

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE LAWMAKING PROCESS:
AN ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL PARTIES' EFFECT ON LEGISLATIVE
PROCEDURES, ELECTIONS, AND INTERBRANCH RELATIONS

by

LAINE P. SHAY

(Under the Direction of Jamie L. Carson and Michael S. Lynch)

ABSTRACT

A considerable amount of scholarly attention has been devoted to exploring the relationship between political parties and the legislative branch. However, most of this research has only been conducted in the context of national-level politics. While this approach has enriched our understanding of political parties, unfortunately, it has empirical and substantive limitations. This dissertation explores three research questions regarding state political parties and their relationship with the legislative branch. In Chapter 2, I examine whether legislative term limits influence legislative procedures. Specifically, I analyze whether term limits correspond to an increase in Speaker power. Chapter 3 focuses on state legislative elections. I examine whether various attributes associated with the majority party influence electoral outcomes for state legislators. In Chapter 4, I focus on interbranch relationships. Specifically, I analyze whether gubernatorial leadership is associated with an increase in partisan behavior regarding legislative roll-call votes. Overall, this project contributes to our understanding of state

political parties and how they can influence various parts of our institutions and political system.

INDEX WORDS: Political Institutions, Legislative Politics, Political Parties, and State Politics

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DEDICATION

To my amazing mother.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In his seminal book, *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*, John H. Aldrich (1995, p. 3) provocatively declares that “democracy is *unworkable* save in terms of parties.”¹ Further, Aldrich argues that parties can have substantial influence on other political institutions and the public. Thus, it is not surprising that scholars have devoted considerable attention to political parties on a wide array of topics such as legislative procedure (Binder 1997), separation of powers (Black et al. 2007), and political accountability (Downs 1957).

While previous research has enriched our understanding of political parties and how they interact with other political entities, most scholars have focused their attention only on parties at the federal-level. There are both methodological and substantive limitations with only analyzing parties in this context. From a methodological perspective, the U.S. parties tend to display limited variation across time. More specifically, political parties tend to evolve slowly across history. Due to the limited number of cases, it is challenging to employ some rigorous empirical tests for this type of political institution. Regarding the substantive limitations, the American political parties at the federal level are only a fraction of the actors involved in the party system. Parties are active in both the state and municipal-level. Because state and local parties have

¹ In this quote, Aldrich is responding to a passage by Schattschneider (1960).

received only limited scholarly attention, it is unclear whether they behave similarly to parties on the federal level. Thus, our knowledge of political parties is incomplete.

In this dissertation, I address some of these limitations regarding research in political parties by examining this institution in the context of state politics. State parties display significant variation in polarization, ideology, capacity, and other political dimensions. This institutional variation allows me to employ empirical tests, for several prominent political party theories, which cannot be easily conducted for the parties at the national-level. Additionally, state parties have several important responsibilities. For instance, state parties are on the front-line of recruiting both federal and state-level candidates because of their direct interaction with the party's activists (Farmer and Little 2007). Thus, focusing on parties in this context has applied benefits as well.

Further, the focus of this dissertation will be on the role of state parties in the context of their relationship with the legislature. I examine the interaction between political parties and the legislative branch due to the significant role that parties play in shaping this branch of government. For instance, parties are partially responsible for the formation of stable voting coalitions in legislatures (Aldrich 1995). Additionally, political parties are vital in American legislative elections (Campbell et al. 1960; Campbell 1986). While partisan politics most likely has an important role in both the executive and judicial branches at the state-level, I leave this to future research.

In this dissertation, each one of the three essays analyze a different angle of state parties and their interaction with the legislative branch, thus, providing us with a more comprehensive understanding of political institutions. In the first essay, I look at how institutional design affects legislative rules and procedures. In particular, I focus on how

legislative term limits influence the rules regarding the amount of power delegated to the party's leadership. In the second essay, I explore whether various attributes of state political parties (i.e. ideology) can influence legislative elections. In the third essay, I synthesize the topics of interbranch politics and party politics. I analyze whether the governor's policy agenda can influence the degree of partisanship observed in the legislature regarding roll-call votes.

Taken together, these essays emphasize the interaction between two institutions in state politics: the legislative branch and the party system. In the remaining portion of this chapter, I describe in more detail each of the three essays in the dissertation. I describe each of the topics I will focus on in each chapter, methods employed, and how each essay contributes to our understanding of political institutions.

1.1 Legislative Term Limits and Speaker Power

The second chapter of this dissertation assesses whether legislative term limits influence the amount of power delegated to the Speaker. The power a Speaker possesses can have a significant impact on the legislative agenda and on the structure of the government. Thus, it is important to analyze the political and institutional factors that might encourage the members to delegate more power to their leadership.

A large body of research has examined the factors that are associated with a powerful Speaker (Aldrich and Rohde 2001; Clucas 2001; Richman 2010). Relevant to my research, Carey et al. (2006) and Mooney (2012) use surveys from state legislators to analyze the influence of legislative term limits. Both studies find that legislative term limits are associated with a weaker Speaker. The authors suggest that this finding is because the Speakers in term-limited states do not have the time to develop their skills in

acquiring power, and the members have few incentives to invest in the internal power structure of the chamber. However, this runs contrary to Mooney's theoretical framework, and he encourages future scholars to analyze this relationship in further detail.

Building off Mooney's (2012) "collective action problem" theoretical framework, regarding state Speaker power, I suggest there are two reasons that members in term-limited states might delegate more institutional tools to control the lawmaking process to their chamber's leadership. First, one of the consequences of legislative term limits is that policy and institutional familiarity tends to decrease (Moncrief, Niemi, and Powell 2008) and this may pose a challenge to governing. Therefore, the legislators might be willing to delegate more institutional tools to their Speaker in order to overcome this obstacle to lawmaking. Second, legislative term limits are known to weaken relationships among the members serving within the chamber and enhance the influence of the Speaker (Sarbaugh-Thompson et al. 2006). The lack of personal relationships among the legislators may pose a challenge to the chamber regarding legislating and accomplishing their policy goals (Kirkland 2011). Therefore, the chamber might be more willing to delegate power to their Speaker.

To test the relationship between legislative term limits and Speaker power, I use an additive index with data provided by Mooney (2013). This data incorporates legislative rules and procedures from lower chambers in 49 states. Specifically, this measure includes the following legislative procedures: committee chair appointment power, committee appointment power, leadership appointment power, bill referral, and control over committee staff. When using three different measures of legislative term

limits, I provide some evidence to support my theoretical expectation. Specifically, legislative term limits are associated with an increase in Speaker power.

This chapter makes several contributions. First, most scholars have explored the impact of legislative term limits on Speaker power with legislative surveys. While this type of data has enriched our understanding of term limits, a weakness to this approach is that these scholars can only capture how legislators perceive term limits' affecting their chamber's leadership. Few studies have examined the consequences of legislative term limits with actual chamber rules and procedures over an extended period or with multiple states. Second, previous research has shown that legislative term limits influence elections, public policy, and interbranch relations. However, few studies have shown that term limits can influence legislative procedure. These findings show that term limits can, indeed, have a significant consequence on chamber organization.

1.2 State Parties, Political Accountability, and Elections

One of the most prominent political institutions that influences elections are political parties (Campbell et al. 1960; Fiorinia 1981; Ranney 1954). In this chapter, I explore whether various attributes associated with state political parties can influence state legislative elections.

A growing body of work explores political accountability with state legislators and has reached two broad conclusions. First, a vein of literature demonstrates that national political factors, such as the president's approval rating, have a significant role in state legislative election results (Campbell 1986). This research suggests that because state legislative elections are in a low-information political environment, this forces the voters to rely more heavily on national-level cues when reaching a decision at the ballot

box. Second, scholars have found that state legislators can be *indirectly* held accountable for their individual behavior. For instance, Rogers (2015) finds that state legislators that are ideologically out-of-step with their constituents are more likely to face a challenger in the next election.

In this chapter, I examine whether majority party members are held accountable for their party's collective behavior. In particular, I argue that two attributes associated with state parties should be associated with an increase in political accountability for the members in the majority party in the state legislature. First, I argue that a more cohesive majority party should enhance the effect of state economic voting in states with unified government. I suggest that the majority party candidates might be able to more easily claim credit and campaign on the state's growing economy with a highly unified governing party, thus, increasing their odds of securing a larger share of the legislative seats. Second, I contend that an increase in the ideological distance between the majority party and the median voter in a state should correspond to a decrease in seats for the majority party. The voters should punish members in the governing party at the ballot box for pursuing policies that are ideologically incongruent with the voters (Downs 1957). I suggest that the public becomes informed about their state political parties by the media and through campaign activities (e.g., challengers and interest group activities).

The dependent variable in this analysis is the percentage of seats gained for the majority party in the general election. For the party cohesion measure, I use Shor and McCarty's (2011) NPAT Common Space Scores. Specifically, I use the standard deviation of the majority party member's ideal point estimates as my measure. These ideal point estimates are comparable across states and time. For the second party

attribute, the ideological distance between the majority party and the median voter in the state, I use two different data sources to explore this relationship. Again, I use Shor and McCarty's ideal point estimates to measure the majority party's ideology. Regarding the median voter's ideology, I use Berry et al.'s (2010) state citizen ideology scores. For both of the state party attributes, I find some empirical evidence to support my theoretical expectations.

This chapter also offers several contributions. Political accountability is a necessary cornerstone of democracy. Politicians should fervently represent the interests of their constituents or face the consequences at the ballot box in the next election (Dahl 1956). Due to its importance to democratic governance, political scientists have extensively explored this topic with Congressional members at the federal level (Canes-Wrone et al. 2002; Jacobson and Carson 2016). However, significantly less attention regarding political accountability, has been explored in the context of state politics. These findings suggest that the voters can hold the state political parties responsible for their collective actions.

1.3 Interbranch Politics and Partisan Politics

The fourth chapter of my dissertation focuses on the nexus of interbranch politics and political parties. Specifically, I analyze how the political parties in the state legislatures respond to their governor acting as the "chief legislator" (Bernick and Wiggins 1981).

In Frances Lee's book, *Beyond Ideology* (2009), she presents the argument that presidential leadership tends to exacerbate partisanship in the U.S. Senate. Specifically, Lee finds that Senators are more likely to vote along party-lines for items on the U.S.

President's policy agenda. One limitation to Lee's groundbreaking study is that there is little variation in partisan polarization at the Congressional level. Specifically, her analysis, for the most part, includes Congresses in which the parties are highly polarized. Thus, it is unclear if Lee's findings and theoretical mechanisms hold in other political environments as well, such as legislative institutions with a high degree of bipartisanship.

In this chapter, I apply Lee's (2008; 2009) theoretical framework to state legislatures. I suggest that gubernatorial leadership should result in more partisan behavior in state legislative roll-call votes, and I provide two reasons to support this claim. First, I argue that the state legislators may use the governor's and their own partisan affiliation as an informational cue when reaching a decision on a roll-call vote. In other words, legislators of the same party as the governor might be more receptive to the policies the governor champions, and he or she uses the governor's partisanship as a cue on the pending measure's policy content. Conversely, members belonging to the opposing party, might be skeptical of any policy proposal that is advocated by the governor (Goren 2005). Second, the members might be more likely to vote along party-lines for items on the governor's agenda in order to influence the parties' reputation with the voters (Cox and McCubbins 2005). Legislators in the governor's party might be more likely to support his or her policy agenda because enacting these policies might help their party's reputation, at least in the context of governing. Alternatively, legislators in the opposing party might be more likely to vote against the executive branch's policy agenda. Voting down or even obstructing the executive branch's policy agenda could cause the governor's party to appear as ineffective with the voters. In turn, the parties' reputations might influence the members' chances of securing reelection. Taken

together, I expect that gubernatorial leadership to be associated with an increase in partisan behavior on legislative roll-call votes.

To assess the relationship between gubernatorial leadership and legislative partisanship, I examine the roll-call votes in 25 state legislatures in 2013. When using data from *Open States*, I collect over 36,400 roll-call votes.² I measure the roll-call partisanship by calculating the Rice Index of Party Difference Scores for each vote (Rice 1928). I use the State of the State Addresses to operationalize the governor's policy agenda. According to Ferguson (2003, p. 166), the State of the State Addresses "constitute valid and reliable indicators of executive policy goals." Additionally, I control for issue area with Kousser and Phillips's (2012) classification scheme.

When controlling for issue area and other political factors, I find some evidence to suggest that gubernatorial leadership corresponds to an increase in partisan behavior regarding legislative roll-call voting, however, it is contingent upon the policy area. In particular, the data suggest that gubernatorial leadership increases partisanship in the following issue areas: development, healthcare, education, social services, and political reform. The two notable exceptions is that gubernatorial leadership tends to promote bipartisanship for crime-related policies (e.g., calls for stricter laws on elderly abuse) and for environmental policies. Finally, I conduct a robustness check to see if the results hold when only examining final passage votes. I find little evidence that gubernatorial leadership has any influence when only examining final passage votes.

This chapter contributes to our understanding of partisanship and legislative politics for several reasons. First, conventional wisdom among many journalists is that

² *Open States* is managed by a non-profit organization that promotes government transparency.

governors should exercise greater “leadership” and champion more issues in order to bring several political actors together in the state. My findings suggest that this strategy would most likely have the opposite effect in most policy areas. Second, by examining the effects of gubernatorial leadership in diverse lawmaking environments, I can conduct a more robust test of Lee’s (2009) argument. Finally, political scientists have explored the determinants of partisan polarization at the federal-level in considerable detail. However, only a few studies have explored partisan roll-call voting in the context of state politics. Thus, the findings from this chapter provide a more comprehensive understanding of political parties and interbranch politics within our federalist system.

CHAPTER 2

DO LEGISLATIVE TERM LIMITS “LIMIT” THE SPEAKER? — EXPLORING THE EFFECT OF TERM LIMITS ON CHAMBER PROCEDURE

In 2010, the Arizona legislature entered into a bitter debate that spurred international attention over a legislative proposal titled “Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act,” or as it is more commonly known, S.B. 1070. This measure was designed to deter undocumented workers from entering and staying in Arizona. One of the bill’s controversial provisions required immigrants to carry legal documents, proving their legal status, on them at all times. Critics of the bill claimed it was blatantly unconstitutional and would result in racial profiling (Saenz 2011).

Before allowing a final passage vote on the bill, Speaker Kirk Adams (R-AZ) employed several procedural tools, delegated to his leadership position, in an effort to keep S.B. 1070 within the parameters of the Constitution and to address the concerns raised by critics of the bill.³ For instance, Speaker Adams held the bill in committee until several amendments that would protect minority groups from unlawful police stops were adopted. The Speaker also referred the bill to a committee that was sympathetic to his policy views.⁴ After several proposed substantive changes to the bill were adopted, the legislation passed the Arizona House of Representatives on a 35-21 roll-call vote and was later signed into law by the governor.

³ The legality of S.B. 1070 eventually reached the Supreme Court in *Arizona v. United States* (2012). The Court upheld and invalidated some provisions of the statute. Specifically, a few provisions of the bill were preempted by federal statute.

⁴ <http://www.heritage.org/events/2012/04/arizona-immigration>

Arizona's S.B. 1070 illustrates how a state Speaker's institutionalized powers can have significant consequences on policy outcomes. However, the willingness of the Arizona House members to endow their Speaker with these powerful procedural tools stands in stark contrast to other states, such as Alaska and North Dakota, whose leaders are much more limited in authority. For example, Speaker Mike Chenault (R-AK), the current leader of the Alaska House of Representatives, has little sway over the committee assignments, leadership structure, or even the legislative staff (Mooney 2013). This raises the following question: why are certain states' Speakers more powerful than others?

One important institutional characteristic that might partially account for the amount of formal powers delegated to a state Speaker is legislative term limits. While other state legislative factors, such as professionalism (Clucas 2007) and the distribution of partisan preferences (Aldrich and Rohde 2001; Richman 2010) are associated with a powerful chamber leader, the extent to which term limits are a factor remains uncertain (Mooney 2012). I argue that legislative term limits might incentivize the members to delegate more tools to control the lawmaking process to their chamber leadership in order to overcome collection action problems for two reasons.⁵ First, one consequence of term limits is that a decrease in institutional familiarity and policy expertise tends to occur (Moncrief, Niemi, and Powell 2008) and this may pose a challenge to lawmaking. As a result, legislators might be willing to delegate more institutional tools to their leadership in order to overcome this obstacle to governing. Second, term limits tend to weaken relationships among the legislators serving within the chamber and enhance the influence

⁵ To be clear, I use the word "Speaker" to mean the leader of the lower chamber.

of the Speaker (Sarbaugh-Thompson et al. 2006). Consequently, the lack of personal relationships among the members may present a challenge to the chamber regarding passing important legislation and accomplishing their policy goals (Kirkland 2011). Thus, the chamber might be more willing to delegate power via tools to control the lawmaking process to their leadership. I test this theoretical expectation with Mooney's (2013) measure of Speaker power across 49 states between 1987 and 2015.

This chapter proceeds as follows. First, I briefly highlight the literature on state Speaker power. From there, I develop the argument, based on simple collective action theory (see, Mooney 2012), that legislative term limits should be a key determinant in a state Speaker's power via the delegation of institutional tools that control the lawmaking process. I then describe my data, research design, empirical results, and robustness checks. Lastly, I review the potential implications of my findings for term limits and leadership power.

2.1 Previous Literature on Leadership Power

At the core of politics is power (Dahl 1957), and state Speakers can use their power to impact policy. For instance, the Colorado media has observed how Speaker Crisanta Duran (D) of the Colorado House of Representatives has used the power delegated to her office to control the legislative agenda. In particular, Speaker Duran has almost complete authority over bill referral, and she frequently sends legislation that is antithetical to her party's core goals to the Veterans Committee, which is commonly referred to as the "kill committee." Speaker Duran unilaterally appointed the "kill committee's" chair and decided which members would be assigned to it. These tools ease Speaker Duran's ability to control legislation (Aguilar 2017). Or as one Colorado

legislator candidly stated when describing the Veterans Committee, “They have five hard core Democrats there who always vote no on Republican bills, with a few exceptions, but generally once it goes to the kill committee, the fix is in.” Legislation that would undermine the Affordable Care Act or “Obamacare” and a bill that would loosen gun regulations are just a few examples of legislation that has been sent to the “kill committee” (*KGNU* 2016). This example demonstrates how the tools delegated to the Speaker can sometimes have a substantive impact on legislative outputs. As this section will demonstrate, legislative scholars have also observed the importance of state Speakers and this has resulted in a well-developed literature.

Early research on state legislative organization uses the institutional and political variation among the states’ legislatures as a way to test prominent legislative theories (Clucas 2001, 2009). For instance, Richard Clucas (2001) examines state legislatures and the amount of power delegated to House Speakers to provide evidence for David Mayhew’s (1974) electoral theory of legislative politics. Specifically, he finds that legislators in electorally competitive states are more likely to delegate legislative control to the chamber’s leadership, so the leaders can more easily gain access to staff and valuable committee assignments for their reelection prospects. In a later article, Clucas (2009) again uses state legislatures to demonstrate the robustness of a prominent legislative theory, conditional party government (CPG). CPG posits that when the majority party is ideologically homogeneous and ideologically distinct from the minority party, then more power is delegated to the chamber’s leadership (Aldrich and Rohde 2001). Clucas finds indirect evidence that if the criteria for CPG are satisfied, then the

majority party leader in the lower chamber does in fact obtain more influence on public policy.

Within this line of inquiry, legislative scholars have also analyzed state legislatures not just for their insights into legislative theories, but to uncover the consequences of recent political reforms and political trends (Clucas 2007; Mooney 2012; Richman 2010). For instance, in the 1960s, state legislative reformists fought for more professionalized chambers in order to enhance their policymaking capabilities and effectiveness (Squire 2007). Richman (2010) finds that this policy change tends to weaken the office of the Speaker. He contends that the large legislative staff and high salaries, in professionalized legislatures, allow the legislators to more easily achieve their policy and reelection goals without the assistance from the Speaker. In another prominent example, Mooney (2012) explores how partisan polarization, a salient political phenomenon, influences control over the legislature. Mooney finds that the distribution of the parties' preferences has little effect on the amount of power delegated to the leadership. Instead, he finds that collective action problems caused by internal dynamics play a more prominent role.

Germane to my research, state politics scholars have focused on a more recent political reform—term limits and their effect on political power. For instance, term limits are associated with governors who can easily expand their influence over policy (Miller, Nicholson-Crotty, Nicholson-Crotty 2011) because the chamber is unable to defend their institutional interests. With respect to chamber leadership powers, conventional wisdom among legislative scholars suggests that they result in weaker leaders (Bowser et al. 2003; Carey et al. 2006; Mooney 2012). Bowser (2005, p. 113) succinctly describes this

perspective, “Perhaps the most noticeable changes in many term-limited legislatures have to do with leadership. Leaders rise to the top more quickly than before but stay for a briefer period and wield less influence than in the past.” Specifically, this literature argues that Speakers in term-limited states are less powerful because they lack the lawmaking experiences and do not have the time to cultivate the skills necessary to obtain institutional tools that can control the lawmaking process. Conversely, the conventional approach claims that leaders in nonterm-limited states have the time to develop their skills in acquiring power and the members are incentivized to invest in the internal power structure.

A few students of legislative politics have nevertheless suggested that term limits may sometimes empower the legislative branch and the chamber’s leadership. For instance, Farmer and Little (2007) uncover that term limits in Ohio are associated with a more powerful Speaker. They claim that the Speaker’s recruitment efforts and frequent fundraising for the members of his party result in a loyal following. In another prominent example, Mooney (2012) suggests that legislators in term-limited states might delegate to their leadership in order to overcome collective action problems associated with term limits.⁶

While the current literature does offer a deeper understanding of the factors at play with legislative power, there are still more questions than answers regarding term limits and their implications. Specifically, the literature provides two different depictions of term limits and their influence on leadership power. I enter this debate by taking a

⁶ It should be noted that Mooney (2012) finds no empirical evidence of term limits resulting in more powerful Speakers. Instead, Mooney finds evidence that went counter to his theory and calls on future scholars to examine this issue more carefully.

different approach when exploring the effects of term limits on the legislative branch. Specifically, I analyze how this political reform influenced actual chamber rules. Most scholars have explored the impact of term limits on legislative power with legislative surveys. While this type of data has provided deeper insights into the politics of term limits, a limitation to this approach is that these scholars can only capture how legislators perceive term limits' effect on their chamber leadership. No study has explored the consequences of term limits with actual tools the Speaker can use to control the chamber over an extended period of time or with multiple states. Importantly, I aim to uncover if term limits influence the actual legislative structure and organization within a chamber and not just the perception among legislators.

2.2 Linking Term Limits to Speaker Power

Term limits are widely supported by the American public (Kousser 2005); thus, it is not surprising that several states have adopted them. Table 2.1 identifies the 21 states that have adopted, implemented, and, in some cases, repealed legislative term limits. Since the implementation of term limits, several political consequences have emerged. Term limits have been shown to influence political behavior (Kuhlmann and Lewis 2017; Masket and Lewis 2006), institutional organization (Nicholson-Crotty and Miller 2011; Wright 2007) and public policy (Kousser 2005; Lewis 2012). While previous research suggests that term limits can have consequences on policy outcomes and legislative behavior, it is still unclear to what extent term limits have any influence on chamber rules. This study focuses on the effect of term limits on one particular type of chamber rule—the number of tools or powers delegated to the Speaker. The power a Speaker wields can have far reaching consequences on policy outputs and government

performance (Fiorina 1986; Hasecke and Mycoff 2007; Lazarus and Monroe 2007; Rohde 1991); therefore, it is important to uncover the factors that incentivize the members to delegate to their leadership. In the remaining portion of this section, I outline why legislative term limits are likely to incentivize the lower chamber to delegate more formal institutional powers to the state Speaker.

According to Mooney (2012), a legislature with a term limit law may decide to delegate tools to the Speaker in order to overcome the collective action problems associated with the lawmaking process. In other words, the members establish a principal-agent relationship with their legislative leadership to help overcome problems that burden the members serving within the chamber (Bender, Glazer, and Hammond 2001; Smith 2000). From the perspective of the members, “the costs of producing collective benefits, including public policy,” are far too high for one legislator to endure (Clucas 2001, p 320). Therefore, the chamber’s leadership is delegated power, resources, and institutional tools. The amount of power delegated to the leadership is in response to the amount of problems facing the legislature. Specifically, states facing more obstacles tend to delegate more tools and resources to their leadership than states with fewer challenges. In turn, legislative leaders are expected to use their power to help the legislators achieve their political goals (Clucas 2001).

