

BRIEF



North Dakota – CPAC Scorecard

Center for Legislative Analysis

12th Edition – 2025

Summary

The latest edition of the North Dakota CPAC Scorecard assesses 17 votes in the North Dakota House of Representatives and 16 votes in the North Dakota Senate from the 2025 session. North Dakota Republicans earned an average score of 79%, an improvement over the 73% average they earned in 2024. Democrats earned an average score of 44%, up sharply from 22% last year, reflecting a more divided minority caucus and a legislature where bipartisan coalitions formed more frequently on select issues.

The 2025 North Dakota session featured a mix of conservative reforms and major government expansion. Lawmakers advanced strong protections for parental rights and biological reality in schools through measures such as **HB1144**, expanded school choice through **SB2241**, strengthened election integrity through **HB1307** and **SB2175**, and pursued universal licensure reforms under **SB2395**. At the same time, the legislature enacted large new spending and bureaucratic growth through bills such as **HB1012** and **SB2003**, which expanded health and human services and higher education governance. North Dakota also moved forward with energy and economic measures, including cutting oil extraction taxes under **HB1483** and prioritizing realistic energy research through **SB2159**. Overall, the session reflected both meaningful conservative victories and continued debates over the size and scope of state government.

Key Takeaways

Expanding Government Bureaucracy and Spending

North Dakota lawmakers enacted major appropriations bills that further entrenched state bureaucracy. **HB1012** poured new funding into the Department of Health and Human Services, created new loan funds and committees, and authorized expanded government intervention. Likewise, **SB2003** reshaped higher education governance while authorizing significant spending and centralized control over the university system. CPAC opposed these measures as unchecked growth of the administrative state.

Advancing School Choice and Education Reform

The legislature took meaningful steps toward expanding educational opportunity. **SB2241**

authorized public charter schools and opened the door to greater competition within the public education system. Lawmakers also pursued accountability reforms in higher education through **HB1437**, challenging entrenched tenure protections and pushing back against ideological capture on campus.

Defending Parental Rights and Biological Reality

Several bills reflected a strong commitment to parental authority and protecting children from radical gender ideology. **HB1144** reinforced biological sex standards in school bathrooms, safeguarding student privacy and safety. **SB2186** strengthened enforcement of court ordered parenting time, while **HB1242** reaffirmed fundamental parental rights, though it ultimately did not become law.

Strengthening Election Integrity and Transparency

North Dakota advanced reforms aimed at improving confidence in elections. **HB1307** aligned local election rules with state standards to prevent jurisdictional manipulation. **SB2175** strengthened post election audit transparency, ensuring more credible checks on election outcomes and reinforcing voter trust.

Promoting Economic Freedom and Workforce Mobility

Lawmakers moved to reduce protectionist licensing barriers through **SB2395**, establishing universal licensure standards that make it easier for qualified professionals to work across state lines. North Dakota also supported responsible energy development, cutting oil extraction taxes through **HB1483** and directing energy research toward practical needs under **SB2159**.

Protecting Children and Upholding Public Morality

The legislature advanced measures aimed at shielding minors from exploitation and harmful content. **SB2380** imposed civil liability and penalties on platforms distributing sexual material harmful to children, reflecting a growing effort to hold adult content industries accountable.

Highlighted Votes Analyzed

HB1012 Expanding the Health and Human Services Bureaucratic Empire

This bill pours new large appropriations into the Department of Health and Human Services, creates a new, extraordinary medical needs housing loan fund, expands payment programs and committees, and even authorizes a line of credit for further government intervention. It entrenches a sprawling welfare and regulatory state rather than pursuing targeted, accountable reform. CPAC opposes unchecked growth in the social service bureaucracy and opposed this bill. The Senate passed this bill on May 1st, 2025 by a vote of 37-9. The House passed this bill on May 1st, 2025 by a vote of 61-26. The bill later became law.

HB1144 Protecting Girls' Privacy in School Bathrooms

This bill amends school restroom policies to address transgender student accommodations and

restroom use in public schools, establishes penalties for noncompliance, and declares an emergency, reinforcing that facilities correspond to biological sex. This bill protects student privacy and safety while pushing back against radical gender ideology in schools. CPAC supports defending biological reality and parental expectations in schools and supported this bill. The Senate passed this bill on April 28, 2025 by a vote of 40-7. The House passed this bill on April 28th, 2025 by a vote of 75-14. The bill later became law.

