

THESE VOTES HAVE IMPACTS

Environmental Leadership from Congressional Caucuses of Color



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The 2018 *National Environmental Scorecard* found that the former leadership in the House of Representatives failed to protect our health and environment, and continued to rubberstamp the Trump administration's overwhelmingly anti-environmental agenda. Further analysis of the *Scorecard* shows, however, that members of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) did the exact opposite. Members of these groups, collectively referred to as the Tri-Caucus, spoke out and voted against attacks on the environmental policies that posed particularly adverse threats to the health and safety of communities of color.

ANALYSIS

At a time when President Trump and his allies in Congress consistently prioritized polluter interests over the people that they are supposed to protect, members of the Tri-Caucus have consistently put people first. Throughout 2018, members of Congress within the Tri-Caucus listened to the wants and needs of the majority of people across the country and voted for clean air, clean water, clean energy and equitable access to public lands.

Communities of color and low-income communities bear a disproportionate burden of polluters' unchecked actions and are often disregarded or disenfranchised from the political processes and decisions that affect their communities. As a result, these communities often suffer from higher rates of asthma and other debilitating

Tri-Caucus
Average
2018 score of

90%

LCV's *National Environmental Scorecard*, which is released annually, provides factual information about the most important environmental legislation considered that year and the corresponding voting records of all members of Congress. The *Scorecard* represents the consensus of experts from about 20 respected environmental and conservation organizations who select the key votes on which members of Congress should be scored. LCV scores votes on the most important issues of the year, including energy, climate change, public health, public lands and wildlife conservation, and spending for environmental programs. The *Scorecard* is the nationally accepted yardstick used to rate members of Congress on environmental, public health, and energy issues.



ANGELIQUE ROZELLE, COLORADO

"I have asthma. I know a lot of people with asthma. I want people to understand how important it is that we do something. Oil and gas drilling is not healthy, it is not safe. I haven't lived my [full] life yet. The drilling needs to stop."

Angelique's story underscores the importance of protecting the EPA's ability to reduce methane pollution and hold polluters accountable.



JUSTIN HASELHORST, VIRGINIA

“By the time I’m seventy, I expect to have grandkids or at least grand-nephews and grand-nieces that will be old enough to ask me questions...So how will I answer them when they ask why we didn’t do better? How will I answer them when they ask what went wrong? How will I explain that despite global consensus, despite dire warning signs, we were simply too selfish or stupid to act?”

We must listen to scientists whose analysis was published in the IPCC report and act on climate before it's too late.

illnesses, contaminated soil and water, crumbling infrastructure, under investment, and job loss and displacement. Because of this history of environmental racism, the Tri-Caucus members’ leadership—which was constantly evident in their challenges to the former House leadership’s attacks on environmental protections—was more important and necessary than ever before.

Tri-Caucus members stepped up for communities in 2018, not just in their votes but in leading floor debates,

committee fights, and holding the Trump administration accountable. Tri-Caucus members had an average score of 90% on the 2018 Scorecard, compared to the average score of 45% for all House members and 50% for all senators.

On numerous specific votes, the Tri-Caucus proved themselves environmental leaders. For example, last July, when an amendment that would directly impact low-income communities and communities of color was added to H.R. 6147, the appropriations bill that funds

agencies like the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Department of the Interior (DOI), the Tri-Caucus stood in near-unanimous opposition and helped defeat it. This amendment would have eliminated the Environmental Justice Small Grants program, which helps to ensure that the EPA carries out its mission to equitably protect public health and the environment.

Another anti-environmental amendment to H.R. 6147 would have hindered the EPA’s ability to reduce methane pollution from the oil and gas industry. These standards are a win-win: the climate benefits are estimated to reach \$170 million by 2025 while also curbing toxic air pollutants that contribute to smog and jeopardize the health of nearby communities, especially low-income and communities of color. A November 2017 report from the NAACP and Clean Air Task Force detailed how the toxic pollution from oil and gas facilities cause increased asthma and cancer rates, particularly for African Americans, whose communities these facilities are disproportionately located in.

An additional example from last year was the so-called Blocking Regulatory Interference from Closing Kilns (BRICK) Act of 2017 (H.R. 1917), which would delay public health protections and allow for continued air pollution from manufacturers of dangerous substances like particulate matter, mercury and other toxic metals, and acid gases. In nearly every state, communities of color are exposed to higher levels of these types of pollutants than other communities, which is why Congressman Donald McEachin (VA-04), co-chair the United for Climate and Environmental Justice Task Force, urged his colleagues to oppose the BRICK Act, saying, “If we delay the rule, our families will be breathing dirtier and more dangerous air. We cannot let that happen.” Although H.R. 1917 passed the House, the Senate never took action on this legislation.

