Mandate to Message

Partisan Competition, Bill Sponsorship, and Position-Taking in Congress

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Abstract

Although bill sponsorship is commonly thought of as a legislative activity undertaken in pursuit of policy goals, recent Congresses have seen a rise in so-called "messaging" bills. Such bills, as their title suggests, serve less as vehicles for changing policy in a member's desired direction and more as platforms for ideological or partisan position-taking. In spite of the growing incidence of such bills—and the ire they commonly draw from pundits—little research has sought to explain the conditions under which members offer messaging bills. In this paper, I show that partisan competition over majority control of Congress helps to explain the incidence of these bills, as members respond to party-level incentives to filter the legislative agenda. I develop a dynamic pivotal politics model of policy change, delineating the conditions under which partisan agenda-setters will respond to competition over majority control by slowing policy change, discouraging members from expending effort to draft compromise legislation. I then test the predictions of this model using an original set of spatial point estimates for status quo and bill proposal locations, based on co-sponsorship and interest-group position-taking data. Using these data, I find strong support for my model's predictions. In particular, I find that members of Congress are far more likely to offer messaging bills when the theory suggests party leaders will block otherwise viable legislation, for partisan competitive reasons. The findings speak to a growing literature tying the insecurity of legislative majorities to a wide variety of legislative outcomes.

Aside from voting, bill sponsorship is among the most fundamental behaviors in which a legislator may engage. Indeed, before a legislature ever considers a bill for passage, lawmakers and their staff must first draft it, often making difficult decisions about which provisions to include or exclude, based on policy goals and the prevailing political climate. Yet while legislators make a wide variety of considerations when drafting legislation, their goal is seemingly less varied: presumably, they want to make policy. That is, they wish to draft a bill that can pass. Indeed, sponsoring successful legislation redounds to the member's benefit in numerous ways, even beyond policy gains: legislative successes generate opportunities for credit-claiming, and they raise a member's profile among her peers.

In spite of the centrality of this goal, members do sometimes sponsor legislation that they understand will not pass. Progressive members, for example, introduced bills to implement a single-payer health care system in 2009. Similarly, some Democratic members have recently introduced bills that would abolish ICE—despite the fact that Republican leaders were highly unlikely to move on such bills. Further still, in nearly each year since its passage, Republicans have introduced legislation meant to fully repeal the Affordable Care Act, while other conservative Republicans have even sponsored bills to abolish the IRS in recent Congresses.[1]

Given members' positions as lawmakers, the introduction of such nonviable legislation is puzzling, at least from a policymaking perspective: why do members expend effort in drafting bills they understand will not become law? In this paper, I argue that such decisions are a function of members' reactions to the institutional constraints and electoral climate surrounding them. Under some conditions, I argue electoral competition over major institutional pivots encourages members to carefully draft viable legislation with the highest probability of passage. Under other electoral and institutional conditions, however, members understand that party leaders face incentives against setting the legislative agenda. In response, rational members understand the wastefulness of costly viable bill-drafting, leading them to draft nonviable "messaging" legislation instead.

To demonstrate how electoral context and congressional institutions influence members' willingness to draft viable legislation—that is, legislation that, if afforded agenda space would pass through Congress—I develop and test a bill-level theory that pairs traditional spatial models of policy change with the recent rise in competition over majority control of Congress. The theory demonstrates how expectations over future control of Congress influences party leaders' willingness to set the legislative agenda for status quo

[1] Such bills have become so common, in fact, that some research has even referred to them as "dead on arrival" bills (Gelman, 2017).

policies lying within certain subsets of the policy space, which in turn influences the kinds of bills members introduce for these status quos. Using a new dataset of point estimates for both status quo and bill proposal locations derived from a joint scaling of cosponsorship, roll call, and interest group position-taking data, I test and find support for the theory's bill-level predicitions—namely that members draft viable legislation (legislation acceptable to all institutional pivots in Congress) when electoral incentives and the location of a bill's associated status quo encourage party leaders to set the agenda, and resort non-viable messaging bills (bills that do not improve upon the status quo for one or more pivot) otherwise.

Even beyond understanding why and when legislators engage in earnest lawmaking, these findings point to the policymaking ramifications of heightened competition over control of a legislature. Much like its level of preference polarization, Congress's level of competitiveness has fluctuated dramatically over its history. This study ties members' sponsorship activities to this competition, demonstrating that changes in Congress's competitiveness may have far-reaching consequences for member behavior. Moreover, given the new estimation strategy introduced in the empirical tests of the theory, the study provides valuable data that allow for the a priori measurement of status quo locations—even when bills do not ultimately receive a roll call vote.

I proceed as follows. First, I review relevant literature on sponsorship activity, demonstrating the need for a better understanding of both the electoral foundations of bill sponsorship activity in general, as well as the determinants of whether members sponsor viable legislation in specific. Second, I develop a theory of the underlying agenda-setting process that bills face, given various electoral expectations faced by partisan leaders. The theory suggests that when partisan agenda setters believe a status quo policy is better moved after the upcoming election, legislators are more likely to introduce non-viable messaging bills. Third, I detail the data and measurement strategy used to test the theory's specific hypotheses regarding electoral expectations, the spatial locations of bills and status quo policies, and the introduction of viable legislation. Finally, I provide empirical evidence in support of my theory, showing that the agenda-setting incentives generated by partisan electoral context appear to influence how and when members offer viable or messaging legislation. I conclude by discussing the study's implications for the study of legislative behavior.

Bill Sponsorship, Position-Taking, and Electoral Competition

Traditionally, research on bill introductions has conceptualized sponsorship as a tool for achieving policy goals. Wawro (2000), for example, features bill sponsorship prominently in his examination of legislative

entrepreneurship in the U.S. House. Similarly, Volden and Wiseman (2014) incorporate a member's bill sponsorships directly into their measure of legislative effectiveness. Such a focus makes sense, given the lawmaking responsibilities of members of Congress; consequently, most examinations of bill sponsorship feature explanatory variables situated within the policymaking process rather than in the electoral process or in communications. Such factors include majority status, committee membership and status, proximity to key institutional pivots, and investment in legislative staff (Schiller, 1995; Garand and Burke, 2006; Cox and Terry, 2008).

Still, members of Congress do occasionally employ primarily legislative behaviors for non-legislative purposes. Hall (1996), for instance, argues that member participation in committee is not uniformly motivated by a desire to influence policy outcomes. Instead, some "showhorse" members use the committee as a means for magnifying their communications efforts and better position themselves for re-election. More specific to bill sponsorship, Sulkin (2005) finds that politicians' promises on the campaign trail translate to actual sponsorship activity: when politicians make promises to address particular issues while campaigning, they frequently sponsor related legislation once they take office.

These findings provide some context for the otherwise puzzling observation that members occasionally draft legislation that is not politically viable and would not likely pass through Congress even if voted upon. That is, apart from policymaking, such findings underscore that bill sponsorship offers position-taking value to the member. In fact, Rocca and Gordon (2010) show that members frequently use bills sponsorship as a means for public position-taking, especially before interest groups. Yet while position-taking value provides a rationale for why members expend effort drafting nonviable legislation, few studies have offered a theory for why and when the position-taking value of bill sponsorship predominates over its policymaking value.

Understanding the conditions under which sponsorship serves policy-change versus position-taking goals is important for a wide variety of reasons. First and foremost, most scholars consider policymaking to be the primary representational function that members of Congress serve in American democracy. Insofar as members expend valuable time and resources drafting legislation that stands little chance of passing, one must wonder how it affects their ability to discharge other key duties of the office. Second, while bill sponsorship is frequently incorporated into measures of legislative effort and effectiveness, the presence of non-viable legislation should count for less in such measures than bills carefully crafted to maximize chances for passage. Moreover, given that bill sponsorship factors prominently in some measures of legislator homestyle, understanding how bill sponsorship is used for legislative versus non-legislative purposes

once again proves integral to accurately capturing home style among modern legislators. Finally, in an era of insecure majorities (Lee, 2016), both individual members and parties have increasingly emphasized messaging over policymaking, in an effort to maximize reelection chances and seat share in Congress. Consequently, understanding how and when members deploy messaging *legislation* is central to capturing how increases in competition over majority control have altered legislative activity within Congress.

In this paper, I develop a bill-level theory of legislative viability, which links the contemporary insecure congressional majorities to members' bill-specific decisions to pursue different types of bill sponsorships. More specifically, I offer a dynamic spatial theory of policy change that delineates how agenda-setters in Congress may strategically speed up or slow down changes to specific status quo policies, based on their party's anticipated electoral gains or less in the coming election. These agenda-setting expectations, then, determine whether members are willing to expend the effort necessary to draft viable legislation. Using a new dataset of bill proposal locations and their associated status quo locations, I show that when members expect agenda-setters to *slow down* the policymaking process for a specific status quo location, they are less likely to meet that status quo with a viable proposal—that is, a proposal that, on the basis of its spatial location improves upon the status quo for all relevant veto points in Congress. Conversely, when members expect agenda-setters to *accelerate* the policymaking process for a specific status quo location, members meet such status quos with viable proposals that improve upon the status quo for all congressional veto players. Put differently, they offer legislation that, if brought up for a vote, should be expected to pass through Congress.

A Theory of Policy Change and Sponsorship Type

In determing whether members meet specific status quo policies with viable or nonviable proposals, I argue that they weigh how electoral and institutional dynamics influence the probability that their bill will receive agenda space. Thus, to understand when members should offer viable legislation, I develop a dynamic spatial theory that delineates when agenda-setters are likely to speed up or slow down the policymaking process. More specifically, I develop a unidimensional spatial theory of agenda-setting and policy change with an endogenous status quo and two actors, an agenda-setter (AS) and a receiver (R). For reasons described below, AS is conceived as a collective type of actor (such as party leadership), while R is a single pivotal actor lying opposite AS.

Electoral Expectations and Partisan Agenda-Setting Decisions

Before members decide on their sponsorship strategies for a given status quo policy SQ_i, they observe the following agenda-setting game. In the first or "present" round, the agenda-setter must decide for SQ_i[2] whether or not to propose an alternative a ("propose" versus "hold back"). If she does propose an alternative, the game shifts to the receiver, who must then select whether to "accept" or "reject" a. If the receiver chooses to accept the alternative, the game ends, the equilibrium policy $SQ^* = a$, and payoffs are realized via a quadratic loss function comparing the new policy to each of the players' ideal points. Should the receiver choose to reject the alternative, the status quo SQ persists. Thus, the result of Round 1 can be either a new policy or the status quo, much as in any traditional spatial model.

Unlike traditional spatial models, however, if SQ is reached because of "holding back" behavior by AS,[3] the game does *not* end. Instead, an election occurs, shifting the location of agenda-setter to AS' and the receiver to R'.[4] In the second round, the game proceeds as in Round 1: AS first whether or not to propose an alternative to the status quo, and R decides whether to accept or reject that proposal. If the proposal is accepted, the game ends with a new policy of $SQ_i^* = a$. If the proposal is rejected, the game ends with the same status quo policy, $SQ_i = SQ_i^*$.

A key feature of this game's structure is the fact that the game only reaches the second round if the status quo persists—a feature designed to more closely replicate the trade-offs that agenda-setters face within. Substantively, this structure creates a key decision for AS: she must choose between what she believes she can gain by proposing a new policy in this round, versus what she believes would occur (for each SQ_i) following the next election. The rationale behind this feature is drawn from substantive observations of the American legislative system: when policy change occurs for a status quo policy in the present legislative session, it is highly unlikely to occur again in the next session. Policy change for a specific status quo policy area can either occur *now* or *later*, but not both. Policy advocates and, increasingly, political researchers (e.g., Buisseret and Bernhardt (2017)) denote this feature of legislative politics frequently, and further justification for this structural decision is provided in Supplemental Information TK.

[2]Note that status quo policies are indexed by i, in order to indicate that the agenda-setter encounters many status quo policies within a given legislative period.

[3]Technically, the game could reach the second round if R1 rejects AS's offer a. However, because R1 is not dynamically sophisticated and AS knows R1's preferences, AS chooses not to make offers in the first round that she knows will not be accepted, assuming an infinitely small proposal cost.

[4]Notationally, then, if a shift in AS or R does occur in Round 2, I will refer to said second-round actors as AS' and R'. If, however, no change occurs, I will simply refer to AS and R similarly in both rounds.

Key Model Features

Members of Congress observe these agenda-setting dynamics before deciding whether to pair a particular SQ_i with a viable or non-viable proposal. However, before discussing how such agenda-setting dynamics influence members' sponsorship decisions, I first underscore some key features of the agenda-setting model as presented above.

First, while previous models of policy change, such as Krehbiel (1998), include a larger number of players with specific identities, I keep the number of players (and the specificity of those players low, in order to increase the flexibility of the theory. That is to say, because the specific identities of the agenda-setter and pivotal actor are fluid, subject to intense scholarly debate, or some combination of the two, my design simplifies the bargaining environment into two key players—an agenda-setter and a single veto agent—who do not have to take on any specific identity. Doing so allows one to make a specific theoretical point and extend to a variety of political contexts.

In order to eventually interpret the dynamics of the theory in the American context, however, I do include a few key assumptions with regard to player locations and identities. More specifically, I assume that agenda control rests in political parties, much in the same way as Cox and McCubbins (2005). With respect to the receiver, I rely upon the fact that, in one dimension, a single actor is ultimately pivotal for any particular legislative decision. In this model, then, R lies at the pivotal actor located farthest from AS in the opposite ideological direction (rightward if AS is leftist, leftward otherwise). This setup generates an asymmetry between AS and R. That is, while AS is a "collective" actor (a party, or set of party leaders) that persists across elections, R is most often an individual legislator, concerned about his/her reelection. This asymmetry has important consequences for how the two players approach the game. Given that party leaders are likely to remain in place (either as minority or majority leaders) following the next election, they are enabled to think dynamically about policy change and weigh the advantages and disadvantages associated with proposing or holding back various pieces of legislation. Consequently, AS is a dynamically sophisticated player who considers Period 2 consequences to its actions in Period 1.

This conceptualization of AS stands in sharp contrast to R. As an individual actor, R faces the real possibility that she may not remain in office following the upcoming election. If the current actor R fails to remain in office, then future policy gains are of little use to her. Put differently, insofar as reelection concerns remain as the individual legislator's primary concern (Mayhew, 1974), dynamic considerations regarding policy gains likely fall to the wayside. Therefore, given that the individual, pivotal legislator R

faces such pressures in the present round (that AS does not face, at least at the same level), R is modeled as a "static" player in the game. In other words, R votes in accordance with her present-round incentives, accepting policy proposals that move the status quo in her direction and rejecting ones that do not.

