

## THE 2011 SCORECARD METHODOLOGY

Club for Growth publishes this scorecard so our members and the public can monitor the actions and the voting behavior of members of Congress on economic growth issues.

We conducted a comprehensive examination of each lawmaker's record on pro-growth policies and computed an Economic Growth Score on a scale of 0 to 100. A score of 100 indicates the highest support for pro-growth policies. Those lawmakers scoring 90 or higher in 2011— and who also have a lifetime score of 90 or higher—receive the *Defender of Economic Freedom* award.

The rating examines legislative actions that affect our immediate pro-economic growth policy goals, including:

- Lower marginal income tax rates
- Cutting and limiting government spending
- Death Tax repeal
- Expanding free trade
- Legal reform to end abusive lawsuits
- Replacing the current tax code
- School choice
- Regulatory reform and deregulation
- Reform entitlements to increase economic freedom and ensure that long-term federal spending is financially sustainable
- Social Security reform with personal retirement accounts

Not all of these policy goals will come up for a vote in each session of Congress. In the 2011 Session, many of the votes were on bills that proposed laws that would directly harm these goals.

Whenever possible the Club will send a “key vote” alert to each member of Congress prior to an expected roll call vote or pending legislative action that we plan to include in the scorecard. While the Club will seek to provide a “key vote” alert, it reserves the right to include any vote or action in the rating as votes often come up with little warning.

### **Legislative Actions Considered**

The Club's rating includes 34 House and 25 Senate roll call votes as well as other selected actions that advance or harm pro-growth policies. A bonus points were also awarded to Lawmakers who signed a pledge to vote against raising the debt limit unless accompanied by real spending reform and passage of a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. Another bonus point was awarded to representatives who signed a letter vowing to cast their votes against a debt ceiling increase without real spending cuts.

## **Computation**

Scores are computed on a scale of 0 to 100. Each vote or action in the rating is assigned a certain number of points depending on its relative importance. Absences are not counted against a member, though we reserve the right to do so in the future if, in our judgment, an absence was used to duck taking a position.

To provide some additional guidance concerning the scores, each lawmaker was ranked. Members with 0% scores were, by default, ranked #435 in the House and 100 in the Senate. Scores and ranks cannot be directly compared between the House and Senate as different votes were taken in each chamber.

We have also provided a “Lifetime Score” for each member of Congress. This is a simple average of the scores from 2011 and all previous years where the lawmaker earned a score in a Club for Growth rating.

In some cases a lawmaker was not present for enough votes for a meaningful score or ranking to be computed and in such cases “n.a.” for not applicable appears. In computing lifetime scores, years with “n.a.” listed instead of a score are not included.

## **Additional Factors**

A study of roll call votes on the floor of the House and Senate and legislative actions is just that. It can not account for a lawmaker’s work in committee, advocacy in his party’s caucus meetings, and effectiveness as a leader in advocating pro-growth policies.