Congressional Black Caucus

	PARTY	DISTRICT	2018 SCORE
Senator Kamala Harris	D	CA	100
Senator Cory Booker	D	NJ	100
Rep. Terri Sewell*	D	AL-7	71
Rep. Karen Bass	D	CA-37	66
Rep. Barbara Lee	D	CA-13	100
Rep. Maxine Waters	D	CA-43	94
Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester	D	DE-0	94
Rep. Val Demings	D	FL-10	94
Rep. Alcee Hastings	D	FL-20	94
Rep. Al Lawson	D	FL-5	89
Rep. Frederica Wilson	D	FL-24	97
Rep. Sanford Bishop Jr.	D	GA-2	63
Rep. Hank Johnson	D	GA-4	100
Rep. John Lewis	D	GA-5	97
Rep. David Scott	D	GA-13	86
Rep. Danny Davis	D	IL-7	97
Rep. Robin Kelly	D	IL-2	97
Rep. Bobby Rush	D	IL-1	91
Rep. André Carson	D	IN-7	94
Rep. Cedric Richmond	D	LA-2	46
Rep. Anthony Brown*	D	MD-4	83
Rep. Elijah Cummings	D	MD-7	89
Rep. Brenda Lawrence	D	MI-14	94
Rep. Keith Ellison	D	MN-5	74
Rep. William Lacy Clay	D	MO-1	86
Rep. Emanuel Cleaver II	D	MO-5	97
Rep. Bennie Thompson	D	MS-2	86
Rep. Alma Adams	D	NC-12	94
Rep. G.K. Butterfield	D	NC-1	91
Rep. Donald Payne Jr.*	D	NJ-10	91
Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman	D	NJ-12	94
Rep. Yvette Clarke	D	NY-9	100
Rep. Hakeem Jeffries*	D	NY-8	91
Rep. Gregory Meeks	D	NY-5	100
Rep. Joyce Beatty	D	OH-3	83
Rep. Marcia Fudge	D	OH-11	89
Rep. Dwight Evans	D	PA-2	94
Rep. James Clyburn	D	SC-6	94
Rep. Al Green	D	TX-9	97
Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee	D	TX-18	97
Rep. Eddie Johnson	D	TX-30	94
Rep. Marc Veasey	D	TX-33	89
Rep. Mia Love	R	UT-4	17
Rep. A. Donald McEachin*	D	VA-4	86
Rep. Robert Scott	D	VA-3	94
Rep. Gwen Moore*	D	WI-4	94

Beyond voting against many anti-environmental bills that disproportionately impact communities of color, members of the Tri-Caucus played critical roles as Democratic leaders on committees that impact public health and our environment. Last year, Representatives Raúl Grijalva (AZ-03) and Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) helped lead the resistance to the polluter-friendly chairs of their respective committees.

Now, they are chairing the House Natural Resources Committee and the House Science Committee respectively as they work to take meaningful action on issues that impact our climate, air, water, lands, and wildlife.

As the ranking member on the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Johnson spoke out against efforts to silence climate science and urged her colleagues to take climate action based on the most recent report of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Today, as chair of the Science Committee in the new pro-environment majority, Johnson has held multiple hearings on climate change, which is hitting communities of color first and worst.

As the ranking member on the House Natural Resources Committee, Grijalva worked to hold Republican leadership accountable for their attacks on parks, public lands, and offshore drilling throughout the 115th Congress. He was a tireless leader in the fight to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), which helps fund parks and conservation projects in nearly every county across the country and was finally reauthorized earlier this year. LWCF has helped to make public recreation more accessible to all communities and often creates the only opportunities for low-income and communities of color to enjoy the outdoors. As the chair of the Natural Resources Committee, Grijalva is now fighting for full LWCF funding and to make sure that the communities most impacted by

Representative Sewell entered statements into the Congressional Record noting how she would have voted on roll call votes 153, 243, 246, 250, 257 and 328, which all would have been scored as pro-environment.

Representative Brown entered statements into the Congressional Record noting how he would have voted on roll call votes 198, 199 and 203, which would have been scored as pro-environment.

Representative Payne entered statements into the Congressional Record noting how he would have voted on roll call votes 282 and 284, which would have been scored as pro-environment.