It may initially seem tempting to think of R in terms of a dynamically sophisticated minority party: if the majority party is dynamically sophisticated, why is the minority party not thinking dynamically and whipping R accordingly? To be clear, it is indeed likely that minority parties are dynamically sophisticated in some sense: minority parties want to maximize their chances at taking back the majority. However, *even if* they were able to whip moderate members located near the R pivot, doing so is not likely to improve the minority's chances at taking the majority. To see why, consider what might happen if R did vote dynamically—in other words, to occasionally vote *for* policies that move the status quo *away* from his/her ideal point or *against* policies that move the status quo *closer*. Such votes are not likely to improve the chances that the minority party regains power: voting against her own preferences (and potentially the preferences of the district) is unlikely to improve R's reelection chances.Understanding this, marginal members occasionally respond quite colorfully to the prospect of their being whipped in this fashion. For example, moderate Sen. Joe Manchin (D - WV) recently took umbrage at the idea of Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer influencing his vote: "I'll be 71 years old in August, you're going to whip me? Kiss my you know what."[5] Assuming that the minority party does not view losing incumbent seats as a viable strategy for regaining power, then, it may choose against cross-pressuring R in her vote choice. Thus, rendering R a static player therefore makes sense, even if one thinks of her as under the power of the minority party.[6]

The analysis will rely upon a few other assumptions worth mentioning. First, the model setup implies that the agenda-setter can never be "crossed" by the receiver, if/when the receiver moves in the direction of the agenda-setter. Operationally, this simply means that R is always more moderate than AS. Additionally, I assume that AS and R cannot share an ideal point.These are weak assumptions that improve model interpretation.

[5]https://www.politico.com/story/2018/07/13/schumer-supreme-court-fight-centrist-democrats-716654

[6]It is worth noting that, practically speaking, this feature mirrors an assumption made by Buisseret and Bernhardt (2017) in their recent paper.

How Do Electoral Prospects Influence Policy Change Under Possible Power Transitions?

Given the structure and features of the agenda-setting game, what sorts of agenda-setting dynamics do members of Congress observe as electoral dynamics change? As is common for spatial models, the equilibria of this game vary considerably with regard to status quo location and the locations of AS, R, AS', and R'. Thus, to illustrate the sorts of agenda-setting behavior members of Congress should expect for a given SQ_i, I detail how three power transition scenarios influence AS's willingness to set the legislative agenda.[7]. Much like Krehbiel (1998) and others, my discussion of the theoretical dynamics underlying these regimes will remain abstract, for illustrative purposes; regardless, the scenarios underscore conditions under which members of Congress can expect specific SQ_i to be met with accelerated or decelerated agenda-setting, which influences members' willingness to draft costly viable legislation. For each scenario, I delineate the conditions under which AS ought to set the agenda, comparing results to those from a traditional, static model. Next, I develop three main predictions regarding agenda-setting activity, highlighting when party leaders will speed up or slow down policy change. Finally, I trace out relevant implications for bill sponsorship activity from these predictions, ultimately arguing that future gains for the majority party encourage sincere policymaking, while future losses may discourage it.

Scenario 1: AS Maintains Agenda Control and Makes Gains with Reciever

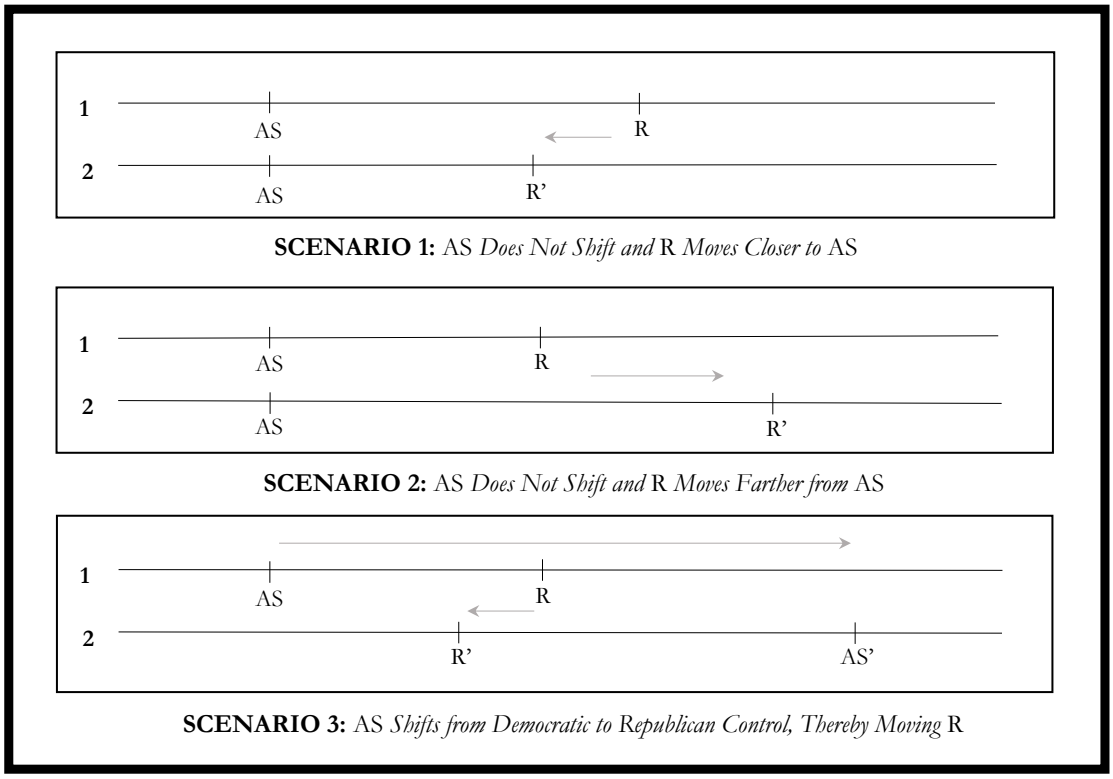
In the first power transitionscenario, AS is expected to maintain agenda control following the upcoming election. However, R is expected to *move closer* to AS.Here, without loss of generality, suppose that AS lies left of center and R to the right. As noted above, the upcoming election is expected to be a positive one for AS's party: in addition to retaining control of AS, R is expected to move closer to AS. [8] As denoted in Figure **??**, should the expected shift in R's location occur, players in the game have a reasonably reliable idea about where the new receiver, R', would be located.

How does this possibility of change of control influence AS's actions in the present round? Consider how AS ought to act if the probability of R moving closer is equal to 1 (Pr($R' - AS < R - AS$) $= 1$). In this scenario, AS must backward induct from the second round, to determine where policy would move should she opt against offering a policy alternative in the present round. Consider first a status quo policy

[7] I eventually argue that all post-WWII elections each fall into one of these regimes

[8] As Figure 1 depicts, AS's rentention of agenda control is captured by the persistence of AS in the second round. That is, the location of AS in the second round is equivalent to that in the first round. In reality, this is unlikely to be the case. If, for example, Democrats add seats to their majority, the location of AS is likely to shift slightly leftward. However, because such intraparty shifts are typically small, AS is held in place here, for ease of exposition.

Figure 1: Common Power Distribution and Electoral Change Scenarios



lying far to the left of AS. For such status quo policies, AS can offer an alternative policy located at her ideal point, because such an alternative is a net improvement for the Republican receiver. Because AS can do no better in the second round by holding back, she instead should always propose her ideal point in the first round for any such status quo policy.

This dynamic changes for SQ_i lying at AS and rightward. Indeed, if the status quo lies close but to the right of AS, AS may desire to move the status quo but cannot do so: R will reject any movement away from her right-leaning ideal point. Moreover, for all policies located between AS and R', SQ will persist through both rounds, as neither the first-round nor second-round agenda-setter will be able to make improvements upon the status quo. In the present round, AS will be unable also to move status quo policies between R and R' in her direction, so her best response is simply to allow the status quo to persist.

However, for policies lying to the right of R, AS faces an interesting incentive. Policies lying to the right of R are moveable in the first round: R will accept any proposal at least as good as the status quo. However, for these SQ to the right of R, SQ is even less desirable for R' than it is for R. Consequently, AS can extract more policy concessions in the second round than the first. Taken together, AS faces an

incentive to *hold back from offering a policy alternative* when the status quo is to the right of R, even though she can improve upon the status quo in the first round by making an offer. This dynamic is not limitless, however. Indeed, eventually a status quo policy is so far to the right that $AS \geq SQ - 2|SQ - R|$—i.e., that AS's ideal point lies within the leftward reflection of SQ over R. Under such conditions, AS can propose and obtain her ideal point in the first round, rather than having to wait until the second round. This means that for any weak preference of present gains over future ones, AS should propose her ideal point in the first round, which R will accept.

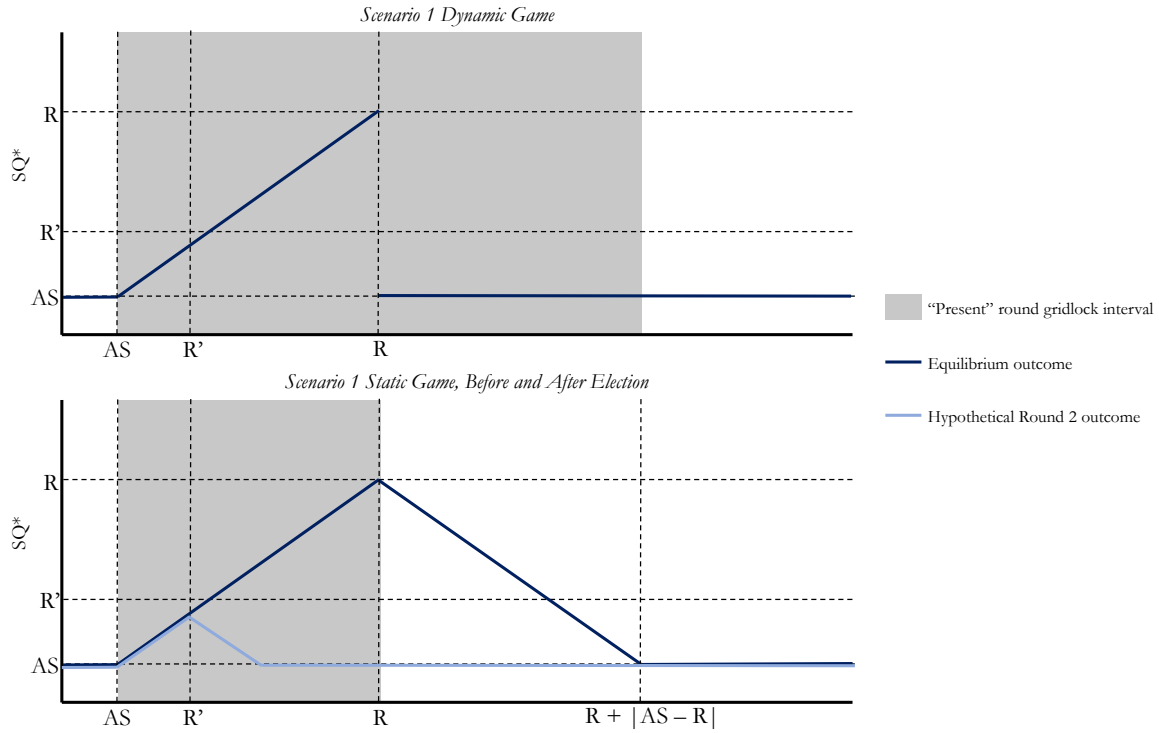
The results are summarized in the upper portion of Figure 2. Here, the horizontal axis represents the location of the SQ, while the vertical axis represents the location of the equilibrium policy outcome, SQ^*. The dark line tracks the equilibrium outcome SQ^* for each SQ along the horizontal axis. Finally, the grey portion of the graph covers the region of SQ values for which no policy change occurs in the first round of play. As Figure 2 depicts, policy stasis occurs not only for SQ between AS and R, but also for policies lying to the right of R.[9] This region is quite large, indicating that policy change should slow significantly when AS expects to face a more favorable R in the future. Compared to the static mode (bottom panel of 2), the dynamic model predicts considerably less agenda-setting and eventual policy change.

These results hold for any scenario under which AS remains the same and makes some kind of gains with the receiver in the upcoming election. Under these scenarios, less policy change will occur than what models based on static preferences alone would predict: for SQ policies lying to the right of R, AS is at best indifferent between Round 1 and Round 2 policy outcomes, opting against Round 1 policy change for all policies to the right of R and to the left of $R + |AS - R|$. In empirical tests in later sections, I call this phenomenon *policy deceleration*. This phenomenon is summarized in Proposition 1:

> **Proposition 1 (Policy Deceleration):** In addition to policies located between AS and R, AS will refrain from attempts to change status quo policies lying to the right of R but to the left of $R + |AS - R|$, when AS anticipates her party will remain in control of AS and R will move closer to her.

[9] Here again, it is worth noting that while the equilibrium outcome ($SQ^* = AS$) is unambiguous for policies lying to the right of the reflection of AS over R, whether or not such change occurs in the first or second round depends upon assumptions about temporal preferences on the part of AS.

Figure 2: R' More Favorable to AS



Bill Sponsorship Under Scenario 1

Clearly, at least in the abstract, dynamic electoral considerations may dramatically influence how agenda-setters think about the legislative agenda. Given that the game detailed above is one of full information, it stands to reason that the game's dynamics should also influence how members think about bill sponsorship. Indeed, when a member finds herself in a situation like Scenario 1 and wishes to address a particular status quo by introducing legislation, she does so with an understanding that AS faces incentives to decelerate policymaking for certain regions of the policy space.

How might individual members respond to such conditions of policy deceleration? Consider the costs associated with the two types of bill-writing discussed above: viable and non-viable sponsorship. As noted throughout, a piece of *viable* legislation is a bill that should pass into law, should it be brought up for a vote. Within the context of the spatial model, viable legislation must be spatially acceptable to all pivots or veto players: that is, *viable legislation must serve as an improvement upon the bill's associated status quo for all veto players within the political system.* Such legislation therefore moves the status quo toward the center of the political spectrum (relatively speaking). Conversely, non-viable legislation is not an improvement for one or more veto players, meaning the sponsor has elected to move the status quo away from the center

of spectrum—typically close to their own ideal point.

In order for members to draft truly viable legislation, they therefore must compile a large amount of political and policy-specific information. Indeed, beyond grasping the legal, economic, and social ramifications of various policy instruments, a member must explore how pivotal legislators and interest groups are likely to react to policy proposals. Compiling such information is costly, occupying a sizable portion of a member's time and legislative resources. Ultimately, the member does receive a benefit from sponsoring this type of legislation: should the bill pass, the related policy gains would benefit her. Moreover, she may gain the respect of her colleagues, and she may be viewed as productive by her constituents. Still, because she will likely need to compromise from her preferred policy outcome, her position-taking payoff with her reelection constituency is limited.

By contrast, non-viable bills do not require the member to compromise on her preferred policy outcome. Indeed, sometimes termed "messaging" bills, the primary purpose of such bills is to offer an opportunity for a member to signal her alignment and commitment to the ideological principles of her reelection constituency (Gelman, 2017; Rocca and Gordon, 2010). Unlike viable legislation, the member recognizes that messaging bills are not likely to pass into law, even if they do receive a vote in Congress. Consequently, the member need not expend valuable legislative time and resources compiling information about key legislative actors. Instead, she need only ensure she maximizes position-taking benefit from sponsorship such legislation. Thus, while she forfeits potential policy gains by offering messaging legislation, she scores political points with key supporters, potentially aiding in her reelection.

