



2025 IDAHO FREEDOM INDEX

Idaho's conservative scorecard to hold
lawmakers accountable for their votes.



IDAHO FREEDOM
FOUNDATION

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

I have some good news for you! The 2025 edition of the *Idaho Freedom Index* shows marked improvement from our Legislature in restoring liberty, protecting rights, limiting government, reducing taxes, respecting families, and honoring the Constitution. That said, significant work remains to make Idaho the beacon of freedom for the country. We still regulate too much, tax too much, spend too much, and “government” too much.

I invite you to take a moment to examine how the Legislature is doing overall, check how your senator and representatives are respecting the ideals of freedom and limited government, and compare their votes to other legislators.

Our Idaho Freedom Index is the gold standard for evaluating how legislators’ votes align with the principles of freedom and responsibility. Published for 13 years, it is the “true north” for assessing the voting performance of the Legislature and the governor.

To understand how the Freedom Index works, see pages 2-4 for the entire set of metrics by which each bill is measured. The analysis of each rated bill simply squares the bill with the freedom metrics. If you agree with the metrics, you will undoubtedly agree with the bill ratings and, therefore, the legislator scores that follow.

As a citizen taxpayer, a Ph.D. in economics, a professor for 25 years, a three-term legislator, a senior analyst, and now the president of the Idaho Freedom Foundation, I have come to know what good policy looks like, and I also know the pressures and conflicts put on a legislator who must cast yea or nay votes on every bill.

Based on my experience in these areas, I can say the Idaho Freedom Index provides legislators with essential information and details about the bills before them. Legislators can’t possibly read every bill, but the Idaho Freedom Foundation can and does. The dispassionate, objective analysis from the IFF works to help legislators cast their best votes based on the information from our metrics of solid conservative values, Constitutional integrity, and fiscal restraint.

Ultimately, the actions and votes of the legislators determine Idaho policy. Let’s look at the results of the 2025 legislative session. It was an improvement on many fronts, and the Freedom Index average improved by more than 12 points compared to 2024. This year, we saw school choice pass, we saw diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs and spending prohibited in our state institutions of higher learning, and a bill to make sure taxpayer dollars are not used to support illegal aliens. These are positive developments.

The Legislature as a whole improved its conservative and freedom record, and we can see there are a few all-star legislators who truly hold the line (page 6). We also see the cellar-dwellers on the index who seem to work against the values of freedom and limited government.

There seems to be a growing distrust of free markets, increasing dependence on federal spending, heightened dependence on government programs, more attacks on freedom of speech, and a lingering disregard for fiscal responsibility. Despite being a so-called “red state,” many legislators (regardless of political party) vote along liberal lines,



scoring in the F range of the index. We have serious work to do to restore freedom in Idaho.

In addition to the Idaho Freedom Index, we have another similar measure to track bills and legislators on how they adhere to the principle of fiscal restraint: the Idaho Spending Index. You can see the Spending Index summary on pages 21-22 and all the legislators’ scores on the preceding pages. These two indices (Freedom and Spending) are the gold standard for tracking state legislators. **No other state policy center does what we do — only the Idaho Freedom Foundation stands out.**

The Idaho Freedom Index and the Spending Index inform all of Idaho about how the Legislature works and, more importantly, how each legislator performs. Please carefully review the Index and the scores as you evaluate officeholders, and we ask that you consider supporting the Idaho Freedom Foundation in its efforts. To partner with us in this work, you may use the envelope to make a donation and help keep Idaho free!

In Liberty, with firm reliance on our Creator,



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ronald M. Nate".

Ronald M. Nate, Ph.D.
President, Idaho Freedom Foundation

THE FREEDOM INDEX

How Does It Work?

1 BILL INTRODUCTION

A bill gets introduced in either chamber by being read for the first time and referred to a committee. This is the first time that the language of a bill becomes public.

2 RATING

+1 point for each instance of expanding freedom-oriented policy. **-1 point** for each instance of government expansion and restriction on freedom.

The sum of all points assigned to each metric gives the bill score.

3 VOTING

As a bill moves through the legislative process, lawmakers receive the points assigned to that bill. Conversely, if they vote against a bill, they receive the inverse number of points. For example, a lawmaker who votes for a bill rated +3 would receive all three positive points. However, a lawmaker who votes against the same bill would receive -3 points on their score.

4 SCORING

A lawmaker’s Freedom Index score represents the proportion of the time that they voted for freedom-oriented policies. Therefore, a lawmaker who has a score of 100% voted for freedom-oriented policies every time they cast their vote.

Scoring Key:



5 VOTER EDUCATION

Bill ratings and legislator scores help constituents better understand the type of legislation moving through the statehouse and the true voting behavior of their lawmakers. This cultivates a more informed and active constituency in Idaho.

IDAHO INDEX METRICS

Idaho Freedom Index Metrics

The Idaho Freedom Index provides the most comprehensive and powerful indicator of how our legislators' votes reflect the principles of restoring liberty, protecting rights, limiting government, reducing taxes, and honoring the Constitution. Bills are analyzed within the context of the metrics below. A bill receives one (+1) point for each metric that is satisfied by freedom-focused policymaking and loses one (-1) point for each instance in which the inverse is true. The bill's score comprises the sum of these points.

Does it create, expand, or enlarge any agency, board, program, function, or activity of government? Conversely, does it eliminate or curtail the size or scope of government?

Does it transfer a function of the private sector to the government? Conversely, does it eliminate a function of government or return a function of government to the private sector?

Does it give government any new, additional, or expanded power to prohibit, restrict, or regulate activities in the free market? Conversely, does it eliminate or reduce government intervention in the market?

Does it increase barriers to entry into the market? Conversely, does it remove barriers to entry into the market?

Does it directly or indirectly create or increase any taxes, fees, or other assessments? Conversely, does it eliminate or reduce any taxes, fees, or other assessments?

Does it increase government redistribution of wealth? Conversely, does it decrease government redistribution of wealth?

Does it increase government spending (for objectionable purposes) or debt? Conversely, does it decrease government spending or debt?

Does it in any way restrict public access to information related to government activity or otherwise compromise government transparency, accountability, or election integrity? Conversely, does it increase public access to information related to government activity or increase government transparency, accountability, or election integrity?

Does it violate the principle of equal protection under the law? Conversely, does it restore or protect the principle of equal protection under the law?

Does it directly or indirectly create or increase penalties for victimless crimes or non-restorative penalties for non-violent crimes? Conversely, does it eliminate or decrease penalties for victimless crimes or non-restorative penalties for non-violent crimes?

Does it violate the spirit or the letter of either the United States Constitution or the Idaho Constitution? Conversely, does it restore or uphold the protections guaranteed in the US Constitution or the Idaho Constitution?

Does it violate the principles of federalism by increasing federal authority, yielding to federal blandishments, or incorporating changeable federal laws into Idaho statutes or rules? Conversely, does it restore or uphold the principles of federalism?

Does it promote the breakdown of the traditional family or the deconstruction of societal norms? Conversely, does it protect or uphold the structure, tenets, and traditional values of Western society?

Does it expand the government's bureaucratic monopoly on education, reduce family and student choice, or finance education based on an institution or system? Conversely, does it reduce government coercion in education, expand education choice, or finance education based on the student rather than the institution?



Idaho Spending Index Metrics

The Idaho Spending Index serves to provide a fiscally conservative perspective on state budgeting while providing an unbiased measurement of how Idaho lawmakers apply these values to their voting behavior on appropriations bills. Each bill is analyzed within the context of the metrics below. They receive one (+1) point for each metric that is satisfied by freedom-focused policymaking and lose one (-1) point for each instance in which the inverse is true. The sum of these points composes the score for the bill.

Does this budget enact powers and activities that extend beyond the proper role of government? Conversely, does this budget fulfill the proper role of government?

Does this budget incur any wasteful spending among discretionary funds, including new line items? Conversely, does this budget contain any provisions that serve to reduce spending where possible (i.e. base reductions, debt reconciliation, etc.)?

Is the continuation or growth in ongoing spending, if any, inappropriate for the changes in circumstances, scope of the agency, or current economic environment? Conversely, is the continuation or growth in ongoing spending appropriate given any change in circumstances or economic pressures?

Does the budget fund any programs or line items that violate either the spirit or the letter of the U.S. Constitution and the Idaho Constitution? Conversely, is this budget restricted to programs and line items that better align the agency with the spirit and the letter of both the U.S. Constitution and the Idaho Constitution?

Does this budget perpetuate or expand state dependence on federal dollars, thereby violating principles of federalism? Conversely, does this budget actively reduce the amount of federal dollars used to balance this budget?

Does this budget create permanent programs or Full-Time Positions (FTP) using temporary funding?

Does the budget grow government through the addition of new, permanent FTPs or through funding unlegislated efforts to create new or expanded entitlement programs? Conversely, does this budget reduce the size of government staff and programs except where compelled by new legislation?

Does this budget contain hidden fund transfers or supplemental expenditures that work to enact new policy or are not valid emergency expenditures? Conversely, are fund transfers only made to stabilization funds or are supplemental requests only made in the interest of resolving valid fiscal emergencies?

