

ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED AMERICANS

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109th Congress Gets Failing Grade for Senior-Issues Votes

Voting Record to Guide Election Day Decisions, Says Alliance for Retired Americans

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For a copy of the Voting Record visit: <http://www.retiredamericans.org/votingrecord>

Washington, D.C.— The health and economic well-being of America’s seniors came under serious attack during the first session of the 109th Congress, according to the results of the **Alliance for Retired Americans’ 2005 Voting Record** released today.

The Alliance has been monitoring the senior-issue votes in the House and Senate for five years, and the **2005 Voting Record** reflects a disturbing trend of anti-senior sentiment in Congress.

The **2005 Voting Record** reports that overall, 56% of the Senate and 53% of the House received a failing score. The Alliance concluded that the number of elected officials who voted against seniors paints a grim picture. With 73% of Republicans scoring zero in both the Senate and the House, but no Democrats scoring zero in either chamber, Republicans would have some catching up to do to be considered a friend to seniors.

In another downward trend, 40% of Senators and 35% of Representatives scored a perfect 100% for their senior-issue votes. In 2004, 44% of the Senate and 42% of the House received perfect scores.

“The **Voting Record** is a report card for seniors,” said George J. Kourpias, president of the National Alliance. It affords an opportunity for seniors to evaluate and judge their lawmakers’ votes on issues of importance to older Americans and, if necessary, put a politician on notice. The **Voting Record** is the ultimate reality check for who is – and isn’t – a true advocate for seniors.”

“Rather than fix the obvious flaws in the Part D drug program before chaos ensued,” Kourpias added, “this Republican-controlled Congress elected to deepen the deficit crisis and play favorites with America’s most wealthy by rewarding them with tax cuts, at the expense of retirees and seniors.”

“Congress had several opportunities to make senior-friendly changes, such as allowing the Medicare program to negotiate for lower drug prices, extending the enrollment period without penalty, and lowering rebates to drug manufacturers. It didn’t take advantage of those opportunities,” said Edward F. Coyle, the Alliance’s Executive Director. “The only politicians who will be mentioning Medicare this election year will be those who saw these problems and voted to fix them.”

The Alliance, which is a nationwide grassroots organization that advocates on behalf of seniors, assessed how Members of Congress voted on ten House and ten Senate votes that were important to the welfare of seniors, including Medicare, retiree benefits, tax breaks and pensions.

Edward F. Coyle, Executive Director of the Alliance for Retired Americans, is available for interviews and comments.

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The Alliance for Retired Americans is a national organization that advocates for the rights and well being of 3 million retirees and their families.