

## **WHO ARE WE?**

CBC Monitor is a group of nonpartisan African American activists who insist that the Congressional Black Caucus ought to represent the political will of Black communities, rather than party leaders, campaign contributors or corporate donors. CBC Monitor has partnered with Black Agenda Report at [www.blackagendareport.com](http://www.blackagendareport.com) to produce twice-a-year report cards on the performance of the Congressional Black Caucus from an African American political point of view.

You can find us, and all past editions of the CBC Monitor Report card online at [www.blackagendareport.com](http://www.blackagendareport.com), and at <http://cbcmonitor.voxunion.com/>

Email us at [publisher@blackagendareport.com](mailto:publisher@blackagendareport.com).

## **WHY A REPORT CARD ON THE BLACK CAUCUS?**

Because the Congressional Black Caucus exists to represent the political will of Black America in the US Congress.

If a Congressional Black Caucus is necessary, and we believe it is, so is a Black yardstick against which to measure the CBC's performance against the political will, the political expectations of Black America; the Black Consensus

## **WHAT IS THE BLACK CONSENSUS?**

Whether the questions are war and peace, the misguided priorities of our policing, prosecution and prison machineries, or jobs, voting rights, housing, health care and education the range of Black American political opinion is different, and markedly to the political left of our white neighbors. We call this range of opinion the Black Consensus.

The Black Consensus spans generations and classes in our communities. It is what differentiates them politically from white America.

Some of the chief and principal concerns of the Black Consensus are:

- Changing the nation's policy of racially selective policing, prosecution & the racially selective criminalization & mass imprisonment of African Americans;
- The creation of create hundreds of thousands of new jobs that pay living wages;
- Providing affordable rental and ownership housing opportunities, especially to low and moderate income families;
- Ensuring availability of the low-cost high speed universal broadband in black and poorer communities which will be as essential as paved streets and roads to economic development in the 21 century; <sup>st</sup>
- Reversing the post-Katrina ethnic cleansing of the Gulf Coast, so that hundreds of thousands of our people can come back to New Orleans and the Gulf Coast region.
- How to provide universal health care and quality education to all;
- Ending America's racist, unjust and illegal wars in Iraq, Iran, Somalia and elsewhere, and reducing the military budget which consumes the resources we need to solve all the other problems.

<b>NAME</b>	<b>SEP 2007 SCORE</b>		<b>CAREER AVG</b>
<b>Ellison, Keith</b>	100%	A	<b>100</b>
<b>Lee, Barbara</b>	100%	A+	<b>100</b>
<b>Moore, Gwen</b>	90%	A	<b>96</b>
<b>Lewis, John</b>	100%	A+	<b>95</b>
<b>Waters, Maxine</b>	90%	A	<b>95</b>
<b>Rangel, Charles</b>	80%	B	<b>94</b>
<b>Scott, Robert "Bobby"</b>	80%	B	<b>94</b>
<b>Watson, Diane</b>	90%	A	<b>94</b>
<b>Watt, Melvin</b>	90%	A	<b>94</b>
<b>Conyers, John</b>	80%	B	<b>93</b>
<b>Kilpatrick, Carolyn</b>	85%	B+	<b>92</b>
<b>Tubbs-Jones, Stephanie</b>	85%	B+	<b>91</b>
<b>Carson, Julia</b>	80%	B	<b>90</b>
<b>Fattah, Chaka</b>	75%	C	<b>90</b>
<b>Payne, Donald</b>	90%	A	<b>90</b>
Jackson, Jesse Jr.	90%	A	89
Cleaver, Emmanuel	80%	B	88
Green, Al	80%	B	88
Brown, Corrine	80%	B	87
Davis, Danny	80%	B	87
Hastings, Alcee	80%	B	86
Johnson, Eddie Bernice	80%	B	86
Clyburn, James	80%	B	85
Jackson-Lee, Sheila	80%	B	85
Cummings, Elijah	80%	B	84
Meek, Kendrick	80%	B	84
Towns, Edolphus	80%	B	84
Clay, Wm. "Lacy"	80%	B	83
Rush, Bobby	80%	B	83
Johnson, Hank	80%	B	80
Thompson, Bennie	80%	B	79
Butterfield, G. K.	80%	B	76
Meeks, Gregory	80%	B	74
Wynn, Albert	80%	B	72
<b>Clarke, Yvette</b>	65%	D	<b>65</b>
<b>Jefferson, William</b>	80%	B	<b>64</b>
<b>Scott, David</b>	70%	C	<b>60</b>
<b>Davis, Artur</b>	70%	C	<b>50</b>
<b>Bishop, Sanford</b>	70%	C	<b>47</b>

**THE GOOD NEWS**, is that some African American reps in Congress continue to take seriously the charge of representing the real interests of the communities that elected them. Ellison (MN), Lee (CA) and Lewis (GA) got perfect scores in 2007, and 15 CBC members retain career scores of 90% or higher.

