

# Voting Record of the 113th Congress, First Session

We began 2013 with a spirit of hope for legislation across a broad range of issues, including adequate funding to support lives lived in dignity, improved safety in our neighborhoods, and comprehensive immigration reform. However, concern about reelection and gridlock quickly took over.

Both the House and Senate spent much of 2013 focused on funding the government. They still struggle to answer this challenge in a way that is both morally and economically sound. Each passed a budget and proceeded to make appropriations based on its

own spending limit. In the final working hours of the year, a compromise negotiated by Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and Representative Paul Ryan (R-WI-1) was passed by both chambers. NETWORK did not score this final bill, although the House chart shows how representatives voted: "Y" for yes and "N" for no. We could not commit to supporting or opposing this complex mix of provisions, some helpful, others quite harmful.

The Senate made strides to help those at the margins by passing Comprehensive Immigration Reform and

reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Senators attempted to quell increasing gun violence with many amendments, none of which passed. The House was successful in passing the Violence Against Women Act. However, the Speaker refused to bring Comprehensive Immigration Reform or bills to suppress gun violence to the floor.

The House and Senate each passed a version of the Farm Bill, both of which would be devastating to those relying on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, previously known as food stamps). The Senate cut \$4 billion over ten years in their proposal; the House passed a separate nutrition title cutting \$40 billion from the program. Recent reports indicate that SNAP may be cut \$9 billion in the end.

To maintain a spirit of hope that Congress will work to protect human dignity, we need changes of minds and hearts in the House and the Senate. Your work and ours will continue to be critical in the months ahead. We know we are making a difference in turning hearts—but more is needed to do justice for the 100%.

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Marge Clark, BVM, NETWORK  
Lobbyist

## Congressional Inaction Causes Injustice

In the House voting record, we have taken the unusual step of including a column for long-overdue Comprehensive Immigration Reform, which was not allowed to come to the floor for a vote. We want to emphasize that this is only one of numerous important issues that Congress refused to address, including measures to curb gun violence. We will continue to press for congressional action in 2014 in order to correct these failures.

We must also note that Congress passed fewer laws this first session than in other sessions in recent decades. Initial predictions are that 2014 may not be better. A recent study published in The Journal of Politics ("Conditional Status Quo Bias and Top Income Shares: How U.S. Political Institutions Have Benefited the Rich") shows that gridlock tends to favor people at the top of the economic ladder since they benefit from the status quo. Clearly, we have a lot of work to do this year to foster equality and justice.

## Senate Voting Record 2013

### **1. Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 • Vote #19 (S. 47)**

NETWORK supported this bill's VAWA reauthorization for the next five years. It extends protections under the law to include additional groups of victims of domestic violence, including those abused on tribal lands.

Passed 78–22, February 12, 2013

### **2. Amendment to Protect Medicare from Becoming a Voucher Program Vote #48 (S. Amdt. 432 to S. Con. Res. 8)**

NETWORK supported this amendment because the original budget bill passed by the House eliminated Medicare's guaranteed benefits, replacing them with a voucher program. Limits to spending would have been determined each year, making significant cuts to services possible.

Passed 96–3, March 21, 2013

### **3. Amendment to Provide for the Repeal of the Affordable Care Act**

#### **Vote #51 (S. Amdt. 202 to S. Con. Res. 8)**

This amendment to the Senate budget proposal called for deficit-neutral reserve funds to facilitate repeal of the Affordable Care Act. NETWORK opposed it and all efforts to repeal the ACA.

Failed 45–54, March 22, 2013

### **4. Amendment to Provide Tax Relief for Low- and Middle-Income Families**

#### **Vote #52 (S. Amdt. 439 to S. Con. Res. 8)**

NETWORK supported this amendment, which makes explicit that the reserve fund for tax relief provides for low- and middle-income families, and preserves benefits under the ACA.

Passed 99–0, March 22, 2013

### **5. Amendment to Permanently Eliminate the Estate Tax**

#### **Vote #67 (S. Amdt. 307 to S. Con. Res. 8)**

This amendment to the Senate budget proposal called for deficit-neutral reserve funds in order to eliminate the federal estate tax. NETWORK opposed it because the estate tax is a vital component of reasonable revenue for responsible programs.

Failed 46–53, March 22, 2013

### **6. Congressional Budget for the United States for Fiscal Year 2014 • Vote #92 (S. Con. Res. 8)**

NETWORK supported this Senate version of the budget, which replaced sequestration with increased revenue and carefully determined spending cuts. It respects safety-net programs and protects healthcare.

Passed 50–49, March 23, 2013

### **7. Amendment to Provide a Responsible and Consistent Background Check Process**

#### **Vote #97 (S. Amdt. 715 to S. 649)**

NETWORK supported this amendment intending to limit gun violence by modestly expanding mandatory background checks for gun purchases at gun shows and over the Internet. It also called for a commission to study causes of mass violence. While 54 senators voted for this amendment, the Senate had agreed to raise the majority requirement for adoption to 60 votes.

Failed 54–46, April 17, 2013

### **8. Amendment to strike a Reduction in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**

#### **Vote #131 (S. Amdt. 931 to S. 954)**

This amendment to the Farm Bill wanted to strike reductions to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) while reducing federal reimbursement to crop insurance providers. NETWORK supported this bill.

