

PARTIES, PREFERENCES, AND EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS AFTER: A
DISSERTATION ON THE INFLUENCE OF CONGRESSIONAL INSTITUTIONS ON
LEGISLATIVE AND BUREAUCRATIC OUTCOMES

by

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(Under the Direction of Dr. Michael Lynch)

ABSTRACT

This dissertation focuses broadly on the behavior of elected elites who have power of the outcomes of the legislative process and policy implementation. In my first chapter, I explore the effect that executive and legislative institutions have on the outcomes of federal services through the example of the US Postal Service. Using data on all established post offices from 1840 to 1915, I find evidence supportive of several prior theories of bureaucratic influence. My second chapter focuses on the House standing committee system and the influence that it has on recording voting behavior by House members. After estimating one dimensional ideal points using Poole and Rosenthal's W-NOMINATE (1985), I find that recorded votes in committee tended to be more strictly party line than record votes on the floor. Continually I find that when testing to see if there were any individual level changes causing changes in voting behavior between contexts that majority party membership was the primary indicator of how much change there was in member behavior. Finally, my last chapter looks at member votes on the Journal of the US House to determine if their inclusion in our measures of behavior makes a substantive impact on their results. In testing prior theories about the use of Journal votes, I find that

members do vote outside of the normal when voting to approve the Journal though these votes make no substantive change on our measures of behavior. Overall, I find that party does make a huge impact on both the behavior of Congresspeople when voting and the implementation of the policies they produce.

INDEX WORDS: Congress, Presidency, US Postal Service, Recorded Voting, Elite Behavior, Partisanship

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DEDICATION

“Isaac Newton wrote:

I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me (More 1934).”

To my mom and dad. Thank you for helping me pick up the first of many extraordinary seashells and pebbles.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the study of Legislative and Executive institutions, scholars have always placed emphasis on the impact that elite preferences and partisanship have had on the legislative process and distributive benefits ascertained therein. The study of elite preferences and partisanship has helped frame not only how we, as scholars, look at the actions of the federal government but has also influenced how we view the outcomes of national policy, as well. Previous scholarship suggests several theories to help examine how members choose to pursue policy, though one of the most common explanations for when and why members pass policy is partisanship. Partisanship structures member preferences on policy by providing a heuristic for members to vote with when unsure about a bill and is reinforced by party leaders who make sure lower ranking members continue to fall in the line. Especially today, many onlookers to the legislative process view it as dysfunctional because of the constant gridlock caused by persistent polarization that prevents policy from reaching final passage. In contrast, some scholars argue that members are trying to pursue good policy by developing expertise and voting with their true preferences for policy. Proponents of this theory do not believe that parties have the same primacy in members minds when making policy. In this dissertation, I intend to evaluate some of the above theories of elite behavior to determine how partisanship, and member preferences effect the outcomes of the legislative process.

The first chapter of my dissertation centers on the effect that elite institutions can have on the distribution of federal benefits through the US Postal Service. The US Postal Service has

served as an avenue for targeted constituent benefits since its inception during the Second Continental Congress. These benefits, called patronage, were incentives provided by members of Congress and the Executive to party affiliated constituents and donors as a reward for their loyalty and service to the party. These kinds of incentives often took several forms, such as jobs and other appointed positions in the service of the federal government as well as broader benefits to geographic areas in support of a political actor. Throughout the 1800s to the 1900s, the postal service also went through a great period of growth within the service that allowed them to also offer new post offices and more routes as a form of partisan advantage to constituencies in support of actors with pull over the service. This chapter evaluates the influence that elite institution like Congress and the Presidency have on one specific incentive that the service can provide to its constituencies: post offices. Through the 1800s and into the 1900s, the postal service established a massive amount of post offices as it expanded westward. Through data collected by Blevins and Helbock (2021) on all of the post offices opened through time, I determine that the legislative branch has the primary pull over the expansion of the postal service from 1840 to 1915. In this chapter, I show that elites do have control over the operations of bureaucratic entities which allows members of Congress especially, to use post offices as incentive for electoral support. Further, I find that this effect is limited depending on the party membership of the member. When a districts representative was in the majority party, increased electoral support of the member resulted in more post offices while minority party districts received less access to the service when they received more support in the prior election. This finding substantiates prior theories that argue that members of Congress had the bulk of the control over access to bureaucratic services provided by the USPS in this era and has broader implications for how we view elite influence on policy.

The second chapter of my dissertation will focus more intently on the measurement of voting preference in Congress in varying political environments, namely the Congressional committee systems. This chapter will focus on committees and how they provide a distinct context for vote choice that may allow legislators more freedom to pursue their preferred legislative goals. I theorize in this dissertation that committees allow members to build expertise in a specific area that can help garner them some discretion when making policy from the broader House. There are three primary theories surrounding member behavior in committees: the distributive perspective, the chamber driven model and the party dominated perspective. The distributive perspective argues that committees are autonomous because of their expertise and primacy in the policy process which allows them to gatekeep and agenda set for the House. In contrast, the chamber driven model and party driven model argue that committees are not autonomous and are instead constrained by either the parent chamber or the larger party system. While this literature is rife with formal models, tests of these theories have been harder to achieve because of a lack of transparency of committee action. By collecting the newly available recorded votes of committees, I estimate ideal points for both floor and committee votes on a common space so that they can be compared for further analysis. After estimating points for six standing committees in the House, I conducted a test of these three prior theories and find that the biggest predictors of changes in member behavior were the party of the member and the marginality of their home district. Consistent with prior theories, the behavior of members was highly partisan in committees indicating the party identification is a big predictor of how members use their procedural power in committee. I substantiate prior theories of party influence on committee behavior and hope to further this research in the future to look at additional Congresses.

The final chapter of my dissertation will focus on the use of Journal votes in our measures of member behavior. The US House Journal is the public record of all official actions that happen in the legislative calendar which does not include any debate about the legislation that makes it on to the floor. The Journal must be approved at the start of every day and if the members request, then the chamber will vote on the measure before moving on to the rest of their scheduled business. Despite the procedural nature of the Journal and its approval, members often call votes without the intention to amend the text of the Journal. Previous scholarship suggests several reasons that members may hold a vote to approve the Journal and further, why they would vote against it, including to amend the Journal, to delay the floor for members to make it to the chamber, or to bias our measures of party unity and member behavior. This chapter evaluates the later by using Poole and Rosenthal's (1985) method for estimating one-dimensional W-NOMINATE scores to see if the inclusion of Journal votes in the estimation of our measures has a significant impact on their result. I do this by estimating three sets of ideal points with recorded votes from three Congresses in the modern era: a point estimated using all votes taken during that Congress, a point for just votes on the Journal, and a point estimated with all votes except the ones related to the Journal. I find that members do generally vote in ways contrary to our expectations specifically when voting to approve the Journal though the use of these votes in the broader measure did not produce any significant change in the scores produced by W-NOMINATE. Overall, this indicates that if members are trying to bias our measures, then they are not successful at it given the volume of votes like this taken and the inconsistency in their behavior. Taken together, these three chapters look to determine how elites use their preferences and their partisan ties to make policy in the broader political climate.

CHAPTER 2
ELITE POWER AND BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL: THE CASE OF THE POSTAL
SERVICE FROM 1840 TO 1915¹

¹ Putman, Alexandria Marie. To be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal (Legislative Studies Quarterly).

Abstract

The American bureaucracy is often thought to be at the will of elite institutions despite the existence of bureaucratic entrepreneurs. This paper seeks to evaluate previous notions about the role of elites in bureaucratic processes by looking at one prevalent example, the United States Postal Service, to determine how elites may influence the establishment of federal services geographically. To weigh in on the contentious debate between Carpenter (2001; 2002) and Kernell (2001) on the subject, I employ an expanded dataset of all post offices opened from 1840 to 1915 to determine who or what is the main driver of postal development at the time. Through the use of a negative binomial model, I determine that elites did have a significant positive influence over the development of the USPS when electoral support was high in a district. Furthermore, this effect is exacerbated by the partisan composition of the federal government and by membership within the majority party. With the use of a new extensive dataset on the United States Postal Service, I have been able to contribute to the prior debate on the structural influences that elites can have on the development of bureaucratic agencies.

Introduction

The US Bureaucracy is a set of over 430 agencies that are responsible for implementing policy over a wide range of constituent service areas. These services are vital to constituents who both provide financial stake in the maintenance of these services and have sanctioning power over our elected officials. The importance of these types of services and policies drive elites to place emphasis on the institutions responsible for carrying out their implementation when legislating. Undoubtedly, the US bureaucracy offers an avenue for targeted benefits that has

resulted in an ever-changing relationship between the bureaucracy, the people it serves, and the policy makers responsible for its funding. The complexity of the relationship between these entities has been the center of debate in political science with scholars going to bat for the entity they think has the most power over policy implementation through the bureaucracy.

In one camp, there is the theory that elites place a huge priority when legislating over the bureaucracy because elected officials fear sanction and use targeted services as incentives to procure further electoral security. This group of scholars place importance on the legislative and budgetary power that both Congress and the President have over bureaucratic agencies. Some argue that Congress is the primary influence over bureaucratic policy because of their lofty power over the budgetary process and over the content of legislation. This is consistent with the idea that members of Congress use their power to give out distributive benefits to those that will support them electorally (Kernell 2001; Kernell and McDonald 1999). Alternatively, others suggest that the President has more power over the distributive benefits achieved their bureaucratic agencies. Literature in this vein shows that areas that were more support of the sitting President were more likely to get additional access to federal services than areas that were not as supportive of the President (Rogowski 2016). Regardless, the institutional leverage that Congresspeople and the Executive have would naturally lead to powerful elites being able to influence unelected bureaucrats. This is evident throughout history with some notable examples being the establishment of railroads as post routes by Congress in the mid-1800s or the push for privatization of the USPS by President Trump in 2020. While the bureaucracy is a separate set of entities to the elected body, elites have a huge role to play in the development of federal services through their institutional powers over policy.

On the other hand, some scholars argue that bureaucrats have more control than we often attribute to them. These theories posit that members of the bureaucracy are autonomous entrepreneurs and can use their appointed authority and expertise to make decisions about the implementation of their policies even, at times, in contrast to the preferences of elites. If we think back to the example of railroad postal routes and consider the USPS again, we can see a good representation of what these interactions may be like (Carpenter 2001). In the Annual Report of the Postmaster General for 1842, the Postmaster General stresses how detrimental Congress' recent route mandate had been to its ability to make money in recent years. In response to this deficit, the Postmaster General asserts that he will no longer maintain service for rail routes until Congress makes a change to their previous policy to better mediate the relationship between the USPS and rail companies who were charging more than USPS could afford. These demands were largely addressed by subsequent Congresses who were forced to make the requested changes to the law when confronted with the huge loss in revenue (Annual Reports of the Postmaster General 1838 – 1842). Unfortunately, many of these theories remain unsubstantiated because of lack of data for bureaucratic services, which has left this debate largely unaddressed (with one notable exception) in more recent literature.

This paper contributes to the current debate on the various institutional influences on the development of the bureaucracy by evaluating these theories through one primary example: the operations of the US Postal Service. While perhaps one of the most innocuous of our federal services, the US Postal Service is the oldest established member of the federal bureaucracy to date, with origins in a postal department established far prior to the ratification of the Constitution. The USPS was initially mandated by the Constitution, which explicitly gave Congress the right “To establish post offices and post roads” and the Executive the power to

“appoint Ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, judges of the Supreme Court, and all other offices of the United States with the advice and consent of the Senate” (US Constitution). From then on, Congress and the Executive have had a huge influence on the USPS through their combined capacity to appoint people into positions of influence in the USPS and to provide discretionary funding to its departments (Kernell 2001; Rogowski 2016). Since its humble origins, the USPS has grown to meet the needs of a quickly developing nation by expanding route systems, subsidizing industry advancements in transportation, and most of all, by delivering the mail. In a time where email and fax machines didn’t exist, the postal service drove communication between members of this nation allowing people the opportunity to write correspondence to loved ones even when far away from home (Carpenter 2001; 2002; Gallagher 2016). This position of importance over the constituency allowed the postal service to offer elites a preeminent avenue for political gain through the establishment of offices and routes. This paper uses the establishment of postal services as an example to evaluate prior theories of institutional influence on federal agencies.

To evaluate the extent of elite influence on the post office, I use data collected by Blevins and Helbock (2021), who separately collected historical data on all of the post offices opened since the postal service was initially sanctioned (Helbock, 1938-2011) and then coded all of the entries with GIS and duration variables for use in analyses on the dissemination of postal services over time (Blevins 2021). I utilize this expansive dataset to run a negative binomial model to determine how institutional level characteristics and agencies can impact where and when access to federal services is expanded. While conducting this analysis, I predict that services will be established more often in areas who are more electorally supportive of their current representatives and whose members are represented by the majority party. Generally, I

find support for several prior theories of bureaucratic development that substantiate the claim that elites have a positive influence on access to federal services.

A Brief History of the Postal Service

The United States Postal Service (formerly the US Post Office Department, or USPOD) was mandated by the Second Continental Congress and is one of the only bureaucratic institutions to be sanctioned by the Constitution. The postal needs of constituents were met prior to this point through the Crown's Mail which imposed heavy taxation and a lack of privacy on mail services. After the Revolution, the early infrastructure of the Crown's Mail Service was taken up by the fledgling US where they unofficially carried it on until 1792. Initially, the idea of the Postal Service came about because the newly minted federal government needed a way to connect the former colonies in one unified state. Benjamin Franklin saw the US Postal Service as a binding force which would allow citizens to remain in contact with each other and with their representatives so that they could hold their government accountable through their access to information. Further, it helped promote the economy which benefitted from the ability to send money, products, and documents through the mail (Gallagher 2016). Alexis de Tocqueville noted the success of this initiative when saying, "In America one of the first things done in a new State is to have the mail come. In the Michigan forests there is not a cabin so isolated, not a valley so wild, that it does not receive letters and newspapers at least once a week; we saw it ourselves (Tocqueville 1838)."

In 1792, the United States Post Office Department (USPOD) was established as a member of the Executive cabinet and built some of its first official brick and mortar post offices to go along with policy that gave Congress and the Executive additional discretionary power over the service (Kielbowicz 2002). As the USPOD continued to expand offices into the early

1800s, they began to have issues with the rampant theft of mail. This was caused by several factors, including the lack of established roadways and paths for riders, riders left exposed to the elements only on horseback, and riders often carrying valuables that were sent through the mail. Naturally, this made delivering the mail a hazardous job to have and also made it more difficult for the USPOD to become a successful entity. To combat issues of theft, the USPOD made a hugely influential decision at this time to invest money in the development of the transportation industry so that they could better protect the mail that they were tasked with delivering. This project quickly came to fruition and soon the USPOD introduced carriages which allowed multiple people to ride along to protect the cargo and provided more space for parcels (Carpenter 2001; 2002; Gallagher 2016).

Years later after national expansion had come to be at the forefront of the nation's policy concerns, Congress established all waterways as postal routes which helped get mail to towns that were not accessible via road and thus, couldn't receive the normal carriage. After waterways became postal routes in the 1820s, the Postal Department had greatly increased its capacity to deliver the mail. This only increased in the 1830s when railroads were designated as postal routes by Congress to the eventual disdain of the Postal Service (Gallagher 2016). Unfortunately, Congress did not necessarily take into account the cost that maintaining such extensive service would be and by 1840, the US Postmaster General was reporting huge deficits because of the cost of the mandatory rail routes. From this point on marks a more contentious relationship between the US Postal Department and the elite institutions that it stems from as elite institutions continue to make new designations and services that the members of the USPOD then have to fulfill without input (Annual Reports of the Postmaster General, 1835-1842). The increasing number of post offices over this time led to an increase in the practice of patronage in the Postal

Department as appointments were made to suit political gain under President Jackson's "spoils" system. Political appointments amounted to almost 3/4 of all federal civilian workers in the USPS at that time, showing how commonplace this practice was for the federal government. This practice continued until 1883 when the Pendleton Civil Service Act changed the system of employment to a merit-based system instead a spoils based system that promoted patronage (Gallagher 2016).

Thanks to the great expansion of mail services across the US, the Postal Department started to become incredibly efficient because it had greater access to transportation and a higher volume of mail was being delivered. Despite the increased economic efficiency the USPOD was experiencing, the customers of the Postal Service were becoming frustrated with the high cost of sending a letter. This triggered the "Cheap Postage Movement" where members of the public began to seek out private mail contractors who offered more competitive pricing than the Postal Service. Unlike the USPS, private mail carriers can choose where they deliver the mail and they do not have to deliver in places that are not profitable like the Postal Service. The competition coupled with the public dissatisfaction led to massive revenue losses in the USPOD who could not keep up with changing public demands and economic considerations. After facing huge losses, Congress began to take action to solve the problem of the failing post office by appointing a Commission to investigate the situation. As a result of the Commission, Congress passed the Post Office Act of 1845, which established that the USPS is an entity that is meant to serve as a public service and not necessarily a self-supporting business (Carpenter 2001; 2002; Gallagher 2016). This was reinforced in the commission's report which said that the goal of the Post Office is "to render the citizen worthy, by proper knowledge and enlightenment, of his important privileges as a sovereign constituent of his government." From here, Congresspeople worked to

lower postage rates and the cost of transportation contracts so that the Postal Service could regain some financial stability. In 1848, stamps were introduced as a way of validating mail services and more designations were made that increased the number of postal routes available to US citizens (Leonard 2016).

By 1850, the post had shifted its priorities to serving the largely personal needs of its constituents. At this point in time, literacy rates in the US had risen and members of the public were now able to use the Postal Service to have regular communications with family members and friends. Soon overland carriages became the most popular form of transportation for the USPS and by 1860, postal routes stretched the full expanse of the western United States connecting the country from the east coast to the west coast. Unfortunately for the newly connected country, the American Civil War soon divided the post which refused to deliver to the Confederate South. As a result, the USPS that remained was able to make some major advancements to the service including the expansion of the Free City Delivery, development of the money order and postal rate systems, improvement of international mail, and the popularization of the Dead Letter Office. After the end of the Civil War, the Postal Department opened up its employment pool to include women and African Americans. Later the USPS became the one of the biggest employers of women and people of color well into the twentieth century (Gallagher 2016).

In the late 1880s, the postal service began to rapidly expand the services that it offered to the public and officially transitioned away from the patronage system. Services like rural free delivery and parcel post made mail services easier to access for constituents who were in areas that had not previously been serviced because of a lack of population density and lack of accessibility via carriage (Gallagher 2001). Rural free delivery (RFD), in particular, was a rather

important service when it was introduced because it meant that many people that could not previously receive their mail easily could petition to have their mail brought to them directly rather than venturing into the nearest city to pick it up. Rural free delivery was first proposed by Postmaster Wanamaker, who championed the RFD as a service that would increase communication across the United States by expanding service into what became universal free delivery, or the legal obligation of the USPS to deliver to all US inhabitants (Carpenter 2001; 2002). This policy came in tandem with the good roads movement that was pursued by cyclists who were trying to increase the number of paved roads. This movement was crucial to the development of rural free delivery because the application process for new routes required that roads were suitable enough to have deliveries made on them, a qualification that often excluded many rural residents from these routes (Kernell 2001). Within the first year of operation in 1896, 44 routes were established in rural areas and by 1902, the service was officially adopted by the United States Postal Service after its success in previous years (Carpenter 2001; Kernell 2001).

The implementation of rural free delivery was not entirely apolitical, however, as there were electoral benefits to be had by supporting such a policy and overseeing its implementation. It has been argued that the postal service, congress, and the Presidency all had a hand in creating an application for routes that was structured to advantage certain areas over others for political gain. One example of this was through the paved road requirement in the application, which required that roads be tidy and crossable in order to have a route established there (Carpenter 2001; Kernell 2001). For reference, only 7% of rural public roads in 1904 were considered ‘surfaced’ roads, which meant almost 93% of roughly over 2,000,000 miles of public roads were dirt (Census 1910). This qualification meant that many rural routes could not qualify and were subject to evaluation from postal service inspectors who evaluated at their “patroned” discretion

whether or not the route was suitable for approval. Many have argued that stipulations like these lead to inequalities in the implementation of rural routes in southern states, who would have benefited from the establishment of the RFD. These states received significantly fewer routes than the more Republican North. Over time the number of routes grew, expanding the service late into the 1910s as other services like the parcel post were also implemented. These services were eventually disbanded as universal free delivery grew because there is no longer a reason to specify them as different services once the all-encompassing universal free delivery became possible in the 1920s and 30s (Gallagher 2016; Leonard 2016).

Overall, this time period is characterized by several attributes, including high levels of patronage and fluctuating openings and closures of post offices. At this time, the post office was wrought with patronage as political leaders used its positions as a way to reward co-partisans with a sustainable wage and good benefits. This was a privilege frequently enjoyed by the Executive and Congress, which I argue had incentive to use the Postal Service as a way of rewarding those who were loyal to them, like by giving loyal supporters access to rural routes and new post offices (James 2006; Mebane et al. 2002). I intend to show through the following analysis that the President and members of Congress have a distinct advantage in the development of these types of agencies because they can influence the people who make policies in the area, propose changes of their own through the passage of law, and provide/limit funding to the service should they see fit.

Congress and Bureaucratic Policy

The bureaucracy and in particular, the Postal Service are comprised of complex processes and institutions that have taken decades to institutionalize into the agencies we know today. The USPS was initially mandated by the Constitution, which explicitly gave Congress the right “To

establish post offices and post roads”. To this day, many bureaucratic agencies, including the USPS, still rely on Congress to make and pass policy to support their continued operation (Ingraham 1987). The legislative branch also has a much more expansive set of budgetary powers that allows members of Congress to pass policies authorizing funds for agency projects (Oleszek et al. 2015). Congress’s influence on agencies like USPS can be seen throughout history with examples including the delegation of rail routes and rates in the 1830s and 40s, as well as the establishment of rural routes via application into the 20th century. Through their broad legislative powers, members of Congress have the capacity to affect sweeping change over the agencies that it promotes, and this policy is important for members to contribute to because it can help them electorally. A major part of the debate surrounding bureaucratic influence is centered around the influence the Congress can and does play on the establishment of federal services. Prior literature argues that Congress is the main driver in the establishment and maintenance of federal services, especially when pertaining to agencies like the USPS.

The question then becomes what motivates elites to use their resources to help in the development of federal services. For Mayhew, this answer is simple: members of Congress are “single minded seekers of reelection” (Mayhew 1974a; Owens and Wade 1984). For elites, any action is proximate to the end goal of reelection, which may include the maintenance of bureaucratic services that interact closely with the American public. This varies from legislator to legislator though more electorally vulnerable members of Congress are more likely to use targeted incentives (Stein and Bickers 1994) and federal grants are more likely to be distributed in proximity to elections (Anagnoson 1982). Of the federal services in direct contact with constituents, the USPS is the oldest and most historically influential because of its influence on early American political discourse. In the 19th and early 20th century, the Postal Service served as

one of the most accessible and in some cases, the only means of communicating across great distances. In this time, it was really meaningful for constituents to have access to these services because it meant that constituents could use them to build their businesses, participate in political pursuits and above all, talk to their family and friends despite the distance between them. Elected officials may have recognized how important the services provided by the USPS are to constituents and may have utilized this information in decisions regarding federal funding. This argument persists within the context of the Postal Service where scholars argue that there are strong electoral and partisan ties to replacing outdated services with ones more beneficial to the areas that are supported by them (Kernell and McDonald 1999).

