

# THE 2012 SCORECARD METHODOLOGY

## 112th Congress – 2nd Session, 2012

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 2012— and who also have a lifetime score of 90 or higher—receive the *Defender of Economic Freedom* award. These lawmakers' names are highlighted in yellow.

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

- Reduce income tax rates
- Death tax repeal
- Limited government through limited spending and budget reform, including a Balanced Budget Amendment to the United States Constitution
- Social Security reform with personal retirement accounts for younger workers
- Expanding trade freedom (free trade)
- End abusive lawsuits through medical malpractice and tort reform
- Replacing the current tax code (flat tax, fair tax)
- School choice
- Regulatory reform and deregulation

Not all of these policy goals will come up for a vote in each session of Congress. In the 2012 Session, many of the votes were on bills that proposed laws that would directly harm these goals.

Whenever possible the Club sends 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 seeks 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 23 House votes and 30 Senate votes as well as other selected actions that advance or harm pro-growth policies. Up to 10 points of a Representative's score was based on his score on the special "Spending Cut Scorecard" which was published last July and studied 45 votes on amendments offered in the House through June 30, 2012, to cut spending. The House scorecard also awarded two points if the Representative refused to sign the discharge petition on the farm bill.

### **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 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 are, 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 2012 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. Some House members, noted with an asterisk next to their name, only voted on 50-75% of the weighted votes used for the scorecard. Please exercise caution when comparing their scores to other members.

### **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.