Table 2.1. States with Term Limits

State	Year Enacted	Year of Impact	Year of Repeal	Lower Chamber Limit	Upper Chamber Limit
Maine	1993	1996	-	8	8
California ^a	1990	1998	-	12	12
Colorado	1990	1998	-	8	8
Arkansas ^b	1992	2000	-	16	16
Michigan	1992	2002	-	6	8
Florida	1992	2000	-	8	8
Ohio	1992	2000	-	8	8
South Dakota	1992	2000	-	8	8
Montana	1992	2000	-	8	8
Arizona	1992	2000	-	8	8
Missouri	1992	2002	-	8	8
Oklahoma	1990	2004	-	12	12
Nebraska	2000	2006	-	-	8
Louisiana	1995	2007	-	12	12
Nevada	1996	2010	-	12	12
Oregon	1992	1998	2002	6	8
Idaho	1994	-	2002	8	8
Massachusetts	1994	-	1997	8	8
Utah	1994	-	2003	12	12
Washington	1992	-	1998	8	8
Wyoming	1992	-	2004	8	8

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures

Notes: In Oklahoma, the limit is a total of 12 years in the legislature. The total time may be split between the two chambers or spent entirely in one.

(a) In 2012, California changed its term limit law for the lower and upper from 6 and 8, respectively.

(b) In 2014, Arkansas changed its term limit law for the lower and upper from 6 and 8, respectively.

Why might legislative term limits create collective action problems that incentivize the members to cede authority to their leadership? I suggest there are two reasons. First, one of the consequences of term limits is that the number of inexperienced legislators serving in the chamber surges because of the high legislative turnover. For example, in 1998, after the implementation of term limits, 57% of Michigan's House members were forced to retire (Carey et al. 2009). This dramatic increase in veteran

legislator turnover tends to strip the chamber of its legislative knowledge and expertise (Moncrief and Thompson 2001). Not only does this frequent turnover tend to undermine the development of institutional familiarity, but also a “brain drain” of policy expertise may begin to emerge within the legislature (Bowser and Moncrief 2007).

Inexperience in lawmaking, policymaking, and the chamber procedural process might stymie the members from achieving one of their primary goals as legislators, good public policy (Fenno 1978).⁷ In particular, the lawmaking process tends to be overwhelming for even the most experienced legislator (Packenham 1970; Squire and Hamm 2005, p. 118). A bill sponsor usually must bargain and logroll with their chamber colleagues to increase the chances of their legislation succeeding through the several lawmaking stages (Carrubba and Volden 2000). Moreover, a legislator needs to strategically and prudently manage relations with the public, committee staff, and executive branch while trying to ensure the passage of their policy agenda (Sinclair 1989). Consequently, a member with little legislative knowledge and unaware of the steps necessary to pass a bill, due to term limits, might struggle to accomplish most of their policy goals.

To overcome this inexperience hurdle caused by term limits, the chamber might concentrate power around the Speaker. When power is concentrated around the Speaker, he or she can more easily enforce and implement policy decisions that will help individual members achieve their political goals (Clucas 2001; Mooney 2012). While Speakers in term-limited states may not have much prior legislative experience

⁷ Legislators are also driven by electoral concerns and for power within the chamber. However, as shown by Carey et al. (2006), term limits lessen electoral concerns among legislators. Specifically, legislators in term-limited states are associated with focusing less time on their constituents.

themselves, they can still use their delegated powers to organize the chamber and to ensure the passage of important bills. In other words, a chamber can operate more effectively if power is concentrated among one inexperienced legislator than if it is shared among several green lawmakers. Further, the Speaker can use his or her connections to the party's apparatus for informational and policy expertise to help enact important legislation (Squire and Hamm 2005).

Alternatively, legislators in nonterm-limited states can develop their policy expertise and acquire their legislative knowledge over time (Sarbaugh-Thompson et al. 2006). Experienced legislators are aware of the potential pitfalls ahead of their legislative proposals and they can plan accordingly to ensure their success. This allows the legislators to easily achieve their policy goals on their own and without the aid of the Speaker (Lewis 2012). Therefore, nonterm-limited legislators may have few reasons to delegate legislative tools to their Speaker.

The second reason that legislative term limits may create collective action problems, thus, resulting in the chamber delegating more power to the Speaker, is that term limits are associated with weaker legislative relationships between the members (Cain and Levin 1999). Sarbaugh-Thompson et al. (2006) provide evidence that suggests legislators serving in term-limited states have fewer relationships with other members and struggle to reach consensus on important policy issues than legislators without term limits. Sarbaugh-Thompson and her co-authors argue this is due to the term-limited members not having the time to develop a rapport or personal relationship with their colleagues. Without these personal relationships, it may be harder for the members to enact their policy agenda. In other words, for most members, getting their policy agenda

through the legislature will require at least a simple majority in both chambers, which may be difficult to do if the relationships between the legislators has not been developed (Fenno 1978; Kirkland 2011; Kingdon 1973). In order to overcome this collective action problem, the legislature may delegate more power to their chamber's leadership to enhance the efficiency of the lawmaking process. This comports with Sarbaugh-Thompson et al.'s finding that term-limited members are usually influenced more by their Speaker. If the Speaker has more sway on the members' decisions, then perhaps the chamber might be more willing to delegate tools to control the lawmaking process to their leadership.

Conversely, legislators in nonterm-limited states tend to have stronger working relationships with their fellow legislators (Cain and Levin 1999). This should ease their ability to build consensus and enact important legislation (Berman 2007; Kirkland 2011), thus, achieving their policy goals. If the members' policy goals are met, then they might have less need to delegate institutional tools to their leadership.

To summarize, building off Mooney's (2012) premise that collective action problems associated with internal dynamics of the legislative process play a major role in the legislature's decision to delegate power, I provide two reasons that legislative term limits may increase the amount of lawmaking tools delegated to the Speaker. First, term limits increase legislative turnover and tend to result in a loss of legislative and procedural knowledge in the chamber. This loss of expertise might pose a challenge for legislators trying to pass their legislative agenda. Thus, legislators might be forced to delegate institutional tools to their chamber leadership to achieve their policy goals. Second, legislative term limits tend to weaken relationships among legislators within the

chamber. Limited relationships pose a challenge to the legislature enacting laws and for the members to achieve their policy goals. Given this, the members might be more willing to delegate power to their leadership. Taken as a whole then, my theoretical expectation is that legislative term limits should be associated with more tools delegated to the state Speaker.

2.3 Data and Research Design

2.3.1 Dependent Variable

How should we measure state Speaker power? Both Battista (2011) and Mooney (2012) note that the two primary instruments researchers typically used to gauge a Speaker's power are legislative surveys and indices comprised of rules and formal institutionalized tools delegated to the Speaker. A major limitation with the legislative survey approach is that it cannot easily address factors that vary over time and the response rate for contemporary surveys is exceptionally low. Further, the wording of the questions in legislative surveys can pose an additional challenge to comparing the effect of power across time (Battista 2011). Therefore, and in an effort to avoid similar issues, I examine the effect of legislative term limits on state Speakers' formal powers with the delegation of lawmaking tools and chamber rules with an additive index. This approach is commonly utilized by several legislative scholars (Clucas 2001; Bagashka and Clark 2014; Martorano 2004; 2006; Richman 2010).

Clucas (2001) has created a Speaker power index based on several sub-indices that captures the chamber rules and various tools delegated to the Speaker. While his groundbreaking state Speaker power index is the foundation for numerous studies (Richman 2010; Miller, Nicholson-Crotty, Nicholson-Crotty 2011; Mooney 2012), one

major limitation is that the measure only includes states legislatures in 1995. Moreover, it is not possible to expand the index with the original sub-indices into other time periods because of data availability (Mooney 2013). Therefore, I cannot examine if legislative term limits have any effect on Speaker power with this specific measure.

Mooney (2013) has recently constructed a similar index of Speaker power for 49 states and across multiple decades. To demonstrate his index's validity, Mooney conducts various tests that show his index is strongly correlated with previous measures of Speaker power. For this analysis, I use Mooney's index of Speaker power because it covers the time period before and after the implementation of legislative term limits and his index includes almost every lower chamber in the U.S.

Mooney's (2013) additive index is composed of five indicators with data collected from *The Book of the States*. The five indicators Mooney uses in his Speaker's power index are the following: committee chair appointment power, committee assignment power, control over chamber's leadership structure, procedural power, and control over legislative resources.

Committee chair appointment power is the Speaker's ability to select committee chairs unilaterally. Committee chairs can use their gatekeeping powers to block legislation that could potentially upset their constituents and hurt their party's reputation with the electorate. In addition, Speakers who can unilaterally appoint committee chairs can have more influence on policy, and they can threaten to withhold committee chair positions from legislators who rebel against the chamber's leadership.

Committee assignment power measures the ability of state leaders to decide committee assignments. Legislative committees are the primary vehicles in which bills

are created; therefore, control over this aspect of the legislature gives a Speaker more power over policy outcomes. Moreover, legislators prefer to sit on committees that might benefit their constituents. Therefore, Speakers can use this tool to reward their allies in the chamber.

The *control over the chamber's leadership structure* indicator accounts for the Speaker's ability to decide which members can join the House's leadership. Speakers who can unilaterally structure the chamber's leadership can more easily influence the legislative agenda, and they can use these leadership positions as an incentive for legislators to fall in line.

Procedural power measures how much influence the Speaker has in bill referral. Leaders who can unilaterally decide which committee can hear a bill can also decide the fate of legislation. For instance, a common tactic Speakers use to block legislation that is antithetical to his or her policy agenda is to refer the bill to a committee that he/she knows will not offer a report (e.g., the Colorado example discussed earlier in the chapter).

The *control over legislative resources* indicator accounts for the independence of professional committee staff from the Speaker. Committee staff that is insulated from the Speaker's influence is less likely to follow his or her policy preferences.

These sub-indices are equally weighted and summed together. Higher scores indicate that a Speaker has more legislative tools at his or her disposal to control the lawmaking process. For this analysis, I extend Mooney's index measure to 2015. Specifically, I examine all states calculated in Mooney's index between 1987 and 2015. Mooney does not calculate a Speaker power score for Nebraska because it does not have

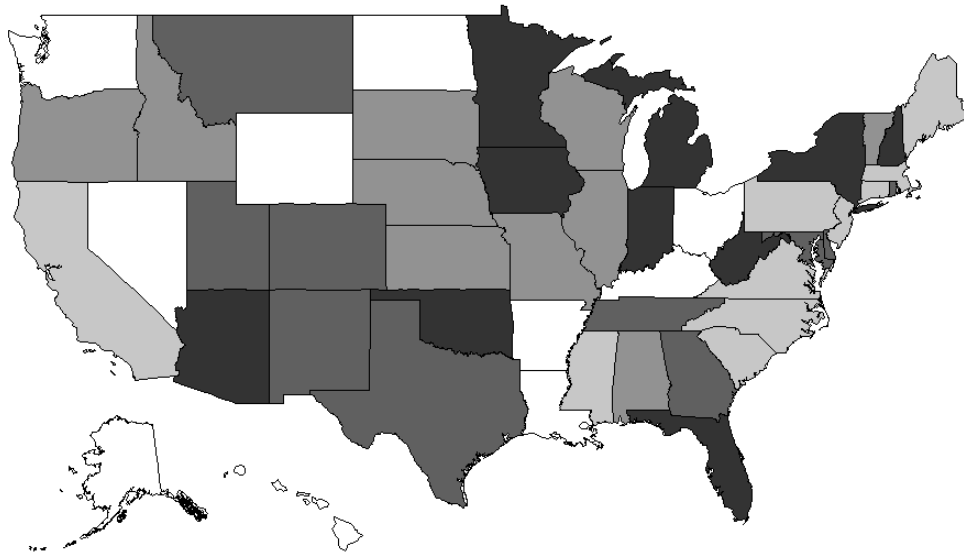
a lower chamber. Therefore, Nebraska is excluded from my analysis. For more details on Mooney's coding of Speaker power, see Appendix A.

The approach I adopt to measure Speaker power is not without its shortcomings. In particular, the legislative procedures in Mooney's (2013) Speaker power index may not contain every tool that is delegated to the chamber's leadership. Additionally, a given legislative tool may not have the same impact in every state. I am conscious of these limitations, and I recognize that Speakers may use other institutional tools not included within Mooney's index to influence the lawmaking process and the precise impact of a particular tool could vary by state. Unfortunately, I cannot adopt alternative methods (e.g., legislative surveys) to gauge Speaker power because of the low-response rate. However, by adopting this index approach, I am able to examine the changes in Speaker power before and after the implementation of legislative term limits. It is also important to remember that the Speaker power index I utilize is highly correlated with other well-established scholarly measures (Clucas 2001; Miller, Nicholson-Crotty, Nicholson-Crotty 2011). Thus, despite its limitations, this study offers an important substantive contribution to the effects of legislative term limits.

My unit of analysis is the amount of power a Speaker has in the legislative session following the most recent legislative election for the lower chamber. I use this unit of analysis because legislative procedures and rules are relatively stable between elections. Further, chamber rules usually change only after the election of new members (Squire and Hamm 2005). This unit of analysis is also consistent with Mooney's (2013) original coding and collection of the Speaker power index.⁸

⁸ I have also updated Mooney's (2013) data by a few years. The results are consistent when using Mooney's original data.

Figure 2.1. Speaker Power by State, Averaged from 1987-2015



Note: Darker shaded states indicate that the Speaker is delegated more institutional tools. States that are white indicate an institutionally weak Speaker. Nebraska is filled with the mean value of the data set and is included for visual purposes only. Nebraska is not included in any of the data analyses.

In Figure 2.1, I show the average amount of Speaker power across the states.⁹

Darker shaded states indicate a Speaker has more tools, on average, to control the chamber. Conversely, lighter shaded states indicate a Speaker possess fewer institutional tools, on average, to control the chamber.¹⁰ As suggested by Figure 1, there is wide variation of lower chamber rules among the U.S. states. Kentucky's Speaker has historically been the weakest chamber leader in the United States with a score of zero between the 1980s and the early 2000s. During this time period, the Kentucky Speaker had no control over the distribution of committee assignments, bill referrals, legislative staff, and the appointment of committee chairs or leadership positions. Alternatively, Oklahoma's Speaker, in 2001, is the most powerful leader in my dataset with a score of

⁹ Specifically, I calculate the average Speaker power score for every state between 1987 and 2015.

¹⁰ I code Nebraska as the mean value within my dataset and this is for visual purposes only. In none of my analyses is Nebraska included because it does not have a lower chamber.

4.28. In 2001, the Oklahoma Speaker has unilateral control over committee assignments, the appointment of committee chairs, and bill referrals. Additionally, the Oklahoma Speaker has significant influence over the legislative staff and he can appoint over a majority of the chamber's leadership positions. The average Speaker power score in my dataset is 2.69 and the standard deviation is 0.80.

It should also be noted that my data only includes the amount of power delegated to leaders in lower chambers and I do this for three reasons. First, Hamm, Hedlund, and Martorano (2001) find that differences between the upper and lower chambers are less distinct in state legislatures. Second, Mooney's (2013) measure of Speaker power only examines lower chambers. Finally, I focus only on lower chambers to remain consistent with previous research (see, Bagashka and Clark 2014; Clucas 2001, 2007, 2009; Martorano 2004; 2006; Mooney 2012; Richman 2010).

2.3.2 Key Explanatory Variables

My variables of interest are three separate measures that account for legislative term limits. First, I employ the most common way to measure legislative term limits—a simple dichotomous variable. For the *legislative term limits (dichotomous)* variable, I code states with implemented term limits as “one” and all other observations as “zero.” However, in theory, the effects of term limits could vary depending upon the specific restrictions within a state. For example, it is possible that Michigan's strict term limit law of only allowing House members to serve a maximum of six years could have a different effect than Nevada's more lenient limit of twelve years. Therefore, for my second and third measures, *legislative term limits (Baker & Hedge)* and *legislative term limits (Sarbaugh-Thompson)*, I employ Baker and Hedge's (2013) and Sarbaugh-

Thompson's (2010) continuous term-limitedness scores.¹¹ Both of these continuous scores take into account three different components of a state term limit law: the maximum length of service allowed, presence of lifetime or consecutive service limits, and whether legislators are allowed to "recycle" between the chambers.¹² All other observations are coded as "zero." Higher scores indicate a state has a more stringent term limit law.

I focus on implemented legislative term limits rather than adopted term limits because the previous literature would suggest that implemented term limits are more likely to influence legislative organization. This approach is also consistent with similar studies that explore the consequences of legislative term limits on institutional organization (see Bagashka and Clark 2014; Carey et al. 2006; Kousser 2005; Miller, Nicholson-Crotty, and Nicholson-Crotty 2018). Most importantly, I focus on implemented term limits because my theory suggests that it is the loss of institutional familiarity, due to term limits, rather than the anticipation of term limits that drives the chamber's decision to delegate more power to their Speaker.¹³

¹¹ Baker and Hedge (2013) creates their scores by using data provided by Sarbaugh-Thompson (2010). Specifically, the authors add 1 to Sarbaugh-Thompson's scores and divide by three. For more details on the calculation of the continuous measure of term limits, see Baker and Hedge (2013) and Sarbaugh-Thompson (2010).

¹² In recent years, a few states have amended their term limit laws (e.g. Arkansas and California). Baker and Hedge's (2013) and Sarbaugh-Thompson's (2010) original term-limitedness scores do not account for these recent changes. I have calculated term limit scores that take into account these recent changes to term limit policies. These adjusted scores produce results that are substantively identical to those presented here.

¹³ It should be noted that Idaho, Massachusetts, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming all had term limit laws that were adopted. However, they were repealed by either the courts or legislature before their implementation. Thus, it is impossible to include them in my analysis. Additionally, Oregon adopted and implemented legislative term limit law, however, it was repealed in 2002 by the State Supreme Court. Oregon is included in my analysis.

2.3.3 Additional Explanatory Variables

I also control for other variables that could potentially influence the amount of power delegated to a state Speaker. Mooney (2012) finds that a prominent reason Speakers can easily acquire more power is to overcome collective action problems. Therefore, I control for the *chamber size* or the number of legislators serving in the chamber.¹⁴ Specifically, legislators may empower their state Speaker with more tools to overcome problems associated with having a large number of members in the chamber. Rank and file members may also delegate more power to their Speaker to help address the dire economic conditions facing their constituents. The *Unemployment rate* variable is measured as the percentage of state residents who are unemployed at the start of the legislative session.¹⁵ Also, states with larger populations may have more complex problems on their agenda (Richman 2010). Therefore, I control for a state's *population* in my model. Finally, the *percent urban* variable is the percentage of a state's population that lives in an urbanized area.

Moncrief, Niemi, and Powell (2008) suggests that an increase in *chamber turnover* might result in more power being delegated to the Speaker. Specifically, a sudden rush of new and inexperienced members might make lawmaking more difficult for the chamber. Thus, with an increase in chamber turnover, there might be an increase in legislative power delegated to the Speaker. My measure of legislative turnover is derived from *The Book of the States*, and higher turnover indicates more freshman serving within the chamber. Additionally, Carey, Niemi, and Powell (2000) argue that

¹⁴ In all of my models, I log the population, legislative professionalism, and chamber size variables to account for any nonlinearities in their effect on Speaker Power. Not logging these variables has no influence on the legislative term limits coefficient.

¹⁵ I am grateful to Carl Klarner for sharing his party competition data from Klarner (2003).

the repeal efforts within some states enhanced institutional uncertainty, and as such, less power might be delegated to the Speaker. Therefore, *repeal* is a dichotomous variable indicating the period between a state adopting a term limit law and the full repeal of the law by either the State Supreme Court or the legislature. All other observations are coded as “zero.” I expect the coefficient to be negatively signed.

Clucas (2001) finds that *party competition* can influence the number of tools delegated to the state Speaker. Additionally, research by Clucas (2009) and Hinchliffe and Lee (2016) suggests that an increase in party competition is associated with more polarized parties or that the CPG criteria is met. Thus, including a measure of party competition might capture some of the ideological dynamics within a chamber associated with CPG. I use the folded-Ranney index to account for the level of partisan competition within a state.¹⁶ This measure incorporates the partisan distribution of legislative seats and the incumbent governor’s average vote share in the most recent election. The folded-Ranney index also captures the duration of partisan control for each state. Higher scores indicate increasing party competition within a state.

I also include multiple indicators that control for the party system within a state (Battista and Richman 2011). The *gubernatorial opponent seat share* variable controls for the amount of support that a governor has in the lower chamber.¹⁷ Specifically, it is the percentage of seats held by the opposition party minus the percentage of seats held by

¹⁶ I use the four-year moving average of this variable. The unfolded Ranney index ranges from 0 to 1. Higher scores indicate a more Democratic-leaning state. Scholars often “fold” the Ranney index so that the most competitive states have a value of 1 and the least competitive states have a value of 0.5. For more details on this measure, see Ranney (1976).

¹⁷ The gubernatorial opponent seat share variable can also be viewed as a continuous measure of divided government. I have also estimated a model with a dichotomous measure of divided government. The two measures were strongly correlated at 0.72. Including a divided government variable in my model had no influence on my legislative term limits variable.

the governor's party. Higher values indicate that the opposition party has more seats within the lower chamber. Hedlund et al. (2009) find that *majority party strength* influences the organization within a legislative chamber. I measure this variable as the percentage of seats held by the majority party at the start of the session.

There are several other state institutional features that could influence the members' decision to delegate power to their Speaker. For instance, I include Squire's (2007) measure of *legislative professionalism* as suggested by Clucas (2007) and Richman (2010). Squire's index combines each legislature's amount of salary, legislative staff, and length of session. More professionalized legislatures are associated with more powerful Speakers. The higher salaries, associated with professionalized legislatures, tend to increase the value of the seats to the members. Majority party members in professionalized legislatures might try to retain their valuable seats by relying heavily on their leadership and delegate tools to their Speaker in an effort to protect their party brand and to help their reelection efforts.

Both *citizen initiatives* and *tax and expenditure limits (TEL)* are associated with states facing several difficulties implementing policy (Lewis 2012). Legislators may be forced to delegate more power to the leadership in order to overcome this institutional hurdle. The citizen initiative variable accounts for whether a state allows either constitutional or statutory citizen initiatives. The measure of TEL captures whether a state's growth of revenue or spending is restricted in any capacity. Both the TEL and citizen initiatives variables are dichotomous.

Finally, I control for the *state's ideology* because left-leaning states have been shown to expand the role of state government (Alt and Lowry 1994). In order to

implement their policy agendas, liberal state governments may need to delegate more tasks to their leadership. I control for the preferences of the state government with Caughey and Warshaw's (2017) state ideology scores. Higher scores indicate a state is more liberal.¹⁸

2.4 Findings

Given that the dependent variable is continuous, I estimate the coefficients using linear regression with year fixed effects and a random effect for each state (Woolridge 2015, p. 474).¹⁹ The estimates are presented in Table 2.2, and I report three separate models. Model I displays the results with the dichotomous measure of legislative term limits and Model II reports the estimates with Baker and Hedges's (2013) continuous measure of term limits.²⁰ Model III reports the results using Sarbaugh-Thompson's (2010) continuous measure of term limits. As expected, all three of the legislative term limit variables are positively signed and statistically significant. This indicates that states with implemented legislative term limits are associated with a Speaker with more tools to help him or her to control the legislative process.²¹

¹⁸ Specifically, I use their mass economic preference measure because most studies suggest that voters tend to be more influenced by economic policy. However, I have estimated models with the mass social policy preferences, state economic policy, and state social policy measures. The results with these alternative measures are substantively identical to those presented here. Additionally, I have also estimated several models with Berry et al.'s (2010) annual state government ideology scores that are calculated for every state. The results are also identical when employing this measure of state ideology.

¹⁹ For the sake of parsimony, I omit the fixed effects parameters from the tables. Additionally, I have also estimated a model with state fixed effects. The estimates from a linear model with state fixed effects were substantively similar to those presented here.

²⁰ I have also estimated a model where I interacted legislative term limits with the turnover variable. The interactive variable was insignificant. The results are available upon request.

²¹ My findings appear to not be driven by outliers. The results are consistent when using a robust regression estimator.

