



Written by [Peter Rykowski](#) on June 17, 2022

Published in the July 11, 2022 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 38, No. 13

## Congressional Scorecards

Do you know how faithful your state and federal representatives are to the U.S. Constitution?

Article VI of the Constitution stipulates that all state and federal legislators, among other officials, “shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution.” However, when examining our Republic’s history, especially in the last century, it becomes clear that they have rarely followed their oaths.

For example, the federal government routinely usurps powers not granted to it by the Constitution, and Congress has increasingly (and unconstitutionally) delegated its power to the executive branch. This has led to an out-of-control government that routinely infringes on Americans’ fundamental, God-given rights. State legislators haven’t performed much better, frequently acquiescing to federal overreach, abusing their power themselves, and pursuing false “solutions” such as a Constitutional Convention, or Con-Con.



Unfortunately, it is safe to say that many Americans are unaware of their state and federal legislators’ performance. Some don’t even know who their legislators are. How can such individuals hold their officials accountable or promote constitutional governance? Because of this lack of understanding, Congress and state legislators have been able to enact destructive and unconstitutional policies with impunity, sliding the United States ever closer to socialism.

The John Birch Society, the parent organization of *The New American*, is working to counter this by creating an educated and informed electorate, keeping with founder Robert Welch’s prescription that “education is our total strategy, and truth is our only weapon.” Such an electorate, in addition to understanding their legislators’ performance, will elect candidates who support America’s founding principles and will follow the Constitution, and will influence their existing officials to do so. This, rather than a Con-Con, will rein in out-of-control government.

Accordingly, *The New American* has created — and continues to create — effective tools to help Americans hold their elected officials accountable. One of these tools, as many readers might know, is “The Freedom Index,” which is published biannually in *TNA* magazine and rates all 535 U.S. representatives and senators on their adherence to the Constitution. Many have found this index to be eye-opening.



Written by [Peter Rykowski](#) on June 17, 2022

Published in the July 11, 2022 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 38, No. 13

---

However, *TNA* now publishes a new tool, in addition to the “Freedom Index,” to enhance these efforts: “Congressional Scorecards.” These useful pamphlets focus on individual U.S. representatives and senators — rather than showing all 535 of them — so one can more effectively educate Americans on their congressman’s fidelity to the Constitution.

The “Congressional Scorecards” are effectively a reincarnation of the old “TRIM (Tax Reform IMMEDIATELY) Bulletins.” The latter, which displayed the voting records of individual U.S. representatives, along with the cost per household of each included bill, were enormously effective. Since they were inexpensive to print, tens of thousands of these bulletins were sometimes distributed in a single congressional district.

The “Congressional Scorecards” build upon this concept. As with the former “TRIM Bulletins,” they include the cost per household, when applicable. This is effective because it shows Americans how big-spending bills affect them — and their families — personally; they are not abstract curiosities.

The “Congressional Scorecards” also have been enhanced in several important ways. First, they now include U.S. senators in addition to representatives. Additionally, unlike the “TRIM Bulletins,” which only showed how congressmen voted on big-spending bills, the “Congressional Scorecards” include a wide variety of legislation, spending bills, as well as legislation related to national policy, foreign entanglements, gun control, federalism, election integrity, and other key topics.

Last, but not least, the current scorecards can easily be printed out by anyone with a home printer. This is an improvement from the “TRIM Bulletins,” which required printing on legal-size paper.

As stated above, and as implied by the title, the “Congressional Scorecards” only evaluate U.S. representatives and senators. They do not cover state legislators. However, especially in today’s political climate, state legislatures are (at least) as important as Congress, frequently voting and setting policy on key matters such as medical freedom, election integrity, gun control, public education, nullification, and the Con-Con.

It is imperative to promote constitutional governance at the state level as well as in Congress. Accordingly, *TNA* is expanding the scorecards to also evaluate state legislators. This will enlarge the arsenal of tools patriots have available to promote liberty and hold their officials accountable. Readers are encouraged to regularly check [TheNewAmerican.com](#) as this new feature is rolled out.

It should be emphasized that both the “Congressional Scorecards” and the upcoming state-level scorecards are not political tools. Although JBS members are encouraged to engage in politics in their individual capacities, *TNA* and the JBS are nonpartisan organizations and take no part in political activity.

Accordingly, the scorecards should not be used to advocate for or against any candidate or political party, nor should they be distributed only immediately before elections. Rather, patriots should distribute them regularly throughout the year, and should focus on educating legislators and their constituents. If this is done, legislators will either begin voting constitutionally or, because of their newly educated constituents, suffer the electoral consequences.

With everything said above, readers are encouraged to access and distribute the “Congressional Scorecards.” One can find them by accessing [TheFreedomIndex.org](#), or by going to [TheNewAmerican.com](#) and clicking on the “Freedom Index” tab. Additionally, for help finding and



Written by [Peter Rykowski](#) on June 17, 2022

Published in the July 11, 2022 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 38, No. 13

---

printing the scorecards, and for additional advice on how to use them, one can access TNA's "Congressional Scorecard User Guide" at <https://thenewamerican.com/freedom-index/user-guide/>

*Peter Rykowski is a research associate for The John Birch Society, manages JBS's legislative alerts, and is editor of the JBS Bulletin.*



Written by [Peter Rykowski](#) on June 17, 2022

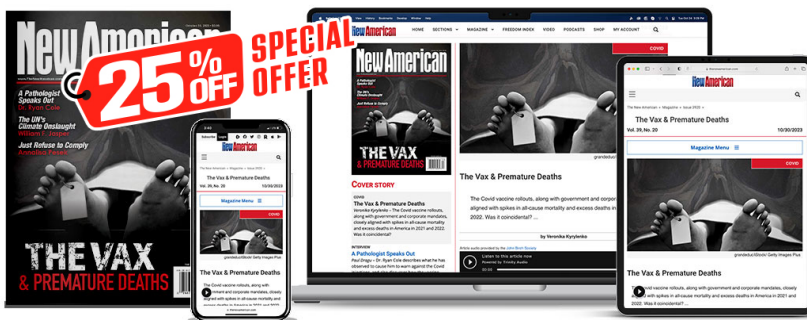
Published in the July 11, 2022 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 38, No. 13

## Subscribe to the New American

Get exclusive digital access to the most informative, non-partisan truthful news source for patriotic Americans!

Discover a refreshing blend of time-honored values, principles and insightful perspectives within the pages of "The New American" magazine. Delve into a world where tradition is the foundation, and exploration knows no bounds.

From politics and finance to foreign affairs, environment, culture, and technology, we bring you an unparalleled array of topics that matter most.



[Subscribe](#)

### What's Included?

- 24 Issues Per Year
- Optional Print Edition
- Digital Edition Access
- Exclusive Subscriber Content
- Audio provided for all articles
- Unlimited access to past issues
- Coming Soon! Ad FREE
- 60-Day money back guarantee!
- Cancel anytime.