



LEGISLATORS FOLLOW LEADERSHIP LIKE SHEEPLE

Heading into the general election, legislators may be making noises about shaking off the speaker of the house and being independent voices, but their voting records suggest “go along to get along.”

The 2018 "Sheeple" index, a collaboration between WatchdogRI.org and the Gaspee Project, ranked how often state representatives and senators voted in lock-step with leadership. Even with the 2018 General Assembly averaging -74.3 on a scale of -100 to +100 on Gaspee’s annual Whipple Liberty Index, there was little opposition as more than half of all lawmakers voted with the House speaker or the Senate president over 90% of the time.

Of the 457 House bills examined for 2018, excluding resolutions and marriage solemnizations, 25 representatives voted at least 95% of the time with the speaker, with the worst five "sheeple" offenders being Raymond Johnston (100.0%), Joe Shekarchi (99.8%), Shelby Maldonado (99.6%), Patricia Serpa (99.6%), and Joseph Solomon (99.3%). Of the Senate's 362 bills, 16 Senators surpassed the 95% sheeple threshold, with Erin Lynch Prata (100.0%), Hannah Gallo (99.4%), Maryellen Goodwin (99.4%), Michael McCaffrey (99.4%), and Susan Sosnowski (99.4%) as the five least independent when it came to casting votes in lock-step with the Senate president.

Note: Some legislators are not included on the Sheeple tables because they missed more than one-fifth of all substantial votes (see our related Walker Index). It is therefore arguably unfair to judge how often they voted with leadership because, for most

of them, the source of their seeming independence was their absence. In fairness, however, the General Assembly arguably sets them up for this pitfall by piling so many votes on just a few days. An illness or unexpected emergency causing a faithful legislator to miss just a few hours of votes could make all the difference.

Rhode Island Senators Who Missed at Least One-Fifth of Votes, 2018		
	District	Missed Votes (%)
Daniel DaPonte	14	51.9
Marc Cote	24	33.7
Walter Felag	10	30.9
Dennis Algieri	38	30.4
William Conley	18	30.1
Cynthia Coyne	32	29.8
Elaine Morgan	34	24.0
Adam Satchell	9	24.0
Frank Lombardi	26	23.8
Mark Gee	35	20.7

Note: See Whipple Walker Index for details.

Rhode Island Representatives Who Missed at Least One-Fifth of Votes, 2018		
	District	Missed Votes (%)
Katherine Kazarian	63	48.5
Helder Cunha	64	47.9
Joy Hearn	66	46.1
Michael Morin	49	37.8
Jared Nunes	25	36.9
Jean Barros	59	35.0
Ramon Perez	13	30.9
Sherry Roberts	29	29.8
Scott Slater	10	20.6

Note: See Whipple Walker Index for details.



Rhode Island Senators' Sheeple Votes, 2018

District	Senator	Votes Cast with President			Sided with President on Non-Unanimous Votes		
		Count	%	Rank	Count	%	Rank
4	Dominick Ruggerio	362			72		
22	Steve Archambault	345	95.3	15	66	91.7	13
30	Jeanine Calkin	347	95.9	14	57	79.2	24
8	Sandra Cano	301	83.1	25	57	79.2	24
7	Frank Ciccone	317	87.6	23	64	88.9	16
16	Elizabeth Crowley	333	92.0	20	69	95.8	8
12	Lou DiPalma	342	94.5	17	71	98.6	3
13	Dawn Euer	351	97.0	10	63	87.5	18
23	Paul Fogarty	332	91.7	21	66	91.7	13
27	Hanna Gallo	360	99.4	2	71	98.6	3
3	Gayle Goldin	315	87.0	24	56	77.8	26
1	Maryellen Goodwin	360	99.4	2	72	100.0	1
5	Paul Jabour	349	96.4	13	63	87.5	18
21	Nicholas Kettle						
25	Frank Lombardo	357	98.6	7	69	95.8	8
31	Erin Lynch Prata	362	100.0	1	72	100.0	1
29	Michael McCaffrey	360	99.4	2	71	98.6	3
6	Harold Metts	345	95.3	15	61	84.7	21
28	Joshua Miller	322	89.0	22	65	90.3	15
15	Donna Nesselbush	351	97.0	10	67	93.1	12
17	Thomas Paolino	335	92.5	18	54	75.0	28
19	Ryan Pearson	351	97.0	10	68	94.4	11
20	Roger Picard	356	98.3	8	71	98.6	3
2	Ana Quezada	352	97.2	9	64	88.9	16
33	Leonidis Raptakis	279	77.1	26	45	62.5	33
11	James Seveney	359	99.2	6	69	95.8	8
36	James Sheehan	335	92.5	18	63	87.5	18
37	Susan Sosnowski	360	99.4	2	70	97.2	7