Table 2.2. *State House Speaker Power – Testing Term Limits Hypothesis, 1987-2015*

Variable	Model I Coefficient	Model II Coefficient	Model III Coefficient
Legislative Term Limits (Dichotomous)	0.233* (0.085)	–	–
Legislative Term Limits (Baker & Hedge)	–	0.430* (0.137)	–
Legislative Term Limits (Sarbaugh-Thompson)	–	–	0.214* (0.088)
Repeal	-0.342* (0.121)	-0.343* (0.120)	-0.333* (0.121)
State Ideology	-0.081 (0.219)	-0.086 (0.219)	-0.073 (0.220)
Legislative Professionalism	0.325* (0.129)	0.308* (0.129)	0.284* (0.129)
Party Competition	0.770* (0.307)	0.774* (0.307)	0.762* (0.307)
Gubernatorial Opponent Seat Share	-0.132* (0.072)	-0.139* (0.072)	-0.142* (0.073)
Majority Party Strength	0.308 (0.313)	0.331 (0.313)	0.335 (0.313)
Chamber Turnover	-0.002 (0.002)	-0.003 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.002)
Percent Urban	-0.010 (0.007)	-0.010 (0.007)	-0.012* (0.007)
Unemployment Rate	-0.001 (0.018)	-0.003 (0.018)	-0.005 (0.018)
Chamber Size	0.446* (0.262)	0.437* (0.262)	0.410 (0.264)
Population	0.044 (0.270)	0.071 (0.268)	0.149 (0.267)
TEL	0.022 (0.076)	0.032 (0.076)	0.037 (0.076)
Citizen Initiative	-0.080 (0.212)	-0.083 (0.213)	-0.058 (0.214)
Constant	0.698 (1.861)	0.542 (1.861)	0.240 (1.868)
State Intercept (st. dev.)	0.684	0.687	0.693
R ²	0.738	0.741	0.744
Number of Observations	701	701	701

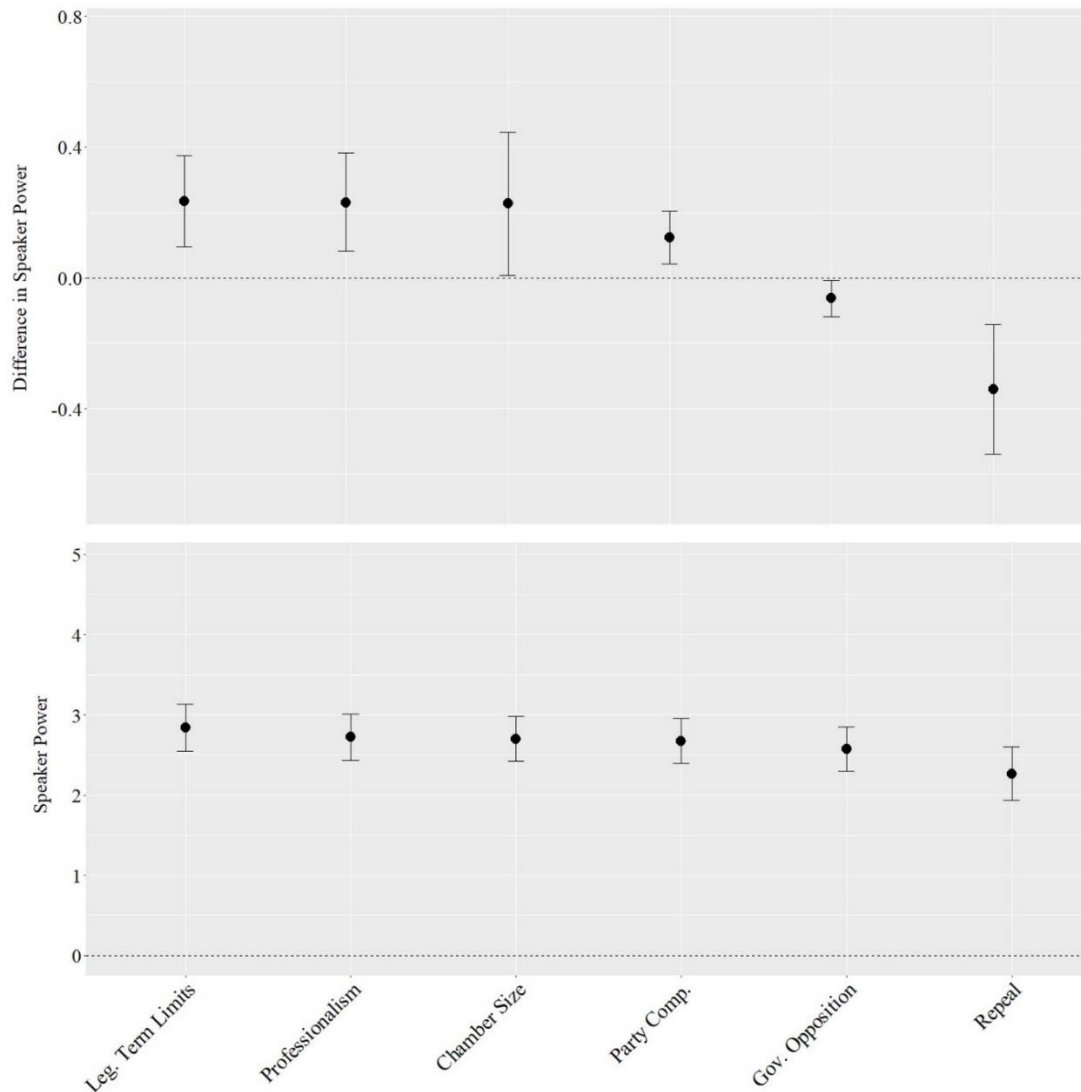
* $p \leq 0.05$ (all one-tailed tests). The models are estimated using linear regression with fixed effects for year and a random for each state.

Substantively, the results from Model I, with the dichotomous variable, suggest that, holding all else constant, legislative term limits are associated with a 0.234 increase in the Speaker power index (2.606 to 2.840). Regarding Baker and Hedge's (2013) legislative term limits variable that is used in Model II, shifting from a state without term limits (0) to approximately a one-standard deviation increase above the mean value or

Oklahoma's term limit score value (0.33), holding all else constant, is associated with a 0.141 increase in the Speaker power index (2.609 to 2.750). For Sarbaugh-Thompson's (2010) legislative term limits scores used in Model III, shifting from a state without term limits (0) to approximately a one-standard deviation above the term limit score mean value or Montana's term limit score (0.47) is associated with a 0.101 increase in the Speaker power index (2.634 to 2.735).

To place the substantive effects of legislative term limits in perspective, I provide two plots in Figure 2.2 with all the statistically significant explanatory variables from Model I. In the top graph, I present the differences in speaker power. For continuous variables, these differences are estimated by changing the level of the explanatory variable of interest from its first quantile to third quantile value, holding all other variables constant. For dichotomous variables, these differences are calculated by changing the value from zero to one. The purpose of this graph is to compare the impact of each significant explanatory variable. In the bottom graph, I provide the value of the predicted speaker power score when the variable of interest is held at its third quantile value for continuous variables and maximum value for dichotomous variables. Again, all other explanatory variables are held at their mean or modal value.

Figure 2.2. *Difference in Speaker Power (Top) and Speaker Power at High Value of Independent Variable (Bottom)*



Notes: For dichotomous variables, the top graph is created by shifting the variable of interest from its minimum to maximum value while holding all other variables at their means (or modes for dichotomous variables). For continuous variables, the differences are estimated from shifting the variable of interest from its first quantile value to third quantile value. The bottom graph is created by holding the variable of interest at its maximum value (dichotomous variables) or third quantile value (continuous variables) while all other variables are held constant. The dot represents the point estimate and the whiskers represent the 95% confidence band. All estimates are based on the estimates from Model I.

In particular, the estimated differences in speaker power demonstrate that legislative term limits can create changes in a Speaker's power comparable in size to those of other important institutional and political characteristics. For instance, the effect

of legislative term limits is similar in size to the impact of legislative professionalism, which increases the Speaker power index by 0.231 (2.491 to 2.722). Additionally, the impact of term limits is comparable in magnitude to the party competition variable, which increases the Speaker's power score by 0.123 (2.552 to 2.675). Finally, the impact of the legislative term limits variable is also on par with the effect of gubernatorial opponent seat share variable. The latter is associated with a 0.062 decrease in the Speaker power index (2.636 to 2.573). Altogether, these results imply that term-limited legislators have an incentive to delegate more institutional tools to the chamber leader, and not only is this effect statistically significant, but it is also substantively significant.

It is important to note that the change in Speaker power is somewhat modest. This is not surprising given that previous research shows that state legislative rules and procedures tends to change gradually from session to session (King 2000; Martorano 2004; Squire and Hamm 2005). However, the effect of legislative term limits on the chamber's rules is similar to that of other institutional factors. Further, these changes to a chamber's procedure rules can have a dramatic effect on policy as illustrated by the Arizona case with SB 1070.

As discussed above, most of the additional explanatory variables perform as expected. The results suggest that an increase in the number of seats held by the governor's opposing party is associated with a weaker Speaker. Similar to Richman (2010), I find that legislatures with more members are associated with more tools delegated to the Speaker. Additionally, like Clucas (2007), I find evidence that suggests a more professional legislature is associated with a more powerful Speaker. I also uncover that higher levels of partisan competition correspond to more power being

delegated to the Speaker (Clucas 2001). Finally, I find that the repeal variable is significant and negatively signed. The remaining explanatory variables are not statistically significant at conventional levels.

2.5 Robustness Check: Analyzing Only Term-Limited States

One concern with my analysis is that, for some reason, Speakers in term-limited chambers could have been powerful before the implementation of term limits and the amount of power delegated to the Speaker did not change after this new policy was carried out. In other words, the implementation of term limits, in itself, did not affect the amount of power delegated to the chamber's leadership. Therefore, as a robustness check, I have estimated several models that only includes the 16 states that have implemented legislative term limits between 1987 and 2015. This model more directly tests the relationship between term limits and Speaker power. Additionally, this analysis compares the amount of power a Speaker has over the lawmaking process before and after the implementation of term limits within a state.

I use the same variables and methods as described in the prior section. The results are shown in Table 2.3. Model IV presents the results with the dichotomous measure of legislative terms limits and Model V reports the results with Baker and Hedge's (2013) measure legislative term limits variable. Model VI reports the results using Sarbaugh-Thompson's (2010) term limit scores. The legislative term limit variables are positive and statistically significant in all three models. Again, this suggests that legislative term limits are associated with more power being delegated to the Speaker.

Table 2.3. *Speaker Power Before and After Implementation of Term Limits, 1987-2015*

Variable	Model IV Coefficient	Model V Coefficient	Model VI Coefficient
Legislative Term Limits (Dichotomous)	0.303* (0.126)	—	—
Legislative Term Limits (Baker & Hedge)	—	0.638* (0.182)	—
Legislative Term Limits (Sarbaugh-Thompson)	—	—	0.263* (0.084)
Repeal	0.293 (0.265)	0.285 (0.260)	0.310 (0.262)
State Ideology	1.441* (0.392)	1.377* (0.386)	1.376* (0.389)
Legislative Professionalism	-0.264 (0.259)	-0.372 (0.239)	-0.392 (0.236)
Party Competition	-0.711 (0.438)	-0.702 (0.429)	-0.683 (0.432)
Gubernatorial Opponent Seat Share	0.037 (0.121)	-0.005 (0.117)	-0.042 (0.119)
Majority Party Strength	-0.498 (0.455)	-0.346 (0.446)	-0.268 (0.451)
Chamber Turnover	-0.003 (0.003)	-0.004 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.003)
Percent Urban	-0.006 (0.014)	-0.010 (0.014)	-0.009 (0.014)
Unemployment Rate	-0.010 (0.026)	-0.022 (0.025)	-0.030 (0.026)
Chamber Size	-0.090 (0.628)	-0.215 (0.648)	-0.168 (0.653)
Population	0.058 (0.550)	0.366 (0.558)	0.407 (0.567)
TEL	0.151* (0.087)	0.181* (0.087)	0.176* (0.087)
Citizen Initiative	1.063 (0.769)	0.992 (0.804)	1.004 (0.811)
Constant	2.943 (4.153)	1.487 (4.252)	0.991 (4.307)
State Intercepts (st. dev.)	0.721	0.755	0.761
R ²	0.835	0.854	0.854
Number of Observations	211	211	211

* $p \leq 0.05$ (all one-tailed tests). The models are estimated using linear regression with year-fixed effects and a random effect for each state.

Taken together, the empirical results from Tables 2 and 3 suggest that term limits have a significant effect on the organization within a chamber. As legislators are forced out of office, the Speaker tends to more easily acquire tools to control the lawmaking process. Overall, these findings are consistent with Mooney's (2012) claim that term

limits are associated with a chamber in turmoil, and the members increasingly turn to their leadership for guidance.

2.6 Conclusions and Implications

In 2016, the Missouri legislature considered a highly divisive bill, S.B. 656, which sought to loosen gun regulations. In particular, the legislation would allow most Missourians to carry a concealed gun without a permit on training. The bill also expanded legal protections for Missouri citizens who use deadly force to defend themselves. The bill was highly controversial because several Democratic politicians argued that it would result in a sharp rise in gun violence (O'Neil 2016). Therefore, the Republican-controlled legislature had to employ several tactics to ensure the bill's survival. The Speaker of the Missouri House of Representatives, Todd Richardson (R), had several tools at his disposal to aid the passage of the measure and this was noticed by several opponents of the bill. For instance, one Missouri legislator claimed that the chamber's leadership denied the bill's opponents from speaking against the legislation on the floor and the Speaker used the legislative staff to their political advantage (Newman 2016). Additionally, the Speaker was allowed to unilaterally appoint members to the conference committee who crafted the final draft of the legislation. Eventually, the bill was signed into law along party-lines and over the governor's veto. This example highlights how the power a Speaker wields can have significant consequences on policy and legislative behavior. Further, the findings from my study suggest that legislative term limits might partially account for why the Missouri legislators have delegated so much lawmaking authority to their Speaker.

In this chapter, I explore the relationship between legislative terms limits and the number of tools delegated to the state Speaker in 49 states between 1987 and 2015. The analyses presented here suggest that term limits do strengthen the Speaker's power when examining the chamber's rules with Mooney's (2013) Speaker power index. Importantly, these findings speak to the debate concerning term limits and their effect on power within the legislative branch and its leadership (Bowser 2005; Mooney 2012). While conventional wisdom suggests that legislative term limits weaken and destabilize the legislative branch and its leadership, I find that they can sometimes empower the chamber's leadership in terms of institutional tools delegated to the Speaker. The Speaker can use these tools to help overcome the collective action problems associated with legislative term limits (Mooney 2012).

Before concluding, a few caveats are in order. First, I am not asserting that term limits strengthen every aspect of the legislative branch and its leadership. Indeed, other legislative power structures, such as the committee system (Cain and Wright 2007) and the parties' reelection apparatuses (Apollonio and La Raja 2006) are most likely weakened by the presence of legislative term limits. Rather, I claim these findings challenge the conventionally held view that the legislative term limits weaken most facets of the legislative branch and its leadership. My results cast doubt on this view by suggesting that at least the Speaker can acquire more lawmaking tools or pass chamber rules that will help him or her carry out their branch's policy agenda.

Second, it should be noted there are several dimensions of leadership power (Battista 2011; Battista and Richman 2011; Mooney 2012). In particular, Speakers might be able to use informal tools, knowledge, and their own personal skills to influence the

lawmaking process. It is important to recognize that my results do not speak to this particular dimension of power. However, future scholars should more closely examine the impact of term limits on this particular issue.

I hope that my findings stimulate additional research on the effects of term limits on other aspects of legislative organization, moving this research in new directions. For example, it is unclear how term limits may impact committee power (see, Bagashka and Clark 2014). My findings combined with prior research (Carey et al. 2006) would suggest that term limits should result in a less powerful committee system. The literature suggests that powerful Speakers tend to undermine the autonomy and independence of the committee system so they can enact a partisan agenda (Aldrich and Rohde 2001). However, no study, as of yet, has analyzed chamber rules concerning committee autonomy within all U.S. states. Thus, there is still a great deal to learn about the implications of term limits on legislative organization.

CHAPTER 3

IT'S MY PARTY, AND I'LL LOSE IF I WANT TO — EXPLORING PARTY ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE CONTEXT OF STATE POLITICS

Governor Sam Brownback (R-KS) and several Republican state legislators, mostly associated with the Tea Party, pledged as candidates to enact one of the most sweeping tax reforms in Kansas history (Judis 2014; Levitz 2016). Following through on their campaign promise, Governor Brownback and the Republican-led legislature signed into law a tax bill known as the Senate Substitute for HB 2117. This revolutionary economic policy lowered the individual income tax rates to an unprecedented level in Kansas and exempted several sources of income from taxation (Dickinson, Mazza, Keenan 2012). According to Brownback and some of his Republican allies, slashing the state's income tax rate would result in an economic “renaissance” for Kansas (2014). In a local newspaper, Brownback even asserted that cutting the state tax rates would be “a shot of adrenaline” for the “the Kansas economy” (2012). While some cheered for the bold and experimental policy (*Wall Street Journal* Editorial Board 2012), others expressed strong skepticism (Hiltzik 2014; Krugman 2014).

Most economists would probably claim that HB 2117 did not spur an economic “renaissance” for Kansas. For instance, after the tax policy went into effect, individual income tax revenue plunged by over 25%. Due to a lack of tax revenue, the Republican legislature was forced to gut spending for nearly all state services. To make matters worse, over five years, the legislature was constantly engaging in tumultuous budgetary

battles and the state's credit rating was lowered twice. (Gale 2017; *Kansas City Star* Editorial Board 2016). The *USA Today* Editorial Board candidly stated that the “tax cuts amounted to a disaster for the residents of Kansas” (2017). A columnist for the *Kansas City Star* bluntly asserted that the “Kansas economy is in the dumps” and attributed it to Brownback's “ruinous” tax policies (Abouhalkah 2016). Due to a lack of revenue, the tax policy came to an end in 2017 when the Kansas legislature overrode a gubernatorial veto and reversed most of HB 2117 (Berman 2017).

During the brief period that HB 2117 was in effect, the Republican Party lost over a dozen state legislative seats in a favorable political climate.²² Consequently, some in the media speculated that the voters were punishing some Republican state legislators, in part, for their party's collective behavior and governance at the state-level (e.g., Smith 2016). But was that actually the case? And, more broadly speaking, under what political circumstances might the voters hold state governing parties and their members accountable? Current political science research would suggest that the voters can hold Congressional parties accountable for how they govern (Jones 2010, 2015; Jones and McDermott 2004, 2010). However, in the context of state political parties, there has been limited empirical analysis. Existing literature would suggest that voters hold state parties responsible to a limited extent—a state party is held accountable only in the presence of unified government (Leyden and Borrelli 1995; Lowry, Alt, and Ferree 1998; Rudolph 2003). However, given the wide variation of parties across time and states, there is still much to learn.

²² It should be noted that, in 2014, the Republican Party did gain a few seats due to the midterm election.

In this chapter, I examine two attributes associated with state parties and how they relate to political accountability. First, I argue that an increase in majority party cohesion enhances the effect of state economic conditions on state electoral outcomes in states with unified government. I suggest that majority party candidates can more easily campaign on the state's expanding economy with a cohesive governing party, thus, helping their chances of securing a greater share of legislative seats. Second, I suggest that an increase in the ideological distance between the state's majority party and the median voter in a state should be associated with a decrease in legislative seats for the governing party. The voters should punish members in the majority party for enacting laws and taking positions that are ideologically out-of-step with the voters (Downs 1957). When examining nearly all state lower chambers between 1998 and 2014, I find some evidence to support my theoretical expectations that parties can be held accountable for governing.

The findings from this chapter provide us with a deeper understanding of political accountability for two reasons. First, political accountability is crucial for a healthy and robust democracy. Elected officials are expected to adequately serve and represent their voters or face the wrath of their constituents in the following election (Dahl 1956; Ranney 1954). Given its normative importance, legislative scholars have devoted considerable attention to the political factors that strengthen this important tenet of democracy (APSA 1950; Jacobson and Carson 2016; Schattschneider 1942; Wilson 1885). Considerably less research, however, has been devoted to whether party accountability occurs at the state-level. My findings suggest that voters do, indeed, hold state political parties responsible for their actions and beyond the context of unified

government. Second, one shortcoming with testing theories of political parties in the national context is that the parties vary only across time, and frequently the parties only vary monotonically (e.g., polarization). One advantage of using state political parties is that they vary across both time and states. Thus, my findings provide a more robust test of several prominent theories regarding political parties.

This chapter proceeds as follows. First, I theoretically argue that two attributes of political parties might enhance political accountability. Then, I describe my data, research design, and empirical results. Lastly, I review the potential implications of my findings for state parties and electoral outcomes.

3.1 Linking State Parties to Political Accountability

In Austin Ranney's (1954) seminal book, *The Doctrine of Responsible Party Government*, he presents the normative argument that political parties should be held accountable for their actions related to governing. Ranney declares that voters who are content with the current policies of the governing party should reward them by voting for their candidates in the following election. Conversely, voters who are dissatisfied with the performance of the polity should vote for the majority party's opponents. Empirical research by Key (1966) suggests that voters do in fact hold Congressional parties accountable for their actions, however, the voters' evaluations are contingent on the party that controls the executive branch. Later research by Jones and McDermott (2004; 2005) extends Key's argument by showing that the U.S. political parties can be held accountable by the voters for their actions independent of the executive branch, at least in the context of federal elections. Building off this research and Cox and McCubbins's (1993, 2005) thesis of the "party's brand," I explore whether state political parties are

held responsible for their actions in office. In particular, I argue that two attributes regarding state political parties might influence accountability: ideological congruence with the voters and the degree of cohesion within the majority party.

Before outlining the specifics of my theoretical expectations, it is important to discuss how the voters might learn about state parties and their various attributes. While my argument assumes that the voters are influenced by their state parties, I do not suggest that the voters are fully informed on all specific information related to these political entities. Additionally, the literature suggests several mechanisms in which the voters can hold political officials and entities accountable on their record given that the public does not possess complete information. For instance, one political actor that can inform the public about a state's governing party is the media (Arnold 1990, p. 64-5). The press can inform the public if the governing party enacted a policy that is ideologically out-of-step with most of the voters in the state. Or, the media can highlight if nearly all of the members in the majority party share a policy position. Additionally, in the case of state parties with sharp internal disagreements, it is more difficult for the media to pinpoint the party's position, thus, the public and other political actors may have more uncertainty regarding the governing party's collective reputation. One example of the press informing the public involves the state of Wisconsin. In 2011, Governor Scott Walker (R-WI) and the Republican-controlled legislature curtailed the collective bargaining rights for public workers in order to balance the state's budget. Nearly all of the Republican legislators supported the policy and the bill caused the emergence of several massive protests in the state's capital. Shortly after the introduction of the proposal, several minority party members left Wisconsin in an effort to prevent a roll-call vote and

to kill the policy proposal. Consequently, the Republican legislature's position and the capital protests gained national media coverage as evident by the coverage in the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, cable news, and network news (Stein and Marley 2013).

Additionally, the public can also learn about the party's positions through the campaign process. A politically savvy challenger could raise the majority party's ideology on the campaign trail in the hopes of turning it into a political liability for their opponent (Arnold 1990, p. 272-3). Interest groups can also play an important role in informing the public. For instance, during the Wisconsin recall elections in 2011, outside interest groups spent over \$25 million informing the public of the Republican Party's policies on the budget and collective bargaining rights. Additionally, several challengers from the Democratic Party would frequently mention on the campaign trail that the Republican Party overwhelmingly supported curtailing collective bargaining rights (Stein and Marley 2013). Like Ansolabehere and Jones (2010), I take no position on which mechanism or source plays a more prominent role in informing the public about the positions of their elected officials. However, I will stress that while the voters may not possess high levels of knowledge about specific political issues, they can still reach reasonably rational decisions regarding voting based on their beliefs (Popkin 1994).

3.1.1 The Electoral Costs of Party Unity

My first theoretical expectation concerns the relationship between party cohesion and the state's economy. A well-developed body of work has uncovered that incumbents in the state legislature can be held accountable for the state's current economic conditions (Lowry, Alt, and Ferree 1998; Rudolph 2003; Cohen and King 2004; Hogan 2004, 2008; Rogers 2015). For instance, when the economy is expanding, incumbents can more

easily engage in credit-claiming, thus, increasing their chances of securing reelection (Fiorina 1978; Jacobson and Carson 2016; Kinder and Kiewiet 1979). Credit-claiming is a reelection activity in which legislators try to persuade their constituents that they are responsible for some desirable government action or outcome (Mayhew 1974, p. 53). Conversely, when a state's economy is shrinking, incumbents in the state legislature tend to face grim reelection prospects as a challenger may try to raise the issue on the campaign trail (Campbell 1986; Kramer 1971).