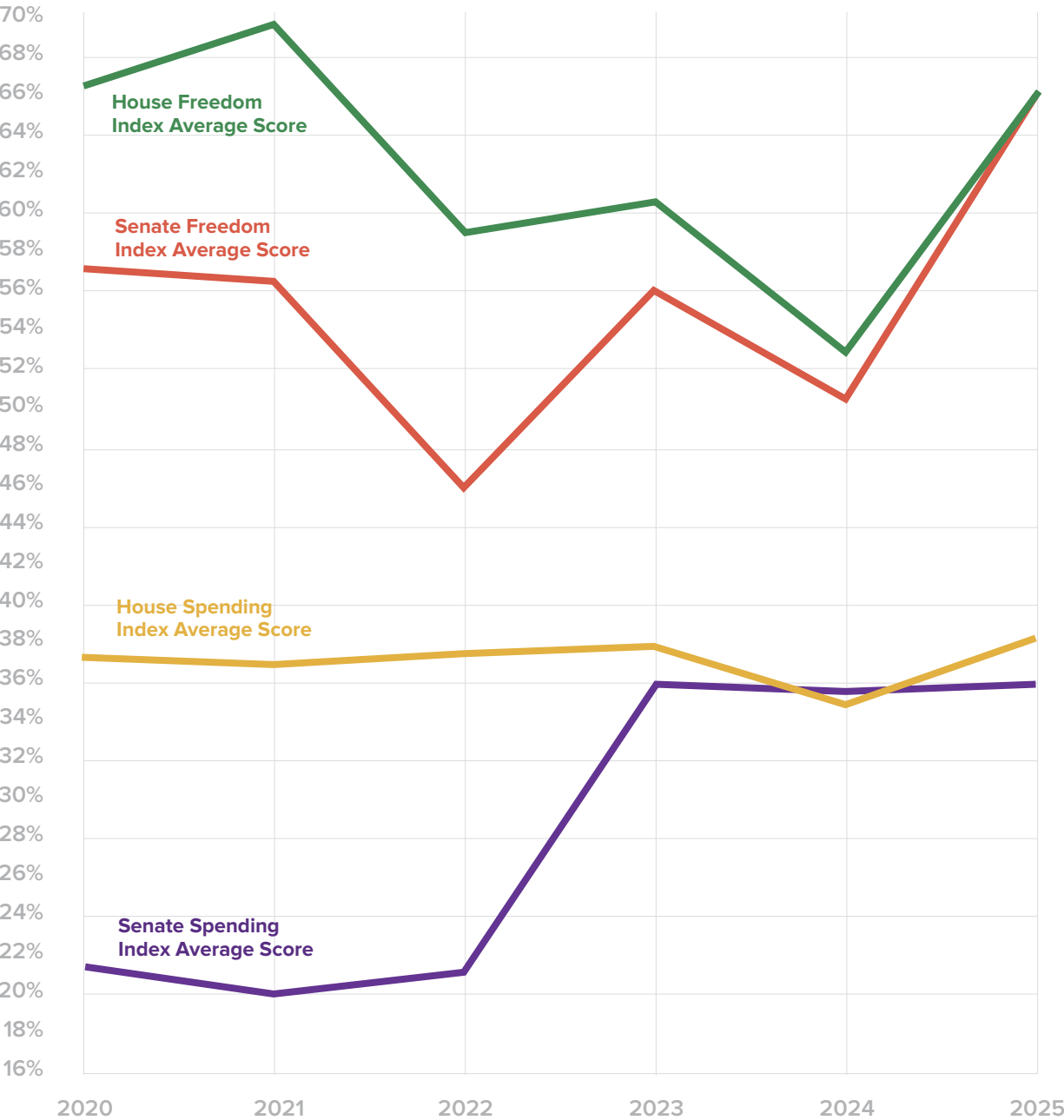
The Idaho Freedom Foundation analyzes and rates hundreds of bills each legislative session on a wide variety of topics. We typically rate more than half of the bills printed during each session. Not every bill gets an IFF rating, however. Some reasons for not rating a bill include: it being administrative or procedural, falling outside of our rating metrics, involving excessively technical or complex issues, or being a frivolous or unnecessarily provocative bill introduced for political posturing.

LEGISLATURE AVERAGE TRENDS

SIX-YEAR HISTORY

The trends in average scores shown here represent the collective voting patterns of the 70 Representatives and 35 Senators voting in each legislative session, not individual lawmakers' scores. These trends indicate the overall level of conservatism and fiscal responsibility within each body over time.

Freedom and Spending Index Average Score



TOP 16 ALL STARS

These lawmakers averaged 90% or above on the Freedom and Spending indices together. We applaud them for defending and advancing the principles of limited government, personal freedom, and fiscal responsibility.

 GLENNEDA ZUIDERVELD Senate – District 24 FREEDOM INDEX 99.4% SPENDING INDEX 100.0% AVERAGE SCORE 99.7%	 CHRISTY ZITO Senate – District 8 FREEDOM INDEX 97.7% SPENDING INDEX 100.0% AVERAGE SCORE 98.9%	 LUCAS CAYLER House – District 11 FREEDOM INDEX 97.1% SPENDING INDEX 100.0% AVERAGE SCORE 98.6%	 JOSH KOHL Senate – District 25 FREEDOM INDEX 96.5% SPENDING INDEX 100.0% AVERAGE SCORE 98.3%
 KENT MARMION House – District 11 FREEDOM INDEX 96.1% SPENDING INDEX 100.0% AVERAGE SCORE 98.1%	 CLINT HOSTETLER House – District 24 FREEDOM INDEX 95.2% SPENDING INDEX 100.0% AVERAGE SCORE 97.6%	 DAVID LEAVITT House – District 25 FREEDOM INDEX 94.0% SPENDING INDEX 100.0% AVERAGE SCORE 97.0%	 FAYE THOMPSON House – District 8 FREEDOM INDEX 94.7% SPENDING INDEX 97.9% AVERAGE SCORE 96.3%
 CORNEL RASOR House – District 1 FREEDOM INDEX 91.8% SPENDING INDEX 98.6% AVERAGE SCORE 95.2%	 HEATHER SCOTT House – District 2 FREEDOM INDEX 92.8% SPENDING INDEX 96.5% AVERAGE SCORE 94.7%	 DALE HAWKINS House – District 2 FREEDOM INDEX 91.8% SPENDING INDEX 97.2% AVERAGE SCORE 94.5%	 DAN FOREMAN Senate – District 6 FREEDOM INDEX 89.7% SPENDING INDEX 96.6% AVERAGE SCORE 93.2%
 KYLE HARRIS House – District 7 FREEDOM INDEX 88.9% SPENDING INDEX 97.2% AVERAGE SCORE 93.1%	 STEVE TANNER House – District 13 FREEDOM INDEX 91.8% SPENDING INDEX 93.8% AVERAGE SCORE 92.8%	 TONY WISNIEWSKI House – District 5 FREEDOM INDEX 90.8% SPENDING INDEX 94.4% AVERAGE SCORE 92.6%	 CHRIS BRUCE House – District 23 FREEDOM INDEX 89.4% SPENDING INDEX 91.7% AVERAGE SCORE 90.6%

THE GOOD AND THE BAD BILLS OF 2025

One of the frustrations Idahoans face each year during the legislative session is the good bills that die and the bad bills that pass. The Idaho Freedom Foundation closely follows legislation moving through the Capitol each year and analyzes bills that impact the lives of *We the People*. Here are some of the best and worst pieces of legislation introduced and considered this year. Idaho made some great progress in 2025!

✓ A purple check mark indicates an Idaho Freedom Foundation victory!!

Best Bills of the Year:

House Bill 77 (+2): A bill creating an alternate licensing path for Idaho physicians. Those who enter it would not have to enter a residency program. **Final Disposition:** DEAD – Blocked by House Health & Welfare Chair John Vander Woude.

✓ **House Bill 93** (+1): A bill creating a school choice, education tax credit with certain stipulations. **Final Disposition:** PASSED – Signed into law by Governor Brad Little.

House Bill 98 (+3): A bill that prohibits public officials from using school district funds, personnel, and other resources in support of teachers' unions. **Final Disposition:** DEAD – Blocked by Senate State Affairs Chair Jim Guthrie.

✓ **House Bill 135** (+3): A bill that would make illegal aliens ineligible for most types of taxpayer-funded benefits in Idaho. **Final Disposition:** PASSED – Signed into law by Governor Brad Little.

House Bill 138 (+5): A bill repealing Medicaid expansion in Idaho unless certain cost-saving measures are implemented and reform benchmarks are met. **Final Disposition:** DEAD – Blocked by Senate Health & Welfare Chair Julie VanOrden.

✓ **House Bill 177** (+2): A bill declaring gold and silver are legal tender in the state of Idaho. **Final Disposition:** PASSED – Signed into law by Governor Brad Little.

House Bill 269 (+3): A bill that would have ended the Idaho Launch program in June 2026. **Final Disposition:** DEAD – Blocked by House Commerce & Human Resources Chair James Holtzclaw.

House Joint Resolution 001 (+2): To amend the Idaho Constitution to eliminate the legislature's authority to mandate public education, and to protect parents' right to educate their children free from government interference. **Final Disposition:** DEAD – Failed on the House Floor.

Senate Bill 1008 (+3): A bill prohibiting colleges and universities from banning or regulating the otherwise legal possession of firearms. **Final Disposition:** DEAD – Blocked by Senate State Affairs Chair Jim Guthrie.

✓ **Senate Bill 1198** (+5): A bill eliminating and prohibiting DEI in higher education, biased reporting systems, mandatory DEI coursework, and discriminatory practices in admissions/employment. **Final Disposition:** PASSED – Signed into law by Governor Brad Little.

✓ **Senate Bill 1210** (+1): A bill to amend Idaho's "Coronavirus Stop Act" to protect individual medical freedom against vaccine mandates and all other medical interventions. **Final Disposition:** PASSED – Signed into law by Governor Brad Little.

