



## **2012 ENVIRONMENTAL SCORECARD RELEASED:**

### ***Best and Worst Environmental Voting Scores in Four Years Highlight Different Ideologies at the State Capitol***

**Hartford, CT (July 9, 2012)** - The Connecticut League of Conservation Voters today released its annual ***Environmental Scorecard***, a report card ranking individual state legislators on their votes cast during the 2012 session of the Connecticut General Assembly.

According to the League, environmental priorities, which had trended downward in 2010 and 2011, changed course upward in 2012.

The average score for all legislators in 2011 was 76% versus the average score of 91% for 2012. This year 53 more legislators earned 80% or higher than they did in 2011.

The League tracked approximately 21 bills during the three-month legislative session. Eight were hostile to the environment and 13 were favorable. **Four of the pro-environment bills passed, while three others made a good showing. All of the hostile bills were either defeated, defanged, or transformed into friendly legislation.**

The four successful bills, now laws 1) help provide better, timely information to address sewage spills, 2) improve the state's open space plan, 3) provide better coastal zone management options, and 4) reduce phosphorus in water. Several other good bills were poised to pass but were stalled in a legislative standoff between the House and Senate at the end of session. CTLCV expects to see those initiatives return in 2013.

Information on bills that passed or failed, along with scores of individual lawmakers are detailed in the Scorecard at [www.ctlc.org](http://www.ctlc.org).

**The hostile bills proposed this year included attacks** 1) on the Environmental Protection Act; 2) on legal protections for municipalities that allow free public access to open space; 3) on the right of the state not to allow new cell towers in state conserved lands and parks; 4) on a pesticide ban on school lawns and playing fields; 5) on restrictions on tree cutting by the state; 6) on essentially all environmental regulations (multi-pronged attacks); 7) and on the conservation functions of DEEP, slated to be transferred to the Department of Agriculture. Fortunately, every one of these ill-conceived proposals was soundly defeated.

A special session was held on June 12th to pass unfinished business related to the state budget. Among many items contained in the 2012-2013 Budget Implementer were important initiatives to expand energy efficiency with financing incentives for commercial property owners, and to allow the Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority to bond \$50 million for clean and renewable energy programs. We could not score energy legislation passed during the special session because these provisions were all part of a larger, single bill that included many unrelated issues.

CTLCV's Executive Director, Lori Brown, suggests that the reason for the turnaround at the legislature is because the votes being cast against good environmental policy flew in the face of the public's core values. **"Constituents expect their elected leaders to protect clean air, clean water and open spaces. The poor scores legislators earned last year voting against the**

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"This year we had to fight an uphill battle. Our continued presence at the legislature made a difference and we have the numbers to show it." —Patrick Shortell, CTLCV Political Director

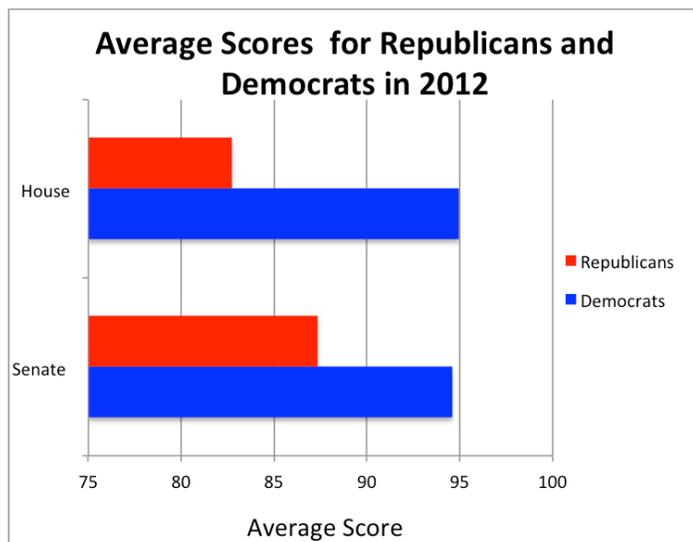
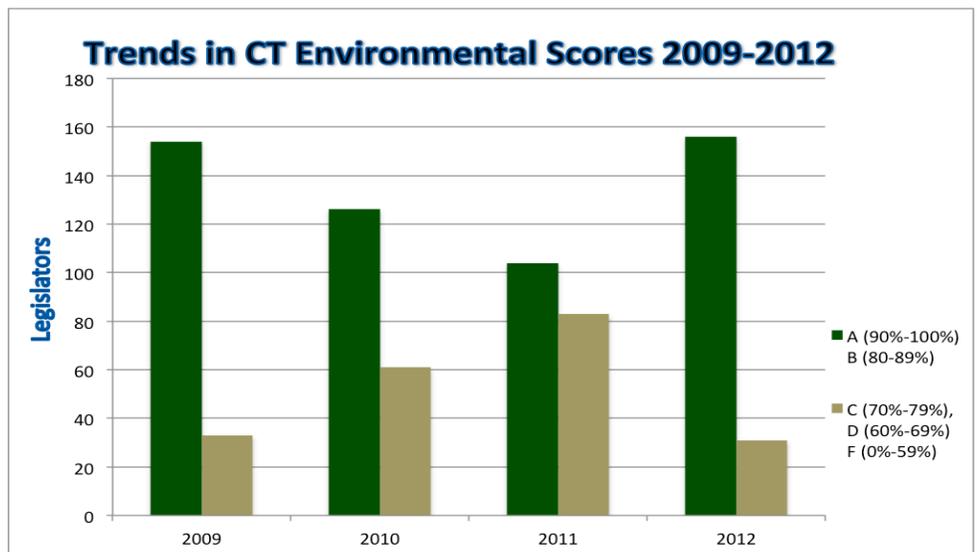
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**environment really hit home. This year, lawmakers were more receptive to environmental concerns and more cautious in opposition.”** CTLCV believes that this trend will continue through 2013, if advocates and the public in general continue to press for clean air, clean water, and healthy communities.

