

110th Congress Second Session • 2008



Congressional Scorecard



American Federation of State, County and
Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO

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.

Visit AFSCME's website at www.afscme.org to obtain *AFSCME e-News*, 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 Department of Legislation, 1625 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036-5687, or call (800) 732-8120.

2008 Senate Vote Descriptions

1. Extending Unemployment Insurance

AFSCME Position: Yes

The Senate, during consideration of the House-passed economic stimulus bill (H.R. 5140), rejected a motion to cut off debate and proceed with consideration of an amendment by Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) that would have added 13 weeks of extended unemployment insurance (UI) benefits in all states and an additional 26 weeks in high-unemployment states.

Senate Vote Number 8

AFSCME supported the motion, which the Senate rejected by a vote of 58-41 on Feb. 6, 2008. (A 3/5 majority was necessary to end debate.)

2. Putting Children First

AFSCME Position: Yes

The Senate rejected an amendment by Sen. Bernard Sanders (I-VT) that would have put children ahead of millionaires and billionaires by restoring the pre-2001 top income tax rate for people earning more than \$1 million and using this revenue to invest in the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Head Start, child care, nutrition, school construction and deficit reduction.

Senate Vote Number 64

AFSCME supported the amendment, which the Senate rejected by a vote of 43-55 on March 13, 2008.

3. Preserving the Estate Tax

AFSCME Position: No

The Senate rejected an amendment by Sen. Jon Kyl (R-AZ) that would have increased the Federal Estate Tax exemption of the first \$2 million of an estate to \$5 million, lowered the tax rate to 35 percent, and sharply reduced the amount of federal revenue available for public services.

Senate Vote Number 77

AFSCME opposed the amendment, which the Senate rejected by a vote of 48-50 on March 13, 2008.

4. Rejecting Harmful Budget Cuts

AFSCME Position: Yes

The Senate approved the fiscal year 2009 budget plan (S. Con. Res. 70), which rejected harmful budget cuts and added additional funding for important domestic programs, such as education, Medicaid and Medicare. The resolution also provided an expansion of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and an additional \$35 billion for a second economic stimulus package that extended unemployment insurance, increased food stamp benefits and provided state fiscal relief.



Senate Vote Number 85

AFSCME supported the concurrent resolution, which the Senate agreed to by a vote of 51-44 on March 14, 2008.

5. Helping Victims of Employment Discrimination

AFSCME Position: Yes

The Senate rejected the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2007 (H.R. 2831), which restored long-standing pay discrimination protection that the Supreme Court eliminated in its 2007 *Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber* decision.

Senate Vote Number 110

AFSCME supported the motion, which the Senate rejected by a vote of 56-42 on April 23, 2008. (A 3/5 majority was necessary to end debate.)



6. Giving Public Safety Officers Collective Bargaining Rights

AFSCME Position: Yes

The Senate voted to end a filibuster and proceed with consideration of the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act of 2007 (H.R. 980), which extends collective bargaining rights to public safety officers who do not currently have the right in their state to engage in such activities.

Senate Vote Number 126

AFSCME supported the motion, which the Senate agreed to by a vote of 69-29 on May 13, 2008.

7. Improving Medicare Benefits

AFSCME Position: Yes

The Senate rejected a motion to cut off debate and proceed with consideration of the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008 (S. 3101), a bill that would have improved Medicare's guaranteed benefit package by covering new preventive services, blocked a cut in physicians' reimbursements set for July 1, and helped seniors with limited incomes pay their medical and prescription drug bills.

Senate Vote Number 149

AFSCME supported the motion, which the Senate rejected by a vote of 54-39 on June 12, 2008. (A 3/5 majority was necessary to end debate.)

8. Advancing America's Priorities

AFSCME Position: Yes

The Senate rejected a motion to cut off debate and proceed with consideration of the

Advancing America's Priorities Act (S. 3297), a bill that would have made our communities safer and better places to live in by investing funds to protect children, improving our waterways and public transportation, helping states plan for disasters, fighting diseases and other important public programs.

Senate Vote Number 189

AFSCME supported the motion, which the Senate rejected by a vote of 52-40 on July 28, 2008. (A 3/5 majority was necessary to end debate.)

9. Stimulating the Economy

AFSCME Position: Yes

The Senate blocked consideration of the Economic Recovery Act of 2008 (S. 3604), which would have provided \$19.6 billion in federal support for state Medicaid programs, \$490 million for Byrne Justice Assistance Grants to support state and local law enforcement and additional funds to avert staffing cuts for child support enforcement.