Notes: Legislation does not include resolutions and marriage solemnization bills. Missed votes count as not voted with leadership.



Rhode Island Representatives' Sheeple Votes, 2018

District	Representative	Votes Cast with Speaker			Sided with Speaker on Non-Unanimous Votes		
		Count	%	Rank	Count	%	Rank
15	Nicholas Mattiello	457			94		
73	Marvin Abney	450	98.5	9	92	97.9	8
45	Mia Ackerman	448	98.0	13	92	97.9	8
1	Edith Ajello	445	97.4	17	83	88.3	33
12	Joe Almeida	394	86.2	50	70	74.5	53
65	Gregg Amore	429	93.9	29	88	93.6	21
37	Samuel Azzinaro	446	97.6	16	89	94.7	15
20	David Bennett	430	94.1	28	87	92.6	26
2	Chris Blazejewski	425	93.0	32	84	89.4	31
71	Dennis Canario	383	83.8	55	69	73.4	55
75	Lauren Carson	372	81.4	57	71	75.5	52
50	Stephen Casey	412	90.2	42	79	84.0	42
31	Julie Casimiro	447	97.8	14	91	96.8	10
40	Mike Chippendale	360	78.8	65	45	47.9	67
55	Arthur Corvese	445	97.4	17	89	94.7	15
44	Gregory Costantino	411	89.9	43	79	84.0	42
60	David Coughlin	391	85.6	51	70	74.5	53
32	Bob Craven	451	98.7	6	93	98.9	4
11	Grace Diaz	382	83.6	56	82	87.2	35
69	Susan Donovan	425	93.0	32	88	93.6	21
70	Jay Edwards	437	95.6	23	87	92.6	26
43	Deborah Fellela	447	97.8	14	90	95.7	13
36	Blake Filippi	385	84.2	54	47	50.0	65
35	Kathleen Fogarty	423	92.6	34	82	87.2	35
30	Anthony Giarrusso	418	91.5	37	60	63.8	58
18	Art Handy	444	97.2	20	89	94.7	15
6	Ray Hull	411	89.9	43	81	86.2	39
17	Robert Jacquard	369	80.7	59	73	77.7	49
61	Raymond Johnston	457	100.0	1	94	100.0	1
47	Cale Keable	449	98.2	12	89	94.7	15
38	Brian Kennedy	429	93.9	29	87	92.6	26
67	Jason Knight	451	98.7	6	89	94.7	15
16	Robert Lancia	367	80.3	60	55	58.5	62
14	Charlene Lima	445	97.4	17	91	96.8	10

Notes: Legislation does not include resolutions and marriage solemnization bills. Missed votes count as not voted with leadership.



