



Marco Simons, Phone: 202-466-5188 x103; Email: marco@earthrights.org

Gary Ruskin, Phone: (202) 387-8030; Email: ruskin@corporatpolicy.org

NEW REPORT CARD EVALUATES CONGRESSIONAL ACTIONS FOR CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY

Washington, DC (December 18, 2013) – Congress had a miserable record on resisting corporate influence in 2012, according to a new Congressional Report Card released today. The 2012 Corporate Accountability Coalition Report Card tracks Congressional action related to corporate accountability, transparency, and responsible business during the second year of the 112th Congress.

Recent polls have shown that the vast majority of Americans are concerned about the influence large corporations exercise over U.S. politics and believe that corporations mistreat their customers and other stakeholders in the interests of maximizing profit. The Corporate Accountability Coalition (CAC) is a response to these concerns: an alliance of organizations that advocate for increased corporate accountability and checks on corporate abuse of power. CAC's Report Card includes some alarming new findings, including the discovery that of the very few actions proposed in the last Congress to promote responsible business practices, most never even received a vote.

“In an age where our courts hand down decisions on an almost daily basis that increase corporate power at the expense of ordinary people, our legislature must hold the line and set a higher standard in corporate accountability,” said Katie Redford, Director and Co-Founder of CAC member EarthRights International. Only 2 Representatives and 4 Senators scored higher than 87%, highlighting how, even as Americans grow increasingly wary of the accumulation of corporate power, Congress is not acting to address the problem. Those members with the highest scores were former Rep. Fortney “Pete” Stark (D-CA) and Rep. Keith Ellison (D-MN) in the House and Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Sen. Al Franken (D-MN), Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ), and Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) in the Senate.

Meanwhile, 12 Representatives and 25 Senators had a score of zero. “This report card shows that most Members of Congress continue their weak-kneed subservience to the giant corporations that dominate our economy and politics,” said Gary Ruskin, director of the Center for Corporate Policy.

About the Report Card

The Corporate Accountability Coalition Report Card represents an attempt to educate the public about Congress's record in protecting people from the unchecked growth of corporate influence.

The Report Card presents information on whether Members of Congress have supported measures that either strengthen or weaken limits on corporate conduct, regulate or give free rein to corporations when they attempt to go beyond those limits, and hold corporations accountable or provide impunity when they disregard those limits. As very few proposed bills went to a vote, legislators were scored on their co-sponsorship of bills related to corporate accountability, transparency, and responsible business, as well as other actions open to all Members of Congress. The Report Card does not endorse or oppose any candidate for election.

“The intent of this report card is to track how Congress votes on what we believe are reasonable limits on corporate power,” emphasized Pratap Chatterjee, executive director of CorpWatch. “The Corporate Accountability Coalition believes that such limits will help level the playing field and make it harder for corporations who benefit from wrongdoing.” CAC expects to release a second scorecard evaluating congressional actions in 2013, sometime next year.

About the Corporate Accountability Coalition

The Corporate Accountability Coalition is a collaboration of the Center for Corporate Policy, Corporate Accountability International, CorpWatch, EarthRights International, and the Institute for Policy Studies.