Biden, Klobuchar rank highest among Presidential candidates who served in the Senate
June 11, 2019

WASHINGTON, DC — The Lugar Center and the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University today jointly released updated lifetime Bipartisan Index rankings of U.S. Senators who have served since 1993. The non-partisan tool measures the degree to which Senators work across party lines.

The lifetime Senate scores show a wide variance among current Democratic presidential candidates, ranging from former Vice President Joe Biden, who placed in the top quartile of the rankings, to Senator Bernie Sanders who placed 247th out of the 250 Senators covered by the Index.

“The new data provides historical context for the challenges to bipartisan collaboration in the Senate over the last twenty-six years,” said Lugar Center Executive Director John Lugar. “But it also shows that legislators can work to build consensus with members of the opposite party regardless of where they fall on the political spectrum.”

The rankings, based on bill sponsorship and co-sponsorship data, update the lifetime Senate scores released in December 2017. The new rankings incorporate results from the 115th Congress (2017-2018) into the lifetime rankings. The list covers 250 Senators who served at least 10 months between 1993 and 2018 and allows voters to see how willing their Senators have been to work across party lines over time.

In the updated rankings, Sen. Susan Collins (R, ME) was the top scoring sitting Senator ranking 2nd on the lifetime list. Former Sen. Lincoln Chafee (R, RI) retained his status as the most bipartisan Senator of the past 26 years. At the bottom of the list, former Sen. Jim DeMint (R, SC) continued to occupy the last spot (250th) in the Index. Sen. Bernie Sanders (D, VT) ranked the lowest of any Senator currently in Congress.

In addition to Sen. Sanders, seven other current Democratic presidential candidates received scores for their performance during their time in the Senate. Vice President Joe Biden (D, DE), who served in the Senate from 1973-2009, was the top scorer among this group, ranking 47th. Sen. Amy Klobuchar
(D, MN) joined Senator Biden as the only other Senator among the candidates to have a positive lifetime Bipartisan Index score. She ranked 78th out of 250.

Michael Bennet (D, CO) ranked 143rd, though his score was below 0.00 (the historical average for Senators).

All other Democratic Presidential candidates had scores in the bottom quartile of the 250. Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D, MA) was 195th; Sen. Cory Booker (D, NJ) was 214th; Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D, NY) was 234th; and Sen. Kamala Harris (D, CA) was 246th.

To see current and previous Bipartisan Index rankings, click here.

Media Contacts:
Lauren Mullins: Lauren.Mullins@georgetown.edu
Betsy Holahan: Bholahan@greatpointstrategies.com

About the Lugar Center:
Founded by former U.S. Senator Richard Lugar, the non-profit Lugar Center is a platform for informed debate and analysis of global issues, including nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, global food security, foreign assistance effectiveness and global development, energy security, and enhancing bipartisan governance. http://www.thelugarcenter.org

About the McCourt School of Public Policy:
Founded in 1996 as the Georgetown Public Policy Institute, the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University is a top-ranked graduate school located at the center of the policy world in Washington, D.C. Our mission is to give our students the rigorous quantitative and analytic skills needed to design, implement and evaluate smart policies and to conduct policy research and recommend effective solutions on today’s most critical topics. http://mccourt.georgetown.edu

###