

# U.S. Congress Did Less for Corporate Accountability in 2013

By [Global Research News](#)

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The U.S. Congress saw no progresses toward corporate accountability and reining in corporate influence over public institutions in 2013, according to the newly released [Corporate Accountability Coalition \(CAC\) Congressional Report Card](#). The second edition of the Report Card, which looks at the First Session of the 113th Congress, focuses on the most relevant congressional activity, and offers an objective measure of congressional leadership in creating policy that protects people and promotes accountability and transparency.

CAC's Report Card includes some alarming new findings, such as that in 2013 not a single pro-accountability bill even made it to a vote. Despite the fact that high-profile corporate malfeasance, from the financial crisis to the Deepwater Horizon spill to the Rana Plaza disaster, continues to make headlines, many legislative actions to address important issues regarding corporate responsibility and necessary limitations on corporate power garnered little, if any, co-sponsorship.

Surveys have consistently shown concerns with unchecked corporate influence. In 2013, a Pew Research poll showed that 80% of middle class adults at least partially blamed large corporations for the difficulties facing the middle class, consistent with earlier surveys finding that overwhelming majorities of Americans believe that corporations have too much power in Washington and that there is too much corporate money in politics.

"As the Supreme Court continues to privilege corporate rights over human rights, our elected leaders must stand and protect what's left of the democratic freedoms that benefit all American citizens, not just the powerful elites." said Katie Redford, Director and Co-Founder of CAC member [EarthRights International](#).

Only two representatives and seven senators received a perfect score: Representatives John Conyers (MI) and Keith Ellison (MN) and Senators Ed Markey (MA), Bob Menendez (NJ), Jeff Merkley (OR), Jeanne Shaheen (NH). Tom Udall (NM), Elizabeth Warren (MA), and Richard Blumenthal (CT).

Several states, however, had entire delegations with zero percent scores, including Wyoming, Arkansas, Idaho, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Kansas, Utah, and West Virginia. Less than 10 percent of Congress scored above 50 percent, while three-quarters of Congress earned a score of 25 percent or less. The average score for Congress even worsened between 2012 and 2013: the average score was only 16 percent down from 25 percent in 2012.

“The Report Card reveals a dangerous reality: corporations exert tremendous influence over our elected officials. The consequences of this influence perpetuate the paradigm of profit over people, and leave us struggling to build meaningful protections for both our environment and our basic human rights,” says Amol Mehra, Director of the [International Corporate Accountability Roundtable](#), a CAC member.

### **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.

“The intent of this report card is to track how Congress votes on holding corporations accountable for their impact on communities and the environment,” said Pratap Chatterjee, Executive Director of CorpWatch. “The Corporate Accountability Coalition believes that good laws can help level the playing field by cracking down on corporations who benefit from wrongdoing.”

The full report is available online at <https://www.earthrights.org/cac-report-card>

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

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