I argue that the relative value of viable and non-viable legislation therefore depends upon the probability that movements of specific SQ_i will occur, all else equal. More specifically, the value of viable and non-viable proposals fluctuates based on the likelihood that agenda-setters will actually move on legislation that alters a given status quo. Scenario 1 generates conditions under which viable proposals, at least for some SQ_i. That is, when a status quo policy lies within the *deceleration region*, members should offer non-viable or messaging legislation: because AS is unlikely to move on such legislation, paying the legislative costs associated with introducing viable legislation makes little sense. Instead, she should maximize the non-policy benefits of bill sponsorship, offering messaging legislation.

Taken together, the trade-offs associated with viable and messaging legislation therefore interact with expectations over future electoral outcomes to translate Proposition 1 into a testable hypothesis about bill sponsorship activity:

H_1 : When AS is not likely to change but R is expected to move **closer** to AS after the upcoming election (that is, the conditions for policy deceleration apply), legislators aiming to change SQ opposite AS (policies within the deceleratin region) will be *less* likely to offer viable proposals (proposals that, based on the current configuration of veto players, will pass into law).

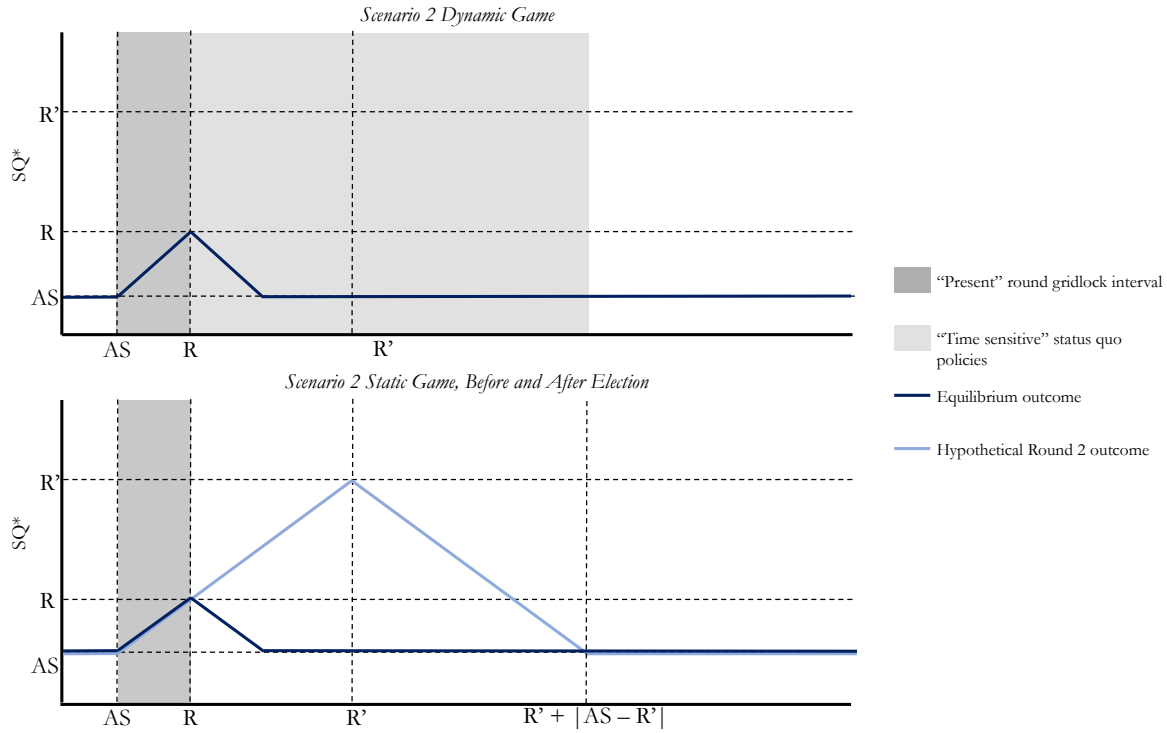
Scenario 2: AS Remains the Same, but Receiver Moves Away from AS

Unlike Scenario 1, AS loses ground with R in Scenario 2. Here, AS and R both lie leftward; however, following the election, R is expected to move away from AS, rendering Round 2 far less advantageous to their policymaking endeavors.

How does this potential shift influence the strategic calculus made by AS in the present? Consider again the scenario wherein the rightward shift of R is guaranteed to occur ($\Pr(R' - AS > R - AS) = 1$). As in Scenario 1, status quo policies lying to the left of the agenda-setter are moveable to AS's ideal point in the first round: R will accept any movement of these status quo policies to the right. Similarlly, policies located between AS and R are immoveable, regardless of the location of R—meaning that the status quo remains in place within this range. But what about status quo policies lying to the right of R? In Scenario 1, AS opted to hold back from policy change. But unlike in Scenario 1, AS should no longer hold back on these status quos. In fact, one might argue that AS should *accelerate* her policymaking efforts on a subset of these status quos. Following the election, status quo policies lying between R and R' become immoveable. Therefore, if AS wants to lock in policy gains in this area, she needs to propose changes now. Of course, as in Scenario 1, this dynamic is not equally true of all SQ to the right of R: for SQ to the right of the reflection of AS over R', AS can achieve her ideal point in either round. Because AS cannot improve upon this outcome under such conditions, she can make an offer in Round 1 and the game ends.

Figure 3 summarizes these results and compares them to the static case. For the present-round static case, nothing has changed: status quo policies lying between AS and R will remain unchanged. Strictly speaking, rendering the game dynamic did not increase or decrease the number of moveable status quo policies in equilibrium. However, onthe game's dynamism accelerates policymaking in a different way (or, at very least, focuses it): that is, because AS knows that policies between R and R' may become immoveable in the immediate future, she may exert additional effort in moving these policies. Whether or not this results in more policy change overall depends on how scarce agenda space is, but the theory's dynamism at very least suggests where AS is likely to focus her policymaking efforts. More specifically,

Figure 3: AS Loses Ground with R'



AS is likely to accelerate policymaking efforts for policies located to the right of R, but to the left of $R' + |R' - AS|$. I refer to this phenomenon as *policy acceleration*, which stands in stark contrast to the *policy deceleration* encouraged in Scenario 1. I define policy acceleration as follows:

> **Definition 1 (Policy Acceleration):** the choice by AS to focus her policymaking efforts on a particular set of status quo policies, due to her belief that future changes of these policies will benefit her less than current ones.

A necessary condition for policy acceleration, of course, is limited agenda space. Were agenda space unlimited, AS could all moveable status quo policies. Consequently, the probability that she moved any individual SQ would not differ from another SQ. With limited agenda space, however, AS must prioritize. Given that her payoffs are a function of her proximity to the eventual SQ^*, AS can ensure the best possible policymaking outcome overall by focusing on SQ that imply the large spatial improvements for AS in Round 1, relative to Round 2. For Scenario 2, these policies are located to the right of R, where Round 2 gains are either impossible or minor. Proposition 2 summarizes this phenomenon:

> **Proposition 2:** When AS expects to retain control of the AS position but lose ground with R, she will focus her policymaking efforts on status quos located to the right of R but to the

left of $R' + |AS - R'|$.

Bill Sponsorship under Scenario 2

As underscored above, members' decisions between viable and non-viable sponsorship are in part a function of their beliefs over the probability that their proposed legislation will actually be put up for a vote by majority party leaders. Unlike Scenario 1, conditions of policy *acceleration* render payment of viable legislation's costs more beneficial. That is, given that legislation is *more* likely to move for certain SQ_i within Scenario 1, members should capitalize by offering legislation that could pass, were it brought up for a vote—opting against messaging for the time being. More specifically, when interested in addressing SQ_i located inside the acceleration region, members of Congress are better served to offer viable legislation than they would be under other electoral conditions. Formally:

> **H_2** : When AS is not likely to change but R is expected to move *further* from AS after the upcoming election (that is, the conditions for policy acceleration, highlighted in Proposition 2 apply), legislators aiming to change SQ opposite AS (policies now within the acceleration region) will be *more* likely to offer viable proposals.

Scenario 3: Control of AS Changes

In Scenarios 1 and 2, AS is expected to remain unchanged. In these scenarios, AS therefore considers only how changes in R influence her policy change options in present and future legislative periods. However, when control of AS is competitive, policymaking dynamics grow more complicated. Under this scenario, control of AS is competitive: it is expected to switch from Democratic to Republican control. Due to the definition of R described earlier, the location of R will therefore also change. That is, because the identity of R is defined as the furthest veto player from AS, a change in AS necessitates a change in R. In this example, if AS lies leftward and R rightward, and shift in AS will move R *leftward*.

How do such major changes affect the policymaking dynamic? Consider first the status quo polices lying to the left of AS. In spite of the potential for coming changes, AS's dominant strategy for these status quo policies remains unchanged from previous scenarios. Indeed, AS can achieve her ideal point in the first round, because R accepts any rightward movement in these status quo policies. Because AS cannot improve upon this result, she will always offer AS in the first round for status quo policies lying to her left.

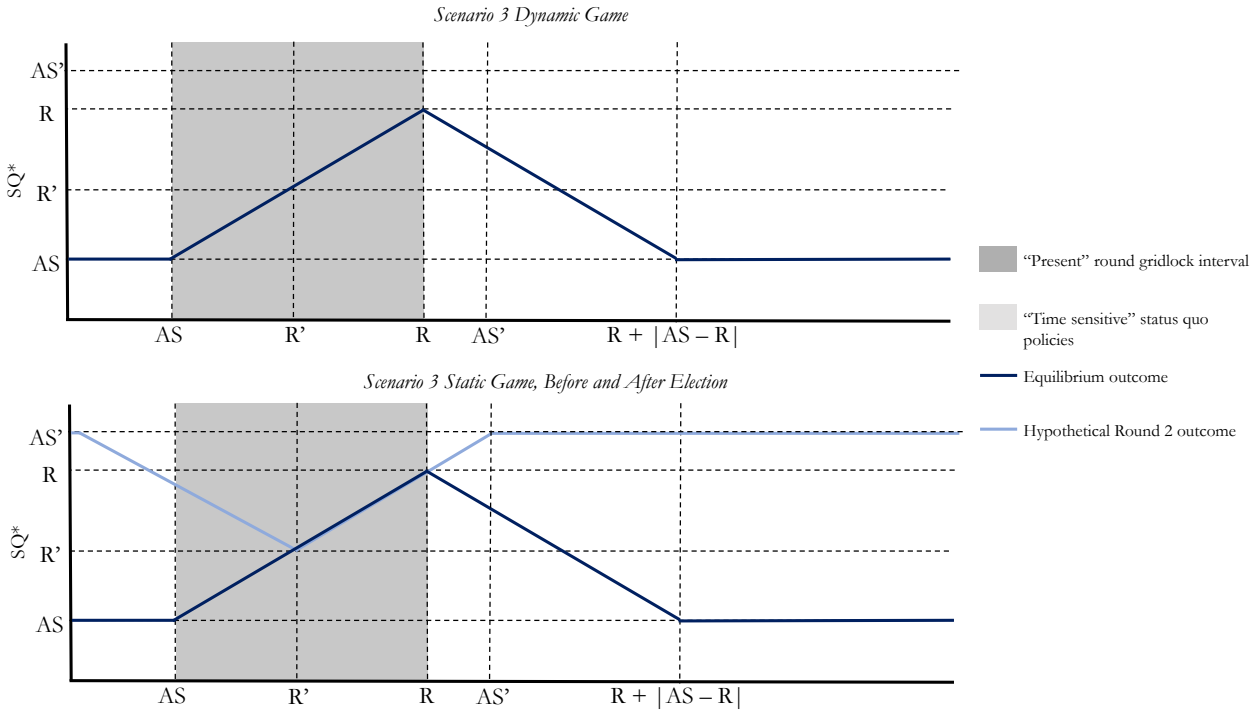
For slightly more conservative status quo policies, however, a different dynamic begins to emerge. Consider what might happen if status quo policies lying between AS and R' are allowed to persist into Round 2. For these status quos, AS' may exploit the Democratic filibuster pivot and move policy rightward by $2|SQ - R'|$. This result is far worse for AS than the status quo. How, then can AS respond? Recall that *any* new policy change in Round 1 ends the game for that particular status quo. Given this feature of the game, AS can protect against rightward movements of status quo policies in this range by offering to R $SQ^* = SQ$. In other words, by offering a policy that is identical to SQ, AS can achieve an outcome that is better for herself than what would occur in the second round. While this strategy may seem at first unrealistic, a practical application of this sort of dynamic may occur when a majority party chooses to reauthorize a program without making major changes to the program's structure. Instead of allowing to the next Congress to take the reauthorization, the current agenda-setter can lock in, say, 5 more years of the current program structure and policies.

This incentive for AS to make SQ-equivalent offers disappears for status quo policies lying to the right of R'. First, whereas policies lying between AS and R' were vulnerable to rightward movements by AS', policies lying between R' and R are located within the Round 2 gridlock interval. No offer AS could make in the present round would improve upon these status quo policies, so policy change does not occur within this interval. Status quo policies to the right of R, however, are moveable, just as in the static case.

Figure 4 depicts these equilibrium policymaking outcomes, SQ^*. In this case, dynamic outcomes differ very little from those in the static case. As the grey regions of the figure demonstrate, the set of immoveable status quo policies in the dynamic case differs only slightly that in the static case. Indeed, aside from the SQ-equivalent offers made within the $[AS, R']$ interval, there is no set of SQ for which AS's ability to pursue would differ from the static case. Similarly, as the dark lines clearly demonstrate, the equilibrium policy outcomes do not differ at all between the static and dynamic cases.

These similarities notwithstanding, much as in Scenario 2, AS does face incentives in Scenario 3 to accelerate policymaking for a certain subset of status quo policies in the first round of play. This incentive is depicted in Figure 4. Consider first SQ policies lying to the right of R. Given that status quo policies to the right of R will be either immoveable ($R' < SQ < AS'$) or moved to AS' (SQ > AS'), AS should accelerate her reform of status quo policies to the right of R, out of concern for poor Round 2 outcomes if no new policy is adopted. Her reason for doing so is clearly illustrated by the difference between the dark and light lines found in the bottom half of Figure 4. For policies to the right of R, the light line (which represents the equilibrium outcome if AS allows a given SQ to persist to the second

Figure 4: Common Power Distribution and Electoral Change Scenarios



round) lies consistenly farther away from AS on the vertical axis than does the dark line, which represents the equilibrium outcome associated with AS deciding to change a given SQ in the first round. As the distance between these lines grows, AS faces an increasing incentive to accelerate policymaking in the first round.

As the distance between the light and dark lines demonstrates, incentives for policy acceleration are also strong for status quo policies lying to the left of AS. For such policies, rather than AS achieving her ideal point by changing such SQs in Round 1, AS' can move SQ significantly rightward. Given that R' is, by assumption, located to the right of AS,[10] such rightward shifts will always result in a policy change that is worse for AS than her Round 1 outcome (her own ideal point). Consequently, for SQ located to the left of AS, the discrepancy between the dark and light lines is considerable: AS stands to lose a great deal if she fails to address SQ within this region. Given this discrepancy, AS may wish to especially accelerate policymaking efforts for SQ to the left of AS.

