



General Assembly Freedom Index 2015 Session

January 2016



SCORECARD

This index ranks General Assembly members from highest score to lowest score in terms of the RI Center for Freedom & Prosperity’s judgment of bills’ effects on aspects of freedom. Chamber, district, and party are given, and final scores are based on representatives’ and senators’ floor votes on select legislation. See www.rifreedom.org for additional information, including a more-detailed methodology.*

1	Price	H39 R	-5.0	40	Doyle	S 8 D	-61.4	79	Lima	H14 D	-63.4
2	Chippendale	H40 R	-5.9	41	Corvese	H55 D	-61.4	80	Melo	H64 D	-63.4
3	Roberts	H29 R	-8.6	42	Malik	H67 D	-61.5	81	Shekarchi	H23 D	-63.4
4	Costa	H31 R	-18.1	43	Tanzi	H34 D	-61.7	82	Azzinaro	H37 D	-63.6
5	Filippi	H36 I	-19.1	44	Kennedy	H38 D	-61.9	83	Gallison	H69 D	-63.6
6	Nardolillo	H28 R	-21.9	45	Ruggiero	H74 D	-61.9	84	Keable	H47 D	-63.6
7	Newberry	H48 R	-23.6	46	Ajello	H1 D	-61.9	85	McKiernan	H7 D	-63.6
8	Morgan	S 34 R	-26.6	47	Sheehan	S 36 D	-62.0	86	Williams	H9 D	-63.6
9	Lancia	H16 R	-27.6	48	Pichardo	S 2 D	-62.0	87	Mattiello	H15 D	-63.6
10	Giarrusso	H30 R	-29.5	49	Raptakis	S 33 D	-62.0	88	Kazarian	H63 D	-63.6
11	Kettle	S 21 R	-32.2	50	Jacquard	H17 D	-62.1	89	Ackerman	H45 D	-63.8
12	Gee	S 35 R	-32.5	51	Pearson	S 19 D	-62.2	90	Amore	H65 D	-63.8
13	Reilly	H72 R	-37.1	52	Walaska	S 30 D	-62.2	91	Bennett	H20 D	-63.8
14	Trillo	H24 R	-37.1	53	Palangio	H3 D	-62.3	92	Canario	H71 D	-63.8
15	Nunes	H25 D	-38.9	54	Goldin	S 3 D	-62.4	93	Carson	H75 D	-63.8
16	Morgan	H26 R	-39.1	55	DaPonte	S 14 D	-62.4	94	Craven	H32 D	-63.8
17	Costantino	H44 D	-48.6	56	Algiere	S 38 R	-62.5	95	DeSimone	H5 D	-63.8
18	O’Neill	S 17 I	-49.2	57	Lynch	S 31 D	-62.5	96	Handy	H18 D	-63.8
19	Phillips	H51 D	-49.8	58	Ruggerio	S 4 D	-62.5	97	Johnston	H61 D	-63.8
20	McLaughlin	H57 D	-50.7	59	Paiva-Weed	S 13 D	-62.7	98	Lombardi	H8 D	-63.8
21	MacBeth	H52 D	-50.9	60	Archambault	S 22 D	-62.7	99	Maldonado	H56 D	-63.8
22	Marcello	H41 D	-52.4	61	Conley	S 18 D	-62.7	100	McNamara	H19 D	-63.8
23	Cote	S 24 D	-52.5	62	Felag	S 10 D	-62.7	101	Morin	H49 D	-63.8
24	Hearn	H66 D	-53.9	63	Goodwin	S 1 D	-62.7	102	O’Brien	H54 D	-63.8
25	Barros	H59 D	-56.0	64	Lombardi	S 26 D	-62.7	103	Serpa	H27 D	-63.8
26	Messier	H62 D	-58.1	65	Metts	S 6 D	-62.7	104	Solomon	H22 D	-63.8
27	Fogarty	H35 D	-58.5	66	Miller	S 28 D	-62.7	105	Regunberg	H4 D	-64.0
28	Picard	S 20 D	-59.2	67	Coughlin	H60 D	-62.9	106	Fellela	H43 D	-64.0
29	Nesselbush	S 15 D	-59.2	68	Ottiano	S 11 R	-62.9	107	Naughton	H21 D	-64.0
30	Gallo	S 27 D	-59.3	69	Sosnowski	S 37 D	-62.9	108	Blazejewski	H2 D	-64.2
31	Jabour	S 5 D	-59.3	70	Fogarty	S 23 D	-62.9	109	Diaz	H11 D	-64.2
32	DiPalma	S 12 D	-59.5	71	Carnevale	H13 D	-63.1	110	Satchell	S 9 D	-64.2
33	Hull	H6 D	-60.0	72	O’Grady	H46 D	-63.1	111	Coyne	S 32 R	-64.6
34	Winfield	H53 D	-60.2	73	Abney	H73 D	-63.1	112	Almeida	H12 D	-67.6
35	Ciccone	S 7 D	-60.3	74	Slater	H10 D	-63.1	113	McEntee	H33 D	-76.3
36	Tobon	H58 D	-60.4	75	Ucci	H42 D	-63.2				
37	McCaffrey	S 29 D	-60.5	76	Marshall	H68 D	-63.2				
38	Crowley	S 16 D	-60.7	77	Casey	H50 D	-63.4				
39	Lombardo	S 25 D	-61.0	78	Edwards	H70 D	-63.4				