For a full list of Index-rated bills, visit our site:



Worst Bills of the Year:

✓ **House Bill 147** (-2): A bill increasing the bonding capacity for school districts, thereby allowing for higher property taxes and significantly more government spending and debt. **Final Disposition:** DEAD – Failed on the House Floor.

✓ **House Bill 157** (-2): A bill allowing the government to collect and retain DNA samples from people who commit certain misdemeanors, expanding a practice that currently extends only to felonies. **Final Disposition:** DEAD – Failed on the House Floor.

✓ **House Bill 301** (-3): A bill allowing the governor to declare an emergency so a state agency could acquire property after a statutory deadline has passed. **Final Disposition:** DEAD – Failed on the House Floor.

✓ **House Bill 306** (-3): A bill replacing the current misdemeanor of libel with the felony of "criminal libel," which includes excessive penalties. **Final Disposition:** DEAD – Held at desk.

House Bill 398 (-3): A bill repealing and replacing Idaho's laws related to lobbying, expanding the definition of lobbying, and adding new reporting requirements. **Final Disposition:** PASSED – Signed into law by Governor Brad Little.

✓ **Senate Bill 1186** (-5): A bill obliterating donor privacy in Idaho for all donations over \$1,000 that are even tangentially related to political speech. **Final Disposition:** DEAD – Held in Senate State Affairs Committee by motion of the committee.

Senate Bill 1201 (-4): This budget appropriates \$5,249,797,100 and 305.50 full time positions for DHW–Medicaid. The biggest single agency budget in Idaho history. **Final Disposition:** PASSED – Signed into law by Governor Brad Little.

✓ **Senate Bill 1212** (-4): A bill repealing and replacing Idaho's campaign finance laws by growing government and limiting free speech. **Final Disposition:** DEAD – Held on Senate calendar without a vote.

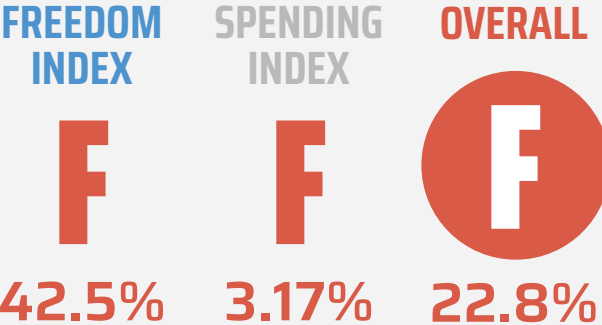
THE GOVERNOR'S SCORE

Idaho's executive office showed modest improvement during the 2025 legislative session — likely a result of stronger, more principled legislation coming out of the House and Senate.