Failed 26–70, May 21, 2013

### **9. An Amendment to Repeal the Nutrition Entitlement Programs and Establish a Nutrition Assistance Block Grant Program**

#### **Vote #132 (S. Amdt. 960 to S. 954)**

This amendment to the Farm Bill sought to eliminate SNAP in 2015, replacing it with a block grant program to fund state-level food assistance programs through 2022. NETWORK opposed this attempt to dismantle an effective and necessary federal program and replace it with state-level programs that required drug testing applicants and mandatory work requirements.

Failed 36–60, May 22, 2013

### **10. An Amendment to Prohibit the Legal Status until an Integrated Entry and Exit Data System has been Sufficiently Implemented**

#### **Vote #152 (S. Amdt. 1228 to S. 744)**

NETWORK opposed this amendment, which attempted to create unnecessary “triggers” to the pathway to citizenship for undocumented individuals. This could have postponed the pathway indefinitely and left many immigrants without real solutions.

Failed 36–58, June 18, 2013

### **11. The Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act**

#### **Vote #168 (S. 744)**

NETWORK supported this bill despite the harsh “border surge” provisions added at the eleventh hour. It creates a pathway to citizenship and upholds our nation’s values of family unity and diversity. It also includes improved workplace protections, clears backlogs that separate families, and provides for refugees and asylum seekers.

Passed 68–32, June 27, 2013

### **Senate Changes during this Session**

William Cowan (D-MA): Term expired July 16, 2013

Tim Scott (R-SC): Appointed to Senate January 2, 2013

John Kerry (D-MA): Resigned February 1, 2013

Jeff Chiesa (R-NJ): Served from June 6, 2013 to October 30, 2013

Cory Booker (D-NJ): Elected October 16, 2013; sworn in October 31, 2013

Edward Markey (D-MA): Elected to Senate June 25, 2013; sworn in July 16, 2013

Jim DeMint (R-SC): Resigned January 1, 2013

Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ): Died June 3, 2013



# House Voting Record 2013

## **1.** Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 • Vote #55 (S. 47)

NETWORK supported this bill's VAWA reauthorization for the next five years. (See #1 in the Senate Voting Record for description.)

Passed 286–138, February 28, 2013

## **2.** Van Hollen of Maryland Substitute Amendment Vote #87 (Amdt. 5 to H. Con. Res. 25)

NETWORK supported this amendment as a substitute to Rep. Paul Ryan's budget. This would include increased revenue from more progressive taxation, stronger support for safety-net programs, and support for economic growth.

Failed 165–253, March 20, 2013

## **3.** Establishing the budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2014 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2015 through 2023 • Vote #88 (H. Con. Res. 25)

NETWORK opposed this plan from the House Budget Committee because it slashes safety-net programs while protecting Pentagon spending. It reduces taxes on wealthy individuals and corporations and repeals the Affordable Care Act. It proposes turning Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid into block-grant programs and cutting funding for CHIP, TANF, child care, child welfare services, child nutrition programs and unemployment insurance.

Passed 221–207, March 21, 2013

## **4.** Nutrition Reform and Work Opportunity Act Vote #476 (H.R. 3102)

Although this bill reauthorizes SNAP through 2016, NETWORK opposed it because it imposes punitive restrictions, including drug testing requirements, on SNAP recipients. It

### House Changes during this Session

Katherine Clark (D-MA-5): Elected December 10, 2013

Edward Markey (D-MA): Elected to Senate June 25, 2013; sworn in July 16, 2013

Jo Bonner (R-AL-1): Resigned August 2, 2013

Robin Kelly (D-IL-2): Elected April 9, 2013

Vance McAllister (R-LA-5): Elected November 16, 2013

Jason Smith (R-MO-8): Elected June 4, 2013

C.W. Bill Young (R-FL-13): Died October 18, 2013

Rodney Alexander (R-LA-5): Resigned September 26, 2013

Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO-8): Resigned January 22, 2013

Mark Sanford (R-SC-1): Elected May 7, 2013

also includes work requirements for all recipients, including parents with young children, eliminating desperately needed food assistance.

Passed 217–210, September 19, 2013

## **5.** Continuing Appropriations Act 2014

**(Official Bill Title: To condition the provision of premium and cost-sharing subsidies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act upon a certification that a program to verify household income and other qualifications for such subsidies is operational, and for other purposes)**

### Vote #550 (H.R. 2775)

This continued appropriations through January 15, 2014, ending the government shutdown and increasing the debt limit through February 7. NETWORK supported its passage, as the shutdown hurt millions of people. It continues funding at FY 2013 levels for most projects.

Passed 285–144, October 16, 2013

## **6.** Keep Your Health Plan Act of 2013 Vote #587 (H.R. 3350)

NETWORK opposed this bill and others like it that undermine the Affordable Care Act. It allows health insurance companies to continue selling plans this year that are outside an exchange established under the ACA that do not meet ACA standards, such as those that exclude preexisting conditions.

Passed 261–157, November 15, 2013

## **7.** Making Continuing Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2014, and for Other Purposes Vote #640, (H.J. Res. 59)

This joint resolution funds the government through the end of the fiscal year. NETWORK was pleased that House and Senate negotiators crafted a bipartisan agreement, but too many negative provisions (including no extension of Emergency Unemployment Compensation) meant we couldn't fully support it. For that reason, we have taken the unusual step of noting in our voting record whether legislators voted for or against the bill without scoring their votes.

Passed 332–94, December 12, 2013

## **8.** Comprehensive Immigration Reform Non-Vote

Many immigration bills were introduced in the House, but none made it to the floor for a vote. We are still waiting for Speaker Boehner to bring to the floor much-needed legislation that creates a pathway to citizenship and protects family unity.







