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Sierra Club California Releases 2015 Legislative Report Card Environment fares well, but oil industry influence evident

SACRAMENTO – Nearly twice as many California Senators as Assembly Members scored a 100 percent on Sierra Club California’s 2015 legislative report card.

“When you look at the votes, it’s pretty clear that many Democratic Assembly members who might vote well on other environmental issues, held back on votes that would have required them to challenge the oil industry to pollute less,” said Kathryn Phillips, director of Sierra Club California.

Eight Assembly members received 100 percent scores on the report card. That meant they voted with the Club’s recommendations on a list of priority bills that would protect the environment and public health. Fourteen Senators received 100 percent.

The Assembly members receiving 100 percent scores are Richard Bloom, Susan Eggman, Marc Levine, Patty Lopez, Adrin Nazarian, Anthony Rendon, Mark Stone, and Phil Ting. Other Assembly members who scored 89% or above are Toni Atkins, Rob Bonta, Ed Chau, David Chiu, Kansen Chu, Matthew Dababneh, Jimmy Gomez, Rich Gordon, Reginald Jones-Sawyer, Sr., Kevin McCarty, Kevin Mullin, Bill Quirk, Miguel Santiago, Tony Thurmond and Jim Wood.

Assembly member Das Williams, who was absent from voting on the last two nights of the legislative session to attend to the birth of his daughter, missed voting on three bills he co-authored that were priority environmental bills. Had he been there to vote, he would have scored a 90 percent on the report card.

“Getting 89 percent or above in the Assembly is a good score this year,” said Phillips. “Anything lower than that means your constituents are not getting the representation on the environment and public health that virtually every public opinion survey indicates Californians want.”

The state Senators receiving 100 percent scores are Ben Allen, Marty Block, Kevin de Leon, Loni Hancock, Jerry Hill, Hannah-Beth Jackson, Mark Leno, Carol Liu, Mike McGuire, Holly Mitchell, William Monning, Fran Pavley, Bob Wieckowski, and Lois Wolk.

“Generally, if you got less than a 100 percent in the Senate, it was because you took a walk or voted against the environment on at least one bill the oil industry overtly worked to defeat,” said Phillips.

Ten bills were scored in each house. Several bills made it to floor votes in each house and are included in the report card for Assembly members and Senators. Some bills died in their house of origin and are only included in that house’s score tally.

“One of the things we looked at this year, too, was campaign finance reports. Thanks to the new system online at the Secretary of State’s website we could quickly research who received oil money in their last campaign and through the summer,” said Phillips. “It was disappointing—not surprising—to see how many legislators who had low scores received a lot of oil money.”

The lowest score among Democratic Assembly members was garnered by Jim Frazier, Adam Gray, Sebastian Ridley-Thomas and Freddie Rodriguez. They each received a score of 46 percent. The highest score among Assembly Republicans was 60 percent, which was garnered by David Hadley.

In the Senate, the lowest score among Democratic members was earned by Cathleen Galgiani, who scored a 50 percent. The highest score among Republican members was thirty percent, earned by five members, Jeff Stone, Sharon Runner, Bob Huff, Anthony Canella, and Tom Berryhill.

“Anything below 60 percent would earn an F grade in most schools,” said Phillips.

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

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.