

Calculating Idaho Freedom Index scores

The formula for calculating a legislator's Freedom Index score:

Freedom Index percentage = $100 * (\text{possible vote score} + \text{legislator's total score}) / (\text{possible vote score} * 2)$

To determine the possible vote score:

Based on 12 metrics, Idaho Freedom Foundation rates all legislation voted on by the Idaho House and Senate. IFF then adds up the ratings for each bill to determine a possible vote score (PVS). Because not all legislation is heard in both chambers, the Senate and the House may have different possible vote scores. For example, during the 2019 legislative session, the House PVS was 114 and the Senate's was 96.

To calculate a legislator's total score:

When a legislator votes for a bill which IFF has rated positively, or votes against a bill which IFF has rated negatively, the value of that bill's rating is added to the legislator's total score.

If a legislator votes against a bill that IFF rated positively, or for a bill rated negatively, then the total possible value of that rating is subtracted from the legislator's total score.

If a legislator is absent from a vote, the legislator's score is neither increased nor decreased.

A hypothetical example:

House members voted on legislation totaling 150 points. Of all the votes, Representative A voted for 10 pieces of legislation that IFF rated at negative 13. As a result, 13 points will be subtracted from this member's final score. Additionally, Representative A was absent for one bill with a rating of positive 5. For this, he neither lost nor received points. For the other 86 votes on legislation where Representative A voted for or against in line with the rating, he received a positive score of 132, equivalent to the sum of all these ratings. From this 132, the negative value of 13 points is taken away, bringing Representative A's total score to 119 points.

To plug this into the formula: the legislator's total score of 119 is added to the possible vote score of 150 for a total of 269. This is divided by twice the possible vote score (2×150), which is 300. Rounding to a single decimal, this gives the Legislator a score of 89.7 percent.

Other details:

If a bill is voted on more than once within a single chamber (as a result of an amendment) then every vote is taken into account for the scoring. If the amended bill with a new rating is not voted on within the other chamber then the vote from

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the original bill and it's original rating will remain.

Hypothetically, a legislator who is absent for every vote would receive a Total Score of 0, and would stand at 50 percent on the Idaho Freedom Index. This is as compared to a representative who votes contrary to every bill rating, for which he or she would have a score of -137 and a 0 percent on the Idaho Freedom Index.

Letter grade breakdown:

100 - 96.7		A+
96.6 - 93.3		A
93.2 - 90.0		A-
89.9 - 86.7		B+
86.6 - 83.3		B
83.2 - 80.0		B-
79.9 - 76.7		C+
76.6 - 73.3		C
73.2 - 70.0		C-
69.9 - 66.7		D+
66.6 - 63.3		D
63.2 - 60.0		D-
59.9 - 0		F

Questions?

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