

Congressional Roll Call Voting Data Codebook

Policy Agendas Project
2018

Contact Information

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Citation Guidelines

Please visit www.comparativeagendas.net/pages/how-to-cite for guidelines on how to cite the use of this or other Policy Agendas Project datasets.

Overview of the Dataset

This dataset includes Congressional roll call votes categorized according to the Policy Agendas Project topic system. Vote descriptors from 1946 through 1990 were tabulated from *United States Congressional Roll Call Voting Records: 1789-1990* codebooks, which are available through ICPSR's data archive. Additional years were obtained by request from Keith Poole, University of Georgia. Beginning with the 107th Congress, votes were collected from Govtrack.us, an open-source, online database of congressional voting records.

As of August 2014, we have streamlined the variables that we collect and offer for download in the RC dataset. A link to the legacy version and corresponding data codebook is available upon request.

Content Coding

We have coded each entry by policy content, along with other variables of interest. We employed the standard Policy Agendas Project topic scheme in our policy content coding, and each entry was assigned one and only one content code. This allows researchers to trace activity on a particular topic across the period. The full description of our content categories may be found in the major topics codebook on the US page of the Comparative Agendas Project website (www.comparativeagendas.net).

Variable Names and Descriptions

id

This column records the unique identifier for each observation. It has no substantive application.

Chamber

- 1= House
- 2= Senate

Filter_House

- 0= Not House
- 1= House

Filter_Senate

- 0= Not Senate
- 1= Senate

RollCallNo ("RC-Count")

Consecutive numbering for each roll call within a chamber in each Congress.

SessCount

Consecutive numbering for each roll call within each session in each chamber. Number should correspond to CQ vote numbers up to the 100th Congress, when CQ begins to follow the Congressional Record numbering system (which includes quorum calls).

Bill

The bill or issue under consideration. This field was standardized across congresses and chambers from the original data. Errors were also corrected.

Bill Types:

- HCONRES – House Congressional Resolution
- SCONRES – Senate Congressional Resolution
- HR – House Bill
- S – Senate Bill
- HJRES – House Joint Resolution
- SJRES – Senate Joint Resolution
- HRES – House Simple Resolution
- SRES – Senate Simple Resolution

Other Issues:

- PROC – Procedural votes including House Journal passage, Sergeant of Arms requests, and miscellaneous motions not associated with a bill. **Note:** Procedural motions on a bill are identified as such and coded accordingly (e.g. a motion to request the attendance of absent senators on a bill addressing TANF appropriations would be coded as family welfare whereas the request in the absence of a bill would be coded as an internal legislative matter).
- TRTY – Treaties and international agreements
- NOMIN – All nominations for all departments, including nominations to the court
- MULT – Votes which en bloc agree to two or more resolutions

Filter_Nomination

Any roll call vote on a nomination (procedural or confirmation).

Date (composed of variables Month, Day, Year)

The date the vote took place. Many minor date errors were found in the USC RC codebooks. We have corrected these whenever possible.

Congress (“Cong”)

The number of the given Congress.

Session

First or Second congressional session.

Description

Description of the issue being considered. Frequently, but not always, the bill is identified. Some descriptors are very brief and best understood in the context of votes immediately preceding and following because these records will often provide more information on the bill title, etc.

Detailed information on bills may be obtained through the Congressional Bills Project, directed by John Wilkerson, at the University of Washington, and Scott Adler, at the University of Colorado-Boulder.

Link

Link to the roll call information on Govtrack.us. Only relevant for the House in 107th and 108th Congresses for which data was drawn from Govtrack.us.

Pap_MajorTopic

This column records the Policy Agendas Project's major topic code that corresponds to the information found in the Description column. The codes and examples for this column are found in the Major Topics Codebook on the Policy Agendas Project website.

Pap_SubTopicCode

This column denotes the Policy Agendas Project's subtopic code that corresponds to the information found in the Description column. The codes and examples for this column are found in the Major Topics Codebook on the Policy Agendas Project website.

MajorTopic

This column records the Comparative Agendas Project's major topic code that corresponds to the existing Policy Agendas Project topic code. Please visit the Comparative Agendas Project website (www.comparativeagendas.net) for more information.

SubTopicCode

This column records the Comparative Agendas Project's subtopic topic code that corresponds to the existing Policy Agendas Project topic code. Please visit the Comparative Agendas Project website (www.comparativeagendas.net) for more information.