



General Assembly Freedom Index 2016 Session

August 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	Morgan	H26 R	27.8	40	Casey	H50 D	-64.4	79	DeSimone	H5 D	-68.0
2	Morgan	S 34 R	23.7	41	Melo	H64 D	-64.6	80	Carson	H75 D	-68.0
3	Costa	H31 R	20.8	42	Lombardi	H8 D	-64.8	81	Morin	H49 D	-68.0
4	Giarrusso	H30 R	20.4	43	Sheehan	S 36 D	-64.8	82	Ackerman	H45 D	-68.0
5	Roberts	H29 R	17.2	44	Lombardi	S 26 D	-65.0	83	Johnston	H61 D	-68.2
6	Filippi	H36 I	13.8	45	Almeida	H12 D	-65.2	84	Edwards	H70 D	-68.2
7	Price	H39 R	13.6	46	Lombardo	S 25 D	-65.5	85	Diaz	H11 D	-68.2
8	Pagliarini	S 11 R	13.6	47	Picard	S 20 D	-65.7	86	Blazejewski	H2 D	-68.4
9	Newberry	H48 R	6.8	48	Kennedy	H38 D	-66.0	87	Nesselbush	S 15 D	-68.4
10	Chippendale	H40 R	5.4	49	Marshall	H68 D	-66.2	88	Paiva-Weed	S 13 D	-68.4
11	Nardolillo	H28 R	4.0	50	Ruggiero	H74 D	-66.2	89	Felag	S 10 D	-68.4
12	Lancia	H16 R	-1.0	51	McNamara	H19 D	-66.2	90	Walaska	S 30 D	-68.6
13	MacBeth	H52 R	-3.4	52	McKiernan	H7 D	-66.2	91	Miller	S 28 D	-68.9
14	Gee	S 35 R	-11.9	53	Handy	H18 D	-66.2	92	Regunberg	H4 D	-69.0
15	Reilly	H72 R	-12.2	54	Tanzi	H34 D	-66.2	93	Crowley	S 16 D	-69.3
16	O’Neill	S 17 R	-13.1	55	Satchell	S 9 D	-66.3	94	Pichardo	S 2 D	-69.5
17	Trillo	H24 R	-15.6	56	Fellela	H43 D	-66.4	95	Barros	H59 D	-70.2
18	Gallison	H69 D	-21.3	57	Pearson	S 19 D	-66.5	96	DaPonte	S 14 D	-70.3
19	Kettle	S 21 R	-27.3	58	Jacquard	H17 D	-66.6	97	Metts	S 6 D	-70.6
20	Nunes	H25 D	-31.2	59	Coughlin	H60 D	-66.6	98	McEntee	H33 D	-70.8
21	Algiere	S 38 R	-33.9	60	Ucci	H42 D	-66.8	99	Lynch	S 31 D	-71.0
22	Marcello	H41 D	-48.4	61	Tobon	H58 D	-66.8	100	Archambault	S 22 D	-71.0
23	Palangio	H3 D	-54.0	62	Kazarian	H63 D	-66.8	101	Cicccone	S 7 D	-71.0
24	McLaughlin	H57 D	-54.4	63	Craven	H32 D	-66.8	102	Fogarty	S 23 D	-71.0
25	Phillips	H51 D	-55.0	64	Slater	H10 D	-66.8	103	Coyne	S 32 R	-71.2
26	Raptakis	S 33 D	-56.4	65	Fogarty	H35 D	-66.8	104	Sosnowski	S 37 D	-71.2
27	O’Grady	H46 D	-59.2	66	Amore	H65 D	-67.0	105	Gallo	S 27 D	-71.2
28	Carnevale	H13 D	-59.8	67	Azzinaro	H37 D	-67.0	106	McCaffrey	S 29 D	-71.2
29	Hull	H6 D	-59.8	68	Naughton	H21 D	-67.2	107	DiPalma	S 12 D	-71.2
30	Costantino	H44 D	-60.4	69	Mattiello	H15 D	-67.2	108	Ruggerio	S 4 D	-71.2
31	Cote	S 24 D	-61.0	70	Shekarchi	H23 D	-67.2	109	Doyle	S 8 D	-71.2
32	Canario	H71 D	-61.2	71	Serpa	H27 D	-67.2	110	Goodwin	S 1 D	-71.4
33	Hearn	H66 D	-62.4	72	Bennett	H20 D	-67.4	111	Ajello	H1 D	-71.6
34	Winfield	H53 D	-62.6	73	Messier	H62 D	-67.4	112	Goldin	S 3 D	-73.1
35	Corvese	H55 D	-63.2	74	Lima	H14 D	-67.6	113	Conley	S 18 D	-73.1
36	Solomon	H22 D	-63.2	75	Jabour	S 5 D	-67.8				
37	O’Brien	H54 D	-63.4	76	Abney	H73 D	-67.8				
38	Keable	H47 D	-64.2	77	Williams	H9 D	-67.8				
39	Malik	H67 D	-64.4	78	Maldonado	H56 D	-67.8				