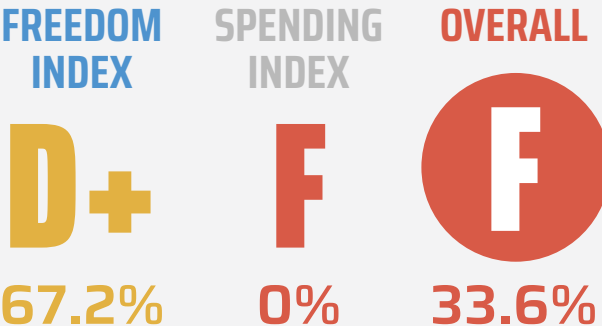


GOVERNOR
**BRAD
LITTLE**

2024 SCORES



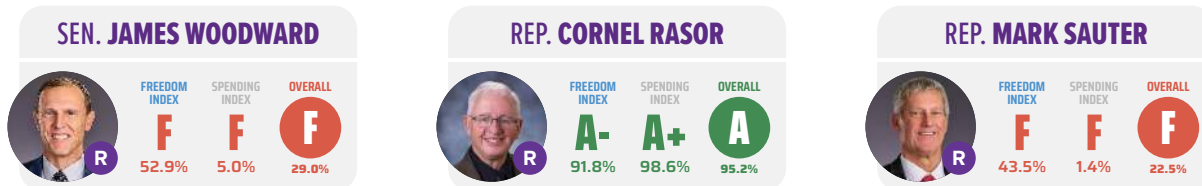
2025 SCORES



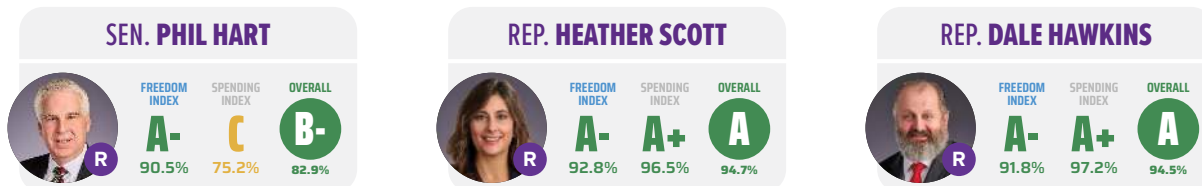
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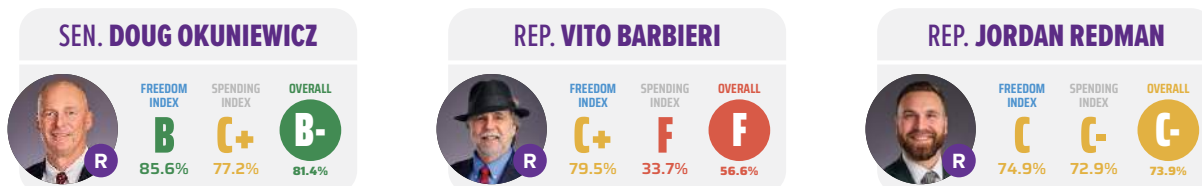
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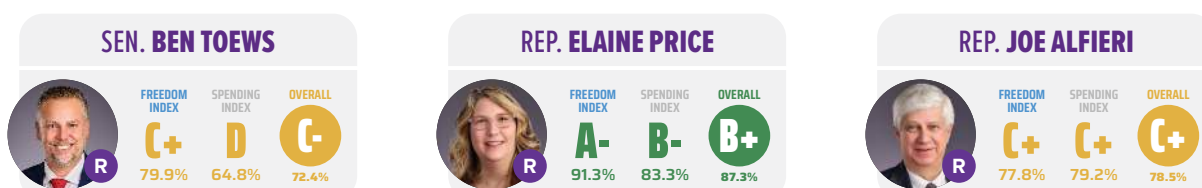
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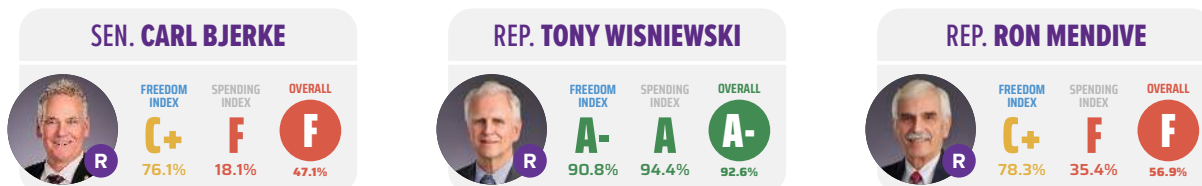
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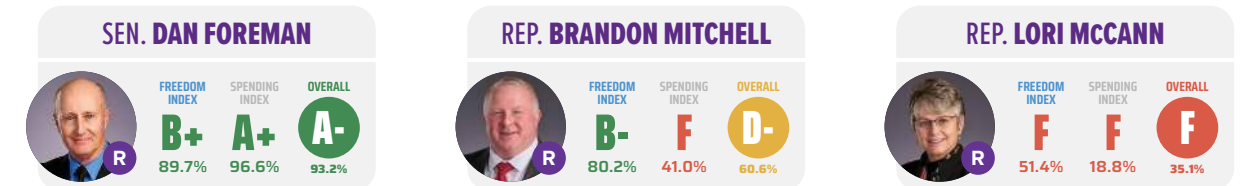
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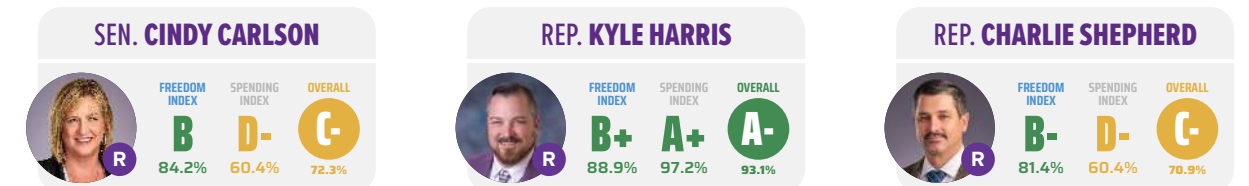
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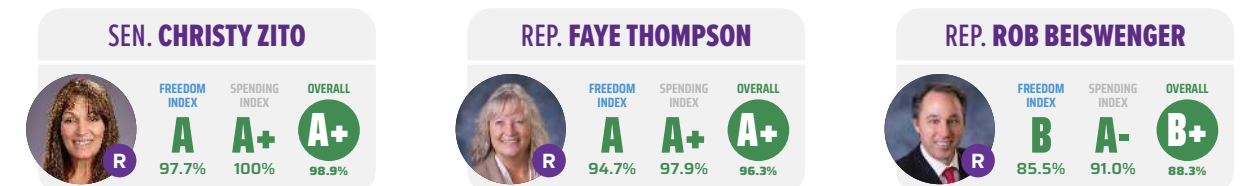
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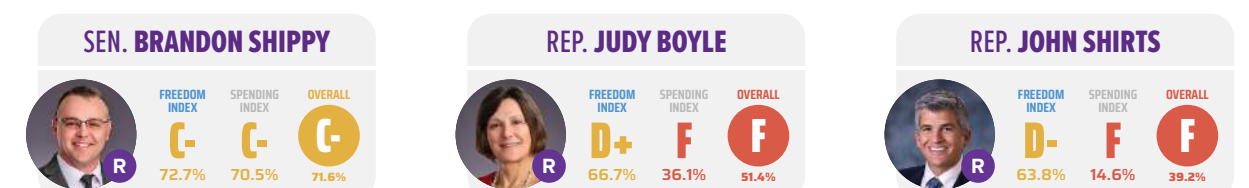
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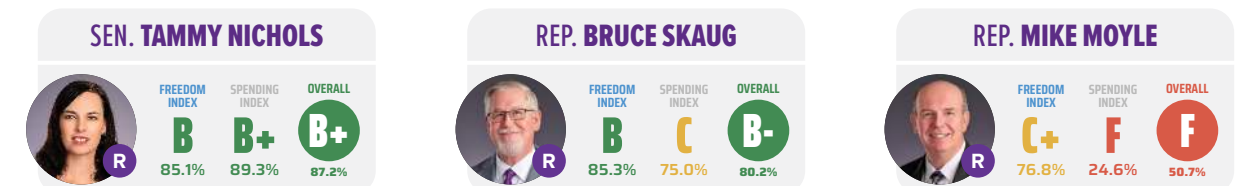
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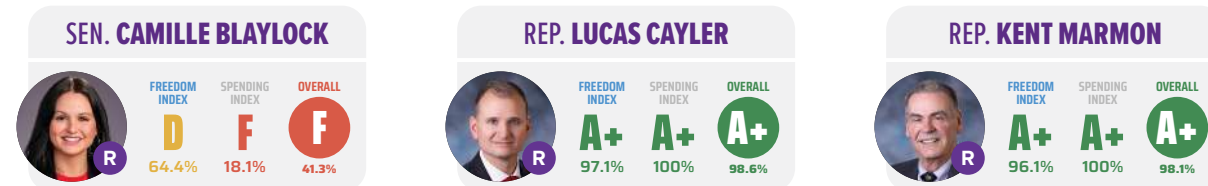
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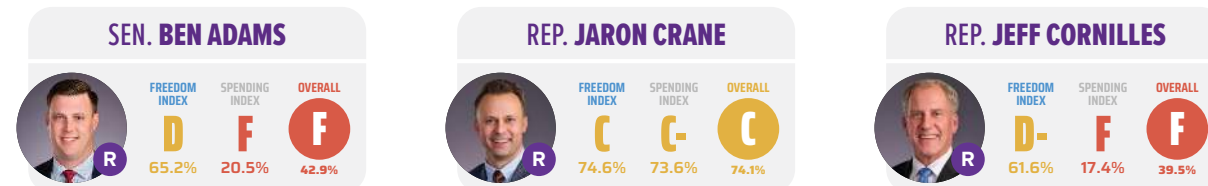
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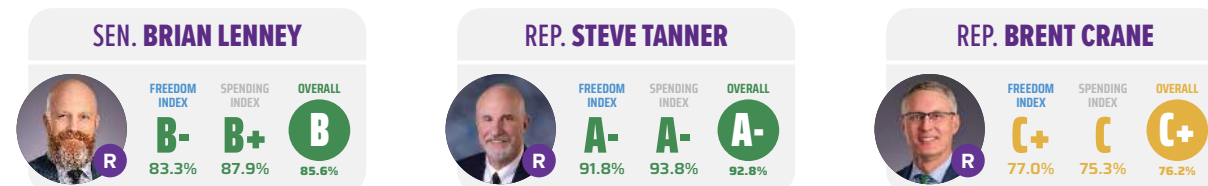
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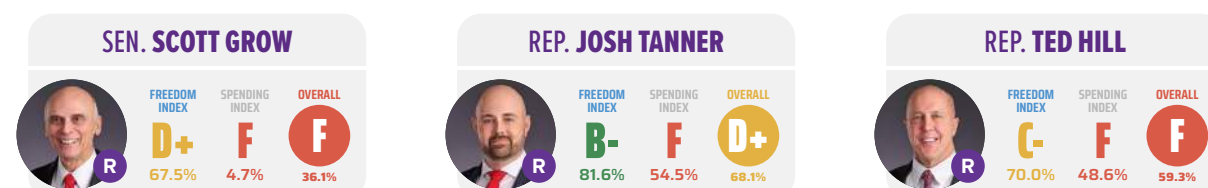
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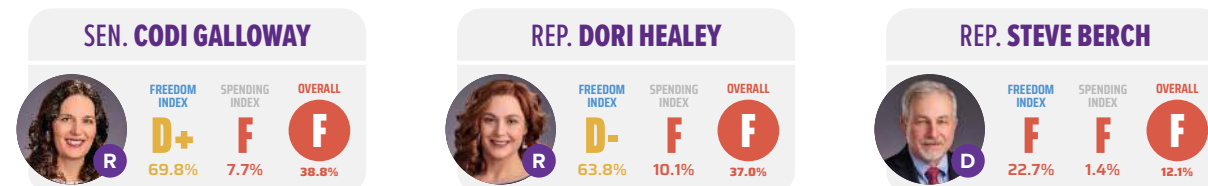
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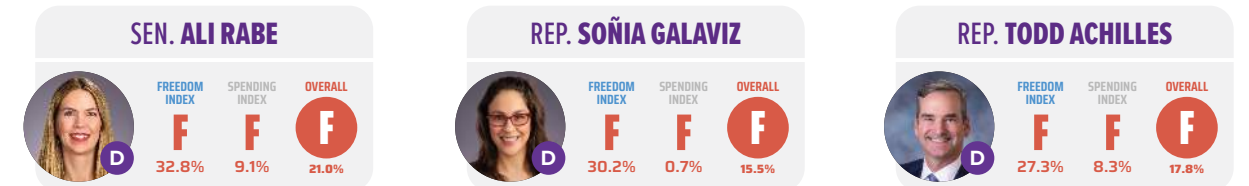
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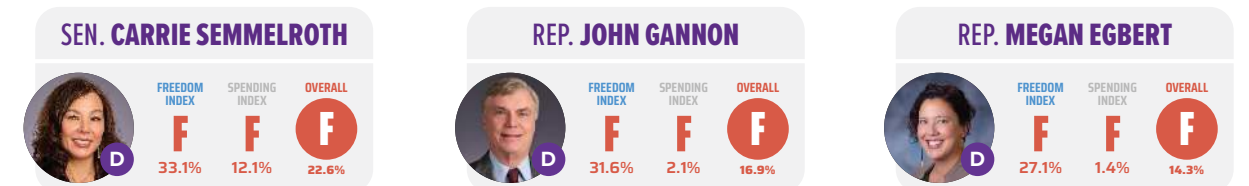
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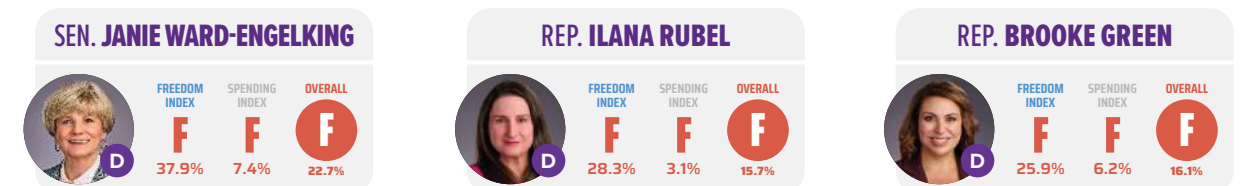
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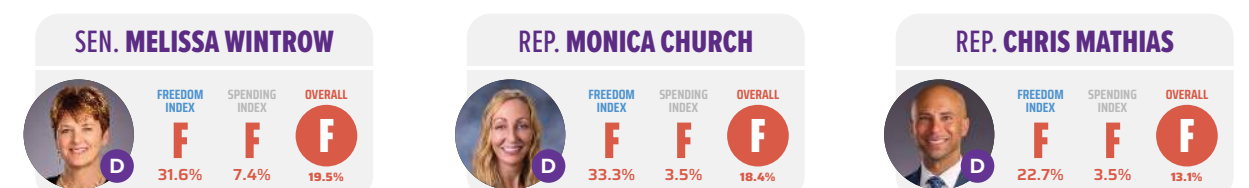
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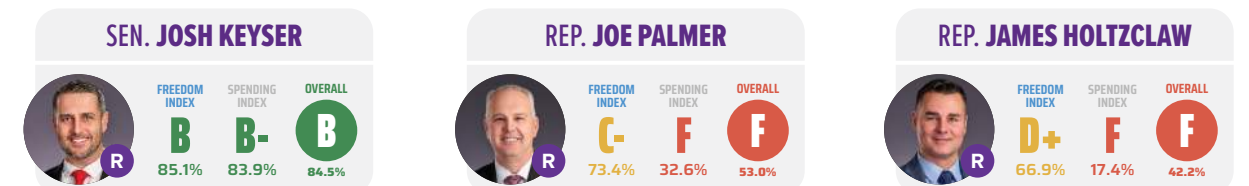
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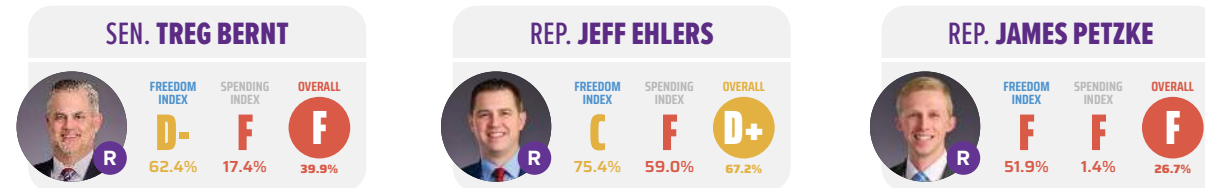


