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John McCain, R-Ariz., vs. Barack Obama, D-III. Key Senate Votes 2005

CLASS-ACTION SUITS: Voting 72-26, senators on Feb. 10, 2005, passed a bill that would shift most large class-action suits from state courts, where juries tend to favor plaintiffs, to federal courts, where corporate defendants improve their chances of winning. A yes vote was to pass S 5.

McCain voted YES. Obama voted YES.

DEMOCRATS' MINIMUM WAGE: Senators on March 7, 2005, defeated, 46-49, a Democratic bid to raise the minimum wage from \$5.15 per hour to \$7.25 per hour over 26 months. Congress had not raised the minimum wage since 1997. A yes vote backed a 41-percent raise in the minimum wage. (S 256)

McCain voted NO. Obama voted YES.

GOP MINIMUM WAGE: Senators on March 7, 2005, rejected, 38-61, a Republican plan to raise the minimum hourly wage from \$5.15 to \$6.25 over 18 months while reducing the number of businesses required to pay it under the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act. A yes vote backed the Republican wage plan. (S 256)

McCain voted YES. Obama voted NO.

BANKRUPTCY CHANGES: Senators on March 10, 2005, passed, 74-25, a bill making it difficult for individuals with means to use bankruptcy to walk away from unsecured debt. Backers said the bill would curb widespread abuses of the bankruptcy code by credit-card borrowers, while foes called it a giveaway to the lending industry. A yes vote was to pass S 256.

McCain voted YES. Obama voted NO.

FAMILY PLANNING: Senators on April 5, 2005, voted, 52-46, to allow U.S. funding of entities abroad that promote family planning measures, including abortion, with their own money. This repealed the 1984 "Mexico City Policy" that banned such U.S. support. A yes vote was to allow the funding. (S 600)

McCain voted NO. Obama voted YES.

VETERANS' CARE: Senators on April 12, 2005, refused, 46-54, to add \$1.98 billion for veterans' health care to a bill (HR 1268) providing \$77 billion for ongoing military actions in Iraq and Afghanistan. More than half of the increment was designated for veterans of those two theaters. A yes vote backed the proposed increase.

McCain voted NO. Obama voted YES.

GUANTANAMO BAY PRISON: Senators on April 13, 2005, refused, 27-71, to delete \$36 million included in a war-funding bill (HR 1268) for building a large military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. A yes vote was to delete the funds in response to court rulings that had cast doubt on the legality of the U.S. incarceration policy there.

McCain voted NO. Obama voted NO.

FOREIGN OIL DEPENDENCY: Senators on June 16, 2005, defeated, 47-53, an amendment to HR 6 requiring a 40 percent cut by 2025 in U.S. imports of foreign oil. The amendment did not specify technologies or policies for achieving the reduction. A yes vote was to adopt the amendment.

McCain voted NO. Obama voted YES.

WIND, SOLAR ENERGY: Senators on June 16, 2005, voted, 52-48, to require increased production of renewable energy from sources such as the wind and sun. A yes vote was to require power companies to produce at least 10 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2020. (HR 6)

McCain voted NO. Obama voted YES.

GLOBAL WARMING: Senators on June 22, 2005, refused, 38-60, to require U.S. factories and power plants to cut emissions of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, to 2000 levels by 2010. Industries with excessive discharges could buy emissions credits from those in compliance. A yes vote backed mandatory emission caps. (HR 6)

McCain voted YES. Obama voted YES.

VEHICLE MILEAGE STANDARDS: Voting 28-67, senators on June 23, 2005, refused to raise fuel efficiency standards for cars, SUVs and light trucks. The amendment to HR 6 sought a fleet average of 40 miles per hour, up from the existing 27.5-mpg for cars and 21 mpg for SUVs and light trucks. A yes vote backed higher mileage standards.

McCain voted NO. Obama voted YES.

ENERGY PACKAGE: Senators on June 28, 2005, passed, 85-12, a bill providing \$14 billion over ten years in tax breaks for oil and gas exploration, coal extraction, expanded nuclear energy and the development of renewable fuels. A yes vote was to approve the energy package (HR 6).