However, students of legislative politics have uncovered that incumbents in the state legislature are not held equally accountable for the state's economy (Lowry, Alt, and Ferree 1998; Rogers 2015). For example, Lowry, Alt, and Ferree (1998) show that economic accountability is usually stronger in the presence of unified government. When one party controls the legislative and executive branch, it is easier for the voters to identify which party to reward or punish for economic performance. In the words of the authors, there is greater "clarity of responsibility" for states with unified government (p. 762). Conversely, it is possible that different parties control the executive and legislative branch. In this political circumstance, voters tend to struggle with deciding which party to hold responsible for the state's economic performance.

I propose that an additional party attribute that may strengthen the "clarity of responsibility" for the voters is the degree of policy cohesiveness within the majority party. A growing literature explores the relationship between party cohesion (or party unity) and electoral politics (e.g., Jones 2010, Levendusky 2010; Kim and LeVeck 2013; Jones 2010). For instance, Kim and LeVeck (2013) find that cohesive parties tend to correspond with legislators spending more cash on their reelection efforts in the hopes of

holding on to their seat. According to Kim and LeVeck, a unified party in lockstep sends a strong and informative signal about the “party’s brand” to the electorate, thus, electorally vulnerable members must employ more campaign contributions to persuade swing voters. In another prominent study, Jones (2010) finds that parties with high levels of voting unity can enhance the influence of Congressional performance evaluations on House member’s reelection prospects. Thus, the literature would suggest that a more ideologically pure party sends a stronger signal than a party in which there is widespread disagreement. Germane to my research, I suggest that as the governing party votes more frequently together as an unified team, it is easier for the voters to identify the state party’s positions (Jones 2010; 2015) and to hold them accountable for their economic performance.

How might party cohesion influence economic voting? A governing party that is presiding over a state with a growing economy may develop a reputation as being able to effectively manage economic issues with some of the voters (Fiorina 1981; Holian 2004), thus, helping their candidates’ electoral prospects. Additionally, a growing economy and a cohesive majority party may provide its members more opportunities to engage in credit-claiming (Mayhew 1974). In other words, with a record for implementing, at least perceived, successful economic policies, members of the majority party can more easily tout their party’s accomplishments on the campaign trail. Therefore, the voters might be more likely to reward the state’s majority party and its candidates in the next election.

Conversely, a state party that tends to vote frequently together and has crafted a reputation for implementing, at least perceived, unsuccessful economic policies, may face a grim future at the polls. In particular, it may be difficult for candidates of a cohesive

majority party to escape their party's reputation of pursuing policies that were ultimately ineffective (Fiorina 1980, p. 26-7; 1981), regardless of the individual member's actual position. Additionally, challengers from the opposing party might be more likely to arise in this political context and associate their political rivals with the unsuccessful economic policies to the voters, regardless of their actual positions.

A governing party that displays sharp divisions on key policy debates may have a different effect on state legislative elections. A governing party with widespread disagreement may complicate the voters' ability to discern the party's actual policy positions, and thus, it may have an uncertain reputation with the electorate (Petrocik 1996). Therefore, if constituents are satisfied with the state's economic performance, but the governing party has an ambiguous reputation and provides contradictory positions to the voters, then candidates in the majority party have little to gain by touting their party affiliation on the campaign trail. Instead, the voters may turn to national, local, and other factors when voting at the ballot box.

When there is economic turmoil in the state and there is widespread disagreement within the majority party, it might be easier for the members in the governing party to shirk accountability. In this scenario, the majority party and its members might be able to easily blame other political actors as the source of the problem, thus, shielding their party's reputation. Or as stated by Richard Fenno, in *Home Style*, non-cohesive parties provide legislators "a wide variety of collegial villains to flay before one's supporters at home" (1978, p. 167). Thus, the majority party and its members can potentially avoid some of the blame for the state's economic performance, thus, helping their reelection efforts. This discussion leads me to the following hypothesis:

Party Unity Hypothesis: During periods of unified government, an increase in majority party ideological cohesion should be associated with an increase in state economic factors influencing state electoral outcomes for majority party members.

3.1.2 Political Accountability and the Governing Party's Ideology

Another attribute associated with the governing party that could influence the number of seats they hold might be the party's actual ideology (Downs 1957). One trait of a healthy democracy is that the citizens' policy preferences are implemented by elected officials (Dahl 1956). Therefore, it is not surprising that several scholars have devoted considerable attention to the relationship between policy responsiveness and electoral accountability (Canes-Wrone et al. 2002; Carson et al. 2010; Miller and Stokes 1963; Miller 2012). I argue that governing parties that are ideologically in sync with the median voter or "attentive publics" in the state are likely to help candidates running under their party label in the next election.

David Mayhew (1974, p. 16) argues that an activity that legislators frequently engage in to help their reelection efforts is position-taking. Position-taking involves elected officials publicly offering statements that are pleasing to their constituents and other political actors. Political scientists have found that legislators engage in position-taking via roll-call votes (Jones 2003; Kirkland 2015) and bill sponsorship (Nownes and Freeman 1998; Rocca and Gordon 2010).²³

²³ A growing body of work has explored whether an electoral connection exists in the context of state politics. A sample of such works includes the following: Cann and Wilhelm 2011; Erikson, Wright, and McIver 1993; Rogers 2015; Wolak 2017.

State legislators might consider taking positions that are ideologically consistent with their constituents in order to help raise the necessary campaign funds (Hogan 2008), prevent the emergence of a skilled challenger (Birkhead 2015; Hogan 2008; Rogers 2015), and to please their voters (Hogan 2008; Wolak 2017, but see Rogers 2017). I suggest that as more members in the governing party engage in position-taking by pushing for policies that are ideologically pleasing to their constituents, thus, nudging the party closer to the median voter in the state, then this may help some of the majority party candidates at the polls. As previously mentioned, the public may learn about a few of the popular policies by either the candidate themselves or the media could potentially provide the information.

An example might help to illustrate this relationship. In 2011, the Vermont Democratic Party controlled the state executive and legislative branches. One of the policy goals of the Vermont Democratic Party and several of its members is to enact a single-payer healthcare system in the state.²⁴ The policy debate was widely covered by the media (e.g., Goodnough 2011). Further, this was a position that was widely supported among the voters of Vermont as multiple polls showed over 50% of the state citizens supported the policy proposal (Clark 2012). Thus, it is not surprising that in the next election, the Vermont Democratic Party gained a few seats in the legislature. I suggest that the governing party's decision, in Vermont, to support policies that are ideologically consistent with the voters, such as healthcare, may be partially responsible for them gaining a few more seats in the legislature. Of course, I recognize that other

²⁴ A single-payer healthcare system is one in which the government provides the healthcare coverage (e.g., Medicaid). However, it is important to realize that some of the details associated with a single-payer system vary by plan. For more details on the definition of a single-payer system, see Soffen (2017).

factors most likely influence the elections in Vermont, but I suggest that the governing party's ideology may be an additional factor. Taken together, this example symbolizes how the voters may learn of the party's ideology, and thus, hold them accountable.

Conversely, while taking the correct position may enhance a member's electoral prospects, taking the wrong position could be political suicide. Members that adopt positions that diverge from one's constituency could draw ire from the voters and provide political ammunition to potential challengers. Therefore, as more members in the governing party take positions that are out-of-step with the voters, thus, pushing the party farther from the median voter, this might dampen the electoral prospects for the majority party candidates. For instance, a politically shrewd candidate for the opposing party could highlight how the governing party enacted policies that are ideologically out-of-step with the state on the campaign trail. This may hinder the political prospects of majority party candidates—including the candidates that are ideologically congruent with the voters.

Like the previous expectation, I suggest that voters will be able to more easily identify and hold accountable the governing party during unified government (Cutler 1988; Sundquist 1988). As the governing party takes more positions that are ideologically distant from the median voter, it should be easier for the public to identify which party is pushing for policies that are out-of-step with the state. Specifically, my second theoretical expectation is as follows:

Ideological Divergence Hypothesis: Under the presence of unified government, majority parties in state governments that are ideologically distant from the average voter in the state are more likely to lose legislative seats.

While the ideological divergence hypothesis may appear obvious at first glance, it is possible that I might find no evidence of the voters holding a state party accountable for their ideology. In particular, a few studies suggest that the voters tend to struggle with holding state politicians accountable because of the low-information political environments associated with these races (see Rogers 2017 for a full review). However, this vein of research focuses on the legislators' individual positions. Therefore, it is not clear whether the voters also struggle with holding legislators and their party accountable for their collective behavior and positions.

In the following section, I describe the data, research design, and methodology I employ to address these two theoretical expectations.

3.2 Data and Methods

In this empirical analysis, I explore the relationship between state political parties and accountability. Specifically, my dependent variable is the percentage of seats gained or lost by the majority party following a general election in each state's lower chamber (see, Simon et al. 1991; Jones 2015).²⁵ Staggered and overlapping elections in nearly all the upper chambers prevent me from including them in the analysis (see Chubb 1988). The average majority party seat change in my dataset is -0.958 and the standard deviation is 6.829. The time span for my analysis is 1998 to 2014. I analyze this time period because of data availability for the party unity and ideological divergence variables.

²⁵ I remove all non-partisan chambers (e.g. Nebraska). I also exclude North Dakota because of its staggered terms.

3.2.1 *Explanatory Variables of Interests*

For the party unity hypothesis, the primary independent variables of interest are a party unity variable, state economy variable, and the interaction between the two. The *party unity* variable captures the degree to which members, within a party, support and vote with their party. I use Shor and McCarty's (2011) NPAT common space scores to measure the cohesiveness of a party.²⁶ Specifically, I calculate the standard deviation of the ideological preferences with all members in the majority party.²⁷ Then, I multiply the scores by "-1" to ease the interpretation of the results.²⁸ Higher scores indicate that a state party is more cohesive.

The *state economy* variable is measured as the state's annual percentage change in real disposable income per capita taken from the year of the election.²⁹ A similar approach is employed by Lowry, Alt, and Ferree (1998). I interact the party unity and state economy variables to determine if the effect of a state's economy on political accountability varies with the presence of cohesive parties.

For the ideological divergence hypothesis, I use Shor and McCarty's (2011) updated ideology scores and the state citizen ideology scores developed by Berry et al. (2010) to create my *ideological divergence* variable. Berry et al.'s annual citizen ideology scores range from 0 to 100, and it represents the median ideological position of

²⁶ Shor and McCarty's NPAT common space scores capture each party and members' ideological preferences. Their measure of ideology relies on the NPAT (National Political Awareness Test) survey from *Project Vote Smart* and roll-call data. Luckily, the NPAT common space scores can be compared across time and chamber.

²⁷ Some of the additional explanatory variables had a handful of missing data. To assuage any concerns resulting from missing data, I used single variable imputation. The results are consistent when using the original data.

²⁸ Unlike national parties, state party cohesion does not increase linearly with time. The correlation between the party unity variable and time is approximately 0.

²⁹ I log the legislative professionalism, state economy, and party unity variables to account for any nonlinearities.

the active electorate in a state (Erikson, Wright, and McIver 1993, p. 14). Higher scores indicate a more liberal state population.³⁰ To capture the party's ideological preferences, I use the median majority party member's ideal point estimate in the lower chamber as calculated by Shor and McCarty. To measure how far a state political party ideologically diverges from the voters, I first regress the state governing party's ideology score on the measure of constituency ideology. Then, for each state, in a given year, I calculate the absolute value of the residual for each observation.³¹ Higher values indicate that the state political party diverges more from the voters' ideological preferences. Conversely, lower scores suggest that the state governing party and the voters are ideologically similar. I expect this variable to be negatively signed and significant only in the unified government model.

3.2.2 Control Variables

I control for other variables that might be associated with partisan electoral outcomes. For instance, I control for the percentage of legislators in the majority party with the *majority party size* variable. As the number of members in the governing party grows, there should be more opportunities for the minority party to gain a few seats. Additionally, I control for the *partisanship* of the electorate. Partisanship is measured as the share of the two-party vote that the presidential candidate of the state's majority party received in the most recent presidential election (Brady et al. 1996). *Spending Gap* is included to account for the effects of minority party and majority party candidate

³⁰ Berry et al.'s (2010) citizen ideology variable is constructed by using the ideology for each member of Congress as a proxy measure of citizen ideology. The authors calculate the citizen ideology for each district in a state using the ideology score of each Congressional incumbent and the hypothetical ideology score for their challenger. These results are weighted by the amount of support the challenger and incumbent received in the most recent election.

³¹ Maestas (2000) uses a similar technique. For more details, see Maestas (2000).

campaign spending per capita (Jacobson and Carson 2016). This variable is calculated by taking the difference between the total amount spent by minority party candidates and majority party candidates in the lower chamber within a state's election year. Then, I divide the difference in spending by the population in the state. This variable is transformed with the natural log to account for the diminishing returns for campaign spending. This data is made available from the *National Institute for Money in State Politics*.

Other institutional factors could also influence state electoral outcomes. For instance, Hogan (2004) finds that professionalized legislatures are associated with higher reelection rates. According to Hogan, the higher salaries in more professionalized legislatures tends to increase the value of the seats in these bodies. In turn, legislators in more professionalized assemblies are incentivized to focus more heavily on their reelection efforts. I use Squire's (2007) measure of *legislative professionalism* which includes the length of session, salary, and staff in a state. Smart and Sturm (2013) find that legislative term limits can enhance electoral competition in the states. Therefore, I include Sarbaugh-Thompson's (2010) continuous measure of *term limits* that considers the stringency of a state's term limit law. Specifically, her term-limitedness score factors in three different components of a state's term limit law: the maximum length of service allowed, presence of lifetime or consecutive service limits, and whether legislators are allowed to "recycle" between the chambers. States without implemented term limits receive a value of "zero." Higher scores indicate a state has a more stringent term limit law. Further, I control for the average *district size* within the lower chamber as suggested by Rogers (2015).

I also include other variables that vary at the national level. The *presidential approval* variable is coded by in-party status so that a popular president helps state legislators in his party and it hurts legislators who are not (Kramer 1971). Specifically, I take the president's raw approval rating and subtract 50%. Then, I multiply these scores by "-1" for chambers not controlled by the president's party. *Midterm elections* tend to be tough elections for members within the president's party (Campbell 1986). Specifically, the president's popularity tends to help candidates running under his party's label during presidential elections. Conversely, without this beneficial coattail effect, candidates of the president's party tend to suffer at the polls. Observations coded as "1" indicate that the state legislative election occurs during a Congressional midterm election and the chamber is controlled by the same party as the president. Conversely, state elections that occur at the same time as a Congressional midterm election, but the legislator belongs to the opposition party of the president are coded as "-1." All other observations are coded as "zero."³²

3.2.3 Estimator

One potential concern with my analysis is that my dataset includes multiple observations from the same state and election year. It is possible that the observations are not truly independent of one another, thus, my estimates could be inefficient. To address this methodological issue, I estimate a random effects model with the intercepts varying by state (Hox 2010). Additionally, I include year-fixed effects (Woolridge 2015, p.466),

³² I have also estimated a model that controls for whether the voters use the national party's ideology as a cue for the governing state party's ideology. Specifically, I calculate the absolute ideological distance between the national party and the median state voter. When including this variable into my models, the results do not substantively change. I do not include it in the model because it is strongly correlated with the partisanship variable.

however, I do not report the fixed effects estimates for the sake of parsimony. I do not employ state fixed effects due to limited degrees of freedom and issues associated with collinearity.

3.3 Findings

Table 3.1-Explaining Majority Party Seat Gain (Percentage), 1998-2014

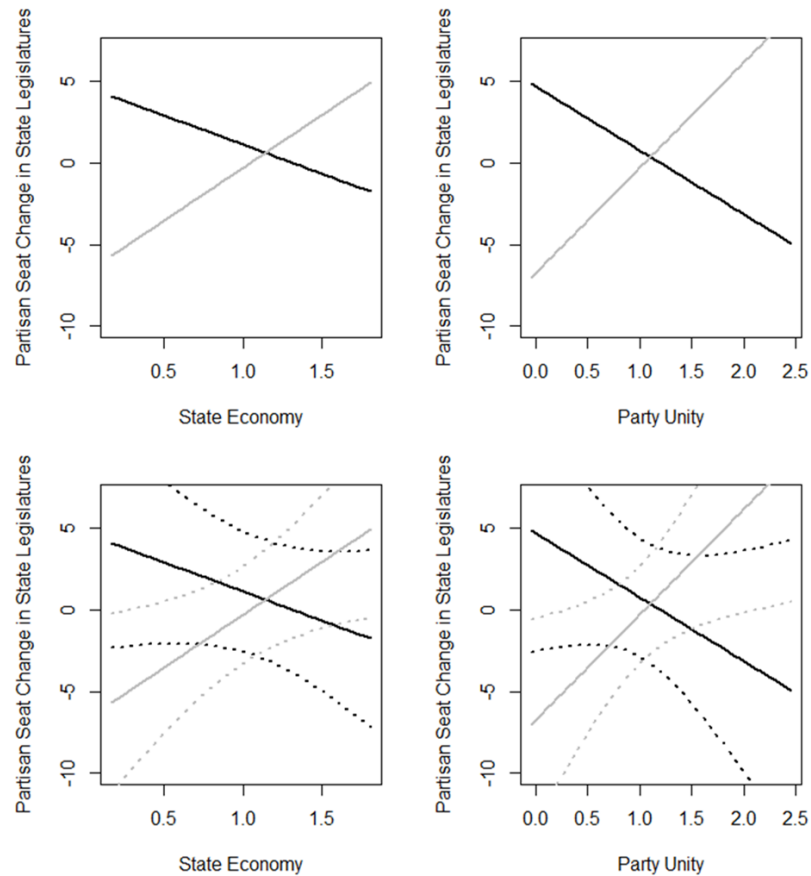
Variable	Unified Govt. Coefficient (S.E.)	Divided Govt. Coefficient (S.E.)
Party Unity × State Economy	7.539* (3.850)	2.498 (3.825)
Party Unity	-8.305* (4.280)	-3.983 (7.738)
State Economy	-13.164* (7.615)	-4.317 (4.578)
Ideological Divergence	-6.891* (1.564)	-6.687* (1.509)
Term Limits	0.944 (1.214)	-0.169 (1.009)
Legislative Professionalism	-6.912 (5.902)	3.673 (5.439)
District Size	3.197* (0.668)	1.525* (0.694)
Majority Party Size	-0.324* (0.055)	-0.347* (0.071)
Spending Gap	-27.227* (9.599)	-37.047* (10.864)
Partisanship	26.193* (6.453)	27.303* (7.005)
Presidential Approval	0.143* (0.032)	0.180* (0.038)
Midterm Election	-3.025* (0.521)	-2.543* (0.624)
Constant	-8.267 (11.711)	0.875 (12.766)
State Intercepts (st. dev.)	1.948	1.023
AIC	1,160	1,304
Number of Observations	199	209

* $p \leq 0.05$. Dependent variable: Percentage of majority party seat gain. The model includes a random effect for each state and year-fixed effects.

Table 3.1 presents the findings from a random effects model with the intercepts varying by state. I estimate models separately for states with unified and divided government. First, as expected, the party unity × state economy variable is significant for

the model that includes observations that only have unified government.³³ Again, this suggests that majority parties that frequently vote together can enhance electoral accountability.

Figure 3.1- Predicted Majority Party Seat Gain (Percentage)



Notes: For the left panels, the solid black line represents non-cohesive parties (i.e., two standard deviations below the average value). The solid gray line represents cohesive parties (i.e., two standard deviations above the average value). For the right panels, the solid black line represents states with a weak economy (i.e., two standard deviations below the average value). The solid gray line represents states with a strong economy (i.e., two standard deviations above the average value). The confidence bands are illustrated in the bottom panel with dashed lines. To ease the interpretation of the graph, I also present the predicted values without the confidence bands in the top panel. These are estimated from the model with only unified government.

³³ I have also conducted a likelihood ratio test to determine if the interactive term should be included. In the unified government model, the chi-square test statistic is 17.134 and statistically significant ($p \leq 0.05$).

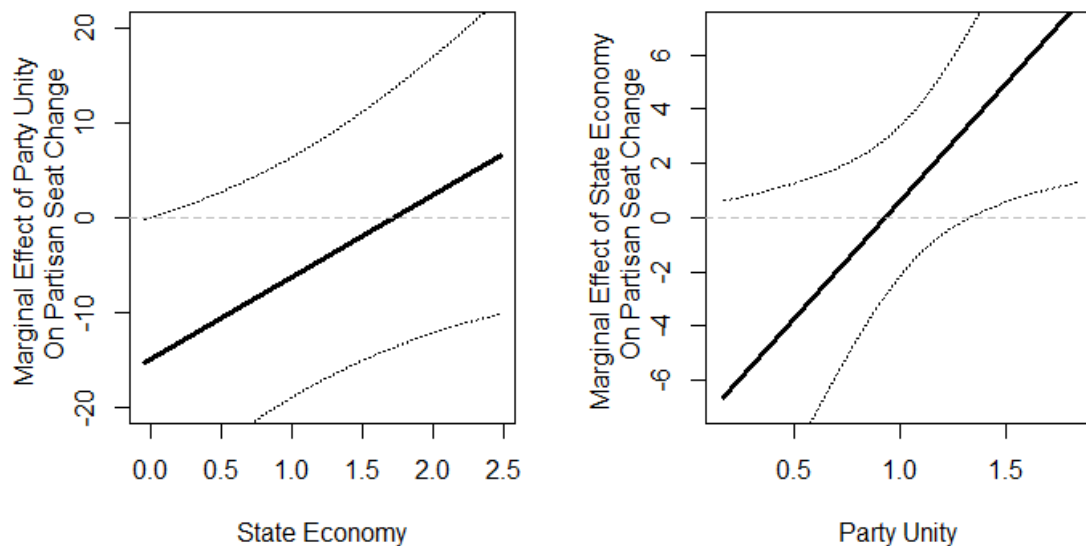
The impact of my interactive measure can be seen in Figure 3.1.³⁴ I report the results without the confidence bands in the top panel to ease the substantive interpretation of the graph. The bottom panel reports the results with the confidence bands. The left panel shows, with the solid gray line, the partisan seat change in states with highly cohesive parties (i.e., two standard deviations above the average value) and, with the solid black line, non-cohesive parties (i.e., two standard deviations below the average value) over a range of values for the state economy variable. Holding all else constant, for states with highly cohesive parties, Figure 3.1 suggests an increase in the state economy variable corresponds to an increase in seats for the majority party. Conversely, for states with less cohesive parties, an increase in the state economy variable is associated with fewer legislative seats for the majority party.

The right panels in Figure 3.1 provides a further clarification of the interaction between the party unity and state economy variables by examining the flip-side of the interactive term: how the effects of a state's economy are conditioned on the party cohesion variable. The solid gray line represents the partisan seat change in states with a strong economy (i.e., two standard deviations above the average) across a range of values for the party unity variable. Additionally, the solid black line represents the partisan seat change in states with a weak economy (i.e., two standard deviations below the average) over a range of party unity values. Holding all else constant, for states with a strong economy, an increase in the party unity variable is associated with an increase in seats for the majority party. Conversely, it appears for states with a weak economy, an increase in the party unity variable corresponds to a loss of legislative seats for the majority party.

³⁴ Both Figure 3.1 and 3.2 are from the model with only unified government.

To more easily convey the substantive effects, I also plot the marginal effects in Figure 3.2. The left graph indicates how the marginal effects of the party unity variable changes across observed values of the state economy variable. This plot suggests that the state economy variable has limited influence on the marginal effects of the party unity variable. Only when the state's economy is in shambles, or the state economy is at its lowest value, do we see any influence. In particular, it appears that an increase in party unity decreases the percent of seats of the majority party when the economy is weak.

Figure 3.2 – Marginal Effects of Party Unity (Left Panel) and State Economy (Right Panel) Variables



Notes: These graphs are based on the estimates with only unified government.