**THE BAD NEWS** is the five lowest scores this year were achieved by Clark (NY), Scott (GA), Davis (AL), Jefferson (LA), Sanford (GA), and Fattah (PA). Rep. Fattah's score may

be an anomaly resulting from missed votes when he ran for mayor of Philadelphia. Rep. Clarke's score is due largely to missed votes. She is a freshman, so we cannot say whether her low score is anomalous or not. Rep. Clark is also the first female CBC member to receive a failing grade on our report card in 3 years.

**CAREER UNDERACHEIVERS** Wynn (MD) and Meeks (NY), improved their performance in 2007, but both have years of voting against the interests of their constituents to make up for. Both are prominently tied to the right wing Democratic Leadership Council.

**CAREER DERELICTS**, Sanford (GA), Davis (AL), Scott (GA) and Davis (GA) are also closely associated with the Democratic Leadership Council. They achieved their uniformly low scores by, among much else, voting for every or nearly every Iraq war funding bill over the last few years. Rep. Artur Davis, even supported new presidential powers to search, eavesdrop and wiretap anyone, anywhere without cause or warrant.

### **A DISHONORABLE MENTION**

No evaluation of the Congressional Black Caucus's performance over the last two terms can be complete without noting the CBC's Derelictus Emeritus, the former Rep. Harold Ford of Memphis TN.

Thanks to his unwavering support for the president's wars, his offer to be the first Black Democrat to vote for social security privatization, and many more legislative atrocities, Ford's career score is well below any of the derelicts currently serving. After an unsuccessful run for the U.S. Senate in 2006, Ford left his post as Trojan Horse inside the CBC to head the Republican-Lite wing of the Democratic Party, the Democratic Leadership Council.

It's worth noting that his white successor, Rep. Steve Cohen represents Ford's former constituents more ethically, ably and accurately than Ford ever did, and consequently scores higher on the CBC Report Card.

Finally, for all those who would contend, in the face of reality, that there is no Black Consensus, that there is no need for a Black Caucus because we all think pretty much alike anyway, here are the scores of white Democrats and Republicans who represent districts that are 25% or more black. The range, even among Democrats is strikingly different.

## OTHER MEMBERS OF CONGRESS WITH 25% OR MORE AFRICAN-AMERICANS IN THEIR DISTRICT

member	party	state	score	Percentage of black voters in district
Serrano, Jose	D	NY	90	36
Castor, Kathy	D	FL	80	28.1
Cohen, Steve	D	TN	80	59.7
Engel, Eliot	D	NY	80	32.3
Miller, Brad	D	NC	80	27.1
Slaughter, Louise	D	NY	80	29.2
Brady, Robert	D	PA	75	44.7
Hoyer, Steny	D	MD	70	30.3
Ruppersberger, Dutch	D	MD	70	27.3
Spratt, John	D	SC	70	32.3
Barrow, John	D	GA	60	44.8
Melancon, Charlie	D	LA	50	30.30%
Ross, Mike	D	AR	50	25
Marshall, Jim	D	GA	40	32.6
Etheridge, Bob	D	CN	30	30.4
McCrery, Jim	R	LA	20	33.50%
Pickering, Chip	R	MS	15	36.3
Alexander, Rodney	R	LA	10	33.90%
Baker, Richard	R	LA	10	33.3
Boustany, Charles	R	LA	10	25
Hayes, Robin	R	NC	10	26.7
Bonner, Jo	R	AL	0	28.1
Everett, Terry	R	AL	0	29.6
Forbes, Randy	R	VA	0	33.3
Kingston, Jack	R	GA	0	25.1
Rogers, Mike	R	AL	0	32.4
Steve Chabot	R	O	0	27.5
Wicker, Roger	R	MS	0	26.3
Wilson, Joe	R	SC	0	26.4