I contend that electoral support and partisanship may be driving factors when elites are choosing where and when to influence postal service. Parties and support are important indicators to use when discussing legislative behavior because these heuristics provide stability to Congress and help members pursue incentives systematically (Krehbiel 1993; Cox and McCubbins 1994). The bureaucracy creates a unique environment for elites to operate because they provide for a greater policy space for Congress to address constituent needs (Fiorina 1977). In theory, this practice could be quite similar for the Postal Service, which is inherently tied to the policy process through appointments, funding, and in its very creation through law. Targeting loyal supporters with these services means that Congresspeople can not only reward and secure support from constituents, but it also means that they can cement lines of communication to their followers in order to communicate various platforms, needs, and events to those most interested in them. Prior scholarship has been locked in a debate about the true cause of development in bureaucratic institutions and scholars like Samuel Kernell (2001) push the idea that Congress is the true master over the bureaucracy. Scholars who support this theory argue that Congress's

budgetary influence drives the USPS to pursue aims essential to the legislature. Kernell suggests that development of postal services, like rural free delivery, were extremely political endeavors because Congress could use complex application processes, dense procedure, and their budgetary discretion to selectively implement services for electoral gain (Kernell 2001). In a long held debate between Kernell (2001) and Carpenter (2001), Kernell (2001) argues that Congress ultimately had the greatest influence in the development of the rural free delivery service as it developed to include more routes and expanded communication across the rural United States (Kernell 2001; Kernell and McDonald 1999). In this paper, I address this prior theory along with several other contending theories about the source of bureaucratic influence, including Carpenter's (2001) theory of bureaucratic autonomy and Rogowski's (2016) theory of Presidential power.

Presidents and Their Agencies

Like Congress, the Executive was also given some Constitutional power over agencies, specifically through the power to "appoint Ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, judges of the Supreme Court, and all other offices of the United States" (US Constitution). Through previous literature, we know that both the Executive and Legislative branches have significant resources and power to help promote desired growth in bureaucratic agencies. The President has both the power to appoint personnel to bureaucratic agencies, including local postmasters, and to grant limited funding to bureaucratic agencies for specified projects. In fact, the President's power over appointments is very influential because the President can appoint more ideologically proximate people to positions in the bureaucracy who will make policy in line with the aims of the Executive in mind (Lewis 2008; Brown 1982). This is called patronage and is exemplified by President Jackson's relationship with bureaucratic appointments. Patronage is

the practice of awarding loyal constituents with government appointments as a type of benefit for electoral support. Even lower-level appointments were subject to Executive influence through the 19th and 20th centuries (Wood and Waterman 1991). This ultimately means that positions with the discretion to influence agency outcomes were filled by those with electoral ties to elites who may bear this favor in mind when implementing new projects within the USPS.

Like Congress, the Executive also has several reasons why they would want to use their power over appointments to influence the kinds of policy that are implemented by the US bureaucracy. One reason could be that Presidents are mindful of the legacy that they leave behind after they leave office and use federal incentives to make long lasting change. As mentioned, the President has no direct power over legislation with the exception of the veto power, but they can influence the way that policy is implemented after it is passed. One avenue for this is the US bureaucracy, which controls the operation and dissemination of federal services far after the sitting President returns to normal life. Additionally, the President will also want to control their image and legacy during this time due to the pressure of reelection. By supporting federal services and establishing them in areas that are electorally beneficial, Presidents can garner some support from constituents who are directly impacted by the agencies policies. These arguments persist in the literature on the US Postal Service which argue that the Executive had influence on the USPS by using appointments to the institution and their limited discretionary funding to develop the service. This research largely argues that Presidents use federal services as a sort of incentive to reward loyal supporters through the allocation of postal routes and offices (Rogowski 2016). Even scholars like Carpenter (2001), who champions the USPS as the source of development, suggest that the President had influence on all types of postal services, including the rural free delivery service (Whittington and Carpenter 2003). Rogowski (2016)

finds the strongest support for this theory when looking at the establishment of post offices during the late 19th century. He finds that post offices tended toward areas that shared a strong attachment to the party of the President. In this chapter, I evaluate this theory along with Carpenter (2001; 2002) and Kernell's (2001) theories about the source of postal development in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Bureaucratic Autonomy

The US Bureaucracy is a complex entity comprised of over 400+ agencies and sub agencies that implement policy across a variety of policy areas. In Principle-Agency Theory, bureaucrats are traditionally considered the agents of their principles. Here a principle is a controlling force for the bureaucracy that can influence the policy that they make because political and budgetary power that they hold over the agency. For bureaucrats, the idea of a principle is complicated because agents are thought to be constrained by the views of Congresspeople, Presidents, and constituents. As mentioned above, Congresspeople have broad power over policy that effects the bureaucracy as well as power over the budgets of these entities. Similarly, Presidents have some budgetary power and the prime power over appointments to bureaucratic agencies through most of the 1800s. Continually, bureaucrats are also bound by the need to make good policy for the sake of the continued success of their agencies. Constituents rely on the services that bureaucratic agencies supply and if agencies want to remain relevant and successful, they also must conform to the needs of the populations that they are going to serve.

While many arguments persist that bureaucrats are at the whims of their principles (i.e. the elected officials who have control over policy), there are scholars that argue that bureaucrats have agency over policy outcomes. Scholars like Skowronek (1982) argue that bureaucrats have

their own type of political control that is autonomous of elites which allows them to develop their institutions internally (Skowronek 1982). Some even argue that the more insulated and institutionalized the bureaucracy is, the more responsive it is able to be because it can build and support itself rather than needing outside entities to help it maintain policy (Stephenson n.d.; Moe 2012). Carpenter (2001) outlines three qualifications that indicate when bureaucracies have achieved autonomy from outside institutional influence: political differentiation; unique organizational capacity; and political legitimacy. For the first, bureaucrats achieve political differentiation by pursuing policy aims that are contradictory to the wants of Congresspeople and the President. This shows that members can and do pursue their own goals even when MCs are not as supportive of their aims. Continually, bureaucrats have a unique organizational capacity because of their access to information and members of staff who can help motivate internal development. Finally, for bureaucrats to be autonomous, they must also have political legitimacy to be able to actually make change in their institution.

Carpenter (2001) heralds the postal service, specifically, as an example of bureaucratic autonomy in his work on the topic by arguing that the USPS and the Postmaster General were instrumental in the establishment of innovative and influential services in the late 1800s and early 1900s. In this work, Carpenter (2001) develops his theory of bureaucratic institutionalization in the Postal Service by arguing that the Postal Service became highly institutionalized because of a higher administrative capacity and thus, could support and come up with the idea for the RFD (Carpenter 2001). He argues that while Congress and the Executive have power over what services are established and where, the USPS has control over how those services get implemented. For example, the USPS has the sole responsibility over transportation to serve the routes. As such, things like coach contracts were negotiated through the USPS who

vetted and managed the personnel responsible for delivering the mail. This research is in strict opposition with Kernell's (2001) work on rural free delivery which argues that the main instigator of development for the USPS is Congress. Many scholars emphasize Congressional dominance over the bureaucracy though it is argued that this logic negates the power of the bureaucracy to institutionalize and expand itself for the betterment of the constituency (Moe 1987). Research does tell us that bureaucrats, in an effort to garner the support of the legislature, will allocate projects to districts with House members that have the most influence over their agency, but this does not negate the power of bureaucrats themselves to use this tactic to their advantage (Arnold 1981; Arnold 1990). Through this article, I intend to evaluate the above theories of bureaucratic influence to determine the effect that these elites have had on the distribution of federal services to constituents from 1840 to 1915.

Hypotheses

This paper's hypotheses will be tested using one negative binomial model that will evaluate our various theories on bureaucratic influence. This model comes from the above theory that elites acting in their capacity to provide funding and to appoint personnel to the service will use post offices as a patronage-esque incentive for districts supportive of them in the prior election. The first hypothesis looks first at Rogowski's (2016) theory that posits the President has considerable institutional power over the Postal Service that allowed them to use its services for electoral gain, including by offering positions in the Postal Service to loyal supporters as a way of incentivizing electoral participation. I hypothesize that Presidents use their discretionary power over the Postal Service to establish post offices in areas that were more supportive of them during the election cycle. Therefore, my first hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 1: If a Congressional district was more supportive of the sitting President in the previous election, then that area will be more likely to receive post offices than areas less supportive of the sitting President.

My next two hypotheses focus on the influence that Congress has on the establishment of postal services. Kernell (2001) argues that Congress used its budgetary and legislative power over bureaucratic services to target postal incentives into areas that they preferred. There are two ways that Congresspeople may decide where to place services: the amount of electoral support given to the members and the dominant party in the district. My second hypothesis suggests that districts will be more likely to get access to federal services when they are more supportive of their current House member. In Hypothesis 3, I add to this by interacting majority party membership which captures the variation that would be caused when a member receives more support but is not in the dominant party. These are represented as the following:

Hypothesis 2: If a Congressional district was more supportive of their current House representative in Congress in the previous election cycle, then that area will be more likely to receive post offices than when they are less supportive of their member in the election.

Hypothesis 3: If a member of Congress is a part of the majority party of Congress, then their district will be more likely to receive post offices when electoral support for the member is higher.

Furthermore, in this analysis I intend to evaluate the influence that bureaucratic entrepreneurs and autonomy may have had on the development of federal services. I argue that the establishment of service in an area is heavily influenced by the bureaucracy's own capability to internally provide for its services. Bureaucrats, themselves, may target their efforts toward areas with more of a need for service, or more established transportation modes already in place

in an effort to develop and expand access to civil services. Therefore, it is likely that districts that don't already have access to postal services will be more likely to get offices as well as states that already have pre-established modes of transportation contracted to the area. To reflect this effect, I have included measures for two additional hypotheses which address both concerns of previous bureaucratic development and the needs of the area. My last set hypotheses are:

Hypothesis 4: If a state already has established transportation lines by the postal service, then areas in that state will be more likely to get post offices established.

Hypothesis 5: If a district already has established post offices, then the area will not receive as many post offices as areas with a higher need for access to the service.

It is through these hypotheses that I seek to determine how elite institutions and federal agencies can impact the institution and maintenance of services in the bureaucracy.

Data and Methods

This project relies on several sources of data, including US Census data, election results, and data compiled from US Postal Guides and Annual Reports of the Postmaster General. The first major source of data for this paper is taken largely from Cameron Blevins recent book *Paper Trails: The US Post and the Making of the American West* which includes data collected originally by Richard Helbock on the establishment of post offices from 1639 to 2000. This extensive data set on US post offices includes over 166,100 post offices in and out of operation throughout that period and tracks their operation to provide both start dates and end dates to many of the post offices in the set. This data set also includes geocoding for almost every post office so that their dissemination can be tracked geographically over time (Blevins and Helbock 2021). In this paper, I use this data to produce my main dependent variable in the model: the number of new post offices established per year and Congressional district. This data is ideal for

this type of project because its geocoding allows us to place the individual post offices in their exact locations to further aggregate them on the district level. By doing this, we can more accurately capture the spatial and temporal dynamics in the data and is required to consistently use other sources of data that are more often found on the district level.

Several outside sources of data have been merged in with this base set of data to evaluate the independent variables proposed in prior theories. These sources include the decennial Census, the Annual Report of the Postmaster General, and CQ electoral data from 1840 to 1915. To start, several of the primary independent variables come from the CQ Elections Database on election results from 1840 to 1915. The above theory argues that the President and Congress will use postal services as incentives to give to loyal supporters. The most obvious metric for members of Congress and the President at the time for providing these incentives would be their amount of electoral support in the previous election. To reflect this, I use electoral data to base several measures of Congressional and Presidential influence. First, I use prior general election results for the sitting President as a measure of where the Executive may target access to bureaucratic services. Similarly, I use previous general election results for my measures of Congressional influence, including electoral support of the member, if the member of the area is in the majority party and if it is a unified congress. Combined these measures are used to look at the first three hypotheses discussed above.

Additionally, this paper intends to evaluate multiple prior theories about elite influence including Carpenter's assertion that bureaucracies have autonomy when making decisions about service placement. However, bureaucratic autonomy is a hard concept to operationalize in its strictest form. Daniel Carpenter does provide some clarity on how we might measure autonomy by providing some context for processes that would have shown that the USPS was

institutionalizing. One process he mentions with regard to the postal service, is the contracting of transportation for the mail. Primary sources show that letter carriers in the 18th and 19th were not necessarily employees of the USPS and instead were contracted privately to deliver the mail (Carpenter 2001). Through their support in the development of newer modes of transportation, the USPS was then able to support its own routes through a fleet of carriages, boats, and railways. Congress and the Executive also have much less control over the kinds of transportation the USPS uses and how mail delivery actually gets executed. For these reasons, I use the total number of miles traversed in a state per year to represent the bureaucracy's ability to support itself through the establishment of a system that promotes the service. Continually, I use a measure of change in both revenue and expenditure of the service in a year, as well as additional controls for personnel including postmaster compensation. These variables were found through the use of publicly available Annual Reports of the Postmaster General from 1840 to 1915. These reports are available through HathiTrust and offer a good insight into the year-to-year operations of the USPS.

Finally, I used data collected from the US Decennial Census (Census Bureau 1840-1915) to help provide some context for the populations in each district and the amount of need for service. From this source I use data on total population per capita and urban population by capita to assess the potential need of services in the district. Total population is meant to account for the increased need that may come from more populous areas. Continually, urban population captures the most consistent measure for how rural/urban an area is with higher values equating to a more urban area. Aside from these, I also have a variable included to account for westward expansion (the median longitude of each district) which was a primary concern in postal development at the period I am looking at.

{Table 2.1: Key Variables Used in the Analysis}

As for my model, I use a negative binomial because my dependent variable is a count of the number of post offices established in a district per year. I use a negative binomial model because this data is over dispersed and does not fit the distributional assumptions of the standard Poisson model. Formally, this analysis is represented by the below:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{NBNM } \mu = & \beta_0 + \beta_1 \textit{House electoral support} \times \beta_2 \textit{majority member} \\ & + \beta_3 \textit{Presidential electoral support} + \beta_4 \textit{unified Congress} \\ & + \beta_5 \textit{unified government} + \beta_6 \textit{transportation} + \beta_7 \textit{change in revenue} \\ & + \beta_8 \textit{change in expenditure} + \beta_9 \textit{gross income} + \beta_{10} \textit{salary} + \beta_{11} \textit{westward} \\ & + \beta_{12} \textit{prior service} + \beta_{13} \textit{population} \\ & + \beta_{14} \textit{urban pop.} + \beta_{15} \textit{nonwhite pop.} + \beta_{16} \textit{congress} + \beta_{17} \textit{state} + \varepsilon \end{aligned}$$

As shown above, this model also includes control variables for temporal and spatial fixed effects to account for nature variation in the data caused by development over time. The data used for this project are generally temporally and spatially dependent with the USPS getting larger and more established as time goes on. Due its growth alongside the US government, the USPS had to respond to geographic changes in the country as the US continued to expand westward. Fixed effects here help control for this phenomenon so we can clearly evaluate our other theories. By evaluating these models, I hope to provide a better understanding of how elites can influence the establishment of bureaucratic services.

Results

After compiling all of the data sources as outlined above, I ran the above function as a negative binomial model looking at the establishment of post offices from 1840 to 1915. The results of this model are presented below in Table 2 and are broadly grouped by theoretical purpose in the model. From this, there are quite a few significant variables that show the potential impact that institutions can have on bureaucratic services. To start, I use Presidential electoral support to evaluate Executive influence on bureaucratic services as discussed in Hypothesis 1. I find that the amount of support the President receives in the prior election has a

significant and positive effect on the number of established offices in a district holding all else constant. This shows that districts that were more supportive of the current President were more likely to receive higher proportions of post offices in a given year. To illustrate the magnitude of this effect, Figure 1 shows the predicted probability of receiving post offices given varying levels of Presidential support. Figure 1 shows that districts that were 100% supportive of the sitting President received ~0.6 more post offices than district that were not supportive of the sitting President at all. Therefore, while the effect of Presidential support on established post offices is positive and significant consistent with Hypothesis 1, the magnitude of this particular effect is small, effectively producing very little effect on established services. This result allows us to reject the null for Hypothesis 1, substantiating the theory that Presidents have a positive impact on services in areas loyal to them (Rogowski 2016).

{Figure 2.1: Predicted Established Offices by Presidential Support}

Continually, I use two House specific variables to help look at Kernell's (2001) claim that members of Congress are really the main drivers of postal development. Both the amount support that the House member had in the district and having a member in the majority party had a significant negative effect on the establishment of offices. This is in the opposite direction that prior theories would suggest. While Hypothesis 2 argues that districts that are more supportive of their House members are more likely to receive post offices as a reward for their loyalty, this result is not consistent. Instead, as districts are more supportive, they become less likely to receive a post office. The same is true when members are in the majority party in Congress. This result shows that an area is less likely to receive an office when their member is in the majority party. These results separately are very different than what we, as political scientists, would

expect because distributive benefits tend to go to act as pork for the members to bring home to their district.

To look at this further, these two variables were interacted to see if a member's party affiliation and the amount of support they received affected the number of established offices when used together. The results here show that members that are in the majority do tend to get more offices and see some increase in offices when their district is more supportive during the election. On the other hand, members who are in the minority party were less likely to gain more post offices for their district and when these members received more electoral support, they became even less likely to garner more offices. This is consistent with Hypothesis 3 that argues that house support's effect on established offices will be moderated by majority party membership. This relationship is further demonstrated below in Figure 2.2, which shows that the magnitude of this effect is much larger for members in the minority power who have more to lose than for members in the majority who tend to have less of a chance for gaining more offices when support is high. From this, I reject the null hypothesis for Hypothesis 3.

Next, I tested to see if unified government and unified Congresses had an effect on when post offices were established. My results show that offices were significantly more likely to be established when there was a unified Congress. This is consistent with prior knowledge that would suggest these kinds of partisan incentives are more easily accessed when both chambers are controlled by the same group. Continually, unified government had the opposite effect on the establishment of post offices. When both chambers of Congress and the President were all in the same party, post offices were less likely to be established broadly. This is not consistent with prior theory and presents mixed results when compared to the previous result. In sum, these results show that Legislative institutions have a clear and significant role in the creation of post

offices from 1840 to 1915. This is consistent with Kernell's (2001) theory that Congresspeople would use federal services to incentivize further support from loyal constituents.

To think more about bureaucratic autonomy and its influence, a separate set of variables was used to target a number of different factors relating the bureaucracy's own operations. Hypotheses 4 and 5 below look specifically at the influence of previous lines of service on postal operations. In the below regression, many of the variables relating to previous aspects of service follow the anticipated directions but do not show significant effects. First, the amount of transportation that the USPS was able to maintain did have a positive impact on the number of established offices in an area. This effect was not significant though, indicating that while operating capacity plays the intended role on the development of post offices, it is not a consistent phenomenon.

Similarly, change in revenue from year to year also had a positive impact on the establishment of post offices. This is consistent with what I would expect here because higher revenue streams would give the agency the capital to continue to expand their services. This effect was not significant, however, providing limited evidence for the consistency of this effect. On the other hand, change in expenditure had a negative effect on the established of post offices. This is also consistent with what would be expected because higher expenditures would show that the USPS might be limited in their capacity to establish more services. This effect was also not significant in the results presented below presenting several mixed results for the impact of bureaucratic institutions on their own services.

Despite the mixed results discussed above, the gross income of the USPS per year did have a significant positive impact on established offices. While previous results are mixed, this shows that the USPS did reliably establish more post offices when they were operating in a

surplus. This is consistent with prior theories about bureaucratic operations which would suggest that agencies can better support and build more programs when they have more access to independent funding pools. As mentioned, this was a significant result which supports the idea that agencies have some ability to influence their service autonomous of elite institutions.

In an effort to evaluate Hypothesis 5, the number of prior established offices in an area was included to see if access to services had an impact on if an area receives more post offices. As expected, the number of previous established post offices did have a negative and significant effect on whether or not more offices when opened in that area. This shows that the areas that did not have as many pre-established post offices were more likely to gain post offices than areas that already had post offices. This is consistent with Hypothesis 5, which argues that prior services will negatively impact a districts chance of gaining more post offices. Due to its significance in the regression, I can confidently reject the null for Hypothesis 5.

Finally, several additional variables were also significant predictors of how many post offices a district would receive per year. Perhaps unsurprisingly, measures of need for postal services like median longitude of the district did have the expected result on the establishment of postal services. The longitude of the district did have a significant positive impact on the number of postal services that were established by the USPS. The more westward a district was the more likely they were to have a post office established in their area. This makes sense because there would have been a greater need for access to postal services as newer states were established westward. This theory is supported by my results which show significant change as states go further west.

Furthermore, several indicators of population need were assessed in the below regression. First, the total population of a district has a significant negative impact on the number of

established post offices. This result is counter intuitive and indicates that areas with higher population counts receive less access to mail services presenting some mixed findings. Likewise, the percentage of the population living in urban areas had a significant positive impact on the number of established post offices. This result suggest that urban districts were more likely to get access to postal services than more rural areas. This probably occurs because urban areas tend to be more population dense meaning that more people would get access in proportion to more rural areas.

Finally, nonwhite population was used to address racial disparities in the distribution of federal services. My results show that areas with higher percentages of people of color tended to not get access to as many post offices. This is unfortunately consistent with the historical treatment of nonwhite populations who were discriminated against in many respects during this time period. This result reflects this stark reality that areas with larger populations of people of color were not given as much access to things like mail services during this time period.

Additionally, all of the controls present for spatial and temporal concerns were also significant. This supports the idea that postal services could have been established with the intention of fulfilling a need for service based on geographic location and current access to the service. For many reasons, this makes sense because areas without offices and access present greater opportunity for growth through the establishment of post offices. Services would naturally expand into areas without as much access making many of these measures significant in this process. Though I have presented the bulk of my evidence here, discussion on the substantive implications of these results will continue further below.

{Table 2.2: Coefficient Results of Models for Established and Discontinued Post Offices}

Discussion

Prior theories provide several explanations for the cause of growth for bureaucratic entities. These theories have seldom been tested together because of a lack of consistent data on the operations of bureaucratic entities, themselves. The above analysis draws on these theories and seeks to test them on a prominent example discussed by Daniel Carpenter (2001) and Samuel Kernell (2001): the USPS. By looking at electoral support and the broader context between the Executive and Congress, results show that both the Legislative and Executive branches had a significant role in the establishment of post offices from 1840 to 1915. Prior support of the President had a positive and significant impact on offices at the time confirming Rogowski's (2016) finding that Presidents have pull over bureaucratic services and can use them to incentivize electoral participation. This is notable because Presidents have little institutional power over the USPS compared to Congress and yet still play a large part in the development of civil services. Further, Figure 2.1 shows this relationship through predicted probabilities. This figure shows that increased amounts of Presidential Support did result in an increased number of offices for the district though this effect was incredibly small (less than .6 offices). This confirms the validity of Hypothesis 1 and allows us to reject the null hypothesis, but this effect is still very small compared to some of the other results presented.

