

BRIEF



Kentucky – CPAC Scorecard

Center for Legislative Analysis

11th Edition – 2024

Summary

The 2024 edition of the Kentucky CPAC Scorecard assesses 18 votes in both the Kentucky State Senate and House. The Kentucky Republicans earned an average score of 82% while Democrats scored just 11%. These scores are similar to the scores in 2023 when Republicans earned 84% and Democrats scored 13%.

In 2024, Kentucky's Republican-led General Assembly advanced a bold conservative agenda despite opposition from Democratic Governor Andy Beshear. Lawmakers successfully enacted numerous pro-freedom reforms - many over the governor's veto - demonstrating strong legislative resolve and unity. Key wins included laws defending Second Amendment rights, increasing election integrity, expanding parental access to children's medical records, and limiting regulatory overreach.

Key Takeaways

The Legislature Overwhelmingly Advanced a Pro-Freedom Agenda, Often in Defiance of the Governor

Despite having a Democratic governor in Andy Beshear, Kentucky's Republican-controlled legislature successfully enacted a slate of conservative reforms. Five conservative bills (all of which CPAC supported) became law **through a veto override**, demonstrating the legislature's willingness and ability to push back against executive obstruction. These override victories included high-profile bills such as **HB 581** (prohibiting discriminatory zoning against gas stations), **HB 44** (improving election integrity), and **HB 136** (limiting overregulation by the state's air quality authority). The result is that even with partisan opposition in the governor's mansion, the Kentucky General Assembly effectively moved forward key pieces of legislation that advance liberty, accountability, and individual rights.

Kentucky Republicans Took a Stand Against Bureaucratic Overreach at Multiple Levels

Several key bills pushed back against unelected and unaccountable bureaucrats—whether at the state level or within local government. **HB 367** would have barred the bureaucracy from changing SNAP eligibility standards without legislative approval. **HB 320** limited the time window for filing employment-related lawsuits, cutting down on costly legal exposure driven by

bureaucratic enforcement. Meanwhile, **HB 513** reasserted the legislature's control over decisions about monuments in the Capitol. Even bills like **HB 581** (protecting gas stations from discriminatory zoning) were fundamentally about curbing the power of local technocrats. CPAC's scorecard this year highlights how conservative lawmakers in Kentucky are reasserting legislative supremacy in the face of administrative overreach.

Several Conservative Priorities Fell Short, But May Return in Future Sessions

While most CPAC-supported bills passed, five did not become law. This includes **SB 6**, a bill aimed at eliminating discriminatory DEI hiring practices in public universities, which passed the House but failed to receive final approval. Similarly, **HB 255**, which would have prevented Kentucky from adopting child labor restrictions more burdensome than federal law, passed one chamber but stalled. **HB 463**, which required age verification to protect minors from obscene online content, also fell short despite receiving overwhelming House support. These bills reflect a growing appetite in Kentucky for bold reforms on culture, regulation, and tech, but additional work is needed to secure their passage in future years.

Highlighted Votes Analyzed

HB 357 - Kentucky's Second Amendment Financial Privacy Protection Act.

This bill prohibits the government from keeping a list of the people that own firearms in the state of Kentucky. CPAC supports the preservation of Second Amendment freedoms and supported this bill. The Senate passed this bill on March 13, 2024 by a vote of 32-6 and the bill later became law without the Governor's signature.

HB 44 - Shoring Up Elections Against Anomalies and Illegal Voting.

This bill makes it easier to identify and report anomalies in the voting system and allows the state government to collect the names of people excused from jury duty for not being citizens. CPAC supports efforts to protect election integrity and supported this bill. The House overrode Governor Beshear's veto of this bill on April 12, 2024 by a vote of 79-20 and the bill later became law.

SB 6 - Cracking Down on DEI at Kentucky's Public Universities

This bill prohibits public universities from discriminating against students or faculty for refusing to promote certain divisive concepts. It also prohibits such institutions from conditioning admission or hiring on one's affirmation of such beliefs. CPAC believes that public universities should not be permitted to engage in obscenely racist decisionmaking and supported this bill. The Senate passed this bill on February 13, 2024 by a vote of 26-7 but the bill never became law.