The policy acceleration incentives associated with Scenario 3 are summarized in Propositions 3a and 3b.

[10] Recall that, by assumption, AS is always more extreme than R. Therefore, when R shifts to the party of AS, it remains more moderate in its preferences than AS. In this case, when R' becomes a Democrat due to the change in AS, we can say that R' will lie to the right AS's current location.

Proposition 3a: When AS expects that her party will lose control of AS, she will accelerate policymaking efforts throughout the policymaking space.

Proposition 3b: AS will focus her policy acceleration on SQ policies for which the difference between a and SQ'' is greatest—namely, policies located to the extremes of AS and AS'.

Bill Sponsorship under Scenario 3

Similar to Scenario 2, the policy acceleration throughout much of the policy space in Scenario 3 generates conditions favorable to the introduction of viable legislation. Indeed, because members understand that AS faces incentives to set the agenda for bills lying outside [AS,R], they should be more likely to pay the costs associated with viable bill sponsorship, all else equal. Here, the sponsorship dynamics are similar to Scenario 3 in theory, though policy accelertion—and therefore, viable bill introduction—extends throughout a much larger portion of the policy space in Scenario 3. In sum, the dynamics in Scenario 3 lead to a third an final hypothesis:

H_3: When AS is likely to change hands, legislators aiming to change SQ outside the interval $[AS, R]$ will be *more* likely to offer viable proposals.

Viable Bill Introduction: Measurement and Data

Translating this abstract account of agenda-setting and consequent sponsorship behavior into empirical tests within the congressional context implies several theoretical and methodological challenges. I address these challenges below. First, I delineate how I identify AS and R within a particular Congress, discussing relevant assumptions made about player identities and information within the policymaking process. Second, I identify how I measure players' contemporaneous beliefs about electoral prospects, using information from electoral betting markets. Finally, I outline how I measure individual bill introduction spatial location and type—i.e., whether a member has elected to offer viable or messaging legislation for a particular SQ_i. With these measurements, I am then able to test whether electoral prospects do indeed influence bill introduction activity as hypothesized.

Identification and Measurement of AS, R, AS', and R'

In order to identify the locations of AS and R within a given Congress, one must first identify which actors in Congress count as pivotal. The U.S. Constitution identifies several such pivotal actors: the median member of each chamber of Congress, the president, and (when relevant) the veto override pivot.

However, legislative scholars also recognize other veto points in the U.S. policymaking system. First, most recognize the 60th vote in the Senate—the filibuster pivot—as a veto player. Additionally, previous studies have posited that partisan control of the voting agenda introduces additional veto points into the political system. In particular, the application of the Hastert Rule[11] in the U.S. House renders the median of the majority party pivotal (see, for example, Woon and Cook (2015) and Crosson (2019)). While some accounts of the U.S. Congress argue that similar agenda control may exist within the U.S. Senate, considerably more debate exists on this point. Consequently, for the purposes of this empirical analysis, I assume the following actors are pivotal in U.S. federal policymaking: both chamber medians, the U.S. House majority median, the Senate filibuster pivot, the president, and the veto override pivot. However, given measurement concerns underscored below, I focus solely on legislative veto players in this analysis, meaning AS and R are located at the House chamber median, House majority median, Senate chamber median, or Senate filibuster pivot.

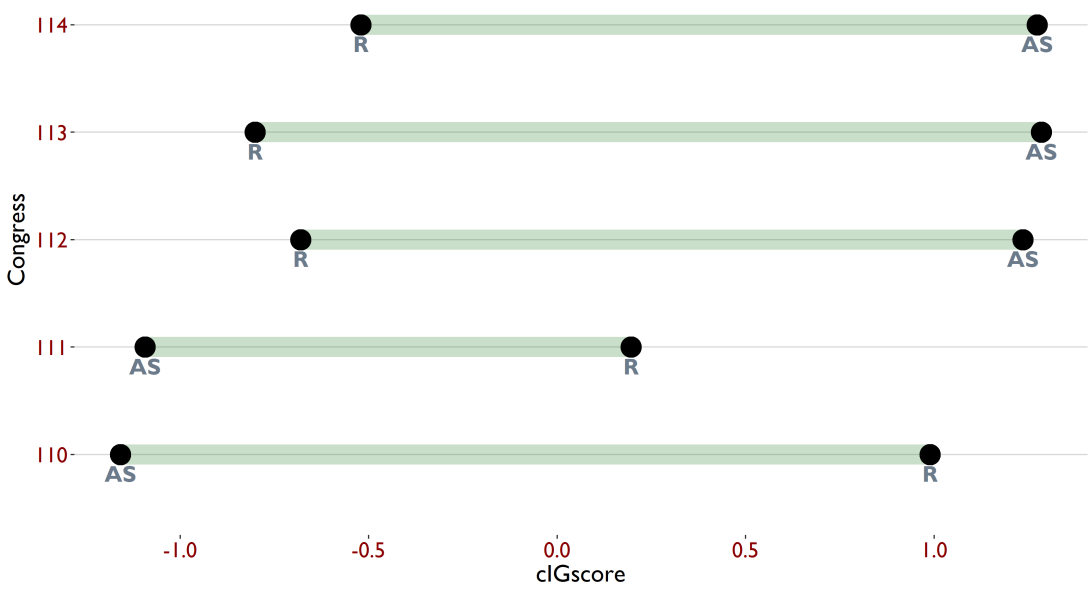
Given that only one of these veto players—the House majority median—is an explicitly *partisan* actor, my empirical analyses assume AS is located at the House majority median. Spatial models always include assumptions about agenda power, and previous models have frequently placed agenda-setting power in the hands of a chamber median (e.g., Krehbiel, 1998). However, given that recent literature finds that policy change models with partisan agenda control tend to generate the most realistic empirical predictions, my model places this power in the hands of the majority median.

With AS located at the House majority median, R is much easier to identify on the basis of the model's assumptions. That is, because R is defined as a single actor pivotal in determining whether AS's proposal passes, I define R as *the veto player lying farthest away from the AS*. For example, if the House and Senate median are controlled by Republicans but the filibuster pivot is controlled by Democrats, AS is occupied by the Republican House majority median, while R is identified as the Senate filibuster pivot. Using this set of player-identification rules, Figure 5 oulines the locations of AS and R over the 5 Congresses examined in this study.

Beyond measurements of AS and R, of course, calculating the acceleration and deceleration regions requires an estimate of R''s location. For most of the above scenarios, the precise location matters little, if at all. For example, in Scenarios 2 and 3, players need only know, should a change in R or AS occur, which *direction* each actor will shift. For Scenario 1, however, players need to form an expectation

[11] Whereby the Speaker selects to keep off the voting agenda bills that do not attain majority support from the majority caucus.

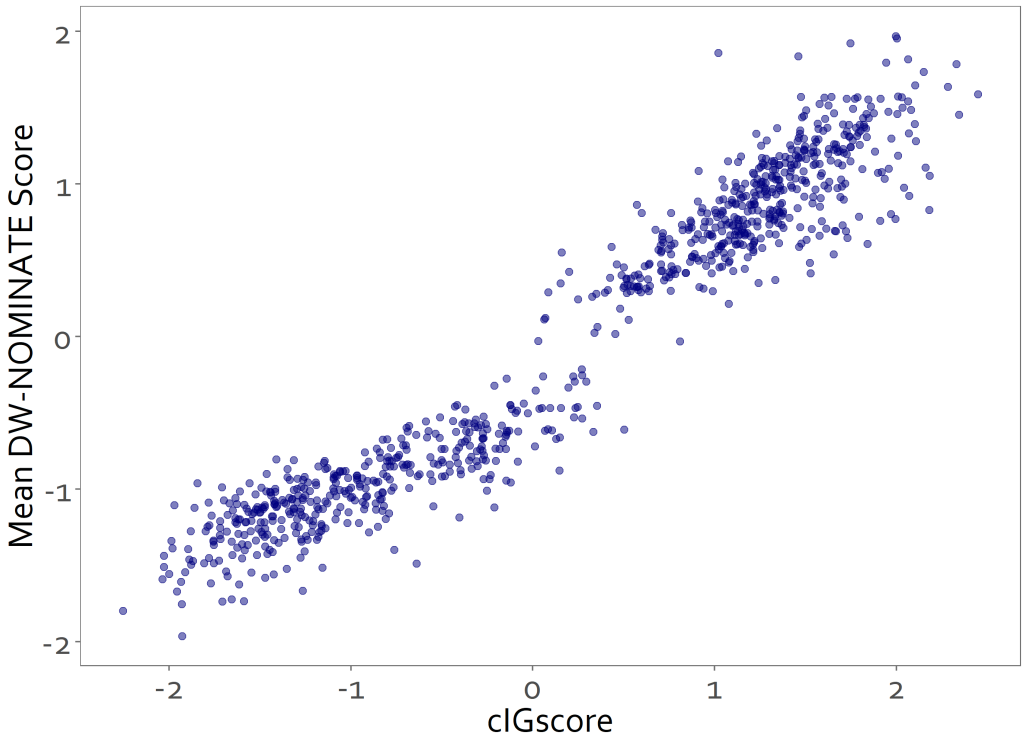
Figure 5: AS and R by Congress



regarding the location of R'. To generate such measurements, I lean on the assumption that members will typically understand how electoral changes will influence who is pivotal after the upcoming election. Thus, I measure the expected location of R' as the actual location of R, should the predicted electoral outcome (discussed below) transpire.

Ideal points for these pivotal actors are measured via the preference estimates found in Crosson, Furnas and Lorenz's (N.d.) study on interest groups and bill locations in recent Congresses. While the generation of these scores is detailed at greater length below, Crosson et al. generate preference estimates for members of Congress on the same scale as a large set of point estimates for bill proposal and status quo locations. These preference estimates correlate strongly with existing preference measures based on roll call data alone. For example, Crosson et al.'s preference estimates (which they call cIGscores) for sponsors of legislation from the 110th - 114th Congresses correlate with first-dimension DW-NOMINATE scores at $\rho = .945$. This correlation is particularly strong considering the fact that the estimation matrix includes many bills, actors (interest groups), and member behaviors (cosponsorship) not found in the matrices used to calculate DW-NOMINATE. Further still, when one compares the members' cIGscores with their roll-call-only IGscores, cIGscores are even more highly correlated with previous measures, this time at $\rho = .977$. Figure 6 plots of sponsor cIGscores against DW-NOMINATE scores. As with DW-NOMINATE, cIGscores remain quite bimodal in distribution and correlate strongly with NOMINATE.

Figure 6: cIGscores v. DW-NOMINATE, 110th - 114th Congresses



Note: Because cIGscores are static and DW-NOMINATE scores are dynamic, this graph depicts cIGscores plotted against each legislator's mean DW-NOMINATE score over the 110th to 114th Congress time period.

Electoral Expectations and Power Transition Scenarios

An additional requirement for testing the above hypotheses relates directly to the dynamic structure of the game itself: in order to code whether or not a status quo policy lies within the deceleration or acceleration intervals, one needs to measure expectations about the upcoming congressional elections. To do so, I turn primarily to an electoral futures market, the Iowa Electronic Market (IEM), in order to best measure contemporaneous changes in electoral expectations—and, therefore, whether members should expect proposals to be met with policy acceleration, deceleration, or neither.

IEM solicits "investments" from private citizens on a wide variety of political outcomes, including the whether particular candidates will win the presidency and how Senate races will end within particular states. Most useful for this analysis, IEM has solicited wagers on partisan control of Congress since 1996. These data are especially useful for this study's purposes, as they capture contemporaneous *beliefs* regarding potential electoral changes, rather than actual changes observed in hindsight. Most importantly, because the contracts are priced within [$0, $1], the resulting contract prices may be interpreted as a collective belief regarding the probability that a chamber of Congress will be under control of either party, following the upcoming election.

Unfortunately, while IEM exists for the full time period covered in this study, there are gaps in the IEM data near the beginning of each congressional session (before new markets were opened). To address this problem, I have extrapolated the IEM measures, using information that may inform politicians' contemporaneous beliefs regarding probabilities of partisan control.[12] This information includes economic indicators such as unemployment rates and consumer sentiment, baseline political information such as the size of a party's majority and (in the Senate) the number of a party's members up for reelection, and granular political data such as presidential and congressional approval rates—in addition to generic congressional vote ballot polls.

These measurements—both real and extrapolated—are ideal for capturing the probability of AS change (i.e., whether or not the majority in the House will shift). But, because R is routinely located at the filibuster pivot, they are less well-suited for the measurement of R's probability for change. When the majority in the Senate is expected to change, thereby altering the location of the filibuster pivot the application of IEM to measure R's change probability is straightforward. However, if the current majoirty in the Senate is expected to *gain* the 60th vote in the Senate, majority change probabilities are not appropriate to mea-

[12] A more detailed recounting of this strategy is included in Appendix D.

sure the probability of change in R. In these cases, I adopt an approach similar to the IEM extrapolation process, this time modeling and extrapolating Senate vote *share*, using Bayesian poisson regression analysis. Doing so allows me to generate a posterior distribution of predicted seat shares for each time period in my data, which I use to generate likelihoods that either party will gain more than 60 seats. Details on this procedure are included in Appendix D.

Taken together, then, AS and R are coded as "likely to change" according to the following rule:

$$C_j^{AS} = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } p(P_j^{AS} \neq P_j^{AS}) > 0.5 \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

$$C_j^{R} = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } p(P_j^{R} \neq P_{j+1}^{R}) > 0.5 \text{ or} \\ & \quad p(VS_j^R < 0.6 < VS_{j+1}^R \vee (VS_j^R > 0.4 > VS_{j+1}^R) > 0.5 \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

where C_j^{AS} and C_j^R represent the binary variable indicated whehter or not AS an R are expected to change, P_j^{AS} and P_j^R represent the party of AS and R during Congress j, and VS_j^R represents the vote share of R's party in the Senate during Congress j.

If either $C_j^{AS} = 1$ or C_j^R = 1, then Congress j is placed into the relevant agenda-setting scenario articulated above. More specifically:

$$\textbf{Scenarios 1, 2:} \quad C_j^{AS} = 0 \text{ and } C_j^R = 1 \text{ ;}$$
$$\textbf{Scenario 3:} \quad C_j^{AS} = 1$$

Note that if R is projected to move closer to AS in Scenario 1/2, then Scenario 1 obtains. Conversely, if R is projected to move further from AS, Scenario 2 obtains.

Using this measurement strategy, AS is coded as competitive in the 111th Congress (after which control of the House switches from Democratic to Republican control), placing the 111th Congress in Scenario 3 (policy acceleration). R is competitive (and AS is not) in the 110th, 112th, and 113th, and 114th Congresses. Since R was predicted to move closer to AS in the 110th, 112th, and 113th Congresses, these Congresses face Scenario 1 (policy deceleration), while the 114th Congresses lies within Scenario 2 (policy acceleration).

