

An hourglass-shaped graphic with a globe inside. The top bulb is dark blue, and the bottom bulb is light blue. The globe is centered in the narrow neck of the hourglass. The top bulb is filled with a dark blue globe, and the bottom bulb is filled with a light blue globe. The hourglass is set against a white background.

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Congressional Research Service

Report RL30562

*Congressional Roll Call and other Record Votes: First  
Congress Through 108th Congress, 1789-2004*

John S. Pontius, Government and Finance Division

March 3, 2005

**Abstract.** This compilation provides information on roll call and other record votes taken in the House of Representatives and Senate from the first Congress through the 108th Congress, 1789 through 2004.

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# CRS Report for Congress

Received through the CRS Web

## **Congressional Roll Call and Other Record Votes: First Congress Through 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1789 Through 2004**

**Updated March 3, 2005**

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<http://wikileaks.org/wiki/CRS-RL30562>

# Congressional Roll Call and Other Record Votes: First Congress Through 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1789 Through 2004

## Summary

This compilation provides information on roll call and other record votes taken in the House of Representatives and Senate from the first Congress through the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1789 through 2004.

**Table 1** provides data for the House, the Senate, and both chambers together. Data provided include total record votes taken during each Congress, and the cumulative total record votes taken from the first Congress through the end of each subsequent Congress. The data for each Congress are also broken down by session, from the 80<sup>th</sup> Congress through the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1947 through 2004.

Figures 1 through 3 display the number of record votes in each chamber for each session from the 92<sup>nd</sup> Congress through 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1971 through 2004. They begin with 1971, the first year for which the House authorized record votes in the Committee of the Whole, pursuant to the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970.

In the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, there were 1,218 record votes in the House of Representatives and 675 record votes in the Senate. From 1789 through 2004, there were 92,206 such votes — 46,017 votes in the House, and 46,189 votes in the Senate.

This report will be updated following the conclusion of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, first session.

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# Congressional Roll Call and Other Record Votes: First Congress Through 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1789 Through 2004

## Roll Call and Record Votes

This compilation provides information on record votes taken in the House of Representatives and Senate from the first Congress through the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1789 through 2004. For purposes of this compilation, a “record vote” is defined as any vote for which public record is made of the votes cast by individual Members.

In the Senate, all record votes are taken by a call of the roll,<sup>1</sup> in which Members state their preference to a clerk. In the House, record votes are normally taken by electronic device, with Members inserting voting cards into a machine and pressing a button to record their preference. Before this system was installed in 1972 (and since, when the system has been unavailable), clerks recorded Members’ votes on the basis of the call of the roll, similarly to the Senate.

**Table 1** provides data on the record votes of the House and Senate, and both chambers together, from the first Congress through the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1789 through 2004. It gives both the total number in, and the cumulative total through, each Congress. For example, in the first Congress (1789 through 1790), there were 109 votes in the House and 100 in the Senate. In the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, there were 1,218 record votes in the House of Representatives and 675 record votes in the Senate. From 1789 through 2004, there were 92,206 such votes — 46,017 votes in the House, and 46,189 votes in the Senate.

Following **Table 1**, three graphs display data on record votes in each chamber for each session of Congress from the 92<sup>nd</sup> through 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1971 through 2004. They begin with 1971, the first year for which the House authorized record votes in the Committee of the Whole, pursuant to the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970. The first graph shows the total number of record votes for each Congress.

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<sup>1</sup> “A roll call is a call of the roll to determine whether a quorum is present, to establish a quorum, or to vote on a question.” Walter Kravitz, *Congressional Quarterly’s American Congressional Dictionary*, Second Edition (Washington: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1997), p. 229. This report is concerned only with record votes and not voice, division, and unrecorded teller votes. See CQ’s *American Congressional Dictionary* for the definitions of the following terms relating to voting: automatic roll call, casting vote, cloture, cluster voting, constitutional votes, division vote, electronic voting, ghost voting, majority vote, proxy voting, Randolph rule, recapitulation of a vote, reconsideration of a vote, recorded vote, recorded vote by clerks, roll call, Speaker’s vote, teller vote, tie vote, voice vote, and yeas and nays.

