



April 21, 2008

John McCain's Record on Energy and Global Warming: Support for Big Oil, Opposition to Renewable Energy

Voting against the environment

McCain Receives “0” on League of Conservation Voters 2007 Scorecard. The League of Conservation Voters rates senators and representatives on the most critical environmental votes, with scores ranging from 100 – voting with the environment every time – to 0 for voting against the environment on every vote. Absences count as a vote against the environment since the legislator did not cast a vote for the environment. In 2007, Sen. McCain missed all 15 critical environmental votes in the Senate, so he received a “0.” [[LCV, 2/08](#)]

McCain Opposes Three Fourths of Environmental Votes: Sen. McCain has a lifetime LCV score of 24%. Even if one excludes his 2007 missed votes, his lifetime score only rises to 26%. [[LCV Scorecard, 2007](#), [LCV Scorecard 2006](#)]

Support For Big Oil

McCain Accepted \$291,658 from Big Oil in 2007. On average, senators voting for big oil tax breaks and against incentives for renewable energy and efficiency in 2007 received \$195,973 in campaign donations from the oil industry during this decade. In 2007 alone, Sen. McCain received \$291,658 from the oil and gas industry. McCain missed all three critical clean energy votes in 2007. His absences aided big oil because opponents of oil industry tax breaks needed a super majority of sixty votes to pass the provision to close the loopholes, regardless of the number of Senators who voted. In other words, an absence was the same as voting against shifting money from big oil tax breaks to incentives for clean energy. [[4/09/08](#)]

Spokesman Said McCain Would Have Voted With Big Oil According to Forbes.com, “Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., was not present for the voting because he is on the presidential campaign trail. However, a spokesperson said that he would not have supported breaking the filibuster.” [Forbes.com, [12/13/07](#)]

McCain Missed Opportunity To End Big Oil Tax Breaks to Invest in Clean Energy In 2007, McCain was the only senator who failed to vote on a motion to invoke cloture (thus limiting debate) on the Energy Independence and Security Act. This vote was about whether to close \$13 billion in tax breaks for major oil and gas companies to invest in new clean energy technologies such as wind and solar, and efficiency. Sixty votes required for passage. The motion was rejected 59-40. [CQ.com; HR 6, Vote #425, [12/13/07](#)]

McCain Tax Plan Huge Windfall for ExxonMobil, others. Sen. McCain recently proposed to cut the corporate tax rate from 35% to 25%. This would have reduced ExxonMobil and ConocoPhillips taxes by \$1.2 billion each in 2007. It would have saved Chevron \$480 million in 2007. [[March 27, 2008](#)]

Gas Tax Holiday Would Hike Oil Prices. On April 15th, 2008, Sen. McCain a three month gas tax holiday. He would suspend the federal gasoline tax of 18.4 cents per gallon from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Economists believe that lowering gasoline prices this way could stimulate more demand. Since oil refinery capacity is limited, this could further drive prices up. "The problem is that lowering gasoline prices at the pump would encourage more consumption. So in the long run, it would push prices up." [[New York Times, 4/15/08](#)]



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McCain is officially inducted into the Petroleum Club. In addition to targeting campaign fund-raising efforts towards the oil industry, with a \$1000-a-head roundtable at the Denver Petroleum Club on March 27, 2008, several of his campaign aides are former oil industry lobbyists. [[3/27/08](#)]

McCain Repeatedly Voted Against American Consumers and for Rich Oil Companies. In 2005, McCain twice voted against legislation that would have temporarily taxed oil company profits and provided consumers with a tax credit. [Senate Roll Call Vote #341, [11/17/05](#); Senate Roll Call Vote #331, [11/17/05](#)]

McCain Voted To Open Enormous Coastal Areas To Drilling. In 2001, Sen. McCain also voted against protection from oil drilling for six million acres off of Florida's Gulf of Mexico coast. In 2006, he voted to open 8 million acres – an area the size of Maryland – off Florida's Gulf coast. [[7/12/01](#); [LCV Scorecard, 2006](#)]

