



West Virginia – CPAC Scorecard

Center for Legislative Analysis

11th Edition – 2024

Summary

The CPAC Scorecard for the 2024 West Virginia legislative session assesses 19 votes in the State House and 15 votes in the State Senate. The West Virginia Republicans earned an average score of 83% compared to the Democrat average of 37%. These scores are similar to the scores in 2023 when Republicans averaged 85% and Democrats averaged 38%.

West Virginia passed several pieces of socially conservative legislation including laws to crack down on transgender ideology and protect minors from pornography. The State Legislature also took back some power from local governments in order to prevent local governments from over-regulating energy or infringing on second amendment rights. Unfortunately, many of the bills that passed with large margins failed to become law because the Senate and House failed to coordinate.

Key Takeaways

West Virginia Pushed Back On Transgender Ideology With Several Bills

Republicans passed **SB 601**, West Virginia's Women's Bill Of Rights which ensures that the law will recognize biological sex. **HB 4233** requires birth certificates to reflect reality. The Parents' Bill Of Rights, **HB 4313**, declares that parents have the fundamental right to direct the upbringing and education of their children. Another bill, **HB 4320**, gives parents access to their children's health records which would prevent quack doctors from transitioning a child without the parents' knowledge. Unfortunately, while both the Women's Bill of Rights and the Parents' Bill of Rights passed the State House and Senate with large margins, they never became law! West Virginia legislators must take up these bills again in the 2025 session.

Republicans Took Action To Protect Minors From Pornography

The invention of the internet has given rise to the modern vice of pornography use. In America's history, social movements have arisen to control and curtail vices like widespread gambling or alcoholism, and today Republicans and Conservatives are leading the fight to curtail widespread pornography addiction. West Virginia Republicans passed **HB 4867** which would prevent

pornographic websites from showing their content to minors. Despite passing unanimously, the bill did not become law due to lack of action by House and Senate leadership.

Election Security Remains A Partisan Issue in West Virginia

The West Virginia House passed **HJR 21**, a resolution which proposes an amendment to West Virginia's Constitution that would formally bar non-citizens from voting. This resolution is the first step in the amendment process. One would hope that election integrity would be a bipartisan issue, but unfortunately the resolution came down to a nearly party-line vote, with 86 out of 87 State House Republicans voting in favor and 9 out of 11 Democrats voting against. This is a contrast with other issues, such as age requirements for pornography, that passed with unanimous support, even from Democrats. These results show that Democrats don't just object to the details of certain pieces of election integrity legislation - Democrats simply oppose election integrity.

Highlighted Votes Analyzed

HB 4940 Criminalizing Squatting in West Virginia

This bill states that squatting is a form of criminal trespass and clarifies that squatters are not to be considered tenants per state law. CPAC opposes squatting and supported this bill. The House passed this bill on March 6, 2024 by a vote of 97-0 (34-0 in the Senate) and the bill later became law.

HB 5159 Removing Barriers for Youth to Seek Employment.

This bill strikes a requirement which had forced individuals ages 14 and 15 to obtain work permits before becoming employed. CPAC supports efforts to ease the process of allowing youth to obtain appropriate employment and supported this bill. The House passed this bill on February 20, 2024 by a vote of 83-16 but the bill never became law.

HB 5170 Channeling More Funds into Grants for Favored Projects.

This bill increases the amount of funds apportioned in matching grants to economic development corporations from \$30,000 to \$50,000. CPAC opposes measures that force taxpayers to subsidize favored economic development projects and opposed this bill. The House passed this bill on February 16, 2024 by a vote of 85-10 (34-0 in the Senate) and the bill later became law.

Trends and Observations

The State Legislature Prevented Local Governments From Infringing On Individual Liberties

Even Red states often have Blue municipalities. This means that citizens in Red states may have their liberties infringed by leftist bureaucrats even if they vote for a Republican Legislature. To prevent city officials from becoming petty tyrants, Republican legislatures in several states including Louisiana and West Virginia have passed legislation which requires municipal governments to respect certain individual rights, especially Second Amendment rights. In 2024 West Virginia passed **HB 4782** which protects gun shops from municipal overreach by requiring local zoning ordinances to treat gun shops like all other businesses. The legislature also passed **HB 4434** which prohibits local governments from implementing electric car mandates, though the bill did not become law.