* Methodology changed to add weight to missed votes, except McEntee.



AVERAGE SCORES

General Assembly: -56.6					
House: -55.4			Senate: -58.8		
Democrats: -61.6	Republicans: -23.0	Independents: -19.0	Democrats: -61.5	Republicans: -43.4	Independents: -49.2

CATEGORIES

Tax & Budget

House				Senate							
Top 10		Bottom 10		Top 10		Bottom 10					
1	Chippendale	-4.0	75	McEntee	-100.0	1	Morgan	6.9	38	Coyne	-69.0
2	Price	-12.0	74	Abney	-77.6	2	Gee	-13.8	37	Satchell	-69.0
3	Roberts	-12.0	73	Naughton	-76.8	3	Kettle	-27.6	36	Doyle	-63.5
4	Filippi	-12.0	72	Regunberg	-76.8	4	Cote	-41.4	35	Fogarty	-62.8
5	Newberry	-12.0	71	Almeida	-76.0	5	Crowley	-57.9	34	Sosnowski	-62.1
6	Lancia	-12.0	70	Diaz	-76.0	6	Lombardo	-60.0	33	Ottiano	-62.1
7	Nardolillo	-28.0	69	Blazejewski	-76.0	7	Ciccone	-61.4	32	Miller	-62.1
8	Barros	-51.2	68	Fellela	-76.0	8	McCaffrey	-61.4	31	Metts	-62.1
9	Reilly	-52.0	67	Solomon	-76.0	9	Pichardo	-61.4	30	Lombardi	-62.1
10	Messier	-52.0	66	Serpa	-76.0	10	O'Neill	-62.1	29	Goodwin	-62.1

Regulatory Environment

House				Senate							
Top 10		Bottom 10		Top 10		Bottom 10					
1	Chippendale	2.8	75	McEntee	-76.0	1	Kettle	-29.6	38	Pichardo	-60.7
2	Price	2.3	74	Diaz	-63.7	2	Gee	-34.1	37	Coyne	-59.6
3	Costa	2.3	73	Blazejewski	-63.3	3	Morgan	-35.9	36	Ottiano	-59.6
4	Roberts	-2.3	72	Fellela	-63.3	4	O'Neill	-44.4	35	Crowley	-59.6
5	Nardolillo	-7.0	71	Almeida	-62.8	5	Picard	-51.9	34	Satchell	-59.3
6	Reilly	-7.0	70	Naughton	-62.8	6	Gallo	-51.9	33	Fogarty	-59.3
7	Giarrusso	-11.6	69	Solomon	-62.8	7	Cote	-55.6	32	Sosnowski	-59.3
8	Trillo	-11.6	68	Serpa	-62.8	8	Jabour	-55.6	31	Miller	-59.3
9	Morgan	-14.0	67	O'Brien	-62.8	9	Ciccone	-57.4	30	Metts	-59.3
10	Newberry	-16.3	66	Morin	-62.8	10	McCaffrey	-57.4	29	Lombardi	-59.3