Rhode Island Representatives' Sheeple Votes, 2018 (Continued)

District	Representative	Votes Cast with Speaker			Sided with Speaker on Non-Unanimous Votes		
		Count	%	Rank	Count	%	Rank
15	Nicholas Mattiello	457			94		
8	John Lombardi	422	92.3	35	84	89.4	31
56	Shelby Maldonado	455	99.6	3	93	98.9	4
68	Kenneth Marshall	431	94.3	27	88	93.6	21
52	Alex Marszalkowski	440	96.3	22	83	88.3	33
33	Carol McEntee	409	89.5	45	77	81.9	46
7	Daniel McKiernan	420	91.9	36	86	91.5	29
57	James McLaughlin	435	95.2	25	82	87.2	35
19	Joseph McNamara	450	98.5	9	93	98.9	4
72	Kenneth Mendonca	437	95.6	23	80	85.1	40
62	Mary Messier	414	90.6	41	78	83.0	45
26	Patricia Morgan	361	79.0	63	40	42.6	71
28	Bobby Nardolillo	404	88.4	46	62	66.0	57
48	Brian Newberry	336	73.5	66	35	37.2	72
54	William O'Brien	396	86.7	48	90	95.7	13
46	Jeremiah O'Grady	387	84.7	53	72	76.6	51
51	Bob Phillips	451	98.7	6	88	93.6	21
39	Justin Price	396	86.7	48	48	51.1	64
41	Bob Quattrocchi	361	79.0	63	33	35.1	73
5	Marcia Ranglin-Vassell	370	81.0	58	57	60.6	60
4	Aaron Regunberg	428	93.7	31	79	84.0	42
74	Deb Ruggiero	403	88.2	47	80	85.1	40
27	Patricia Serpa	455	99.6	3	93	98.9	4
24	Evan Shanley	433	94.7	26	88	93.6	21
23	Joe Shekarchi	456	99.8	2	94	100.0	1
22	Joseph Solomon	454	99.3	5	94	100.0	1
34	Teresa Tanzi	417	91.2	38	75	79.8	47
58	Carlos Tobon	416	91.0	39	82	87.2	35
42	Stephen Ucci	415	90.8	40	89	94.7	15
21	Camille Vella-Wilkinson	450	98.5	9	91	96.8	10
3	Moira Walsh	367	80.3	60	60	63.8	58
9	Anastasia Williams	443	96.9	21	86	91.5	29
53	Thomas Winfield	388	84.9	52	74	78.7	48

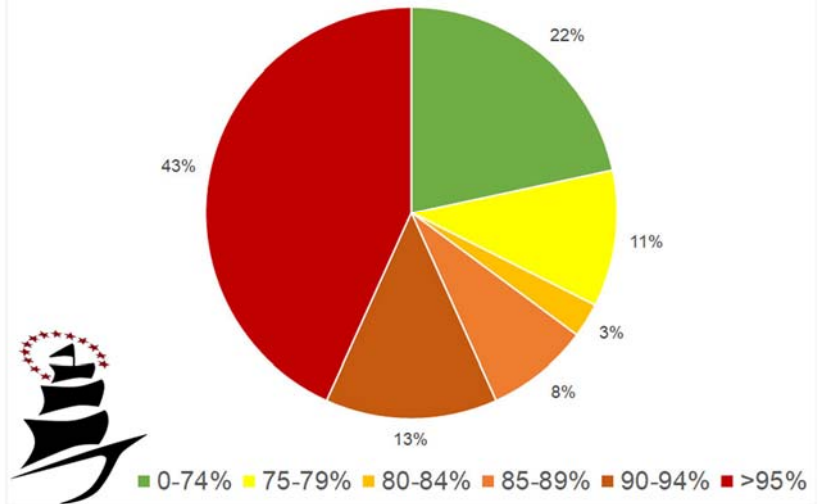
Notes: Legislation does not include resolutions and marriage solemnization bills. Missed votes count as not voted with leadership.



Frequency of Votes with the Senate President

More than 50% of Rhode Island senators voted with the Senate President more than 90% of the time, and only 22% of them voted with him less than 75% of the time.

Rhode Island Senators' Degree of Sheepleness, 2018



Frequency of Votes with the Speaker of the House

Again, more than 50% of Rhode Island representatives voted with the speaker more than 90% of the time, and only 12% of them voted with him less than 75% of the time.

Rhode Island Representatives' Degree of Sheepleness, 2018