Many Bills Did Not Become Law

Ten of the 19 CPAC-supported bills in this session did not become law despite receiving majority support. The reason is that State House Leadership and State Senate Leadership failed to pass the same version of the bill. For example, **HB 4867**, the bill which would have implemented age verification requirements for online pornography passed both chambers unanimously, but never became law. This means that children in West Virginia will continue to be subjected to pornographic online content for at least another year because of the disorganized behavior of the West Virginia Republican leadership.

West Virginia's Economic Policy Is Still Marred By Cronyism

As recently as 1996 West Virginia was a Blue state. West Virginia does well on social issues but it still bears the influence of the left-wing view of economic policy. Mississippi and Alabama, two other states which have a history of ancestral democrats, show the same pattern. In 2024 West Virginia passed several pieces of crony-ist economic legislation including **SB 354** which creates an unnecessary new bureaucratic authority to regulate energy, **SB 690** which promotes agrotourism at public expense, and **HB 5170** which channels more grant funding into politically favored projects. CPAC opposed these bills but all three of them passed by large margins and became law. As West Virginia becomes more Republican, its legislators should consider the Conservative view of economics: freedom and equal opportunity, not bureaucracy and favoritism.

Conservative Excellence - Senate

None

Conservative Excellence - House

Eric Brooks - 95%	Geoff Foster - 95%	Carl Martin - 94%
Adam Burkhammer - 95%	Laura Kimble - 95%	Chris Pritt - 95%
Elias Coop-Gonzalez - 100%	Todd Kirby - 94%	Bill Ridenour - 100%
Henry Dillon - 95%	Larry Kump - 93%	Darren Thorne - 95%
	Todd Longanacre - 100%	

Conservative Achievement - Senate

Mike Azinger - 80%	Patrick Martin - 80%	David Stover - 80%
Jason Barrett - 80%	Mark Maynard - 80%	Chandler Swope - 80%
Laura Chapman - 80%	Craig Blair - 80%	Eric Tarr - 80%
Charles Clements - 80%	Eric Nelson - 80%	Jay Taylor - 80%
Amy Grady - 80%	Mike Oliverio - 80%	Charles Trump - 80%
Bill Hamilton - 80%	Ben Queen - 80%	Ryan Weld - 80%
Mark Hunt - 80%	Rollan Roberts - 80%	Jack Woodrum - 80%
Glenn Jefferies - 80%	Randy Smith - 80%	

Conservative Achievement - House

David Adkins - 84%	David Green - 84%	Erica Moore - 84%
JB Akers - 84%	Walter Hall - 84%	Ty Nestor - 84%
William Anderson - 84%	Roger Hanshaw - 83%	Mickey Petitto - 84%
Trenton Barnhart - 84%	John Hardy - 82%	Chris Phillips - 84%
Jim Butler - 89%	Rick Hillenbrand - 89%	Jonathan Pinson - 83%
Jeff Campbell - 84%	Michael Hite - 84%	David Elliot Pritt - 88%
Geno Chiarelli - 84%	Josh Holstein - 84%	Clay Riley - 84%
Thomas Clark - 84%	Michael Hornby - 84%	Matthew Rohrbach - 84%
Wayne Clark - 84%	Chuck Horst - 89%	Mark Ross - 87%
Roy Cooper - 88%	John Paul Hott - 83%	Charles Sheedy - 83%
Vernon Criss - 84%	Eric Householder - 83%	Doug Smith - 84%
Kathie Hess Crouse - 84%	Gary Howell - 82%	Brandon Steele - 82%
Mark Dean - 89%	Dean Jeffries - 84%	George Street - 89%
Mike DeVault - 84%	D. Rolland Jennings - 84%	Amy Summers - 84%
Lori Dittman - 84%	David Kelly - 84%	Christopher Toney - 84%
Joe Ellington - 87%	Daniel Linville - 84%	Heather Tully - 84%

Paul Espinosa - 84%
Tom Fast - 89%
Bob Fehrenbacher - 82%
Dana Ferrell - 84%
Dave Foggin - 88%
Don Forsht - 84%
Marty Gearheart - 89%

Patrick Lucas - 84%
Phil Mallow - 84%
Keith Marple - 84%
Jordan Maynor - 84%
Margitta Mazzocchi - 83%
Pat McGeehan - 89%
George Miller - 89%

Adam Vance - 84%
Bryan Ward - 89%
Debbie Warner - 84%
Steve Westfall - 84%
Jimmy Willis - 83%
Evan Worrell - 84%