



Richard Sears

Vermont

Senator, SD-BEN (D)

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2024 VT Legislative Scorecard

Based on the Principles of the U.S. Constitution

The Legislative Scorecard is a nationwide, nonpartisan educational program of The John Birch Society intended to inform voters about legislators' voting records. It does not promote any candidate or political party. Bills are chosen for their constitutional implications and taxpayer costs.

★ Constitutional	✗ Unconstitutional	? Did not Vote	Vote
1. S18 Tobacco Ban (Passed 18 to 11 on 3/21/2024). Targets tobacco and nicotine use through extensive regulatory measures.			NO ★
2. S259 Climate Superfund Act (Passed 26 to 3 on 4/2/2024). Requires "compensatory" payments from entities involved in fossil fuel extraction or petroleum refining.			YES ✗
3. S209 Ghost Guns (Passed 26 to 3 on 2/28/2024). Expands regulations on firearms purchases, possession, and serial numbers.			YES ✗
4. H289 Renewable Energy Standard (Passed 21 to 8 on 6/17/2024). Requires "compensatory" payments from entities involved in fossil fuel extraction or petroleum refining.			NONE ?
5. H887 Education Taxation (Passed 22 to 7 on 6/17/2024). Expands taxation on, and DEI in, public education and equal opportunity programs.			NONE ?
6. H706 Farming Restrictions (Passed 25 to 2 on 4/26/2024). Expands neonicotinoid pesticide regulations for farmers.			YES ✗

Scorecard Votes: 25%



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\$294,238

U.S. National Debt Per Household as of July 21, 2026

Why do these votes matter?

1. Tobacco Ban

S18 bans the retail sale of flavored cigarettes, e-cigarettes, e-liquids, tobacco substitutes, and specifically menthol-flavored tobacco products. It mandates that all retail sales of these products require a license, prohibits sales to individuals under 21, and bans vending machine and internet sales to non-licensed entities.

The Vermont Senate passed S18 on March 21, 2024 by a vote of 18 to 11. We have assigned minuses to the yeas because "public health," including "anti-smoking initiatives," is not the purpose of government. An individual's non-injurious personal decisions over what they choose to eat, drink, or consume should not be criminalized, but instead considered private matters not under federal, state, or local jurisdiction.

2. Climate Superfund Act

S259 creates a "Climate Superfund Cost Recovery Program" to require "compensatory" payments from entities involved in fossil fuel extraction or petroleum refining. This law mandates the development of a "Resilience Implementation Strategy" by the Agency of Natural Resources.

The Vermont Senate passed S259 on April 2, 2024 by a vote of 26 to 3. We have assigned pluses to the nays because this bill expands government control under the guise of the "climate change" hoax, and seeks to implement provisions of the United Nations' Agenda 2030 into state law. Vermont must end the war on energy that will further threaten free-market enterprise, reduce our standard of living, and compromise our infrastructure.

3. Ghost Guns

S209, the "Vermont Ghost Guns Act," introduced regulations on unserialized firearms, frames, and receivers. It enacted new laws to prohibit the possession, transfer, or manufacture of firearms, frames, or receivers without a serial number. Additionally, it extended a mandatory 72-hour waiting period for firearm transfers and prohibited firearms at polling places.

The Vermont Senate passed S209 on February 28, 2024 by a vote of 26 to 3. We have assigned pluses to the nays because the fundamental right of the American people to keep and bear arms is protected by the U.S. Constitution, particularly in the 2nd, 9th, and 10th Amendments, and should not be infringed. The Constitution does not limit citizens from manufacturing a firearm.

4. Renewable Energy Standard

H289 amends Vermont's "Renewable Energy Standard" to expand the state's renewable energy programs, increasing the renewable energy requirement for retail electricity providers to 63% starting in 2025, with a goal to reach 100% by 2035 for most providers.

The Vermont Senate passed H289 on June 17, 2024 by a vote of 21 to 8. We have assigned pluses to the nays because it creates more government interference in the economy and advances the Marxist climate-change agenda. Businesses should have the freedom to conduct business without the government meddling in their affairs by setting unrealistic and costly regulations.

5. Education Taxation

H887 creates "the Commission on the Future of Public Education in Vermont", which is tasked with ensuring "equitable educational opportunities". This legislation also raises property-tax rates for 2025, and also introduces a new 3% surcharge on short-term rentals, with the revenue going into the Education Fund.

The Vermont Senate passed H887 on June 17, 2024 by a vote of 22 to 7. We have assigned pluses to the nays because this legislation raises taxes and expands government involvement in education and imposes DEI ideology in schools. We encourage all parents to get their children out of the government school system and instead pursue sound alternatives such as homeschooling and patriotic private schools, where government funds are not involved.

6. Farming Restrictions

H706 bans the use of neonicotinoid pesticides, and prohibits outdoor application of neonicotinoids during bloom periods for specified crops and on ornamental plant. It also mandates the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets to develop best management practices for neonicotinoids.

The Vermont Senate passed H706 on April 26, 2024 by a vote of 25 to 2. We have assigned pluses to the nays because it expands government control over agriculture and increasing regulatory oversight on farmers. This legislation infringes on free-market principles and property rights by forcing growers to comply with government-imposed standards rather than allowing market-driven quality control. "Public health" and environmentalism are not the purpose of government.