



MASSACHUSETTS LEAGUE OF ENVIRONMENTAL VOTERS

VOTE FOR THE FUTURE

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# MA League of Environmental Voters Releases 2010 Environmental Scorecard

## *Scorecard Reflects a Difficult Session for Environmental Issues*

BOSTON- What a difference a session makes. The 2007-2008 legislative session was hailed by environmentalists as one of the best in recent history. Just one session later, many are calling the 2009-2010 session lackluster for the environment and the Massachusetts League of Environmental Voters (MLEV) *2010 Environmental Scorecard* details why.

The document follows a legislative session in which major environmental legislation struggled for breathing room against the casino bill, ethics reform, and a new transportation bill. Only one major environmental bill was signed into law this session; the off highway vehicle bill (OHV), which put stricter regulations on ATVs and stiffened penalties for riding illegally on conservation land.

“Two years ago we hailed the Legislature for brave, forward-thinking actions,” said Lora Wondolowski, Executive Director of MLEV. “This session was spent struggling to maintain some of those advances and unsuccessfully trying to pass some other important, but less sweeping, environmental bills.”

“While the Governor and some legislators supported and pushed for commonsense solutions such as updating the bottle bill, protecting open space, and protecting our rivers and streams, they ultimately did not move forward. This session had, without a doubt, several missed opportunities to protect our health and environment,” concluded Wondolowski.

The Massachusetts League of Environmental Voters worked with environmental and conservation organizations to compile the priority environmental bills to track during the session. Groups were consulted throughout the session to ensure that the key votes were included. The *Environmental Scorecard* includes a voting total for each legislator. The voting total—based on a scale of 0 to 100—was scored on the number of pro-environmental votes cast out of the total number included. In some instances, bills that did not receive a roll call vote were scored by crediting legislators that signed a sign-on letter. Unfortunately, some major environmental bills like OHV in the Senate did not receive a recorded vote. The total score includes extra points for sponsoring and co-sponsoring pro-environment bills (maximum of 10 points, cosponsor=1 pt., sponsor= 2 pt).

On a conference call releasing the Scorecard, **State Senator Jamie Eldridge** and **Representative Lori Ehrlich** addressed both their records from this past session and the work ahead of them next session.

“I am proud of the environmental work I have fought to accomplish in the Legislature this year, but there is so much more left to be done -- including passing the Safer Alternatives, E-Waste and Bottle bills, promoting clean technology, and securing budget funding for environmental protection and water infrastructure. As the *Environmental Scorecard* shows, being a strong environmentalist in the Legislature is as much about demonstrating leadership – sponsoring legislation and fighting to bring it to the floor for passage – as it is about voting the right way. I’ll continue to be a leader on environmental issues, and encourage my colleagues to do the same, so we can see greater gains next session,” said State Senator Jamie Eldridge (D-Acton).

“It is energy and environmental policy that drove me into politics, and I am proud of the legislation I have been able to work on,” said Representative Lori Ehrlich. “I have a number of proposals ready to go and I look forward to working closely with MLEV for a successful next session.”

Twenty six legislators earned perfect 100% scores (three in the Senate, 23 in the House). The bodies’ averages were 77% in the House and 63% in the Senate. This is a marked decrease in scores since the 2008-2009 session, when the average score in both bodies was 84%. Conversely, the number of perfect scores more than doubled from only 10 last session.

"I am very proud of the contributions the Republican caucus has made this legislative session with regard to the environment," said House Minority Leader Brad Jones. "Massachusetts possesses an extensive array of natural resources that we as a legislative body must work to protect and conserve. Though Republicans and Democrats rarely agree on policy issues, I think we can all agree that this is one issue we must not politicize."

The *Scorecard* also includes an Honor Roll to recognize those legislators that went the extra green mile this session. In particular, Senate President Therese Murray (D-Plymouth) provided strong leadership on a wide range of environmental issues. Other honorees include: Sen. Stephen Brewer (D-Barre), Rep. Thomas Calter (D-Kingston), Sen. Cindy Creem (D-Newton), Rep. Vinny DeMacedo (R-Plymouth), Rep. Lori Ehrlich (D-Marblehead), Sen. Jamie Eldridge (D-Westborough), Rep. Jonathan Hecht (D-Cambridge), Rep. Stephen Kulik (D-Pelham), Rep. Pam Richardson (D-Framingham), Rep. Byron Rushing (D- Boston), Frank Smizik (D-Brookline), and Rep. Alice Wolf (D-Cambridge)

“We urge voters to consider the environment when they vote in state elections this fall,” continued Ms. Wondolowski. “There is still much unfinished environmental business for our elected officials to tackle next January and we need leaders who are willing to fight for our natural resources.”

The report can be seen online at: <http://www.mlev.org/scorecard.php>

*The Massachusetts League of Environmental Voters (MLEV) is a statewide, nonpartisan organization dedicated to making environmental protection a top priority for Massachusetts elected officials, candidates and voters in order to better protect our environment and health. For more information visit [www.mlev.org](http://www.mlev.org)*

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