



MARYLAND LEAGUE
OF CONSERVATION VOTERS

Press Release

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Maryland's State Legislators Shift in Favor of Environment

Conservation Scores are up for State Legislature in 2007; Trends Show Significant Improvement in House of Delegates, Strong Performance by "Freshmen," and Bi-Partisan Support

Annapolis, MD. Today the Maryland League of Conservation Voters released its now-annual legislative scorecard. The *2007 Maryland General Assembly Scorecard* grades each member of the state legislature on their key environmental votes for the 2007 legislative session.

Overall, scores went up in 2007 compared to last year's scorecard. The average score for the Senate was 69 percent, while the average for the House of Delegates was an impressive 80 percent.

A total of sixty legislators scored a perfect 100 percent and no legislators scored a 0 percent for the first time since 1982. Eight legislators earned scores below 20 percent.

"We believe the high -- and greatly improved -- scores coming out of this year's legislative session show the importance of the environment as an issue for legislators and the public," said Executive Director Cindy Schwartz.

"We're very proud of the House of Delegates -- which has an average score of 80 percent -- up from 67% last year. This surely is a reflection of the strong leadership of Speaker Mike Busch who can boast of his own perfect 100 percent score."

"We are also happy to note that our 'Fabulous Freshmen' stood out with above-average scores. This trend, combined with a marked improvement overall particularly for Republican Senators and Delegates is surely a good sign for the future of the environment in our state."

The *General Assembly Scorecard* measures floor and committee votes on a wide range of important conservation issues including growth, the Chesapeake Bay, and global warming. Notable bills included in the *2007 General Assembly Scorecard* are: the Clean Cars Act, which cleans up pollution that damages our water, endangers our health, and contributes to global warming; and the Global Warming Solutions Act, which would have made Maryland a leader in the fight against global warming by significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Trends and Highlights in the 2007 General Assembly Scorecard

- Legislators that were endorsed by the Maryland LCV in the 2006 elections scored an average of 30 points higher than their non-endorsed counterparts. (See attached charts.)
- The House of Delegates average score is up 13 points from 2006. House Republicans have nearly doubled their average score (26 percent in 2006 to 50 percent in 2007)
- The Senate average score is up 10 points from 2006. Senate Republicans have nearly tripled their average score (13 percent to 38 percent).
- By region, most Senate averages have gone up. Southern Maryland went from 64 percent to an all-time high of 91 percent. Western Maryland, Harford County, and the Eastern Shore are also at all-time highs. (See attached charts.)

- Every region in the House of Delegates went up from 2006. All are at all-time highs (except Baltimore City which is just 2 percent below its highest).

Since many important decisions are made in legislative committees, the *General Assembly Scorecard* includes committee votes as well as floor votes—each committee vote is counted the same as a floor vote. This year, several bills addressing energy efficiency issues that were defeated in committee are included in this *Scorecard*, and thus highlight the importance of scoring these votes.

“The high conservation scores we saw this year are an encouraging sign. They reflect heightened public awareness of environmental issues, especially growth, the Bay, and global warming. Now, with a serious budget deficit looming, we face significant challenges. The difficult budget decisions will surely be a test of legislators’ mettle when it comes to the environment,” concluded Ms. Schwartz.

The *Legislative Scorecard* is based on public information from Maryland General Assembly records. With input from leaders of Maryland’s conservation community, votes included are on bills, resolutions, appointments, amendments and committee votes considered important because of their potential impact on the state’s environment.

These particular votes, chosen by the Maryland League of Conservation Voters’ Board of Directors in conjunction with the staff of Environment Maryland, offered legislators clear choices on a range of conservation issues. The full scorecard is available online at www.mdlev.org.

Highest Scores

Senate (100%): Britt, Brochin, Conway, Exum, Frosh, *Lenett*, Middleton, Pinsky, *Raskin*, *Rosapepe*, *Zirkin*
House (100%): *Ali*, Barkley, *Barnes*, *Beidle*, Bobo, Branch, Bronrott, Busch, Cane, Cardin, Carter, G. Clagett, V. Clagett, *Conaway*, Conway, Davis, Dumais, Frush, Gaines, Griffith, Gutierrez, *Guzzone*, Hammen, Haynes, Healey, Heller, Hixson, Holmes, Hubbard, James, Jones, *Lafferty*, Lawton, Lee, *Levi*, *Manno*, McIntosh, Montgomery, Morhaim, Niemann, Proctor, Ramirez, Robinson, Rosenberg, Sophocleus, *Stein*, *Stukes*, *Valderrama*, *Waldstreicher*

Lowest Scores (below 20%)

Senate (below 20%): Greenip, Harris, Hooper, Kittleman, Mooney
House (below 20%): Bates, Miller, Wood

Note: Freshmen are in *italic*

Averages

	2007	05-06	03-04
Senate	69%	59%	68%
Republicans	38%	13%	18%
Democrats	82%	79%	90%
House	80%	67%	73%
Republicans	50%	26%	32%
Democrats	91%	85%	92%

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For more than 25 years, the non-partisan Maryland League of Conservation Voters has served as the political voice of environment. We advocate for sound conservation policies, promote environmentally responsible candidates, and hold individual elected officials accountable through our scorecards and reports.