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# Overcoming Tradition

## Ladies Room Opens For Md. Delegates

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ANNAPOLIS, Dec. 8—The walls of tradition came tumbling down today when female members of the House of Delegates celebrated the arrival of their first-ever restroom convenient to the House chamber.

Made from part of the men's room, the new facility was announced from the House floor during a meeting of the Democratic caucus and inaugurated with a gleeful parade led by Del. Pauline Menes (D-Prince George's).

It was Menes who spearheaded the drive 12 years ago in a celebrated incident that demonstrated how far women had to go in the tradition-bound, male-dominated assembly.

Then-Speaker Thomas Hunter Lowe had been the object of Menes' complaints that, unlike their male colleagues who had a restroom adjacent to the House chamber, women in the legislature had to use a public facility across the hall near the Senate. They risked missing votes on such trips.



**DEL. PAULINE MENES**  
... leader of 12-year effort

Lowe, an Eastern Shore legislator, struck back one day when he presented Menes a muskrat-covered toilet seat.

"I went up to the podium to thank him," Menes recalled. "I told him I would not miss an opportunity to take the rostrum since no women had appeared there before."

The restroom controversy was ended with an old-fashioned legislative tool: compromise. "Their side is more private," Del. Gene Counihan (D-Montgomery) said today after a tour. "But ours is more spacious."