{Figure 2.1: Predicted Established Offices by Presidential Support}

Not only did electoral support predict Presidential involvement, but several variables looking at Congressional influence specifically had significant effects on the establishment of civil services. These variables included having a member in the majority party and the amount of electoral support that the member received, which produced coefficients in the opposite direction of what was expected. When interacted, however, this relationship stays significant and does

produce results consistent with Hypothesis 3. In Figure 2.2, this result is clarified by looking at the predicted probabilities when a member is or isn't in the majority party. Here electoral support has very little effect when a member is already in the majority party, however, if a member is in the minority, then increased support resulted in less offices. At least for the minority party, this could mean a change of four post offices depending on the amount of electoral support received. This result makes sense because legislative authority is tied to the majority party in Congress, making it easier for members in the majority to push their policy goals. Majority status then moderates the relationship between electoral support and establishment by making districts with members in the majority party more likely to receive access to the USPS when support is high. Likewise, when members are in the minority party, access to the USPS becomes limited in areas where support is higher. This result supports Hypothesis 3 and Kernell's (2001) theory that Congress and the members therein have an incredible amount of influence over the bureaucracy, which is most true for members in the majority.

{Figure 2.2: Predicted Established Offices by Member in Majority and Member Support}

The last of the main theories evaluated in this model is Carpenter's (2001) theory of bureaucratic autonomy and entrepreneurship, which is insistent upon the idea that bureaucrats, having their own ambitions and interests, can influence the USPS from the inside through specialized policy making. Unfortunately, bureaucratic autonomy is not a straightforward measure and to evaluate it, I have used a handful of indicators to help look at the operations of the USPS over time. While most of these variables are the magnitude and direction of the result we expected, the majority of them were not significant. This doesn't necessarily mean that bureaucrats have no control over their own agencies, but rather that these measures might not truly get at the idea of bureaucratic autonomy. By looking at our variables on geographic need,

we can tell areas with a higher need do tend to get more access to the service. If we are to believe that bureaucrats are dedicated civil servants who would want to expand services to those without access, then this result might mean that bureaucrats are successful at getting post offices established autonomously. Combined with the bureaucracy centered variables, we can get some sense that USPS is successful at what it's doing at this time. However, without a more direct measure, the effect that autonomy and entrepreneurship may have is still very obscured.

From these results, it is clear that there are many factors in play when the USPS chooses to create a post office in an area. Debates on the subject have focused on three competing theories and as such, the magnitude of these effects in comparison may also help us glean who or what the prevailing influence is. By looking at the results, it is clear that in the context of this analysis that bureaucratic influence did not play as big of a role as Carpenter (2001) argues. In contrast, all of the variables addressing elite influence were significant with the effect of unified government being the biggest in magnitude. This shows that Congress is more effective in influencing the implementation of services when both Houses are on same page ideologically. Overall, elite institutions have a huge claim over bureaucratic development with Congress and the Executive driving positive change in the amount of service for their supporters. It is not clear from this analysis whether bureaucrats are autonomous or not and if they are having an effect on the service itself, though I argue that the combination of several factors in this model do suggest some agency on the USPS' part.

Conclusion

In this paper, I evaluate how elites can impact the work done by bureaucratic agencies. I argue that elites have a direct financial pull over the operations of the bureaucracy as well as a way to appoint members to the service when necessary. The pull that they have over the

operations of the Postal Service is vast and I argue that electoral support of elites may be a primary indicator over where postal services are implemented. Continually, internal development in the Postal Service also has a huge impact on its ability expand and maintain its services for their constituency. This relationship was then tested by using a negative binomial model with variables representing influence from all of the institutions involved and the counties themselves. In the above model, we can see that elected elites do tend to have the biggest effect on openings with loyal supporters getting more offices. From these findings, bureaucratic autonomy does not have the same consistency in its impact on the establishment of services though I argue that this impact may be understated because of a lack of a direct measure. Overall, this paper finds that the development of civil services is complex with multiple interests playing a role in how federal services are created. As such, future work on the subject should focus on further clarifying this relationship through more succinct measures of bureaucratic autonomy and additional data.

Table 2.1: Key Variables Used in the Analysis

Variable Name	Data Source	Measure Used
Dependent Variable:		
Number of Established Post Offices by District and Year	Blevins and Helbock (2021)	# of Established Offices by District and Year
Congressional Influence:		
Majority Party	CQ Voting and Elections Collection (1840-1915)	Binary Variable, where 1 = Majority Party and 0 = Minority Party
House Electoral Support	CQ Voting and Elections Collection (1840-1915)	Prior Election Results in a Percentage
Unified Congress	CQ Voting and Elections Collection (1840-1915)	Binary Variable, where 1 = Unified Congress and 0 = Not Unified Congress
Unified Government	CQ Voting and Elections Collection (1840-1915)	Binary Variable, where 1 = Unified Congress and Pres. and 0 = Not Unified Congress and Pres.
Presidential Influence:		
Prior District Electoral Support of President	CQ Voting and Elections Collection (1840-1915)	Prior Election Results in a Percentage
Bureaucratic Characteristics:		
Transportation Per Capita	Annual Reports of the Postmaster General (1840-1915)	# of Miles Traversed by the USPS by State and Year Per Capita
Change in Revenue	Annual Reports of the Postmaster General (1840-1915)	Current Years Revenue – Prior Years Revenue
Change in Expenditure	Annual Reports of the Postmaster General (1840-1915)	Current Years Expenditure – Prior Years Expenditure
Gross Income	Annual Reports of the Postmaster General (1840-1915)	Revenue-Expenditure (By Year)
Postmaster Salaries (By Million)	Annual Reports of the Postmaster General (1840-1915)	Annual Salary of All Postmasters By Year
Constituent Needs:		
Westward Expansion	Lewis et al. (2013)	Median Point of Each Congressional District
Previous Service	Blevins and Helbock (2021)	Number of Prior Offices Per Congressional District
Total Population (By Million)	US Census (NHGIS IPUMS 1840-1914)	Total Population in a District By Million
Urban Population (Per Capita)	US Census (NHGIS IPUMS 1840-1914)	Total Urban Population in a District Per Capita
Nonwhite Population (Per Capita)	US Census (NHGIS IPUMS 1840-1914)	Nonwhite Population in a District Per Capita
Congress	Blevins and Helbock (2021)	Congress Number

Table 2.2: Coefficient Results of Models for Established and Discontinued Post Offices

Negative Binomial Regression:	Established Offices		
Independent Variables	Coefficients	Standard Error	Sig.
<i>Presidential Influence:</i>			
Presidential Electoral Support	1.294e-3	5.418e-4	**
<i>Congressional Influence:</i>			
House Electoral Support	-1.398e-5	1.132e-6	***
Member in Majority	-3.404e-1	2.494e-2	***
House Support x Member in Majority	1.572e-5	1.666e-6	***
Unified Congress	2.145e-1	2.639e-2	***
Unified Government	-3.038e-1	2.567e-2	***
<i>Bureaucratic Influence:</i>			
Annual Transportation (Miles)	5.733e-6	6.562e-5	
Change in Revenue	7.988e-10	2.286e-9	
Change in Expenditure	-2.635e-9	2.208e-9	
Gross Income	7.353e-9	2.422e-9	***
Employee Compensation (Million)	-1.223e-1	3.143e-3	***
<i>Constituent Needs:</i>			
Westward Expansion	-2.827e-2	1.219e-3	***
Prior Established Post Offices	2.192e-2	1.219e-3	***
Total Population (Million)	-1261e-1	7.766e-3	***
Population Residing in Urban Areas (Percentage)	1.390	6.382e-2	***
Nonwhite Population (Percentage)	-3.124e-1	6.222e-2	***
<i>Temporal and Spatial Controls:</i>			
Congress	1.047e-1	2.866e-3	***
State	1.366e-2	8.304e-4	***

*** $p < .0001$, ** $p < .001$, * $p < .01$

$N = 16,253$

Figure 2.1: Predicted Established Offices by Presidential Support

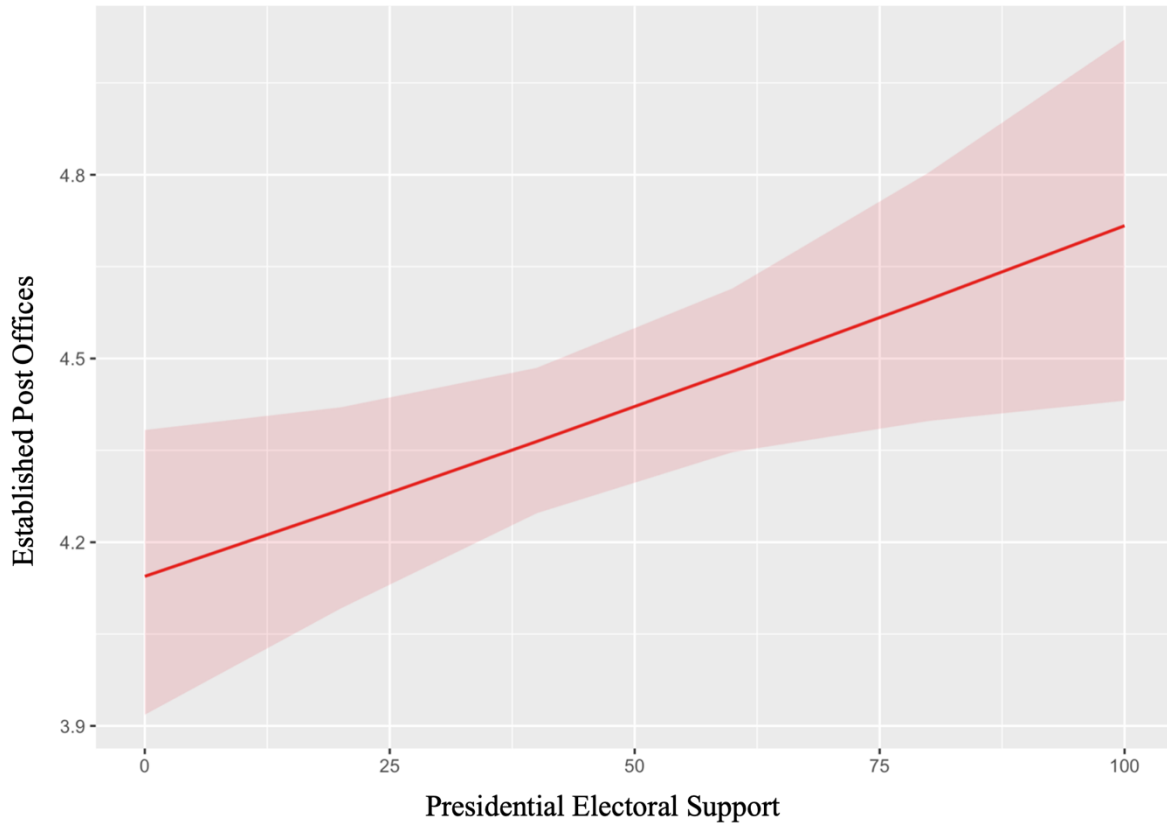
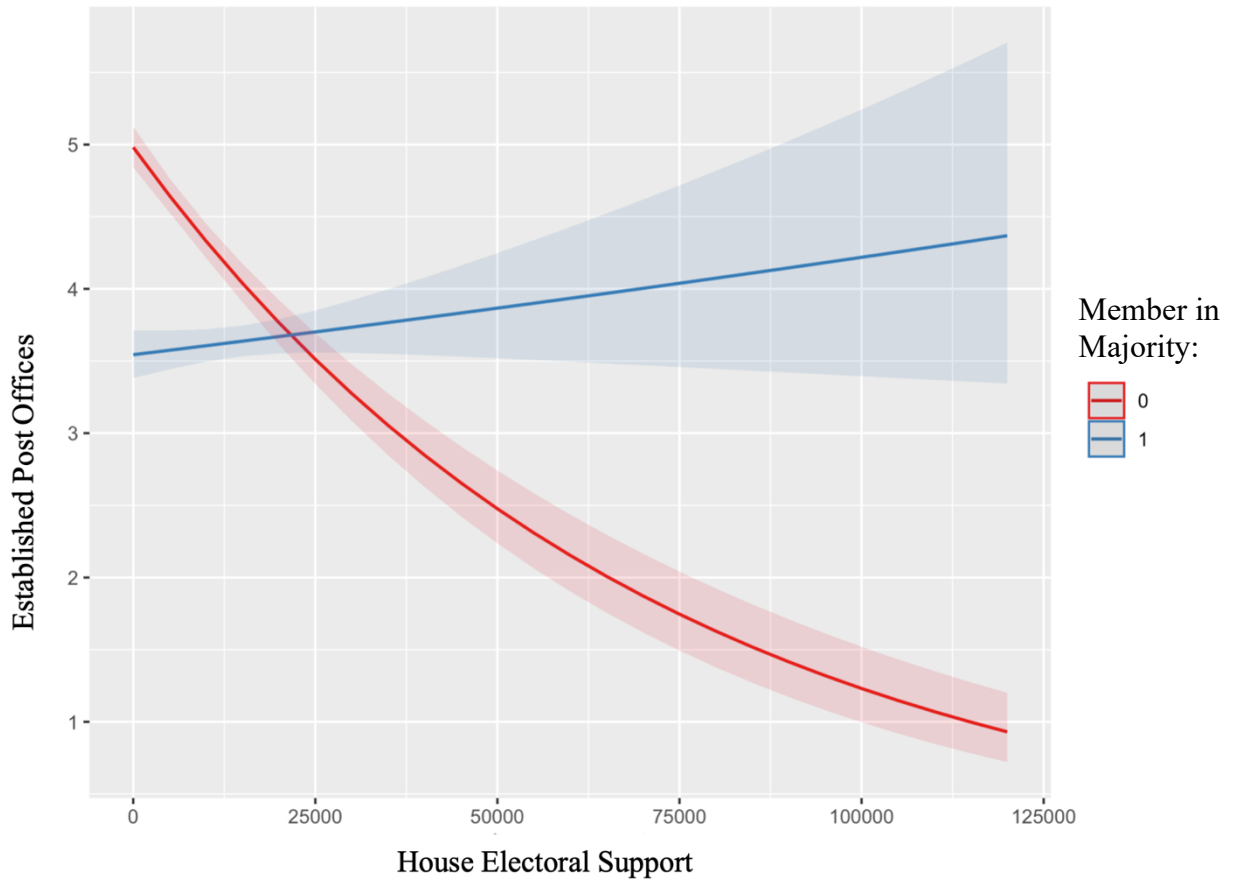


Figure 2.2: Predicted Established Offices by Member in Majority and Member Support



CHAPTER 3

HIDING HIGH DEMANDERS: AN ANALYSIS OF PREFERENCES IN COMMITTEES
THROUGH IDEAL POINT ESTIMATION²

² Putman, Alexandria Marie. To be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal (Legislative Studies Quarterly).

Abstract

Congressional committees are a vital part of the legislative process by providing a specialized context where members of Congress (MCs) can pursue collective goods. The committee context provides members with an insular environment with a single area of expertise that is mostly free from spectators and wandering eyes. Previous scholars have developed several theories about the relationship that committees have to the parent chamber: the distributive theory, the informational or chamber-driven perspective, and the party-driven model. While the distributive perspective argues that members of committees are preference outliers that are unconstrained, the informational and party bound perspectives argue that committees are bound to larger entities that constrain their behavior when making policy. This study seeks to add to this wealth of literature by testing prior theories about committee preferences using Poole and Rosenthal's method for estimating W-NOMINATE (Poole and Rosenthal 1985) and Poole's party switcher model (Poole 2005). In this study, I estimate one dimensional W-NOMINATE (Poole and Rosenthal 1985) scores for committee members based on their voting record in committee and on the House floor. With a sample of legislators from six committees during the 117th congress, this study determines what member characteristics and district factors may contribute to changes in voting behavior in different legislative contexts. I find that the main drivers of change in voting behavior between contexts are the party of the member and the marginality of the member's home district.

Introduction

Since its formation, the Congressional committee system has served as a center for expertise in the US House. Their insular context and specialized policy making capacity allows members of Congress (MCs) to have direct influence over the content in the legislation that ultimately makes it to the floor. One reason that committees are so effective at producing policy is because of their ability to specialize in a policy area where they can gain expertise that is highly impactful for their constituents. MCs are motivated to participate in committee work because they can use this context to direct policy to the needs of their supporters. Members of committees also have power keep legislation from going out onto the floor and to change policy before it moves on through the process which gives MCs discretion over the content of policy in their field. In this chapter, I look at the effect that Congressional committees have on member voting behavior when placed in an environment where they can develop specialized policy knowledge and set the agenda for the floor.

Prior scholarship on committees can be divided into three major theories: the distributive perspective, the informational perspective and the party-driven perspective. The role of committees in the policy making process is to offer a specialized arena for specific policy needs which can handle review and markup more efficiently than the floor could as a whole. Each standing committee has its own set of staff who provide support to legislators when dealing with niche topics that they may need additional information on. Under the distributive perspective, MCs can pursue policy to affect a particular constituent need that could advance their electoral goals. To gain more electoral support, members will do their best to get onto committees in legislative areas that are vital to the constituency that elects them so that they can claim credit for making policy to benefit their needs. As a consequence, members in committee are considered to

be high demanders in their policy areas because they are seeking out benefits that can be directly procured through their involvement in the committee process. In contrast, Krehbiel's (1990) chamber driven model asserts that the committee's primary role is to make the chamber more efficient by acting as an information center for the larger body. In this theory, the committee is constrained by the preferences of the floor who will have the ultimate say in whether or not the bill will pass. Finally, the party-driven model develops the idea that the committee sphere is constrained by the needs of the majority party which has control over committee appointments and the agenda for the floor broadly.

I expand on these prior theories by using Poole and Rosenthal's method for estimating W-NOMINATE (Poole and Rosenthal 1985) and Poole's party switcher model (Poole 2005) to estimate ideal points for six committees from the 117th Congress. In this study, I estimate W-NOMINATE scores for members of different committees on a common space with their floor votes, which allows us to determine if there are meaningful changes in voting behavior between the two contexts. By estimating scores for the member in committee and on the floor on a common space, I can compare their voting preferences through the change in their ideal points. Using this process, I intend to determine if any of our prior theories explain how members express their preferences through their recorded voting records. With the points for both contexts derived from the Poole's (2005) procedure, I run several OLS (Ordinary Least Squares) models to determine what characteristics may drive individual preferences.

I predict that Congresspeople will generally be more polarized in the committee environment than they will be on the floor because they are seeking directed policy goals to bring home to their district. Party then will be a significant predictor of behavior in committees because they are hyper partisan reflections of the House. While I expect that committees are

generally polarized, I hypothesize that different types of committees will impact how members participate in committee work. This is where committees have a place to shine because they tend to be less transparent to the public's wandering eyes and can offer congresspeople more of a closed space to pursue constituent service directly. This is expected to be mediated, to a degree, by the content of the committee work being done and individual factors affecting the electoral security of the member. Committees that are more focused on constituent services may produce changes in member behavior in contrast to those that are more nationally salient like Appropriations and Rules. Continually, members who are more electorally vulnerable will also constrain their behavior in committee depending on if they feel like their actions may put them at risk for sanction. I theorize that characteristics like these may cause changes in member behavior between different contexts that would affect the policy being prepared for the floor.

Through four hypotheses, I make several theoretical arguments about the main drivers of member behavior in different contexts. In general, I argue that member characteristics such as seniority and marginality of district impact an MCs perception of their electoral vulnerability. When legislators are more vulnerable to sanction, they are likely to constrain their behavior to actions they feel will make them safer from losing their position. I argue that these factors will influence a member's perception of their standing with their constituents and change their interactions with committee work. In the analysis, I expect to find that seniority and marginality of members district will be significant predictors of changes in voting behavior from the floor to the committee. I predict that the party of the member, the type of committee they are in and their proximity to electoral sanction will all have an effect on member behavior in committee. Specifically, I expect that when a member is more senior that they will be more likely to change behavior in committee because they are more secure in their position in their home district. I also

expect that members from more competitive districts will be less likely vote differently in committee because they are more vulnerable to sanctioning. In general, if a member thinks they are electorally safe, they may be more likely to change behavior in committee because they will be under even less of a fear of sanction when in this context. Through this analysis, it is my hope that we can gain a better understanding of the committee environment and how it may impact the expression of partisanship through the recorded voting behavior of their members.

The Basics of Committees

Congressional committees are sub-groups of the floor which are responsible for reviewing and evaluating policy proposals before they ultimately reach the floor. They act as the preliminary stage of the legislative process where legislation can be discussed before being taken to the larger body. While the Constitution does not provide for the committee system explicitly, committees have existed to some extent for almost as long as Congress has. Committees existed in those early days as select committees which processed legislation on a short-term, need-only basis. They began as a way to create legislation by discussing propositions in the committee of the whole and then moving over to a select group who would write up the bill based on the prior discussions (Oleszek et al. 2015). This was originally done on a need-only basis as committees were only formed to handle specific pieces of legislation and then disbanded right after the process was done. Starting in 1810, Congress underwent a huge amount of growth while developing standing committees and a bill referral process that allowed Congressmen to delegate legislative power and commission them to gather information and expertise to smooth the legislative process (Gamm and Shepsle 1989; Jenkins 1998). This transition to standing committee work is argued to have been extremely rational and self-interested because it allowed Congressmen to reduce their overall workloads, shifts responsibility to their delegates and helped

Congress become more independent (Gamm and Shepsle 1989). Through the rest of the 1800s, many more standing committees were created to keep up with the demand of developing industry in the US. Unfortunately, by the 1900s Congress had a surplus of committees and sought to reduce the number of standing committees from the original 60 in the House and 72 in the Senate (Oleszek et al. 2015).

The modern committee system is primarily based in the changes made by the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 in response to this continued issue. Polsby (1968) argues that developments like these are some of the major indicators of institutionalization in the US House because they allowed Congress to become more internally complex, and well bounded (Polsby 1968). This measure sought to reduce the heavy burden of committee membership on members who felt the system was inefficient. The Legislative Reorganization Act reduced this stress by combining legislative jurisdictions and by creating sub-committees which were overseen by the larger standing committee. After this Act, the House's standing committees were reduced from the present 48 committees to 19 and the committees were authorized to hire a staff which could handle clerical and research matters. Additionally, the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 authorized the allocation of staff to the Legislative Reference Service which later became the Congressional Research Service (Polsby 1968). Later reforms in the 1970s provided additional staff and resources to the committees and required committees to be more transparent when conducting business. Generally speaking, this leads us to the present committee system which works very similarly to the way it did after the initial Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (Oleszek et al. 2015).

The modern legislative process begins when legislators submit bills to the hopper which are then given a name and assigned to a committee where they can be reviewed. Once in committee,

the bill will either sit untouched, or the members will begin the markup process through a series of hearings. In this way, the committee acts much like a smaller version of the floor with members proposing amendments and voting on key changes to the bills text. This context also works similarly to the floor with the same norms of procedure that move or inhibit the bills progress through the legislative proceeding. In many cases, bills do not make it past committee and are instead, referred to as dead because it will not make it past this stage in the process. This is considered to be a negative power of the committee system because they can simply choose not consider policy and therefore, not produce legislation for the floor (Oleszek et al. 2015; Deering and Smith 1997).