The second and third graphs show, for the House and Senate respectively, the total number of record votes for each session of Congress.

For the 80<sup>th</sup> Congress through the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1947 through 2004, the period usually designated the “modern Congress,” the table also gives the total number of record votes in each chamber during each session of Congress. These data are not readily available for earlier Congresses.<sup>2</sup> Thus, corresponding cells of the table for Congresses before the 80<sup>th</sup> Congress carry the notation “*na.*”

For the House from the 92<sup>nd</sup> Congress through the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1971 through 2004, the table also breaks down the record votes during each session into roll call votes (yea and nay votes) and recorded votes. For the earlier years, in which this distinction was not applicable, corresponding cells of the table carry the notation “*n/a.*”

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<sup>2</sup> In addition, in some of those earlier Congresses, three and occasionally even four sessions were held.

Table 1. Record Votes in Congress, First Congress Through 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1789 Through 2004

Congress/Years		House of Representatives								Senate				Both Chambers	
		1 <sup>st</sup> Session			2 <sup>nd</sup> Session			All Sessions		1 <sup>st</sup> Session	2 <sup>nd</sup> Session	All Sessions Total	Cumulative Total	Congress Total	Cumulative Total
		Roll Call (yea/nay) Votes <sup>a</sup>	Recorded Votes <sup>b</sup>	Session Total	Roll Call (yea/nay) Votes <sup>a</sup>	Recorded Votes <sup>b</sup>	Session Total	All Sessions Total	Cumulative Total						
1	1789-1790	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	109	109	na	na	100	100	209	209
2	1791-1792	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	102	211	na	na	52	152	154	363
3	1793-1794	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	69	280	na	na	79	231	148	511
4	1795-1796	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	83	363	na	na	86	317	169	680
5	1797-1798	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	155	518	na	na	202	519	357	1,037
6	1799-1800	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	96	614	na	na	120	639	216	1,253
7	1801-1802	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	141	755	na	na	88	727	229	1,482
8	1803-1804	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	132	887	na	na	150	877	282	1,764
9	1805-1806	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	158	1,045	na	na	88	965	246	2,010
10	1807-1808	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	237	1,282	na	na	91	1,056	328	2,338
11	1809-1810	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	293	1,575	na	na	167	1,223	460	2,798
12	1811-1812	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	314	1,889	na	na	204	1,427	518	3,316
13	1813-1814	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	352	2,241	na	na	263	1,690	615	3,931
14	1815-1816	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	113	2,354	na	na	189	1,879	302	4,233
15	1817-1818	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	106	2,460	na	na	132	2,011	238	4,471

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Congress/Years		House of Representatives								Senate				Both Chambers	
		1 <sup>st</sup> Session			2 <sup>nd</sup> Session			All Sessions		1 <sup>st</sup> Session	2 <sup>nd</sup> Session	All Sessions Total	Cumulative Total	Congress Total	Cumulative Total
		Roll Call (yea/nay) Votes <sup>a</sup>	Recorded Votes <sup>b</sup>	Session Total	Roll Call (yea/nay) Votes <sup>a</sup>	Recorded Votes <sup>b</sup>	Session Total	All Sessions Total	Cumulative Total						
16	1819-1820	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	147	2,607	na	na	120	2,131	267	4,738
17	1821-1822	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	95	2,702	na	na	91	2,222	186	4,924
18	1823-1824	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	94	2,796	na	na	178	2,400	272	5,196
19	1825-1826	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	111	2,907	na	na	234	2,634	345	5,541
20	1827-1828	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	233	3,140	na	na	238	2,872	471	6,012
21	1829-1830	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	273	3,413	na	na	277	3,149	550	6,562
22	1831-1832	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	462	3,875	na	na	422	3,571	884	7,446
23	1833-1834	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	327	4,202	na	na	229	3,800	556	8,002
24	1835-1836	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	459	4,661	na	na	439	4,239	898	8,900
25	1837-1838	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	475	5,136	na	na	410	4,649	885	9,785
26	1839-1840	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	751	5,887	na	na	334	4,983	1,085	10,870
27	1841-1842	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	974	6,861	na	na	822	5,805	1,796	12,666
28	1843-1844	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	597	7,458	na	na	305	6,110	902	13,568
29	1845-1846	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	642	8,100	na	na	383	6,493	1,025	14,593
30	1847-1848	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	478	8,578	na	na	344	6,837	822	15,415
31	1849-1850	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	572	9,150	na	na	499	7,336	1,071	16,486



