

# VoteTrac

## EVERY VOTE BY EVERY MEMBER OF THE MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE & SENATE FOR OFFENSIVE OR DEFENSIVE RESEARCH

One of the many innovations brought to the development of VoteTrac (formerly known as The Advance Research Group, TARG) is our proprietary language describing votes. *Journals* of the House or Senate do not make it easy for you to figure out what was being voted on. So we wrote meaningful vote descriptions of every vote taken since 1986.

Here's **Journal language for a vote**: *"On adoption of an amendment (offered by Rep. XXX), in item 4800-0060 to the House Bill, making appropriations for the Commonwealth."*

You might be able to figure out what the line item is and how every Member cast his or her vote; but you'd have a difficult time figuring out what the amendment would accomplish.

Here's **the VoteTrac description**: *"Question was on adopting an amendment (by Rep. XXX), to the general appropriations bill, to increase funding for child care by \$4 million."*

And in a departure from the way most vote databases work, **we crafted a search technique designed to meet the needs of the modern political campaign professional**. Each vote description is coded with as many of our 300 issue codes as are necessary to define each vote.

- See a legislator's votes on all law enforcement votes
- Or a sub-set of the law enforcement cluster, such as a member's votes just on guns and weapons
- How one legislator voted with or against one or more other legislators
- The missed votes of a legislator
- How a legislator voted with and/or against the leadership of his/her party

**We start with the raw votes - taxes in this example - of a fictitious state senator, using VoteTrac vote descriptions.**

**Sen. "Barbara Lynn" on Tax Votes**

---

#1 of 228	Bill # S1497	TOT	DEM	GOP
Date: 2/4/1993		Yeas: 28	28	0
Result: SUSTAINED		Nays: 9	0	9
Vote: SUSTAIN A RULING OF THE CHAIR				

QUESTION WAS ON SUSTAINING A RULING OF THE CHAIR THAT AN AMENDMENT (RAUSCHENBACH/AMORELLO) TO THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY BILL, EXTENDING TAX CREDITS FOR LEAD PAINT REMOVAL, WAS BEYOND THE SCOPE OF THE BILL.

---

Member:	LYNN, BARBARA	Voted	Y
---------	---------------	-------	---

---

# 2 of 228	Bill # S1497	TOT	DEM	GOP
Date: 2/4/1993		Yeas: 8	0	8
Result: REJECTED		Nays: 27	27	0
Vote: ADOPT AN AMENDMENT				

QUESTION WAS ON ADOPTING AN AMENDMENT (LEES) TO THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY BILL, SUBSTITUTING TEXT OFFERED BY THE COMMERCE & LABOR COMMITTEE RAISING THE PROPOSED INCOME TAX CREDIT FROM 1 TO 3 PERCENT.

---

Member:	LYNN, BARBARA	Voted	N
---------	---------------	-------	---

---

# 3 of 228	Bill # S1497	TOT	DEM	GOP
Date: 2/4/1993		Yeas: 10	2	8
Result: REJECTED		Nays: 25	25	0
Vote: ADOPT AN AMENDMENT				

QUESTION WAS ON ADOPTING AN AMENDMENT (LEES) TO THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY BILL, TO REMOVE THE SUNSET FEATURE AND MAKE THE PROVISIONS PERMANENT.

---

Member:	LYNN, BARBARA	Voted	N
---------	---------------	-------	---

---

#4 of 228	Bill # S1497	TOT	DEM	GOP
Date: 2/4/1993		Yeas: 13	4	9
Result: REJECTED		Nays: 24	24	0
Vote: ADOPT AN AMENDMENT				

QUESTION WAS ON ADOPTING AN AMENDMENT (LEES) TO THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY BILL, INCREASING FROM 1 TO 3 PER CENT THE INCOME TAX CREDIT FOR CORPORATE INVESTMENT.

---

Member:	LYNN, BARBARA	Voted	N
---------	---------------	-------	---

---

**Next, we analyze the raw votes. The example below is the narrative on a Senator's economic development votes.**

## **Partial Analysis**

### **Senator "Frank Skeffington"**

#### **On Jobs and Economic Development Votes**

##### **Emerging Technologies**

Although Gov. Romney speaks often about emerging technologies being the future of the state's economy, Sen. "Skeffington" repeatedly voted to override the governor's cuts to programs targeted aimed at supporting such businesses. See votes to restore \$100,000 for the Massachusetts Bio-Technology Research Institute, \$1.25 million for the Massachusetts Math, Science, Technology and Engineering Grant Program, \$20 million for the Massachusetts Research Center Matching Fund, \$5 million to recapitalize the Massachusetts Technology Development Corporation, \$12.5 million for the Emerging Technology Fund, \$7.5 million for the John Adams Innovation Institute, and \$1.2 million for the Mass Technology Transfer Center.