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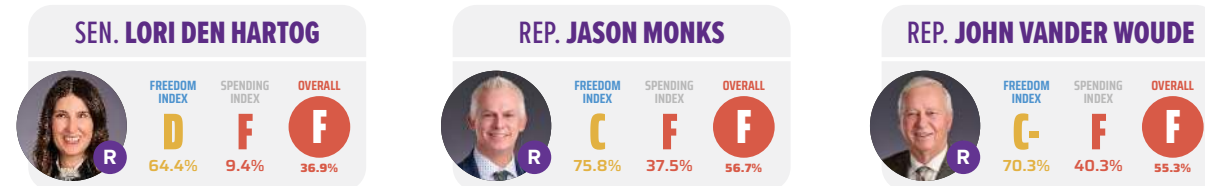


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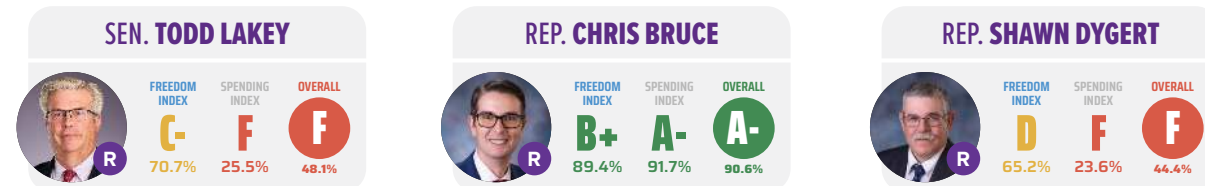
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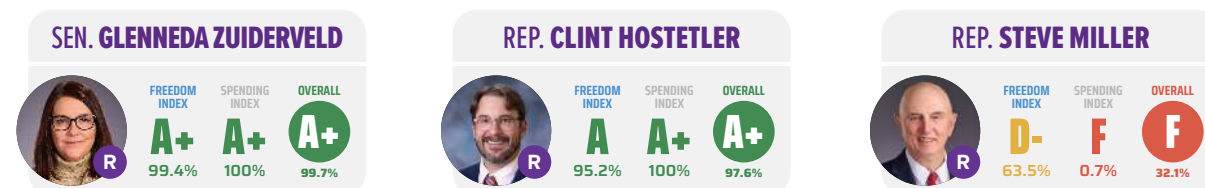
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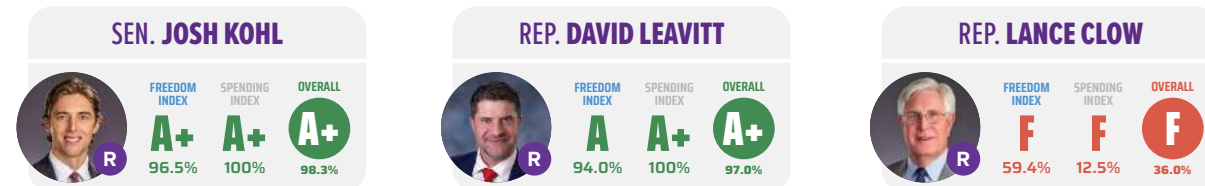
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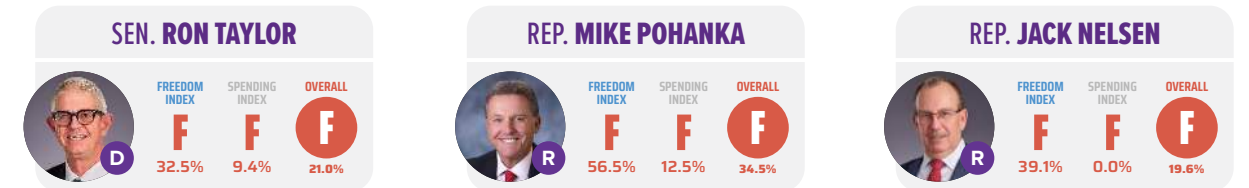
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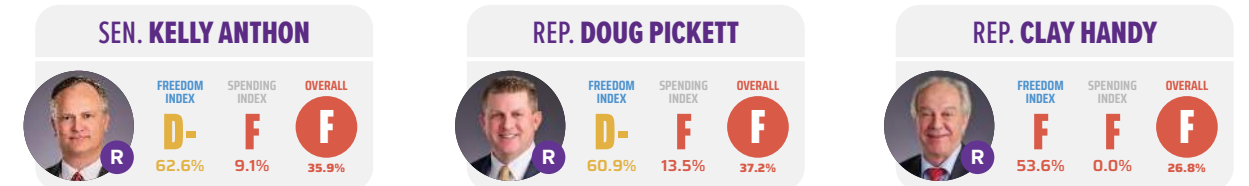
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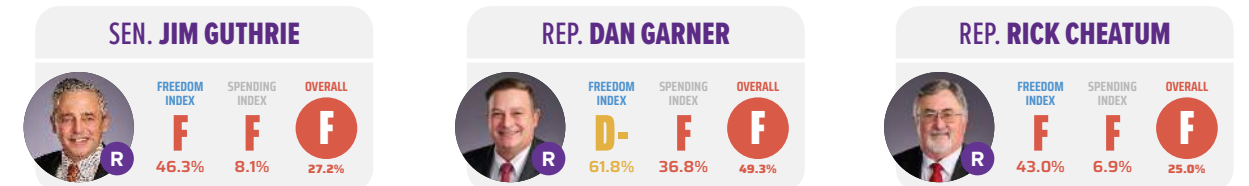
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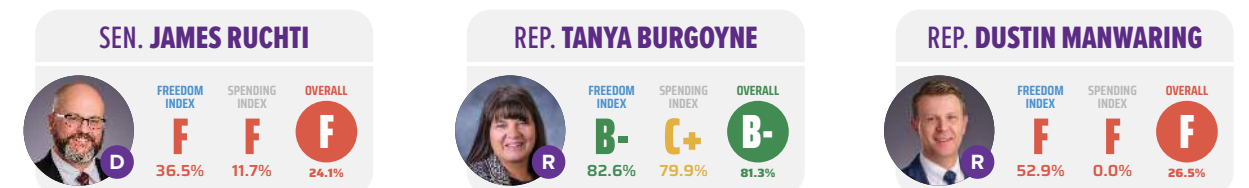
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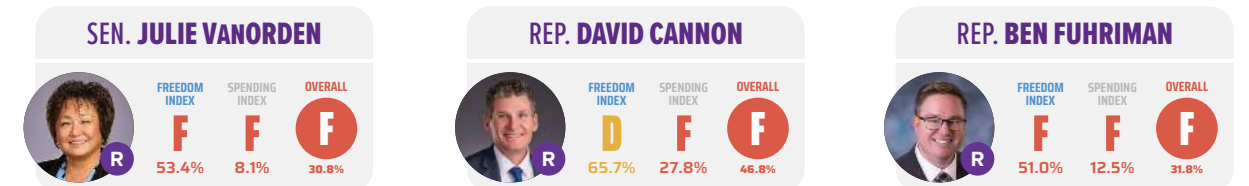
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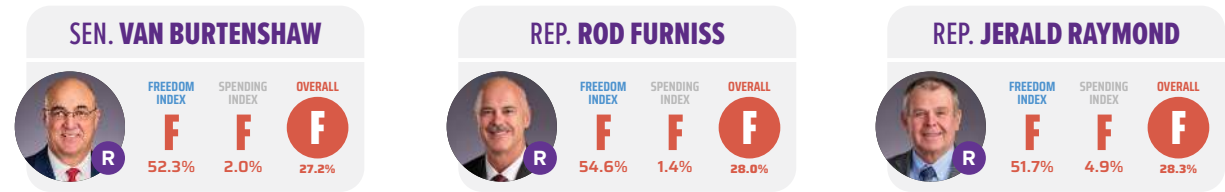


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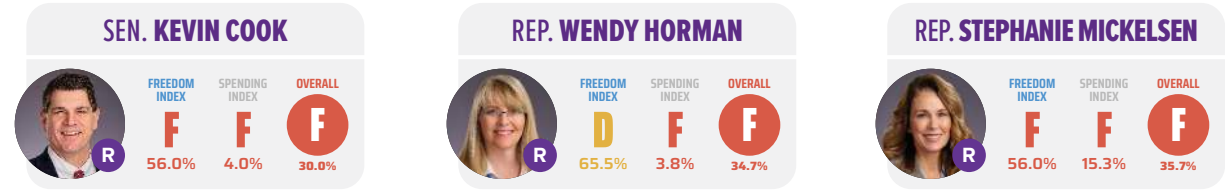


