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## Shriver Center Releases Poverty Report Card

The [Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law](#), a Chicago-based organization that "leads the poverty advocacy community through a bold advocacy agenda," released a scorecard ([PDF](#)) yesterday that rates congressional votes on significant 2007 anti-poverty legislation.



Image via [dougvasant.com](#)

"We think it's very important to fairly evaluate the performance of every member of Congress," Dan Lesser, an attorney with Shriver [told Chicago Public Radio](#). "Our intent is to circulate this widely."

In the Senate Dick Durbin earned an A+, but Barack Obama didn't vote enough to garner a rating. In the House, most of the Illinois delegation earned a C or higher, with only a handful of Republicans earning D's and F's.

Shriver rated members of congress based on how they voted on raising the minimum wage, making it easier for workers to unionize, increasing the availability of affordable health care to low-income children whose parents work and don't qualify for Medicaid, improving the quality of and expanding access to the Head Start program, and shifting government subsidies from agribusiness towards family farms, and shoring up nutrition and anti-hunger programs.

If a member did not vote on a particular measure they did not consider that vote, and they gave each vote equal weight.

So how did they vote? The breakdown, after the jump.

Bobby Rush (D 1st) 100%, A+  
 Jesse Jackson Jr (D 2nd) 100% A+  
 Dan Lipinski (D 3rd) 93% A  
 Luis Gutierrez (D 4th) 100% A+  
 Rahm Emmanuel (D 5th) 100% A+  
 Peter Roskam (R 6th) 20% D  
 Danny Davis (D 7th) 100% A+  
 Melissa Bean (D 8th) 79% B  
 Jan Schakowsky (D 9th) 100% A+  
 Mark Kirk (R 10th) 53% C  
 Jerry Weller (R 11th) 36% D  
 Jerry Costello (D 12th) 100% A+  
 Jerry Bigart (R 13th) 47% C  
 Vacant (14th)  
 Tim Johnson (R 15th) 46% C  
 Donald Manzullo (R 16th) 13% F  
 Phil Hare (D 17th) 100% A+  
 Ray LaHood (R 18th) 73% B

John Shimkus (R 19th) 43% C

By [Kevin Robinson](#) | [Link](#) | [Comments \(1\)](#) | [Recommend this!](#) | [+](#)

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By [matilda](#)  
[1] | 03/11/08 08:26AM

"Shriver rated members of congress based on how they voted on raising the minimum wage, making it easier for workers to unionize, increasing the availability of affordable health care to low-income children whose parents work and don't qualify for Medicaid, improving the quality of and expanding access to the Head Start program, and shifting government subsidies from agribusiness towards family farms, and shoring up nutrition and anti-hunger programs."

It would be nice if so-called progressives paid more attention to how much these programs costs in the long run. In case you have tuned out, entitlement programs, while popular, are facing serious financial problems, and we've hardly taken a serious stab at solving them. Within 10-20 years, everyone reading this blog will directly face the problems caused by our neglect, with our federal health-care programs probably the first to suffer. If you don't believe me, listen to the General Accountability Office, or any number of groups and people on both the left and right.

So yeah, let's give easy gold stars for all these progressive votes, I guess, but ignore basic financial realities that within a generation might put most of these programs in danger.

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