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Sierra Club California Releases 2014 Legislative Report Card

Legislature and Governor Substantially Improve Environmental Scores this Election Year

SACRAMENTO—The California legislature and the Governor substantially improved their performance on key environmental legislation in 2014 according to Sierra Club California’s annual legislative report card.

The report card evaluates legislators’ environmental record based on 11 bills. Those bills were selected for scoring because of their overall importance to environmental quality, the precedent they set for good or bad impacts, and their importance to fulfilling the Sierra Club’s mission to protect the planet.

“This year’s scores show a vast improvement over last year’s, largely because of the absence of last-minute bills designed to undercut the environment,” said Kathryn Phillips, director of Sierra Club California. “It suggests that during an election year, elected officials have a heightened awareness of the public’s expectation that their representatives help protect the state’s air, water and natural areas.”

The report card translates the value of votes—for or against the Sierra Club’s position—into a percentage. In 2013, no legislators earned 100 percent. This year, of the 116 legislators evaluated, 34 earned 100 percent scores. All of the highest scores were earned by Democratic legislators. However, five Democrats earned scores of only 36 percent.

Among the Republicans, the highest score was 45 percent, earned by Mark Wyland (R-Escondido) and Brian Nestande (R-Palm Desert). The lowest, was zero, earned by eight Republican legislators.

“In a state where most Californians support some aspect of environmental protection, you’d have to be really insensitive to your constituents to earn a solid zero,” said Phillips.

The Governor signed all of the bills scored that made it to his desk, giving him a 100 percent rating this year. Last year his score was 43 percent.

The report card is available at Sierra Club California’s website: <http://www.sierraclubcalifornia.org>.

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Sierra Club California is the legislative and regulatory advocacy arm of the 13 Sierra Club chapters in California, representing more than 380,000 members and supporters statewide.