McCain voted NO. Obama voted YES.

CENTRAL AMERICAN TRADE: Senators on June 30, 2005, passed, 54-45, a bill to implement the Central American Free Trade Agreement, which lowers barriers to U.S. trade with El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic. A yes vote was to pass S 1307.

McCain voted YES. Obama voted NO.

AIR-CARGO SECURITY: Senators on July 14, 2005, refused, 45-53, to quadruple spending in HR 2360 for tightening air-cargo security. A yes vote was to raise from \$50 million to \$200 million the sum for programs designed to keep explosives from being planted in commercial-aircraft cargo holds.

McCain voted NO. Obama voted YES.

TV MARTI: Senators on July 19, 2005, refused, 33-66, to shut down TV Marti, a U.S. government station that broadcasts to Cuba in an effort to weaken the communist regime there. Critics say its signal is constantly jammed, while backers say some broadcasts from aircraft get through. A yes vote was to top funding TV Marti.

McCain voted NO. Obama voted YES.

RUSSIA'S NUCLEAR WEAPONS: Senators on July 21, 2005, voted, 78-19, to streamline what is known as the Nunn-Lugar Law under which the U.S. pays Russia to destroy Soviet-era nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. A yes vote backed an amendment to S 1042 that would ease bureaucratic U.S. rules thought to impede weapons destruction.

McCain voted YES. Obama voted YES.

GUN IMMUNITY: Senators on July 29, 2005, passed, 65-31, a bill (S 397) giving gun manufacturers and dealers immunity against most product-liability lawsuits based on the illegal use of firearms. Plaintiffs in such suits were mainly state and local governments and crime victims. The bill sought to ban pending as well as future suits. A yes vote was to pass S 397

McCain voted YES. Obama voted NO.

PORK BARREL DISCLOSURE: Senators on Sept. 21, 2005, voted, 55-39, to require public disclosure of the "earmarks," or pork-barrel items, contained in the fiscal 2006 Department of Agriculture appropriations bill (HR 2744).

McCain voted YES. Obama voted YES.

TORTURE BAN: Senators on Oct. 5, 2005, voted, 90-9, to require the U.S. military to adhere to the United Nations Convention Against Torture prohibition against "cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment," and to follow Army Field Manual rules for humane treatment of prisoners. A yes vote backed the amendment to HR 2663.

McCain voted YES. Obama voted YES.

ARCTIC DRILLING: Voting 48-51, senators on Nov. 3, 2005, refused to keep the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge off limits to oil and gas drilling. The vote upheld language in S 1932 to permit drilling in about 2,000 acres of the 19 million-acre refuge on the coastal plain of northeastern Alaska. A yes vote opposed ANWR drilling.

McCain voted YES. Obama voted YES.

REPORTS ON IRAQ: Voting 79-19, senators on Nov. 15, 2005, called upon President Bush to publicly report every three months on the Iraqi government's progress toward conditions that would enable U.S. troops to withdraw from Iraq. A yes vote was to add the non-binding, GOP-drafted language to S 1042.

McCain voted NO. Obama voted YES.

NEW TAX CUTS: Senators on Nov. 18, 2005, passed, 64-33, a bill (S 2020) to cut tax by at least \$60 billion over the following five years. About half of the sum would result from steps to temporarily protect 14 million middle-income taxpayers against the creep of the Alternative Minimum Tax. A yes vote was to pass S 2020.

McCain voted YES. Obama voted NO.

DEFICIT REDUCTION On a tally of 51-50, with Vice President Cheney casting the tie-breaking vote, the Senate on Dec. 21, 2005, approved the conference report on a bill to reduce deficit spending by \$39.7 billion over five years through entitlement curbs and revenue hikes. The bill achieved most of its savings by slowing spending growth for student-loan programs, Medicaid and Medicare. A yes vote was to pass S 1932

McCain voted YES. Obama voted NO.