Senate Vote Number 206

AFSCME supported the motion, which the Senate rejected by a vote of 52-42 on Sept. 26, 2008. (The vote required a 3/5 majority to proceed with the bill.)

Senate Voting Record 2008

	Vote Number	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Extending Unemployment Insurance</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Putting Children First</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Preserving the Estate Tax</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Rejecting Harmful Budget Cuts</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Helping Victims of Employment Discrimination</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Public Safety Officers Collective Bargaining Rights</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Improving Medicare Benefits</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Advancing America's Priorities</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Stimulating the Economy</div> </div>									Session Support (percent)	Career Cumulative Record		
		AFSCME Position	Right	Wrong	% Right									
Vermont														
Leahy (D)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100%	277	25	92%
Sanders (I)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100%	16	0	100%



2007 House Vote Descriptions

1. Increasing Child Health Care Coverage

AFSCME Position: Yes

The House failed to override President Bush's veto of legislation to renew the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and expand coverage to an additional 4 million low-income children who lack health insurance.

House Vote Number 22

AFSCME supported the veto override, which failed in the House by a vote of 260-152 on Jan. 23, 2008. (A veto override requires a 2/3 majority.)



2. Rejecting Harmful Budget Cuts

AFSCME Position: Yes

The House approved the fiscal year 2009 budget plan (H. Con. Res. 312), which rejected harmful budget cuts and added additional funding for important domestic programs such as education, Medicaid and Medicare. The resolution also provided additional funds to increase the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program, which provides assistance to workers dislocated by trade, and expand eligibility for unemployment insurance.

House Vote Number 141

AFSCME supported the resolution, which the House passed by a vote of 212-207 on March 13, 2008.

3. Preventing Harmful Trade Agreements

AFSCME Position: Yes

The House approved a resolution to suspend "Fast Track" requirements for consideration of the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Colombia has done little to alleviate violence against union members. Since 1986, more than 2,500 trade union members have been killed.

House Vote Number 181

AFSCME supported the resolution, which the House passed by a vote of 224-195 on April 10, 2008.

4. Protecting Medicaid

AFSCME Position: Yes

The House passed the Protecting the Medicaid Safety Net Act of 2008 (H.R. 5613), which blocked implementation of seven harmful rules issued by the Bush administration designed to cut federal Medicaid payments to states. The rules would have cut funding to states of up to \$50 billion over five years.

House Vote Number 209

AFSCME supported the bill, which the House passed by a vote of 349-62 on April 23, 2008.



5. Providing Paid Parental Leave to Federal Employees

AFSCME Position: Yes

The House passed the Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act of 2008 (H.R. 5781), which provides four weeks of paid leave to federal employees for the birth or adoption of a child.

House Vote Number 428

AFSCME supported the bill, which the House passed by a vote of 278-146 on June 19, 2008.

6. Fighting Wage Discrimination

AFSCME Position: Yes

The House approved the Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 1338), which would make it easier for women to seek legal remedies when they suspect that they have been victims of wage discrimination. The bill makes it clear that men and women should be paid equally for equal work and removes caps on the compensation a victim can receive from a discrimination lawsuit.

House Vote Number 556

AFSCME supported the bill, which the House passed by a vote of 247-178 on July 31, 2008.

7. Stimulating the Economy

AFSCME Position: Yes

The House passed the Job Creation and Unemployment Relief Act of 2008 (H.R. 7110), which would provide states with \$14.4 billion in fiscal relief by providing temporary additional federal support of state Medicaid programs, create jobs through a \$30 billion investment in infrastructure, and maintain a basic standard of living for families by extending unemployment benefits for Americans looking for work and providing \$2.6 billion for additional food stamp assistance.

House Vote Number 660

AFSCME supported the bill, which the House passed by a vote of 264-158 on Sept. 26, 2008.



House Voting Record 2008

Vote Number	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Increasing Child Health Care Coverage</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Rejecting Harmful Budget Cuts</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Preventing Harmful Trade Agreements</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Protecting Medicaid</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Providing Paid Parental Leave to Federal Employees</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Fighting Wage Discrimination</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Stimulating the Economy</div> </div>							Session Support (percent)	Career Cumulative Record		
	AFSCME Position	Right	Wrong	% Right							

Vermont

(At Large) Welch (D)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100%	18	0	100%
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Key: ✓ voted with AFSCME's position; ✗ voted against AFSCME's position; ? did not vote.