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Congress/Years		House of Representatives								Senate				Both Chambers	
		1 <sup>st</sup> Session			2 <sup>nd</sup> Session			All Sessions		1 <sup>st</sup> Session	2 <sup>nd</sup> Session	All Sessions Total	Cumulative Total	Congress Total	Cumulative Total
		Roll Call (yea/nay) Votes <sup>a</sup>	Recorded Votes <sup>b</sup>	Session Total	Roll Call (yea/nay) Votes <sup>a</sup>	Recorded Votes <sup>b</sup>	Session Total	All Sessions Total	Cumulative Total						
32	1851-1852	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	455	9,605	na	na	358	7,694	813	17,299
33	1853-1854	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	607	10,212	na	na	546	8,240	1,153	18,452
34	1855-1856	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	729	10,941	na	na	449	8,689	1,178	19,630
35	1857-1858	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	548	11,489	na	na	702	9,391	1,250	20,880
36	1859-1860	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	433	11,922	na	na	607	9,998	1,040	21,920
37	1861-1862	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	638	12,560	na	na	801	10,799	1,439	23,359
38	1863-1864	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	600	13,160	na	na	598	11,397	1,198	24,557
39	1865-1866	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	613	13,773	na	na	501	11,898	1,114	25,671
40	1867-1868	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	717	14,490	na	na	716	12,614	1,433	27,104
41	1869-1870	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	634	15,124	na	na	742	13,356	1,376	28,480
42	1871-1872	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	517	15,641	na	na	803	14,159	1,320	29,800
43	1873-1874	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	475	16,116	na	na	420	14,579	895	30,695
44	1875-1876	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	328	16,444	na	na	434	15,013	762	31,457
45	1877-1878	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	377	16,821	na	na	585	15,598	962	32,419
46	1879-1880	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	439	17,260	na	na	570	16,168	1,009	33,428
47	1881-1882	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	349	17,609	na	na	986	17,154	1,335	34,763

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Congress/Years		House of Representatives								Senate				Both Chambers	
		1 <sup>st</sup> Session			2 <sup>nd</sup> Session			All Sessions		1 <sup>st</sup> Session	2 <sup>nd</sup> Session	All Sessions Total	Cumulative Total	Congress Total	Cumulative Total
		Roll Call (yea/nay) Votes <sup>a</sup>	Recorded Votes <sup>b</sup>	Session Total	Roll Call (yea/nay) Votes <sup>a</sup>	Recorded Votes <sup>b</sup>	Session Total	All Sessions Total	Cumulative Total						
48	1883-1884	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	334	17,943	na	na	428	17,582	762	35,525
49	1885-1886	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	306	18,249	na	na	461	18,043	767	36,292
50	1887-1888	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	320	18,569	na	na	389	18,432	709	37,001
51	1889-1890	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	587	19,156	na	na	526	18,958	1,113	38,114
52	1891-1892	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	304	19,460	na	na	209	19,167	513	38,627
53	1893-1894	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	373	19,833	na	na	561	19,728	934	39,561
54	1895-1896	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	162	19,995	na	na	197	19,925	359	39,920
55	1897-1898	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	183	20,178	na	na	381	20,306	564	40,484
56	1899-1900	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	149	20,327	na	na	169	20,475	318	40,802
57	1901-1902	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	185	20,512	na	na	118	20,593	303	41,105
58	1903-1904	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	87	20,599	na	na	92	20,685	179	41,284
59	1905-1906	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	136	20,735	na	na	128	20,813	264	41,548
60	1907-1908	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	312	21,047	na	na	84	20,897	396	41,944
61	1909-1910	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	202	21,249	na	na	268	21,165	470	42,414
62	1911-1912	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	262	21,511	na	na	396	21,561	658	43,072
63	1913-1914	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	282	21,793	na	na	572	22,133	854	43,926