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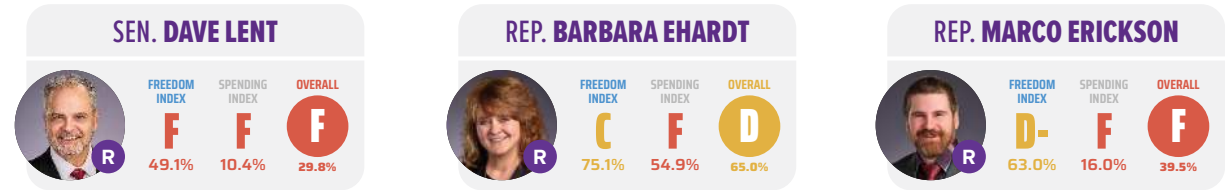
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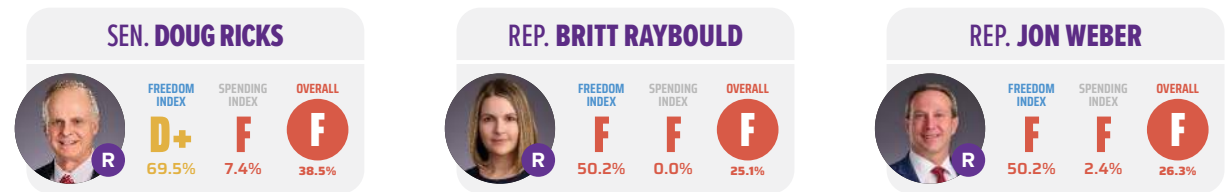
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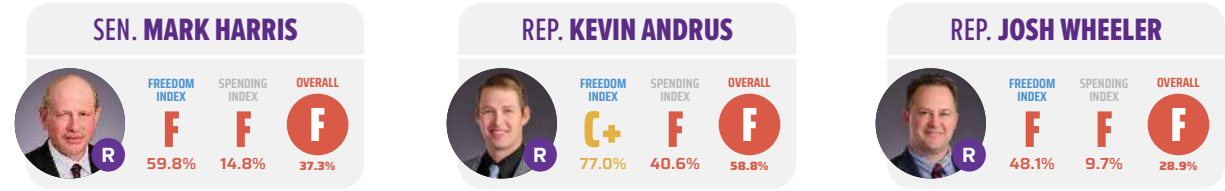
DISTRICT 33



DISTRICT 34



DISTRICT 35



CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE ON THE 2025 FREEDOM INDEX

Each year, Idaho lawmakers consider more than 600 bills, with over 300 becoming law. With so many votes cast, it was once easy for legislators to return home and tell constituents only about the “good” votes they made—leaving voters in the dark about the full picture.

That’s why the Idaho Freedom Index was created.

The Freedom Index rates bills using 14 objective criteria posted on IdahoFreedom.org. For example:

- ▶ Does the bill create a new agency?
- ▶ Raise taxes?
- ▶ Expand government power?
- ▶ Promote the breakdown of the traditional family?

Each “yes” answer earns -1 point; each “no” earns +1. A bill can have multiple plus and minus points. Legislators receive the bill’s score when they vote, creating a clear pattern over time that shows whether they support bigger government—or more freedom.

In a world where we value what we can measure—weight, gas prices, crop yields—the Freedom Index brings measurable transparency to politics. And that makes legislative performance matter. When lawmakers know their votes are being tracked, they begin to consider them more carefully. Over time, this has had a positive effect on preserving individual liberty.

Critics argue the Freedom Index has too much influence. But influence isn’t the problem—transparency is the point. Lawmakers are still free to vote however they wish, but they’ll

carry the public consequences of those votes. That’s accountability.

Should the Freedom Index be the only thing you consider when voting? Of course not. But it remains the most consistent, comprehensive, and accessible way for citizens to evaluate who truly supports freedom.

In a political world dominated by special interests, the Idaho Freedom Foundation exists to represent you. Through the Freedom Index, you can see past the campaign rhetoric and judge legislators by the only thing that truly matters: their voting record.

You deserve good information to make informed decisions. The Freedom Index is your trusty yardstick—free to use, easy to understand, and built to serve citizens, not the political class.

If you believe in lower taxes, less regulation, and more freedom, consider donating to the Idaho Freedom Foundation—the one group in Idaho that sees you as the most important special interest.

Thank you,



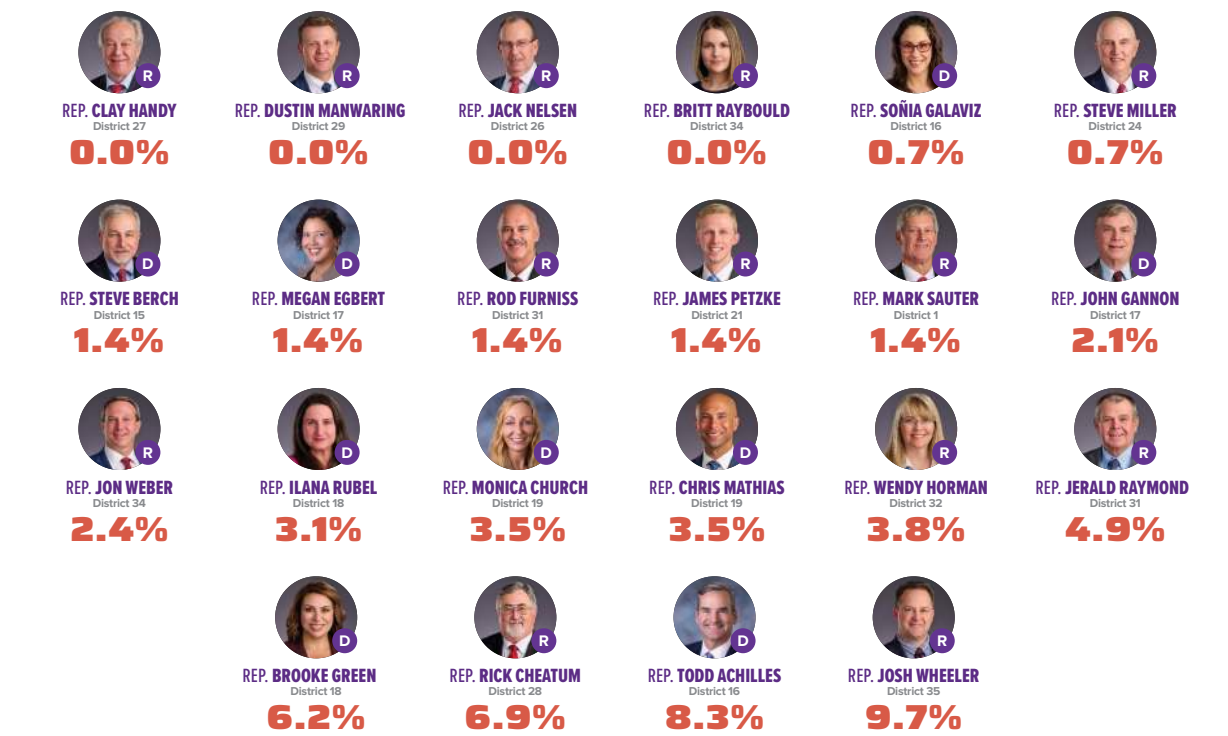
Brent Regan
Chairman, Idaho Freedom Foundation Board



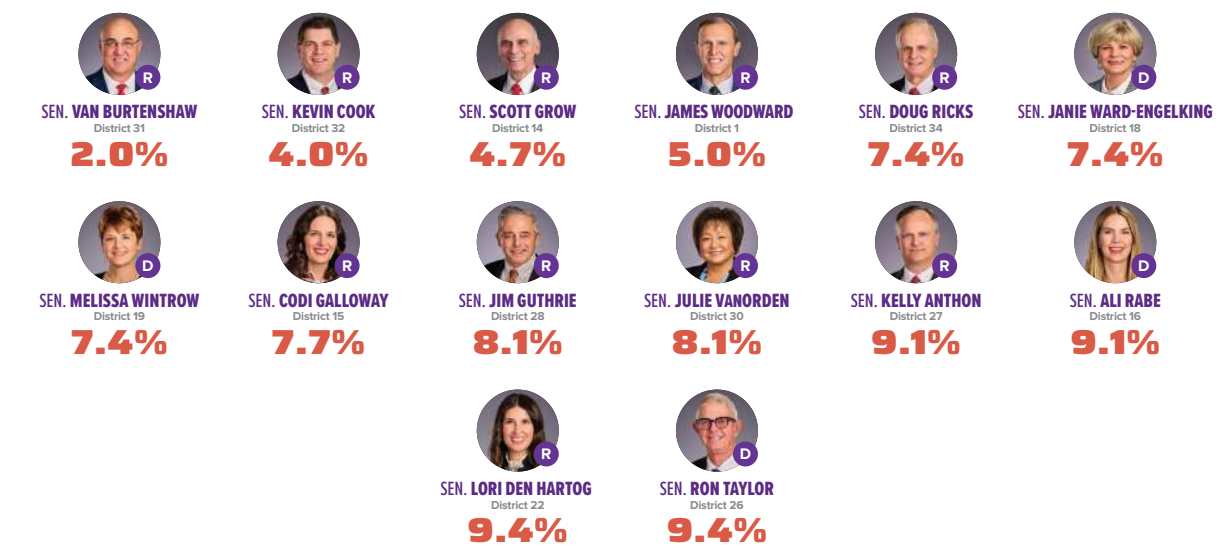
BIG SPENDER CAUCUS

From fiscal year 2020 to 2025, Idaho's total appropriations exploded by an eye-popping 55%. So who's footing the bill? You are. And the lawmakers listed below had no issue voting "yes" on nearly every budget that came across their desk — rubber-stamping billions in new spending without blinking. These are the 2025 Legislature's biggest spenders and their Spending Index scores (lower scores are bad news.)

