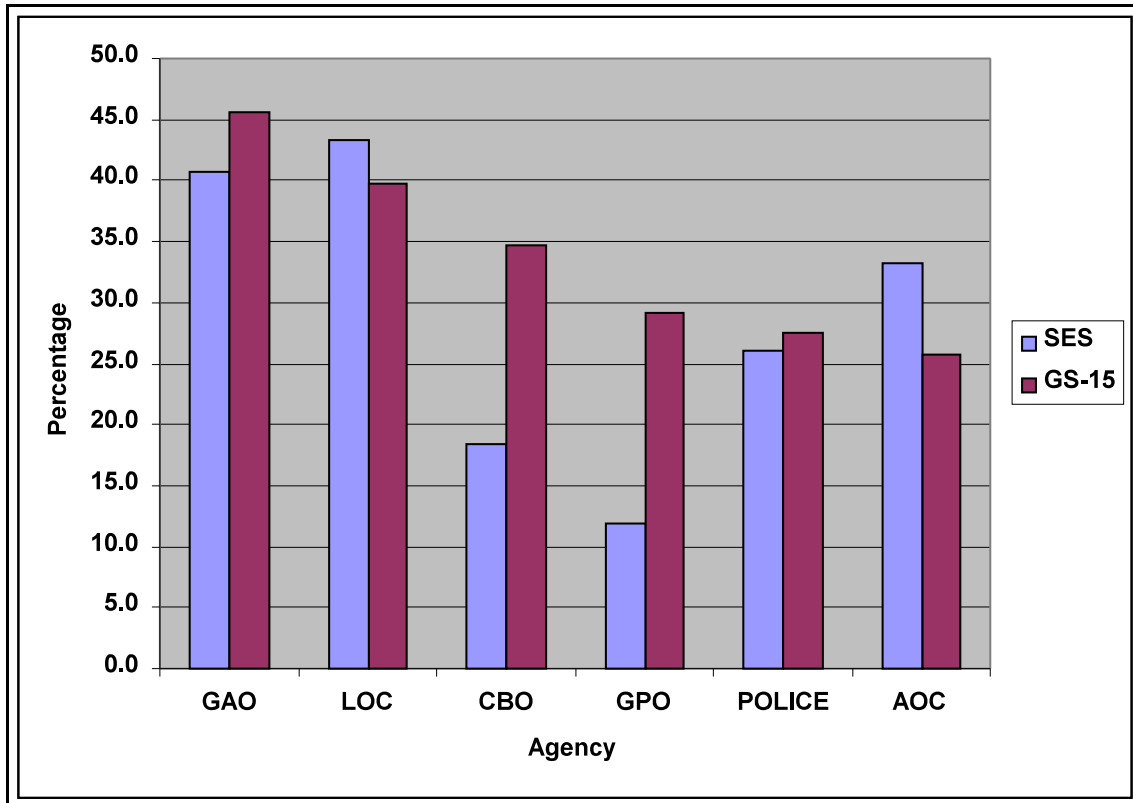
**Figure 6: Comparison of Minority Representation in SES and GS-15 Levels Within Legislative Branch Agencies, FY2007**



Source: Analysis of legislative branch agencies' data.

The trend for women at the GS-15 level in the legislative branch agencies was the opposite. (See **Figure 7** below.) In four of the six agencies, the percentages of GS-15s who were women exceeded the percentages in their SES corps. That trend was particularly notable at CBO and GPO, which had about double the percentage of women at GS-15 as in their SES. Two agencies (the LOC and AOC) had slightly smaller percentages of women at the GS-15 level than in their SES.

**Figure 7: Comparison of Female Representation in SES and GS-15 Levels Within Legislative Branch Agencies, FY2007**



Source: Analysis of legislative branch agencies' data.

### Comparisons in Terms of Average Total Compensation

The Subcommittee's report also examines whether minorities and women in the SES in the legislative branch agencies received salaries, bonuses, and awards (hereafter referred to as "total compensation") comparable to those of their non-minority and male counterparts. As **Table 3** indicates, minorities and non-minorities in the legislative branch SES as a whole had almost exactly the same average total compensation in FY2007, and women received an average of nearly 1% more than men.

**Table 3: Average Total Compensation for SES Officials, FY2007**

Agency	Minorities	Non-Minorities	Women	Men
GAO	\$155,988	\$156,742	\$157,156	\$156,228
LOC	\$159,366	\$161,065	\$161,388	\$157,367
CBO	\$148,597	\$154,640	\$146,129	\$155,977
GPO	\$156,268	\$155,091	\$151,925	\$155,657
Capitol Police	\$157,769	\$155,664	\$153,531	\$156,788
AOC	\$154,526	\$152,250	\$153,036	\$152,572
<b>Weighted Averages</b>	\$156,847	\$156,753	\$157,635	\$156,310

Source: Analysis of legislative branch agencies' data.

Note: Weighted averages take into account differences in the size of the legislative branch agencies, and were developed by multiplying the average total compensation for each agency and subgroup (e.g., minorities) by the number of observations for that agency and subgroup, adding together those sums, and dividing by the total number of observations for that subgroup.

However, **Table 3** also shows that there were differences among the agencies in average total compensation for minorities and women, and differences by agency when comparing within the groups. At three of the agencies, the average total compensation of minorities in the SES exceeded that of non-minorities, but in the other three agencies, non-minorities received more than minorities. The same was true with regard to women and men: at three agencies, men received more than women; and at three other agencies, the opposite was the case. Most of the time the average total compensation differences between the groups were fairly minor (i.e., 1% to 2%). One exception was at CBO, where minorities received about \$6,000 less than non-minorities (about 4% less), and women received almost \$10,000 less than men (about 7% less). Also, at the LOC, women in the SES received about \$4,000 (2.5%) more than their male counterparts.

-----

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my prepared statement. I would be happy to answer any questions.