



Pennsylvania – CPAC Scorecard

Center for Legislative Analysis

11th Edition – 2024

Summary

The eleventh edition of the Pennsylvania CPAC Scorecard analyzes 22 critical votes in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, and 17 bills in the Pennsylvania Senate. **Senate Republicans earned a strong 82% average, while Senate Democrats lagged at 22%,** yielding a **total Senate average of 56%.** In the House, **Republicans averaged 69%, while Democrats posted just 24%, producing an overall House average of 46%.**

These results reveal a legislature split by sharply contrasting visions for Pennsylvania's future. Republicans consistently fought to **defend limited government, fiscal discipline, parental authority, and energy independence,** while Democrats advanced an agenda of **subsidies, regulations, and bureaucratic expansion.** The wide gulf in average scores underscores the polarization of the state's politics, leaving voters with a clear choice between two divergent paths.

Key 2024 debates revealed sharp contrasts. Democrats pushed subsidies for malls, historic sites, and green energy, while Republicans opposed market distortions. Conservatives secured parental rights wins through HB 2185 and bills like SB 913 and SB 971, keeping families central to education decisions. On energy, Democrats favored costly mandates and solar subsidies, while Republicans advanced pro-production measures such as SB 654 to strengthen Pennsylvania's energy leadership. At heart, the divide is clear: government-directed outcomes versus freedom, competition, and family choice.

The 2024 Scorecard demonstrates that **conservatives were often successful in blocking the worst excesses of the Democratic agenda while also securing important wins for families, taxpayers, and workers.** Yet Democrats managed to advance new programs and mandates, showing that vigilance remains essential. The stakes of these battles extend far beyond Harrisburg. With Pennsylvania's pivotal role in national politics, the direction chosen here will influence not only the Commonwealth's economic competitiveness and family prosperity but also the broader trajectory of American liberty and governance.

Key Takeaways

Fiscal Responsibility Under Siege

Democrats pursued a broad slate of costly programs, including HB 1032's solar subsidies and HB 1799's mall redevelopment tax breaks, which conservatives warned would distort markets and weaken fiscal discipline. HB 1573 and HB 1958 also reflected the Democratic tendency to use taxpayer money for special projects and targeted credits that provide benefits to some groups at the expense of others. Republicans remained a vital check, ensuring taxpayers were not saddled with unnecessary long-term obligations and pushing instead for responsible budgeting and lower costs for families.

Parental Rights Gained Ground

Conservatives secured meaningful victories for parents through HB 2185 and Senate measures like SB 913 and SB 971, reinforcing family authority in schools. These bills emphasized parental consent and notification, countering trends where schools often act without informing families. The passage of these measures demonstrated that parents' concerns about transparency and control in education resonate strongly with legislators, showing that the conservative fight for parental rights has gained significant traction and is likely to expand further in the coming years.

Energy Freedom vs. Green Mandates

Democrats advanced mandates that would increase household costs, including appliance regulations (HB 1615) and solar wage requirements (HB 1842). Republicans countered with measures like SB 654, supporting energy development and ensuring Pennsylvania's role as an energy powerhouse, emphasizing affordability and independence over ideology. Additionally, conservative support for SB 1058, which sought to eliminate failed carbon trading schemes, highlighted the GOP's determination to resist costly climate initiatives that weaken Pennsylvania's economy. The sharp divide here underscores energy as one of the most consequential battlegrounds for the state's future.

Highlighted Votes Analyzed

HB 98 – Government Mandates on Equal Pay

This bill purports to define job definitions and mandates that an employees pay is equal to others doing similar work. CPAC opposes employer mandates that prevents employees negotiating their pay and working conditions and opposed this bill. The House passed the bill on May 6, 2024 by a vote of 102-99 but the bill was not taken up in the Senate.

HB 1032 – Subsidizing Solar Energy

This bill sets up a new grant program called the Solar for Schools Grant Program. CPAC supports all forms of energy but opposes using the taxpayers' money to subsidize one form of energy over another and opposed this bill. The House passed the bill on July 11, 2024 by a vote of 112-90 and the bill later became law.

