

Congressional Scorecard



*109th Congress,
First Session,
2005*

Minnesota

**American Federation
of State, County
and Municipal
Employees**



How to Judge a Member's Voting Record

AFSCME selects a few roll-call votes from the hundreds cast by members of Congress every session. In choosing these votes, AFSCME attempts to fairly represent a lawmaker's position on issues determined to be important to AFSCME members — first and foremost as workers, but also as citizens and union brothers and sisters.

This voting scorecard is one of the key factors used in making judgments on AFSCME campaign support, endorsements, or contributions from PEOPLE — AFSCME's Political Action Committee or PAC. Other important factors often include the member's official leadership position, chairmanship or seniority on important committees, leadership in a state's congressional delegation, and accessibility and responsiveness to AFSCME's lobbying efforts.

Please visit AFSCME's website at www.afscme.org to obtain AFSCME Action Alerts, weekly reports, letters to congressional members, and votes. Questions concerning the selection of the votes or other aspects of a member's record are welcome. Write to AFSCME Legislation Department, 1625 L Street, N.W., Washington, DC, 20036-5687, or call 800.732.8120.

Senate Vote Descriptions

1. Upholding Civil Rights And Labor Lawsuits

AFSCME Position: Yes

The Senate rejected an amendment by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA) to the class action lawsuit bill (S. 5) that would have protected the ability of employees to bring complaints against their employers in state courts for violations of employment laws on issues such as appropriate hours worked, exemptions from pay laws, overtime pay eligibility and back pay. This amendment would have changed a provision in the class action bill that would have shifted many of such cases from state to federal courts that offer less protections for employers. Senate Vote 6.

AFSCME supported the amendment, which the Senate rejected by a vote of 59-40 on February 9, 2005. (A three-fifths majority or 60 votes is needed to end a filibuster.)

2. Providing Livable Wages

AFSCME Position: Yes

The Senate rejected an amendment by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA) to the bankruptcy reform bill (S. 256) that would have raised the minimum wage from \$5.15 an hour to \$7.25 an hour over a period of 26 months. This would have been the first increase in seven years. Senate Vote 26.

AFSCME supported the amendment, which the Senate rejected by a vote of 49-46 on March 7, 2005.

3. Preventing Cuts In Medicaid

AFSCME Position: Yes

The Senate adopted an amendment by Sen. Gordon Smith (R-OR) to the Fiscal 2006 Budget Resolution (S. Con. Res. 18) that would strike \$14 billion in Medicaid cuts which would hurt elderly, disabled and low-income Americans. The amendment also provided for the creation of a 23-member Bipartisan Medicaid Commission to study Medicaid before any cuts could occur. Senate Vote 58.

AFSCME supported the amendment, which the Senate adopted by a vote of 52-48 on March 17, 2005.

4. Reversing Drastic Education Funding Cuts

AFSCME Position: Yes

The Senate adopted an amendment by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA) to the Fiscal 2006 Budget Resolution (S. Con. Res. 18) that would have restored drastic education program cuts that would harm our nation's students and paid for the cuts by decreasing the Bush tax cuts by \$5.4 billion. Senate Vote 68.

AFSCME supported the amendment, which the Senate adopted by a vote of 51-49 on March 17, 2005.

5. Imposing Deep Cuts To Services For Working Families

AFSCME Position: No

The Senate approved a five-year budget plan (H. Con. Res. 95) that would slash funding for domestic services for lower- and middle-income workers while providing more than \$70 billion in tax cuts that go primarily to the wealthy. Senate Vote 114.

AFSCME opposed the budget plan, which the Senate adopted by a vote of 52-47 on April 28, 2005.

6. Providing Crucial Funding For First Responders

AFSCME Position: Yes

The Senate rejected a procedural motion by Sen. Daniel Akaka (D-HI) to the Fiscal 2006 Homeland Security spending bill (H.R. 2360) that would have added \$487 million for state and local government first-responder grant programs. Senate Vote 178.

AFSCME supported the motion, which the Senate rejected by a vote of 55-42 on July 13, 2005. (A three-fifths majority or 60 votes was needed to waive the Budget Act.)

7. Slashing Medicare And Medicaid Programs

AFSCME Position: No

The Senate approved the omnibus budget bill (S. 1932) that would slash funding for Medicare and Medicaid programs to help pay for tax cuts for upper-income individuals. Medicare, which provides health care to seniors, was cut by \$4.26 billion and Medicaid, which provides health care for low-income Americans and nursing home care for seniors, was cut by \$5.78 billion. Senate Vote 303.

AFSCME opposed the legislation, which the Senate approved by a vote of 52-47 on November 3, 2005.

8. Rewarding Upper-Income Individuals With Tax Cuts

AFSCME Position: No

The Senate approved a tax bill (S. 2020) that would extend a series of tax cuts primarily aimed at the wealthy that would have expired between 2005 and 2010. These tax cuts to the wealthy come at the expense of working families, seniors and lower-income Americans and threaten the jobs of thousands of AFSCME members. Senate Vote 347.