AVERAGE SCORES

General Assembly: -54.1					
House: -51.6			Senate: -59.2		
Democrats:	Republicans:	Independents:	Democrats:	Republicans:	Independents:
-64.0	7.0	13.8	-68.8	-8.2	N/A

CATEGORIES

Tax & Budget

House				Senate							
Top 10		Bottom 10		Top 10		Bottom 10					
1	Morgan	72.9	75	Ajello	-66.7	1	Morgan	36.0	38	Goldin	-76.0
2	Giarrusso	72.2	74	Diaz	-62.5	2	Kettle	15.0	37	Doyle	-69.0
3	Filippi	66.0	73	Blazejewski	-61.8	3	Pagliarini	12.0	36	Coyne	-69.0
4	Roberts	61.1	72	Edwards	-61.8	4	Gee	12.0	35	Miller	-69.0
5	Nardolillo	55.6	71	Johnston	-61.8	5	O'Neill	8.0	34	Conley	-68.0
6	Price	54.9	70	Ackerman	-61.8	6	Algiere	-12.0	33	Goodwin	-68.0
7	Trillo	54.9	69	DeSimone	-61.8	7	Sheehan	-41.0	32	Ruggerio	-68.0
8	Costa	50.0	68	Slater	-61.8	8	Satchell	-41.0	31	DiPalma	-68.0
9	Newberry	50.0	67	Morin	-61.1	9	Cote	-44.0	30	McCaffrey	-68.0
10	Chippendale	50.0	66	Carson	-61.1	10	Picard	-44.0	29	Gallo	-68.0

Regulatory Environment

House				Senate							
Top 10		Bottom 10		Top 10		Bottom 10					
1	Morgan	-0.6	75	Serpa	-78.3	1	Pagliarini	24.1	38	Conley	-76.3
2	Costa	-5.6	74	Diaz	-77.8	2	Morgan	17.2	37	Jabour	-75.9
3	Roberts	-11.1	73	Edwards	-77.8	3	Gee	-13.8	36	Fogarty	-75.4
4	Gallison	-11.1	72	Johnston	-77.8	4	O'Neill	-15.5	35	Felag	-74.1
5	Newberry	-14.4	71	Ackerman	-77.8	5	Kettle	-44.4	34	Satchell	-74.1
6	Giarrusso	-22.2	70	Morin	-77.8	6	Algiere	-48.3	33	Doyle	-73.3
7	Filippi	-23.3	69	Carson	-77.8	7	Raptakis	-54.3	32	Goldin	-72.8
8	MacBeth	-36.7	68	Maldonado	-77.8	8	Lombardi	-65.5	31	Goodwin	-72.8
9	Price	-37.2	67	Williams	-77.8	9	Cote	-65.9	30	Metts	-72.8
10	Chippendale	-39.4	66	Fogarty	-77.8	10	Lombardo	-67.2	29	Ruggerio	-72.4