Constitutional Government

House					Senate						
Top 10			Bottom 10			Top 10			Bottom 10		
1	Roberts	-3.5	75	Almeida	-72.4	1	Morgan	-59.3	38	Sosnowski	-67.4
2	Filippi	-3.5	74	Marcello	-65.5	2	Kettle	-59.3	37	DiPalma	-67.4
3	Price	-10.3	73	Reilly	-65.5	3	Jabour	-59.3	36	Coyne	-66.7
4	Costa	-31.0	72	Regunberg	-60.0	4	Cicccone	-62.2	35	Fogarty	-66.7
5	Chippendale	-35.9	71	Kennedy	-59.3	5	Doyle	-62.2	34	Ottiano	-66.7
6	Newberry	-37.2	70	Hull	-59.3	6	McCaffrey	-63.0	33	Miller	-66.7
7	Trillo	-37.9	69	Diaz	-58.6	7	Pichardo	-63.0	32	Metts	-66.7
8	Fogarty	-39.3	68	Blazejewski	-58.6	8	Lombardo	-63.7	31	Lombardi	-66.7
9	Giarrusso	-51.7	67	Naughton	-58.6	9	Crowley	-64.4	30	Goodwin	-66.7
10	Ajello	-51.7	66	Fellela	-58.6	10	Sheehan	-64.4	29	Felag	-66.7

Public Sector Labor

House					Senate						
Top 10			Bottom 10			Top 10			Bottom 10		
1	Corvese	-75.0	75	McEntee	-100.0	1	Cicccone	-80.0	38	Coyne	-100.0
2	Price	-100.0	74	Almeida	-100.0	2	McCaffrey	-80.0	37	Satchell	-100.0
3	Chippendale	-100.0	73	Diaz	-100.0	3	Pichardo	-80.0	36	Fogarty	-100.0
4	Roberts	-100.0	72	Blazejewski	-100.0	4	Morgan	-100.0	35	Sosnowski	-100.0
5	Costa	-100.0	71	Naughton	-100.0	5	Kettle	-100.0	34	Ottiano	-100.0
6	Filippi	-100.0	70	Fellela	-100.0	6	Gee	-100.0	33	Miller	-100.0
7	Nardolillo	-100.0	69	Regunberg	-100.0	7	O'Neill	-100.0	32	Metts	-100.0
8	Newberry	-100.0	68	Solomon	-100.0	8	Cote	-100.0	31	Lombardi	-100.0
9	Lancia	-100.0	67	Serpa	-100.0	9	Picard	-100.0	30	Goodwin	-100.0
10	Giarrusso	-100.0	66	O'Brien	-100.0	10	Nesselbush	-100.0	29	Felag	-100.0