If a bill is considered by the committee, then they will begin the markup process by conducting hearings where they will amend the measure before voting to pass the bill onto the Rules committee. Here members of Congress can make the most change to the proposed policy by using this much smaller context to pass changes to the bill more efficiently. With a decrease in the number of people voting on the measure, passage is achieved easier because the minimum winning coalition is smaller than on the floor. The committee process also helps reduce the overall workload of the House by filtering out extraneous pieces of legislation before they ever reach the full consideration of the House. This prevents the floor from being inundated with proposals for legislation that would require their full attention.

Committees also promote efficiency through specialization (Oleszek et al. 2015: Deering and Smith 1997). Through committees, members can specialize in policy areas that are relevant to their constituencies by developing expertise that allows them to contribute to those areas. Expertise, in this context, is achieved through the use of Congressional staff, the Congressional Research Service, direct access to policy data, and the ability to hold hearings to pursue further

information. Through the use of committees, members also enjoy greater access to information, staff and lines of communication that can further their political interests in more substantive areas of policy (Hall 1987). Overall, this context provides members of Congress with an alternative place to secure a leadership role in policy formation and is shown to give members leeway with regard to work in the chamber (Sala 2023).

Committee Selection

Committees are essentially smaller versions of the larger legislature and are made up of subsets of the broader membership with anywhere from 10 to 50 members each. The appointment of committees has changed vastly since their inception. Until 1911, committee membership in the House was decided by the Speaker who appointed members and chairmen. After 1911, the House committee assignment process was taken over by party elites who now had primarily control over committee membership. By now, many high-ranking positions were filled by seniority basis which continued until the 92nd Congress when this no longer became a requirement to be a chair. This gave party leadership an advantage in committees which were no longer distinct from the pull of the majority and minority parties (Oleszek et al. 2015; Deering and Smith 1997). The 104th Congress is a good example of this because homogenous preferences among republicans allowed the party to advance their goals rapidly through the Appropriations committee. These preferences may stem from committee selection, which often places more senior, loyal party members in highly salient committees (Aldrich and Rohde 2000a; 2000b). In this system, the majority and minority each have a quota of members to appoint with the majority receiving control over the majority of open seats and appointment power over the chair. Later developments also made allotments for majority and minority staffs in each

committee as well as provided for separate funding levels to complete their service (Oleszek et al. 2015; Deering and Smith 1997).

Despite the great pull that parties had over the membership and use of committee time, the appointment of specific legislators to committees is often uncontested (Fowler et al. 1980). In the modern era, members can submit their preferences for committee assignments which are generally granted with the exception of assignment requests made for the more salient committees like Appropriations. Nationally relevant committees like Appropriations and Rules are much more competitive and often these committees have queue of members who are waiting for a seat to open that they can fill. Membership in more nationally focused committees is often a priority assignment for legislators who seek the prestige and more salient policy making capacity that those committees have (Bullock 1971, 1972; Jewell Chi-Hung 1974). Studies tracking member movement between committees show that members are not likely to give up seniority in a committee except in exchange for membership on a few key committees like Rules and Appropriations (Jewell and Chi-Hung 1974). Aside from this, many members requesting a spot on the more constituent service committees are granted membership without contest. Example of service-related committees that would be less sought after include committees like Agriculture, or Transportation which have a more narrow focus for policy benefits (Deering and Smith 1997).

Previous scholars have argued that the committee selection process leads to members acting as high demanders in the committee process. This occurs in part because of the specialization in committees that allows members to pursue policies that more directly impact their constituencies (Adler and Lapinski 1997). In the words of Niskanen (1971) “most committees are dominated by legislators who have higher demands for services reviewed [by committees] than the median demand of the legislature and the committee decisions are very seldom amended or reversed by

the whole legislature.” Niskanen (1971), like Mayhew (1974a), argues that members of the legislature are vote maximizers who selectively participate in order to achieve goals that are proximate to election. These proximate activities to election include actions during the legislative process that are intended to produce legislation for the benefit of a public with the power to sanction them if necessary (Mayhew 1974a). Fenno (1962) adds to this by saying that members are likely to seek committee assignments that aid them in making good policy for their constituents. Through committee work, members can specialize in policy in areas that are highly impactful for their constituents that can aid members in the pursuit of their electoral goals. Some prior scholarship refutes this idea by saying that members do not choose their assignments based on electoral viability and instead reports that freshman House members are joining committees because they want to have a hand in making good public policy (Bullock 1976). Continually, studies have shown that committee assignments did not affect the legislator’s electoral viability in the subsequent election even if members were picking them for that purpose (Fowler et al. 1980).

Committee Power

Gatekeeping

Committees have a large amount of negative power, or the ability to gatekeep certain pieces of legislation from making it to the floor and past the committee stage. We consider this a negative power because this allows committees to keep legislation from the floor if they don’t want it to go up for debate effectively stopping undesirable policies from being passed. We do know that the vast majority of legislation that is proposed and directed toward committee does not make it to floor consideration (Deering and Smith 1997). For example, during the 177th Congress over 11,000 pieces of legislation were introduced on the floor for consideration. Only

1,290 of those bills were actually considered or discussed by a committee and 978 passed through the committee after being considered and were discussed on the floor. This shows that the vast majority of policy that is proposed on floor of the House does not end up getting considered by committees who can decide at their discretion if they even want to consider a proposal. This makes up for a large part of the committee's power over agenda setting for the House as they can prevent policies from receiving floor consideration that they don't support.

Agenda Setting

On the other hand, committees also have positive power, or the power to agenda set legislation for the floor. Committees have this power because of their position in the legislative process, which allows them to review and process all legislation before it reaches the floor. This is a powerful position in the legislative process because all subsequent bills on the floor must go through committee hands. When committees are autonomous, members can use their primacy in the legislative process to put forward high demanding legislation that will get pushed through by the floor. In this view, committees receive policy deference because of their expertise in a given area, which allows them to make policy unconstrained by the median voter (Niskanen 1971). When committees are not autonomous, scholars argue that committees can agenda set for the House but are constrained by the agenda that is favorable to the broader House and party system. In the chamber constrained model, committee members know that they cannot get something passed unless the median legislator will vote for its passage. Krehbiel (1990) argues that committees can contribute to the overall ideological leanings of a bills, but they ultimately don't have the same scope as is defined by the distributive perspective. Therefore, without broader support, members cannot agenda set too far out of the scope of the legislator at large. Finally, party dominated theories of committee behavior argue that committees are constrained by party

leadership which decides committee assignments and sets the agenda for them. In all of the above theories, scholars argue that members do have the power to set the agenda for the floor, but they differ in their conception of limiting forces on the floor.

Expertise

One of the biggest advantages of being in a committee is the ability to specialize and build expertise in a specific policy field that allows them deference when policy making. Committees have a much narrower scope when handling policy which allows members of Congress to develop area specific knowledge on the policy area that they are working in. Committee membership also provides access to information and staff that are specifically there to support policy making in that area. This access to information coupled with their ability to conduct hearings helps provide members with an information rich environment for them to do policy. Members who have expertise in an area do gain some additional policy deference as a result of them gaining such specialized experience. In some cases, members get priority because of their expertise when participating on the floor or during the conference process. Members also have primacy in the policy process itself because all policy in their area will get referred through the committee (Deering and Smith 1997).

When discussing high demanders, scholars argue that the expertise that the committee system produces is one of the sole reasons that the broader floor is okay with the amount of pull that autonomous committees could have. As some point out, not every member could possibly develop all-encompassing knowledge about every policy area that they will legislate on. Committees then help members be more efficient by dividing up the workload of developing policy knowledge to make good laws (Krehbiel 1990). Furthermore, the specialization of committee work facilitates logrolling benefits in the legislature. In this system, members can

directly influence policy that affects their constituents in exchange for their deference to members in other areas. Therefore, while committees are theoretically “inefficient” (Niskanen 1971), the broader chamber puts up with this inefficiency for the benefits that come from specializing in a policy area (Benson 1981). Ultimately, committees are hugely influential because they have access to information that the floor does not, staffs who can query information, and the ability to conduct hearings to investigate additional questions. Their expertise allows them to make specified policy proposals that the floor will defer to when in need of clarification.

Ex Post Veto

The final source of committee power comes from what scholars call the *Ex Post Veto*. The ex post veto is the idea that committees have the final say in any legislation that ends up on the floor. Scholars in the past have argued that committee members receive deference when changes are being delivered in conference committees. At this stage, the bill has been passed by both the House and Senate floors and now the two chambers have to reconcile their changes in a single bill to be approved and sent to the Executive. Scholars who believe in the power of the ex post veto argue that this final review allows committee members the ultimate power over any changes that happen to the bill during conference committees.

Shepsle and Weingast (1987) argue that committees have the bulk of the power in Congress because of their role in the conference committee stage. In their view, committees possess an un-circumventable ex post veto which allows committee members to have the final say on bills before they leave congress. Their argument is based in a four-stage spatial model which starts with a committee reporting a bill that is then considered and amended by the floor. After the floor passes the bill, the bill will go back through a round of committee proceedings in

conference committee where they could change or veto the bill if necessary. Afterwards, the bill cannot be amended when it does back to the floor for final passage (Shepsle and Weingast 1987). A key part of this theory is that that committees do not receive deference by the floor for their expertise but instead that the floor is wary of the actions of committees during conference and constrain themselves according to those expectations (Shepsle and Weingast 1987).

It is important to note that not all scholars believe as strongly as others in the notion of the ex post veto. While some argue that conference committees allow members with the final say, others think that conference committees have a more minor contribution in policy change when completing revisions. Krehbiel, in his response to the original Shepsle and Weingast (1987) article, argues that the ex post veto is not a significant deterrent to the floors amending power. As he points out, there are significant institutional barriers to the conference committee having complete control over the final changes made to the bill. Changes in the House Rules, discharge petitions, and obstruction all present challenges to Shepsle and Weingast's (1987) original model. Generally, these findings also coincide with Krehbiel's (1990) later work arguing that committees are constrained by the parent chamber when making legislation because the floor has ultimate amending power. Not only this, but the role of conference committees has changed since this argument was initially made that it is possible that conferences may not have the same power that they once did. In fact, conference committees happen very rarely in the present day limiting the power that committees would have if this was still a major part of the legislative process. Generally speaking, this paper does not seek to explain this aspect of committee work though it is important to recognize in the broader conversation about committee power.

Previous Theories of Committee Behavior

Distributive Theories

Early theories about committee behavior often contributed to what is now called the Distributive Perspective. Distributive theories about committees posit that members of Congress (MCs) self-select into committees and policy areas that their constituents have a high demand in (Deering and Smith 1997). MCs join these committees so that they can avoid electoral sanctioning by making policy that contributes directly to the needs of their supporters (Mayhew 1974a). This is where we get the idea of high demanding committee members who produce an excess of policy to logroll benefits to their district (Benson 1981). Logrolling is the practice of procuring directed benefits for a member's own constituency in order to claim credit for beneficial policy during election. Members are very successful at logrolling in committee because they can have a direct hand in the policy that matters most to their voters. Through the specialization of policy in committees, members can logroll benefits for their districts without getting much oversight from the broader House (Benson 1981). For example, members from areas dense with farmland and needs in the agriculture industry would join the Agriculture committee where they could build expertise in the area and direct policy. This perspective is widely supported by prior literature that focuses on committee selection and the idea that specialization allows MCs to directly impact policy (Adler and Lapinski 1997).

The distributive perspective also argues that committees are autonomous because they have power over setting the agenda for the policy that makes it on to the House floor. Most every piece of legislation placed on the floor goes through committee and the committee has the power to change, pass, or destroy any bill through their negative and positive powers. As mentioned previously, committees have negative power, or the ability to block legislation from moving

forward onto floor consideration. Committees also have positive power, or the ability to produce legislation that they can make the floor consider. Proponents of these theories argue that committees receive deference from the parent chamber, who rationally expects that committees will use and develop expertise to make good policy. In this theory, the committee is unconstrained from the parent chamber and is able to make policy based on member and constituent based preferences rather than those of the median voter (Niskanen 1971; Benson 1981; 1983. Unconstrained and uncontested, committees under this model make high demands and are considered preference outliers who request an inefficient amount of legislation to benefit the ultimate goal of election.

Informational Theories

While much earlier work focused on the distributive perspective, other scholars, namely Keith Krehbiel (1990), argue that committees have a much different effect on their membership and behavior. The Informational Perspective argues that the primary purpose of the committee is to provide expertise to legislation that will appear on the floor. When members act in committee, they improve the division of labor by developing expertise, and forming staffs that ultimately support the quality of the legislation that the floor produces. Members in this model join committees with the intention to make good policy (Fenno 1962) by developing their own policy knowledge to better support their cohort. Under this model, committees are constrained by the floor who can still control the existence of each committee and the Rules that they operate under. For example, the floor has control over the charters of committees giving it the ultimate say on the institution's existence. Committees are also limited by the preferences of floor because the floor must also pass the bill after it is reviewed.

This view of committee involvement argues that committees only have discretion over small parts of the broader bill and cannot ultimately affect too much change over the policies content. In contrast to the distributive perspective, committees under this theory do not have any autonomy when it comes to policy making except when organizing legislative staff and procuring insight for the floor. Committees have less autonomy under this model because of the institutional constraints that limit their scope. Krehbiel and Rivers (1988) argue that institutional factors, like discharge petitions, keep committees from having too much deference which he substantiates by looking at a test case. He validates this theory through later works that argue that the primary role of committees is informational. Ultimately, this explanation points to the floor as an essential factor in Congressional decision making. While the distributive perspective points to committees as being strong drivers of policy decisions, the informational or chamber driven model argues that the floor places constraints on committee behavior because it controls the ultimate fate of the bill (Krehbiel 1990).

Party Dominated Theories

The final theory of Congressional behavior is the party dominated view of committees. In this theory, scholars argue that parties play the primary role in determining how members of Congress act in committee. As discussed in a prior section, parties play a central role in the committee appointments process by choosing the members that go onto influential committees like Appropriations and Rules. Because members are striving to gain election for another term, they adopt institutions that make this easier, including using party as a way to structure themselves and indicate to the public that they share values (Katz and Sala 1996). Aldrich argues that the influence of party on legislation began as early as the founding when majority rule was unstable and parties gave structure to voting through agenda setting (Aldrich 1995). He and

Rohde also assert when extending this research that when parties are unified, they are more likely to make institutional changes that allow them to maintain power and pass preferred legislation (Aldrich and Rohde 2000b; Gailmard and Jenkins 2007; Jones 1968). By controlling the appointments process, parties can affect both the ideological composition of the committee, but the policy outlook of the committee as well. Committees can be a vehicle for party influence because the speaker, who is often the majority party leader, has primary control over committee appointments especially (Lazarus and Monroe 2007).

Committees also rely on party leaders to schedule their legislation on the agenda which means that they are still beholden to the needs of their leaders. This ultimately means that committees under this theory lack autonomy because they are bound by the needs of the larger party organization. Through their ability to appoint and set the agenda, the majority party has quite a lot of control over what issues take the floor and who is allowed to contribute to them. Party also has been shown to affect other parts of the political process like the use of discharge petitions and in recorded voting more broadly (Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart 2001; Binder, Lawrence, and Maltzman 1999). The strength of the party can also mediate the amount and type of work that members can achieve, causing leaders in low strength situations to focus more on maintaining relationships and bargaining than they would in times were party strength is higher (Cooper and Brady 1981). Continually, party strength helps leader's agenda set by having clear, unified goals that they promote and push forward in the legislative agenda for the session (Hartog and Monroe 2011).

Some scholars argue, however that party has no significant effect on legislative behavior. Krehbiel discusses the possibility that parties do not matter in floor votes and preference is a much better predictor of passage in his pivotal politics model, which argues that the median voter

is a better predictor of the passage of legislation than partisanship (Krehbiel 1988). He shows in subsequent work that shows that parties rarely made a significant impact on legislative behavior in a variety contexts including in the appointment of members to standing and conference committees (Krehbiel 2007). In fact, when placing party models in comparison to preferential models, he finds that preferences almost always have more of a significant effect than party identification (Krehbiel 1995).

In sum, these three explanations of committee behavior suggest the dominant of three entities when decision making. First, the distributive perspective argues that member self-select into committees that would most likely impact the constituents in their district. This view of committees paints members as preference outliers who have complete autonomy through their agenda setting and gatekeeping powers. However, the informational or chamber driven model argues that committees are not autonomous and are constrained by the will of the larger chamber because the floor controls the existence of the committee and its jurisdiction. Continually, the floor is also where legislation moves after committee which means that passage is dependent on the floor agreeing on their policy. Finally, the party driven explanation argues that members are constrained by their parties when acting in committees. From this perspective, parties control the membership of committees and the actual scheduling of bills to be entered onto the floor which allows them to control what members are able to pass. While prior work has clarified parts of the larger story of committee behavior, this article seeks to determine if any of these three theories help explain the variation we see in committee behavior through roll call votes.

Measuring Voting Preferences

Scholars like Krehbiel (1990; 2010) and Poole (2005), among many others, made significant strides in measuring voting behavior in the US House. Unlike many other fields of

political science research, the study of elite behavior relies closely on formal and spatial theory, especially in its early days because the structure of voting and representation works well under the assumption of rationality. This research has its roots in development of rational choice theory, which originated in Hotelling's (1929) work on rationality and later Downs' work on the rationality of voting in elections (Downs 1957; Hotelling 1929). The assumption of rationality is frequently applied to representatives by scholars to explain why elites work within the bounds of their institutions. Early theory suggests that elites are self-interested and will pursue their preferences for policy by strategically manipulating floor rules, building coalitions, and participating in committee work (Riker 1980). The committee system is just one facet of this, though it allows Congressmen to pursue their legislative goals in a policy specific, information rich environment that is insulated from the public and workings of the floor (Shepsle and Weingast 1981).

Through spatial formal theory, the measurement of preferences and later, partisanship has advanced largely from the early days of Downs and Riker (Downs 1957; Riker 1980). By using roll call votes, Poole and Rosenthal developed DW-NOMINATE; the preeminent measure of partisanship for elites encompassing all elected representatives from the 1st Congress to the most recent. The method they developed uses recorded votes to estimate two dimensional points corresponding to the changes between elites voting preferences so that we can compare members' preferences (Cox and Poole 2002; Poole and Rosenthal 1991). This line of research has been extended to show how specific pieces of legislation that are more salient to the public and the party may influence these measures, because they receive more pressure from the party to be consistent with party leaders (Cox and Poole 2002). Some do argue, however, that the use of roll call votes may not produce measures that are generalizable to all legislative behavior in

congress. Roll calls used in this type of analysis are recorded, public votes which means that they may be skewed by what the congressmen thinks the constituency they serve wants. On top of this, the points can also become inflated by non-policy votes and are dependent on each other, not the policy space assigned to the vote (Hall and Grofman 1990; Roberts 2007). Scholars, like Adam Bonica (2014), have worked since this time to advance ideal point research to include other institutions and figures in the political sphere. By using campaign finance information for example, Bonica creates ideal points for members of Congress and their competition in elections through the donations that they receive (Bonica 2014). This paper seeks to add to recent research like Bonica's by developing ideal points in a new context: the Congressional committees. By using Poole's (2005) method for looking at party switchers, I determine the effect that legislative context has on recorded voting behavior.

Hypotheses

Drawing from the above, I propose several hypotheses to evaluate some of the individual level characteristics that could be driving changes in voting behavior between different legislative contexts. First, I expect that there will be a change between different types of committees and how they express preferences through voting. Some committees like Agriculture or Transportation are focused more on constituent service-related goals that are less salient to party leaders, high ranking elites, and constituents than committees like Appropriations, Budget, or the Judiciary that are all very salient in the public and other elites. Committees like Appropriations or Rules are procedurally important because they can regulate how bills are presented on the floor or how much money is authorized for policy enactment. Party leaders have a special vested interest in the actions of these types of committees because control over them almost implies control over the amount of change that can happen to a bill and subsequent

policy. I expect that members of high priority committees (Appropriations, Rules, Judiciary, etc.) will show less change between the two contexts than members of service-oriented committees that are less of a priority to ranking MCs. This leads to Hypothesis 1:

Hypothesis 1: Members on constituent service committees will exhibit greater changes between their committee and floor behaviors than members on nationally salient committees.

My second hypothesis generally argues that committees create an insular environment where party leaders can manage members preferences to influence the passage of legislation. Prior theories suggest that legislators are bound by partisan ties that structure their work in committee because parties have institutional control over committee membership and the agenda. Committees are specialized avenues for policy and party leaders have a vested interest in further developing policy in salient areas to the public. I argue that a member's membership may impact the amount of meaningful change between the two contexts. When members are in the majority, they will produce less meaningful change between contexts because they are more constrained than members in the minority. In contrast, members of the minority party will show greater changes in behavior because they will be under less pressure from party leaders. Therefore, my second hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 2: Committee members from the majority party will exhibit smaller changes in floor and committee behavior than committee members from the minority party.

There are also some individual level characteristics may impact a legislator's behavior when in committee versus on the floor. For example, prior electoral conditions of the legislator's home district can be taken as a measure of electoral security which would be likely to impact their behavior when voting. I argue that when legislators are from competitive districts they will stay more in line with party and constituent preferences when voting to avoid losing the next

election. In the present day, holding party lines is particularly important for MCs because parties structure group preferences in the policy making process. By not supporting party preferences, the member may lose support from the organization and constituents who view their party as a salient identity. Therefore, MCs who are electorally vulnerable will probably avoid straying from the party in case it could cause them to lose support and/or their positions. Further, this will affect how far MCs are able to stray from their behavior on the floor. If members are more vulnerable, they will want to be as consistent as possible with what is expected of them to avoid any additional scrutiny. If members deviate too far in committee from their floor preferences, they will draw attention from party leaders and potentially lose their support. As such, I contend that MCs from marginal districts will deviate less when roll call voting in committee versus on the floor. The hypothesis that follows is:

Hypothesis 3: Members from more competitive districts, will exhibit smaller changes between floor and committee behavior than members from safe districts.

Like the competitiveness of the district, seniority is also an indicator of electoral security. I argue that senior members are going to be more likely they to deviate away from their floor preferences in committee because they are more electorally secure. MCs who have served many terms are, in theory, higher ranked than those less senior and would have more leeway from leadership to act on their own accord. I also argue that this measure captures the variation that age may contribute to this phenomenon because older members are also more likely to have been in the legislature longer. I expect that freshmen House members will be more conscious of the expectations of the party and constituents when voting because they are more vulnerable to sanctioning. Senior MCs have more resources and name recognition making them less vulnerable to sanctioning. This type of electoral security allows more senior members to deviate

from their floor behavior in committees more often because they are more established and can express their true preferences when voting. My final hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 4: The change between floor and committee behavior decreases with seniority.

To achieve this aim, I will be using roll call votes from 6 major committees in the 117th House to create ideal points for legislators. By using Poole's (2005) method for looking at party switchers, I used roll call data to estimate one dimensional ideal points for MCs on the floor and in committee on a common space. Through this analysis, we can begin to look at how committees behave empirically using their roll call behavior.