SB2395 Advancing Universal Licensure and Reining in Boards

This bill establishes a universal licensure framework and sets operational standards for occupational boards so qualified professionals from other jurisdictions can more easily obtain North Dakota licenses. It pushes back against protectionist licensing barriers that block workers and drive up costs. CPAC opposes unnecessary occupational licensing and supported this bill. The Senate passed this bill on February 25th, 2025 by a vote of 45-1. The House passed this bill on March 28th, 2028 by a vote of 89-2. The bill later became law.

Trends & Observations

Republican Gains Reflect Greater Cohesion

North Dakota Republicans improved their average score from 73 percent in 2024 to 79 percent in 2025, reflecting stronger alignment around conservative priorities. While internal debates remained on large spending packages, the caucus showed consistent support for parental rights, school choice, election transparency, and economic freedom measures.

Democratic Scores Rose Amid Select Bipartisan Coalitions

Democrats' average score rose sharply from 22% in 2024 to 44% in 2025. This increase reflects bipartisan overlap on certain issues such as election transparency, bond clarity, and select regulatory reforms. However, clear divides remained on government spending growth and cultural policy fights.

Government Expansion Remains a Recurring Pressure Point

Large appropriations and administrative expansions under bills such as **HB1012** and **SB2003** underscore an ongoing tension within the legislature. Even in a conservative state, debates continue over how aggressively to grow health and human services and higher education bureaucracies.

Cultural and Parental Rights Issues Took Prominence

Measures such as **HB1144** and **SB2186** highlight a growing focus on defending parental authority and reinforcing biological standards in schools and family law. These debates remain defining fault lines in modern state legislatures, and North Dakota was no exception in 2025.

Economic and Workforce Reforms Continued to Advance

The legislature moved forward with energy development and workforce mobility initiatives. Tax adjustments under **HB1483** and universal licensure reforms in **SB2395** signal a continued effort

to reduce barriers to work and encourage economic growth, even as fiscal debates over spending persist.

Conservative Excellence - House

TJ Brown - 100%	Ben Koppelman - 94%	Nico Rios - 93%
Nels Christianson - 94%	Andrew Marschall - 93%	Matthew Ruby - 93%
Matthew Heilman - 94%	Michael Motschenbacher - 94%	Mike Schatz - 94%
Dawson Holle - 94%	Dennis Nehring - 94%	Bill Tveit - 100%
Jorin Johnson - 94%	SuAnn Olson - 94%	Steve Vetter - 94%
Jim Kasper - 93%		

Conservative Excellence - Senate

Keith Boehm - 94%	Kent Weston - 93%
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Conservative Achievement - House

Karen Anderson - 82%	Jared Hendrix - 88%	Doug Osowski - 88%
Mike Berg - 81%	Jeff Hoverson - 87%	Karen Rohr - 88%
Macy Bolinske - 88%	Daniel Johnston - 88%	Dan Ruby - 82%
Jason Dockter - 87%	Keith Kempenich - 81%	Vicky Steiner - 82%
Ty Dressler - 82%	Roger Maki - 88%	Greg Stemen - 82%
Jay Fisher - 82%	Lisa Meier - 82%	Steve Swiontek - 80%
Kathy Frelich - 88%	Desiree Morton - 82%	Nathan Toman - 88%
Dori Hauck - 82%		Christina Wolff - 88%

Conservative Achievement - Senate

Todd Beard - 81%	Justin Gerhardt - 81%	Janne Myrdal - 88%
Brad Bekkedahl - 85%	David Hogue 81%	Desiree Van Oosting - 81%
Jose Castaneda - 88%	Greg Kessel - 81%	Bob Paulson - 88%
David Clemens - 81%	Judy Lee - 81%	Michelle Powers - 81%
Claire Cory - 81%	Randy Lemm - 81%	Chuck Walen - 81%
Mark Enget - 88%	Larry Luick - 88%	Mark Weber - 80%
Robert Erbele 81%	Scott Meyer - 80%	Michael Wobbema - 86%