Measurement of Status Quo Locations and Viable, Messaging Legislation

A final requirement for testing whether bills exposed to acceleration or deceleration are systematically more or less viable, of course, is bill-specific information regarding not only a bill's targeted SQ, but also the spatial location of the bill proposal itself. To date, widespread measures of bill proposal and status quo locations have proven highly elusive. As Clinton summarizes in his review (Clinton, 2017) of strategies for measuring the content and direction of policy changes, common methodologies for generating ideal point estimates (e.g. Poole and Rosenthal, 1997; Clinton, Jackman and Rivers, 2004) fall short of producing reliable estimates for prosposal and status quo locations.

In this study, I make use of an original dataset of bill proposal locations and status quo locations generated by Crosson, Furnas and Lorenz (N.d.)—the largest data set of bill proposal and status quo point estimates generated to date. Crosson et al. generate their estimates by jointly scaling cosponsorship, roll call, and interest group position-taking data throughout the legislative process, which allows them to identify proposal locations, cutpoints, and (consequently) status quo locations for each bill possessing the required cosponsorship, roll call, and position-taking data. As noted earlier, the approach also generates ideal points for members of Congress and interest groups, on the same scale as the bill proposal and status quo locations.

This information, when combined with information regarding it the ideological locations of pivotal actors, provides the final keys for the measurement of the primary variables of interests: measurements of whether or not a bill's associated status quo lies within the deceleration or acceleration intervals and whether a bill is viable or messaging.

Using these data, measurement of my dependent variable, the introduction of *viable or messaging legislation*, proceeds as follows. As defined earlier, a proposal counts as viable *when it would pass through both chambers of Congress (on the basis of its spatial properties), were it to be brought up for vote*—and messaging otherwise. Thus, assuming perfect information about the locations of pivotal actors, proposals are viable *when they improve upon the status quo for the most extreme leftward and extreme rightward veto players in the legislative policymaking process.* Because Crosson et al.'s estimation procedure generates ideal points for members on the same scale as proposals, proposals are coded as viable if the following conditions hold:

$$Y_{ij} = \begin{cases} 1, & \text{if } |SQ'_{ij} - L_j| \geq |SQ_{ij} - L_j| \ \& \ |SQ'_{ij} - L_j| \geq |SQ_{ij} - R_j| \\ 0, & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

where Y_{ij} is the binary variable representing whether or not a bill proposal is coded as viable, SQ'_{ij} corresponds to bill i's spatial location in Congress j, SQ_{ij} refers to bill i's associated status quo, L_j refers to the location of the most liberal pivotal actor in Congress j, and R_j refers to the most conservative pivotal actor. Because my theory assumes a unidimensional policy space, if a proposal improves upon SQ for the two most extreme pivotal actors in Congress, it should pass through Congress if brought up for a vote. Viable proposals, then, are sensitive to these preferences and improve upon the status quo for each pivotal actor.

Second, given the electoral transitions highlighted above, the acceleration/deceleration indicator variables are coded as follows. First, status quo policies are subject to policy deceleration within the 110th, 112th, and 113th Congress when they lie beyond R within the policy space (H1). Status quo policies are subject to acceleration in the 114th Congress when they lie beyond R (H2). Finally, status quo policies are subject to policy acceleration in the 111th Congress, anywhere outside of $[AS, R]$ (H3). As stated in the aforementioned hypotheses, members of Congress are expected to offer viable proposals during conditions of policy acceleration and messaging proposals during conditions of policy deceleration. In sum:

> **H_1** : Status quo policies in the 110th, 112th, and 113th Congress lying beyond R in the opposite direction of AS will be met with *messaging legislative proposals.* Other SQ in these Congresses will be met with viable proposals.

> **H_2** : Status quo policies in the 114th Congress lying beyond R in the opposite direction of AS will be met with *viable legislative proposals.*

> **H_3**: All status quo policies in the 111th Congress lying outside $[AS, R]$ will be met with viable proposals.

Additional Independent Variables

Beyond the hypothesis-specific variables highlighted above, a variety of other considerations may well also help to explain the incidence of viable and messaging proposals, each of which I control for in the following analysis. Perhaps the most important such variables again deal directly with the location of SQ. In particuar, I control for the ideological location of SQ and how "extreme" SQ is. Some theoretical models (e.g. Dziuda and Loeper, 2018) suggest that political systems with large numbers of veto players (such as the U.S.) can exhibit over-time policy biases. Therefore, I consider whether conservative or liberal

policies appear more or less likely to be met viable or messaging proposals. Second, I control for the overall extremity of the status quo policy in question, captured by the absolute value of the *SQ Location* term. Here, the expectation is that the estimated coefficient is positive: for policies that are to the far right or far left, it is easier to make a proposal that both AS and R would accept. Not only is the range of possible such offers larger, but the chance is greater that this range will include the proposer's ideal point.

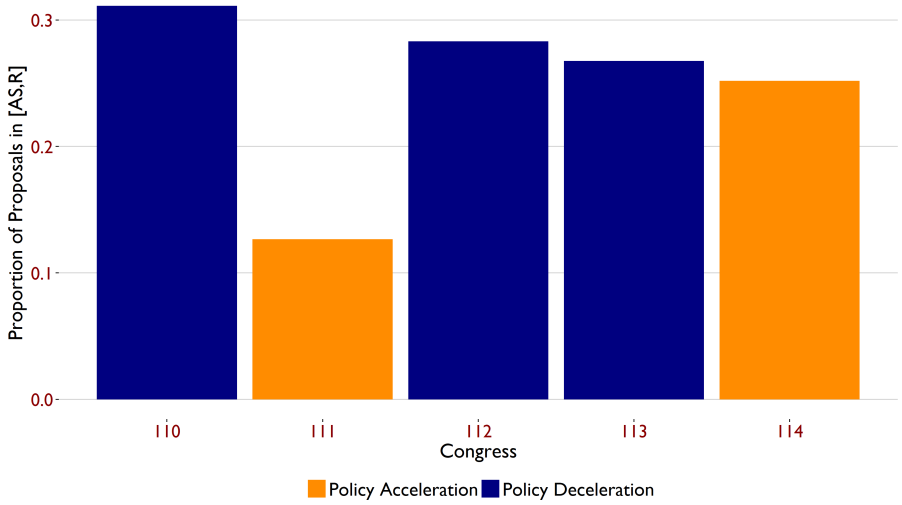
In addition to these SQ-related variables, I include a variety of variables related to the proposer herself. First, I control for majority status. Assuming that majority members face an added incentive to pass legislation (in order for their party to be viewed as competent), such members may be more willing to settle for less than their ideal point more readily. Second, I control for a member's gender. Recent research (Volden, Wiseman and Wittmer, 2013) has suggested that female members are more effective legislators, which could be related to their propensity to offer viable legislative proposals. If so, the coefficient on *Female* would be positive. Third, I control for party (captured by the binary variable *Democrat*). Given that previous literature has underscored the fact that Republicans have polarized to a greater extent than have Democrats (McCarty, Poole and Rosenthal, 2008), and given that some literature has suggested that Republicans are more ideologically motivated than are Democrats (Grossman and Hopkins, 2016), Republicans may be more likely to make messaging proposals which more faithfully reflect their ideal point. Finally, I control for a sponsor's ideological extremity. Members on the far reaches of the ideological spectrum not only may be less interested in compromise, but they also have, mathematically speaking, fewer opportunities within the policy space for offering viable proposals (assuming they wish to offer policies that also improve upon the status quo for them as well). Consequently, I expect that *Ideological Extremity* to be negatively associated with viable proposals.

Empirical Approach and Results

In order to test H_1, H_2 and H_3, I run a series of bill-level logistic regression models, designed to predict whether a member met a targeted status quo policy with a viable proposal. Given that theory makes predictions about the locations and timing of bills—and not individual legislators' propensities to offer certain kinds of proposals per se—a bill-level model is more appropriate for this analysis than, say, a member-level model.

In order to test the above hypotheses, I run three series of logistic regressions with cluster-robust standard errors by Congress. In particular, I regress the binary Y_{ij} (viable proposal) variable on each of the three indicator variables associated with each hypothesis separately. I proceed in this fashion instead of

Figure 7: Percentage of Proposals Located within [AS, R], By Congress



estimating a single model with all three variables for two primary reasons. First, given that H_2 and H_3 both respond to policy acceleration, a unified model would disallow separate testing of these two hypotheses. As a result, it would be impossible to discern whether both hypotheses receive support, or whether one "type" of acceleration is driving any observed result. Second, because the policy acceleration and deceleration variables are exhaustive and mutually exclusive in these data, inclusion of all terms in the same model would force one of the terms into the model's constant term. This would obfuscate the interpretation of the model, for either policy deceleration or acceleration. These challenges notwithstanding, I do estimate a unified deceleration-acceleration model in Appendix A, the results of which are consistent with each of the above hypotheses.

Within each of the models presented below, I vary the subsample, fixed effects, and clustering of standard errors in several different ways, in order to demonstrate the robustness of the results. First, in all models, I remove SQ policies located within [AS,R] (the static gridlock interval), since such policies cannot—by definition—be met with a viable proposal. That is, no proposal exists that would improve upon such status quo policies for both the left and right end points of the static gridlock interval.[13] Interestingly, though, the percentage of all proposals found in [AS,R], depicted in Figure 7 is highest within Congresses exposed to policy deceleration, lending some support to the notion that policy deceleration encourages the introduction of non-viable proposals.

Second, given that R is typically located within the Senate, I rerun all models below using only bills

[13] Which, of course, is why this interval is considered in equilibrium in static policy change models.

originating in the House of Representatives. Implicit in the above hypotheses is the assumption that bill sponsors—regardless of chamber—consider the location of R, as they decide how they will respond to policy acceleration and deceleration. This assumption is most reasonable for sponsors in the Senate, given that R is located within the sponsor's own chamber. In the House, however, it may be less reasonable to assume that sponsors bear in mind the preferences of R, when it is located in a different chamber. Thus, to demonstrate that the results are not driven solely by sponsorship behavior in the Senate alone, all even-numbered models presented below are estimated with House-only data.

Third, I introduce a variety of fixed effects into each analysis, to ensure that unobserved confounds at the issue- and committee-level are not driving the observed results. Fixed effects by a bill's primary issue area are drawn from the Congressional Bills Project Adler and Wilkerson (2006), which draws upon the classifications provided by the Policy Agendas Project. Fixed effects by committee of referral are also drawn from the Congressional Bills Project. In addition to these fixed effects, I estimate a separate set of models with errors clustered by issue area and committee of referral. Results from these models are nearly identical to the primary results presented here, so they are not presented here.[14]

Fourth, when examining Scenarios 1 and 2, I rerun each model using only SQ policies located *beyond R on the opposite side of AS*. That is, because the acceleration and deceleration regions are located outside of [AS,R] to the opposite side of AS, restricting the analysis to these regions ensures that "control" units are drawn from as similar an ideological region as possible. These results are presented for both full-sample and House-only sample regressions, with largely the same results.

Finally, to ensure that my results are not driven by differences between long-serving and new members of Congress, I replicate each of the above analyses and robustness checks solely using bills authored by members who served for all five Congresses in the sample. These results are summarized in Appendix B, and they remain statistically and substantively similar to the results presented below.

H_1: Policy Deceleration

According to the logic delineated in Scenario 1, AS faces incentives to decelerate policy change when she anticipates that she will retain control of AS and gain ground with R (i.e. face a more proximate R), following the upcoming election. In particular, AS has incentives to put off changes to status quo policies located on the opposite side of R from AS (see Figure 2). Understanding this incentive structure, I argue, members of Congress will be reticent to engage in viable bill-writing. Inasmuch as such legislation

[14] Though they are available upon request from the author.

is costlier to draft than legislation lying closer to the member's ideal point, when members do decide to address SQ in this region, they will be unlikely to offer viable proposals. Instead, they may be better served to propose messaging legislation closer to their ideal point.

Table 1: Policy Deceleration and Viable Proposals (Scenario 1)

	Dependent variable:			
	Introduction of Viable Proposal			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
SQ ∈ *Deceleration Region*	−0.735***	−0.827**	−1.994***	−1.485***
	(0.263)	(0.387)	(0.358)	(0.458)
Majority Status	1.755***	3.466***	−1.120	−4.302**
	(0.373)	(0.778)	(0.735)	(2.152)
SQ Location	−0.059	−0.020	0.005	−0.218
	(0.068)	(0.102)	(0.171)	(0.247)
|*SQ Location*|	1.860***	2.026***	2.437***	2.528***
	(0.155)	(0.264)	(0.232)	(0.343)
Female	−0.390	−0.900**	−0.948**	−0.966*
	(0.280)	(0.402)	(0.416)	(0.573)
Democrat	0.743***	1.878***	2.121***	3.365***
	(0.285)	(0.529)	(0.640)	(0.938)
Ideological Extremity	−1.113***	−1.156**	−1.193***	−1.720***
	(0.242)	(0.456)	(0.374)	(0.664)
Constant	−4.840***	−7.080***	−2.726**	0.073
	(0.614)	(1.123)	(1.151)	(2.666)
Observations	753	445	507	320
Sample	Full	House	Opposite AS	House/Opp. AS
Log Likelihood	−286.574	−147.314	−154.140	−88.533
Akaike Inf. Crit.	589.147	310.628	324.281	193.066
Note:				*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table **??** displays strong evidence in favor of strategic member behavior when facing a deceleration environment. Indeed, throughout all model specifications, the association between SQ's location within the deceleration interval and the introduction of viable proposals is negative and statistically significant. Models 1 and 2 make the fullest use of the entire available sample of bills located outside [AS,R]. However, unlike Model 1, Model 2 focuses only on House-originated bills. Effect sizes in these models remain similar.

Models 3 and 4 offer perhaps the most rigorous test of H_1. In these models, I prune the sample to include only bills that are located on the opposite side of R from AS (i.e., to the right of [AS,R] under Democratic AS and to the left of [R, AS] under Republican AS), across all Congresses. According to the theory, bills in this region should only exhibit a negative association with viable proposal-making under electoral conditions for deceleration. Thus, focusing on bills within in this region tests specifically whether the theory isolates the proper *timing* for deceleration—not just spatial bill location. As Table 1 indicates, the theory performs quite well. Across both models, policy deceleration congresses experience far fewer viable proposals, given their associated status quos. This time, however, the effect size is much larger than in Models 1-2.

While the effects sizes vary somewhat between the models, each of the models exhibits a substantively meaningful association with the introduction of viable proposals. In Model 1, which includes the smallest association between deceleration region, status quo policies within the deceleration region are 15 percent less likely to be met with a viable proposal than similar bills not subject to deceleration dynamics, holding all other variables at their means or (in binary cases) their optimal levels. In Model 5, the association is even larger: bills subject to deceleration are 24 percent less likely than similar bills to be met with a viable proposal. When members face a scenario under which they should expect policy deceleration, then, they appear to be introduce bills that are systematically less likely to improve upon the status quo for pivotal actors.

These results are robust to the inclusion of various fixed effects, as depicted in Table 2. The magnitude of the association between location in the deceleration interval and probability of offering a viable proposal does vary based on fixed effect type. However, the results remain substantively and statistically significant, again providing evidence in favor of H_1.

