



MIRS Capitol Capsule

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Gosselin Most Conservative, Vagnozzi Most Liberal

Term-limited Rep. Bob GOSELIN (R-Troy) regained his title as the most conservative member in the House in 2006, beating out former King Conservative Rep. Jack HOOGENDYK (R-Kalamazoo) and Rep. Rick BAXTER (R-Hanover).

And in a surprise result, Rep. Aldo VAGNOZZI (D-Farmington Hills) slipped past reigning King Liberal Rep. Steve TOBOCMAN (D-Detroit) by one vote to become the most liberal member of the House in 2006, according to the members' roll call votes on 41 select House votes compiled by MIRS with technical assistance provided by www.michiganvotes.org.

Gosselin scored a perfect 100 percent conservative while Hoogendyk and Baxter each recorded three liberal votes to put them at a 92.68 ranking. Interestingly, Baxter, who was defeated in a competitive race in Jackson, featured the caucus' second-highest conservative ranking while Rep. Leslie MORTIMER (R-Horton), who also was defeated in another competitive Jackson County race, ended up with the caucus' second-highest liberal voting record.

The most liberal Republican of 2006 ended up being Rep. Tory ROCCA (R-Sterling Heights), the son of two former moderate (D and R) lawmakers from southern Macomb County, who finished with a 60.98 percent ranking.

Gosselin said 2006 demanded conservative votes in the Legislature as Michigan tried to appeal to job providers with a low tax structure and a limited regulatory environment.

"I wear it like a badge of honor," said Gosselin of his "Most Conservative ranking."

Vagnozzi said he was surprised by his

"Most Liberal" ranking, but noted that the out-going Republican leadership put up a lot of votes during the lame duck session that demanded "no" votes. Regardless of his ranking, he said he's proud of his voting record is always willing to discuss it with his constituents.

"If you explain your reasons, most people will accept it," Vagnozzi said. "They want you to do the best you can in voting your conscience, and, generally, my community has been supportive."

Vagnozzi's missed a 100 percent liberal score by voting against a bill that would have allowed Kent County to collect a 2 percent hotel tax for marketing and promotions. Tobocman, Rep. Morris HOOD III (D-Detroit) and Rep. Andy MEISNER (D-Ferndale) missed tying Vagnozzi by one vote, each scoring above 95 percent on the liberal ranking.

Not surprisingly, the Democratic members in the more competitive districts were the most conservative. Rep. John ESPINOZA (D-Croswell) and Rep. Joel SHELROWN (D-West Branch) each had a 57.50 percent conservative ranking, followed by Rep. Gary McDOWELL (D-Rudyard) with 48.78 percent rank.

House Speaker-Elect Andy DILLON (D-Redford Twp.) was among the Top 10 most conservative members of his caucus with a 42.50 percent conservative ranking.

Once again, in the MIRS ranking, no Democrat was more conservative than a Republican and, conversely, no Republican was more liberal than a Democrat.