

PRESS RELEASE

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SD CITIZENS FOR LIBERTY RELEASES 2017 CONSERVATIVE SCORECARD

Group raises the bar on state legislator evaluations

Rapid City, SD (October 9, 2017) - SD Citizens for Liberty, Inc., an active local tea party organization, has taken the familiar practice of rating state legislators' performance to a new level. "There are lots of scorecards out there, but most of them are more narrowly focused than ours," said Mike Mueller, President of SDCFL. "We evaluate the votes of all 105 legislators over a broad spectrum of bills that represent issues people care about." The group uses the provisions of the South Dakota and US Constitutions and the planks of the state and national Republican Party platforms as an evaluating guide. What is unique to this effort is the inclusion of committee votes in the group's in-depth online chart that features links to the bills and the legislator's state website page.

"Our parliamentary system can effectively serve the people when properly used, but too often committee hearings provide political cover for lawmakers to advance an agenda or kill an important bill before it proceeds to the floor of the House or Senate", said Tonchi Weaver, the group's project director. "Other groups look only at floor votes when creating scorecards; because all the strategizing goes on in committees, we included those votes as well".

This project has taken several months to complete and was complicated by the need to include the special session called by Governor Dugaard in mid-June. The color-coded chart is heavily footnoted to indicate the references used to evaluate the votes. It also includes notations on past political affiliation of many Republican legislators.

“People want to compare how their legislators are voting in office versus what they said when they ran for office”, Mueller said. “Our scorecard plays an important role in keeping legislators honest – and keeping the citizens informed.”

The 2017 South Dakota Conservative Scorecard as well as the 2017 Second Amendment Scorecard published earlier this year can be accessed on SD Citizens for Liberty’s Facebook page, or on the website sdcitizensforliberty.com