Sen. "Skeffington" favors stem cell research (crucial to the state's bio tech industry) and voted to oppose an amendment sponsored by Sen. Hedlund (R-Weymouth) to strike a provision in the Economic Stimulus Bill (2003) that encouraged such research in Massachusetts.

##### **Unemployment Insurance**

One of the most important issues to businesses in Massachusetts, especially to larger employers, is the cost of unemployment insurance. With the exception of his vote in 1994 to extend unemployment insurance benefits eligibility to certain recipients, Sen. "Skeffington" has been a consistent supporter of efforts to hold down the cost of unemployment insurance premiums as advocated by the Associated Industries of Massachusetts, the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce and other business organizations.

See votes in favor of an amendment sponsored by Sen. Lees (R-Springfield) to a bill to freeze unemployment insurance rates in 1994 (estimated to save businesses \$12 million), legislation freezing unemployment insurance premium rates to avoid an automatic increase, modifying the rate schedule for the unemployment benefits fund (the bill was estimated to save businesses \$100 million in employer contributions that would have otherwise been required based on the jobless rate experience).

# Each Report begins with an Executive Summary

## Senator “Frank Skeffington”

### Executive Summary

#### **JOB AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- Strong supporter of the tourism industry which is of particular importance to his district
- Voted for legislation to facilitate the construction of the Boston Exhibition and Convention Center in South Boston, as well as improvements to the convention centers in Worcester and Springfield
- Supporter of state initiatives to foster regional economic development
- Voted to override Gov. Romney’s veto of \$350,000 earmarked for regional economic development project
- Favored extending the Community Reinvestment Act to mortgage lenders
- Authored the Economic Stimulus Act of 2003
- Voted to override Gov. Romney’s veto of \$500,000 to make loans to women and minority owned businesses in targeted urban areas
- Generally supported public investment in private sports facilities (Yes to New Boston Garden and Foxboro Stadium; No to Fenway Park)
- Supported efforts to promote the growth of emerging technologies and repeatedly voted to override Gov. Romney’s cuts to programs to support such businesses
- Supports stem cell research
- With the exception of his 1994 vote to extend unemployment insurance benefits, has been a strong supporter of efforts to reduce the cost of unemployment insurance premiums to businesses
- Voted for deregulation of the electric industry, but supported union efforts to protect jobs
- Voted for mutual holding company legislation sponsored by the state’s mutual life insurance industry
- Supported targeted tax breaks for defense and mutual fund industries, as well as for domestic insurance companies, to both promote economic activity and to permit Massachusetts to remain competitive with other states
- Voted to repeal the prohibition on the sale of liquor on Sundays

## The analyses become part of a larger Campaign Research Report, a sample Table of Contents for which appears below

### Book I

Methodology	
Executive Summary	TAB A
Vote Analyses	
Jobs	TAB B
Taxes	TAB C
Health	TAB D
Vetoes	TAB E
Education	TAB F
Political/Governmental Reform	TAB G
Local Aid	TAB H
Against Sen. Smith	TAB I
With Sen. Jones	TAB J
Missed Votes	TAB K

### Book II

Raw Votes

**Other vote analyses can include how one Member voted with another – select the most liberal or conservative to learn how the object of your interest votes on or off the reservation**

### Senators ‘Smith’ & ‘Jones’ Voting Against One Another

---

#1 of 147	Bill # S1581	TOT	DEM	GOP
Date: 3/22/1993		Yeas: 13	5	8
Result: REJECTED		Nays: 20	20	0
Vote	ADOPT AN AMENDMENT			

QUESTION WAS ON ADOPTING AN AMENDMENT (BARRETT) TO SENATE RULES TO APPOINT A TEMPORARY BIPARTISAN COMMITTEE ON SCHEDULING.

Member: ‘Smith’ Voted Y Member: ‘Jones’ Voted N

---

#2 of 147	Bill #S1581	TOT	DEM	GOP
Date: 3/22/1993		Yeas: 12	5	7
Result: REJECTED		Nays: 20	20	0
Vote	ADOPT AN AMENDMENT			

QUESTION WAS ON ADOPTING AN AMENDMENT (BARRETT) TO SENATE RULES TO PROHIBIT SESSIONS AFTER DEC. 1 IN THE FIRST YEAR AND NOV. 1 IN THE SECOND YEAR OF BIENNIAL SESSIONS.

Member: 'Smith' Voted Y      Member: 'Jones' Voted N

---

# VoteTrac

## The Instant Campaign