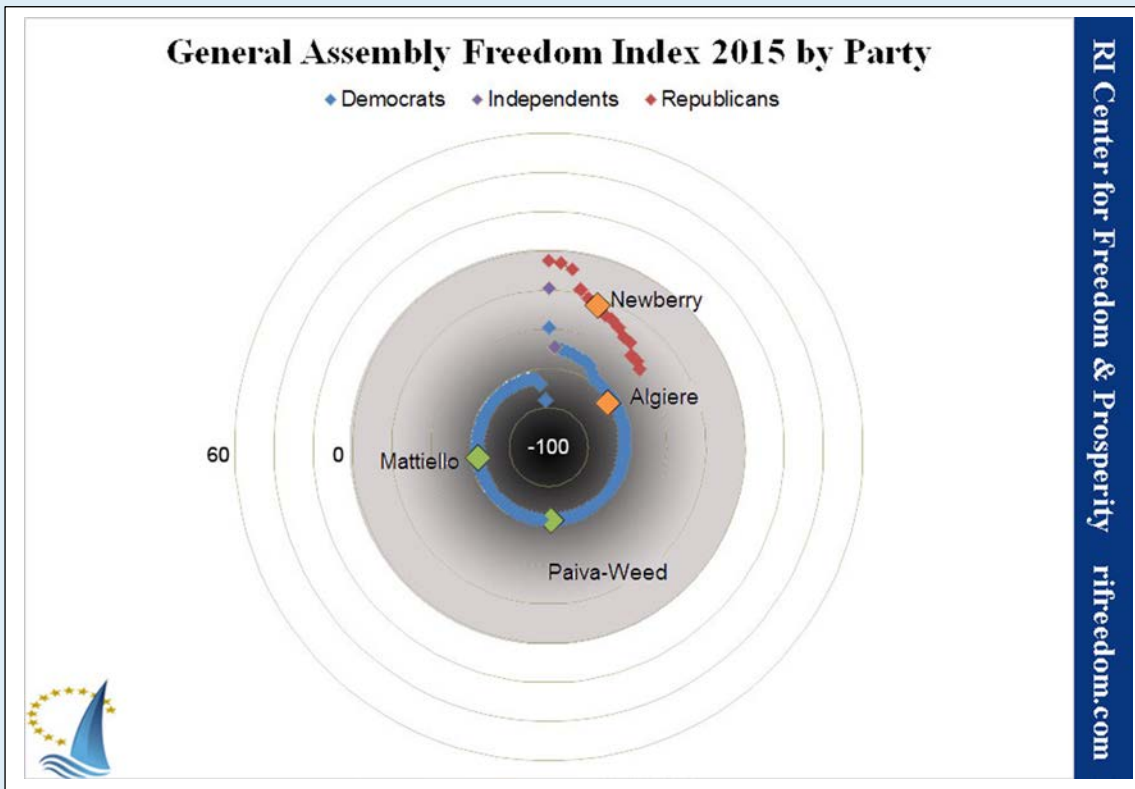
Education Reform

House					Senate						
Top 10			Bottom 10			Top 10			Bottom 10		
1	Chippendale	100.0	75	McEntee	-60.0	1	Morgan	100.0	38	Pichardo	-100.0
2	Costa	100.0	74	Jacquard	-40.0	2	Kettle	100.0	37	McCaffrey	-64.0
3	Nardolillo	100.0	73	Blazejewski	-36.7	3	Gee	100.0	36	Cicccone	-64.0
4	Lancia	100.0	72	Williams	-36.7	4	O'Neill	100.0	35	Coyne	-64.0
5	Giarrusso	100.0	71	Winfield	-36.7	5	Cote	20.0	34	Satchell	-60.0
6	Nunes	100.0	70	Almeida	-33.3	6	Nesselbush	20.0	33	Fogarty	-60.0
7	Marcello	100.0	69	Diaz	-33.3	7	DiPalma	20.0	32	Sosnowski	-60.0
8	Hearn	96.7	68	Naughton	-33.3	8	Crowley	-44.0	31	Ottiano	-60.0
9	MacBeth	40.0	67	Fellela	-33.3	9	Doyle	-52.0	30	Miller	-60.0
10	Filippi	33.3	66	Regunberg	-33.3	10	Walaska	-52.0	29	Metts	-60.0



