

Hard-charging conservative lawmakers helped to boost pro-Taxpayer Scores for both the House and Senate, but even they had a hard time overcoming the tax-and-spend crowd in Washington, according to the 362,000-member National Taxpayers Union's (NTU's) 33rd annual Rating of Congress. The scorecard, the only one to utilize every roll call vote affecting fiscal policy, was based on 337 House and 234 Senate votes from 2011.

Between 2010 and 2011, the average Taxpayer Score in the House rose from 42 percent to 50 percent, the first time the House mean has managed to reach the halfway mark since 1996. The Senate's average inched up from 45 percent to 46 percent. The Taxpayer Score reflects a lawmaker's commitment to reducing or controlling federal spending, taxes, debt, and regulation.

In the latest NTU Rating, 53 lawmakers attained scores sufficient for an "A" grade (a minimum score of 85 percent in the House and 90 percent the Senate) and therefore won the "Taxpayers' Friend Award" - representing a decline from the 79 who achieved the honor in 2010. Over 200 Senators and Representatives were tagged with the title of "Big Spender" for posting "F" grades (20 percent or less in the House and 19 percent or less in the Senate), somewhat lower than in recent years.

The best performance in the House belonged to Representative John Duncan, Jr. (R-TN), with a 93 percent. Close behind with rounded scores of 92 percent were Ed Royce (R-CA), Ron Paul (R-TX), and **John Campbell (R-CA)**. In the Senate, Tom Coburn (R-OK), earned the number one prize with a 96 percent score, followed by Ron Johnson (R-WI) with a 95 percent.

Representative Andre Carson (D-IN) had the worst House score, roughly 6 percent. Dale Kildee (D-MI) also came in at about 6 percent. Among Senators, Sherrod Brown (D-OH) had the rock-bottom score at 6 percent, while both Bob Casey (D-PA) and Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) had fractionally higher scores that still rounded to 6 percent.

Between 2010 and 2011 average Taxpayer Scores for Republicans fell by 10 points in both chambers. Democratic averages rose by 1 percentage point in the Senate and 5 points in the House.

"National Taxpayers Union's 2011 Rating shows a Congress making some progress toward the limited, affordable government taxpayers deserve while still having a long way to go," said NTU President Duane Parde. "For every single Taxpayers' Friend who bravely sought to conquer Washington's mound of fiscal woes, four Big Spenders worked to make the pile of problems even more difficult to climb."

NTU is a nonprofit, nonpartisan citizen group founded in 1969 to work for limited government. Note: The 2011 Rating and a searchable Rating database dating back to 1992 are available at www.ntu.org .

SOURCE National Taxpayers Union