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Congress/Years		House of Representatives								Senate				Both Chambers	
		1 <sup>st</sup> Session			2 <sup>nd</sup> Session			All Sessions		1 <sup>st</sup> Session	2 <sup>nd</sup> Session	All Sessions Total	Cumulative Total	Congress Total	Cumulative Total
		Roll Call (yea/nay) Votes <sup>a</sup>	Recorded Votes <sup>b</sup>	Session Total	Roll Call (yea/nay) Votes <sup>a</sup>	Recorded Votes <sup>b</sup>	Session Total	All Sessions Total	Cumulative Total						
64	1915-1916	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	157	21,950	na	na	406	22,539	563	44,489
65	1917-1918	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	266	22,216	na	na	384	22,923	650	45,139
66	1919-1920	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	339	22,555	na	na	407	23,330	746	45,885
67	1921-1922	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	362	22,917	na	na	751	24,081	1,113	46,998
68	1923-1924	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	179	23,096	na	na	235	24,316	414	47,412
69	1925-1926	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	114	23,210	na	na	236	24,552	350	47,762
70	1927-1928	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	72	23,282	na	na	191	24,743	263	48,025
71	1929-1930	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	103	23,385	na	na	436	25,179	539	48,564
72	1931-1932	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	123	23,508	na	na	280	25,459	403	48,967
73	1933-1934	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	143	23,651	na	na	228	25,687	371	49,338
74	1935-1936	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	212	23,863	na	na	193	25,880	405	49,743
75	1937-1938	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	158	24,021	na	na	174	26,054	332	50,075
76	1939-1940	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	227	24,248	na	na	266	26,320	493	50,568
77	1941-1942	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	152	24,400	na	na	192	26,512	344	50,912
78	1943-1944	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	155	24,555	na	na	220	26,732	375	51,287
79	1945-1946	na	n/a	na	na	n/a	na	249	24,804	na	na	244	26,976	493	51,780

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Congress/Years		House of Representatives								Senate				Both Chambers	
		1 <sup>st</sup> Session			2 <sup>nd</sup> Session			Both Sessions		1 <sup>st</sup> Session	2 <sup>nd</sup> Session	Both Sessions Total	Cumulative Total	Congress Total	Cumulative Total
		Roll Call (yea/nay) Votes <sup>a</sup>	Recorded Votes <sup>b</sup>	Session Total	Roll Call (yea/nay) Votes <sup>a</sup>	Recorded Votes <sup>b</sup>	Session Total	Both Sessions Total	Cumulative Total						
80	1947-1948	84	<i>n/a</i>	84	79	<i>n/a</i>	79	163	24,967	138	110	248	27,224	411	52,191
81	1949-1950	121	<i>n/a</i>	121	154	<i>n/a</i>	154	275	25,242	226	229	455	27,679	730	52,921
82	1951-1952	109	<i>n/a</i>	109	72	<i>n/a</i>	72	181	25,423	202	129	331	28,010	512	53,433
83	1953-1954	71	<i>n/a</i>	71	76	<i>n/a</i>	76	147	25,570	89	181	270	28,280	417	53,850
84	1955-1956	73	<i>n/a</i>	73	74	<i>n/a</i>	74	147	25,717	88	136	224	28,504	371	54,221
85	1957-1958	100	<i>n/a</i>	100	93	<i>n/a</i>	93	193	25,910	111	202	313	28,817	506	54,727
86	1959-1960	87	<i>n/a</i>	87	93	<i>n/a</i>	93	180	26,090	215	207	422	29,239	602	55,329
87	1961-1962	116	<i>n/a</i>	116	124	<i>n/a</i>	124	240	26,330	207	227	434	29,673	674	56,003
88	1963-1964	119	<i>n/a</i>	119	113	<i>n/a</i>	113	232	26,562	229	312	541	30,214	773	56,776
89	1965-1966	201	<i>n/a</i>	201	193	<i>n/a</i>	193	394	26,956	259	238	497	30,711	891	57,667
90	1967-1968	245	<i>n/a</i>	245	233	<i>n/a</i>	233	478	27,434	315	280	595	31,306	1,073	58,740
91	1969-1970	177	<i>n/a</i>	177	266	<i>n/a</i>	266	443	27,877	245	422	667	31,973	1,110	59,850
92	1971-1972	212	108	320	244	85	329	649	28,526	423	532	955	32,928	1,604	61,454
93	1973-1974	307	234	541	325	212	537	1,078	29,604	594	544	1,138	34,066	2,216	63,670
94	1975-1976	362	250	612	448	213	661	1,273	30,877	611	700	1,311	35,377	2,584	66,254
95	1977-1978	471	235	706	564	270	834	1,540	32,417	636	520	1,156	36,533	2,696	68,950