Representative Jeffries entered statements into the Congressional Record noting how he would have voted on roll call votes 282 and 284, which would have been scored as pro-environment.

Representative McEachin missed a number of votes due to a medical procedure.

Representative Moore entered a statement into the Congressional Record noting how she would have voted on roll call vote 328, which would have been scored as pro-environment.

Congressional Hispanic Caucus

	PARTY	DISTRICT	2018 SCORE
Senator Catherine Cortez Masto	D	NV	100
Senator Robert Menendez	D	NJ	100
Rep. Ruben Gallego	D	AZ-7	100
Rep. Raúl Grijalva	D	AZ-3	94
Rep. Pete Aguilar*	D	CA-31	91
Rep. Nanette Barragán	D	CA-44	94
Rep. Salud Carbajal*	D	CA-24	83
Rep. Tony Cárdenas	D	CA-29	49
Rep. J. Louis Correa	D	CA-46	91
Rep. Jim Costa	D	CA-16	69
Rep. Jimmy Gomez	D	CA-34	97
Rep. Grace Napolitano*	D	CA-32	94
Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard	D	CA-40	100
Rep. Raul Ruiz	D	CA-36	91
Rep. Linda Sánchez	D	CA-38	97
Rep. Norma Torres	D	CA-35	94
Rep. Juan Vargas	D	CA-51	91
Rep. Darren Soto	D	FL-9	100
Rep. Luis Gutiérrez	D	IL-4	91
Rep. Albio Sires	D	NJ-8	89
Rep. Ben Ray Luján	D	NM-3	97
Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham	D	NM-1	91
Rep. Ruben Kihuen	D	NV-4	97
Rep. Adriano Espaillat	D	NY-13	100
Rep. José Serrano	D	NY-15	100
Rep. Nydia Velázquez	D	NY-7	100
Rep. Joaquín Castro	D	TX-20	97
Rep. Henry Cuellar	D	TX-28	49
Rep. Vicente Gonzalez	D	TX-15	74
Rep. Filemon Vela	D	TX-34	80

Representative Aguilar entered a statement into the Congressional Record noting how he would have voted on roll call vote 346, which would have been scored as pro-environment.

Representative Carbajal entered statements into the Congressional Record noting how he would have voted on roll call votes 243, 246, and 250, which would have been scored as pro-environment.

Representative Napolitano entered a statement into the Congressional Record noting how she would have voted on roll call vote 321, which would have been scored as pro-environment.



MARIA GUARDADO, MARYLAND

“Me motiva participar con Chispa porque me preocupa la salud de mis hijos especialmente porque uno de ellos padece de asma. Me preocupa las malas condiciones en las que nuestra comunidad vive.”

Maria is motivated to participate with Chispa Maryland because she's worried about the pollution and climate change that will affect her children's health and well-being. This is why we need an EPA that fulfills its mission to use science to protect the health of communities across the country.

Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus

	PARTY	DISTRICT	2018 SCORE
Senator Kamala Harris	D	CA	100
Senator Mazie Hirono	D	HI	100
Senator Brian Schatz	D	HI	100
Senator Tammy Duckworth*	D	IL	86
Rep. Raúl Grijalva	D	AZ-3	94
Rep. Pete Aguilar	D	CA-31	91
Rep. Nanette Barragán	D	CA-44	94
Rep. Karen Bass	D	CA-37	66
Rep. Ami Bera	D	CA-7	91
Rep. Salud Carbajal	D	CA-24	83
Rep. Judy Chu	D	CA-27	97
Rep. J. Correa	D	CA-46	91
Rep. Susan Davis	D	CA-53	94
Rep. Anna Eshoo*	D	CA-18	94
Rep. Jimmy Gomez	D	CA-34	97
Rep. Ro Khanna	D	CA-17	100
Rep. Barbara Lee	D	CA-13	100
Rep. Ted Lieu	D	CA-33	89
Rep. Zoe Lofgren	D	CA-19	97
Rep. Alan Lowenthal	D	CA-47	94
Rep. Doris Matsui	D	CA-6	94
Rep. Jerry McNerney	D	CA-9	91
Rep. Grace Napolitano	D	CA-32	94
Rep. Scott Peters	D	CA-52	86
Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard	D	CA-40	100
Rep. Linda Sánchez	D	CA-38	97
Rep. Adam Schiff	D	CA-28	97
Rep. Brad Sherman	D	CA-30	97
Rep. Jackie Speier	D	CA-14	40
Rep. Eric Swalwell	D	CA-15	89
Rep. Mark Takano	D	CA-41	97
Rep. Juan Vargas	D	CA-51	91
Rep. Maxine Waters	D	CA-43	94
Rep. Stephanie Murphy	D	FL-7	83
Rep. Tulsi Gabbard*	D	HI-2	94