Before discussing policy acceleration dynamics, a few other results merit mention. First, as expected, majority party members are significantly more likely to offer viable proposals, all else equal—at least in Models 1-2. In Models 3 and 4, however, the opposite trend emerges. Indeed, for policies that lie *opposite* AS—and therefore, opposite most or all majority party members, legislators within the majority are *less* likely to offer viable proposals. In other words, when Republicans seek to address liberal status quo policies (and vice versa) as members of the majority, they appear to be attempting to move policy beyond what R will tolerate. This, of course, does not mean that amendments and committee activity will not moderate the bill, but this trend reversal is notable nonetheless. The pattern holds in Table **??**, when fixed effects are included.

Table 2: Scenario 1 Results with Fixed Effects

	Dependent variable:							
	Introduction of Viable Proposal							
	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
SQ ∈ *Decel. Region*	−0.889***	−0.983**	−2.574***	−2.339***	−0.572**	−0.679*	−2.022***	−1.415***
	(0.302)	(0.444)	(0.471)	(0.629)	(0.276)	(0.387)	(0.378)	(0.503)
Majority Status	1.843***	3.600***	−1.308	−5.908*	1.965***	4.065***	−0.754	−3.623**
	(0.448)	(0.991)	(1.146)	(3.355)	(0.334)	(0.630)	(0.614)	(1.628)
SQ Location	−0.137	−0.095	−0.014	−0.322	−0.095	−0.077	−0.041	−0.298
	(0.084)	(0.136)	(0.276)	(0.382)	(0.070)	(0.104)	(0.149)	(0.296)
|*SQ Location*|	2.081***	2.265***	3.320***	3.448***	2.051***	2.412***	3.003***	3.231***
	(0.206)	(0.368)	(0.417)	(0.622)	(0.179)	(0.276)	(0.323)	(0.467)
Female	−0.361	−0.845*	−1.063**	−1.381	−0.368	−0.901*	−1.022**	−1.039
	(0.306)	(0.469)	(0.499)	(0.904)	(0.326)	(0.541)	(0.521)	(0.792)
Democrat	0.882**	2.005***	2.304**	3.685***	0.896***	2.518***	2.605***	4.439***
	(0.352)	(0.672)	(1.042)	(1.356)	(0.298)	(0.514)	(0.605)	(1.285)
Ideo. Extremity	−0.968***	−1.136**	−1.363**	−1.915*	−1.201***	−1.455***	−1.093***	−2.170***
	(0.297)	(0.558)	(0.632)	(1.117)	(0.260)	(0.481)	(0.368)	(0.724)
Constant	−6.718***	−8.371***	−4.642*	−0.431	−5.676***	−8.382***	−4.721***	−1.969
	(1.140)	(1.797)	(2.697)	(4.388)	(0.688)	(1.139)	(1.074)	(1.867)
Observations	710	419	478	299	753	445	507	320
Effects	Issue	Issue	Issue	Issue	Comm.	Comm.	Comm.	Comm.
Sample	Full	House	Opposite AS	House/Opp. AS	Full	House	Opp. AS	House/Opp. AS
Log Likelihood	−246.540	−127.722	−118.617	−65.262	−264.986	−127.237	−131.377	−73.006
Akaike Inf. Crit.	547.079	309.443	291.235	184.524	613.973	332.474	346.754	224.013

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Beyond majority party membership, *|SQ Location|, Democrat, and Ideological Extremity* all behave as expected. Democrats do appear systematically more likely to offer viable proposals, consistent with asymmetries highlighted in previous work. Similarly, more extreme members demonstrate a lower propensity for offering viable proposals, all else equal. Also, consistent with spatial constraints associated with moderate versus extreme status quo policies, moderate status quo policies are less likely to be paired with a viable proposal (and extreme status quos more likely). Interestingly, however, female members of Congress do not appear to offer more viable proposals than do their male counterparts. While the effect is not consistently significant, female members are if anything *less* likely to offer such proposals.

Taken together, the evidence presented in Table 1 is consistent with theoretical expectations. Under conditions of policy deceleration, members of Congress appear less likely to offer viable proposals for consideration.

H_2: Policy Acceleration when AS Does Not Change

As detailed above, when AS is not expected to change but R is expected to move away from AS, AS faces an incentive to accelerate policymaking for a particular set of SQ. More specifically, AS should focus her policymaking energy on $SQ > R + |SQ - R|$,[15] as movements of those SQ will become either impossible or smaller following the upcoming election. Understanding this dynamic, members of Congress will, I argue, propose legislation that is viable, rather than messaging, within this region. That is, they will generate proposals—for SQ within the acceleration region specifically—that would pass through Congress if given the opportunity, since the overall probability of those policies receiving agenda space should be higher.

Table 3 investigates whether or not SQ within the acceleration region are in fact met with viable proposals at a higher rate than those outside of that region. As in Table 1, Models 1 and 2 make full use of all data outside the static gridlock region, while Models 3 and 4 focus only on SQ lying opposite R from AS. Here again, Models 3 and 4 offer the most difficult test of the theory, as they compare SQ that are similar in spatial location and other factors, but differ in their exposure to electoral incentives for acceleration.

As Table 3 depicts, support for H_2 is mixed. In particular, across all specifications, results are positive and significant in models pooling over chamber and positive, though the results are not significant in House-only models. These positive results are consistent with H_2, although the weak House-only results

[15] when Democrats control AS; the analogous region for Republican control is $SQ < R - |SQ - R|$

Table 3: Policy Acceleration and Viable Proposals (Scenario 2)

	Dependent variable:			
	Introduction of Viable Proposal			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
SQ ∈ *Acceleration Region*	0.700**	0.590	1.225***	0.623
	(0.333)	(0.475)	(0.402)	(0.574)
Majority Status	1.691***	3.380***	−0.640	−4.567
	(0.368)	(0.763)	(0.581)	(3.325)
SQ Location	0.032	0.068	0.155	−0.268
	(0.063)	(0.093)	(0.138)	(0.258)
|*SQ Location*|	1.869***	2.026***	2.262***	2.340***
	(0.155)	(0.259)	(0.226)	(0.302)
Female	−0.391	−0.893**	−0.800**	−0.893
	(0.281)	(0.412)	(0.376)	(0.548)
Democrat	0.877***	1.984***	2.205***	4.015***
	(0.298)	(0.521)	(0.554)	(1.019)
Ideological Extremity	−1.098***	−1.182***	−1.030***	−1.562**
	(0.237)	(0.440)	(0.335)	(0.612)
Constant	−5.283***	−7.432***	−4.237***	−0.621
	(0.628)	(1.165)	(0.890)	(3.605)
Observations	753	445	507	320
Sample	Full	House	Opposite AS	House/Opp. AS
Log Likelihood	−288.616	−149.441	−170.486	−94.761
Akaike Inf. Crit.	593.231	314.882	356.973	205.522
Note:				*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

indicate that incentives for viable proposal-making are not as strong as in the other cases. One reason for this relative weakness might be due to the uncertainty associated with the electoral outcomes of the treated Congress under this scenario, the 114th Congress. Under this scenario, the IEM predicted for most of 2015 and 2016 that Republicans would incur losses in the Senate, due in part to the unpopularity of their presidential candidates. Such a dynamic should have led Republicans to push policymaking forward; however, many Republicans may have reasonably believed that the threat of losing the Senate was not as great as some worried.[16]

Consequently, given the uncertainty of 2016 electoral prospects, the support for H_2 shown here is perhaps understandably weaker than in the other scenarios. Nevertheless, among models exhibiting a statistically significant association between viable proposal-making and SQ location in the acceleration region, acceleration-region bills are between 7 and 11 percent more likely to be met with viable proposals than are similar bills outside this region. These results are similar—and in other cases stronger—when fixed effects are incorporated, reported in Table 4. That is, a SQ's location within the Scenario 2 acceleration region is consistently positively associated with the introduction of a viable proposals in all but a handful of the House-only models.

Given that the models presented here are highly similar to those examined in the deceleration analysis, most of the additional covariates behave similarly in Table 2 as in Table 1. However, it is worth noting that, for Models 5 and 6, *Majority Status* falls out of statistical significance in the opposite-AS models. Apart from this difference, though, much remains similar. Here again, sponosor characteristics such as *Ideological Extremity* and party (*Democrat*) are associated with a lower and higher probability for viable proposals, respectively. SQ extremity is also again positively associated with viable proposal-making.

Taken together, these models provide support for the hypothesis that agenda-setting dynamics generated by electoral expectations—this time providing incentives for acceleration—influence members' propensities for offer viable or messaging legislation.

H_3: Policy Acceleration when AS Changes

Whereas AS is expected to remain under control of the same party in Scenarios 1 and 2, AS is expected to change in Scenario 3. This anticipated change generates large discrepancies in expected policy outcomes in Periods 1 and 2, across large portions of the policy space. Indeed, as captured in Proposition 3, AS faces an incentive to accelerate policymaking for all SQ lying outside the static gridlock interval. Consequently,

[16] In fact, Republicans surprisingly did not incur losses in 2016 and even won the White House

Table 4: Scenario 2 Results with Fixed Effects

	Dependent variable:							
	Introduction of Viable Proposal							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
SQ ∈ *Accel. Region*	0.890**	0.835	1.510***	1.255*	0.644*	0.590	1.273***	0.595
	(0.385)	(0.552)	(0.477)	(0.691)	(0.367)	(0.515)	(0.448)	(0.633)
Majority Status	1.770***	3.534***	−0.728	−6.385	1.923***	4.015***	−0.256	−3.297*
	(0.439)	(0.998)	(0.787)	(5.840)	(0.336)	(0.632)	(0.564)	(1.760)
SQ Location	−0.025	0.018	0.177	−0.380	−0.019	0.005	0.107	−0.336
	(0.074)	(0.118)	(0.189)	(0.374)	(0.071)	(0.106)	(0.144)	(0.313)
|*SQ Location*|	2.079***	2.271***	2.856***	2.981***	2.065***	2.415***	2.848***	3.068***
	(0.205)	(0.370)	(0.366)	(0.524)	(0.179)	(0.275)	(0.306)	(0.442)
Female	−0.368	−0.850*	−0.812*	−1.162	−0.373	−0.881	−0.888*	−1.092
	(0.308)	(0.481)	(0.439)	(0.805)	(0.326)	(0.537)	(0.483)	(0.755)
Democrat	1.071***	2.220***	2.431***	4.813***	1.027***	2.621***	2.708***	5.057***
	(0.366)	(0.678)	(0.767)	(1.475)	(0.314)	(0.522)	(0.590)	(1.358)
Ideological Extremity	−0.973***	−1.227**	−1.152**	−1.686*	−1.193***	−1.522***	−1.025***	−2.193***
	(0.298)	(0.539)	(0.494)	(0.907)	(0.259)	(0.480)	(0.341)	(0.723)
Constant	−7.138***	−8.782***	−5.874***	−1.022	−6.077***	−8.651***	−6.241***	−2.987
	(1.162)	(1.882)	(1.864)	(6.260)	(0.690)	(1.160)	(0.996)	(1.839)
Observations	710	419	478	299	753	445	507	320
Effects	Issue	Issue	Issue	Issue	Comm.	Comm.	Comm.	Comm.
Sample	Full	House	Opposite AS	House/Opp. AS	Full	House	Opp. AS	House/Opp. AS
Log Likelihood	−248.982	−129.846	−137.978	−74.182	−265.656	−128.165	−144.205	−76.869
Akaike Inf. Crit.	551.965	313.691	329.957	202.364	615.311	334.330	372.410	231.738

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

for all status quo policies located outside the static gridlock interval, members of Congress should be more likely to offer viable proposals when they expect AS to change parties—as described in H_3.

Tests of H_3 reveal strong support for the idea that members of Congress respond to possible changes in AS by proposing viable—and not messaging—legislation. Table 5 summarizes these results. As in the previous two analyses, Model 1 makes full use of the dataset, while Model 2 focuses on House bills alone. The same pattern holds for Models 3-4 and Models 5-6, except that Models 3-4 include issue area fixed effects while Models 5-6 include committee fixed effects.

Table 5: Policy Acceleration and Viable Proposals (Scenario 3)

	Dependent variable:					
	Introduction of Viable Proposal					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
SQ ∈ *Acceleration Region*	2.789***	2.450***	3.196***	3.061***	2.949***	2.353***
	(0.410)	(0.622)	(0.466)	(0.874)	(0.372)	(0.543)
Majority Status	1.234***	2.389***	1.336***	2.195*	1.482***	2.962***
	(0.421)	(0.890)	(0.513)	(1.240)	(0.359)	(0.653)
SQ Location	−0.023	0.011	−0.101	−0.072	−0.072	−0.060
	(0.078)	(0.107)	(0.099)	(0.149)	(0.074)	(0.104)
|*SQ Location*|	2.207***	2.217***	2.582***	2.551***	2.423***	2.618***
	(0.174)	(0.272)	(0.253)	(0.383)	(0.206)	(0.298)
Female	−0.340	−1.029**	−0.291	−1.120**	−0.326	−1.020*
	(0.320)	(0.481)	(0.354)	(0.539)	(0.348)	(0.573)
Democrat	−0.308	0.580	−0.342	0.314	−0.228	1.245**
	(0.385)	(0.691)	(0.490)	(0.958)	(0.353)	(0.585)
Ideological Extremity	−1.141***	−1.110**	−0.978***	−0.897	−1.253***	−1.356***
	(0.281)	(0.480)	(0.326)	(0.590)	(0.292)	(0.489)
Constant	−5.407***	−6.896***	−8.118***	−8.961***	−6.191***	−8.158***
	(0.671)	(1.228)	(1.360)	(1.898)	(0.755)	(1.152)
Observations	753	445	710	419	753	445
Effects	None	None	Issue	Issue	Committee	Committee
Sample	Full	House	Full	House	Full	House
Log Likelihood	−250.768	−136.182	−208.411	−114.561	−228.792	−118.775
Akaike Inf. Crit.	517.535	288.363	470.821	283.122	541.584	315.549
Note:						*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

As illustrated in Table 5, H_3 receives strong support across all models. Indeed, when members target

SQ inside the acceleration region, they appear far more likely to offer a viable proposal than when they target otherwise similar bills not located within this region. This association remains strong regardless of whether or not the models pool across a bill's chamber of origin. In fact, holding all other variables at their means or optimal values, bills with SQ located in Scenario 3's acceleration region are viable with probability between 0.91 or 0.93 (depending upon the specific model referenced). Similar bills located outside the acceleration region are met with a viable proposal with a much smaller probability, between 0.40 and 0.53. This means that electoral incentives for acceleration are associated with a 48 - 51 percentage increase in viable proposal-making instead of messaging proposal-making.

Much as in previous models, *Ideological Extremity* of the proposal and the extremity of the SQ are negatively associated with viable proposal-making. Moreover, *Majority* status again remains a positive and significant predictor of the introduction of viable proposals. Sponsor gender, on the other hand, is inconclusively associatied with viable proposal-making—though again, if anything, female members are less likely to introduce viable proposals. Finally, there does not appear to be an association between party and viable or messagine proposal-making in these models—a result that differs from the two previous analyses.