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Congress/Years		House of Representatives								Senate				Both Chambers	
		1 <sup>st</sup> Session			2 <sup>nd</sup> Session			Both Sessions		1 <sup>st</sup> Session	2 <sup>nd</sup> Session	Both Sessions Total	Cumulative Total	Congress Total	Cumulative Total
		Roll Call (yea/nay) Votes <sup>a</sup>	Recorded Votes <sup>b</sup>	Session Total	Roll Call (yea/nay) Votes <sup>a</sup>	Recorded Votes <sup>b</sup>	Session Total	Both Sessions Total	Cumulative Total						
96	1979-1980	359	313	672	420	184	604	1,276	33,693	509	546	1,055	37,588	2,331	71,281
97	1981-1982	224	129	353	295	164	459	812	34,505	497	469	966	38,554	1,778	73,059
98	1983-1984	297	201	498	227	181	408	906	35,411	381	292	673	39,227	1,579	74,638
99	1985-1986	255	184	439	224	227	451	890	36,301	381	359	740	39,967	1,630	76,268
100	1987-1988	234	254	488	308	143	451	939	37,240	420	379	799	40,766	1,738	78,006
101	1989-1990	226	142	368	271	239	510	878	38,118	312	326	638	41,404	1,516	79,522
102	1991-1992	238	190	428	271	202	473	901	39,019	280	270	550	41,954	1,451	80,973
103	1993-1994	266	331	597	205	292	497	1,094	40,113	395	329	724	42,678	1,818	82,791
104	1995-1996	299	568	867	223	231	454	1,321	41,434	613	306	919	43,597	2,240	85,031
105	1997-1998	285	348	633	257	276	533	1,166	42,600	298	314	612	44,209	1,778	86,809
106	1999-2000	320	289	609	359	241	600	1,209	43,809	374	298	672	44,881	1,881	88,690
107	2001-2002	313	194	507	302	181	483	990	44,799	380	253	633	45,514	1,623	90,313
108	2003-2004	417	258	675	313	230	543	1218	46,017	459	216	675	46,189	1,893	92,206