HB 2185 – Increasing Parental Notification

This bill requires that parents be notified if their child's school programs include studies concerning Type 1 Diabetes. CPAC strongly supports expanding parental knowledge of school activities and supported this bill. The House passed the bill on October 22, 2024 by a vote of 168-34 and the bill later became law.

SB 654 – Budget Agreement on Oil and Gas Depletion Allowance

This bill conforms Pennsylvania to federal tax law that allows producers, mineral owners and royalty owners a deduction for percentage depletion for mines, oil, and gas wells as well as increasing the tax credit called the Coal, Refuse Energy and Reclamation tax credit. CPAC supports strengthening America's role in the supply of oil and gas worldwide and supported this bill. The Senate passed the bill on July 11, 2024 by a vote of 43-6 and the bill later became law.

SB 971 – Parental Awareness of Violent Incidents

This bill expands parental awareness to notify both parents and employees of incidents that include a weapon. CPAC feels it is vital to keep parents (and teachers) aware of dangerous incidents that involve a weapon and supported this bill. The Senate passed the bill on June 26, 2024 by a vote of 47-3 but the bill was not taken up in the House.

Trends and Observations

Polarization and Stalemate

Partisan lines defined nearly every major vote. Republicans remained united in defending conservative values, while Democrats pressed forward with progressive mandates, resulting in deadlock on many issues. The depth of this divide illustrates how little common ground exists between the two caucuses. It also shows why elections in Pennsylvania have such outsized importance—one or two seats can determine whether limited government or bureaucratic expansion dominates the session.

Energy as a Defining Battleground

Energy policy was perhaps the most defining battleground of the year. Democrats consistently sought to advance their green agenda by subsidizing renewables and imposing mandates that increase costs on households and businesses. Republicans responded with legislation aimed at strengthening Pennsylvania's oil and gas industries, aligning state tax law with federal energy incentives, and removing costly carbon trading schemes. The contrast demonstrates a stark divide between an ideology that prioritizes government-driven environmental policy and one that emphasizes affordability, reliability, and energy independence.

Parental Rights Momentum

Conservatives achieved some of their most important victories by reinforcing parental rights in education. The success of HB 2185, SB 913, and SB 971 highlighted how parental empowerment has become one of the most effective conservative rallying points. These measures resonated with families across the Commonwealth, cutting across partisan divides in public opinion, even if not in legislative votes. The growing demand for transparency and parental authority ensures this will remain a defining issue in future sessions.

Bureaucratic Expansion by Democrats

Democrats repeatedly attempted to grow government through new agencies, commissions, and targeted programs. Bills like HB 2104, HB 2202, and HB 2225 show a consistent pattern of expanding the bureaucracy, often duplicating federal functions or creating racially exclusive benefits. Republicans countered that these measures create inefficiencies, waste taxpayer dollars, and undermine fairness. This growing Democratic tendency toward bureaucratic sprawl is likely to remain a source of partisan conflict moving forward.

Conservative Excellence - Senate

John DiSanto - 94%

Jarrett Coleman - 94%

Conservative Excellence - House

Andre Carroll - 100%

Keith Harris - 100%

Conservative Achievement - Senate

Chris Gebhard - 88%

Scott Hutchinson - 81%

Lynda Schlegel Culver - 81%

Tracy Pennycuik - 86%

Wayne Langerholc - 81%

Patrick Stefano - 81%

David Argall - 81%

Daniel Laughlin - 81%

Elder Vogel - 81%

Ryan Aument - 81%

Doug Mastriano - 81%

Judy Ward - 81%

Lisa Baker - 81%

Kristin Phillips-Hill - 81%

Kim Ward - 81%

Michele Brooks - 81%

Joe Pittman - 81%

Gene Yaw - 81%

Rosemary Brown - 81%

Mike Regan - 81%

Scott Martin - 80%

Cris Dush - 81%

Devlin Robinson - 81%

Frank A. Farry - 81%

Greg Rothman - 81%

Conservative Achievement - House

Bryan Cutler - 82%

Doyle Heffley - 82%

Eric Nelson - 82%

Eric Davanzo - 82%

Dallas Kephart - 82%

Perry Stambaugh - 82%

Seth Grove - 82%

Jacob D. Banta - 82%