Constitutional Government

House				Senate					
Top 10		Bottom 10		Top 10		Bottom 10			
1	Price	23.5	75 McEntee	-64.7	1	Pagliarini	-3.4	38 Conley	-65.5
2	Nardolillo	23.5	74 Barros	-64.7	2	Algiere	-10.3	37 Goldin	-65.5
3	Costa	19.1	73 Hearn	-64.0	3	Kettle	-29.3	36 Goodwin	-65.5
4	Roberts	19.1	72 Ajello	-62.5	4	Gee	-31.0	35 Ruggiero	-65.5
5	Newberry	14.0	71 Regunberg	-62.5	5	O'Neill	-31.9	34 DiPalma	-65.5
6	Morgan	13.2	70 Blazejewski	-54.4	6	Felag	-51.7	33 McCaffrey	-65.5
7	Filippi	11.8	69 Edwards	-52.9	7	Cote	-58.6	32 Gallo	-65.5
8	Chippendale	11.8	68 Johnston	-52.9	8	Fogarty	-58.6	31 Sosnowski	-65.5
9	Giarrusso	10.3	67 Ackerman	-52.9	9	Lombardi	-60.3	30 Coyne	-65.5
10	Lancia	7.4	66 Morin	-52.9	10	Lombardo	-61.2	29 Lynch	-65.5

Public Sector Labor

House				Senate					
Top 10		Bottom 10		Top 10		Bottom 10			
1	Giarrusso	100.0	75 Ajello	-100.0	1	O'Neill	12.5	38 Conley	-100.0
2	Roberts	100.0	74 McEntee	-100.0	2	Morgan	0.0	37 Goldin	-100.0
3	Price	100.0	73 Barros	-100.0	3	Pagliarini	0.0	36 Goodwin	-100.0
4	Morgan	12.5	72 Blazejewski	-100.0	4	Gee	0.0	35 Ruggiero	-100.0
5	Newberry	12.5	71 Diaz	-100.0	5	Raptakis	-75.0	34 DiPalma	-100.0
6	Trillo	12.5	70 Edwards	-100.0	6	Kettle	-87.5	33 McCaffrey	-100.0
7	Costa	0.0	69 Johnston	-100.0	7	Cote	-87.5	32 Gallo	-100.0
8	Filippi	0.0	68 Morin	-100.0	8	Sheehan	-87.5	31 Sosnowski	-100.0
9	Garrison	0.0	67 Carson	-100.0	9	Lombardi	-87.5	30 Coyne	-100.0
10	Marcello	0.0	66 DeSimone	-100.0	10	Lombardo	-87.5	29 Fogarty	-100.0