Of importance is the right panel, which demonstrates how the marginal effects of the state economy variable changes across observed party unity values. This graph suggests that the marginal effect of the state's economy enhances the effect on the number of partisan seats gained only when the majority party is highly cohesive. This graph suggests that more cohesive majority parties, or observations in which the party unity variable is slightly below the mean, enhances the impact of the state economy

variable. One reason why the economic variable might display no significant effect in states with less cohesive parties is that these governing parties may have more ambiguous political reputations with the voters (Jones 2015), therefore, the voters may be forced to evaluate the parties and their candidates on other criteria (e.g., national factors or local race factors).

For my second theoretical expectation, I find that the ideological divergence variable is significant and correctly signed in the model that includes states with only unified government. Based on the estimates from Table 3.1, a minimum (0.009) to maximum (1.487) shift in the level of ideological divergence is associated with a ten percentage point decrease in seats for the majority party (4.285 to -5.694). Alternatively, a one standard deviation increase is associated with an approximately two and one-half percentage point decrease in seats for the majority party. Surprisingly, even under divided government, I also find that state parties that are ideologically distant from their voters are electorally punished. A minimum (0.028) to maximum (1.819) shift in the ideological divergence variable corresponds to a twelve percentage point decrease in seats for the majority party (4.186 to -7.523). Additionally, a one standard deviation increase is also associated with an approximate two percentage point decrease in seats for the majority party.

The additional explanatory variables perform as expected. The results suggest that presidential coattails do influence state legislative outcomes as indicated by the significant presidential approval and midterm variable.³⁵ State legislators in the same

³⁵ Another avenue of future research is the influence of gubernatorial approval. Unfortunately, due to methodological issues associated with state polls, this is not possible. For more information on this issue, see Beyle, Niemi, and Sigelman (2002).

party as a popular president appear to receive an electoral boom. Additionally, members in the same party as the president appear to face electoral challenges during a midterm election as indicated by the negative coefficient. Majority parties with little electoral support tend to have tough reelections as indicated by the positive coefficient. Further, majority parties with a large percentage of members are associated with larger turnover in the following election. I also uncover that the spending gap variable is a strong predictor for the number of seats gained or lost by the majority party. Finally, I find that majority parties tend to gain more seats with larger districts. Conversely, I find limited support for the remaining explanatory variables significantly influencing my dependent variable.

3.4 Conclusions and Implications

Students of legislative politics have called for more attention to be given to state political parties and how they might influence electoral politics (e.g., La Raja and Raymond 2016; Rauch 2016). For instance, in 1976, the Harvard Institute of Politics suggested various reforms and ways to strengthen state political parties as a way to enhance accountability for state legislators for the policies they enact.³⁶ In another prominent example, writing an Op-Ed for the *Los Angeles Times*, Jonathan Rauch highlights how state political parties are critical for important aspects of the electoral process such as candidate recruitment, collecting voting data, and coordination between national and local politicians. Given their importance, Rauch also proposes a series of reforms to help strengthen state political parties in an effort to “improve American politics” and political accountability. However, do voters really hold their state parties accountable for governing? The findings from this chapter imply that the efforts to

³⁶ <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/1976/11/29/political-group-wants-stronger-state-parties/#.WQmPaZmalTU.email>

reform the state party system could potentially have significant ramifications on the the voters' ability to hold their state legislators accountable and my findings should be taken into account when considering institutional reforms to state political parties.

In this chapter, I examine nearly all lower chambers between 1998 and 2014. I find that two attributes associated with a party can increase political accountability. First, I show that a more cohesive majority party can enhance the impact of the state's economy for majority party candidates during unified government.³⁷ Specifically, majority party candidates campaigning in a state with a cohesive party and a growing economy are more likely to win their seats in the state legislature. I suggest that this relationship exists because an increase in majority party cohesion tends to ease the governing party's ability to claim credit for any political success on the campaign trail (Holian 2004). Second, I find that state governments which are ideologically distant from the voters are more likely to lose state legislative seats than more congruent state governments under unified and divided government. This is consistent with Downs (1957) argument of political parties and elections.

To be clear, I am not arguing that voters are aware of their state legislators' individual positions and are highly aware of specific political information. Indeed, previous research finds mixed evidence of an electoral connection existing in the context of an individual state legislator's behavior (see, Hogan 2008; Rogers 2017). Rather, I am suggesting that the voters might hold their state political parties accountable for their collective actions. Finally, it is important for me to stress that I am not suggesting that state political parties are the most prominent factors that voters consider when at the

³⁷ It should be noted that I find that the economy variable only matters when party cohesion is high.

ballot box. Indeed, voters most likely rely heavily on national-level factors when reaching a decision. Instead, I am arguing that state political parties should work jointly with other national and local factors associated with political accountability.

I hope that my findings stimulate additional research on state parties and political accountability, thereby, moving this research in new directions. For instance, future research could analyze if party unity influences the likelihood of a challenger emerging (Rogers 2015). Challengers tend to only emerge when the political conditions are in their favor (Kernell and Jacobson 1983). Further, future research could analyze the influence of a state party brand on a state legislator's campaign spending (Kim and LeVeck 2013; Fourniaies and Hall 2014). More precise party reputations have been shown to increase the cost of Congressional elections; however, it is unclear if the same holds for state legislatures. Thus, there is a great deal to learn about the implications of state parties on electoral accountability.

CHAPTER 4

SHOULD LEADERS ALWAYS LEAD? AN EXAMINATION OF GUBERNATORIAL LEADERSHIP AND STATE LEGISLATURE PARTISANSHIP

At the start of his administration, in 2017, Governor Matthew Bevin (R) vowed to make school choice a cornerstone of his education policy. In his State of the State Address that year, Governor Bevin confidently assured the public that “Charter schools are coming to Kentucky! I will tell you that right now!”³⁸ Charter schools are K-12 educational institutions that receive government funding, but typically have fewer restrictions and regulations than most public schools. Shortly after Bevin’s speech, the Kentucky legislature hastily pushed through HB 520.³⁹ HB 520 authorizes the operation of charter schools in Kentucky, and it requires that charter schools give preference to less affluent students (Barton 2017). However, some Kentucky legislators and teacher unions fear that the establishment of charter schools might drain valuable and scarce funds away from the other public K-12 schools in the state. The opposition to HB 520 was somewhat surprising given that a similar bill was introduced the prior year and it had bipartisan support (Bottom Line 2016).⁴⁰ Despite strong opposition from most Kentucky Democrats, in March of 2017, HB 520 was enacted into law with almost all legislators voting with their party (Loftus 2017).

³⁸ <https://www.c-span.org/video/?423622-1/governor-matt-bevin-delivers-kentucky-state-commonwealth-address&start=2484>

³⁹ The bill was introduced about a month after the 2017 State of the State Address.

⁴⁰ Specifically, the bill proceeded out of committee with nearly unanimous support. Additionally, several of the members expressed praise for the bill on the lower chamber’s floor.

While Kentucky's adoption of charter schools evolved mostly into a partisan slugfest, this was less the case for Washington State regarding its experimentation in charter schools. In 2016, Governor Jay Inslee (D) and the Washington legislature enacted into law SB 6194. This enactment also allowed charter schools to operate in the state. However, unlike HB 520 in Kentucky, the policy was supported with a broader and more bipartisan coalition of legislators (Higgins, O'Sullivan, and Cornwell 2016). Interestingly, Governor Inslee *did not* speak out on the charter school issue. The cases of HB 520 of Kentucky and SB 6194 of Washington raise an interesting question in the context of this dissertation: what factors can exacerbate partisan disagreement on legislative roll-call votes?

I argue one factor that might increase partisan behavior in state legislatures is gubernatorial leadership or the governor's policy agenda.⁴¹ Building off Lee's (2008; 2009) theoretical framework, which will be discussed in greater detail in the following section, I provide two mechanisms linking gubernatorial policy positions to partisan legislative roll-call votes.⁴² First, the legislators may use the governor's and their own partisan identification as a cue when voting (Goren 2005). Second, the governor is a leader of his or her party (Crew and Lewis 2011). When a member supports their party leadership's policy agenda, or when a member of the opposition party votes against the governor's agenda, they might be able to influence the majority party's reputation with the voters (Cox and McCubbins 2005). Additionally, members of the opposing party have a political interest to deny the governor and the members of his party any policy

⁴¹ Of course, the effect of gubernatorial leadership should work in conjunction with other political factors that might promote partisan behavior in legislative roll-call voting (e.g., party competition).

⁴² Frances Lee (2009) argues that issues the U.S. President champions should increase partisan behavior regarding legislative roll-call voting.

success because it may help to undermine the campaign message of the governor's party. In turn, this may influence the members' chances of securing reelection for their next campaign. Thus, contingent upon the governor's and their own partisan affiliation, the members might reach a decision on a legislative roll-call vote out of concern for their party's collective reputation with the voters. These two mechanisms lead me to the expectation that issues that the governor champions are associated with a higher degree of displayed partisanship on legislative roll-call votes than on issues he or she does not advocate to the public.⁴³

I test this theoretical expectation with over 36,400 roll-call votes from 25 state legislatures in 2013.⁴⁴ Additionally, I measure gubernatorial leadership by examining State of the State Addresses. When controlling for issue content and other political factors, I find that gubernatorial leadership tends to increase partisan behavior in roll-call voting. However, there are a few noticeable exceptions. First, when governors champion crime-related issues (e.g., human trafficking) that tends to correspond with an increase in bipartisan roll-call voting.⁴⁵ This is consistent with Gest's (2003) finding that nearly all politicians want to avoid being seen as "soft on crime" by their constituents. Second, I find that environmental issues that the governor exercises leadership on tend to be associated with greater bipartisanship. I suggest this is due to the distributive nature of the policy area (Lowi 1964). Finally, the members are less likely to engage in partisan

⁴³ Like Lee (2008, p. 917), it is not necessary for the executive branch to offer a particular position on a specific roll-call vote. He or she simply needs to simply raise the issue by a call of action.

⁴⁴ The 25 states in my dataset include the following: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

⁴⁵ This was determined by examining the roll-calls that the governor championed and were coded within the policy area "crime."

politics when voting on final passage. I suggest this is due to fears associated with potential electoral ramifications. Overall, my findings reveal that the governor and the positions he takes can become a focal point among members in the legislature.

This chapter contributes to our understanding of partisanship and legislative politics in the context of state legislatures for several reasons. First, several journalists have called on governors to exercise greater “leadership” and speak out on more issues in an effort to unite their constituents and the members serving within the legislature (e.g., *Star-News* Editorial Board 2017). My finding suggests that it would have the opposite effect, with some notable exceptions. An increase in gubernatorial leadership would most likely increase the growing gap between the two parties in the legislature rather than bringing them together.⁴⁶ Second, by examining state legislatures, I can provide a more robust test of Lee’s (2009) argument that executive branch leadership enhances partisan polarization. By using roll-call votes at the Congressional level, Lee’s analysis can only examine legislators’ reaction to the executive branch in a political environment with little variation in partisan polarization.⁴⁷ Unlike Congress, state legislatures display a wide range of polarization (Shor and McCarty 2011), thus, these findings suggest that Lee’s argument may hold in other political environments (e.g., less partisan arenas) as well. Finally, while a considerable amount of research has explored partisan polarization at the federal level (McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2006), only a handful of studies have explored this topic at the state level to date (Hinchliffe and Lee 2015). Taken together,

⁴⁶ By “increase in gubernatorial leadership,” I mean more frequently raising policy issues or speaking out on legislative items.

⁴⁷ To be fair, my analysis does not directly control for partisan polarization. However, my data does include roll-calls from states with very divergent degrees of polarization (e.g., Arkansas and California).

these findings help to provide a more comprehensive understanding of parties and the institutional factors that may help to drive them apart.

This chapter proceeds with six sections. First, I briefly outline the literature on political parties and polarization. Then, I present two theoretical mechanisms linking gubernatorial leadership to partisan voting in the state legislatures. Next, I explain the data and methods that are employed to explore this relationship. Fourth, I present the empirical findings. Sections five present the results from a robustness test that focuses only on final passage votes. Finally, I discuss the implications of my results in a broader political context.

4.1 Previous Literature

The role of political parties in the lawmaking process has been extensively studied by political scientists (Aldrich 1995; Cox and McCubbins 2005; Rohde 1991; Smith 2007). For instance, Binder (1997) finds that an increase in majority partisan capacity results in fewer minority party rights; thus, minority party members have less influence in crafting legislation. In another prominent example, Miller and Overby (2014) find that when the political parties are more cohesive and polarized, majority party members are less likely to sign a discharge petition for a bill they sponsor. In this chapter, I build off previous literature by examining the role of political parties in the lawmaking process, but within the context of state politics. Further, in this section, I briefly highlight some of the previous literature that discusses the role of partisanship in the legislative process.

Several scholars have explored the political factors that tend to increase partisan polarization when measured in the aggregate. In McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal's (2006)

landmark book, *Polarized America: The Dance of Ideology and Unequal Riches*, they analyze the various factors that result in a greater ideological divide between the two-major parties. They suggest that the rise of income inequality and an increase in immigration tends to play a prominent role in ideologically dividing the parties across time. Kelsey Hinchliffe and Frances Lee (2015) apply McCarty and his co-authors' theoretical framework to state legislatures. With somewhat divergent findings, Hinchliffe and Lee find that one of the main causes of partisan polarization is the degree of party competition within a state.⁴⁸ As the parties reach parity in strength, both in the electorate and in government, the parties are more likely to move ideologically apart from one another. The authors suggest that parties move farther apart for electoral purposes—to help motivate their voting base and also to create issues for the campaign trail.

A growing body of works focuses on partisan polarization at both the roll-call and member level instead of the aggregate level (Carroll and Eichorst 2013; Lee 2008; Nokken 2000; Wright and Schaffner 2002). For example, Wright and Schaffner (2002) show that states with a weaker party system tend to result in more bipartisan voting among individual members. Carroll and Eichorst (2013) reach a similar conclusion when they find that individual legislators are consistently more partisan with the presence of party competition in a state. Further, Nokken (2000) analyzes Congressional party switchers and their tendency to vote with their party. He finds that the switcher's partisan voting changes almost as soon as they join the other party.

Germane to my research, Frances Lee suggests in *Beyond Ideology* (2009), that one source of partisan conflict is presidential leadership. Specifically, for her analysis,

⁴⁸ The authors use Shor and McCarty's (2011) NPAT Common Space Scores to conduct this analysis. Specifically, their dependent variable is the absolute distance between the minority and majority party.

Lee examines all roll-call votes in the Senate between 1981 and 2004. Lee finds that the issues on the U.S. president's policy agenda can ignite partisan conflict between the Republicans and Democrats in the Senate. Lee suggests there are several reasons why presidential leadership may increase partisan roll-call voting in the Senate. First, the president is the national party leader, and the senators understand that successful passage of the executive branch's policy agenda could influence his party's reputation with the voters. For senators within his party, passing his policy agenda may provide them several credit-claiming opportunities, thus, helping their reelection efforts (Mayhew 1974). Alternatively, senators of the opposing party are incentivized to obstruct his agenda, therefore, preventing members of his party to engage in credit-claiming opportunities. Additionally, she suggests that the senators may rely on the president's partisan identification as a cue when casting their votes. Specifically, senators in the opposing party should be skeptical of any policy the president advances. Therefore, using the president's partisan affiliation as a cue for the roll-call's policy content, senators in the opposing party should be more likely to vote against his agenda. Alternatively, senators in the president's party should be more accepting of the issues on the executive branch's legislative agenda due to the favorable party cues.

Similarly, a few state politics scholars have attempted to analyze whether the executive branch can influence the voting decisions within the legislative branch (Bernick 1978; Songer et al. 1986). For example, Bernick (1978) shows that when a governor takes a stand on an issue he can increase party cohesion, but his analysis only focuses on one-party dominated states. Additionally, Donald Songer and his co-authors conduct personal interviews with a random sample of state legislators in Oklahoma and

Kansas. They find limited evidence that the governor has any influence on a legislator's lawmaking decisions (p. 121).

While previous research has enriched our understanding of partisanship in state legislatures, there is still a great deal more we have to learn. For instance, it is unclear whether Frances Lee's theoretical framework of executive branch leadership and partisan voting translates to state legislatures based on the findings from previous studies. Songer et al.'s (1986) findings would suggest that the governor's role as "chief legislator" would be mostly ceremonial as his empirical findings provide little support for the claim that the governor has any influence on the legislators' decisions. Additionally, Bernick's (1978) results suggests that if gubernatorial leadership has any influence on partisan voting it only applies in certain states. In response to existing research, and building off Lee's (2008) theoretical framework, I present two theoretical mechanisms linking gubernatorial leadership to partisan voting in state legislatures in the next section.

4.2 Gubernatorial Leadership and Partisanship in State Legislatures

In 2013, Governor Nikki Haley (R) of South Carolina called on the state legislature to pass an ethics and election reform bill. A year earlier, the South Carolina State Supreme Court disqualified and removed over 200 state legislative challengers from being on the primary ballot. The Court justified their decision by claiming that the candidates did not disclose the required financial statements. The disqualified candidates claimed that there were multiple conflicting state statutes that resulted in a confusing and overly technical process. Further, the ruling left all incumbents exempt from this financial disclosure requirement (Goodman 2012). Consequently, several politicians expressed their displeasure regarding this political conundrum. Additionally, a year

prior, both parties were working together in their efforts to place the challengers back on the ballot (*WISTV* 2012).

“Hundreds of would-be challengers were thrown off the electoral ballot,”

Governor Haley highlighted in her State of the State speech, “while incumbents skated by untouched.” When it finally came time to vote on this specific initiative on Governor Haley’s agenda, the members did not budge from each of their party’s respective corners and the bill was voted on in a strictly partisan fashion. I suggest that one reason that the South Carolina electoral reform bill was voted along party lines is that Governor Haley made it a priority in her policy agenda. In this section I provide two theoretical mechanisms linking gubernatorial leadership to partisan voting in the state legislature.

The first theoretical mechanism connecting gubernatorial leadership to partisan voting is that the member’s own policy views may be shaped by a cue from the governor’s partisan identification. A growing literature suggests that state legislators tend to rely on informational cues when reaching a roll-call decision (Jenkins 2006; Mooney 1991; Songer et al. 1986). Informational cues allow the legislators to reach reasonable legislative decisions, without fully understanding the pending issue. One cue that the members have at their disposal is the governor and his or her partisanship.

Importantly, the members may interpret and respond very differently to certain cues, including the executive branch’s position on an issue. Research has shown that citizens tend to rely more frequently on informational cues from “sources” (e.g., partisan elites) that they like or trust (Carmines and Kuklinski 1990; Goren 2005; Zaller 1992). Or, in the words of Goren, Federico, Kittilson (2009, p. 806), “If the cue giver and recipient share a party label, the latter will trust the former and accept the message

without reflecting much on message content. But if the cue giver and recipient lie across the partisan divide, the recipient will mistrust the source and reject the message.”

Additionally, politicians usually must support one of the two major parties in order to remain in office. Therefore, members in the state legislature are more likely to display a strong attachment to their partisan affiliation and this might influence their roll-call voting.

Elected officials tend to possess higher levels of policy information than the public. However, the large number of roll-calls and diverse issues on the policy agenda may force the members in the state legislature to reach decisions on policies that even they are not well-informed on. I suggest that the governor’s position can be a cue for the members. Members belonging to the same party as the governor should be more likely to trust and embrace his or her policies. Conversely, members in the opposition party might display higher levels of distrust for the governor and the policies he or she supports. Therefore, I expect that gubernatorial leadership to widen the gap between the two parties in a state legislature.

The second theoretical mechanism linking gubernatorial leadership to partisan voting are the parties’ reputations. Members in state legislatures are incentivized to protect their party’s reputation with the voters (Aldrich and Battista 2002; Clucas 2001; Cox and McCubbins 2005; Prince and Overby 2005). In particular, members in the majority party usually try to push a policy agenda that most of the party supports and that is popular with the voters. However, it is also important to remember that governors are prominent political actors who can shape their party’s image, electoral prospects, and the policy agenda they pursue (Besley and Case 1995; Morehouse 1998; Rogers 2015).

When the governor highlights a policy, they can heavily influence the state's legislative agenda (Crew and Lewis 2011; Schneider 1989; Weinberg 2010). Further, when the governor takes a policy position, this shapes his party's policy effectiveness and reputation. Legislators in the governor's party might perceive that supporting the executive branch's policy agenda might build a positive reputation, at least with respect to governing, with the voters, thus, helping their own reelection efforts.⁴⁹ Therefore, members within the governor's party might be more willing to support the executive branch's policy agenda. Conversely, members of the opposition party might calculate that there could be potential political benefits in their efforts to oppose the governor and his or her party's legislative agenda. By voting against and trying to obstruct the governor's policy agenda, members in the opposition party can more easily argue on the campaign trail that the governor's party is ineffective at governing. Additionally, by voting against the governor's legislative agenda, members in the opposition party might benefit in the next election by distinguishing themselves from the other party because they are giving their constituents a reason to vote for them in the upcoming election (Bernick 1978; Hinchliffe and Lee 2015).⁵⁰ Or, as Rosenthal (1990, p. 59) observed, "Governors and their programs are prime targets for the opposition. If the governor can be discredited, then the governor's legislative party will suffer as well."

In sum, when the governor takes a position on an issue, he or she is likely influencing the politics surrounding the policy and the members' ultimate decision to cast a favorable vote. Further, the members in both parties have a political interest in the

⁴⁹ Another avenue of future research is the influence of gubernatorial approval. Unfortunately, due to methodological issues associated with state polls, this is not possible. For more information on this issue, see Beyle, Niemi, and Sigelman (2002).

⁵⁰ By "opposition party," I mean members not in the governor's party.

items on the gubernatorial agenda. Due to their antithetical political interests, gubernatorial leadership should drive the parties farther apart on issues the executive branch highlights.⁵¹

To summarize, I put forward two theoretical mechanisms that link gubernatorial leadership to more partisan voting in state legislatures. First, I suggest that the members are more likely to rely on their own partisan identification and the governor's partisan affiliation as an informational cue when casting a vote on a legislative roll-call. Second, I suggest that members in both parties may consider their party's collective reputations when voting on a policy. Thus, given the theoretical logic laid out in these mechanisms, I expect that issues the governor champions will be associated with an increase in partisan voting by the state legislators compared to policies the governor does not raise.

4.3 Data and Research Design

4.3.1 Data Source for State Legislative Roll-Call Votes

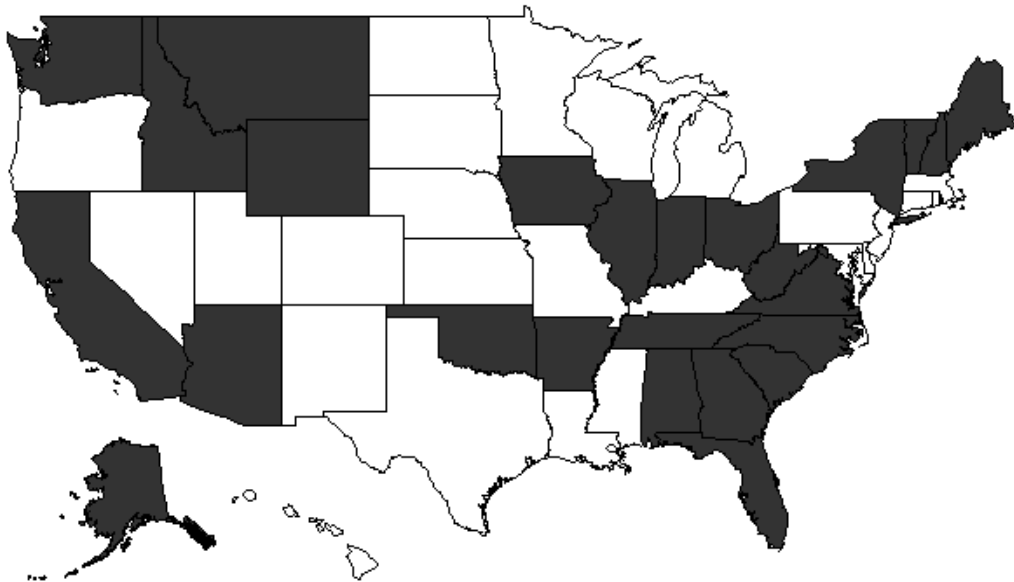
To examine the relationship between gubernatorial leadership and partisan voting, I examine the roll-call votes cast in 25 state legislatures in 2013.⁵² The 25 state legislatures I chose are a reasonable representation of the 50 state legislatures based on previous literature (see, Martorano 2006). For a fuller discussion regarding the sample of states used in this analysis, see Appendix C. Shown in Figure 4.1 are the 25 states included in my sample. I chose these 25 states and the year, 2013, due to data and resource availability. These state legislative roll-calls are made available by *Open States*.