Taken together, the results from this third and final analysis are strongly consistent with H_3. When control of AS is expected to change from one party to the other, AS faces strong incentives to accelerate policymaking for SQ lying outside the static gridlock interval. Understanding this dynamic, members of Congress appear more likely to offer viable proposals for consideration, rather than messaging bills.

Discussion and Conclusion

For several decades now, Washington journalists and scholars of Congress have underscored the growing incidence and importance of messaging bill-writing and vote-taking, as members fail to draft serious legislation capable of passage. Still, in spite of this centrality, academic research has generally neglected to explain when and why members offer viable or messaging legislation—or how electoral expectations may influence their legislative activities more broadly. In this study, I provide a theoretical framework for understanding how fluctuations in competition over partisan control of pivotal actors in Congress might influence members' bill sponsorship patterns. Empirical examinations of this framework provide strong support for the notion that expectations over future partisan advantages and disadvantages do appear to influence the types of legislation members are willing to sponsor.

Given that Congress's electoral history has varied considerably in terms of competitiveness, under-

standing how electoral dynamics influence legislative behavior remains a crucial topic for future research. Indeed, while Congress has expereinced prolonged eras of partisan dominance (e.g., Democratic rule for much of the 20th Century), intense competition over control of congressional majorities has developed since the 1980s and 90s, fundamentally altering how members of Congress approach their work as legislators (Lee, 2016). In spite of these dramatic differences over time, however, current models of policy change and bills sponsorship activity rarely consider how electoral competition might influence the strategic environment within which policy change occurs. This study provides a framework for understanding how these electoral dynamics influence not only when bills should pass into law, but also how members of Congress may respond to the differential incentives introduced by various electoral regimes.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Unified Acceleration Models

While the primary analysis in the paper separately examines policy acceleration under H_2 and H_3, the results are robust to inclusion of all terms in a single model. Indeed, when all policy-acceleration-related variables are included in a single model, conditions for policy acceleration are consistently positively associated with the introduction of viable proposals. Here again, because all Congresses in the sample are subject to either policy acceleration or deceleration, inclusion of a unified policy acceleration term forces policy deceleration into the constant of the model. Even still, the constant term points in the expected (negative) direction.

Table A1 summarizes these results. In the table, odd-numbered models make use of all available data (less bills included in [AS,R]), while even-numbered models make use of bills first introduced in the House—analysis to the presentation of results in the main text. Models 1-2 include no fixed effects, Models 3-4 include major issue topic fixed effects, and Models 5-6 include fixed effects for primary committee of referral. Finally, Models 7-8 winnow the sample to bills introduced by members who served in all five Congresses in the sample. In each model, errors are clustered by Congress.

Table A1: Unified Acceleration Models (H2 and H3)

	Dependent variable:							
	Introduction of Viable Proposal							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Policy Acceleration	2.117***	1.618***	2.493***	2.039***	2.233***	1.618***	2.058***	1.382**
	(0.274)	(0.354)	(0.328)	(0.409)	(0.299)	(0.354)	(0.370)	(0.572)
Majority Status	1.224***	2.803***	1.275**	2.727**	1.454***	2.803***	1.195**	3.624***
	(0.404)	(0.798)	(0.501)	(1.075)	(0.357)	(0.798)	(0.518)	(1.056)
SQ Location	0.108	0.112	0.027	0.038	0.061	0.112	0.029	−0.017
	(0.074)	(0.102)	(0.091)	(0.138)	(0.073)	(0.102)	(0.097)	(0.154)
|*SQ Location*|	2.130***	2.171***	2.522***	2.555***	2.358***	2.171***	2.065***	2.485***
	(0.170)	(0.271)	(0.251)	(0.396)	(0.201)	(0.271)	(0.214)	(0.376)
Female	−0.398	−0.935**	−0.363	−0.963*	−0.339	−0.935**	−0.204	−1.572**
	(0.314)	(0.453)	(0.356)	(0.537)	(0.344)	(0.453)	(0.396)	(0.664)
Democrat	0.462	1.383***	0.604	1.390**	0.700**	1.383***	0.714*	2.703***
	(0.317)	(0.525)	(0.395)	(0.675)	(0.313)	(0.525)	(0.400)	(0.792)
Ideological Extremity	−1.270***	−1.294***	−1.250***	−1.290**	−1.362***	−1.294***	−0.906**	−0.287
	(0.260)	(0.446)	(0.326)	(0.558)	(0.283)	(0.446)	(0.394)	(0.878)
Constant	−5.911***	−7.431***	−8.018***	−9.069***	−6.764***	−7.431***	−6.130***	−10.390***
	(0.686)	(1.160)	(1.379)	(2.086)	(0.751)	(1.160)	(0.891)	(1.704)
Observations	753	445	710	419	753	445	409	225
Effects	None	None	Major Topic	Major Topic	Committee	Committee	None	None
Sample	Full	House Only	Full	House Only	Full	House Only	5-term Members	5-term Members
Log Likelihood	−254.075	−138.824	−211.030	−117.081	−233.456	−138.824	−145.398	−58.890
Akaike Inf. Crit.	526.150	293.647	476.059	288.163	550.913	293.647	306.797	133.781

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

The analysis presented in the body of the paper presents three sets of models, such that each hypothesis may be examined individually. However, the results in the paper are robust to the inclusion of both acceleration and deceleration variables in the same model. Indeed, as showing in Table A1, a unified policy acceleration term is strongly positively associated with the introduction of viable proposals, across a wide variety of model specifications. Here again, though, because all Congresses in the sample are subject to either policy acceleration or deceleration, either the deceleration term is forced into the constant term. Even still, the constant exhibits the expected (negative) sign.

Table A1 demonstrates that these results are robust to a wide variety of model specifications. Models 1-2 include no effects, while Models 3-4 introduce issue area fixed effects and Models 5-6 introduce committee fixed effects. Each model exhibits a strong, positive relationship between exposure to conditions for policy acceleration and members' propensity to introduce viable legislation. Models 7-8 confine the sample to bills introduced by members who served in all five Congresses in the sample. Despite the sample restriction, the results remain substantively and statistically significant.

Appendix B: Bill Sponsorships by Members Serving in All Five Congresses

One possible confound for the observed patterns of viable and messaging legislation is that new members in a given Congress could be artificially deflating the number of viable proposals, due to their relative lack of legislative effectiveness. That is, rather than being attuned to the strategic dynamics generated by differences in agenda-setting behavior, newer members simply lack the information and skill necessary to draft legislation that could pass into law, if brough up for a vote. To address this possiblity, I reestimate each of the paper's models using only bills introduced by members who served in all five Congresses in my sample.

Table A2 summarizes these results for tests of H_1 (policy deceleration). Even when restricting the sample to bills introduced by the aforementioned five-term members of Congress, the results remain largely robust, with seven of the models remaining statistically signifiant. Models 1-4 include no effects, while Models 5-8 introduce issue area fixed effects and Models 9-12 introduce committee fixed effects. Additionally, as in the main text, odd models make use of the full sample, while even models restrict the sample to House bills alone. Moreoever, Models 3-4, 7-8, and 11-12, further restrict the sample to include only SQ lying opposite the static gridlock interval relative to AS. The strongest results are found in these "opposite-only" models, perhaps due to the fact that they provide the most realistic comparison points for treated bills of interest.

Table A2: Policy Deceleration Among Long-Serving Members

	Dependent variable:											
	Introduction of Viable Proposal											
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
SQ ∈ *Deceleration Region*	−0.574	−1.008	−2.279***	−1.672**	−1.051**	−2.029**	−3.399***	−4.242**	−0.481	−0.663	−2.988***	−1.978
	(0.362)	(0.648)	(0.515)	(0.709)	(0.484)	(0.880)	(0.866)	(1.831)	(0.401)	(0.695)	(0.738)	(1.216)
Majority Status	1.702***	4.186***	−1.223	−18.013***	1.849***	5.196***	−1.229	−21.840	1.915***	4.688***	−1.036	−21.489
	(0.458)	(1.044)	(0.933)	(2.340)	(0.606)	(1.153)	(1.793)	(3,588.091)	(0.437)	(1.009)	(1.070)	(4,074.615)
SQ Location	−0.132	−0.138	−0.168	0.145	−0.343***	−0.724**	−0.402	−0.643	−0.221**	−0.208	−0.493*	−0.393
	(0.087)	(0.161)	(0.255)	(0.499)	(0.127)	(0.292)	(0.545)	(1.043)	(0.099)	(0.183)	(0.275)	(0.821)
|*SQ Location*|	1.807***	2.398***	2.601***	2.850***	2.309***	3.655***	4.194***	5.729***	2.046***	2.826***	3.669***	4.397***
	(0.188)	(0.367)	(0.359)	(0.547)	(0.319)	(0.690)	(0.821)	(1.751)	(0.237)	(0.459)	(0.579)	(0.993)
Female	−0.221	−1.599**	−0.395	−1.459*	−0.267	−1.679*	−0.977	−1.604	−0.152	−1.521*	0.185	−0.866
	(0.363)	(0.638)	(0.473)	(0.855)	(0.461)	(0.887)	(0.864)	(1.813)	(0.431)	(0.894)	(0.880)	(1.735)
Democrat	0.821**	3.076***	3.221***	3.001	1.141**	4.280***	4.034**	4.032	1.051**	4.089***	4.982***	7.856**
	(0.363)	(0.879)	(0.998)	(2.006)	(0.479)	(1.017)	(2.051)	(3.280)	(0.410)	(0.965)	(1.174)	(3.854)
Ideological Extremity	−0.582	−0.139	−0.703	−1.370	−0.567	−0.327	−1.013	−2.410	−0.617	−0.587	−0.718	−4.498*
	(0.369)	(1.066)	(0.491)	(0.930)	(0.497)	(0.962)	(0.844)	(1.604)	(0.408)	(1.057)	(0.687)	(2.726)
Constant	−5.368***	−10.079***	−4.140***	13.198***	−9.831***	−20.728***	−11.609***	1.118	−6.341***	−11.183***	−7.694***	14.718
	(0.817)	(1.555)	(1.515)	(3.537)	(1.819)	(7.778)	(4.156)	(3,588.314)	(1.040)	(2.283)	(2.218)	(4,074.620)
Observations	409	225	260	152	384	212	247	143	409	225	260	152
Effects	None	None	None	None	Issue	Issue	Issue	Issue	Committee	Committee	Committee	Committee
Chamber	Both	House	Both	House	Both	House	Both	House	Both	House	Both	House
Sample	All	All	Opposite AS	Opposite AS	All	All	Opposite AS	Opposite AS	All	All	Opposite AS	Opposite AS
Log Likelihood	−162.624	−60.806	−74.257	−34.337	−128.713	−42.167	−48.913	−18.940	−146.028	−47.775	−51.786	−18.354
Akaike Inf. Crit.	341.248	137.612	164.515	84.673	311.426	138.334	151.826	91.880	372.056	169.549	183.572	110.708

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A3: Policy Acceleration (H2) Among Long-Serving Members

	Dependent variable:											
	Introduction of Viable Proposal											
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
SQ ∈ *Acceleration Region*	0.641	0.926	2.120***	1.059	1.051*	2.436**	3.102***	2.905*	0.633	0.435	0.435	2.488***
	(0.482)	(0.962)	(0.684)	(1.077)	(0.558)	(1.109)	(1.084)	(1.731)	(0.534)	(1.005)	(1.005)	(0.924)
Majority Status	1.642***	4.119***	−0.917	−16.693***	1.785***	5.208***	−0.986	−16.366	1.860***	4.659***	4.659***	−0.483
	(0.460)	(1.013)	(0.877)	(2.276)	(0.593)	(1.153)	(1.541)	(2,280.062)	(0.442)	(1.021)	(1.021)	(1.074)
SQ Location	−0.053	−0.006	0.033	0.029	−0.193*	−0.377	−0.050	−0.631	−0.151	−0.132	−0.132	−0.194
	(0.080)	(0.150)	(0.223)	(0.465)	(0.105)	(0.244)	(0.399)	(0.916)	(0.100)	(0.183)	(0.183)	(0.258)
|*SQ Location*|	1.819***	2.388***	2.427***	2.677***	2.292***	3.687***	3.637***	4.618***	2.057***	2.829***	2.829***	3.441***
	(0.189)	(0.347)	(0.341)	(0.486)	(0.313)	(0.680)	(0.650)	(1.238)	(0.237)	(0.455)	(0.455)	(0.550)
Female	−0.248	−1.736***	−0.358	−1.566*	−0.281	−2.202**	−0.586	−2.252*	−0.176	−1.661*	−1.661*	0.146
	(0.370)	(0.673)	(0.490)	(0.844)	(0.463)	(0.886)	(0.726)	(1.325)	(0.433)	(0.883)	(0.883)	(0.783)
Democrat	0.937**	3.282***	3.606***	4.268**	1.295**	4.909***	4.604***	6.951**	1.178***	4.203***	4.203***	5.097***
	(0.402)	(0.800)	(0.913)	(2.041)	(0.515)	(1.107)	(1.745)	(3.395)	(0.439)	(1.012)	(1.012)	(1.210)
Ideological Extremity	−0.534	−0.220	−0.421	−1.399	−0.500	−0.705	−0.436	−2.250	−0.582	−0.701	−0.701	−0.408
	(0.355)	(0.951)	(0.570)	(0.924)	(0.471)	(0.998)	(0.937)	(1.403)	(0.402)	(1.062)	(1.062)	(0.624)
Constant	−5.784***	−10.472***	−6.124***	10.721***	−10.387***	−22.573**	−13.081***	−3.208	−6.737***	−11.313***	−11.313***	−10.265***
	(0.828)	(1.564)	(1.529)	(3.475)	(1.885)	(11.211)	(3.653)	(2,280.139)	(1.018)	(2.249)	(2.249)	(2.139)
Observations	409	225	260	152	384	212	247	143	409	225	225	260
Log Likelihood	−162.987	−61.685	−80.794	−36.790	−130.108	−42.734	−57.138	−22.250	−146.063	−48.151	−48.151	−58.635
Akaike Inf. Crit.	341.974	139.369	177.587	89.580	314.215	139.467	168.277	98.500	372.127	170.301	170.301	197.269

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A4: Policy Acceleration (H3) among Long-Serving Members

	Dependent variable:					
	Introduction of Viable Proposal					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
SQ ∈ *Acceleration Interval*	2.460***	1.457**	3.204***	1.835**	2.838***	1.254
	(0.496)	(0.695)	(0.713)	(0.883)	(0.489)	(0.795)
Majority Status	1.363**	3.562***	1.336*	3.865***	1.589***	3.973***
	(0.537)	(1.078)	(0.686)	(1.180)	(0.479)	(1.077)
SQ Location	−0.100	−0.095	−0.354**	−0.473**	−0.223**	−0.176
	(0.100)	(0.149)	(0.152)	(0.235)	(0.104)	(0.172)
|*SQ Location*|	2.086***	2.457***	2.860***	3.450***	2.384***	2.886***
	(0.224)	(0.386)	(0.456)	(0.633)	(0.277)	(0.463)
Female	−0.096	−1.516**	−0.194	−1.764*	0.068	−1.393
	(0.384)	(0.657)	(0.517)	(0.910)	(0.466)	(0.901)
Democrat	−0.017	2.302***	0.134	2.992***	0.137	3.230***
	(0.463)	(0.870)	(0.617)	(1.069)	(0.457)	(1.070)
Ideological Extremity	−0.787**	−0.189	−0.792*	−0.464	−0.778*	−0.501
	(0.376)	(0.875)	(0.446)	(0.936)	(0.432)	(1.039)
Constant	−5.701***	−9.972***	−11.343***	−19.588**	−6.861***	−10.929***
	(0.838)	(1.619)	(2.174)	(9.110)	(1.124)	(2.282)
Observations	409	225	384	212	409	225
Log Likelihood	−144.790	−59.602	−109.668	−42.932	−126.715	−47.017
Akaike Inf. Crit.	305.581	135.204	273.337	139.864	333.430	168.034

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Appendix C: Introduction of Additional Control Variables

The models presented in the main text each include set of control covariates that may influence the introduction of viable proposals, most of which behave as expected. However, I considered a variety of other potential confounds, which I present in the tables below. These include a sponsor's status as a committee chair or ranking member, subcommittee chair or ranking member, and member seniority. By and large these variables are not significantly associated with the introduction of viable or messaging proposals and were therefore not included in the primary analysis.