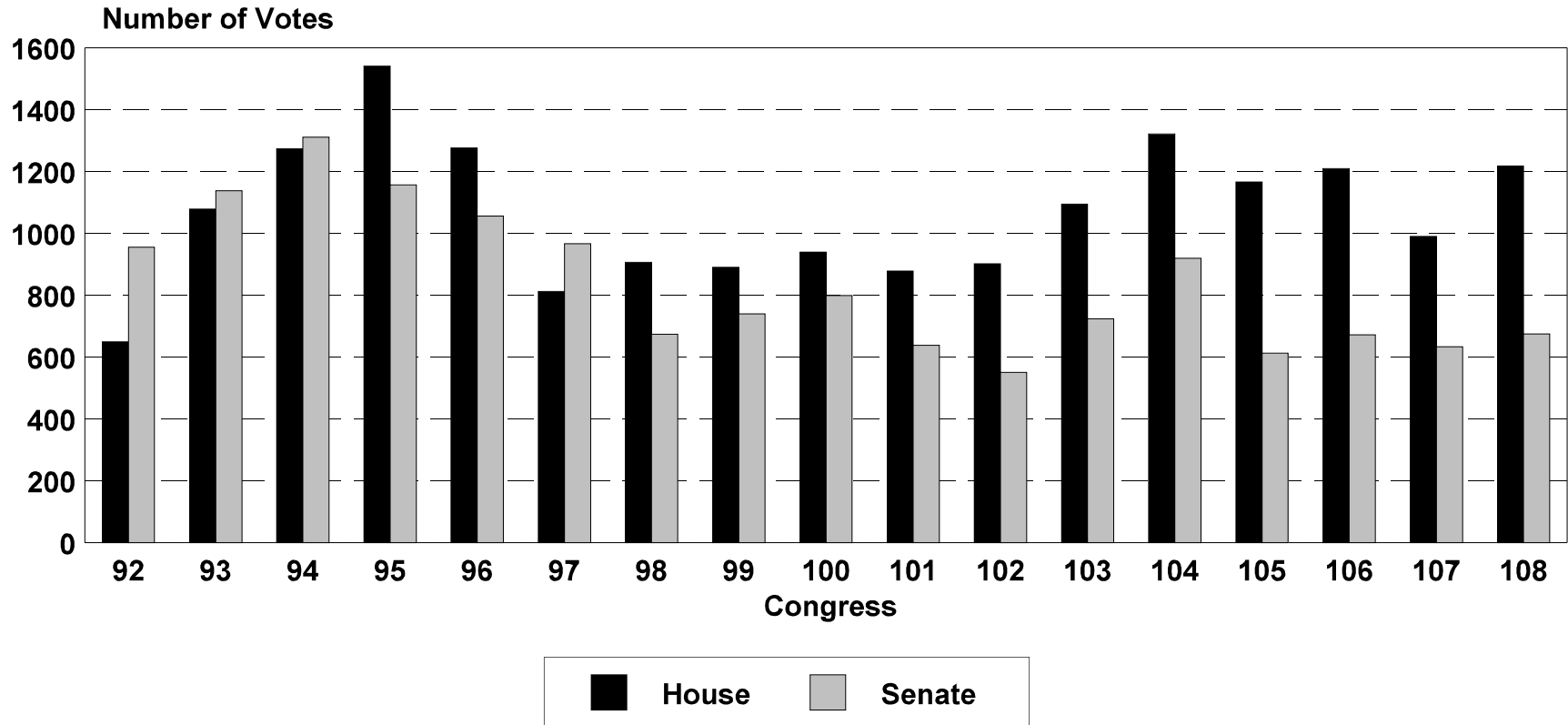
**Source:** Data were obtained from the following sources: (1) U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *Number of Roll Call Votes in the U.S. House of Representatives and in the U.S. Senate, First Through 79<sup>th</sup> Congresses*, by Sula P. Richardson, Report unnumbered (Washington: Jan. 16, 1985, out of print); *Indicators of House of Representatives Workload and Activity*, by Roger H. Davidson and Carol Hardy, CRS Report 87-492 S (Washington: June 8, 1987, out of print); *Indicators of Senate Activity and Workload*, by Roger H. Davidson and Carol Hardy, CRS Report 87-497 S (Washington: June 8, 1987, out of print); and (2) *Congressional Record*, Daily Digest, "Resume of Congressional Activity," Dec. 22, 1987, p. D1679; Nov. 10, 1988, p. D1399; Nov. 21, 1989, p. D1431; Nov. 2, 1990, p. D1453; Nov. 27, 1991, p. D1549; Oct. 9, 1992, p. D1332; Nov. 26, 1993, p. D1389; Dec. 1, 1994, p. D1273; Jan. 3, 1996, p. D1535; Oct. 4, 1996, p. D1053; Jan. 19, 1999, p. D29; Jan. 30, 2002, p. D46; Jan. 29, 2002, p. D23; Dec. 16, 2002, p. D1193, Dec. 8, 2003, p. D1349, and Dec 20, 2004, p. D1135.

**Notes:** For the purposes of this compilation, a record vote is defined as any vote for which public record is made of how individual Members voted (for or against). In the House, record votes include both roll call (yea and nay) and recorded votes. In the Senate, all record votes (yea and nay, and roll call votes) are taken by a call of the roll. See text for definition of terms.