HOUSE

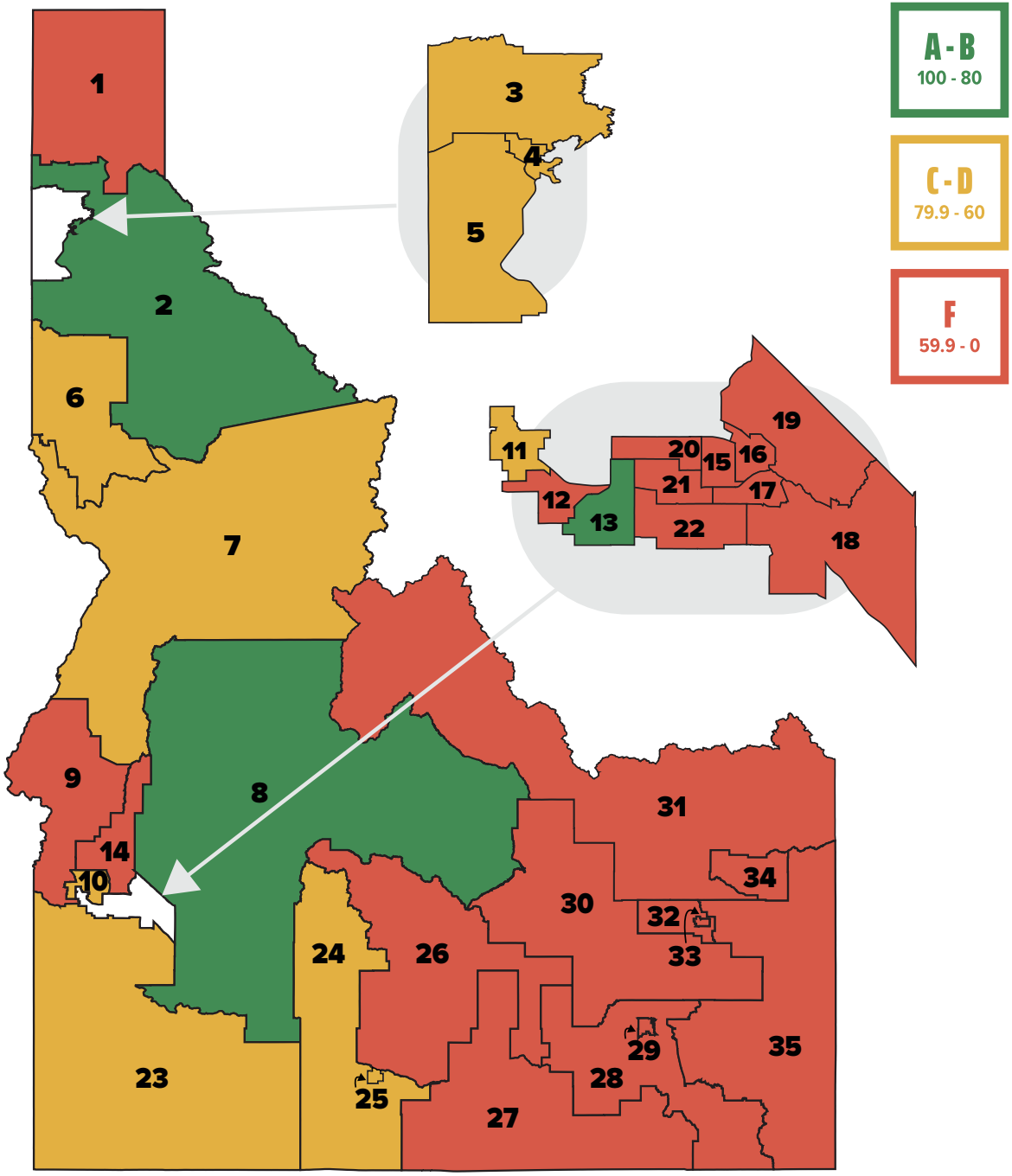


SENATE



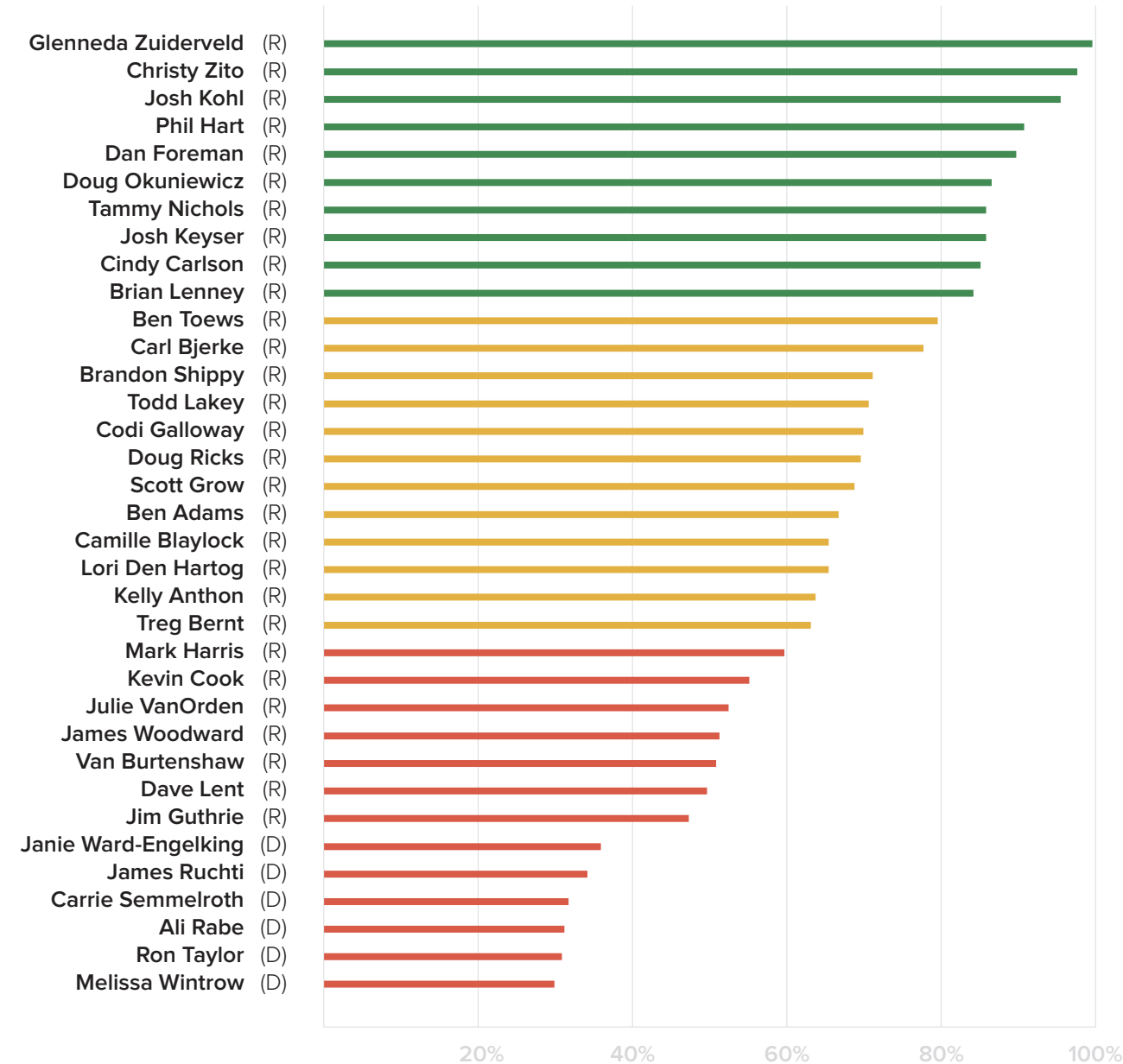
LEGISLATIVE GRADES BY DISTRICT GEOGRAPHY

This map presents the average Freedom and Spending Index scores of the one senator and two representatives combined in each district.