AFSCME opposed the legislation, which the Senate approved by a vote of 64-33 on November 18, 2005.

House Vote Descriptions

1. Stopping Religious Discrimination In Employment

AFSCME Position: Yes

The House rejected an amendment by Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA) to the job training reauthorization bill (H.R. 27) that would have removed a provision in the bill allowing religious organizations receiving federal money to reject job applicants on the basis of their religious beliefs. House Vote 46.

AFSCME supported the amendment, which the House rejected by a vote of 239-186 on March 2, 2005.

2. Decimating Job Training Services

AFSCME Position: No

The House approved a job training bill (H.R. 27) that would end the state employment service and dislocated worker programs, threaten AFSCME member jobs, and eliminate vital services for the unemployed. House Vote 48.

AFSCME opposed the legislation, which the House approved by a vote of 224-200 on March 2, 2005.

3. Deep Cuts To Services For Working Families

AFSCME Position: No

The House approved a five-year budget plan (H. Con. Res. 95) that would slash funding for domestic services for middle- and lower-income workers and families while providing more than \$70 billion in tax cuts that go primarily to the wealthy. House Vote 149.

AFSCME opposed the legislation, which the House approved by a vote of 214-211 on April 28, 2005.

4. Saving The Food Stamp Program From Privatization

AFSCME Position: Yes

The House rejected a motion that would have instructed House conferees to the agriculture spending bill (H.R. 2477) to agree to a provision prohibiting state agencies from using any federal funds to contract out Food Stamp program operations, which employ AFSCME members. House Vote 535.

AFSCME supported the motion, which the House rejected by a vote of 216-209 on October 20, 2005.

5. Inadequate Funding For Health, Human Services And Education Programs

AFSCME Position: No

The House rejected a spending bill (H.R. 3010) that would have underfunded by billions of dollars health care, education,

job training and social services programs that fund tens of thousands of AFSCME member jobs and provide vital services to working families. House Vote 598.

AFSCME opposed the legislation, which the House rejected by a vote of 224-209 on November 17, 2005.

6. Slashing Medicaid And Student Loan Programs

AFSCME Position: No

The House approved the House version of the omnibus budget bill (H.R. 4241) that would cut funding for the Medicaid program by \$11 billion to help pay for tax cuts for upper-income individuals. The bill would also reduce assistance to lenders of student loans and reduce aid to states to enforce child support payments. House Vote 601.

AFSCME opposed the legislation, which the House approved by a vote of 212-206 on November 18, 2005.

7. Rewarding Upper-Income Individuals With Tax Cuts

AFSCME Position: No

The House approved a tax bill (H.R. 4297) that would extend a series of tax cuts aimed overwhelmingly at wealthy investors that would have expired between 2005 and 2010. These tax cuts for the wealthy come at the expense of working families, seniors and lower-income Americans and threaten the jobs of thousands of AFSCME members. House Vote 621.

AFSCME opposed the legislation, which the House approved by a vote of 234-197 on December 8, 2005.

8. Cutting Services For Working Families To Pay For Tax Cuts For The Wealthy

AFSCME Position: No

The House approved the final omnibus budget bill (S. 1932) that would cut domestic federal spending by a massive \$39.7 billion over five years. The bill cuts services for middle- and lower-income families and reduces assistance to lenders of student loans. It also cuts aid to states to enforce child support payments and reduces Medicaid spending by \$4.8 billion. In effect, the bill forces middle- and lower-income families to shoulder the burden for the cost of the tax cuts for wealthy Americans. House Vote 670.

AFSCME opposed the legislation, which the House approved by a vote of 212-206 on December 19, 2005.

Senate Voting Record 2005

Vote Number	Workers Rights	Livable Wages	Preventing Medicaid Cuts	Reversing Education Cuts	Federal Services Cuts	Funding First Responders	Medicare and Medicaid Cuts	Session support (percent)	Career Cumulative Record		
	AFSCME Position	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N		Right	Wrong	Percent Right
Minnesota											
Coleman (R)	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	50	6	18	25
Dayton (D)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	88	43	1	98

House Voting Record 2005

Vote Number	AFSCME Position	Stopping Employment Discrimination	Job Training Cuts	Federal Services Cuts	Saving Food Stamp Program	HHS and Education Cuts	Medicaid and Student Loan Cuts	Tax Breaks for the Wealthy	Session support (percent)	Career Cumulative Record		
		Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N		Right	Wrong	Percent Right
Minnesota												
1	Gutknecht (R)	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	13	6	92	6
2	Kline (R)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	0	0	24	0
3	Ramstad (R)	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓	X	38	27	127	18
4	McCollum (D)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100	43	0	100
5	Sabo (D)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100	244	10	96
6	Kennedy, M. (R)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	0	1	42	2
7	Peterson, C. (D)	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	75	105	48	69
8	Oberstar (D)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100	276	15	95

Key: ✓ voted with AFSCME's position; X voted against AFSCME's position; ? did not vote.