**The League contends that the biggest obstacle facing the environment remains inadequate funding for our environmental agency, DEEP.** Lawmakers were successful in maintaining support levels for the Clean Water Fund and Community Investment Act—both representing long term investment in our land and water. However, funding for DEEP continues to spiral downward with each new budget and endangers core conservation programs in communities across the state. This year, another \$500,000 was disproportionately taken from the Environmental Conservation budget, with a total of \$8 million taken from the agency’s bottom line.

**Scorecard Grades Lawmakers on How They Voted on the Year’s Top Environmental Bills**

The annual environmental scorecard grades state senators and representatives on a 0% to 100% scale based on how they vote on important environmental legislation. This year the scorecard grades legislators’ votes on fifteen significant environmental bills that came up during the 2012 legislative session. The graph shows the downward trend of good environmental scores from 2009 to 2011. This year saw better numbers and better results for the environment.



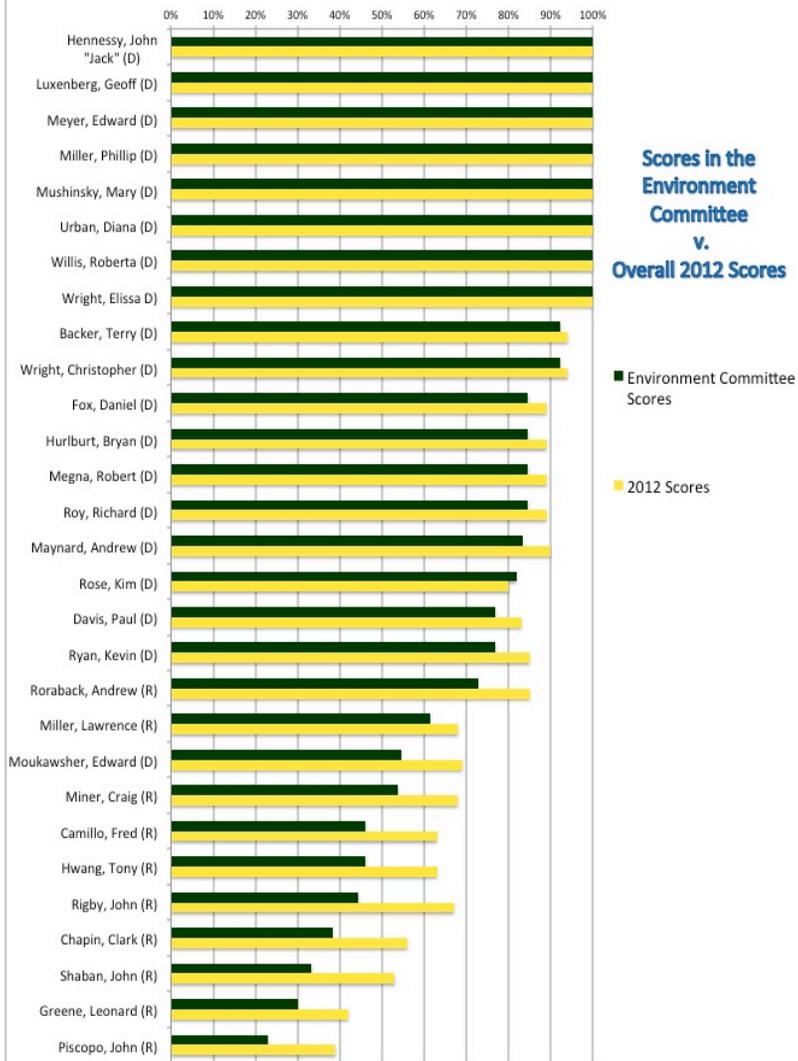
**Republican and Democrat Average Scores**  
There remain sharp differences in the average scores between the Parties, with Republicans earning on average 12% lower scores than Democrats in the House, and 8% lower in the Senate.

**Divergent Scores in the Environment Committee**

“The Environment Committee members with failing grades are getting a hard look from the League,” states Brown. **Nine** members received failing scores (60% or lower) on their committee votes and we note that their overall 2012 scores are often below average as well.”

Looking ahead the League wants to analyze more closely how key committees perform with respect to promoting environmental values. According to Margaret Miner, CTLCV Scorecard Committee chair, “We hope that a committee focus will enable us to assess more accurately performance on a

## Environment Committee's Scores



range of issues, including environmental funding. People often assume that, if their legislators are on the Environment Committee, and if these legislators claim to be pro-environment, then they must actually be pro-environment. Not exactly. They may be on the committee because they want to block environmental initiatives. The numbers tell the story.”

Citizens who want a sense of how their own state legislators performed on environmental issues this year should take a close look at their grades. This year’s Scorecard includes lifetime scores. This helps constituents see the long-term trends over the last 13 years.

For explanations of the environmental bills analyzed for the scorecard, a rundown on the 2012 legislative session and other analyses, please visit [www.ctlcv.org](http://www.ctlcv.org).

**Download the Full Scorecard at**  
[www.ctlcv.org/scorecard.html](http://www.ctlcv.org/scorecard.html)

### About the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters

Formed in 1998, the bipartisan Connecticut League of Conservation Voters works with legislatures and environmental leaders in Connecticut.

Their goal is to get sustainable environmental policies enacted at the state level that affect our air, water, wildlife, open space, transportation, energy choices, and health. CTLCV helps educate state legislators about issues, notifies them about important upcoming votes, and produces an annual environmental scorecard to track their individual voting records.