Generating Ideal Points

To analyze voting behavior in committees, this paper uses Poole's (2005) party switcher model to estimate ideal points for members in committee and on the floor. This protocol allows us to estimate points in different contexts on the same scale (Cox and Poole 2002; Poole and Rosenthal 1991, Poole 2005). By estimating points for members in committee and on the floor on the same scale, we can then compare them to see if there are any consistent causes for changes in behavior in different contexts. Before starting the process of estimating the ideal points, I first had to collect the roll call votes for both contexts. Thanks to Legacy VoteView and the work of Keith Poole and Howard Rosenthal (1991), roll call votes for the House floor are easily accessible for use with the pre-existing NOMINATE software. Committee votes are much less accessible but can be found by searching through the documentation of committee hearings over specific bills available through Congress's website. By going through the records of individual hearings, I was able to find and code pdfs of each individual roll call that took place in each of the six committees that I analyze. In this paper, I take a sample of legislators from six

committees: three service-oriented committees, and three procedurally important committees. I chose the standing committees for Transportation, Veterans Affairs, and Agriculture as examples of committees that are oriented towards constituent service. In contrast, I use Appropriations, Rules, and Judiciary as examples of committees that are important procedurally to party leaders. This sample is taken from the 117th Congress, which was the first full Congress that published all of their committee hearings and the roll calls therein.

To estimate ideal points for these committees, I use both sets of votes in a singular matrix according to the procedure established in Poole's (2005) *Spatial Models of Parliamentary Voting*. In this book, Poole develops the party switcher model which he uses to measure preferences of legislators before and after they switch political parties as a natural experiment. In this model one legislator is treated as two: one, while in committee and another on the floor. When W-NOMINATE is used on this data, it will estimate two separate points for each legislator with each scaled with respect for the rest of the membership. The distance between the two estimated points can then be used to show if there was any "meaningful" change in the members behavior. An example of this process is illustrated below in matrix form:

{Table 3.1: An Example of the Party Switcher Model in Action (Step 1)}

First, we must start with a matrix of all votes for both the floor and the committee. As mentioned, both sets of votes (floor and committee) are used in the same matrix. The committee votes are at the front of the matrix separate from the floor votes and the members themselves are at the top of the matrix. Here our votes are columns with "C1" and "C2" as committee votes and "F1", "F2" and "F3" as floor votes. Continually, votes are coded using Poole and Rosenthal's system where 1 is a "Yea", 6 is a "Nay" and 0 is "Not Present". It is crucial that anyone using this procedure use all recorded votes present in the legislature. This allows the ideal points

produced to be on common space to each other so that they can be compared. Technically speaking, ideal points aren't a strict measure of partisanship in the way that they are often perceived. They have no reference toward the types of policy being voted on or a specific ideological scale. Instead, W-NOMINATE points are estimated with respect to the voting patterns of the other MCs participating in the vote. As such, the points produced are dependent on the votes of all members in that Congress and don't have a strict ideological scale that they map directly onto. This is important because it means that we can't just estimate a set of ideal points for a committee and then a second set for the floor separately. By doing so, we would have two separate sets of points on two separate ideological scales that could not be compared to each other. Therefore, all of the votes taken for both the committee and the floor were included in this estimation to ensure that all ideal points produced were with reference to the others in the set.

{Table 3.2: An Example of the Party Switcher Model in Action (Step 2)}

The next step in this process is to separate a single member's votes out into separate rows for both the floor and committee. This treats the member in committee and the member on the floor as two different people and estimates them on the same plane. Finally, using the *pscl* library in R, we can prepare this roll call matrix to use in Poole and Rosenthal's (1991) W-NOMINATE software. Once the matrix is formatted correctly, we are able to run the above matrix through W-NOMINATE so get individual points for all of the MCs in the matrix. In the above case, this would make five separate unidimensional points, two of which are based on Millicent's behavior on and off of the floor. This process separately takes place for each member within the committee. After getting points for the members behavior in and out of committee, the points are saved in a separate matrix and then you would move on to the next member, as

presented in Table 3. Afterwards, we would return to our original matrix and complete the same process again for the next member on the list. In our example, we'd move to Gertrude and split her votes to get a point for her after Millicent. In practicality, this is best done through a loop which will split each members votes, and estimate W-NOMINATE over and over until it gets through every member of the committee. This will save each point into a separate matrix that can then be used in the final model. If we were to complete this process on the above example, we would ultimately end up with six unidimensional points; two for each member in the committee.

{Table 3.3: An Example of the Party Switcher Model in Action (Step 3)}

An additional consideration is the number of dimensions that are being estimated when using W-NOMINATE. W-NOMINATE scores are usually on one or two dimensions that account for most of the changes found between legislators' floor behavior. Poole notes that these the dimensions themselves are not fixed and are based on the legislators voting record and not a static ideological scale. He contends that the first dimension typically represents the standard liberal to conservative scale while the second dimension is much less clear. In this paper, I use one dimensional W-NOMINATE scores because of the more limited scope of roll call votes and members in committees. Of the committees that I have sampled from, all of them had between 30 to 65 members and 55 to 305 votes. As such, the points I have produced are one dimensional to avoid inconsistencies that would arise out of stretching the smaller amounts of data too far. Once every member has a set of points representing their behavior in both contexts, we can compute the changes between the two and use that distance as a dependent variable for "meaningful" change.

A Comparison of Committee and Floor Behavior

Before looking at a larger causal analysis, we're going to look at the ideal points estimated from the above process visually to get a broader idea of the structure of this data. Starting with the House Standing Committee on Agriculture in Figure 1, we can already see the very well divided nature of the committee context. In committee, member behavior is as extreme as it can possibly be with Democrats all falling at a score of -1 and Republicans at +1. This makes sense because as we'll discuss later, MCs voted almost entirely on the party line when in committee making two very separate voting groups in this context. Continually, members when on the floor weren't nearly as perfectly divided as in committee which means that their floor ideal points are really dependent on committees who hit the outer limits of the possible values. As we'll discuss later, parties are integral to explaining how members vote in committee and out on the floor which is clear just from looking at the data and Figures 1 through 6 below. Continually, the type of service that the committee preforms does not, at a glance, seem to have any impact on the members voting patterns. As mentioned, every vote analyzed was party line regardless of the type of policy that the committee specializes in.

This relationship is illustrated through several figures below which show the density of members ideal points along the one-dimensional ideological scale. In Figure 1, the estimated ideal points for the Agriculture committee show distinctly different groups that form in both committee and on the floor. On the floor, the majority of the estimated points fall within a much closer range than the members points do in committee. Substantively, this shows that members were more polarized in committee when compared to when they are on the floor. The Transportation and Veterans Affairs committees show a similar trend of behavior in Figures 2 and 3, respectively. In addition, this pattern extends to the more salient committees like

Appropriations, Rules and Judiciary. This shows that the committee context is much more polarized than the floor is. While members occasionally cross party lines on the floor to produce more ideologically centrist policy, this is not the case in basically every vote that occurs in the committees sampled. In contrast, votes in committee were divided strictly along party lines explaining why there are higher densities on members on the exact ideological extremes on the graphs. This shows that while other factors may have an effect on expressions of voting in committee, party is ultimately the biggest driver of voting patterns in this context.

Finally, there are some points for members in committee that are not as strictly polarized as the majority of committee members. This variation is unfortunately not because of any type of structured change in behavior but is instead because some members were not present for every vote. For example, Rep. David Price of the Appropriations committee was not present for the first three-quarters of recorded votes taken by the committee. Due to his lack of participation in those votes, his ideal point in committee is much more moderate despite his polarized behavior otherwise. In most cases, members who look more moderate in committee are members who were not present during votes taken before or after a certain point. In Rep. Price's case, he joined the Appropriations committee later in the legislative session making him look more moderate statistically than members who voted in every committee vote. The same is true for Rep. Hastings of the Rules committee, Rep. Young of the Transportation committee, and Rep. Letlow of the Agriculture committee who were all also absent in committee leading to less polarized scores. Outstanding absences however, every member present did vote along party lines leading to high levels of polarization in committee. The discussion below uses these points to look further at the individual differences that are driving hyper partisan behavior in committee.

{Figure 3.1: Histogram of Ideal Points of Agriculture Committee Members}

{Figure 3.2: Histogram of Ideal Points of Transportation Committee Members}

{Figure 3.3: Histogram of Ideal Points of Veterans Affairs Committee Members}

{Figure 3.4: Histogram of Ideal Points of Appropriations Committee Members}

{Figure 3.5: Histogram of Ideal Points of Rules Committee Members}

{Figure 3.6: Histogram of Ideal Points of Judiciary Committee Members}

Additional Data and Operationalization

With the points estimated above, I evaluate my four hypotheses in a regression analysis presented below. First, I use the absolute value of the distance between each member's floor ideal point and their committee point to reflect the amount of change that happens between a member's voting preferences in each context as my dependent variable. This measure represents the amount of change in voting behavior that occurs between the floor and committee. As for my independent variables, a table of the measures used in my analysis and their sources has been provided below, followed by an explanation of the structure of that variable:

{Table 3.4: Variables Used in the Analysis}

First, Hypothesis 1 is evaluated by using a binary variable for whether or not the committee is more service oriented compared to its nationally salient counterparts. In this measure, the committees on Agriculture, Transportation and Veteran's Affairs were given a "1" because their policy focus is more directly tied to constituent needs. On the other hand, the committees on Appropriations, Judiciary, and Rules were all given a score of "0" because of their salience to the public and broader issues within government operations. Hypothesis 1 argues that members of constituent service committees will have greater change between contexts than members of nationally salient committees because of their importance for national and party issues.

Hypothesis 2 is evaluated using a binary variable accounting for majority/democratic party membership. This measure is drawn from data provided by the Office of the Clerk, along with several other measures included in this analysis. Hypothesis 2 argues that members in the majority party will show less change between contexts than members of the minority who have more freedom to pursue their policy preferences. Unsurprisingly, the two parties are quite different and in a legislative context, one party is going to be more dominant because they are in the majority party. This variable captures changes that would be caused by being in the majority party versus the minority party in the 117th Congress and is operationalized as such.

My main independent variable of interest for Hypothesis 3 is the competitiveness of the district. This is measured using data from the CQ Voting and Elections Collection (2021-2022) on the size of the winning coalition of the individual member of congress. Specifically, I use the amount of electoral support the member had in their district subtracted by the minimum winning coalition that they could have to determine how competitive the district is. I use this measure because to account for the impact that a member's perceived electoral security may have on their voting behavior. I argue that more secure MCs will deviate more frequently because they won't be as worried about sanction from constituents and ranking members.

Along similar lines, I use seniority, or the number of prior terms served to account for another source of electoral security, incumbency. This measure is used to evaluate Hypothesis 4, which argues that more senior members will show more change between contexts because they are not as electorally vulnerable as less established members. Prior theoretical works show that incumbents have an advantage against competitors because they have prior name recognition, party backing, and experience in the legislature. The longer an incumbent has to further their advantage, the more electorally secure they will be and thus, more senior members are likely

more insulated from sanction than freshmen. To reflect this variable, I have included a measure for prior consecutive terms served in the House which taken from the Office of the Clerk of the US House (2021-2022).

Continually, I provide one other individual level variable taken by the House Office of the Clerk (2021-2022): prior military service. I use prior military service to control for legislators who have previously served in the military as they may have slight changes in the strength of their preferences, specifically on veteran's affairs and armed forces policy. This variable is set up as a binary, where members with a military background coded as a "1" and all other members are coded as a "0".

On top of the other characteristics measured above, I also use additional measures for aggregate features of the constituencies that members are from. As prior literature suggests members are high demanders in committee because they have an explicit electoral interest in that policy area. For example, members in a district that is heavily reliant on the agriculture industry are going to be more demanding of policy in the Agriculture committee because their constituents have higher needs in that area. To reflect this notion, I used information collected by the US Census (2020) about the constituents to measure how much of a need the district will have in a policy area covered by my sample committees. In my regression, I account for policy specific constraints like the usage of public transportation and the number of people in the transportation and agriculture industries. I argue that areas with more people will have more of a need for policy in these areas and members will meet this demand in committees like Agriculture. The total number of service members in the district is also accounted for to account for an increased need in the district for support from veteran's affairs. All of these measures were collected by the NHGIS IPUMS from the US Decennial Census (2020) and are scaled by capita.

With these variables, the following model will shed light on how individual and aggregate factors can change how MCs act in committee.

Methods

Using the ideal points produced using Poole's (2005) party switcher model, I compute the distances between each legislator's floor and committee behavior to determine if there are any consistent sources of "meaningful" change from committee to the floor. The distance between the two is used as my dependent variable in several multiple linear regressions below. The regressions I used were Ordinary Least Squares models to account for my continuous level dependent variable. Formally the broader model is expressed by the following:

$$y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Democrat} + \beta_2 \text{marginality} + \beta_3 \text{seniority} + \beta_4 \text{former military service} \\ + \beta_5 \text{committee type} + \beta_6 \text{transportation industry} + \beta_7 \text{agriculture industry} \\ + \beta_8 \text{active service members} + \beta_9 \text{public transportation} + \varepsilon$$

By the above estimation, we will be able to look directly at how legislators act in committee as opposed to the floor with regard to expressed preferences. Through this, we can make inferences about what other factors may mitigate changes in voting behavior between committees and the floor, including committee types.

Results

Using the data collected from the above sources, I ran an OLS model with the change between the members floor point and their committee points as the dependent variable. From this model, I estimated coefficients to look at the impact that these variables have on changes in behavior between different contexts. The results of this estimation are presented in Table 5 along with their standard errors and significance stars:

{Table 3.5: Coefficient Results for OLS Model}

To start, these results show that there is no significant change in member voting behavior when the committee is focused on constituent service goals. Specifically, when a committee is

service oriented, then there is about a 0.017 unit change in the members ideal points in the model with all committees accounted for. This change is insignificant and fails to reject the null for Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 1 states that legislators will have greater change when they are in service oriented committees because they aren't as procedurally important to party leaders. I theorized that procedurally vital committees to party leaders are subject to more oversight because of their effect over the legislative process and the amount of change that can happen to a policy. This constant surveillance will keep member behavior consistent in both contexts observed because they are under the same amount of pressure from elites. On the other hand, service committees aren't as salient to party leaders and are not under the same pressure to vote along party lines. This is unsubstantiated by my results, however, which suggest that the type of committee does not affect members behave in committee.

Several additional variables were used in this analysis to account for individual changes for the specific members of congress. The first of these measures is the party of the member in congress. The party-dominated perspective argues that party leaders have the primary control when making policy in committee because party leaders control appointments and agenda setting on the floor. In Hypothesis 2, I test this idea by accounting for members who were a part of the majority party to see if there was change in behavior when members are in the dominant party. I argue that when members are in the majority party that they will be more likely to have meaningful change between contexts because they have more power in the legislative process and can push party policy through extreme voting. In Figure 7, this is evident by the sharp division of points for the Agriculture committee on the y-axis. In this figure, members are clearly divided more strictly in committee than on the floor where there is much more overlap between members in different parties on the first dimension. We can see this illustrated further in Figure

8, where the estimated ideal points for the Appropriations show a similar division along party lines. Here that members were consistently more polarized in committee than they were when voting on the floor outstanding any major changes in the committees themselves. Finally, the coefficients for party across all models in Table 2 are all positive and significant, indicating a “meaningful” change in behavior caused by party identification. Specifically, this shows that when a member is in the majority party then there will be a smaller change in the distance between the members point on the floor and in committee. Because of this, I reject the null for Hypothesis 2, which says that members will not produce any significant changes due to their partisan identification.

Next, I looked at the effect of marginality of a district on the distance between the two contexts. Competitiveness of the members district is measured by the percent of votes earned by the winning candidate minus the minimum winning coalition. Across several of the models presented, the marginality of district has a very slight positive effect on the amount of change that happens between the committee and the floor. This change is significant in four of the seven models presented though it is not consistently significant in all of them. With mixed results, I can reject the null for Hypothesis 3 with some trepidation. Hypothesis 3 states that members from more marginal districts will be less likely to change their behavior because they are more vulnerable to losing the next election. As Mayhew famously says, congresspeople are “single minded seekers of reelection” whose actions are all proximate to the end goal of keeping their position for another term. When members are electorally vulnerable, they will be more likely to pursue goals that are consistent with those that could sanction them through the election like party leaders and constituents. The results in Table 2 support the theory that electorally vulnerable members will be more consistent in their voting behavior to avoid sanction at times

though their inconsistency leaves room for pause. This can also be further evaluated in Figure 9, where there is a visually spurious relationship between electoral vulnerability and change in ideal points. Similarly, the number of prior terms served by the members also does not have significant effect on the amount of change between the two contexts. For every additional term served in congress, there is a small positive change between a legislator's ideal points. This a very small effect and suggests that more senior members of the House are more consistent in their voting behavior in both contexts than freshman members. By looking at Figure 4, it is clear that there is not a consistent relationship between the number of terms served by a House member and their consistency when voting. Given these results, I am unable to reject the null for Hypothesis 4.

{Figure 3.7: The Relationship Between Marginality of a District and Voting Consistency}

{Figure 3.8: The Relationship Between Prior Legislative Experience and Voting Consistency}

Additionally, I accounted for whether or not a legislator is a former military member in all of the above models. In all of them, former military status also did not have a significant result on voting behavior in the two environments. I include this measure specifically to account for members who would be more personally affected by policy having to do with the armed services. I argue that former military members in Congress would be more sympathetic to policy affecting veteran's affairs and armed services because of their prior experience. Continually, members who are former service members will also already have expertise in military operations prior to their appointment in the legislator furthering their specialized skillset in committee. I argue that these members will especially be high demanders of policy handled of the Veterans Affairs committee. As mentioned, this was not a significant result in any model that I looked at including the Veterans Affairs committee model.

The above regressions also account for district level characteristics in addition to the characteristics of the individual legislator. First, there are several measures to look at the kinds of industry that members of the constituency participate in. I use these to evaluate the impact that constituent needs may have on member behavior in committees where that need can be addressed. In this case, each of the service committees identified includes at least one indicator of the amount of policy need the individual members constituency has in the area. For the committee on Transportation, usage of public transportation and members of the transportation industry were the indicators that were chosen to look at the influence of constituent need on member behavior. The amount of people involved in the transportation industry in the larger model had a negative effect (-2.283) on changes in voting in committee, but this effect did not indicate a significant change. In the committee specific model, the effect remained insignificant but was much larger than in the fuller model (-12.10). In contrast, the number of constituents using public transportation had mixed effects on changes in behavior between the floor committee. This effect was also not significant and produced no meaningful changes in either model.

To the same end, the number of people involved in the agriculture sector of a legislator's district was used to account for constituent needs in that field. For this, high amounts of people in the industry should indicate more meaningful change between context to be consistent with prior theories about distributive influence. Consistent with the previous discussion, the effect of this measure was insignificant and a very small in both the larger model and the committee specific one. Both models had slightly negative effects on the distance between a member's points but this effect was small and inconsistent. Finally, the number of active service members in a district was used to look at districts with higher needs in veterans' affairs policy. Once again,

this effect was insignificant and positive in both models showing that members with a higher need did have a greater distance between their points. These results taken together suggest that changes in legislators' behavior do not necessarily depend on the needs of their constituents and instead could be driven by institutional factors like pressure from party leaders. In this way, members put more pressure on maintaining the support of their party to ensure that they continue to avoid sanction in the next election cycle. This idea is reinforced by the result of party identification which did prove to have a significant effect on members behavior. Further, the marginality of a members district also had a significant and positive impact on "meaningful change" in member behavior suggesting that members are responsive when in proximity to sanction. In the next section, I will discuss the implications of these results for the theory presented in this article and future research on the subject of preferences and voting in committee.

Discussion

The results presented above have several important implications for how we conceptualize the role of committees in the legislative process. Prior literature has suggested several factors that influence committees when making policy during markup. The distributive perspective argues that members are high demanders of policy in the committees they join because their constituents have a higher need for policy in that area. In an effort to procure favor in the coming election, members become preference outliers in committee who are unconstrained in their effort to produce policy. In contrast, the chamber driven perspective argues that members are constrained by the floor because the chamber has ultimate say over whether or not the bill continues in the legislative process. Continually, committees here are mostly informational because they have specific policy expertise that helps the floor be more efficient. Finally, the

party dominated model says that committees are actually constrained by party over anything else. This model states that party leaders have huge control committee through appointments and agenda setting which allows them to structure preferences in committee. The above analysis is intended to help shed some light on these different theories by estimating ideal points for committees and the floor to compare behavior in both environments.

To evaluate the distributive perspective, measures for constituent needs were included to assess the idea of members becoming high demanders because of increased policy needs for constituents. Higher levels of these variables indicate a higher need for policy in that representative's district. Despite multiple indicators of constituent need, the direction of change between is mixed and does not offer any consistent explanation for change in legislator behavior. These measures were also broadly insignificant showing that changes in behavior between contexts were not motivated by constituent needs. In contrast, the party driven model was assessed in this model through the use of majority party membership to indicate whether or not party identification will constrain a member's behavior in committee. In every model, membership in the majority party had a significant, positive impact on meaningful change in member behavior. This shows that members in the majority party had greater shifts in voting behavior between the two environments than members who were in the minority party. Substantively speaking, members of the majority party have a greater expectation to produce policy for their voters because they have primary control over the chamber. Due to this and the strength of party leadership, I argue that parties strongly structure committee preferences because leaders can push members to pursue party priorities more directly in committee than on the floor. Subsequently, this implies that Krehbiel's (1990) informational model may not be descriptive of

present committee behavior because of the explicit rejection of partisanship as a factor in member behavior.

With some exceptions, almost every vote taken in these committees was strictly party line which means that member behavior, when quantified, was as extreme as W-NOMINATE will allow. From this examination, it seems that partisanship is the main driver when it comes to the behavior of members in specialized legislative environments. This is important because it shows that committees are polarized and substantiates prior theories that argue that committee members are preference outliers who do will act more extremely in committee. Continually effect was not mediated at all by the type of committee work being done. Members were just as hyper partisan whether they in a high-profile committee like Rules and Appropriations or in a more service-oriented committee like Agriculture. Therefore, despite the wealth of theory and literature supporting the chamber dominated and distributive models of committee behavior, I find that the party dominated perspective provides a much better explanation for the patterns of behavior we see in standings committees at present.

Another important implication of this model that electorally vulnerable members did show significant and meaningful change between contexts. Previous research shows that members who are electorally vulnerable are going to pass policy that benefits the goals of the constituents and party leaders to avoid sanction. I hypothesized that seniority and marginality of the district may impact the perception that legislator has on how vulnerable they are to sanction. My results substantiate this theory when looking at the impact that marginality of a member's district has on change between contexts. In almost all models, the result for this measure was significant implying that members do constrain their voting behavior when they are closer to sanction. Unfortunately, I find mixed results for this theory when looking at the seniority which

had no significant effect on the amount of change in patterns of voting. This was included to account for the electoral advantage that member receive the longer that they are in office which could influence members to act more extremely. Overall, electoral mechanisms do seem to impact member behavior in committee, but that effect is not clear or consistent in the above models.

Finally, I want to add a word of caution about this particular technique when using it for multiple groups of votes. The party-switcher model is best utilized when each group or context has a substantial number of votes and members to analyze against each other during the estimation. Unfortunately, not all data was made equally and due to the nature of committees, there are a more limited number of votes and members to account for. Continually, almost all of the committee votes were party line which eliminates a lot of potential variation that Poole and Rosenthal's protocol is expecting when you run W-NOMINATE. In less technical terms, this data is just not in the ideal format because committees naturally present challenges to the estimation of ideal points even when all votes are accounted for. That said, our estimation of these points is still very illustrative of the broader theory taking place in the above analysis. One concern in the data is the lack of variation caused by the extreme partisan polarization in committee. While this does stress W-NOMINATE in multiple dimensions, it ultimately supports the larger perspective that committees are largely party dominated entities.

