



Written by [Billy J. Stephen](#) on April 9, 2026

## Trump Endorses Indiana Senators Despite Low and Mediocre Freedom Scores

At the end of March, President Donald J. Trump issued a [wave of endorsements](#) in Indiana's 2026 Republican primaries, backing multiple state Senate incumbents and challengers following the fight over congressional redistricting. Yet while Trump's [Truth Social posts](#) describe these lawmakers as defenders of "Hoosier" values, election integrity, law and order, and the Second Amendment, their records on *The New American's* state Legislative Scorecards vary widely — from occasional strong marks in some cases to deeply mediocre or low ones in others.



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Indiana State Capitol

Recent reporting shows that Trump's Indiana endorsements were closely tied to the redistricting battle that followed the failed push to redraw the state's congressional map before the 2026 elections. The March 24 [endorsement wave](#) aimed largely at Republican state senators who supported that effort, while earlier and later endorsements targeted primary challengers running against Republicans who opposed it.

### The Endorsements

That wider endorsement slate included [Senator Ronnie Alting](#) in District 22, [Senator Scott Alexander](#) in District 26, [Senator Elizabeth M. Brown](#) in District 15, [Senator Tyler Johnson](#) in District 14, [Senator Mike Gaskill](#) in District 25, [Senator Jeff Raatz](#) in District 27, [Senator Randy Maxwell](#) in District 43, [Senator Chris Garten](#) in District 45, [Senator Daryl Schmitt](#) in District 48, [Senator Jim Tomes](#) in District 49, and [Senator Gary Byrne](#) in District 47. These senators show slight variation in their lifetime freedom scores: Alting at [20 percent](#) (more than a dozen [Democrats in the Indiana Legislature have higher lifetime scores](#) than him), Alexander at [39 percent](#), Maxwell at [42 percent](#), Garten at [43 percent](#), Brown at [46 percent](#), Schmitt at [50 percent](#), Raatz at [55 percent](#), Johnson at [61 percent](#), Byrne at [61 percent](#), Gaskill at [63 percent](#), and Tomes at [71 percent](#).

Taken together, the scores show that Trump's endorsement list was not made up exclusively of the highest-scoring constitutionalists in the Indiana Senate. Instead, it included lawmakers with records ranging from weak to mediocre, even though the endorsement language was uniformly glowing. That is why *The New American's* [Freedom Index and state Legislative Scorecards](#) are so important.



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## Voting Records vs. Endorsements

That contrast becomes clearer when compared with some of the strongest freedom scores in the state. Representative Andrew Ireland at [83 percent](#), Representative Matt Hostettler at [79 percent](#), Representative Lorissa Sweet at [78 percent](#), Representative Zach Payne at [74 percent](#), Senator R. Michael Young at [74 percent](#), and Representative Craig Haggard at [72 percent](#). In other words, several Indiana lawmakers have notably higher scores than many of the candidates Trump praised in his March endorsement push.

None of this means Trump's endorsements are insignificant. In a Republican primary, they may still carry real weight. But they do underscore an important point: An endorsement is not the same as a voting record. Voters who want to know whether a candidate truly supports [limited government, constitutional fidelity, and individual liberty](#) should look beyond campaign rhetoric and examine the actual state Legislative Scorecards, vote by vote.



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