



# Vern Buchanan

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## Freedom Index 118-2 | Score: 60%

Our second look at the 118th Congress shows how every member of the House and Senate voted on key issues such as continuing resolutions, abortion (House only), Ukraine (House only), and Covid vaccine mandates (Senate only).

### Abortion Services

**Constitutional Vote: Yes | Vote Cast: Yes**

During consideration of the fiscal 2024 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 2670), Representative Ronny Jackson (R-Texas) offered an amendment to prohibit the Department of Defense from paying or reimbursing expenses for abortion services. It would also repeal an October 2022 Defense Department memo titled "Ensuring Access to Reproductive Health Care." Under the policy established by this memo, the Defense Department reimburses travel expenses for service members who travel to get an abortion in another state where abortion is legal.

The House adopted Jackson's amendment on July 13, 2023 by a vote of 221 to 213 (Roll Call 300). We have assigned pluses to the yeas because the right to life is the most fundamental, God-given, and unalienable right asserted in the Declaration of Independence and guaranteed by the Fifth and 14th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution.

### Ukraine

**Constitutional Vote: Yes | Vote Cast: No**

**Cost per Family: \$+2**

During consideration of the fiscal 2024 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 2670), Representative Matt Gaetz (R-Fla.) offered an amendment that would prohibit the use of federal funds to provide security assistance to Ukraine.

The House rejected Gaetz' amendment on July 13, 2023 by a vote of 70 to 358 (Roll Call 304). We have assigned pluses to the yeas because using American taxpayer dollars to provide financial and military support to Ukraine is unconstitutional. Providing foreign aid, including the more than \$113 billion in funding for Ukraine, is not one of the enumerated powers delegated to Congress under Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution. Moreover, the United States should pursue a sound, traditional foreign policy of noninterventionism, based on U.S. national interests and the intent of the Founding Fathers.

## DEI Funding

**Constitutional Vote: Yes | Vote Cast: Yes**

During consideration of a bill to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration (H.R. 3935), Representative Mary Miller (R-III.) offered an amendment to prevent funds in the bill from being used to hire diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) officials or conduct DEI training.

The House rejected Miller's amendment on July 19, 2023 by a vote of 181 to 254 (Roll Call 353). We have assigned pluses to the yeas because nowhere in the Constitution is Congress authorized to allocate federal funding for DEI initiatives. Moreover, DEI is part of the broader Marxist-inspired "Black Lives Matter" agenda and has its roots in Marxist "Critical Theory." The federal government has no business promoting this extremist, anti-American agenda — including in aviation.

## FAA Reauthorization

**Constitutional Vote: No | Vote Cast: Yes**

**Cost per Family: \$872**

The Securing Growth and Robust Leadership in American Aviation Act (H.R. 3935) would reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) through fiscal year 2028. It would gradually increase annual authorizations for federal aviation programs from \$12.7 billion in fiscal 2024 to \$14 billion in fiscal 2028. It would also transfer federal oversight authority over unmanned aircraft systems, which support and control unmanned aerial vehicles or drones, from the Department of Transportation to the FAA.

The House passed H.R. 3935 on July 20, 2023 by a vote of 351 to 69 (Roll Call 364). We have assigned pluses to the nays because of the bill's unconstitutional federal overreach. The federal government should stay out of the regulation of unmanned aerial systems and vehicles, which should instead be managed by local ordinances or (at most) state laws. Ultimately, the Constitution does not authorize the federal government to control or regulate private or commercial aviation. Instead, such matters should be under the auspices of local and state governments, and left up to the market to determine.

## Electronic Identification Ear Tag Mandate

**Constitutional Vote: Yes | Vote Cast: No**

During consideration of the fiscal 2024 agriculture appropriations bill (H.R. 4368), Representative Harriet Hageman (R-Wy.) offered an amendment to prevent funds from being used to mandate electronic identification ear tags for cattle and bison.