Conclusion

This paper uses Poole's (2005) party switcher model to evaluate several prior theories about the role of committees in the legislative process. Using recorded votes for six committees in the 117th House, I find that the primary indicator of member voting behavior in committee was partisan identification. This supports prior perspectives that argue party leaders constrain

members in committee through their power over committee appointments and the upcoming legislative agenda. My results are consistent with this prior research and expand on them by introducing the use of this procedure for committees. While this study focuses on the 117th Congress, it would be interesting and fruitful to look at how voting behavior in committee has changed over time. In earlier theories this was not the case, however, and further research should be done to see if the same polarized trends exist in earlier periods where parties were not as strong. Continually, future research can continue to extend into other standing committees to see if there are consistent trends in the voting behavior of members within different committee types. With the use of the procedure to estimate ideal points used in this paper, this literature could also be extended to look at different contexts for voting and the impact of changes in institutional structures. Overall, this paper finds that prior theories of polarized committees are correct in the belief that members will be high demanders and will be more partisan when voting in committee. My findings substantiate prior theories that committees are more ideologically extreme and that parties will heavily structure preferences in committee.

Table 3.1: An Example of the Party Switcher Model in Action (Step 1)

Name	C1	C2	F1	F2	F3
Millicent	1	0	1	1	1
Gertrude	1	1	0	0	1
Andy	0	0	0	1	0
Chris	6	6	1	0	1

Table 3.2: An Example of the Party Switcher Model in Action (Step 2)

MC	C1	C2	F1	F2	F3
Millicent (Committee)	1	0			
Millicent (Floor)			1	1	1
Gertrude	1	1	0	0	1
Andy	0	0	0	1	0
Chris	6	6	1	0	1

Table 3.3: An Example of the Party Switcher Model in Action (Step 3)

Name	C1	C2	F1	F2	F3
Millicent	1	0	1	1	1
Gertrude (Committee)	1	1			
Gertrude (Floor)			0	0	1
Andy	0	0	0	1	0
Chris	6	6	1	0	1

Table 3.4: Variables Used in the Analysis

<i>Variable Name</i>	<i>Data Source</i>	<i>Measure Used</i>
<i>Dependent Variable:</i>		
Absolute Change Between Floor and Committee NOMINATE scores	Estimated from Roll Calls Provided by VoteView and Congress.gov	Abs(Floor Ideal Point – Committee Ideal Point Per Legislator)
<i>Member Characteristics:</i>		
Democrat	CQ Voting and Elections Collection (2020)	Binary Variable, where 1 = Democrat and 0 = Republican
Marginality of District	CQ Voting and Elections Collection (2020)	Percentage of Incumbent Vote Share – 50% (Minimum Winning Threshold)
Seniority	US House of Representatives Office of the Clerk (2020)	Number of Prior Terms Served by Member
Former Service Member	US House of Representatives Office of the Clerk (2020)	Binary Variable, where 1 = Former Military Membership
Committee Assignment		Several Binaries for Each Committee
<i>Constituent Characteristics:</i>		
Usage of Public Transportation	Decennial Census (accessed via NHGIS IPUMS) (2020)	# of People Using Public Transportation Per Capita in a Congressional District
Employment in Transportation Industry	Decennial Census (accessed via NHGIS IPUMS) (2020)	# of People in the Transportation Industry Per Capita in a Congressional District
Service Members	Decennial Census (accessed via NHGIS IPUMS) (2020)	# of Service Members (Former and Present) Per Capita in a Congressional District
Employment in Agriculture Industry	Decennial Census (accessed via NHGIS IPUMS) (2020)	# of People in the Agriculture Industry Per Capita in a Congressional District

Table 3.5: Coefficient Results for OLS Model

Ordinary Least Squares:	Distance Between Committee and Floor Ideal Points						
Independent Variables	All Committee Model	Agriculture Only	Transp. Only	Vet. Affairs Only	Approp. Only	Rules Only	Judiciary Only
<i>Committee Characteristics:</i>							
Constituent Service	0.017 (0.042)						
<i>Legislator Characteristics:</i>							
Marginality of Home District	-0.008*** (0.002)	-0.006*** (0.003)	-0.013*** (0.005)	-0.001 (0.005)	-0.009*** (0.003)	-0.017 (0.01)	0.001 (0.005)
Number of Prior Terms	0.007 (0.005)	-0.006 (0.012)	0.023 (0.015)	0.004 (0.083)	0.004 (0.008)	-0.022 (0.01)	0.003 (0.012)
Democrat	0.666*** (0.042)	0.506*** (0.066)	0.521*** (0.113)	0.741*** (0.086)	0.820*** (0.073)	0.664*** (0.180)	0.749*** (0.120)
Prior Military Service	-0.016 (0.074)	0.037 (0.082)	-0.035 (0.146)	-0.023 (0.083)	-0.026 (0.099)		0.087 (0.152)
<i>District Characteristics:</i>							
Transportation Industry	-2.283 (3.523)		-12.10 (8.4317)				
Agriculture Industry	-2.027 (1.978)	-0.556 (2.127)					
Public Transportation Usage	-0.309 (0.517)		1.919 (1.157)				
Active Service Members	2.331 (2.860)			2.692 (2.929)			

*** $p < .0001$, ** $p < .001$, * $p < .01$

Figure 3.1: Histogram of Ideal Points of Agriculture Committee Members

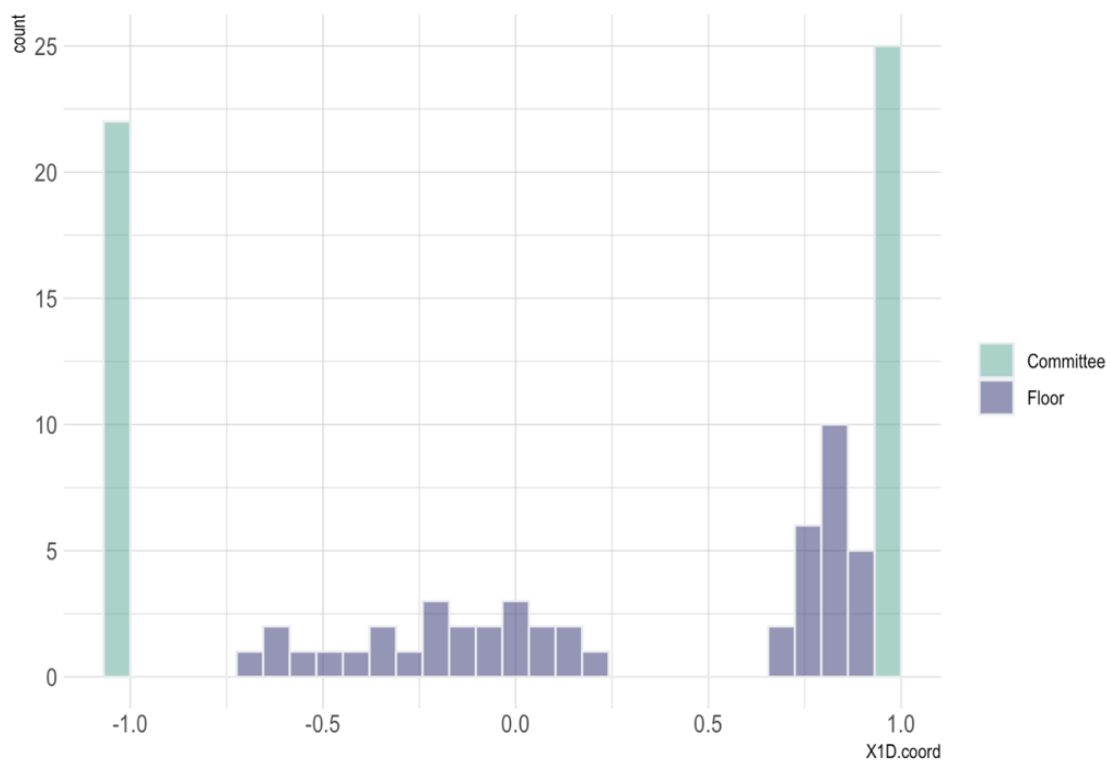


Figure 3.2: Histogram of Ideal Points of Transportation Committee Members

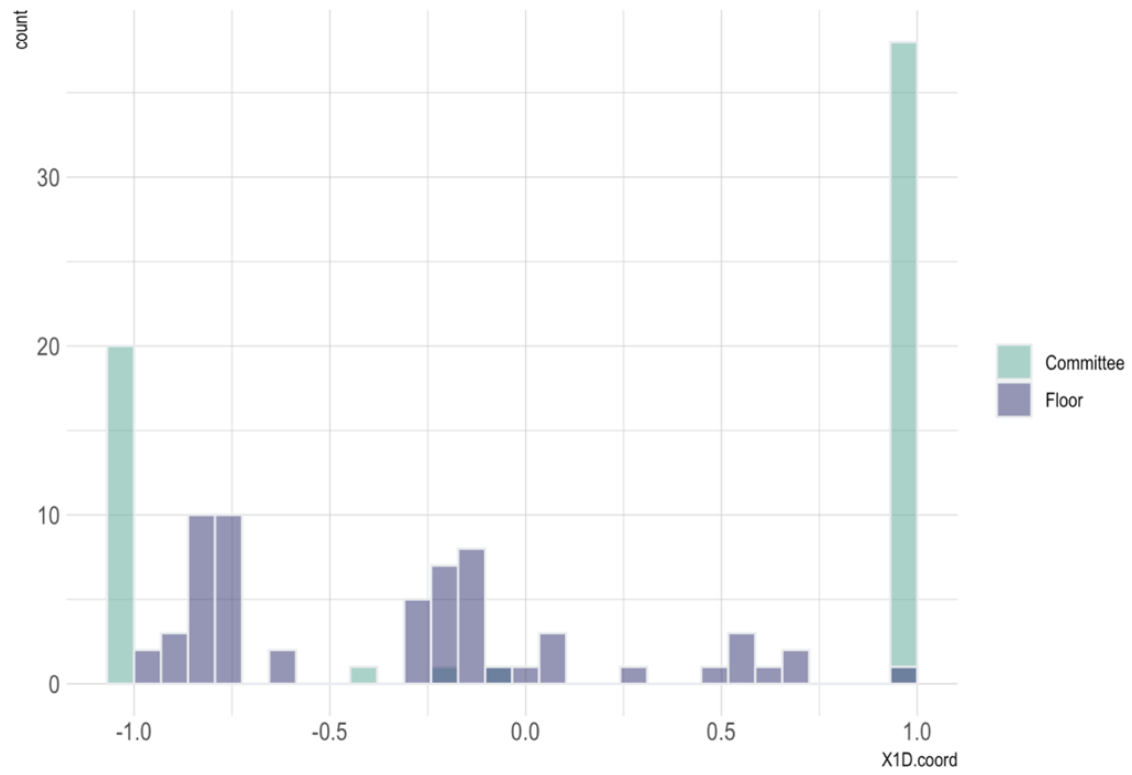


Figure 3.3: Histogram of Ideal Points of Veterans Affairs Committee Members

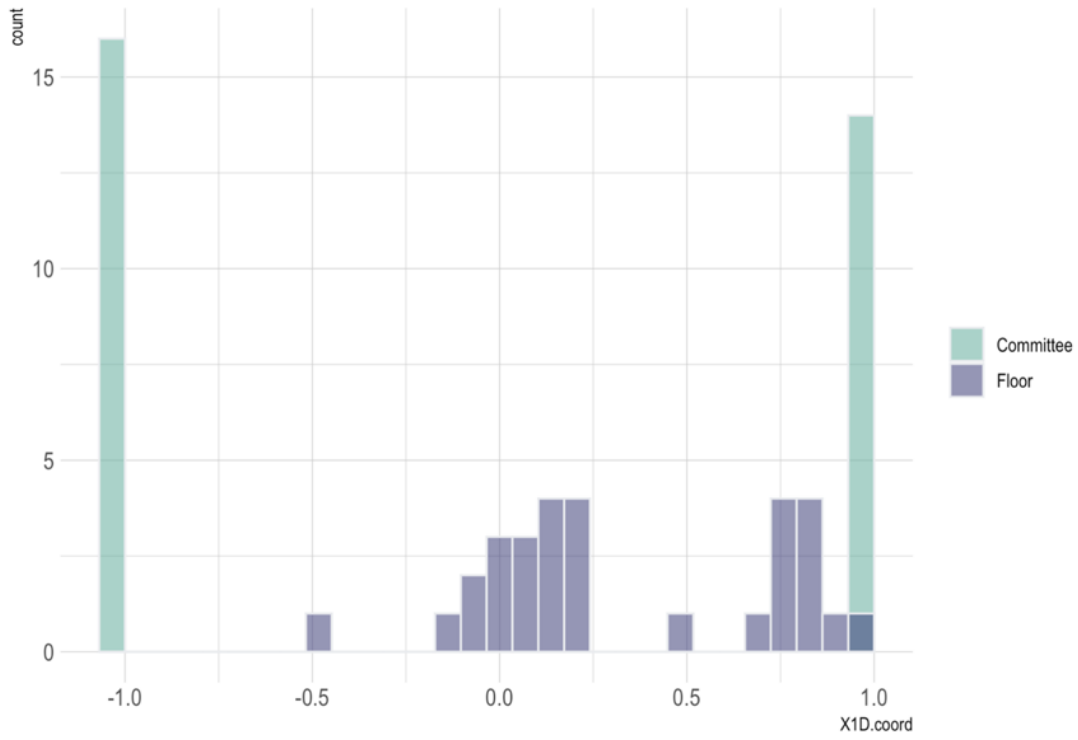


Figure 3.4: Histogram of Ideal Points of Appropriations Committee Members

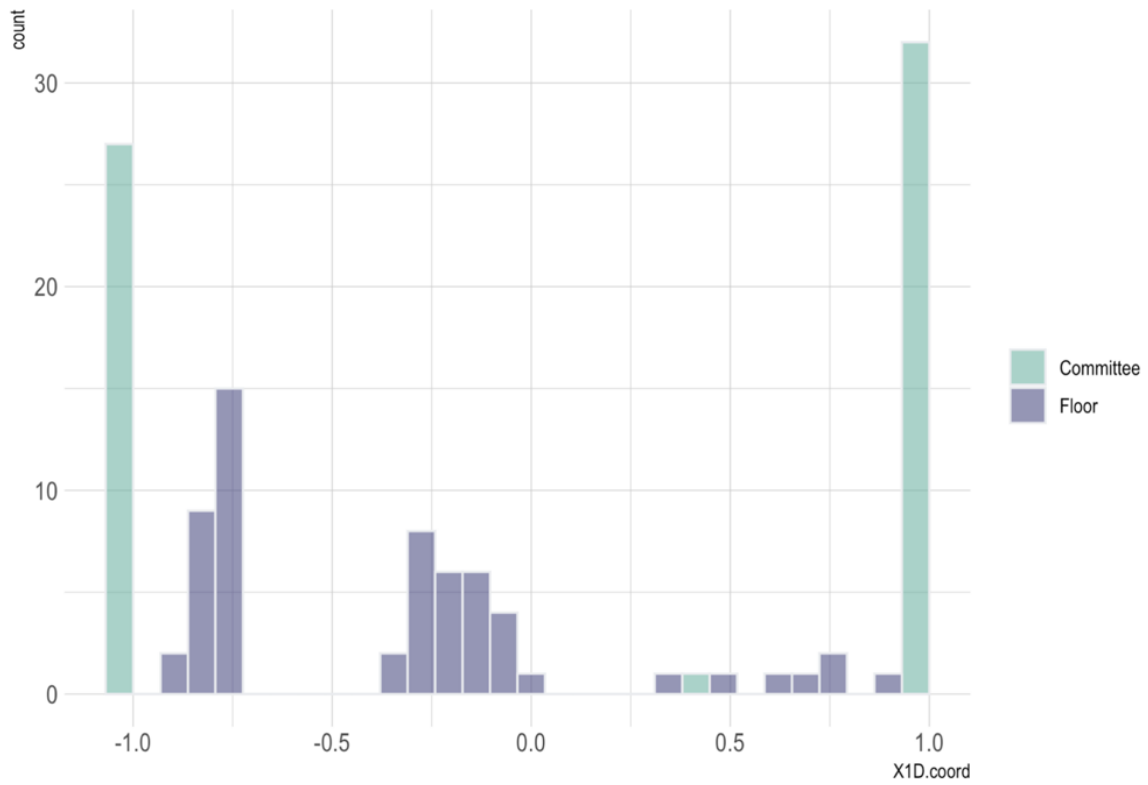


Figure 3.5: Histogram of Ideal Points of Rules Committee Members

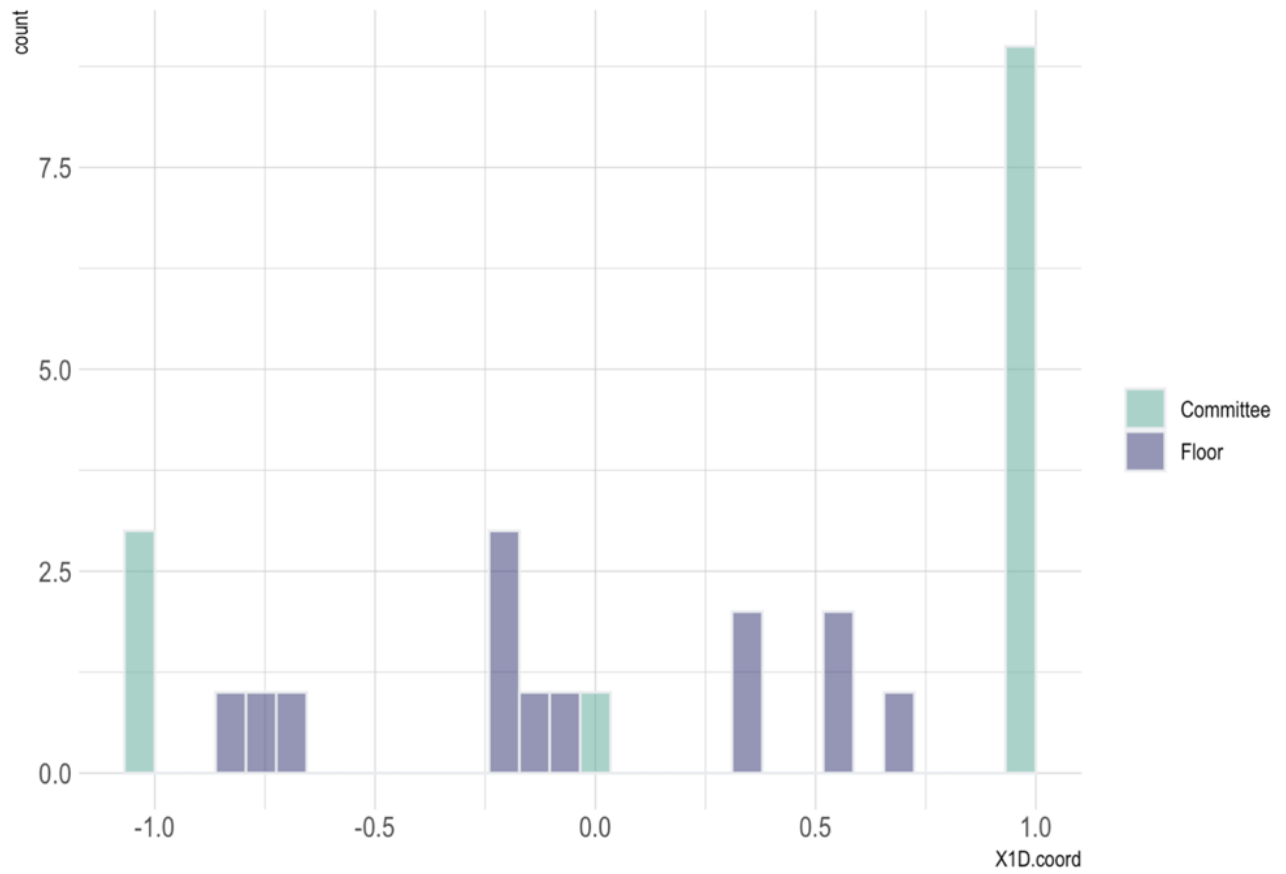


Figure 3.6: Histogram of Ideal Points of Judiciary Committee Members

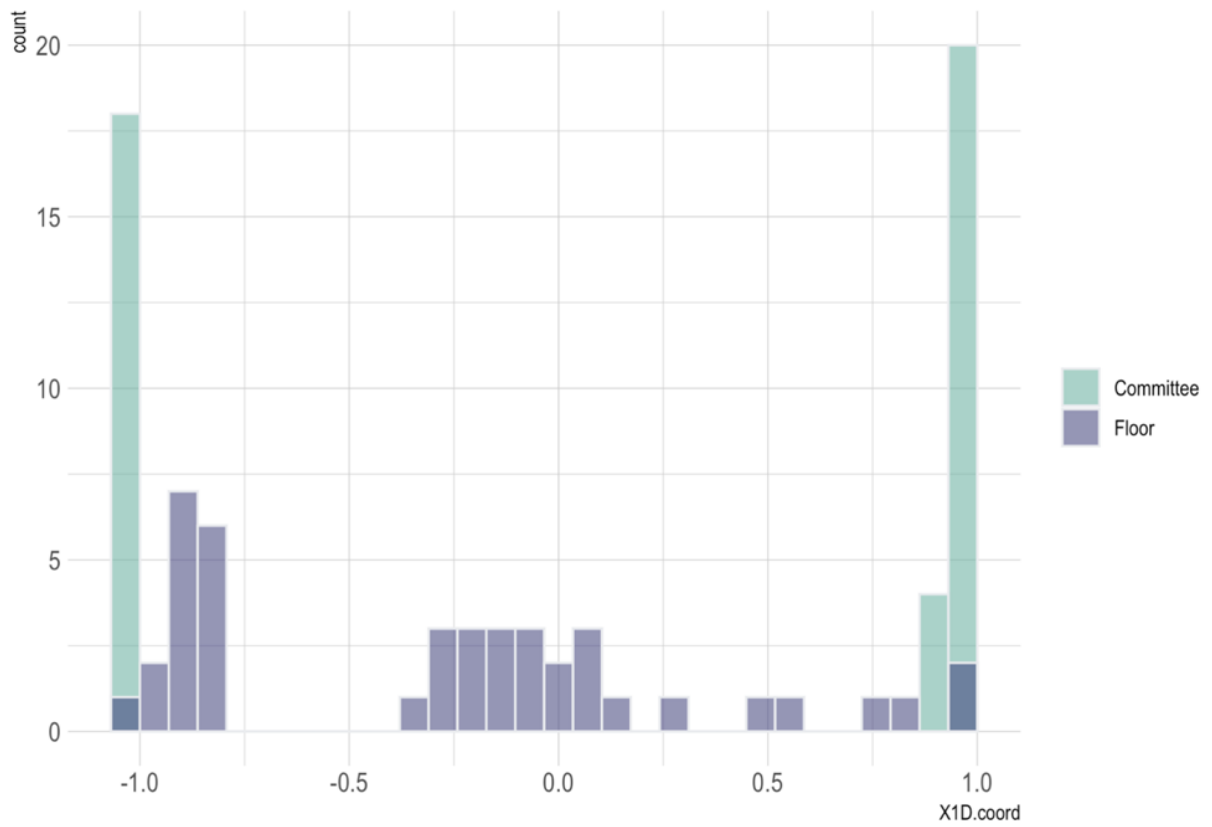


Figure 3.7: The Relationship Between Marginality of a District and Voting Consistency