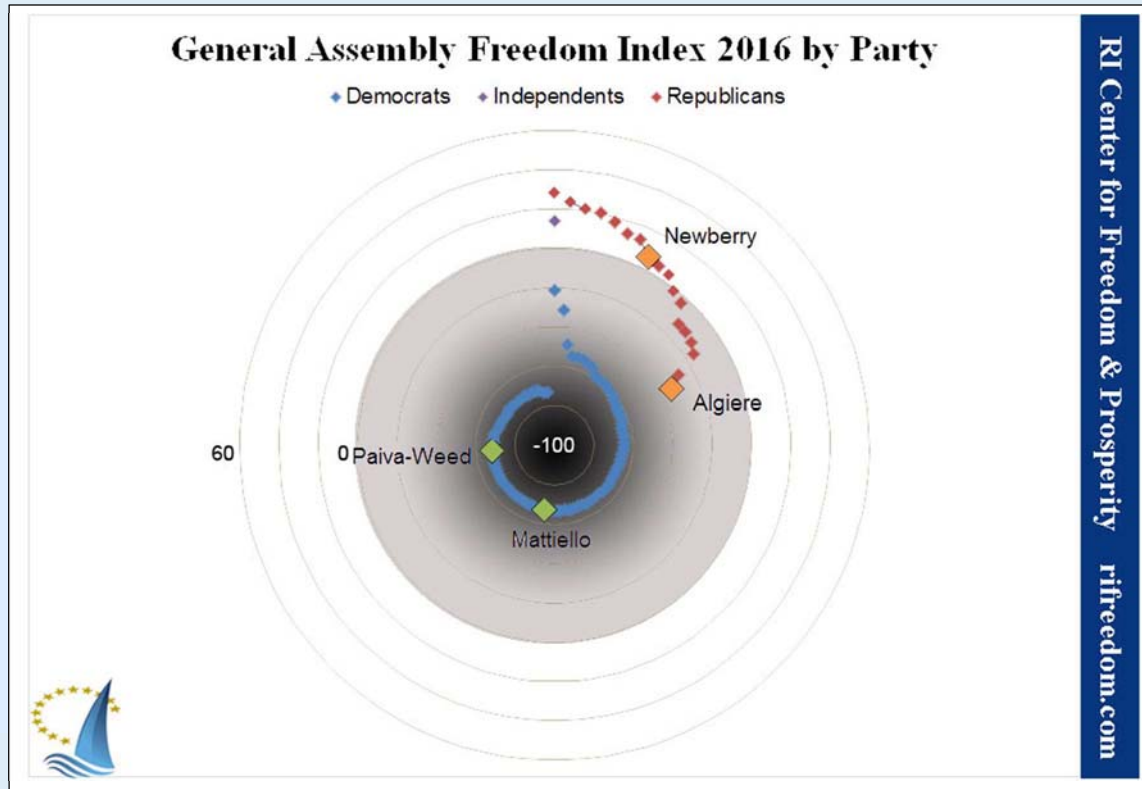
Education Reform

House				Senate					
Top 10		Bottom 10		Top 10		Bottom 10			
1	Morgan	50.0	75 Ajello	-100.0	1	Morgan	100.0	38 Conley	-100.0
2	Costa	50.0	74 McEntee	-100.0	2	O'Neill	12.5	37 Goldin	-100.0
3	Giarrusso	50.0	73 Barros	-100.0	3	Pagliarini	0.0	36 Goodwin	-100.0
4	Price	50.0	72 Regunberg	-100.0	4	Gee	0.0	35 Doyle	-100.0
5	Chippendale	50.0	71 Blazejewski	-100.0	5	Kettle	0.0	34 Ruggiero	-100.0
6	Lancia	50.0	70 Diaz	-100.0	6	Pearson	0.0	33 DiPalma	-100.0
7	MacBeth	6.3	69 Edwards	-100.0	7	Lombardi	-87.5	32 McCaffrey	-100.0
8	Filippi	0.0	68 Johnston	-100.0	8	Lombardo	-87.5	31 Gallo	-100.0
9	Nardolillo	0.0	67 Ackerman	-100.0	9	Paiva-Weed	-87.5	30 Sosnowski	-100.0
10	Nunes	0.0	66 Morin	-100.0	10	Walaska	-87.5	29 Coyne	-100.0



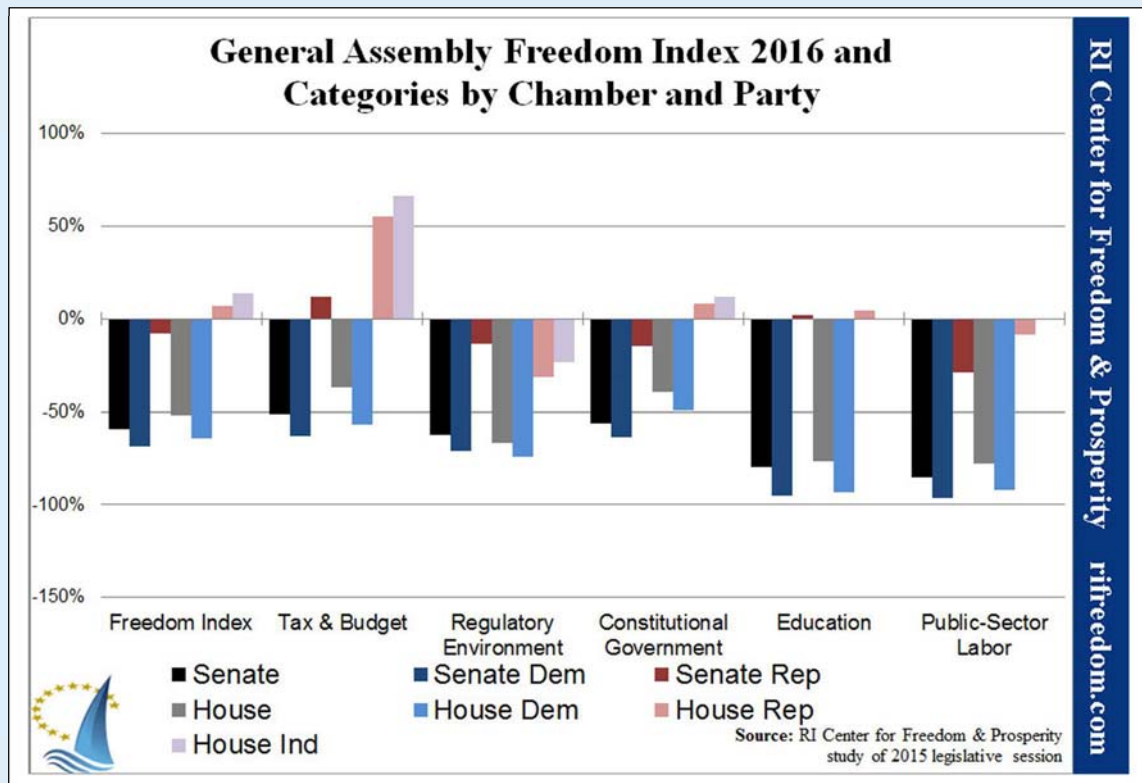
Legislators' Scores on the General Assembly Freedom Index