⁵¹ It is also highly possible that the effect of gubernatorial leadership may be conditioned by issue salience, partisan polarization, and other factors. Controlling for the policy content helps to account for this factor to some extent, but future research should investigate this issue with greater care.

⁵² My study includes 25 states: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

Additionally, my analysis only includes floor votes. All other votes (e.g., committee votes) are removed from my analysis.

Figure 4.1-Map of States included in Analysis



Notes: States shaded dark indicate that it is included in the sample. White states are not included in the analysis.

It would be ideal to include all of the states and multiple years, however, there are data limitations that prevent me from adopting such approach. First, I cannot include states before 2013 because *Open States* has too many missing states prior to 2013 to include a representative sample. Additionally, the 2015-16 legislative roll-call votes was just recently released. Second, I focus only on these 25 states in 2013 for time management purposes. Specifically, in *Open States*' data, the names of the legislators were frequently misspelled which posed a challenge to merging the several necessary excel worksheets. Further, there were frequent instances of votes being coded incorrectly by the year they were cast. On top of that, there were several instances of non-floor votes

that had to be removed from the dataset. Also, locating the member's partisan identification involved a considerable amount of time. Third, several other scholars have adopted a similar approach (see, Bagashka and Hayes 2016; Hall 1995; Hogan 2005; Morehouse and Jewell 2003; Nicholson-Crotty and Meier 2002).⁵³

Taken together, one significant limitation to this study is that it only examines one year of legislative behavior in 25 states. It is certainly possible that these findings may not hold in other time periods and I am deeply conscious of this limitation. However, I believe these findings do offer a reasonable first glimpse at the relationship between gubernatorial leadership and legislative partisanship regarding roll-call voting. Additionally, in the future, I plan to analyze this relationship across all states and in additional time periods to determine the robustness of the findings.

4.3.2 *Dependent Variable*

My dependent variable is the Rice Index of Party Difference for each roll-call vote (Rice 1928). This score takes the absolute difference between the percentage of Republicans voting aye and the percentage of Democrats voting aye. The Party Difference scores captures how strongly the Republican and Democratic Party oppose one another on a legislative roll-call vote. Higher values indicate a more partisan vote.⁵⁴ The states with the most partisan voting within the legislature are Maine and New Hampshire with average party difference scores of 61.3% and 59.5%, respectively. Conversely, Arkansas (5.0%) and Virginia (7.4%) are the most bipartisan legislatures.⁵⁵

⁵³ For a detailed discussion on the appropriateness of examining only a handful of states in a very short time period, see Nicholson-Crotty and Meier (2002).

⁵⁴ More formally, I calculate the scores with the following formula: $\text{Party Difference Score}_i = |\% \text{ Democratic Aye} - \% \text{ GOP Aye}|$

⁵⁵ This is consistent with Shor and McCarty's (2011) finding that Southern states tend display greater bipartisanship than the average U.S. state legislature. The authors attribute it to the history of one-party dominance in these Southern states.

The average value of my dependent variable is 18.5% and the standard deviation is 31.1%.

4.3.3 *Independent Variable of Interest*

Gubernatorial agenda items are identified by whether the roll-call vote involves a specific policy a governor raised in the State of the State Address in 2013. Previous state politics scholars have argued that State of the State Addresses are a valid measure of gubernatorial leadership (Ferguson 2003; Herzik and Brown 1991). According to Ferguson (2003, p. 166), these “speeches constitute valid and reliable indicators of executive policy goals.” Mentioning a policy in the State of the State Address shows that the governor is stressing leadership on that issue. Similar to Lee (2008), it does not matter whether the executive branch offers a clear position on a particular roll-call vote because the governor’s reputation is still influenced when the legislature addresses issues that the governor has chosen to associate him or herself with. This variable is dichotomous. Issues that the governor has championed are coded as “one” and all other observations are coded as “zero.” Across the 25 states in my dataset, a governor, on average, takes a position on 115 roll-call votes. In Appendix D, I list all of the specific policies that the governors mention in their State of the State Addresses.

An example might help to clarify the coding of this variable. Governor Rick Scott (R) of Florida stated the following in his 2013 State of the State Address, “we are committed to removing the sales tax on manufacturing equipment.” In this case, I would search all of the Florida legislative roll-call votes that concern the taxation of

manufacturing equipment, and I would code such roll-calls as “one.”⁵⁶ This would include all amendments, procedural votes, and final passage votes.

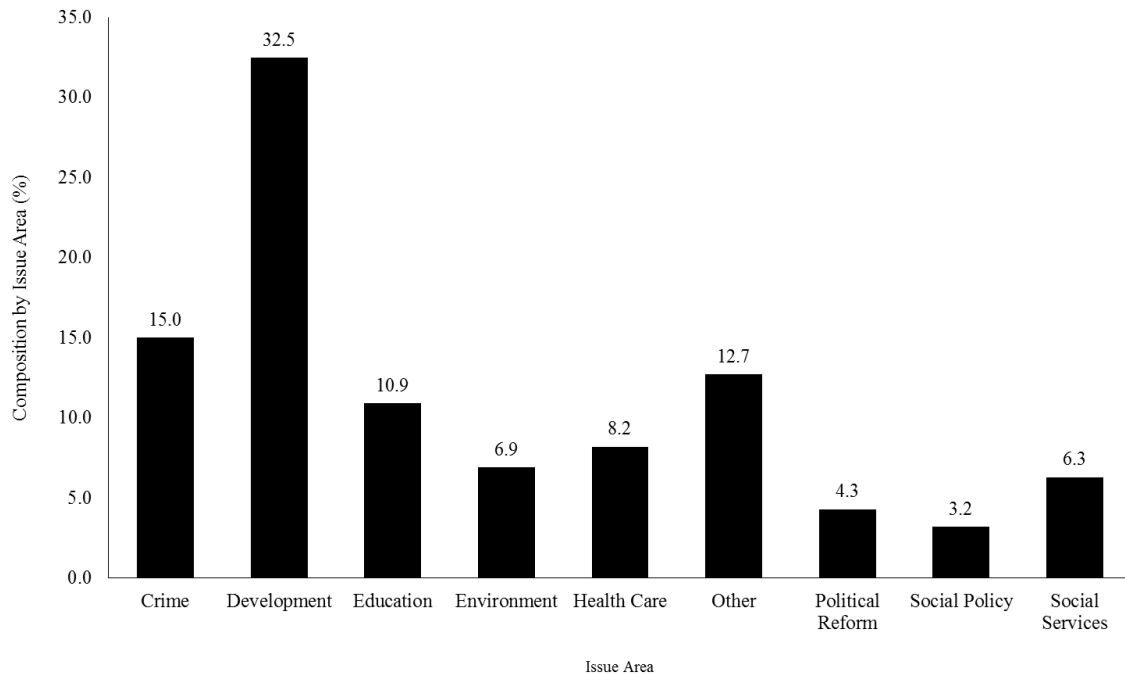
4.3.4 *Issue Classification*

In order to examine the relationship between gubernatorial leadership and partisan voting, it is essential to account for the different levels of partisan disagreement by the broader policy areas. Additionally, controlling for the policy area also addresses the potential methodological issue (selection bias) that I will address later in this chapter. For this analysis, I employ the classification scheme developed by Kousser and Phillips (2012). This exhaustive and mutually exclusive issue schemes groups the roll-call votes into 9 broad issue areas based on governmental function. The issue areas include the following: Crime, Development, Education, Environment, Health Care, Other, Political Reform, Social Issues, and Social Services. While scholars have developed other classification schemes (e.g., Baumgartner, Jones, and Wilkerson 2002), they were developed for federal level policies. For instance, in only rare and unusual circumstances, does a state legislature grapple with a policy that pertains to “international trade.”⁵⁷ For more information on Kousser and Phillips’s coding scheme, see Appendix E. In nearly all cases, the votes can be classified based on the bill or the amendment’s language alone. For the handful of difficult cases, I turned to the state’s legislative journal and examined the debate surrounding the proposed measure.

⁵⁶ In this particular case, all legislative-roll calls regarding HB 7009 would be coded as “one.”

⁵⁷ Even among domestic issues, the amount of overlap between state and national issues tends to vary for by state. States, such as California and New York, tended to have a legislative agenda similar to the federal government. Conversely, states, states such as Idaho and Wyoming, tended to have very different legislative agendas. For instance, one of the more divisive and time-consuming issues on the agenda for Idaho was whether cursive would be mandatory in the public-school system.

Figure 4.2-Roll Call Composition by Issue Area



Notes: The bars represent the percentage of legislative roll-calls that are classified under each issue area when using the issue classification scheme developed by Kousser and Phillips (2012).

Figure 4.2 shows a bar plot of the percentage of legislative roll-call votes that are classified by each issue category. The most common policy that state legislatures grapple with is development with 33% of the roll-call votes. According to Kousser and Phillips's classification scheme, issues fall under the category of "development" are policies that shape the state's economy. The next most common issue area that state legislatures deal with is crime (15%). The least common issue areas that state legislatures vote on are political reform (4.3%) and social policy (3.2%). Additionally, it appears that the most partisan issues areas are Social Issues and Political Reform with each issue area having an average party difference scores of 42.7% and 29.4%, respectively. Conversely, the most bipartisan policy areas are Other (13.1%) and Crime (14.1%).

4.3.5 Additional Explanatory Variables

I also include additional explanatory variables that might be associated with partisan voting. For instance, previous research has shown that legislators are more likely to side with their party on procedural votes than final passage votes (Snyder and Groseclose 2000). Therefore, I include a dichotomous *final passage* variable. Observations coded as “one” indicate a final passage vote. All other observations are coded as “zero.” I expect this coefficient to be significant and negatively signed. Additionally, I control for issues that the U.S. president has taken leadership on. Lee (2008) finds that when the President speaks out on issues, it exacerbates polarization between the two parties in Congress. The same logic may hold for state legislators given the similar dynamic between governors and state legislators. Therefore, I include a *presidential leadership* dummy variable.⁵⁸ I identify the issues that the U.S. President champions by analyzing the 2013 State of the Union Address. The *upper chamber* in a state legislature might be less likely to cast partisan votes due to the smaller number of members within the chamber (Chen and Malhotra 2007). Chambers with a large number of members tend to struggle with enacting some policies due to the confusion associated with the large number of members. One way the members and the chamber overcome this problem is by more frequently relying on the party system to reach decisions. Thus, I include a dichotomous variable accounting for the upper and lower chamber in each state.

Term limits have been shown to increase partisan polarization in a state (Maskett and Shor 2015). Therefore, I include a dichotomous indicator controlling for the presence of legislative term limits. Richman (2010) finds that more professionalized

⁵⁸ Additionally, there are a few issues that the president raises that are not related to state-politics policies (e.g. international affairs).

legislatures tend to display lower levels of partisanship. He argues that because legislators, in professionalized bodies have more institutional resources, they do not need to rely as heavily on their party to help with their reelection and other political goals. Thus, I include Squire's (2007) measure of *legislative professionalism*. This measure of professionalism includes session length, legislators' salary, and legislative staff. Higher scores indicate a more professionalized legislature.

Sinclair (1989) argues that interest groups encourage elected officials to engage in more partisan behavior. Thus, states with more powerful and influential interest groups may display higher levels of partisanship. To capture *interest group power*, I use Nownes, Thomas, and Hrebenar's (2008) interest group index that ranges from one to five. Higher scores indicate that interest groups have more influence in the legislature.⁵⁹ I expect this coefficient to be significant and positively signed. Further, I control for a state's *population size* with data from the U.S. Census. It has been shown that more populated states could have more complex policy environment and greater collective actions problems, thus, the legislators cast more partisan votes to help overcome these policy issues (Richman 2010). Finally, some research suggests that *racial diversity* in a state can influence the party system in a state (Giles and Hertz 1994). Therefore, I include Hicks's (2015) racial diversity index in all of my models. It ranges from 8 to 67. According to Hicks (p. 754), the "components used in measuring racial diversity include, by state/year, the proportion of the population that is exclusively White, Hispanic, African American, and Asian." Lower scores indicate that a state's population tends to

⁵⁹ Nownes, Thomas, and Hrebenar's (2008) create their index from political scientists' surveys in nearly all states.

belong to 1 racial group. Conversely, a higher score indicates that a state's population is equally composed by all four racial groups.⁶⁰

4.3.6 *Estimator*

Given that my data includes multiple roll-calls in the same state legislature, it is necessary for me to account for the potential dependence within my data.⁶¹ Specifically, other state political factors might be correlated with my dependent variable. Not accounting for this feature in my dataset, may cause my estimates to be inefficient. Therefore, I include a random effect for each state in all of the linear models presented in this chapter (Woolridge 2015).⁶²

4.4 **Results**

Before presenting the results from my linear random effects analysis, I first show the bivariate relationship between the gubernatorial leadership and the Rice Index of Party Difference Score by the nine policy areas. Table 4.1 presents the average party difference score for issues the governor champions (coded as 1) and for the legislative agenda items that were not mentioned in the State of the State Address (coded as 0). The average party difference score moves in the expected direction in most policy areas, with policies that the governor champions being associated with greater partisan polarization.

⁶⁰ Hick's (2015) estimates his racial diversity index as follows: $100 \times (1 - [W^2 + B^2 + A^2 + L^2])$. W represents the proportion of a state's population that is white, B is the proportion of a state's population that is African American, A is the proportion of a state's population that is Asian, and L is the proportion of a state that is exclusively Latino.

⁶¹ As an additional robustness test, I have estimated a tobit model with a random effect for each state. The results are consistent with those presented here. For more details, see Appendix F.

⁶² I report the results from the random effects model rather than the fixed effects model as suggested by the Hausman test. The Hausman test was insignificant for all models presented in this chapter. This indicates that both the random and fixed effects estimators are consistent, but the estimates from the random effects estimator are more efficient. Additionally, in the fixed effects model, the gubernatorial leadership variable was substantively identical to the results presented here. Thus, I report the results with the random effects estimator.

For five of the nine policy schemes, a difference of means test indicates that gubernatorial leadership is associated with greater partisan voting in the legislature. Only for the crime-related policies is gubernatorial leadership associated with more bipartisan behavior. For instance, governors who fight against elderly abuse, child neglect, and human trafficking can generally motivate more legislators to cross the political aisle. Taken together, this simple test suggests that gubernatorial leadership exerts a contrary pull on the parties in the state legislature, driving them farther apart on the issues that the governor champions.

Table 4.1- Gubernatorial Leadership and Partisan Division, Difference of Means Test

Policy Area	No Gubernatorial Leadership (n)	Gubernatorial Leadership (n)	Difference
Development	17.0 (11,024)	23.4 (836)	6.4*
Crime	14.4 (5,111)	8.1 (273)	-6.3*
Health	16.4 (2,767)	24.2 (223)	7.8*
Education	18.4 (3,468)	28.5 (543)	10.1*
Social Issues	43.1 (1,070)	37.5 (85)	-5.6
Social Services	21.1 (1,938)	29.9 (370)	8.8*
Other	13.2 (4,555)	9.7 (76)	3.5
Political Reform	29.1(1,507)	38.4 (67)	9.3*
Environment	21.4 (2,122)	19.4 (387)	-2.0
All Votes	18.1 (33,594)	23.7 (2,860)	5.6*

Notes: Values represent the average Rice Index of Party Difference Score for roll-call votes in each category.

* $p \leq 0.05$.

Moving on to the linear random effects analysis, the results are presented in Table 4.2. The statistical results reported suggest that gubernatorial leadership is associated with an increase in partisan polarization in most issue areas. In five of the nine policy areas, the gubernatorial leadership variable is statistically significant and correctly signed. More specifically, in the substantive areas of Development, Health, Education, Social

Services, and Political Reform, I find that gubernatorial involvement increases partisanship.

Table 4.2- Gubernatorial Leadership and Partisan Division, Random Effects (Part 1)

	<i>Development</i>	<i>Crime</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Education</i>
	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient	Coefficient
Variable	(S.E.)	(S.E.)	(S.E.)	(S.E.)
Gov. Leadership	2.495*	-4.593*	3.961*	3.103*
	(1.040)	(1.601)	(1.926)	(1.420)
Pres. Leadership	2.882	8.243	11.691*	3.090
	(2.269)	(8.937)	(2.268)	(2.643)
Final Passage	-2.265*	-4.804*	-2.779*	-10.834*
	(0.598)	(0.798)	(1.161)	(1.125)
Professionalism	-8.601	-15.414	-29.624	-26.787
	(45.880)	(43.805)	(64.193)	(42.897)
Term Limits	7.645	5.006	11.430	8.871
	(5.983)	(5.630)	(8.326)	(5.491)
Interest Group Power	-3.886	-1.011	-9.643	-4.254
	(4.914)	(4.643)	(6.892)	(4.559)
Population Size	0.453	0.446	0.556	0.342
	(0.718)	(0.693)	(1.008)	(0.670)
Racial Diversity	-0.469*	-0.402	-0.450	-0.327
	(0.237)	(0.227)	(0.332)	(0.223)
Upper Chamber	-3.200*	-3.671*	-4.887*	-7.631*
	(0.524)	(0.715)	(0.997)	(0.937)
Party Competition	-4.744	9.905	-2.894	-35.148
	(34.017)	(32.257)	(47.933)	(31.681)
Constant	51.195	28.601	65.876	83.256*
	(35.273)	(33.578)	(49.938)	(33.011)
State Intercepts (St. Dev.)	12.77	11.87	17.65	11.46
AIC	112,484	50,042	28,052	38,374
Number of Observations	11,860	5,384	2,990	4,011

Notes: Dependent variable is the party difference score. Higher values indicate more partisan voting. Results are estimated from a linear model with a random effect for each state. SE=Standard Error. Vote classification scheme developed by Kousser and Phillips (2012).

* $p \leq 0.05$

Table 4.2- Gubernatorial Leadership and Partisan Division, Random Effects (Part 2)

	Soc. Issues	Soc. Services	Other	Pol. Reform	Environmen t
Variable	Coefficient (S.E.)	Coefficient (S.E.)	Coefficient t (S.E.)	Coefficient (S.E.)	Coefficient (S.E.)
Gov. Leadership	1.374 (4.514)	3.159* (1.573)	-4.219 (2.965)	18.364* (5.175)	-7.598* (1.713)
Pres. Leadership	14.110* (2.375)	10.022* (4.323)	-11.083 (10.401)	-2.354 (4.553)	9.591* (2.686)
Final Passage	-6.798* (2.246)	-4.696* (1.589)	-3.780* (0.873)	-4.588* (2.032)	-3.304* (1.324)
Professionalism	-56.835 (61.184)	-11.959 (63.232)	-7.271 (41.503)	2.239 (62.493)	10.252 (48.605)
Term Limits	12.672 (7.622)	11.824 (7.988)	9.346 (5.408)	11.114 (7.988)	6.620 (6.202)
Interest Group Power	-11.569 (6.320)	-0.578 (6.578)	-7.080 (4.455)	0.021 (6.608)	-4.240 (5.117)
Population Size	0.703 (0.951)	0.388 (1.006)	-0.006 (0.649)	0.861 (0.995)	-0.302 (0.750)
Racial Diversity	0.028 (0.314)	-0.394 (0.327)	-0.281 (0.215)	-0.720* (0.327)	-0.054 (0.251)
Upper Chamber	-6.399* (2.016)	-6.374* (1.360)	-3.659* (0.772)	-1.838* (1.876)	-4.659* (1.181)
Party Competition	-59.968 (43.378)	6.478 (45.632)	-42.599 (31.075)	-3.602 (46.008)	18.175 (35.250)
Constant	121.261* (44.786)	37.346 (47.461)	85.538* (32.214)	53.110 (47.833)	21.242 (36.626)
State Intercepts (St. Dev.)	15.38	16.69	11.38	16.33	12.72
AIC	11,358	22,530	43,429	15,711	24,017
Number of Observations	1,152	2,308	4,666	1,574	2,509

Notes: Dependent variable is the party difference score. Higher values indicate more partisan voting. Results are estimated from a linear model with a random effect for each state. SE=Standard Error. Vote classification scheme developed by Kousser and Phillips (2012).

* $p \leq 0.05$

Substantively, holding all variables constant, I find that gubernatorial leadership widens the divide between parties on *development* issues by an estimated 2.5% and on *healthcare* policies by 3.9%. Additionally, it appears that *education* policies that the governor champions are associated with a 3.1% increase in the divide between the two

parties. The gubernatorial leadership variable corresponds to a 3.2% increase in partisan voting for *social services* issues. Finally, gubernatorial leadership on *political reform* policies has a robust effect on partisanship as evident by the 18.4% increase in the party difference scores. Overall, not only does gubernatorial leadership have a significant effect on partisanship, but it can also have a robust substantive effect as well.

Further, the finding that the gubernatorial leadership variable has no statistically significant effect on legislative partisanship on social issues is consistent with previous literature which finds that parties have limited influence on votes concerning abortion and religion. Usually, legislators are “free to vote their conscience” on these policies (Snyder and Groseclose 2000, p. 194). Surprisingly, I find that gubernatorial leadership on environment-related policies tends to promote more bipartisanship as indicated by the results in Table 2. This may be due to the heavily distributive and constituency-oriented (e.g., water infrastructure grants) nature of these policies (Lowi 1964).

Regarding the control variables, most perform as expected. Legislators tend to act more bipartisan when casting a final passage vote. Additionally, the legislators serving in the upper chamber are more likely to vote less partisan relative to the members in the lower chamber. Additionally, presidential leadership also tends to exacerbate partisanship and this is consistent with Lee’s (2008) findings. For the remaining variables, I find limited evidence of them significantly influencing legislative partisanship on roll-call votes, at least once other factors are taken into consideration.

One potential issue for my analysis is that governors, for whatever reason, may prefer to focus on more polarizing policies. If governors tend to focus their efforts on more partisan policies, then my findings might be driven by gubernatorial agenda choices

rather than the legislature's reaction to the governor. Therefore, I have conducted various robustness tests to account for this possibility. I find little evidence of such a selection-bias occurring in my data. However, it is important to remember that no test can completely rule out the possibility of a selection bias occurring, therefore, future scholars should examine this potential methodological issue with greater detail. Additionally, it is important to remember that the State of the State Address usually proceeds all roll-call votes, thus, minimizing some of the concerns related to a selection-bias occurring within my dataset. A fuller description of this robustness test and the results are reported in Appendix G.

Taken together, the results from Tables 4.1 and 4.2 suggest that gubernatorial leadership tends to exacerbate partisanship. The two exceptions are in the areas of crime and the environment. When governors speak on issues concerning child abuse and human trafficking, this tends to promote more bipartisan voting among the legislators. Additionally, governors most likely promote bipartisanship in environmental areas due to the distributive-nature of the issue area.

4.5 Robustness Check: Final Passage Votes Only

Previous scholars have emphasized analyzing final passage votes because they can be interpreted as being more directly linked to policy outcomes (Cox and McCubbins 2005; Krehbiel 1998, p.84). Therefore, as a robustness check, I have estimated several models, with a random effect for each state, with only final passage votes. The results are displayed in Table 4.3. As the results shows, most of the results do not hold. Instead, these findings suggest that the members tend to vote more partisan, on issues the governor champions, for procedural votes.

Table 4.3- Final Passage Votes Only (Part 1)

	<i>Development</i>	<i>Crime</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Education</i>
Variable	Coefficient (S.E.)	Coefficient (S.E.)	Coefficient (S.E.)	Coefficient (S.E.)
Gov. Leadership	-1.906 (1.306)	-3.909* (1.919)	0.834 (2.310)	-1.519 (1.820)
Pres. Leadership	3.694 (2.803)	-4.378 (9.879)	6.568* (2.452)	-0.372 (2.373)
Professionalism	-1.769 (30.830)	0.991 (20.744)	-22.893 (62.222)	-44.764 (33.128)
Term Limits	5.922 (4.071)	7.493* (2.613)	9.514 (8.179)	7.503 (4.336)
Interest Group Power	-9.616* (3.298)	-6.371* (2.120)	-14.949* (6.714)	10.247* (3.518)
Population Size	0.410 (0.484)	0.317 (0.344)	0.436 (0.978)	0.823 (0.521)
Racial Diversity	-0.070 (0.164)	-0.028 (0.119)	-0.063 (0.325)	0.030 (0.179)
Upper Chamber	-1.762* (0.684)	-2.486* (0.890)	-4.537* (1.213)	-3.919* (1.067)
Party Competition	-36.012 (23.297)	-22.781 (15.074)	-33.964 (46.915)	-53.114* (24.721)
Constant	70.591* (24.042)	44.623* (15.744)	88.129 (48.736)	87.366* (25.602)
State Intercepts (St. Dev.)	8.30	4.71	17.06	8.39
AIC	57,122	25,973	15,428	21,364
Number of Observations	6,220	2,881	1,712	2,325

Notes: Dependent variable is the party difference score. Higher values indicate more partisan voting. Results are estimated from a linear model with a random effect for each state. SE=Standard Error. Vote classification scheme developed by Kousser and Phillips (2012).

