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Consumer Heroes, Champions Highlight 2014 Legislative Scorecard

- **Consumer Heroes, 2011 to 2014:** Senators Richard Madaleno, Paul Pinsky, and Jim Rosapepe along with Delegates Al Carr, Bill Frick, Barbara Frush, and Carolyn Howard named “Consumer Heroes” for perfect voting record on key consumer bills over last four years.
- **2014 Consumer Champions:** Forty-seven delegates and 26 senators named MCRC “2014 Consumer Champions” for perfect scores on consumer rights votes this year.
- **Victories on foreclosure relief, minimum wage create high scores:** Strong votes for legislation to help families rebuild their lives after foreclosure, raise the minimum wage, and pass other key consumer bills helped create high scores for many legislators in 2014.

Baltimore, MD: The Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition (MCRC) named seven lawmakers “Consumer Heroes” for their 100% pro-consumer records for the 2011 to 2014 sessions while 47 delegates and 26 Senators earned perfect scores for their consumer rights votes this year on the 2014 Legislative Scorecard MCRC released this morning. “As so many Marylanders struggle to recover from economic hard times, those lawmakers really stood up for Maryland’s working families, and we’re proud to celebrate their work,” MCRC Executive Director Marceline White noted.

“This year’s high scores reflect the good work legislators did to help families rebuild their lives after foreclosures, raise the minimum wage, and take other steps to protect Maryland families,” White explained. “Unfortunately other critical issues like protection from unfair debt collection and paid sick leave for all working families didn’t make it to the floor this year – so the legislature’s unfinished business isn’t fully reflected in this year’s scores.”

Overall, 33 senators and 50 delegates earned scores of 90% or better for the 2014 session while two senators and 35 delegates (including five Democrats) got failing grades (under 65%) on the scorecard.

You can:

- See the list of seven Consumer Heroes, 2011 to 2014 here:
<http://www.marylandconsumers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=CypTU9ie06g%3d&tabid=38>
- See the list of 2014 Consumer Champions here:
<http://www.marylandconsumers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=htEG7n5g9GU%3d&tabid=38>
- See the list of 37 legislators who earned failing grades this year here:
<http://www.marylandconsumers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=l5onONB02MU%3d&tabid=38>

MCRC’s scorecard grades each legislator on floor votes on seven key consumer issues this year: Cutting the time to file deficiency judgments after foreclosures (HB 274/SB 708); renewing the exemption of some mortgage debt written down during foreclosure from state income tax (HB 923/SB

596); raising Maryland's minimum wage (HB 295); establishing a task force to study ways to cut the car insurance costs and reduce the number of uninsured drivers (HB 130/SB 153); banning the use of "ticket bots" to buy up tickets to events before the public has a chance to purchase them (HB 98/SB 154); requiring merchants who use cellphones to track shoppers to post a notice that they are doing so (House side only) (HB 924); Establishing an office of the Consumer Protection Division of the Maryland Attorney General's Office in Prince George's County (HB 480/ SB 508).

The scorecard also grades the legislators who serve on committees that mark-up important consumer rights bills on their committee votes. MCRC averages each legislator's floor score and committee score to develop his or her total grade. "Many of the legislature's most important decisions happen in its powerful committees, where legislators often kill key bills or change them beyond recognition long before they get to the floor," Marceline White notes. "It's important to hold legislators accountable for their committee votes as well as floor votes."

To honor the legislators who've consistently defended consumer rights on the four committees that mark-up most key consumer bills (the Senate Finance and Judicial Proceedings committees and the House Economic Matters and Judiciary committees), MCRC named 26 members of those committees who earned overall scores of 85% or better our "2014 Committee Champions." "Legislators on those committees cast more tough votes on consumer issues than other lawmakers," Marceline White observes. "Our committee champions are legislators who stand up for consumer again and again on the panels where Maryland families need a voice the most."

- You can read the full list of 2014 Committee Champions here:

<http://www.marylandconsumers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=Gvew44T8ws8%3d&tabid=38>

To give consumers a better idea which legislators stand up for their interests, year-in and year-out, the scorecard also includes a four-year average score that gives an overall rating for how well each legislator has served consumers since the current slate of lawmakers was elected in November 2010.

For full information on the scorecard you can:

- Read and download the full scorecard here:
<http://www.marylandconsumers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=81gR1iNHunQ%3d&tabid=38>
- See the 2014 and four year scores for each senator here:
<http://www.marylandconsumers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=QBseFEvHaVQ%3d&tabid=38>
- See the 2014 and four-year scores for each delegate here:
<http://www.marylandconsumers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=rQGKk-HqL-g%3d&tabid=38>
- See all the votes and worksheets we used to grade the legislators and review MCRC's 2010 to 2013 Legislative Scorecards on our Legislative Scorecard homepage here:
<http://www.marylandconsumers.org/Advocacy/LegislativeScorecards/tabid/121/Default.aspx>

Please NOTE: Copies of scorecard and lists of consumer champions, heroes are attached.

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The Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition (MCRC) advances fairness and justice for Maryland consumers through research, education, and advocacy. Find MCRC on the web at www.marylandconsumers.org, on Facebook at [facebook.com/mdconsumers](https://www.facebook.com/mdconsumers) and on Twitter at twitter.com/mdconsumers.