

NGLTF Grades Vermont's Congressional Delegation

Paul Olsen

Annually, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) issues "report cards" to members of the United States Senate and House of representatives to grade their performance on national issues of importance to the lesbian and gay community. Issues considered when determining grades include votes on AIDS/HIV legislation, domestic partner legislation for the District of Columbia, funding for sexual behavior research by the national Institute of Health (NIH), funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), co-sponsorship of the Civil Rights Amendments Act of 1991 (the national gay and lesbian civil rights bill), and position on the military ban. Among those graded during the 102nd Congress were Vermont's Senators, James Jeffords and Patrick Leahy, and Representative Bernard Sanders.

Republican Senator James Jeffords received a "C" while Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy earned an "A". In the NGLTF's report, 66% of senators received the grade of "F", 9% received an "A", 8% received a "B", 8% received a "C", and 9% received a "D". Sixteen senators, including Patrick Leahy, co-sponsored the Civil Rights Amendments Act of 1991. Senator Jeffords still refuses to co-sponsor the bill.

Voting for the NGLTF position 100% of the time, Representative Bernard Sanders received an "A". The majority of his colleagues in the House (57%) received an "F", 21% an "A", 8% received a "B", 5% a "C", and 9% received a "D". Sanders joined 110 representatives as a co-sponsor of the House version of the Civil Rights Amendment Act of 1991.

Compared to their colleagues in the Senate and House, Senators Jeffords and Leahy and Representative Sanders all received passing grades from the NGLTF. Based on the outstanding grades received by Leahy (91%) and Sanders (100%) it is clear that while they studied hard last term, Senator Jeffords (70%) needs to do his homework. ▼

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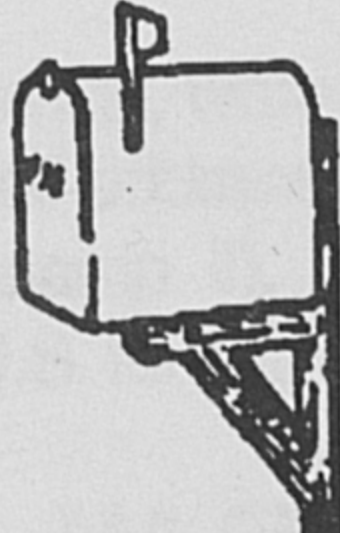
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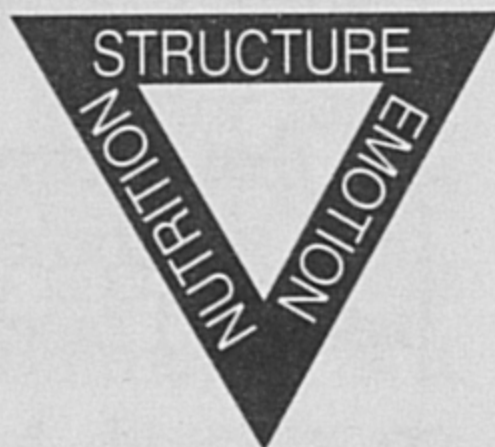
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