* $p \leq 0.05$

Table 4.3- Final Passage Votes Only (Part 2)

	<i>Soc. Issues</i>	<i>Soc. Services</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Pol. Reform</i>	<i>Environment</i>
Variable	Coefficient (S.E.)	Coefficient (S.E.)	Coefficient (S.E.)	Coefficient (S.E.)	Coefficient (S.E.)
Gov. Leadership	9.388 (5.714)	-0.616 (2.418)	-0.917 (3.457)	10.050 (7.376)	-4.677* (2.325)
Pres. Leadership	4.137 (3.589)	9.721 (4.995)	-5.692 (15.308)	-5.088 (5.959)	7.855* (3.426)
Professionalism	-69.022 (61.364)	-30.850 (36.523)	-13.720 (25.664)	40.325 (51.933)	15.847 (26.329)
Term Limits	6.761 (7.992)	7.165 (4.518)	3.626 (3.479)	8.302 (6.769)	3.864 (3.335)
Interest Group Power	-15.893* (6.322)	-7.872* (3.734)	-10.635* (2.765)	-6.927 (5.481)	-10.644* (2.686)
Population Size	1.399 (0.969)	0.838 (0.596)	0.238 (0.406)	0.437 (0.844)	0.002 (0.415)
Racial Diversity	0.255 (0.330)	0.224 (0.209)	0.129 (0.143)	-0.429 (0.287)	0.201 (0.144)
Upper Chamber	-4.829 (3.196)	-1.705 (1.776)	-1.343 (0.912)	0.249 (2.693)	-1.605 (1.637)
Party Competition	-52.501 (44.787)	-45.274 (25.986)	-49.697* (20.122)	-52.192 (38.989)	-31.798 (19.003)
Constant	106.236* (45.510)	65.580* (27.228)	77.515* (20.492)	90.461* (40.453)	58.879* (19.864)
State Intercepts (St. Dev.)	14.35	7.97	6.50	12.25	5.24
AIC	5,007	12,299	23,198	7,135	11,758
Number of Observations	517	1,290	2,584	730	1,251

Notes: Dependent variable is the party difference score. Higher values indicate more partisan voting. Results are estimated from a linear model with a random effect for each state. SE=Standard Error. Vote classification scheme developed by Kousser and Phillips (2012).

* $p \leq 0.05$

I suggest this observed pattern emerges because final passage votes tend to be more visible by the public, and importantly, strategic actors. Members who vote too partisan may pay a price at the ballot box (Carson et al. 2010). For state legislators, members who votes too extreme may encourage the emergence of a challenger who can turn their voting record into a political issue on the campaign trail (Arnold 1990; Rogers

2015). Additionally, voting too extreme may hinder the members reelection fundraising efforts (Hogan 2008).

Thus, an important limitation to these findings is that the relationship between gubernatorial leadership and partisan roll-call voting is not robust to all types of roll-calls. Specifically, these results imply that the members are conscious of when to engage in partisan politics. When the roll-call is easier to identify, perhaps by a challenger or some other political actors, the members are less likely to cast a partisan vote on an issue that the governor raises. Conversely, the members are more inclined to act partisan on roll-calls that are less.

4.6 Conclusions and Implications

In his 2013 State of the State Address, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo (D) embraced the living-wage movement by calling on the legislature to raise the state's minimum wage to \$9 an hour in an effort to boost the income of low-income families. Governor Cuomo preemptively took aim at the critics of his economic policy by saying that raising the minimum wage is “the right thing to do. It's the fair thing to do. It is long overdue.” Shortly thereafter, both chambers passed Governor Cuomo's policy initiative; however, it advanced to the governor's desk almost perfectly along party-lines and it was hotly contentious (Blain and Lovett 2013). However, in West Virginia, a similar minimum wage policy was approved with nearly unanimous consent from both parties (Davidson 2014).⁶³ Why did New York and West Virginia's state parties display sharply divergent voting behaviors on a similar minimum wage law? I suggest that Governor Cuomo's decision to publicly champion the minimum wage increase may have partially

⁶³ http://www.wvlegislature.gov/Bill_Status/Bills_history.cfm?input=4283&year=2014&sessiontype=RS&btype=bill

been a factor that drove the two-parties farther apart on the issue. When examining state legislative roll-calls votes, I find some suggestive evidence to support this conclusion.

One tenant of democracy is that the elected officials enact sound and effective policies (Dahl 1989). In this chapter, I examine the effect of gubernatorial leadership on partisan conflict in state legislatures. Building off Lee's (2009) theoretical framework, I theorize that because governors are prominent leaders in their parties this may incentivize the members in the chamber to use the governor's partisan affiliation as an informational cue when reaching a decision on legislative roll-call votes. Additionally, the members may decide to vote heavily partisan on the issues the governor champions in order to influence the parties' reputation among the voters, thus, theoretically influencing their chances of securing reelection. Thus, both partisan interests and political attitudes should influence the legislator's response to gubernatorial leadership. When examining roll-calls across multiple issue areas and states in 2013, I find mixed evidence that gubernatorial leadership increases partisanship in state legislatures. In most issue areas, gubernatorial leadership does tend to enhance partisan behavior. However, when the governors speaking out on crime-related policies (e.g., elderly abuse), this tends to incentivize bipartisan voting among the members in the legislature. Additionally, gubernatorial leadership tends to promote bipartisanship for environmental policies. I suggest this is due to the distributive nature of such policies (Lowi 1964). Taken together, these findings suggest that the effect of gubernatorial leadership on roll-call partisanship tends to vary by policy area. This is a slight departure from Lee's (2009) findings.

This chapter furthers our understanding of the role that partisanship plays in the legislative arena. In particular, we have a limited knowledge of how party politics can play out in the lawmaking process, at least in the context of state politics. These findings indicate that the members' willingness to support a policy can be contingent on who proposes it and not just the bill's own merits. These findings suggest that the members might be more likely to support a bill that is proposed by their party's leadership but disapprove of it when advocated by the other party's leadership, even if the content is highly similar. Thus, these findings demonstrate the importance of studying the effects of political parties in the policy formulation stage in state legislatures.

Before concluding a few caveats are in order. First, it is important to remember that the data included in this chapter only includes roll-calls from 25 states in one year. It is possible that some of these findings may not hold across all time periods or with the inclusion of additional states. In particular, it is certainly possible that in earlier time periods (e.g., 1940s), where governors tended to be institutionally weaker, the effect of gubernatorial leadership may have considerably less influence on partisan roll-call voting (Associated Press 2011).⁶⁴ Second, legislative procedures vary by state (Hamm and Squire 2005). This may influence the degree of agenda control the majority party can wield. Therefore, it is possible that the effect of gubernatorial leadership may vary by state.

A third limitation to this study is that the effects of gubernatorial leadership tend to vary by vote type. In particular, when only examining final passage votes, it appears gubernatorial leadership has little effect. I suggest that the members are less likely to act

⁶⁴ Additionally, future scholars may wish to examine the effect of gubernatorial staff and resources to determine if they have any influence on partisan behavior regarding legislative roll-call voting.

partisan on a final passage roll-call vote that pertains to a specific issue that the governor has championed in order to avoid potential political risks (Carson et al. 2010). In particular, voting too partisan may cause a challenger to emerge in the next election (Roger 2015) or it may hurt a candidate's ability to raise the necessary campaign contributions (Hogan 2008). Final passage votes are most likely far easier for political actors to uncover and use to their political benefit than perhaps a procedural vote. All three of these topics should be addressed by future scholars in more detail to ensure the robustness of these findings.

Future research could explore in further details the influence of presidential leadership on partisan roll-call voting within state legislatures, thus, moving this research in new directions. Moreover, in this analysis I only examine 25 states. Future scholars should try to expand the analysis to all 50 states and across multiple time periods to ensure that these findings are robust to other political and geographical factors. Finally, institutional rules vary substantially across state legislatures. For instance, some states have a filibuster in place while others do not. Future researchers might examine whether the presence of the filibuster forces legislatures to enact more bipartisan legislation. States with a higher filibuster threshold may force the legislature to only pursue bipartisan legislation. Taken together, there is much more to learn about the determinants of partisan roll-call voting in state legislatures.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

A considerable amount of scholarly attention has been devoted to the dynamics between political parties and the legislative branch. For instance, Howell et al. (2000) find that the presence of divided government can decrease legislative productivity. Additionally, Jones (2010) provides evidence which suggests that an increase in party unity among the members in the majority party can enhance the effect of Congressional approval on electoral outcomes. Finally, Binder, Lawrence, and Maltzman (1999) argue that partisanship can affect a member's decision to waffle on a discharge petition for a bill they co-sponsor.

While this research has deepened our understanding of the role of parties in the lawmaking process, there are a few limitations. In particular, a large portion of the research on parties and the legislative branch only examines this relationship at the federal-level. Focusing on this relationship only in the context of national politics has both methodological and substantive shortcomings. First, a methodological shortcoming of analyzing federal-level political institutions is the limited number of cases and variation of institutional features. For instance, Congress, as an institution, varies only over time and any institutional fluctuations tends to occur at a slow pace. Unlike Congress, state legislatures display considerable institutional variation in procedures, polarization, and other matters across states and time. This institutional variation eases our ability to test several prominent political science theories.

Second, there are substantive shortcomings to examining parties only in the federal-context. While parties at the federal-level undeniably play a vital role in American politics, it is important to also recognize and analyze parties at the state and local-level. State political parties play an important role in recruiting candidates and passing significant legislation, such as Arizona's SB 1070, as discussed in Chapter 2. Further, few scholars have assessed whether the theories developed for political parties at the national-level are applicable to the state party apparatus as well. Thus, we have an incomplete understanding of this important political institution.

The primary goal of this study was to help fill this theoretical and empirical void in state party and legislative research. Additionally, I hope that these findings shed deeper insights into the relationship between two important political institutions, the legislative branch and the political party system. In particular, one contribution of this dissertation is that the findings suggest that state political parties can impact legislative rules and procedures, legislative elections, and interbranch politics.

Finally, one more important contribution of this dissertation is that the findings suggest that several theories that were originally crafted for parties at the national-level also translate in the context of state politics. It is important to recognize that state parties are indeed different from the national-level parties. Further, some theories that were originally crafted in the context of national politics may not easily apply to state politics as well. However, my findings would suggest that there are at least some similarities between state and national parties, at least on the dimensions I test in Chapters 2, 3, and 4.

This chapter proceeds with two sections. First, I briefly outline the main findings from the previous chapters. Finally, I discuss areas of future research.

5.1 Summary of Findings

In Chapter 2, I explore the effects of legislative term limits on state chamber rules and procedures. Building off Mooney's (2012) theoretical framework, I outline two reasons why legislative term limits should be associated with an increase in Speaker power. First, legislative term limits are known to decrease institutional familiarity and policy expertise. In order to achieve their policy goals, the members might be more willing to delegate institutional powers to control the lawmaking process to their Speaker. Second, term limits are known to dampen the relationships among the members in the chamber. Having weak relationships in the legislature could undermine the member's ability to pass important legislation. Thus, the members might be willing to delegate more power to their leadership. When using Mooney's (2013) Speaker power index between 1987 and 2015 in 49 state lower chambers, I find evidence which suggests that legislative term limits are associated with an increase in Speaker power. This chapter provides several contributions. First, previous research examining the relationship between term limits and Speaker power finds that term limits weaken the position. These studies rely on legislative surveys to reach this conclusion. This vein of research conflicts with Mooney's (2012) theoretical framework that legislative term limits should increase the amount of collective action problems in the legislature, thus, incentivizing the chamber to delegate more power to its leadership. In this analysis, when analyzing actual chamber rules and procedures, my findings confirm to Mooney's theoretical expectation. Second, nearly all research on Speaker power has only examined state

legislatures in one-year. This analysis is one of the first to examine the legislative rules and procedures over an extended period, thus, providing a more robust test of term limits and other political factors' effects on Speaker power.

Chapter 3 examines the effects of attributes associated with state political parties on legislative elections between 1998 and 2014. In particular, I argue that two party attributes may influence state legislative elections: party unity and the ideological distance between the voters and the governing party. First, I argue that an increase in majority party unity should increase the effect on the odds of the candidates in majority party winning their election during the presence of unified government. Second, I suggest that an increase in the ideological distance between the voters and the majority party's median member should correspond to fewer seats for the governing party. For my analysis, I measure the party's cohesion and ideology variables with Shor and McCarty's (2011) NPAT Common Space scores. Additionally, I operationalize my dependent variable as the percentage of seats gained by the majority party. When using a linear random effects model, I find some evidence to support my theoretical expectations. These findings support the idea that the degree of party unity within the governing party can influence election outcomes that has been argued by previous scholars.

In Chapter 4, I extend Frances Lee's (2008) argument that executive branch leadership tends to increase partisan behavior in state legislatures. Specifically, two theoretical mechanisms should link gubernatorial leadership to more partisan roll-call votes. First, the members own policy views might be shaped by the governor raising a policy issue. Specifically, the members may rely on the governor and their own partisan affiliation when deciding how to vote on an issue that is on the executive branch's policy

agenda. Second, the members might be more willing to vote along party-lines on the items belonging to the governor's policy agenda for political purposes, specifically, to influence the parties' brands. For the members in the governor's party, ensuring that the governor's policy agenda is signed into law, may help their party develop a positive reputation for being able to govern. This positive reputation may help their chances of securing reelection. Conversely, for the members in the opposing party, voting against and blocking the governor's agenda may hinder the executive branch's reputation. A weak reputation associated with being able to govern may be an electoral benefit for those not running under the governor's party label.

To assess this theoretical expectation, I examine the roll-call votes in 25 state legislatures in 2013. Specifically, my dataset includes over 36,400 roll-call votes. I calculate the Rice Party Cohesion Scores for every roll-call vote. Additionally, I measure gubernatorial leadership by examining State of the State Addresses. When controlling for issue content and other political factors, I find that the effect of gubernatorial leadership tends to vary by policy area. This chapter makes several contributions. First, these findings imply that Lee's (2008; 2009) theoretical framework may not be applicable in certain political environments. Second, the results from this chapter reveal that the governor can have a significant impact on partisanship in the legislature. This is a conclusion that has received mixed support in the literature. Finally, several members of the media have suggested that the governor should speak out more frequently and passionately on salient policy issues. According to this perspective, the governor raising these issues should bring together several diverse groups and constituents. The findings

from this chapter suggest it might have the opposite effect—it could further divide, at least, the state legislators by party, in some policy areas.

Taken together, these three chapters represent a significant step in filling a theoretical and empirical void in the party literature by exploring important research questions regarding the relationship between political parties and the legislative branch in the context of state politics. In particular, these findings suggest that state political parties can have an effect on legislative rules and procedure, elections, and interbranch politics.

5.2 Future Research

While these findings do enrich our understanding of political parties, there is still a great deal more we must learn. In this section, I present three topics and research questions that I hope to address in the future.

First, I would like to extend the dataset used in Chapter 4 to all 50 states. While my dataset includes a reasonable representation of the 50 states, it would be wise to ensure that my results are robust to the inclusion of all the states. *Open States* has most of the state roll-call votes online, but I would have to go through a handful of the state journals and code by hand a few of the missing legislatures. Additionally, I would like to extend the dataset to 2014 to empirically confirm that my results were not driven by the year selected. This is an important undertaking considering that little research has been conducted with state legislative roll-call votes.

Second, a prominent theory of legislative politics is conditional party government (CPG) (Aldrich and Rohde 2001). This theory states that when CPG's criteria are met (i.e., the parties are internally homogeneous and externally heterogeneous), this

influences the behavior and organization of the chamber. To be clear, the CPG criteria are the following: ideological distance between the majority and minority party and the degree of cohesion within the majority party. I would be curious to explore if, during periods of unified government, as the criteria of CPG are met if the state legislature is more efficient at passing legislation. To measure CPG, I can use Shor and McCarty's (2011) NPAT Common Space Scores. Additionally, *The Book of the States* keeps track of the number of laws enacted by state and year. This research could shed light on whether the parties' ideology influence their ability to pass important legislation.

Finally, I believe more attention should be given to the effect of partisan polarization on policy outcomes. In particular, I suggest that partisan polarization could influence the fiscal outcomes of a state and this could be tested with state bond ratings. I would expect that partisan polarization would heighten the tension between the two parties, thus, posing a challenge to the legislature to enact sound fiscal policy. However, the effect of partisan polarization is most likely also conditioned on other political factors (e.g., legislative professionalism). More professionalized legislatures are known to pursue more financially-risky legislation in an effort to please their constituents (Lewis 2012). I would expect that an increase of polarization in professionalized legislatures would result in even lower bond ratings. This potential research findings could provide insight into the lowering of the U.S. bond rating in the 2010s. Overall, there is still a great deal to learn about the role of political parties in the U.S. political process.

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APPENDIX A

CODING OF MOONEY'S SPEAKER POWER INDEX

Christopher Z. Mooney (2013) has constructed an index of state speaker's power that I use as my dependent variable. Mooney's measure incorporates various tools at the speaker's disposal (e.g. appointment, bill referral, legislative staff, etc.) and is an additive index. This measure includes all lower chambers with the exception of Nebraska. Mooney only uses lower chambers because of the few differences between the upper and lower chambers. This data is collected from *The Book of the States*.

Attached below are the components of Mooney's measure and how each are individually coded as specifically described in his original article.

Table A.1-Legislative Aspects Related to Speaker Power

Legislative Aspect	Coding
Committee Chair Appointment Power	• 1.0=Speaker Appoints committee chairs • 0.5=Speaker is involved with committee chair appointments, but not the sole authority • 0=Speaker has no committee chair appointment authority
Committee member assignment	• 1.0=Speaker makes committee assignments • 0.67=Speaker makes majority party committee assignments • 0.33=speaker is involved with committee assignments, but not the sole authority • 0=speaker has no committee assignment power
Chamber leadership appointment	Proportion of House leaders (not including the speaker) who are appointed by the speaker

Procedural

- 1.0=speaker has complete control over bill referral
- 0.75=speaker controls referral, but with restrictions
- 0.5=speaker shares power over referral; no restrictions on referrals
- 0.25=speaker shares power over referral; restrictions on referrals
- 0=speaker is not formally involved in bill referral

Control over legislative committee staff

- 1.0="caucus or leadership" is the only "source of professional [committee] staff services"
 - 0.75="caucus or leadership" plus one other agency/category are listed as a "source of professional [committee] staff services"
 - 0.5="caucus or leadership" plus two other agencies/categories are listed as a "source of professional [committee] staff services"
 - 0.25="caucus or leadership" plus three other agencies/categories are listed as a "source of professional [committee] staff services"
 - 0="caucus or leadership" is not listed as a "source of professional [committee] staff services"
-

APPENDIX B

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR CHAPTER 3

Attached below are some descriptive statistics used in Chapter 3. There are a total of 408 observations in this dataset

Table B.1-Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Party Unity	1.008	0.367	0.163	1.889
State Economy	1.949	0.388	-1.613	2.632
Unified Govt.	0.487	0.500	0.000	1.000
Partisan Gain (DV)	-0.958	6.829	-30.500	29.000
Ideological Div.	0.633	0.352	1.818	1.818
Term Limits	0.173	0.438	-0.180	1.990
Legislative Prof.	0.197	0.116	0.027	0.626
District Size	10.533	0.967	8.011	13.089
Maj. Party Size	62.01	10.02	40.00	100.00
Spending Gap	-0.029	0.055	-0.324	0.097
Partisanship	0.542	0.081	0.357	0.734
Pres. Approval	0.007	0.995	-1.000	1.000
Midterm	0.022	0.729	-1.000	1.000

APPENDIX C

STATE SAMPLE REPRESENTATIVENESS

My study includes 25 states: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

The states included in this chapter are representative of all legislatures on four indicators: legislative professionalism, legislative turnover, partisan competition, and geographic region. Martorano (2006) argues that states display a great deal of variation in legislative professionalism, turnover, and party competition, thus, it is vital that any sample of state legislature be reflective of these traits. As an additional robustness check, I control for the geographic region.

Table C.1-Population versus Sample

	<u>50 States</u>	<u>Sample States</u>
<i>Legislative Professionalism</i>		
Citizen Legislatures	34%	36%
Hybrid Legislatures	46%	44%
Professional Legislatures	20%	20%
<i>Legislative Turnover</i>		
Low Turnover	69%	64%
High Turnover	31%	36%
<i>Party Competition</i>		
Competitive Legislatures	27%	24%
Uncompetitive Legislatures	73%	76%
<i>Geographic Region</i>		
South	32%	40%
Midwest	24%	16%
Northeast	18%	16%
West	26%	28%

In regards to professionalization, my sample of 25 states is highly representative of the United States. I classified each state as either citizen, hybrid, or professional based on

data provided by *National Conference of State Legislatures*. A citizen legislature is one in which has short session length, low legislator salary, and few committee staff. An example of a citizen legislature is Wyoming. A professional legislature is one with a long session length, high salary, and large staff for the members. An example of a professional legislature is California. Finally, a hybrid is a legislature in between a citizen and professional legislature. Tennessee is an example of a hybrid legislature.

With respect to the 50 states, 34% are considered citizen legislatures. Approximately 36% of the states included in my sample of 25 states are classified as a citizen legislature. 46% of the states are considered hybrid legislatures. My sample has around 44% of hybrid legislatures. Finally, like the 50 states as a whole, 20% of the states included in my sample are professional legislatures. This suggest that the 25 states used in my sample is somewhat representative of the entire population of state legislatures at least in regards to professionalization.

Martorano (2006) suggests that researchers should also consider legislative turnover when sampling from the states. Like Martorano, all 50 states were classified as either having low or high legislative turnover. States with less than 25% turnover are classified as “low turnover” and states with at least 25% turnover are classified as “high.” It appears that my sample of 25 states is reasonably representative of the 50 states as a whole. Around 69% of legislatures tend to have low turnover and in my sample 64% are classified as “low.” Conversely, 31% of the states in the entire population are classified as “high turnover” and my sample has around 36% of states with high legislative turnover. Thus, it appears that my sample of 25 states is reasonably represented of all 50 states.

I also compare my sample of 25 states to all 50 states in regards to party competition. A legislature is considered competitive if the difference between the two parties is less than 20%. Nationally, only 27% of states have parties competing for control. It appears that my sample follows a distribution similar to the entire universe of the 50 states. Only 24% of the states in my sample are considered “competitive.”

Finally, I consider one more additional characteristic—geographic region. Like the U.S. Census, I classify states as either belonging to the Northeast, South, Midwest, or West. While not perfect, my sample tends to follow a distribution similar to the entire population.

Taken together, Table C.1, indicates that the 25 state legislatures in my sample are reasonably representative of the 50 state legislatures in regards to professionalism, legislative turnover, party competition, and geographic region.

APPENDIX D

SPECIFIC ISSUES GOVERNORS RAISED

Listed below are the specific issues the governors raised. This is for Chapter 4.