	PARTY	DISTRICT	2018 SCORE
Rep. Colleen Hanabusa	D	HI-1	46
Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi	D	IL-8	94
Rep. Jan Schakowsky	D	IL-9	100
Rep. Katherine Clark	D	MA-5	94
Rep. John Delaney	D	MD-6	91
Rep. Jamie Raskin	D	MD-8	97
Rep. Keith Ellison	D	MN-5	74
Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman	D	NJ-12	94
Rep. Ruben Kihuen	D	NV-4	97
Rep. Jacky Rosen	D	NV-3	94
Rep. Joseph Crowley	D	NY-14	86
Rep. Carolyn Maloney	D	NY-12	97
Rep. Gregory Meeks	D	NY-5	100
Rep. Grace Meng	D	NY-6	100
Rep. Jerrold Nadler	D	NY-10	100
Rep. Thomas Suozzi	D	NY-3	97
Rep. Nydia Velázquez	D	NY-7	100
Rep. Marcia Fudge	D	OH-11	89
Rep. Suzanne Bonamici	D	OR-1	97
Rep. Brendan Boyle	D	PA-13	91
Rep. Al Green	D	TX-9	97
Rep. Gerald Connolly	D	VA-11	94
Rep. Robert Scott	D	VA-3	94
Rep. Suzan DelBene	D	WA-1	94
Rep. Pramila Jayapal*	D	WA-7	94
Rep. Adam Smith	D	WA-9	100

Senator Duckworth entered a statement into the Congressional Record noting how she would have voted on roll call vote 71, which would have been scored as pro-environment. She missed two votes due to the birth of her daughter.

Representative Eshoo entered statements into the Congressional Record noting how she would have voted on roll call votes 390 and 392, which would have been scored as pro-environment.

Representative Gabbard entered a statement into the Congressional Record noting how she would have voted on roll call vote 420, which would have been scored as pro-environment.

Representative Jayapal entered a statement into the Congressional Record noting how she would have voted on roll call vote 420, which would have been scored as pro-environment.

* The Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) is comprised of Members of Congress of Asian and Pacific Islander descent and members who have a strong dedication to promoting the well-being of the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community.

environmental decisions, like indigenous communities and communities of color, are heard.

Last year, Tri-Caucus members also played a critical role in holding Trump's Cabinet accountable. Trump Cabinet members helped push the most anti-environmental agenda ever while they were also mired in numerous scandals. Scott Pruitt, former EPA administrator, and Ryan Zinke, former secretary of the Department of the Interior, had strong ties to polluting industries and misused taxpayer funds. That is why Tri-Caucus members spoke in committee hearings, gave floor speeches, and sent letters calling out these corrupt former Cabinet members for gutting the very agencies that they were tasked to lead.

Grijalva helped lead the fight to demand answers from Zinke on his efforts to attack public lands. He sent several letters to both Zinke and Trump about their plans to shrink national monuments, including culturally important sites like Bears Ears, and to open more public lands up to drilling and mining. Representative Nanette Barragán (CA-44) also grilled Zinke when he testified before the House Natural Resources Committee on his proposal to slash DOI funding. As one of the co-chairs of the United for Climate and Environmental Justice Task Force,

she questioned Zinke on his ties to Big Polluters.

Representative Pramila Jayapal (WA-07), the third co-chair of the Task Force, played a key role in holding Pruitt accountable for his actions. When Pruitt proposed rolling back the Clean Power Plan—the single biggest step ever taken to address climate change—she urged him to listen to the families in her district that would suffer from this decision. In addition, Representatives Ted Lieu (CA-33) and Ruben Gallego (AZ-07) teamed up to highlight Pruitt's blatant corruption, speaking out on the House floor about his abuses of power and misuse of taxpayer dollars.

In 2018, it was heartening to see members of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, Congressional Black Caucus, and Congressional Hispanic Caucus fight back against attacks on our health and environment. We are so excited to see these caucuses grow in membership, with a historic number of members of color joining the 116th Congress. These new members are already strong advocates as part of the pro-environment House majority and are poised to have a major impact on the health and security of communities across the country.

Trump Cabinet

members helped

push the most anti-

environmental agenda

ever while they

were also mired in

numerous scandals.