



2008 CONGRESSIONAL REPORT CARD

PRESENTED BY:

**NEW JERSEY ADVOCACY NETWORK
TO END HOMELESSNESS**

OCTOBER 6, 2008



Issues Used for the Report Card

- **SEVRA: The Section Eight Voucher Reform Act**
 - A proposal to reform and vastly improve our Section 8 program
 - H.R. 1851 passed the House in July 2007
 - A **Y** marks those House Members who voted for the bill
 - SEVRA legislation was introduced in the Senate (S.2684), but is unlikely to be considered before Congress adjourns
 - For the Senators, a **Y** marks co-sponsorship of the bill.



Issues Used for the Report Card

- **New Section 8 Vouchers (Chabot Amendment):**
 - The SEVRA legislation includes an authorization of 100,000 new Section 8 vouchers
 - During House consideration of H.R. 1851, Representative Chabot (R-OH) offered an amendment to strike the new vouchers from the bill
 - A **Y** marks those members who correctly opposed the Chabot amendment.



Issues Used for the Report Card

- **CDBG Funding Letter:** The Community Development Block Grant
 - CDBG is one of our nation's largest and most important tools for community development
 - CDBG grants provide communities with local control in deciding how to spend funds to meet housing and development needs for its low-income residents
 - The President's 2009 budget proposed a deep cut to CDBG
 - A letter in the House and Senate called on Appropriators to reject this cut and instead increase funding to \$4.1 billion.
 - A **Y** indicates the Member signed the letter to appropriators requesting increased CDBG funding

Issues Used for the Report Card

■ McKinney Funding Letter:

- The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance program is our country's largest and most important federal program to combat homelessness.
- The program has received the support of the Administration through proposed funding increases, but the President's proposed increase of only \$50 million over the Fiscal Year 2008 amount would not allow communities to build as much new permanent housing as it had the previous year.
- Letters circulated in the House and Senate requested that appropriators increase funding from \$1.636 (proposed by the President) to \$2 billion in fiscal year 2009
- A **Y** indicates the member signed the letter to appropriators.

Issues Used for the Report Card

- The National Affordable Housing Trust Fund Act
 - **H.R. 2895:**
 - The National Affordable Housing Trust Fund Act proposes to create a permanent funding mechanism within the Department of the Treasury to produce, preserve, and rehabilitate rental housing for the lowest-income Americans
 - A similar proposal was included in H.R. 3221, which was enacted as part of a massive housing bill in July 2008
 - A **Y** indicates the Member voted for H.R. 2895 when it passed the House in October 2007.
 - **S. 2523:**
 - The National Affordable Housing Trust Fund Act is the Senate's version of the above-referenced bill
 - Unlike the House, S. 2523 did not receive separate consideration before being included in H.R. 3221.
 - A **Y** indicates the Member was a cosponsor of the bill.



Issues Used for the Report Card

■ The **Homes for Heroes Act**

- This legislation would address the severe problem of veteran's homelessness and housing crises by authorizing new housing vouchers for homeless veterans and their families, create the position of Special Assistant for Veterans Affairs at HUD, and a new \$200 million housing production program to benefit low-income veterans.
- This bill was introduced in both the House of Representatives (H.R. 3329) and Senate (S. 1084)
- Voted on and passed only by voice vote in the House.
- A Y indicates the Member cosponsored the Homes for Heroes Act.



Issues Used for the Report Card

■ **Extra Credit:**

- Congressmen and Senators often engage in activities that are helpful to a cause without it fitting neatly into something that advocacy organizations can score.
- The Advocacy Network emailed all housing staffers in the delegation asking them to feel free to contribute ideas of activities the Member engaged in that were helpful in meeting the housing needs of homeless persons and families
- This section reflects some of the answers of those who chose to respond.



Grading Parameters and Rating

- The members who supported a majority of the issues after including any extra credit were rated as **Very Supportive**. This would equate in report card language to a **grade of A/B**.
- The members who supported most of the issues after including any extra credit were rated as **Supportive**. This would equate in report card language to a **grade of C**.
- The members who supported a minority of the issues after including any extra credit were rated as **Not Supportive**. This would equate in report card language to a **grade of F**.

2008 HONOR ROLL

Members Who Ranked as Very Supportive (A/B)

Senator Frank Lautenberg	Very Supportive
Senator Robert Menendez	Very Supportive
Representative Rob Andrews	Very Supportive
Representative Bill Pascrell	Very Supportive
Representative Albio Sires	Very Supportive

Members Who Ranked as Not Supportive (F)

Representative Scott Garrett	Not Supportive
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Members Who Ranked as Supportive (C)

Representative Frank Pallone	Supportive
Representative Frank LoBiondo	Supportive
Representative Donald Payne	Supportive
Representative Jim Saxton	Supportive
Representative Chris Smith	Supportive
Representative Michael Ferguson	Supportive
Representative Rodney Frelinghuysen	Supportive
Representative Steve Rothman	Supportive
Representative Rush Holt	Supportive



Recent News: House Passes McKinney-Vento Reauthorization

- The first reauthorization since 1992
- Increases priorities on homeless families with children
- Increases resources to prevent homelessness for those at risk of homelessness living in motels or doubled up
- Continues to provide incentives for developing permanent supportive housing
- Provides dedicated funding for permanent housing renewals
- Grants rural communities greater flexibility
- Modestly expands the definition of homelessness to include people who are losing their housing in the next 14 days and who lack resources or support networks to obtain housing, as well as families and youth who are persistently unstable and lack independent housing and will continue to do so

How They Voted: S1518/H7221

Voting in Favor

Rep. Rob Andrews

Rep. Frank LoBiondo

Rep. Jim Saxton

Rep. Chris Smith

Rep. Frank Pallone

Rep. Bill Pascrell

Rep. Steve Rothman

Rep. Donald Payne

Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen

Rep. Rush Holt

Rep. Albio Sires

Voting No

Rep. Scott Garrett

Not Voting

Rep. Michael Ferguson

***The Bill now awaits
Senate Approval.***