Legislators' Scores on the General Assembly Freedom Index

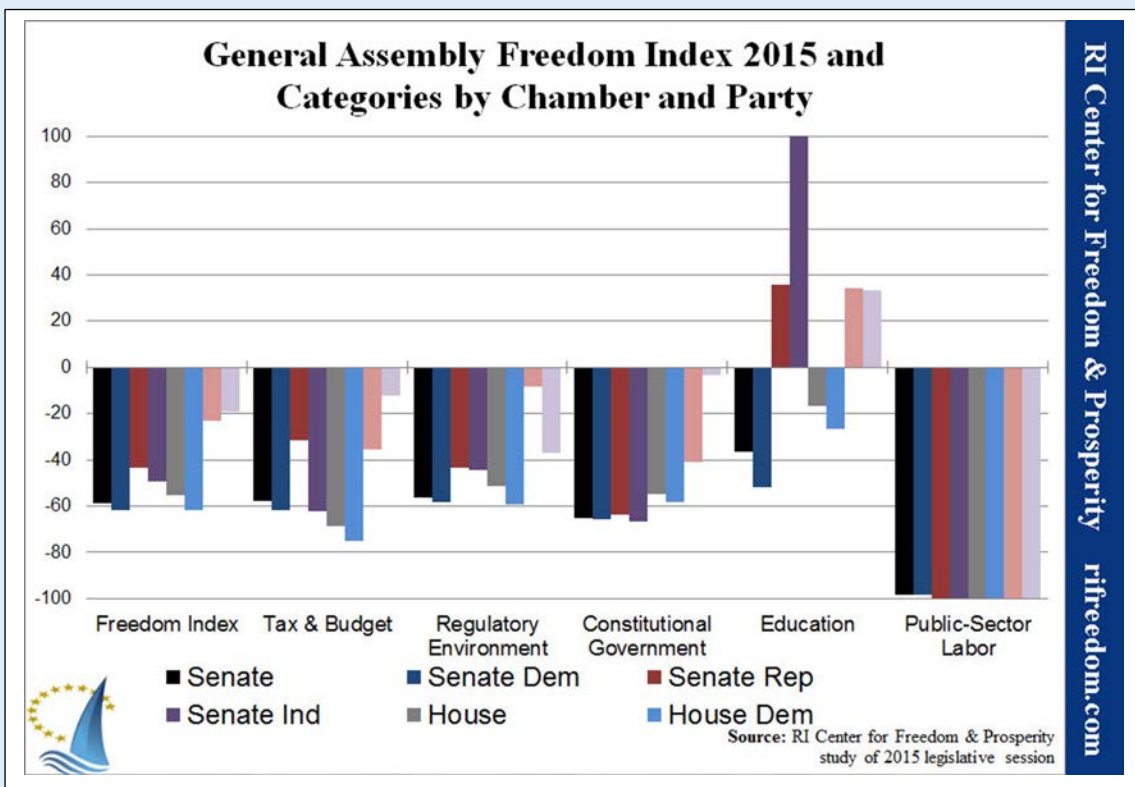
Compared with the 2014 legislative session, Democrats took a big leap toward the abyss, while Republicans took a step back, with new legislators leading the way. Even so, once again, no legislators advanced freedom overall, in 2015.



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Comparison of Chambers and Parties

With the notable exception of education reform, groupings of legislators continued to make Rhode Island a more-difficult, more-expensive place to live, with fewer freedoms.