Alabama

- Commercial manufacturing plants established in the state
- College and Career Ready Task Force
- Low cost of energy in state due to natural resources (coal, natural gas, nuclear and hydro-electric energy)
- Alabama Trust Fund
- 2nd Amendment to U.S. Constitution
- Protect elderly
- Protect “unborn” (abortion)
- expansion of voluntary Pre-K programs
- 2.5% pay raise for teachers
- Alabama Department of Homeland Security needs to develop a strategic plan for preventing and responding to incidents of active shooters
- Online license and tag verification system
- Have government agencies switch to paperless bills
- 2011 tornadoes and recovery

Alaska

- Natural resources in state (including oil production)
- Alaska’s North Slope
- Enact laws against domestic violence, sexual assault, and sex trafficking
- Enact more stricter laws against child pornography
- fund 15 Village Public Safety Officers
- Alaska Performance Scholarships
- Teaching standards
- Digital Learning Initiative
- Restructure taxation on oil
- Alaska Gasline Development Corporation
- Alaska Pipeline Project
- Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority
- Power Cost Equalization
- Create formula to determine if unemployment insurance is solvent
- Cut unemployment taxes
- U.S. federal government overreach
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

- “pass legislation giving our State authority to seek and assume primacy over dredge and fill operations within our borders”

Arizona

- 2nd Amendment (U.S. Constitution)
- Increase caseworkers for foster care system and Child Protection Services (CPS)
- Protect children
- Reduce state business regulations
- Commerce Authority
- sales tax system (simplify)
- have a School Resource Officer in every building
- Charter schools
- Fund the Move on When Reading program
- Common Core
- Establish 1st Comprehensive Performance Funding plan
- Medicaid Expansion
- Affordable Care Act
- Arizona’s Medicaid Program- AHCCCS
- Arizona Natural Resources Review Council
- Arizona can maintain land and natural resources better than federal government
- Immigration Reform
- Border Security
- Human Trafficking

Arkansas

- Student education scores
- Invest in jobs
- Reduce sales tax
- Reduce Grocery Tax
- Arkansas’s Medicaid Program
- ARKids First
- Fight Medicaid Fraud
- Affordable Care Act
- Help Military Spouses
- Forestry Commission
- Department of Correction funding

California

- Cut State Budget
- Curb prison spending
- Pension liabilities reform
- Proposition 30
- Labor Unions
- Renewable Energy
- Reform Worker’s Compensation

- Protect Forrest/Timber industry
- Reform Welfare
- high speed rail system
- Affordable Care Act
- No Child Left Behind
- Student Assessment
- Assistance to local governments over education (Local Control Funding Formula)
- Language spoken in schools and foster care
- Covered California
- Business and Economic Development
- Enterprise Zone Program
- Jobs Hiring Credit
- California Environmental Quality Act
- Trade and Invest in China
- Water/ San Joaquin Delta
- Limit Greenhouse Gases
- Building energy efficiency standards
- Invest in California's highways

Florida

- Remove Sales Tax on manufacturing Equipment
- Give Public School Teachers a Raise (\$2,500)
- Florida Families First budget
- Eliminate Teacher Tenure
- Teacher Performance Pay
- Recognize Elizabeth Heli (and a few others) as teachers
- increases K-12 education funding
- Increase funding for universities
- Lower cost of college
- Fight human trafficking
- Affordable Care Act
- Medicaid Expansion

Georgia

- Accountability Courts
- Increase Drug, DUI, Mental Health, and Veteran Courts
- Reform Juvenile Justice system (including increased funding)
- Pass The Jake and Griffin Prince BUI Law
- Prevent Boating Accidents (alcohol related)
- Kile Glover Boat Education Law
- Add 10 days to pre-K school year
- Continue reading mentor program
- Charter Schools
- Quality Basic Education legislation

- HOPE Grants
- Georgia Grown program
- Georgia SHAPE Program
- Medicaid Expansion
- Expand Savannah harbor

Idaho

- 150th Anniversary of becoming territory
- 3.1% increase in General Fund Spending
- Increase K-12 Spending
- Budget and Public Education stabilization funds (Rainy Day Funds)
- Idaho Global Entrepreneurial Mission
- Build aerospace center
- “Buy Idaho” Campaign
- Hire One Act
- Hire One More Employee
- Hire One Hero program
- Leadership in Nuclear Energy or LINE Commission
- Idaho National Laboratory and the Center for Advanced Energy Studies
- Eliminate Personal Property Tax
- Affordable Care Act
- Catastrophic Health Care
- Fund Rural Hospital Training Program
- Medical Home Collaborative
- Fight Mental Illness (including in prisons)
- Increase funding for volunteer fire protection associations

Illinois

- Illinois Military Family Relief Trust Fund
- Infrastructure Development
- Ethics Reform
- Medicaid Reform
- Legislative Scholarship Program
- Close state facilities
- Illinois Jobs Now!
- Tollways in Illinois
- House Bill 190
- High Speed Rail
- Improve Water Pipes
- Illinois Clean Water Initiative
- Reform worker compensation systems
- Loans to underrepresented groups
- Renewable Energy
- Green Jobs
- Help veterans (especially, training and job)

- Raise minimum wage
- Affordable Health Care Act
- Illinois Health Insurance Exchange
- Invest in early education
- Infrastructure for several college campuses
- Assault Weapons Ban
- School Safety Drills
- Mental Health (including Access to Records)
- Scholarship for immigrants (Dream Commission)
- Driver's license for undocumented immigrants
- Help individuals with developmental disabilities
- Civil Unions
- Make Voter Registration Online
- Primary Election Reform
- Protect homeowners from mortgage loan fraud
- Illinois Citizens Utility Board
- Citizens Utility Board
- Ban conflict of interest voting

Indiana

- Business regulations
- Budget
- Increase Funding for Education
- Infrastructure funding
- Agriculture Innovation Corridor
- Indiana Economic Development Corporation
- Veterans (job training)
- Tax Reform
- Teacher Performance Grants
- Jobs for America's Graduates
- Charter Schools/Vouchers
- Make College Affordable
- Protect elderly and disabled
- Reform Medicaid so it helps disabled more
- Abortion
- Increase Funding for Department of Child Services
- comprehensive school safety review
- Gun Control

Iowa

- Budget
- Property Tax Reform
- Homestead Tax Credit
- Elderly and Disabled Tax Credit

- School Finance Formula
- Teacher leadership/Compensation
- Teach Iowa Initiative
- Increase Teacher pay
- Fight obesity
- Iowa Medical Residency Programs
- Rural Doctor Loan Program
- Tort Reform

Maine

- Maine Tax Reform
- Maine pension system
- Strengthen vocational education
- Increase school accountability (teachers and students)
- Maine Turnpike Authority
- Maine State Housing Authority
- Business Friendly Communities initiative
- Pay Maine's hospitals
- National Debt
- Affordable Care Act
- Maine Energy Costs
- Wind Energy
- Natural gas
- Charter Schools
- Unions

Montana

- Budget
- New jobs program
- Montana budget online
- Increase Rainy Day Fund
- J.O.B.S bill
- Hire only Montana companies to do infrastructure projects
- First Montanans
- Indian Country Economic Development project
- Increase dual credit
- Increase community college usage
- Universal Enrollment System (education)
- Tuition Freeze
- Veterans and education
- Early education (Head Start)
- Stars to Quality Program
- Montana Lottery Program
- Increase Technology in Schools

- Access Health Montana
- Medicaid Expansion
- Energy Development
- Fight Wall Street
- Cut Taxes for Homeowners
- Eliminate Business Equipment Tax
- Campaign Finance Reform (reduce corporate influence)
- Campaign Spending Transparency

New Hampshire

- Budget
- Medicaid (revenue shortfalls and management care)
- Lower the cost of college (tuition rate)
- UNIQUE funds
- Adequacy formula
- Charter Schools
- Clean Energy
- Biotechnology
- Research and Development Tax Credit
- Affordable Care Act
- Medicaid Expansion
- Mental Health
- Substance Abuse
- Retirees Health Program
- Community Health Centers (funding)
- Help Veterans (healthcare)
- Suicide Prevention
- Retirees Health Program
- Children in Need of Services program
- Increase police (and drug task force)
- Increase funding for judicial branch (Circuit Courts)
- Reform Women's Prisons
- LCHIP Program
- Water treatment projects
- Liquor Commission Reform
- Cigarette Tax
- Increase state auditors
- Casino
- Infrastructure improvement
-

New York

- Hurricane Relief
- Reduce Bureaucracy and promote entrepreneurship

- Property Tax Cap
- Women's Rights (e.g., pay)
- New York Open for Business
- Innovation Hot Spot
- unemployment insurance and workers compensation reform
- clean tech economy (invest)
- Energy Czar
- Promote New York products (wine, beer and yogurt)
- New York Attractions (Marketing)
- Resort Casinos
- Extend School Year
- Early Education/Universal Pre-K
- teacher evaluation system
- Teacher Performance Pay
- Minimum Wage
- Stop-and-Frisk
- Marijuana Reform
- Criminal Justice reform (package)
- Affordable Housing
- Marriage Equality
- Women's Rights (package)
- Fight Domestic Violence
- Abortion
- Gun Control
- Campaign Finance Reform
- Financial Restructuring Assistance Program
- Climate Change
- Recreate NY-Smart Home Program
- Volunteer Corp (establish)

North Carolina

- Budget/Revenue
- Medicaid Reform
- IT Equipment
- Electronic Tracking of Vehicles
- DMV reform
- Addiction Treatment
- Prevent Binge Drinking
- Mental Health
- Promote Vocational Education
- Technology and Education
- Education and Lottery Funds
- Tax Reform
- Offshore Drilling

- Energy Resources
- Infrastructure
- “Made in North Carolina”
- North Carolina’s Commerce Department
- Department of Environmental and Natural Resources-establish customer service

Ohio

- Affordable Health Care Act
- Medicaid Expansion
- Help Mentally Ill and those suffering from addiction
- Autism Coverage (mandate)
- Food bank
- Help disabled children
- Fight human trafficking
- Sentencing reform
- JobsOhio
- Energy regulation reform

Oklahoma

- Tort reform
- Excessive worker compensation
- Quick Action Closing Fund
- Education Accountability measures
- Infrastructure
- 2nd Amendment (U.S. Constitution)
- Develop industries (i.e. aerospace)
- Complete College America
- Teacher Health Benefits
- Tax Reform
- Drought Management Plan
- Energy Efficiency in State Government
- Change energy of state vehicles
- Consolidate Information Technology resources (including education program “Open Range”)
- State Capital repairs
- Transparency on data government
- Improve Ethics Commission
- Protect Children from Abuse
- Fight smoking and substance abuse (prescription drug abuse)
- Ban smoking in public
- Affordable Care Act
- Medicaid (and expansion)
- Mental Health (including increase funding for Department of Mental Health)

South Carolina

- Help veterans
- Tort reform
- Cut taxes
- Unions
- Welfare Reform
- Agriculture Industry
- Tax Reform
- Regulation reform
- Small Business Regulatory Committee
- Gas Tax
- Reform Prisons (guards)
- Department of Revenue (data security)
- Elect Superintendent of Education
- Department of Administration Reforms
- Voting in Legislature Reform
- Ethics Reform
- Candidate Transparency Reform
- Mental health and substance abuse
- Medicaid bill
- Medicaid Expansion
- Affordable Care Act
- Aid Rural Hospitals
- Charter Schools
- Teach for America
- Change funding K-12

Tennessee

- Tornado relief
- Tenure laws (teachers)
- Charter Schools
- Lottery Scholarships
- Jobs4TN
- TEAM Act
- Pay raise for government employees
- FastTrack grant funding
- Increase funding for scholarships
- School facilities (funding)
- Substance abuse programs
- Juvenile justice programs
- raise the exemption level on the estate tax
- Grocery Tax
- Increase funds for Rainy Day Funds
- DMV- self-service kiosks

- Tennessee Higher Education Commission-should be controlled by governor
- Streamline government agencies
- Parole board reform
- Prescription Drug abuse (also drug abuse courts)
- Tougher sentences for gangs and using a gun in a crime
- Tougher sentences for domestic abusers
- Government workers recruitments (improve)
- No Child Left Behind
- Student Performance Measurement

Vermont

- Civil unions/marriage equality
- Oil use and renewable energy
- High speed internet access
- Single payer system
- Property Tax Reform
- Invest in early education with funds from Earned Income Tax Credit
- Establish health center in public schools
- Solve hunger in public schools/children
- Expand Dual Enrollment
- Vermont Strong Scholars Program
- Increase funding for colleges
- Personal Learning Plans (establish)
- Math education reform
- Vermont Innovation Zones

Virginia

- Transportation funding
- Amtrak funding
- Virginia Retirement System (funding)
- Top Jobs for the 21st Century
- Reduce pollution
- Increase the Blue Crab population
- Reduce Violent Crime
- Tougher punishment for parole violators
- Fight domestic abuse
- Fight gang violence
- Fight internet crime
- Fight child sex abuse
- Stricter punishments for drug dealers
- Restore voting rights for prisoners
- The Educator Fairness Act
- Teacher Performance Pay
- Teach for America program

- Increase reading specialists in schools
- School ranking system
- Opportunity Educational Institution
- Charter schools
- Infrastructure funding
- Increase fuel efficiency (and gas tax)
- Dulles Metrorail Project/ Dulles Toll Road
- Vehicle registration fee increase
- Alternative fuel vehicle fee increase
- Marketplace Fairness
- Tort reform
- Make College Affordable
- Increase Rainy Day Funds
- Federal Action Contingency Trust (FACT) Fund
- Medicaid Expansion
- Affordable Health Care Act
- Mental Health Funding
- School and Campus Safety Task Force
- Improve Foster Care System
- Chesapeake Bay improvement (environmental cleaning)

Washington

- Marriage Equality
- Wall Street Excess
- Clean Energy
- Aerospace Industry
- Agriculture Industry
- Research and Development tax credit
- Fund infrastructure
- New transportation package
- Affordable Care Act
- Medicaid Expansion
- Reproductive Parity Act
- Mental Health Reform
- Restrict Gun Access
- Promote STEM education
- Clean Pacific Northwest waters
- Fight Climate Change
- Help shellfish industry

West Virginia

- Texting while driving
- Substance abuse
- Tax Reform

- OPEB bill
- Coal production
- PROMISE Scholarship
- Mine Safety
- Medicaid funding
- State police funding
- Budget
- Land usage
- Blue Ribbon Commission
- Public-Private Partnership Act
- Natural Gas exploration
- Fight the EPA
- Reduce truancy
- Education Efficiency Audit
- Pre-K program
- Teacher Evaluations
- Improve Reading (especially, teaching certification)
- birth through 5 program
- Childcare subsidies
- Promote Vocational education
- Keep West Virginians from leaving state (due to education)
- Teacher recertification
- School Accreditation
- Increase school autonomy in hiring
- Teacher tenure
- Change how “snow days” are counted
- Promote technology in schools
- Search and Seizure legal standards (lower them)
- Honor troopers who died
- Prison reform

Wyoming

- Wildfire relief
- Honoring teachers
- Coal mining industry
- Broadband connectivity
- Suicide prevention
- Supplemental budget
- Natural gas
- Affordable Care Act
- Governor’s Office and Governor’s Residence
- Bonus for State Employees
- Hay Study (compensation for employees)
- Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust (increase funding)

- Gillette-Madison water project
- Infrastructure projects (water, sewer, etc.)
- Landfill maintenance
- Energy investments
- Enzi STEM facility
- Permanent Mineral Trust Fund (severance taxes)
- Rainy Day Account funds
- Medicaid Expansion
- Increase Gas Tax
- Student Assessment (ACT versus PAWS)
- hydraulic fracturing
- consolidate agencies (technology)

APPENDIX E

ISSUE CLASSIFICATION OF STATE LEGISLATIVE ROLL-CALL VOTES

The following classification scheme was developed by Kousser and Phillips (2009). For more details on this classification scheme, see Kousser and Phillips. Attached below is the exact description of their classification scheme.

A. **Crime** (n=5,384):

- Proposals that address public safety;
- Drug prevention and rehabilitation
- Corrections and sentencing;
- Victims' rights and services.

B. **Development** (n=11,860):

- Proposals designed to grow, protect, or shape the state economy, including infrastructure investments;
- Business incentives;
- Tourism promotion;
- Minimum wage and other labor laws;
- Delivery of energy.

C. **Education** (n=4,011):

- Proposals that directly address either public or private education (early learning programs through higher education).

D. **Environment** (n=2,509):

- Proposals that address the environment;
- State parks and open spaces;
- Use of natural resources.

E. **Health Care** (n=2,990):

- Proposals that address the general cost and availability of health insurance;
- Delivery of health care;
- Disease prevention and awareness.

F. **Other** (n=4,666):

- Proposals that do not fit into one of the existing categories.

G. **Political Reform** (n=1,574):

- Proposed changes in the constitution, fiscal rules, electoral rules, or the powers, responsibilities, and obligation of political actors.

H. **Social Policy** (n=1,152):

- Proposals that are commonly linked with the so-called "culture wars" or morality policy (gay and lesbian rights, abortion, marriage, gaming, etc.).

I. **Social Services** (n=2,308):

- Proposals that address redistribute (welfare-type) programs targeting the working poor, unemployed, elderly, or disabled, including TANF, Medicaid, SCHIP, unemployment insurance, workers compensation, etc.

APPENDIX F

TOBIT MODELS

As the dependent variable is the Rice Party Difference Score, it is truncated on both the left and the right. The highest party difference score can be no larger than 100% and no smaller than 0%. As such, linear regression may be somewhat inappropriate. Specifically, my results might be biased and inconsistent. Thus, as a robustness test, I estimate a tobit regression model with a random effect for each state that takes into account the data's truncation.

The results are shown below. Overall, the results are consistent with the findings reported in the main text. I rely on the results from the linear regression model with a random effect for each state for two reasons. One, the results are easier to substantively interpret. Second, the results appear to be more conservative than those estimated with a tobit model.

Table F.1-Gubernatorial Leadership and Partisan Division, Tobit Models (Part 1)

	<i>Development</i>	<i>Crime</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Education</i>
Variable	Coefficient (S.E.)	Coefficient (S.E.)	Coefficient (S.E.)	Coefficient (S.E.)
Gov. Leadership	4.131* (1.988)	-14.168* (4.020)	6.000* (3.002)	5.426* (2.895)
Pres. Leadership	1.513 (4.419)	17.926 (18.014)	20.727* (4.872)	-2.686 (6.363)
Final Passage	-3.007* (1.181)	-8.494* (1.808)	-2.707 (2.637)	-17.643* (2.319)
Professionalism	-2.768 (67.243)	-26.193 (75.283)	-74.974 (96.547)	-48.483 (70.610)
Term Limits	10.740 (8.549)	10.950 (9.419)	26.416* (12.266)	14.419 (8.869)
Interest Group Power	-7.730 (6.396)	-5.429 (7.787)	-19.252* (10.222)	-13.289 (7.382)
Population Size	0.630 (1.059)	0.877 (1.222)	1.287 (1.549)	0.842 (1.113)
Racial Diversity	-0.815* (0.347)	-0.740 (0.394)	-0.627 (0.502)	-0.684 (0.368)
Upper Chamber	-8.950* (0.524)	-11.836* (1.648)	-14.192* (2.283)	-21.126* (2.022)
Party Competition	-49.448 (48.337)	-14.645 (54.300)	-44.039 (74.872)	-120.987* (51.495)
Constant	97.787 (50.233)	50.0128 (56.830)	106.951 (74.871)	177.025* (53.810)
State Intercepts (St. Dev.)	17.96	19.57	25.557	18.19
Number of Observations	11,860	5,384	2,990	4,011

Notes: Dependent variable is the party difference score. Higher values indicate more partisan voting. Results are estimated from a tobit model with a random effect for each state. SE=Standard Error. Vote classification scheme developed by Kousser and Phillips (2012).

* $p \leq 0.05$

Table F.1- Gubernatorial Leadership and Partisan Division, Tobit Models (Part 2)

	<i>Soc. Issues</i>	<i>Soc. Services</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Pol. Reform</i>	<i>Environment</i>
Variable	Coefficient (S.E.)	Coefficient (S.E.)	Coefficient (S.E.)	Coefficient (S.E.)	Coefficient (S.E.)
Gov. Leadership	0.600 (6.398)	6.900* (3.031)	-4.312 (7.735)	37.383* (9.652)	-14.927* (3.094)
Pres. Leadership	18.519* (3.409)	21.432* (9.063)	-243.54 (6774.10)	-1.969 (8.473)	15.940* (4.677)
Final Passage	-8.333* (3.246)	-7.274* (3.388)	-3.917 (2.248)	-6.183 (3.836)	-4.937* (2.356)
Professionalism	-58.860 (84.530)	13.119 (111.058)	-5.075 (76.459)	5.132 (94.642)	32.996 (67.931)
Term Limits	18.536 (10.489)	21.709 (13.854)	17.983* (9.786)	21.243 (11.900)	9.401 (8.541)
Interest Group Power	-16.849* (8.713)	-5.348 (11.443)	-16.931* (8.079)	-4.675 (9.846)	-11.375 (7.065)
Population Size	0.496 (1.313)	0.126 (1.774)	0.075 (1.217)	1.310 (1.532)	-0.655 (1.405)
Racial Diversity	0.132 (0.433)	-0.634 (0.576)	-0.745* (0.397)	-1.274* (0.501)	-0.125 (0.351)
Upper Chamber	-9.025* (2.898)	-18.555* (3.043)	-14.812* (1.999)	-2.893 (3.515)	-11.150* (2.098)
Party Competition	-103.423 (59.814)	-47.176 (79.515)	-108.550* (58.820)	-37.828 (69.898)	-3.357 (48.762)
Constant	160.415* (61.670)	37.346 (47.461)	155.649* (58.863)	89.636 (71.745)	44.190 (50.733)
State Intercepts (St. Dev.)	21.03	28.57	20.26	23.516	17.02
Number of Observations	1,152	2,308	4,666	1,574	2,509

Notes: Dependent variable is the party difference score. Higher values indicate more partisan voting. Results are estimated from a tobit model with a random effect for each state. SE=Standard Error. Vote classification scheme developed by Kousser and Phillips (2012).

* $p \leq 0.05$

APPENDIX G

DO GOVERNORS CHOOSE POLARIZING ISSUES?

One potential issue for my analysis is that governors, for whatever reason, may prefer to focus on more polarizing policies. If governors tend to focus their efforts on more partisan policies, then my findings might be driven by gubernatorial agenda choices rather than legislative reactions to the governor. To account for this possibility, I compare the average party difference score across the issue categories mentioned in each State of the State Address with the average party difference score of issues not mentioned with a difference of means test. In other words, if governors do systemically focus on more polarizing issues, then topics mentioned in the Address should be significantly more polarizing, than those not mentioned in the speech.

The results are displayed in Table G.1. The findings provide little evidence that governors systematically concentrate on partisan issues. In all 25 Addresses, none of the governors significantly selected more partisan issues over less partisan issues. In other words, there are several additional polarizing items on the legislative agenda that the governors could raise if he or she wished to. However, avoiding excessively partisan issues is most likely a prudent political strategy for either a governor trying to promote the passage of his or her policy agenda or perhaps even securing reelection in the not too distant future. Further, this finding is not surprising as governors frequently discuss several non-polarizing issues (e.g. promoting veteran education) in their speeches.

Altogether, the data reported in Table G.1 shows little evidence that gubernatorial agenda items tend to be more partisan than the policies on the legislative agenda.

Table G.1-Selection Bias in Gubernatorial Agendas

Average Party Difference On...	Topics Mentioned in the State of the State Address (n)	Topics Not Mentioned in the State of the State Address (n)	<i>p</i>
Alabama	28.6 (198)	27.5 (1,051)	0.70
Alaska	16.5 (53)	10.1 (183)	0.13
Arizona	30.3 (89)	24.8 (788)	0.16
Arkansas	6.9 (66)	4.9 (3,421)	0.27
California	29.9 (177)	26.6 (3,116)	0.30
Florida	9.9 (80)	12.4 (740)	0.35
Georgia	15.7 (19)	11.6 (462)	0.56
Idaho	9.9 (35)	12.1 (784)	0.39
Illinois	17.0 (131)	14.3 (1,678)	0.27
Indiana	30.8 (111)	25.3 (665)	0.19
Iowa	24.7 (20)	22.1 (145)	0.24
Maine	65.9 (92)	60.7 (693)	0.21
Montana	34.4 (225)	31.1 (3,131)	0.15
New Hampshire	62.5 (75)	58.2 (176)	0.39
New York	14.1 (163)	11.0 (3,236)	0.16
North Carolina	23.9 (184)	20.0 (1,909)	0.19
Ohio	45.0 (30)	34.2 (349)	0.17
Oklahoma	23.9 (264)	21.1 (1,593)	0.22
South Carolina	25.7 (133)	20.6 (1,029)	0.13
Tennessee	14.7 (220)	12.4 (2,438)	0.31
Vermont	39.4 (17)	41.6 (134)	0.77
Virginia	8.2 (263)	7.3 (3,182)	0.51
Washington	15.3 (72)	17.8 (1,297)	0.46
West Virginia	9.2 (62)	8.6 (722)	0.85
Wyoming	16.2 (81)	17.1 (672)	0.72

Notes: Values represent the average Rice Index of Party Difference Scores for votes on the issue topics that governors included in their State of the State Addresses and on the issues that Governors did not mention in their State of the State Address.

* $p < 0.05$.