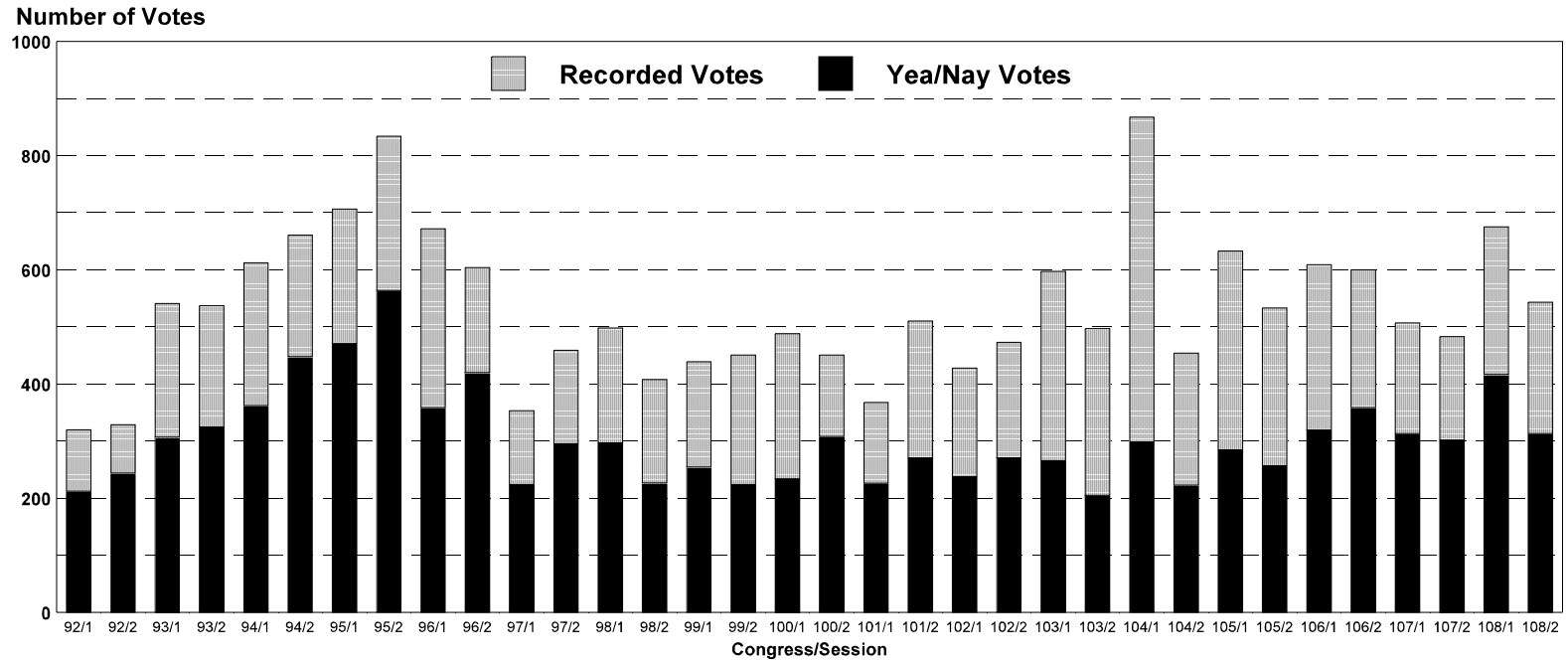
a. Roll call (yea and nay) votes are taken only when the House is sitting as the House and not when in Committee of the Whole (na=not readily available).

b. Recorded votes may be taken when the House sits either as the House or in Committee of the Whole. Because this form of record votes began in 1971 in the House, the table indicates n/a (not applicable) for the period 1789 through 1970.

**Figure 1. Total Number of Record Votes, House of Representatives and Senate, 92<sup>nd</sup> Congress - 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1971-2004**



**Figure 2. Total Number of Record Votes (Yea/Nay and Recorded), House of Representatives, by Session, 92<sup>nd</sup> Congress - 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1971-2004**



**Figure 3. Total Number of Record Votes, Senate, by Session, 92<sup>nd</sup> Congress - 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1971-2004**

Number of Votes