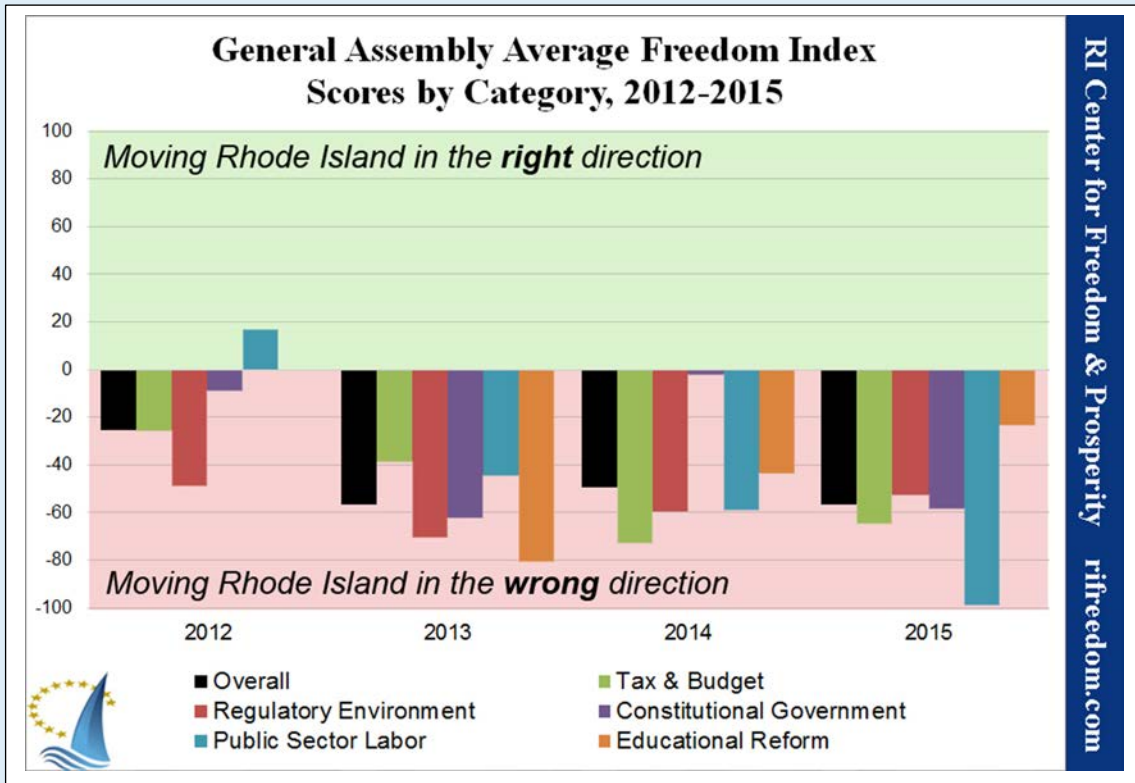


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Trends from Year to Year

A positive Freedom Index score indicates that — on the whole — the General Assembly is moving the state of Rhode Island in the right direction. This chart shows how consistently legislators vote in ways that harm Rhode Islanders’ freedom and impede their prosperity.



EXPLANATION

The third-annual General Assembly Freedom Index by the RI Center for Freedom & Prosperity scores Ocean State lawmakers on their level of support for principles of freedom as proven by their votes on the floors of the House and Senate.

The index examines legislators’ votes in terms of their likely effect on the free market, the size and scope of government, the balance of residents’ interests against those of public employees and beneficiaries, and the constitutional structure of a divided government with limited power over the people whom it represents. The Center reviewed every bill that received a vote by the full membership of either chamber (by roll-call or by

lack of objection for unanimous consent) and selected 99 that fit its understanding of these criteria. (Companion bills only count once.) The resulting scores give a detailed sense of each legislator’s priorities beyond a few high-profile issues. We further divided bills into five categories:

- **Tax & budget:** bills that affect the tax structure in Rhode Island and/or that relate to government expenditures, just driving or relieving the pressure on taxation
- **Regulatory environment:** bills that make it more or less difficult to live and do business in the state by imposing regulations
- **Constitutional government:** bills that affect the structure of the government, as well as the scope of government in its authority over residents’ lives



- **Public sector labor:** bills related to the relationship between the government's employees and itself and the electorate
- **Education reform:** bills that advance or impede the reform of the state's public education system, in terms of both cost and quality

Most legislation has implications for more than one of these categories. For the purposes of this index, we applied our subjective sense of the area of core effect and sorted the bills accordingly. If, for example, a bill having to do with education seemed to us intended to secure the role of public employees, we classified that bill as Public Sector Labor, not Education Reform.

Methodology

1) Determine weighting: Each selected bill received a weight ranging from +3 to -3, as determined by the RI Center for Freedom & Prosperity. Negative weights indicate legislation that creates or expands an agency, government program/function, or tax; creates new regulatory burdens; is hostile to constitutional principles; or otherwise conflicts with the principles that guide the Center. Positive factors were assigned to bills in line with those principles. Companion bills in the House and Senate were weighted identically. To determine the weightings, the Center requested reviews of all chosen legislation from a half dozen engaged Rhode Islanders with similar principles and combined the range of results for a final weighting.

2) Determine vote: Each legislator received a +1 or -1 vote factor, depending on whether he or she voted FOR or AGAINST a particular bill, respectively. Beginning in 2015, legislators who

don't vote "yea" or "nay" on a bill for any reason receive 80% credit for the final result. In prior years, they received 25% for not voting and 75% credit for abstaining.

3) Calculate weighted vote: Multiplying the weighting factor and the vote factor produced a weighted vote score for each legislator for each bill.

4) Calculate the legislator score: The cumulative score for all bills for each legislator determined that legislator's overall score.

5) Calculate Freedom Index: Dividing each legislator's total score by the maximum possible for the appropriate chamber provided his or her Freedom Index, or a percentage of the best possible score he or she could have achieved. In 2014, the "perfect" scores are 99 for the House and 117 for the Senate.

To rank the legislators, the Center sorted them by their Freedom Index scores and then, in the cases of ties, by their scores in each category, in the following order: Regulatory Environment, Tax & Budget, Constitutional Government, Public Sector Labor, and Education Reform. When legislators' results were still identical, the Center adjusted them in order of their apparent stature and power within their chambers.

It should be noted that the complexity not only of the law but of political theory in general can make assessments of the sort described above subjective and very difficult. People reviewing the index should consider the results to be the best judgment of the Center, given our collected experience and expertise.