McCain Voted To Drill Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Crucial Showdown. Sen. McCain has made much of his opposition to drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, America's home to its only wild polar bear population. Yet in a crucial showdown on December 21, 2005, he voted to consider, rather than block, the Defense Appropriations bill that contained an Arctic drilling provision. Sen. Ted Stevens R-AK added it to the final bill at the last minute even though it wasn't in earlier versions. A cloture vote to end debate on the bill failed 56-44, so Stevens was forced to remove the drilling provision. The bill passed without it later that day. [[How he's voted: Energy and Global Warming](#)]

McCain Said US Dependence on Foreign Oil Was A Security Threat, Yet He Voted Against Reducing that Dependence. In 2005, McCain voted against legislation calling on the President to submit a plan to reduce foreign petroleum imports by 40 percent. [Senate Roll Call Vote #140, [6/16/05](#)]

McCain Called Handouts to Big Business, Oil Companies 'Irresponsible.' McCain: "[The 2005 Energy Bill] does little to address the immediate energy crisis we face in this country. The handouts to big business and oil companies are irresponsible and will be disastrous for people of Arizona. I cannot in good conscience, vote to pass legislation that does not adequately address issues related to energy efficiency, security, and energy independence," [Statement, Office of Senator McCain, 6/28/2005]

McCain Once Called for End to Tax Breaks for Oil and Gas Companies. In a 2000 pledge on tax cuts, McCain claimed that he would help pay for the policy by closing loopholes for the oil industry, among other special interests. "'Every tax dollar now wasted on special breaks for oil companies, ethanol giants, insurance companies and the multitude of other special interests with their armies of lobbyists, is now at risk,'" McCain said." [CNN, [1/00](#)]

Voting Against Clean Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

McCain Skipped Vote on Green Tax Credits in Stimulus Package. In the 2008 Recovery Rebates and Economic Stimulus for the American People Act the Senate included provisions to renew and extend the Production Tax Credit and Investment Tax credit for power companies, businesses, and individuals who employ wind, geothermal, solar and other types of renewable electricity. The February 6, 2008, Senate vote failed to invoke cloture by one vote, and the Senate was forced to drop the renewable electricity incentives. Sen. McCain *was the only senator to miss the vote*. He indicated that he would have voted against the package with the extension of the renewable electricity incentives. [[2/6/08](#); Washington Post, [2/7/08](#)]



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McCain Skipped Vote on Renewable Energy In 2007, McCain skipped a vote on a motion to invoke cloture (thus limiting debate) on Energy Independence and Security Act, which included fuel economy, energy efficiency and renewable fuels provisions. The controversial issue in the Senate was the House passed provision to require electric utilities to produce at least 15 percent of their electricity from renewable energy sources by 2020. The previously mentioned clean energy tax package was also an issue. Sixty votes required for passage. Sen. McCain was the only one of five senators then running for president who missed the vote. The motion was rejected 53-42. [HR 6, [Vote #416](#), [12/07/07](#)]

McCain Skipped Vote to Establish \$32.1B of Tax Incentives for Renewable Energy and Efficiency. In 2007, McCain failed to vote on a motion to invoke cloture (thus limiting debate) on an amendment by Sens. Baucus (D-MT) and Grassley (R-IA) amendment would establish \$32.1 billion of tax incentives for alternative energy sources. The amendment would have provided tax incentives for more energy efficiency and the development of carbon capture and storage technology to reduce global warming pollution from power plants. It would have paid for these tax incentives with savings from closing oil company tax loopholes and recovering unpaid royalties from oil and gas production in federal waters in the Gulf of Mexico. Sixty votes required for passage. Motion rejected 57-36: R 10-34; D 45-2 (ND 41-1, SD 4-1); I 2-0. [HR 6, [Vote #223](#), [6/21/07](#)] NOTE: Sen. Reid switched his vote from “yes” to “no” to protect his ability to conduct a revote.