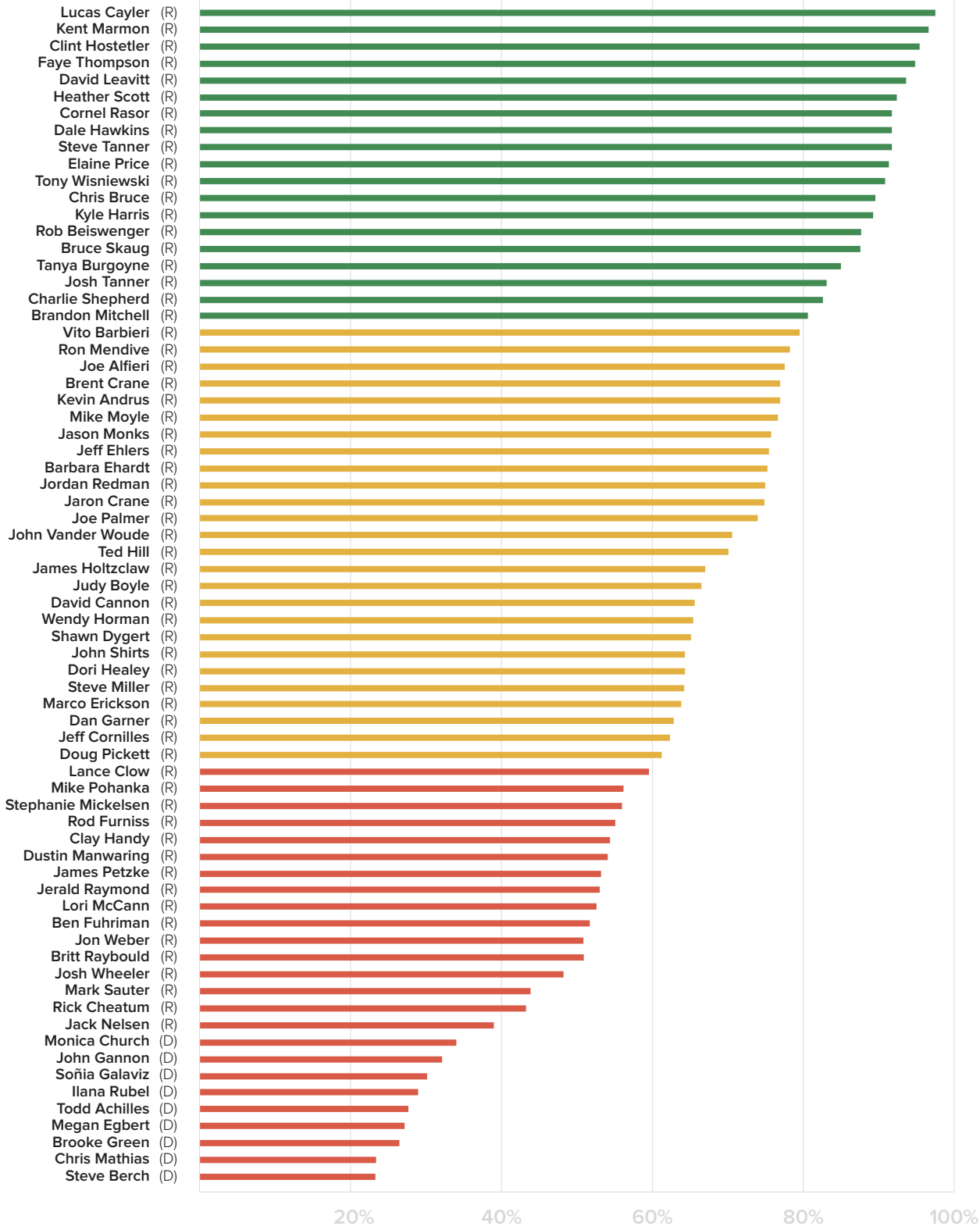


HOW DO LAWMAKERS STACK UP?

Freedom in the Senate

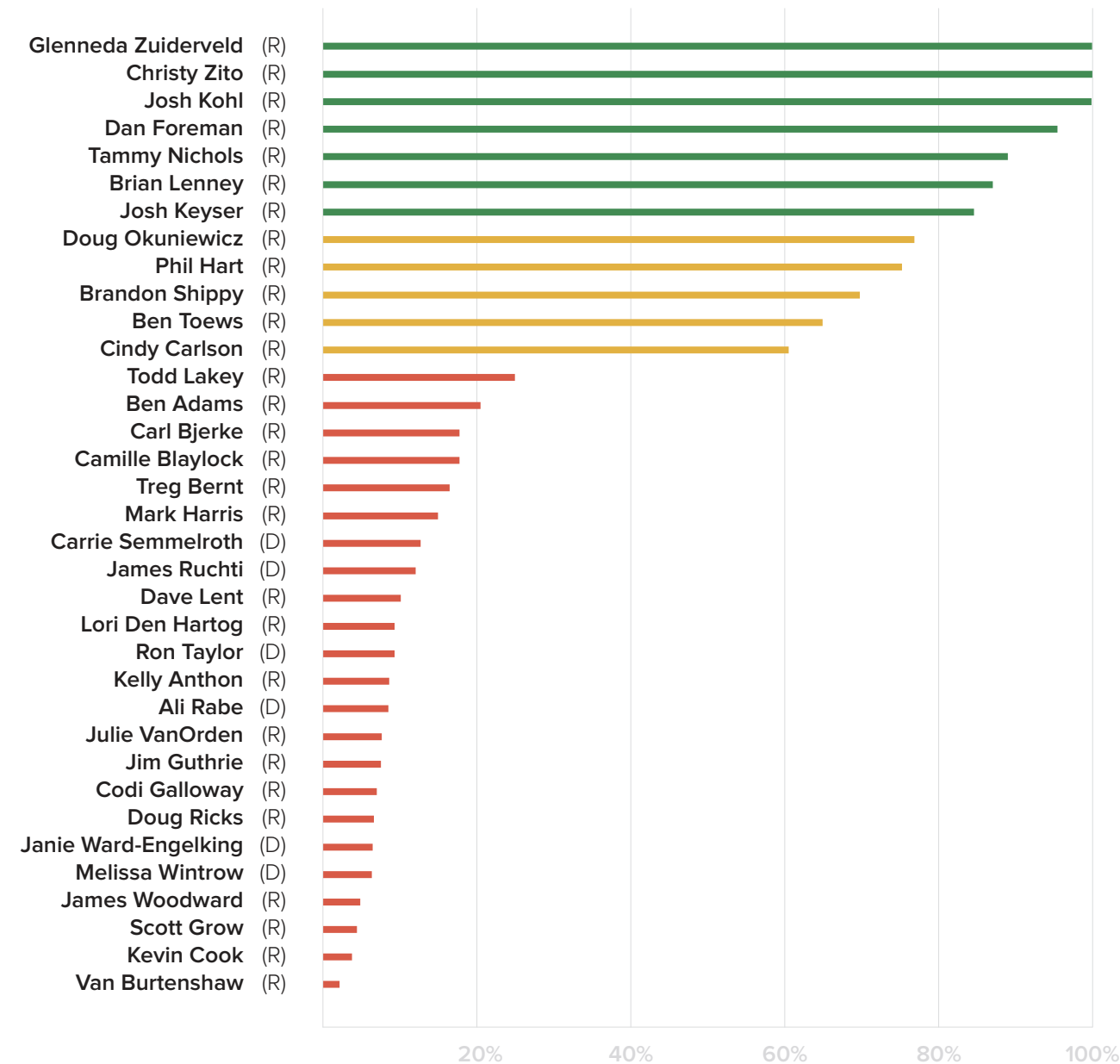


Freedom in the House

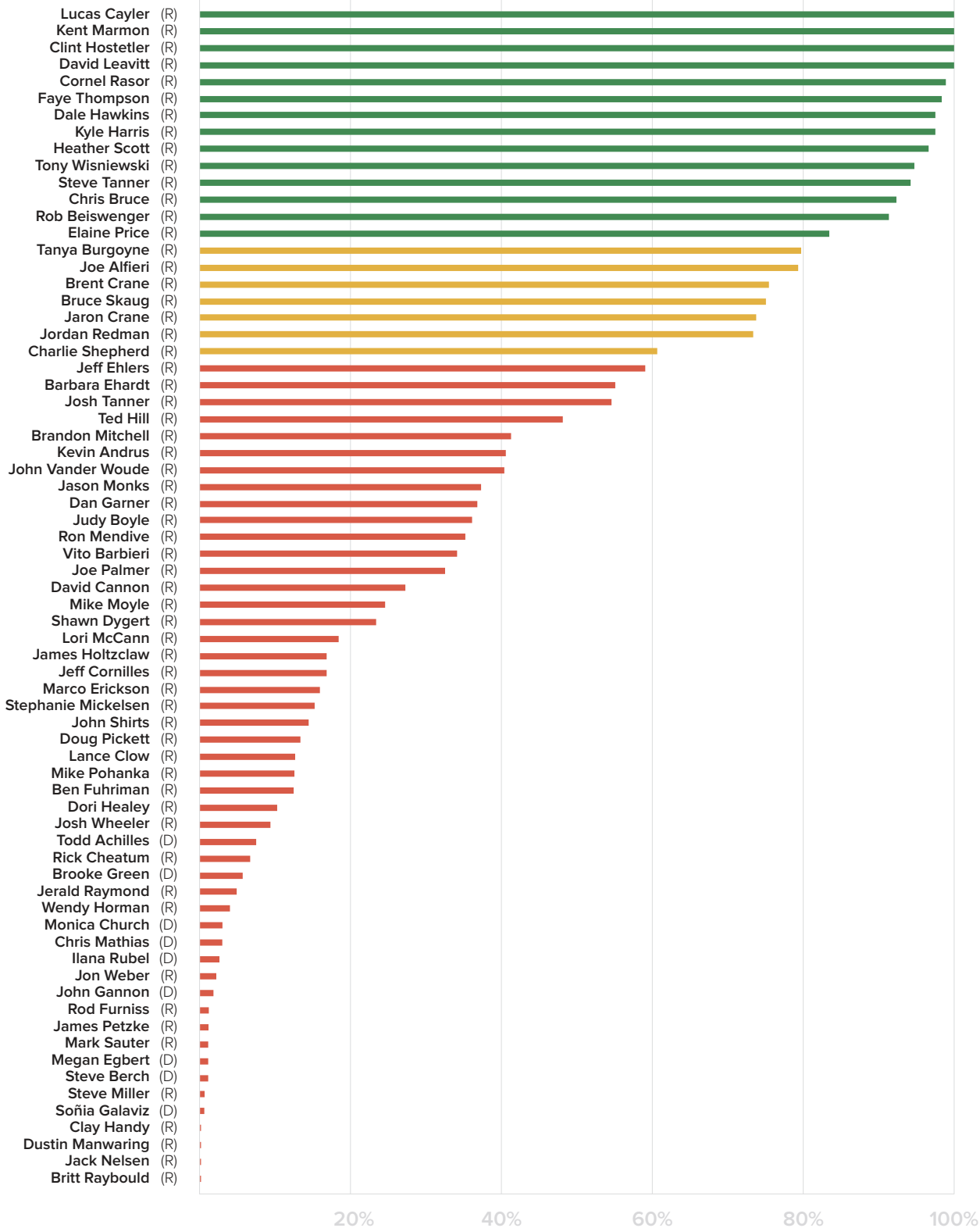


HOW DO LAWMAKERS STACK UP?

Spending in the Senate



Spending in the House



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