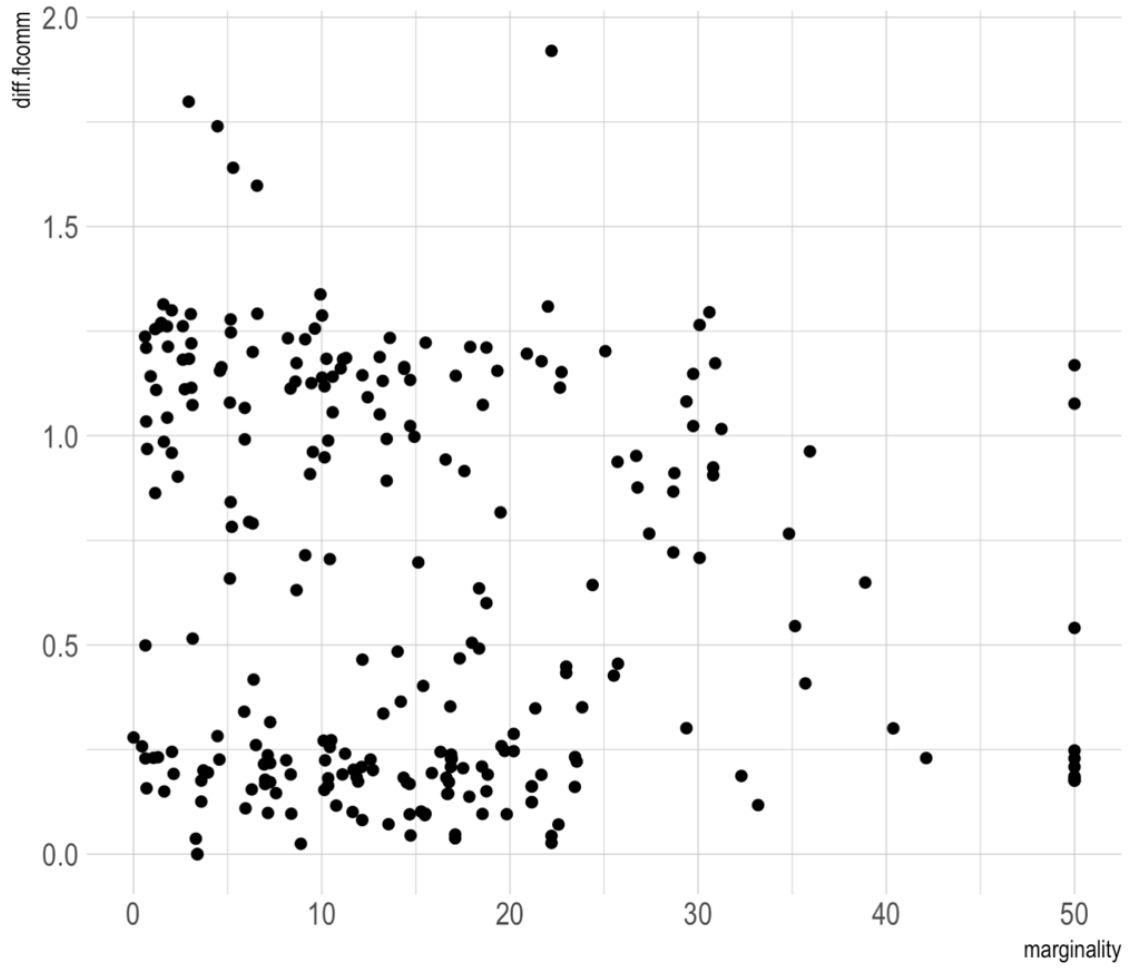
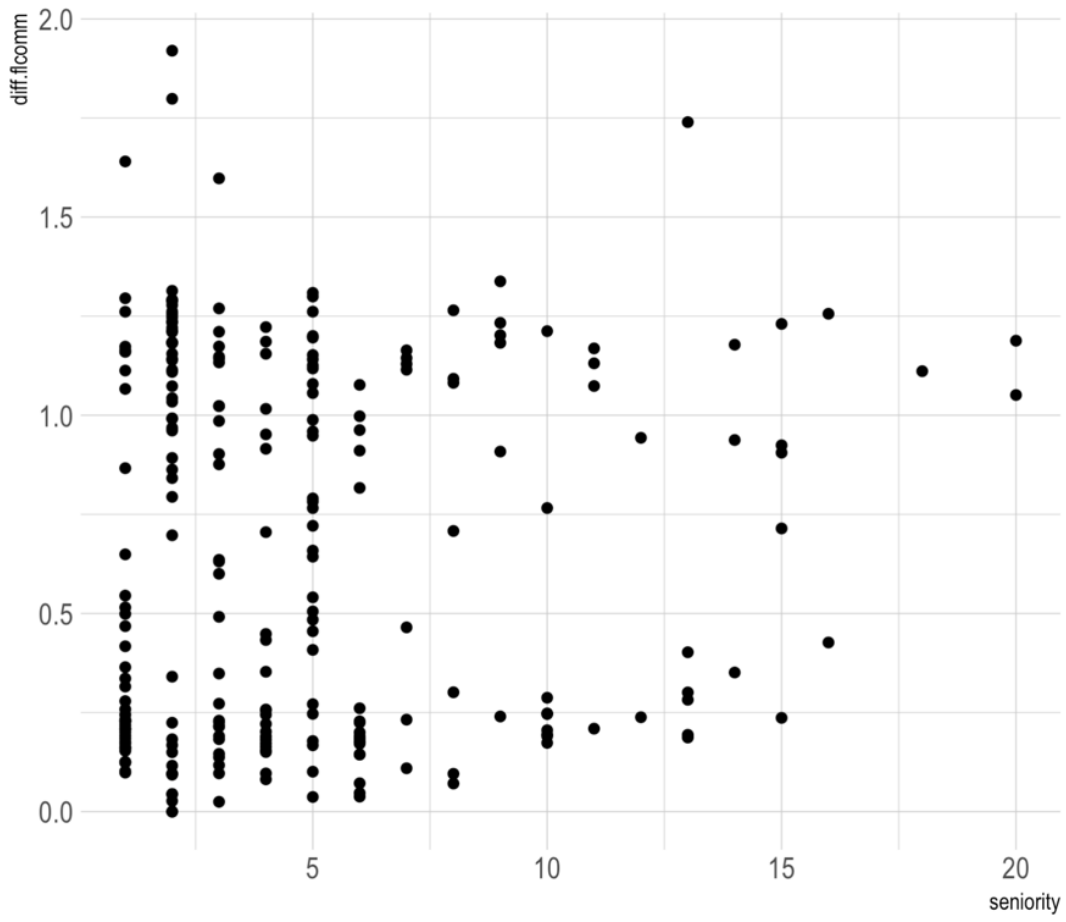


Figure 3.8: The Relationship Between Prior Legislative Experience and Voting Consistency



CHAPTER 4
A RESEARCH NOTE ON THE EFFECT OF JOURNAL VOTES ON THE
ESTIMATION OF W-NOMINATE³

³ Putman, Alexandria Marie. To be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal (Legislative Studies Quarterly).

Abstract

The Journal of the US House is the collection of notes taken on the prior day's debate and must be approved every day for printing. As such, every day the House conducts a vote to approve the Journal and if the vote fails the members of the House are then allowed to offer amendment to the minutes. This vote should in theory be uncontested unless there is an error in the report that must necessarily be modified. Despite this, more recent recorded votes show that members are frequently not voting to approve the previous days minutes seemingly without cause for amendment. I argue that the influx of contested Journal votes in the House is perhaps causing bias in our measures of House preferences that use roll call votes. This research note seeks to shed some light on the effect that recorded Journal votes have on our scores for W-NOMINATE. I do this by looking at three Congresses (103rd, 107th, and 111th) since the introduction of the vote since the 1990's and estimating points including all votes, just Journal votes, and all votes but the ones for the journal. By looking at these Congresses, I hope to show that there may be cause for concern when introducing specific votes into our measures of member behavior.

Introduction

The Journal of the US House is an official, public record of all important procedural actions taken on the floor of the House. This record does not include any of the debate that happens on the floor of the House, but instead, consists of information like the results of votes, committee reports, and information on legislation that is introduced on the floor. This practice is laid out in the Constitution, which requires the House to keep a Journal of relevant proceedings

that can be regularly accessed by the public. While the Constitution only requires the House to keep track of three aspects of legislative procedure, Jefferson's Manual outlines several other actions that need to be accounted for in addition to those necessary view the Constitution. Some of these actions include discharge petitions, points of order, and message from the House, Senate and President.

The Journal itself is approved every day by the Speaker of the House unless a vote is called which requires the House to perform a voice vote and if necessary, a recorded vote to approve the Journal. Generally, about three quarters of members on the floor will vote to approve the Journal when these votes do take place with those who disapprove not having any consistent partisan identification or explicit reason to vote against the Journal. If the vote fails then members are offered the chance to amend the Journal, which has only happened once in 1990. In this instance, Representative Robert Walker called for a vote which failed and then was able to offer amendment where he instead spent an hour discussing the importance of transparency in the legislature and the Government in Sunshine Act. Once he finished speaking about the Act in what is a symbolic action on his part, the vote to approve the Journal subsequently passed the House moved on to business for the day.

Prior scholarship argues that MCs call for votes on the Journal either to amend the text of the Journal, to delay further legislative action, or to manipulate the scores that researchers take based on legislator behavior. Patty (2010) argues that members use Journal readings and votes to delay the House from getting to later parts of the agenda until additional members get to the floor. He finds that votes on the Journal were more likely to take place when there was salient party policy on the agenda (Patty 2010). Continually, the Congressional Research Service reports that members might also conduct Journal votes in an effort to throw off the scores that

researchers use to measure their voting behavior. For example, scholars rely on party unity scores to look at how consistent members are with the rest of their cohort within the party. By disapproving on a Journal vote, members can look like they are more independent from their party because of the procedural and non-partisan nature of the vote.

In this research note, I seek to determine the effect of using Journal votes in the estimation of our measures of member behavior, like W-NOMINATE, to see if members do use Journal votes as a way to mess with our measures of voting behavior. To look at this, I use a sample of votes from the 103rd, 107th, and 111th Congresses to look at how the inclusion of Journal votes may skew our results when we estimate ideal points. Using Poole and Rosenthal's method for estimating W-NOMINATE and roll call votes for the three selected Congresses collected for VoteView, I have estimated one dimensional ideal points for each Congress using all recorded votes, just the Congresses Journal votes, and everything but the Journal votes. By doing this, I hope to further understand the bias that we may introduce when using these types of votes in our measures of member behavior.

What is the Journal and Why Do We Vote?

The Journal of the US House of Representatives is a public record of all of the procedural actions taken on the floor of the House, including information about actions taken on legislation, printed titles of bills, and the results of all votes taken on the floor. The Journal is not the same as the Congressional Record which records all of the debate that happens on the floor of the House though they are both public records and can contain some of the same information. The Journal also refers to two separate documents in the House: the Daily Journal and the Session Journal. The Daily Journal is a collection of each day's notes taken and voted on separately at the start of each legislative day in the House. Generally, the Speaker announces whether or not they

will approve the House Journal at the start of the day and members will only vote if a member calls for it, then the House will either take a voice vote or a recorded vote and if the vote fails, then members will have the chance to amend the Journal. At the end of the legislative calendar, members will then approve the Session Journal which is the collection of all of the Daily Journals of the previous session (CRS 2018).

The use of the House Journal is mandated in the Constitution (Article I, Sections 5 and 7) which says, “Each House shall keep a Journal of its Proceedings and from time to time publish the same, excepting such Parts as may in their Judgement require Secrecy.” Supreme Court Justice Story accurately says that “The object of the whole clause is to insure publicity to the proceedings of the legislature, and a correspondent responsibility of the members to their respective constituents.” By collecting this information, the House can maintain transparency with public about what they are doing which helps constituents stay informed and educated about public affairs. However, the Constitution only requires that the House Reports Presidential veto messages and the results of votes taken on the floor. All other aspects of the Journal that are included are at the discretion of the House which can decide what procedural actions are necessary to report in the Journal. To date, the House Manuel or Jefferson’s Manuel defines what actions the House must report in the Journal outside of what is required by the Constitution (CRS 2018). Actions that the House is required to report in the Journal include:

- The introduction of all bills and resolutions (with titles, bill numbers, sponsors, etc.)
- Committee and conference reports
- Messages from the House, Senate, and the President
- Discharge Petitions and Points of Order
- Unanimous Consent Agreements

- Recorded Votes
- Disciplinary censure of a member

As mentioned previously, the Speaker announces whether or not they intend to approve the Journal at the start of each day. Unless requested by a member, the chamber does not have to approve the Journal though a vote is often called. If a vote is called for by a member, then the chamber conducts a voice vote, which is almost always approved. Additionally, if a vote is taken then the members can also request for the Journal to be read by the Clerk. After taking the voice vote, members can then seek a recorded vote which has never failed (Oleszek et al. 2015). If either vote fails then the House can modify the Journal, though this has only happened one time in 1990 when a voice vote on the Journal failed prompting amendment by Representative Robert Walker. As mentioned by the CRS Report on the subject, Representative Walker used the time during debate to discuss government transparency and the Government in Sunshine Act, reportedly saying that members were “unwilling to work in sunshine itself” (CRS 2018). This was recognized as a symbolic action and after an hour of debate, the Journal was finally approved by voice vote.

Despite the procedural nature of approving the Journal, recorded votes on its validity happen frequently, with the 111th Congress having 13 Journal specific votes out a total of over 1,500 recorded votes. When the House does vote on the Journal, the CRS reports that about 75% of members usually vote to approve the Journal and this division does not reflect partisan divisions. This suggests that a vote on the Journal might be more symbolic because of its procedural nature and the infrequent rejection by the House at large (CRS 2018). The CRS outlines several reasons that members would call for a vote and/or vote against the approval of the House Journal:

- To amend the content of the Daily Journal
- To delay further legislative action
- To obtain a quorum call
- To assemble members before a major debate or vote
- To demonstrate independence from party leadership

In theory, members are meant to call votes because they want to amend the content of the Journal. Despite this implication, amendments to the Journal are usually made by unanimous consent and don't tend to need the use of a recorded vote (CRS 2018). Representative Harry Reid admits in 1985 that instead members "all recognize that the Journal or more specifically approval of the Journal can be used as a procedural tool; that is, Members that want to express disfavor with the preceding day's business can call for a vote, thus officially expressing their displeasure." Under this view, the vote is more symbolic and serves as an act of credit claiming or ideological positioning for the member (CRS 2018). Continually, calling for a reading of the Journal or for a vote can be considered a dilatory action that members can use to ascertain whether or not there is a quorum to conduct business or to give additional members time to assemble in the chamber. John Patty (2010) writes on this theory by arguing that members use Journal votes as a way to assemble members before high priority votes. He theorizes that party leaders push members to call for Journal votes on days when they know that major party legislation is going to be passed. Patty (2010) finds that Journal votes were more likely to be taken on days when high priority legislation was scheduled to come to floor. Further, he finds that those later votes tended to be closer and more partisan than on days where Journal votes did not occur.

The CRS suggests that members may also call for Journal votes when they want to show some sort of independence from the larger party leadership. By voting against the approval of the Journal, members can show independence without ultimately harming the party's policy goals by doing so during important votes (CRS 2018). It's suggested that members do this because they are aware that researchers and media outlets pay attention to elite voting behavior through measures like party unity scores and DW-NOMINATE scores. This paper seeks to look further at this type of legislative action to see if members are truly using votes on the Journal to influence their scores. To do this, I use Poole and Rosenthal's method for estimating W-NOMINATE to look at the development of Journal votes and their ability to conflate member scores of ideology.

Measuring Member Behavior

Unlike some other areas of political science research, the study of elite behavior relies closely on formal and spatial theory because elites are considered self-interested and will pursue their preferences for policy by working strategically to build coalitions (Riker 1980). This research has its roots in development of rational choice theory, which originated in Hotelling's (1929) work on rationality and later Downs' work on the rationality of voting in elections (Downs 1957; Hotelling 1929; Riker 1980). By using roll call votes, scholars have been able to develop multiple measures of member behavior, such as Poole and Rosenthal's (1991) NOMINATE scores and the Rice Index of Party Voting (Rice 1925). Party Unity Scores use roll call votes measure how often members vote with the party majority (ex. MC voted with the majority party 61% of the time) and likewise, leadership scores (Cox and McCubbins 1991) measure how consistently members vote with party leadership. Another example of a measure using roll call votes is Poole and Rosenthal's (1991) DW-NOMINATE which uses the roll call record to

estimate points representing the revealed voting preferences of all elected representatives from the 1st Congress to the present. More recently, scholars like Adam Bonica (2014) have created ideal points for members of Congress and their competition in elections through the use of campaign finance information on the donations that members receive prior to an election.

Some do argue, however, that the use of roll call votes may not produce measures that are generalizable to all legislative behavior. Roll call votes generate what are called, revealed preferences. The idea of a revealed preference means that when members vote in a public setting that they are likely only showing the preferences they want the public to see. In this way, members can hide their true preferences and our measures can become biased because they don't represent the reality of what is happening on the floor. On top of this, the points can also become inflated by non-policy votes and are dependent on each other, not the policy space assigned to the vote (Hall and Grofman 1990; Roberts 2007). For example, Jason Roberts (2007) argued that while the roll call record is a wealth of knowledge, roll call voting on the floor has drastically changed over time and procedural changes can really impact the outcome of the scores themselves. These measures are especially obscured by parties which are responsible for a large amount of change in the legislative procedure through the twentieth century (Roberts 2007). This note adds to Roberts' initial article by further identifying one procedural aspect of the roll call record: Journal votes. Journal votes are generally meant to be pretty easy to pass because there really is no reason to contest its publication. Despite, members frequently call for votes and vote against the approval of the Journal without explicit cause. I argue that members use these votes to make themselves look more independent from party leadership and to skew measures of member behavior derived from them.

Data and Method

To look further at the effect that the inclusion of Journal votes has on our estimation of W-NOMINATE. To do this I use a sample of all roll call votes from the 103rd, 107th, and 111th Congresses to evaluate the impact that these votes has had on our estimation since the 1990s. I choose this sample of Congresses to try to best capture the changes that occur from Presidency to Presidency with each Congress chosen from the beginning of each of three President 's terms. To be specific, I have a sample from Presidents Bill Clinton, George Bush Jr., and Barack Obama who I think can represent the changes that have occurred in legislative behavior over that time. I collected the roll calls for this estimation from Legacy Vote View which reports all roll call votes used to estimate W-NOMINATE. With the help of the PIPC database from Crespin and Rohde, I was able to identify the votes specifically to verify the journal, so that I could subset them in and out of my estimation of W-NOMINATE. Using these two sources, I subset the roll call data into a set of all votes, one with just the votes over the Journal and one with all votes except those for the journal.

When looking at the votes specifically, it should be noted that in the 103rd Congress about 77 of the 1,123 roll call votes that were take were Journal specific and this number declined in every Congress since then. In the 103rd Congress, Journal votes took up about 6.85 percent of all votes taken. In the 107th Congress, this proportion stayed consistent with 66 of 996 rollcall votes taken that Congress being on the Journal amounting to 6.62 percent of the total votes taken. Finally, in the 111th Congress, only 13 of the 1,655 votes taken were on the Journal taking the proportion of roll call votes on the Journal down to 0.78 percent of the votes. Overall, this trend shows that these votes are largely going out of fashion in the House and that they ultimately take up a small amount of the total votes taken in Congress.

With this data, I have run several sets of ideal points using different subsets of the larger vote pool to see if the inclusion of Journal votes in our measures makes a substantive change in the measure itself. To do this, I use Poole and Rosenthal's (1991) protocol for estimating one dimensional W-NOMINATE scores using their package in R. I estimate three sets of scores for each congress: all votes in a congress, just the Journal votes, and everything except the Journal Votes. I then compare them to see if the absence of the Journal votes makes a significant impact on the score of the member. By doing this, we can further look at the role of the House Journal as a way to bias measures of elite behavior in the US House.

Discussion

After estimating ideal points for three congresses, I plotted them below to show how the introduction of roll call votes that are procedurally unimportant can bias our measures of legislator behavior. In Figure 1, the ideal points estimated for all of the votes from the 103rd Congress are plotted against the ideal points that we would get if we just ran the Journal votes that took place in the same Congress. If the members behavior is consistent between the two estimations, then members points on the graph should fall along a straight, 45 degree line across the graph. As shown, members in Figure 4.1 do not fall along a straight line suggesting that members may be voting differently specifically during Journal Votes then they do on average. To verify this, Figure 4.2 plots the ideal points estimated from all votes taken in the 103rd Congress against ideal points estimated from all votes except those taken on the Journal. In contrast, Figure 4.2 shows a very straight line across the middle of the graph indicating that members ideal points were unaffected by the changes present in the Journal votes. This result suggests that while Journal votes do seem inconsistent with general voting behavior, that inconsistency does not seem to bias overall score of the member.

{Figure 4.1: Comparison of Ideal Points Estimated Using All Votes and Ideal Points Estimated Using Just Journal Votes (103rd Congress)}

{Figure 4.2: Comparison of Ideal Points Estimated Using All Votes and Ideal Points Estimated Without Journal Votes (103rd Congress)}

We can verify this by moving ahead in time to the 107th Congress to see if this pattern remains consistent as the use of Journal Votes becomes more prominent. Figure 3 shows the relationship ideal points estimated for all votes taken in the 107th Congress and ideal points estimated with just the Journal votes taken in the same Congress. From this graph, it is clear that members are exhibiting different behavioral patterns when specifically voting for the Journal then when they are voting more generally on the floor. Once again, I have plotted the ideal points estimated with all of the roll call votes from the 107th against those estimated from all votes except the ones taken on the Journal. Like in the 103rd Congress, these points fall in a perfectly straight line, showing once again that despite any variability in behavior during the Journal vote that ideal points are robust enough to remain consistent. This could imply that members are trying to bias their scores but any attempt at bias does not tend to substantively affect the validity of our measures.

{Figure 4.3: Comparison of Ideal Points Estimated Using All Votes and Ideal Points Estimated Using Just Journal Votes (107th Congress)}

{Figure 4.4: Comparison of Ideal Points Estimated Using All Votes and Ideal Points Estimated Without Journal Votes (107th Congress)}

Finally, Figure 4.5 shows the points estimated for the 111th Congress, with points derived from all votes taken on the x-axis and points estimated from just the Journal votes on the y-axis. Like the previous Congresses, Journal votes do seem to indicate some change in behavior when

members are voting on the Journal and not more substantive business. This contrasted by Figure 6, which mirrors the previous result that exclusion of Journal votes from our measures of behavior does not impact the resulting ideal points. This shows that even over a decade later, Journal votes do not seem to bias the results of our estimations for measures like W-NOMINATE. In this era, the use of the Journal vote seems especially ineffective at biasing our results for these measures because there simply aren't enough votes to substantively make an impact. In this Congress, 13 votes were on the approval of the Journal in comparison to the over 1,500 that were taken total in that same Congress. With an amount of data so small, the effect that these votes would have is minimal when put with the much larger set of votes.