McCain Opposes Renewable Electricity A renewable electricity standard would require utilities to generate a certain portion of their electricity from wind, solar, geothermal, and other renewable energy sources. Twenty six states, including Arizona, have such requirements. In 2002 and 2005, there were to require utilities nationwide to generate 10% or 20% of their electricity from renewable energy resources. Sen. McCain voted against renewable electricity every time.

[2005](#)

[2002](#): Voted against 20% requirement:

[2002](#) (Vote 55): Voted to gut 10% requirement:

[2002](#) (Vote 59): voted to gut 10% requirement:

McCain Voted Against Important Efficiency Standards. In 2002, Sen. McCain voted against an amendment by Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) that would have restored a standard to require a 30 percent increase in efficiency for air conditioners. It would have saved consumers \$1 billion on their electric bills, reduced energy use enough to avoid construction of 45 new power plants, and reduced greenhouse gases by 2.5 million metric tons. President Bush had blocked this rule, and Sen. McCain’s vote supported him. [[4/25/02](#)]

McCain Has No Plan To Increase Energy Efficiency. Though a recent study by McKinsey & Co. found that the best way to make deep cuts in carbon emissions is to improve energy efficiency of buildings, appliances, and other energy consumers, McCain’s understanding of the problem is woefully lacking. He has proposed a program of “energy audits,” a system Dr. Romm, calls “a weak, uncoordinated, narrowly-targeted action. They will barely have any impact when it comes to large commercial users who can already afford them.” [Dr. Romm, Salon, [2/8/08](#)]

A Weak Record on Fighting Global Warming



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McCain's Conservative Judges Will Roll Back Necessary Climate Change Legislation. McCain has repeatedly promised to appoint “strict constructionist... [judges]...of the character and quality of Justices Roberts and Alito.” Yet as Dr. Joseph Romm, former Deputy Assistant Secretary at the U.S. Department of Energy warned, “the conservative justices almost thwarted the majority in the landmark Massachusetts v. EPA case, in which the court decided 5-4 that the EPA has the authority and responsibility to regulate carbon dioxide as a pollutant.” [CPAC speech, [2/7/08](#); Salon, [2/8/08](#)]

McCain Won't Support Global Warming Solutions Without Huge Role for Nukes. Sen. McCain was recently asked about the Lieberman-Warner Climate Security Act, which would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 18% by 2020, and 62% by 2050. This level of reductions is within the range recommended by scientists to avoid the worst impacts of global warming. He said that “I will support [it] if we have a dramatically increased role for nuclear power...Nuclear power has got to be a very big part of any effective action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.” [[Bloomberg TV, 04/17.2008](#)]

McCain-Lieberman Emissions Cuts Are Weak. McCain's Climate Stewardship and Innovation Act, S. 280, would cut greenhouse gas emissions by 13% by 2020, and by 50% by 2050. This level of emissions reductions was deemed valuable when the bill was first introduced in 2003, but new scientific urgency since then has overtaken it. Its lower level of reductions would probably fail to stave off the worst impacts of global warming. The reductions are less than the Lieberman-Warner Climate Security Act, S. 2191. [NRDC Legislation Fact Sheet, [Jan. 2008](#)]

McCain Boasts of Global Warming Record, But Solutions Are Absent From His Website. The “Environment” page of the “issues” category of his website acknowledges the importance of limiting carbon emissions, but gives no specific policy that he would advocate to do so. [McCain's [website](#)]

McCain's Climate Message Is “Bush-Lite” And “Insubstantial.” Michael Shank, of the Foreign Policy in Focus think tank, said that McCain's climate message is “not only Bush-lite, but also insubstantial.” Shank pointed out that “their approaches are strikingly similar and sadly unassertive: let innovation, technology, and the free market solve the problem. According to both, business will lead and the greening of America will follow.” Shank pointed out, “The only main difference between the two is that Bush would rely on ethanol subsidies to reduce U.S. dependence on foreign oil while for McCain leans heavily toward nuclear energy.” [Foreign Policy in Focus, [1/15/08](#)]