Trends and Observations

Kentucky's Legislature Has Grown Comfortable Overriding Governor Beshear's Vetoes

Unlike in some other states with split government, the Kentucky General Assembly was not deterred by a hostile executive. Instead, **veto override votes became a central feature of the**

2024 session. Override margins were not close: **HB 44** passed the House 79–20 after a veto, **HB 581** passed 77–20, and **HB 136** passed 77–20. These are not narrow victories; they represent overwhelming legislative confidence in the policy direction taken. This suggests that Kentucky’s Republican majorities are **governing with a clear mandate**, and not merely playing defense. The political courage shown in these votes reflects a deep commitment to principle and a willingness to govern assertively.

The State is Reasserting Legislative Supremacy Over Symbolic and Cultural Matters

While many states have delegated cultural or symbolic decisions to unelected commissions, Kentucky’s legislature took a different approach with **HB 513**, which reasserts legislative control over monuments in the Capitol rotunda. This is part of a larger national trend in conservative governance: **refusing to allow unelected elites to unilaterally rewrite the public narrative or erase historical memory**. By requiring legislative sign-off for monument removal or installation, Kentucky sent a clear signal that elected representatives - not activist bureaucrats - will decide how the state represents its past.

Efforts to Limit Local Government Power Were a Recurring Theme

Across several CPAC-scored bills, the legislature moved to limit the authority of local governments to impose burdensome or ideologically driven regulations. For instance, **HB 18** prevents cities from forcing landlords to accept tenants using federal housing vouchers. **HB 581** blocks local zoning rules that unfairly penalize gas stations. **SB 215** bars cities from imposing their own emissions rules or de facto car mandates. These actions reflect a growing trend in conservative states: recognizing that progressive policy experimentation is increasingly taking place at the local level, lawmakers are stepping in to defend individual rights and economic freedom against local overreach.

Conservative Excellence - Senate

None

Conservative Excellence - House

Shane Baker - 94%
Steven Doan - 94%

Daniel Elliott - 93%
Savannah Maddox - 94%

Candy Massaroni - 94%
Felicia Rabourn - 94%

Conservative Achievement - Senate

Gary Boswell - 83%
Jared Carpenter - 81%
Danny Carroll - 83%
Matthew Deneen - 83%
Donald Douglas - 83%

Jimmy Higdon - 87%
Jason Howell - 83%
Christian McDaniel - 85%
Stephen Meredith - 83%
Robby Mills - 83%

Robert Stivers - 82%
Brandon Storm - 82%
Damon Thayer - 83%
Lindsey Tichenor - 88%
Stephen West - 82%

Greg Elkins - 83%
Shelley Funke Frommeyer - 83%
Rick Girdler - 89%
David Givens - 86%

Michael Nemes - 83%
Julie Raque Adams - 80%
John Schickel - 89%
Brandon Smith - 82%

Phillip Wheeler - 83%
Gex Williams - 83%
Mike Wilson - 80%
Max Wise - 83%

Conservative Achievement - House

Adam Bowling - 82%
Josh Branscum - 83%
Josh Bray - 83%
Randy Bridges - 80%
Josh Calloway - 87%
Mike Clines - 83%
Jennifer Decker - 88%
Stephanie Dietz - 83%
Jonathan Dixon - 82%
Myron Dossett - 82%
Robert Duvall - 83%
Daniel Fister - 83%
Deanna Frazier Gordon - 81%
Chris Freeland - 83%
Chris Fugate - 82%

David Hale - 83%
Mark Hart - 83%
Richard Heath - 83%
Samara Heavrin - 88%
Mary Beth Imes - 82%
DJ Johnson - 83%
Kim King - 83%
Matthew Koch - 83%
Matt Lockett - 82%
Bobby McCool - 86%
Shawn McPherson - 87%
David Meade - 83%
Michael Meredith - 83%
Suzanne Miles - 88%
Kimberly Poore Moser - 83%

Amy Neighbors - 83%
David Osborne - 83%
Jason Petrie - 83%
Michael Sarge Pollock - 83%
Philip Pratt - 80%
Marianne Proctor - 88%
Steve Rawlings - 82%
Rebecca Raymer - 83%
Steven Rudy - 83%
Nancy Tate - 83%
Walker Thomas - 83%
James Tipton - 83%
Ken Upchurch - 83%
Richard White - 82%
Wade Williams - 88%