{Figure 4.5: Comparison of Ideal Points Estimated Using All Votes and Ideal Points Estimated Using Just Journal Votes (111th Congress)}

{Figure 4.6: Comparison of Ideal Points Estimated Using All Votes and Ideal Points Estimated Without Journal Votes (111th Congress)}

Overall, the above Figures show that member may, in fact, vote differently when a Journal vote is being taken in order to bias their score when scholars measure their behavior. Despite any attempt that may occur to do this, in actuality these votes are not sufficient enough to really change the result of W-NOMINATE, which is robust enough to handle a couple of members going rogue during a regular procedural vote. Especially in later Congresses, members call for less and less recorded votes on the Journal going from over 100 recorded votes during the 103rd Congress to 13 in the 111th Congress. This is a drastic decline in the use of these votes and with less recorded votes to analyze, any predicted impact of their inclusion in our measures disappears because there just aren't enough votes to severely impact the validity of our measures. The implications of this result are twofold. First, members could very well be trying to make

themselves seem like they are more independent from party leadership than they are during substantive debate. MCs are certainly aware that we are paying attention to them, and their roll call behavior and it isn't out of the question that members are attempting to bias their scores. Second, even if members are actively trying to effect our perceptions of their roll call behavior, this attempt is ineffective and instead, our measures are robust when faced with intentional manipulation from MCs. This contributes to our understanding of roll call behavior by contributing to a broader literature substantiating the validity and reliability of our measures of voting behavior.

Conclusion

The Journal of the US House of Representatives is a public record of all actions taken by members of congress, including the results of votes, information on bills introduced on the floor and statements from the President. The Journal is reviewed and approved at the start of every day by the Speaker unless members call for a vote or reading of the Daily Record. Some researchers argue that members vote on the Journal not to substantively amend the Journal but as a symbolic action to delay further legislative motion. Scholars like Patty (2010) argue that members use votes on the Journal to delay the House before important pieces of legislation make it to the floor for review. He finds that these votes were more like to precede party line votes and salient policy approvals. The CRS reports that Journal votes might also be used as a way to bias measures of the legislator behavior so that MCs can appear more independent from party leaders. I test this idea by running ideal points for three Congresses (103rd, 107th, and 111th) using W-NOMINATE to determine if the inclusion of Journal votes effectively bias our measures of behavior in the House. I found that while members might manipulate their behavior during Journal votes, these votes have no substantive effect on our measures of member voting behavior. This shows that

despite what could be an effort to bias our data, our measures are robust to minor attempts to throw wrench in our more reliable methods. This spells good news for scholars like myself who rely on measures using roll call votes to make predictions about broader government processes.

Figure 4.1: Comparison of Ideal Points Estimated Using All Votes and Ideal Points Estimated Using Just Journal Votes (103rd Congress)

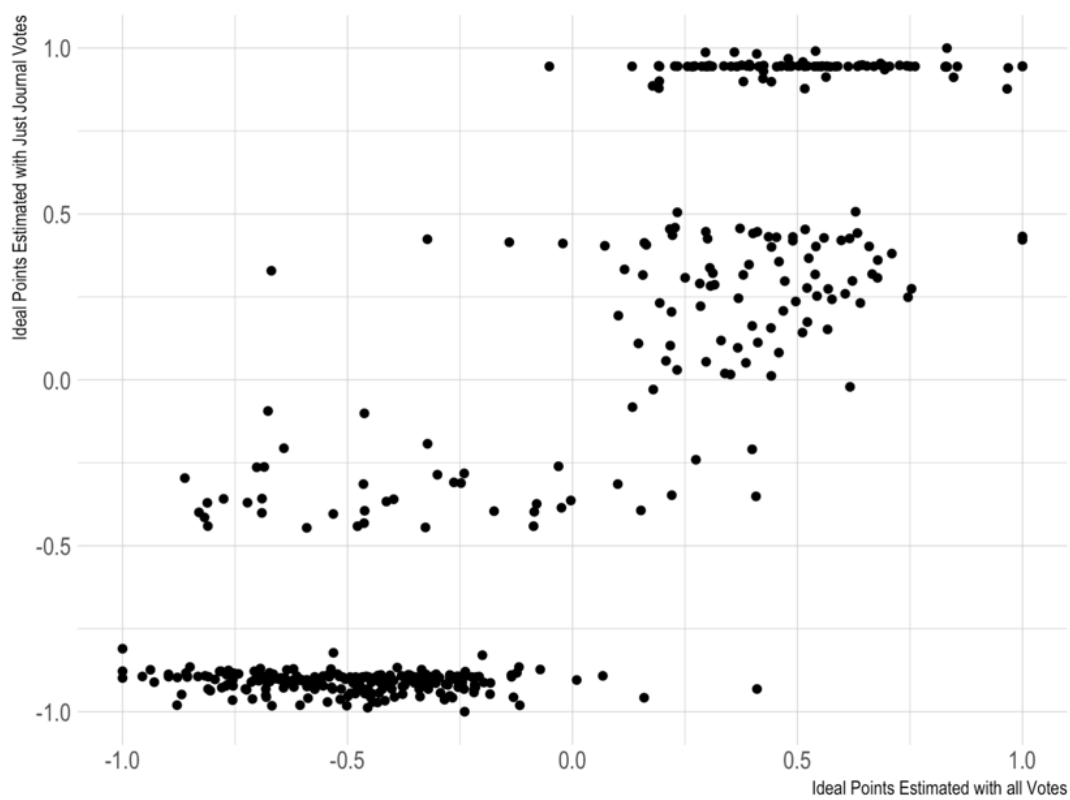


Figure 4.2: Comparison of Ideal Points Estimated Using All Votes and Ideal Points Estimated Without Journal Votes (103rd Congress)

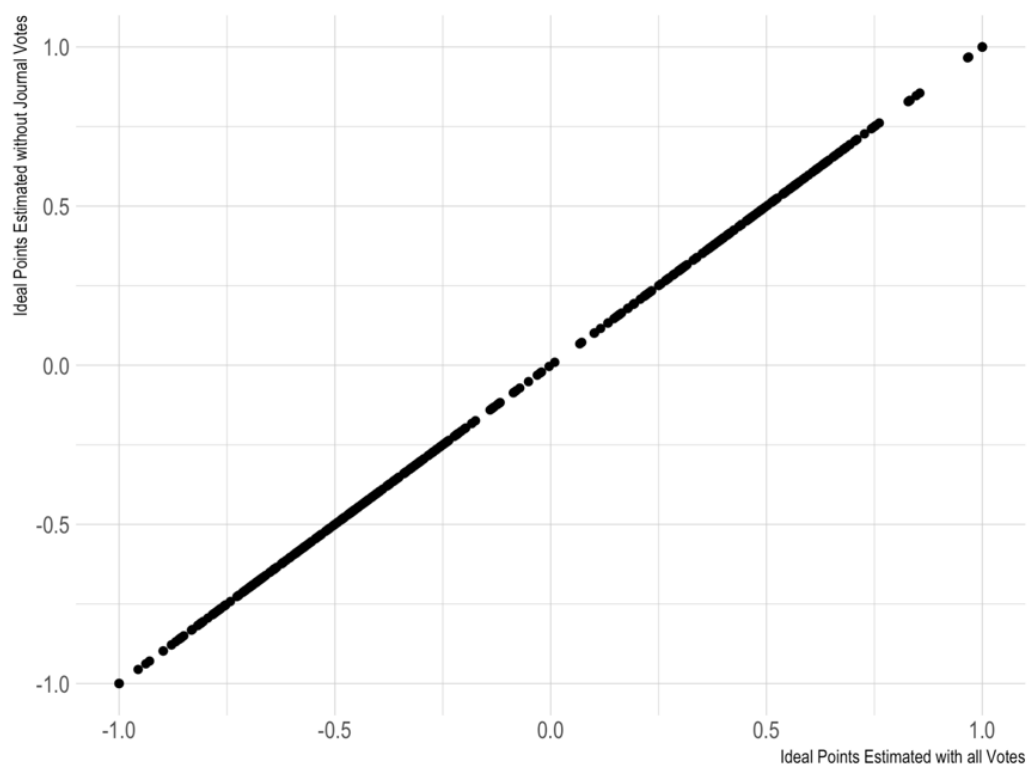


Figure 4.3: Comparison of Ideal Points Estimated Using All Votes and Ideal Points Estimated Using Just Journal Votes (107th Congress)

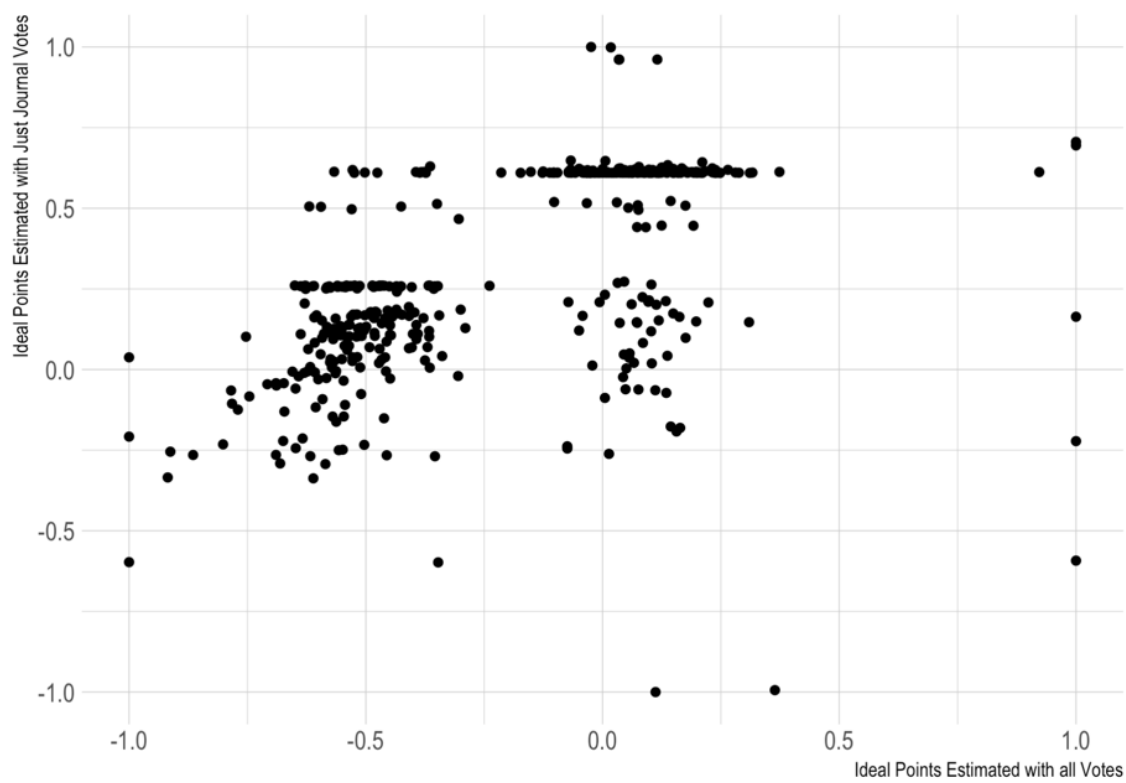


Figure 4.4: Comparison of Ideal Points Estimated Using All Votes and Ideal Points Estimated Without Journal Votes (107th Congress)

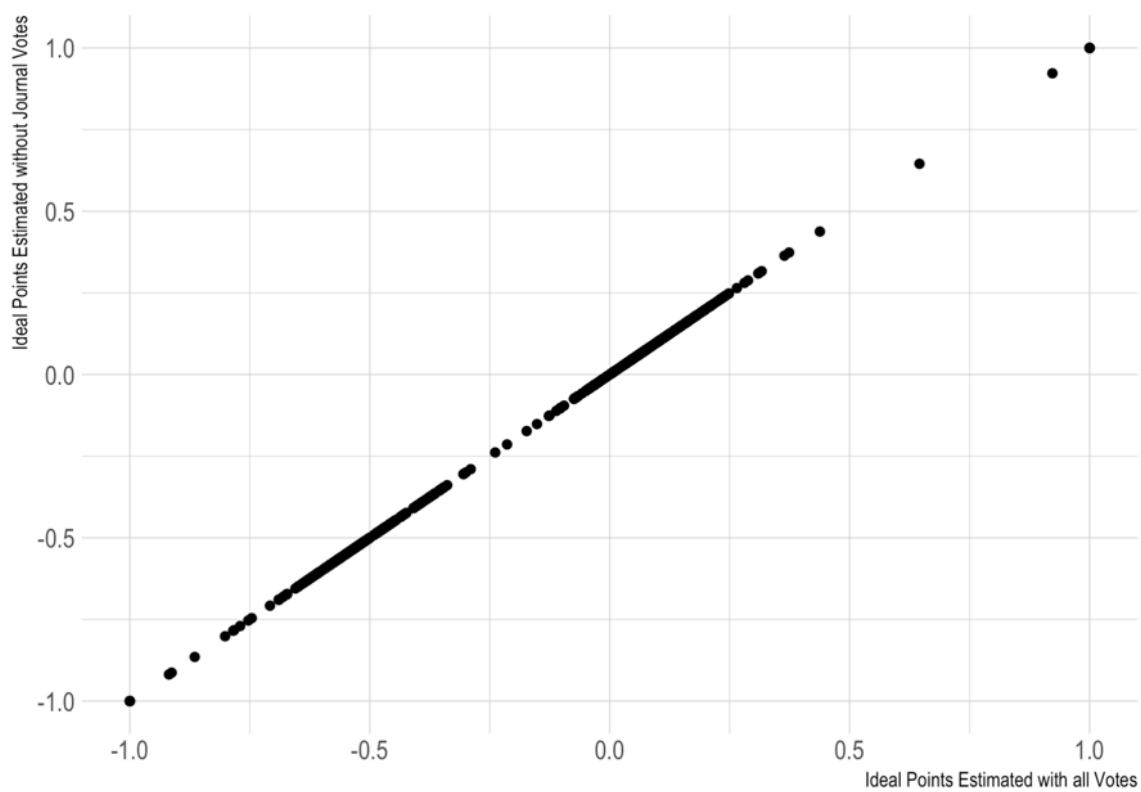


Figure 4.5: Comparison of Ideal Points Estimated Using All Votes and Ideal Points Estimated Using Just Journal Votes (111th Congress)

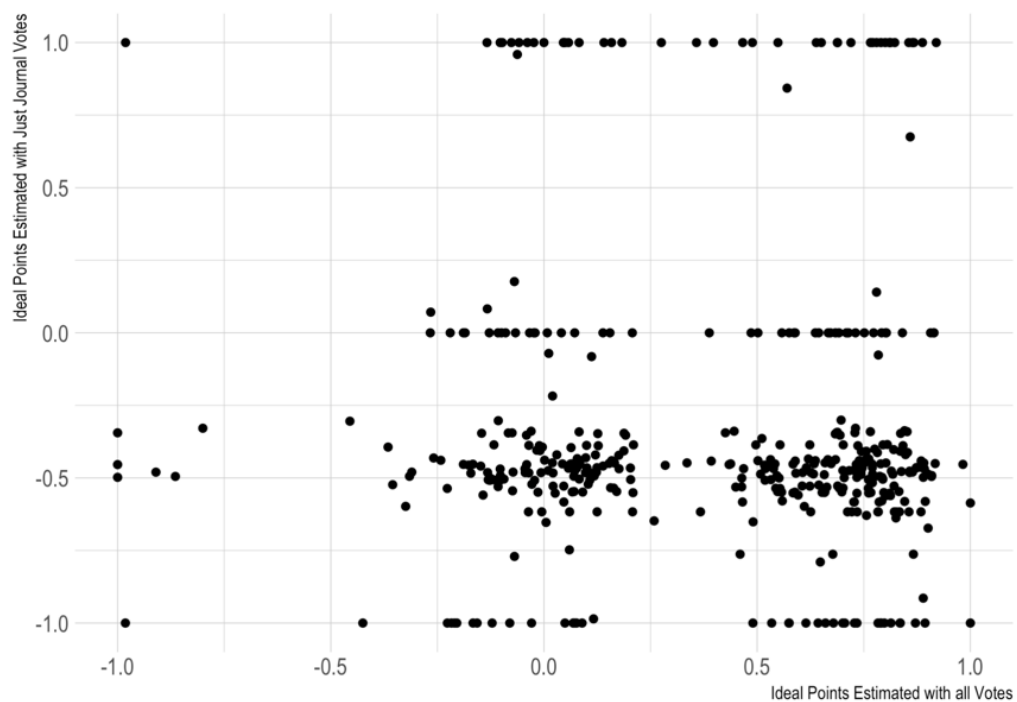
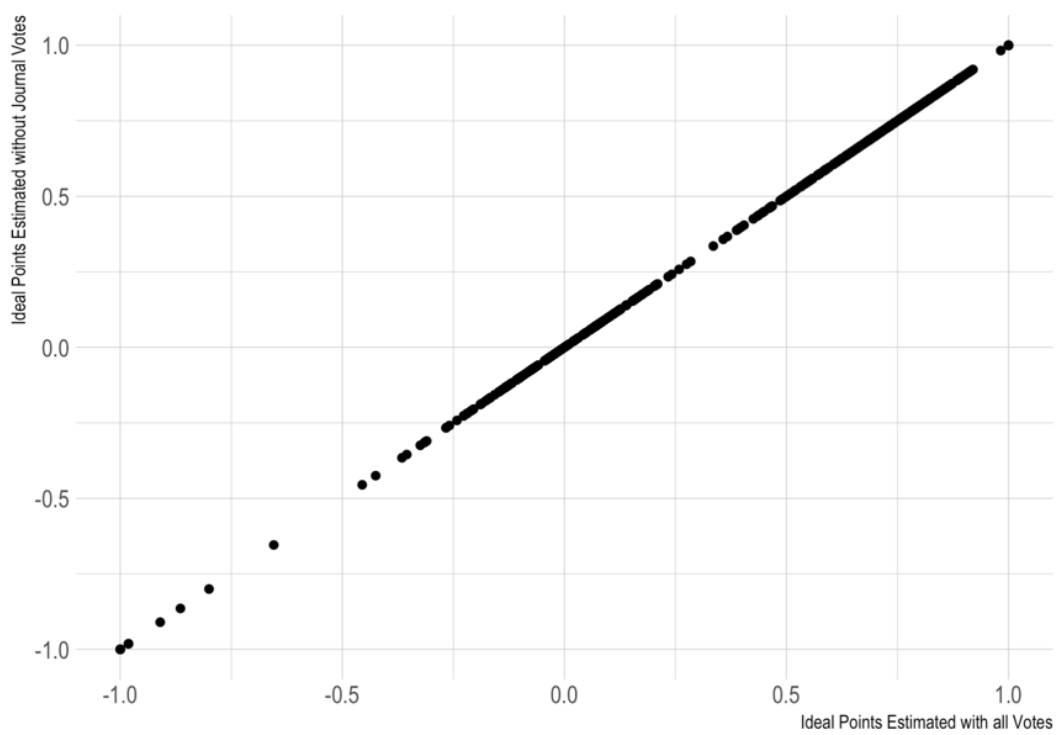


Figure 4.6: Comparison of Ideal Points Estimated Using All Votes and Ideal Points Estimated Without Journal Votes (111th Congress)



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In this dissertation, I have sought to determine what types of influence affect the outcomes of the legislative process including political parties and preferences. In Chapter 2, I used an expansive dataset on the US Postal Service to help arbitrate a decades old debate about the source of influence over the federal bureaucracy. There are three main sources of influence that are discussed by scholars: the Presidency, Congress, and the US Bureaucracy, itself. Scholars like Rogowski (2016) find that the Executive holds primary power over the bureaucracy because of the appointments power and their discretion over policy implementation. Similarly, Kernell (2001) argues that the bureaucracy is really subject to the whims of Congress members who can use their position over funding to manipulate the bureaucracy to meet their needs. Lastly, Carpenter (2001) asserts that the bureaucracy has power to institutionalize and adapt on its own without the aid of elites. Using data on all post offices established from 1840 to 1915, I find that Congresspeople tended to have the biggest effect on when and where postal services were established. In particular, my results show that majority party membership mediated the effect that electoral support had on the establishment of postal services. Districts with members in the majority party experienced only a slight positive increase in postal services when electoral support was high, but members of the minority party experienced a significant decrease in access to postal services when electoral support for them was high. My results also support theories of Executive influence and present mixed results in support of Carpenter's (2001) theory of bureaucratic autonomy. Overall, I show that the USPS is influenced by many different actors not

limited to elected elites and that parties do play a big role in determining which areas get access to bureaucratic services.

My third chapter focuses on the role of the Congressional committee system in the legislative process and its impact on the behavior of members when roll call voting. Prior literature on the topic is divided on the subject with some believing that committees are autonomous high demanders for policy while others believe that committees are constrained by the parent chamber and by the larger parties. In this chapter, I use Poole and Rosenthal's method for estimating W-NOMINATE (1985) and Pool's (2005) party switcher model to estimate ideal points for committees on a common space to the floor. Using the points estimated with this method, I run several OLS regressions to determine if there are any individual or aggregate factors that systematically affected the amount of difference in roll call behavior between the two contexts. I find that Congressional committees are hyper partisan representations of the floor with every vote being completely party line. My results reflect this as almost every committee member ended up with their point on one of the extremities of the ideological scale. Those members who were not on the extremities were not present in committee during the time of the vote and those do not appear as extreme as the other members of the committee. Overall, I find support for the party dominated perspective which argues that parties constrain the behavior of members in committee in order to influence the preliminary outcomes of the committee.

Finally, my fourth chapter looks at the use of the Journal votes to manipulate our measures of ideology by members of Congress. The Journal of the US House is a written record of the proceedings of the House without any additional debate or context on the measure. The Journal must be approved on a daily basis and occasionally, members call a recorded vote despite the innocuous nature of the approval of the Journal. The CRS (2018) theorizes that one

reason members may call a roll call during the approval of the Journal is that members are aware that scholars are monitoring their voting behavior and thus, are using Journal votes as a way of manipulating these measures. To evaluate this theory, I use Poole and Rosenthal's (1985) method for estimating W-NOMINATE to estimate ideal points over time to see if removing the roll call votes taken on the House Journal affected the results of our measures. I find that while members so vote differently in committee, the inclusion of these votes did not have any substantive effect on the results of these scores. This shows that our measures of ideology are robust against any bias that might be caused by outside manipulations though it is still unclear if it is the intention of members to manipulate our measures at all.

Overall, this dissertation has sought to determine what influences can impact the outcomes of the legislative process. From the above chapters, I have determined that parties generally do structure a lot of member behavior both during the legislative process and after when policy is being implemented. My second chapter shows that majority party membership and house support were large predictors of where federal services were implemented. Similarly, electoral support of the President and several indicators of bureaucratic autonomy were also significant when looking at bureaucratic operations. My third chapter also validates the influence of parties over the political process by showing how hyper partisan committees are in comparison the floor. Finally, my fourth chapter looks voting on the House Journal and determines that if members are trying to manipulate our measures to look less partisan than they are doing a bad job at producing meaningful change in their scores. Overall, I find that parties are a major predictor of elite and bureaucratic behavior and this is consistent across a variety of political actions.

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