The House rejected Hageman's amendment on September 27, 2023 by a vote of 97 to 336 (Roll Call 419). We have assigned pluses to the yeas because the federal government has no authority under the Constitution to regulate agriculture. Furthermore, Hageman's amendment would push back against the United Nations' Agenda 2030, which is inherently contrary to the Constitution. Congress should eliminate all federal involvement in agriculture.

## Migration and Refugee Assistance

Constitutional Vote: Yes | Vote Cast: Yes

Cost per Family: \$+19

During consideration of the fiscal 2024 state-foreign operations appropriations bill (H.R. 4665), Representative Scott Perry (R-Pa.) offered an amendment to eliminate all \$2,548,250,000 of funding for the State Department's Migration and Refugee Assistance program.

The House rejected Perry's amendment on September 28, 2023 by a vote of 121 to 311 (Roll Call 469). We have assigned pluses to the yeas because this program encourages increased immigration, which is a tool of the Deep State to fundamentally transform the United States by deliberately changing the country's demographics, thus radically altering the voting patterns of the nation.

## Prohibiting UNESCO Funding

Constitutional Vote: Yes | Vote Cast: Yes

During consideration of the fiscal 2024 state-foreign operations appropriations bill (H.R. 4665), Representative Greg Steube (R-Fla.) offered an amendment to prohibit funding in the bill from aiding the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

The House rejected Steube's amendment on September 28, 2023 by a vote of 198 to 232 (Roll Call 494). We have assigned pluses to the yeas because nowhere in the Constitution is Congress authorized to allocate federal funding to international organizations such as UNESCO. Such organizations threaten U.S. sovereignty and constitutionally protected freedoms, and the United States has no business being involved in them.

## Continuing Resolution

Constitutional Vote: No | Vote Cast: Yes

Cost per Family: \$13,314

Representative Kay Granger (R-Texas) made a motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 5860, the "Continuing Appropriations Act, 2024 and Other Extensions Act," which would appropriate federal government funding at fiscal 2023 levels from October 1, 2023 through November 17, 2023. Additionally, it would appropriate \$16 billion in disaster relief for fiscal 2024 and extend federal authorization for multiple programs, including certain Medicare, Medicaid, and Federal Aviation Administration programs. Notably, the bill does not include funding for Ukraine.

The House agreed to Granger's motion on September 30, 2023 by a vote of 335 to 91 (Roll Call 513). We have assigned pluses to the nays because Congress needs to cut spending to avoid fiscal disaster. Additionally, Congress' inability to promptly pass a 2024 budget, instead using a continuing appropriations bill that funds the federal government at bloated fiscal 2023 levels, illustrates the breakdown of the federal budgeting process.

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## National Monument Declarations

Constitutional Vote: Yes | Vote Cast: Yes

During consideration of the fiscal 2024 environment-interior appropriations bill (H.R. 4821), Representative Andy Ogles (R-Tenn.) offered an amendment to prohibit funds from being used to provide additional funding for national monument designations under the Antiquities Act. According to Ogles, “In the 8 years that Joe Biden was Vice President under the Obama administration, the Antiquities Act was weaponized for 550 million acres of land. That is roughly a quarter of the land by acreage in the United States. That is a problem that goes beyond the scope and intent of this act.”

The House rejected Ogles’ amendment on November 2, 2023 by a vote of 175 to 244 (Roll Call 592). We have assigned pluses to the yeas because, although the Founding Fathers did not envision the federal government indefinitely “owning” 30 percent of the land area of the states as it now does, they did grant Congress, not the president, the “Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States” (Article IV, Section 3 of the Constitution). As to whether the federal government has the right to ownership and control of a large percentage of the land area of the states for an indefinite period of time, here’s Founding Father Thomas Jefferson’s answer in his Kentucky Resolutions of 1798: “The several states composing the United States of America, are not united on the principle of unlimited submission to their General Government; but that by compact under the style and title of a Constitution for the United States and of amendments thereto, they constituted a General Government for special purposes, delegated to that Government certain definite powers, reserving each state to itself, the residuary mass of right to their own self Government; and that whensoever the General Government assumes undelegated powers, its acts are unauthoritative, void, and of no force.”