

ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED AMERICANS

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Capitol Hill Votes on Seniors and Retirees Scrutinized

Congress Tries to Stand Up for Seniors, but Faces Stiff Resistance from White House, Drug and Insurance Industry Lobbyists

Washington, DC - Marking the beginning of Older Americans Month, a new congressional voting record released today by the Alliance for Retired Americans details the voting record of every U.S. Senator and Representative on key issues affecting current and future retirees. The document is available at <https://retiredamericans.org/voting-record/>.

“What is at stake is nothing less than the future of retirement in America. As our leaders in Washington vote on prescription drugs, Medicare, Social Security, health care, and pensions, politically savvy seniors need to know where their elected officials stand on these important issues,” said Alliance President George J. Kourpias.

“I am not the only one who worries that this may be the last generation that ever gets to retire,” Kourpias said, noting a recent nationwide survey of seniors in which 88 percent of respondents did not believe their children or grandchildren would have the quality of life that they have had.

The Alliance voting record examines 10 key Senate votes and 10 key House votes in 2007, showing the roll calls on blocking Social Security privatization, lowering Medicare costs, expanding access to affordable health care, stopping oil price gouging, and protecting voting rights.

According to the Alliance, 244 U.S. House members received passing grades (60 percent or higher), with 176 achieving perfect scores of 100 percent. 189 received failing grades (below 60 percent), with 66 receiving scores of zero. Two seats were vacant during these votes.

In the Senate, 52 members received passing grades (60 percent or higher), with 31 achieving perfect scores of 100 percent. 47 received failing grades (below 60 percent), with 27 receiving scores of zero. Senator Tim Johnson (D-SD) missed these votes due to illness.

Senators Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama each scored 100 percent, while Senator John McCain scored a zero on the ten votes evaluated by the Alliance in 2007.

The widespread voter discontent in the 2006 congressional elections ushered in a new Congress which sought to improve health care, reduce drug prices, and end taxpayer overpayments to private insurance companies who operate Medicare Advantage programs. Unfortunately for America’s seniors, these efforts were stymied by opposition from the White House and pharmaceutical and insurance lobbyists.

“This voting record measures how committed our elected officials are to retirees and older Americans. I encourage everyone to become fully aware of how their leaders vote. With so much at stake, we must be as educated and active as we can,” Kourpias said.

The Alliance for Retired Americans is a national organization that advocates for the rights and well being of over 3.5 million retirees and their families.