Compared with the 2015 legislative session, Republicans began clawing their way out of negative territory while Democrats slid. This widening split left positive legislators for the first time since the 2013 session.



Comparison of Chambers and Parties

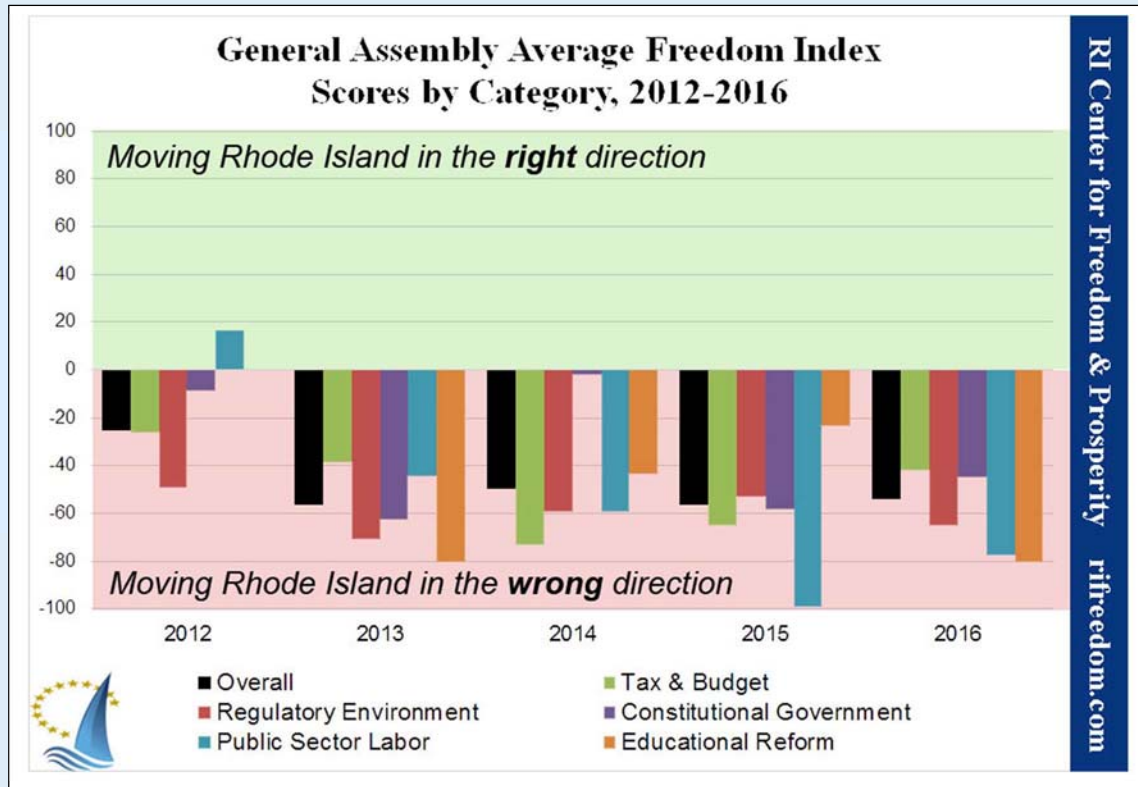
Although the results improved across categories compared with last year, particularly among Republicans, the General Assembly once again made Rhode Island a more-difficult, more-expensive, less free place to live.





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 98 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 75% 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 2016, the "perfect" scores are 125 for the House and 118 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, ranking them lower for ties on the negative side and higher for ties on the positive side.

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.