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The Capitol Report for the Week of April 30, 2018

**Bipartisanship Index ranks Wisconsin politicians**

By WisPolitics.com

Bipartisanship, to some political professionals, is a thing of the past.

Given congressional and legislative districts that are tilted far right or far left, there are simply fewer true swing districts. So that means there are simply fewer representatives who are operating in the middle of the political spectrum.

According to a recent analysis by the Lugar Center and Georgetown University’s McCourt School of Public Policy, one of the few exceptions is western Wisconsin Congressman Ron Kind.

Kind, D-La Crosse, who represents Wisconsin 3rd Congressional District along the Mississippi River, is touting his recent ranking as the state’s most bipartisan House member, noting his constituents are looking for an “independent voice” in Congress.

Meanwhile, U.S. Rep. Glenn Grothman, R-Glenbeulah, was blasted by Democratic opponent Dan Kohl for his classification as Wisconsin's most partisan member of the chamber.

[The Bipartisan Index](http://www.thelugarcenter.org/ourwork-61.html) ranks all members of Congress based on how frequently a member introduces bills that get sponsors from the opposite party, and how often they co-sponsor legislation from the other side of the aisle.

Kind has ranked in the top 25 of all 438 House members since the index’s launch in 2015.

“When I’m holding listening sessions in Wisconsin or talking to folks at the YMCA and the grocery store, I often hear about the frustrations people have with how divided Congress is,” Kind said in a statement. “Now more than ever, people want an independent voice that doesn’t approach issues with an ‘us and them’ mindset.”

Since Grothman took office in 2015, he’s ranked in the bottom 15 of all members of his chamber. But the newest scores show he’s 410th, the highest, most bipartisan ranking he’s received since heading to D.C.

Kohl’s campaign in a recent statement attributed the Glenbeulah Republican’s placement as the result of “desperate efforts by Grothman to build his bipartisan credibility” after Kohl got into the 6th Congressional District race.

But spokesman Timothy Svoboda said Grothman had a long record of working across the aisle dating back to his time in the state Legislature. That includes teaming up with 2nd District Dem U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan on a bill that would let students refinance their federal student loans.

He also noted that on average, about one-fourth of the between 1,000 and 2,000 bills that pass the House originate from the minority party. Of the 425 Dem-sponsored bills that have passed since Grothman was voted into Congress, he voted for 97 percent of them, Svoboda said.

The other Wisconsin House members received the following rankings: U.S. Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, R-Menomonee Falls, 79th; U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher, R-Green Bay, 185th; U.S. Rep. Sean Duffy, R-Wausau, 216th; Pocan, D-Town of Vermont, 333rd; and U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore, D-Milwaukee, 359th.

House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Janesville, was excluded from the ranking.

In the Senate, U.S. Sens. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh, and Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison, were both near the middle of the pack, ranking 51st and 54th, respectively.

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