Tables A5, A6, and A7 summarize the results of regressions including these additional variables. A5 focusses on conditions for policy deceleration (Scenario 1), while A6 and A7 deal with policy acceleration

(Scenarios 2 and 3). Each table considers the same combinations of full-sample and House-only-sample examinations as presented in the paper's main analysis. These specifications do not appear to alter the models' primary findings in any notable fashion.

Appendix D: Iowa Electronic Market Prices and Extrapolations

Table A8 presents the models used to extrapolate the betting price data generated by the Iowa Electronic Markets. The extrapolations both extend the data backward in time (generating monthly probabilities for partisan control by chamber, from 1940 forward) and between individual election markets (i.e., the months after one election ends and before the next election market opens for betting). The models regress monthly price averages for each relevant IEM (along with actual partisan control outcomes, in order to better anchor the historical predictions) on a variety of covariates that may influence a politician's assessment of each party's chances to capture the majority in a chamber. Both models are logistic regressions estimated via Maximum Likelihood, and they were selected based on an iterative process that compared predicted electoral probabilities with those actually observed in the IEM data. Various automated model selection techniques, such as LASSOPlus (Ratkovic and Tingley 2018), were used in the building of these models, though the machine-fit specifications typically returned models that were far too overfit to the dependent variable.

Using these models, I generated monthly predicted probabilites of Republican and Democratic control of the House and Senate, from 1940 to 2016. Figure A1 presents these extrapolations, as well as the IEM market prices where available. In the figure, the light colors represent extrapolations of the market prices, while the darker colors represent the actual IEM prices. Figure A2 presents the same information, but it breaks down the projections by presidency rather than Congress. In both graphs, the predicted probabilities comport nicely with contemporaneous reports about the upcoming election, and they serve as the basis for assigning Congresses to the various Scenarios delineated in the theory section.

As noted earlier, however, these majority control probabilities do not provide all of the predictions necessary to measure which electoral scenario applies at a given point in time. In particular, they do not cleanly translate into predictions regarding whether either party will capture the filibuster pivot. To measure this probability, I build a third model, this time regressing actual seat share in election following a given Congress on a variety of covariates similar to those presented in Table A8. In addition to these covariates, I include the predicted majority control probabilities generated in Table A8 in the model. Crucially, to estimate the model, I employ a Bayesian estimation of a Poisson count model, as doing so

Table A5: Policy Deceleration (Scenario 1)

	Dependent variable:			
	reasonable_prop			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
SQ ∈ *Deceleration Region*	−0.839***	−0.876**	−1.990***	−1.518***
	(0.289)	(0.402)	(0.364)	(0.422)
Majority Status	2.148***	2.418	−2.029	−4.630***
	(0.741)	(1.492)	(1.250)	(1.544)
SQ Location	−0.078	0.008	0.002	−0.278
	(0.071)	(0.105)	(0.173)	(0.265)
|*SQ Location*|	1.907***	2.082***	2.469***	2.542***
	(0.166)	(0.264)	(0.243)	(0.346)
Female	−0.356	−1.197**	−0.907**	−0.736
	(0.294)	(0.519)	(0.450)	(0.688)
Democrat	0.766**	1.700***	2.159***	3.448***
	(0.324)	(0.549)	(0.653)	(1.135)
Ideological Extremity	−1.178***	−1.054**	−1.273***	−1.689***
	(0.252)	(0.483)	(0.415)	(0.551)
Committee Chair	0.133	−0.315	0.067	−0.363
	(0.265)	(0.370)	(0.360)	(0.480)
Ranking Member	−0.263	−3.406***	−0.428	3.802
	(0.530)	(1.214)	(1.204)	(8.827)
Subcommittee Chair	−0.538**	−0.590	0.244	−0.332
	(0.246)	(0.369)	(0.326)	(0.450)
Sub-Comm. Ranking Member	0.479	−0.312	−0.873	−2.063
	(0.582)	(1.277)	(1.221)	(2.054)
Seniority	0.00003	0.00004	0.00000	0.00004
	(0.00003)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.00006)
Constant	−5.214***	−6.094***	−1.939	0.255
	(0.946)	(1.689)	(1.570)	(1.466)
Observations	753	445	507	320
Log Likelihood	−283.181	−139.762	−152.904	−87.402
Akaike Inf. Crit.	592.362	305.525	331.808	200.804

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A6: Policy Acceleration (Scenario 2)

	Dependent variable:			
	Introduction of Viable Proposal			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
SQ ∈ *Acceleration Region*	0.737**	0.630	1.121**	0.695
	(0.357)	(0.488)	(0.437)	(0.548)
Majority Status	2.055***	2.438*	−1.475	−4.716***
	(0.747)	(1.478)	(1.186)	(1.739)
SQ Location	0.024	0.106	0.154	−0.282
	(0.064)	(0.094)	(0.143)	(0.275)
|*SQ Location*|	1.907***	2.077***	2.284***	2.340***
	(0.165)	(0.257)	(0.229)	(0.316)
Female	−0.367	−1.195**	−0.820**	−0.723
	(0.293)	(0.524)	(0.410)	(0.640)
Democrat	0.917***	1.865***	2.274***	4.038***
	(0.332)	(0.526)	(0.580)	(1.186)
Ideological Extremity	−1.150***	−1.089**	−1.098***	−1.560***
	(0.248)	(0.465)	(0.351)	(0.529)
Committee Chair	0.148	−0.306	0.248	−0.301
	(0.273)	(0.376)	(0.369)	(0.469)
Ranking Member	−0.215	−3.370***	−0.198	5.515
	(0.543)	(1.193)	(1.009)	(882.746)
Sub-Comm. Chair	−0.460*	−0.610*	0.187	−0.451
	(0.242)	(0.359)	(0.314)	(0.428)
Sub-Comm. Ranking Member	0.477	−0.222	−0.786	−1.808
	(0.594)	(1.279)	(1.126)	(2.228)
Seniority	0.00002	0.00003	−0.00002	0.00003
	(0.00003)	(0.0001)	(0.00005)	(0.0001)
Constant	−5.674***	−6.520***	−3.427**	−0.436
	(0.966)	(1.725)	(1.433)	(1.560)
Observations	753	445	507	320
Log Likelihood	−285.914	−141.998	−169.325	−93.646
Akaike Inf. Crit.	597.827	309.996	364.650	213.292

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

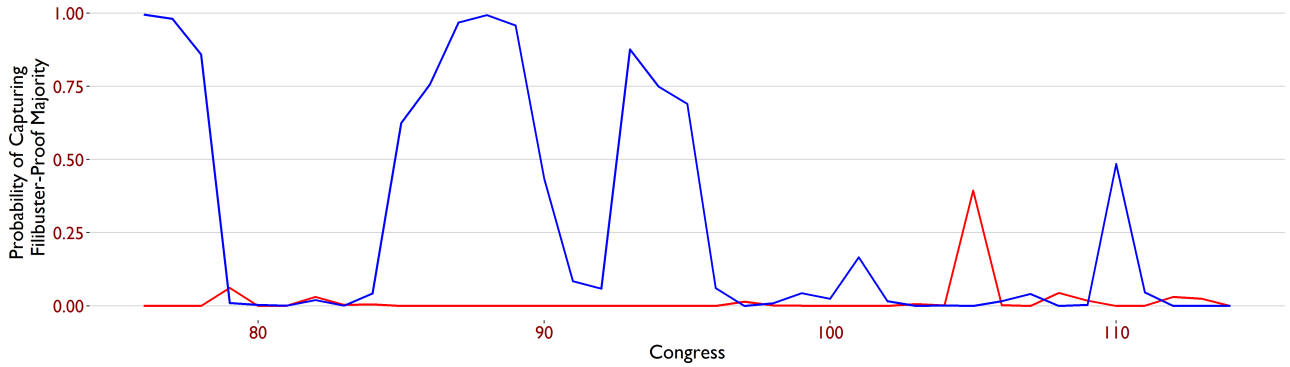
Table A7: Policy Acceleration (Scenario 3)

	Dependent variable:	
	reasonable_prop	
	(1)	(2)
SQ ∈ *Acceleration Region*	2.813***	2.467***
	(0.436)	(0.584)
Majority Status	1.428*	1.340
	(0.759)	(1.289)
SQ Location	−0.022	0.020
	(0.080)	(0.106)
|*SQ Location*|	2.237***	2.315***
	(0.182)	(0.267)
Female	−0.373	−1.299**
	(0.335)	(0.589)
Democrat	−0.276	0.543
	(0.426)	(0.671)
Ideolgoical Extremity	−1.214***	−0.992*
	(0.291)	(0.516)
Committee Chair	0.408	−0.195
	(0.267)	(0.389)
Ranking Member	−0.120	−3.721***
	(0.618)	(1.302)
Sub-Comm. Chair	−0.149	−0.545
	(0.255)	(0.406)
Sub-Comm. Ranking Member	0.604	−0.488
	(0.628)	(1.252)
Seniority	0.00000	0.00002
	(0.00003)	(0.0001)
Constant	−5.718***	−6.075***
	(0.997)	(1.533)
Observations	753	445
Log Likelihood	−248.755	−128.856
Akaike Inf. Crit.	523.509	283.713
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Table A8: Predictive Models for Iowa Electronic Market Prices

	Dependent variable:	
	Prob(Republican House)	Prob(Republican Senate)
	(1)	(2)
Number of Current Republican Members	0.027	0.330***
	(0.018)	(0.093)
Republican President and Majority	0.584	
	(2.508)	
Senate Seats Defended		−0.212***
		(0.071)
Presidential Approval	0.051	−0.007
	(0.053)	(0.041)
Democratic President	7.107	5.269
	(5.130)	(3.925)
Presidential Approval ∗ Democratic President	−0.091	−0.066
	(0.087)	(0.070)
Presidential Election Year	−1.162	0.588
	(1.100)	(0.921)
Democratic President ∗ Presidential Election Year		−2.160
		(1.414)
Congressional Time Trend	0.004	
	(0.054)	
Generic Vote Poll Differential	2.132	0.066
	(1.942)	(0.062)
Congressional Time Trend ∗ Generic Vote Poll Differential	−0.020	
	(0.018)	
Pepublican President and Majority ∗ Presidential Election Year	2.684*	
	(1.586)	
Constant	−10.217	−12.868**
	(7.022)	(5.566)
Observations	92	92
Log Likelihood	−26.069	−35.440
Akaike Inf. Crit.	74.138	88.880
Note:		*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Figure A3: Predict Probability of Attaining Filibuster-Proof Majoirty in Senate



Note: Democratic probabilities depicted in blue, Republican in red.

allows me to calculate a *distribution* of predicted Senate seat counts for each observed combination of covariate values. By calculating the percentage of this distribution for which either party is predicted to attain 60 or more Senate seats, I can produce a probability that the filibuster pivot will be captured by either Republicans or Democrats. This provides the final piece of electoral information needed to assess which electoral scenario members face at a given point in time.

Table A9: Predictive Model for Control of Filibuster Pivot

	Dependent variable: Republicans in Senate				
	2.5%	25%	50%	75%	97.5%
(Intercept)	2.8382887	2.9408208	2.9810628	3.026467	3.123543
IEM Projection (Republican)	-0.1755138	-0.1170642	-0.0880277	-0.060353	-0.006238
Republicans in Senate	0.0189805	0.0216515	0.0229784	0.024354	0.027087
Seats Defended by GOP	-0.0215998	-0.0188637	-0.0172997	-0.015993	-0.013463
Generic Vote Share Poll Differential	0.0025487	0.0034628	0.0039521	0.004442	0.005259
Presidential Approval	-0.0002599	0.0005496	0.0009262	0.001387	0.002132
Democratic President	0.3032922	0.3691468	0.4024813	0.434416	0.494369
Presidential Election Year	0.0393485	0.0569597	0.0659358	0.075781	0.096964
Presidential Approval ∗Democratic President	-0.0056338	-0.0047145	-0.0042138	-0.003619	-0.002686
*Democratic President*Presidential Election Year*	-0.2463468	-0.2148064	-0.1975603	-0.183207	-0.158368
Observations = 38					
Sample size per chain = 10000					
Thinning interval = 1; Number of Chains = 1					

Appendix E: Justification for Advancement Asymmetry

As noting in the main text, the agenda-setting game to which members respond features an asymmetry in whether or not the game advances to a second round. In particular, the game only advances to a second

round if the SQ persists, forcing AS to make a decision between what she can achieve in the present Congress, versus what she could achieve in future Congresses. Here, I provide additional justification for which this design choice is appropriate.

In their recent paper on policymaking, for example, underscore the following commentary offered by environmental advocates from TheClean.org, with regard to proposed cap-and-trade legislation that they opposed: "Will [the public] see [the legislation] as a 'win'—that the problem is solved? If so, what will that mean for pushing for the needed steps later?" In other words, if compromise legislation prevails today, such progress will preclude further reforms in the future. Policy advocates from other issue areas echoed a similar sentiment in interviews for Crosson and Heaney's (2016) study on coalition lobbying, stating that, "Passing legislation as close as possible to our ideal policy is important, because if we go back to Congress next year and ask for the rest of what we want, they will deny us and tell us they have already 'done' [issue redacted]."[17] In other words, Congress has already addressed the problem brought forth by the public and interest community, and they must allocate scarce agenda space to some other issue yet to be addressed. Consequently, policy entrepreneurs and interest group leaders understand the importance of not squandering their window of opportunity by ceding too much to the opposition.

This observation also receives some support within the empirical literature. According to Maltzman and Shipan (2008), a large majority of major laws were not amended within 4 years of passage. In fact, only about 25 percent were amended within 1-3 years. Insofar as amendments serve as a good measure of attempts to alter a targeted SQ more than once, these data would seem to confirm that repeated policy movements within on the same SQ are rare. Taken together, then, both qualitative and quantitative evidence provide a strong justification for the aforementioned asymmetry in game continuation. Moreover, they provide some anecdotal evidence for the idea that political elites do in fact consider future policy change possibilities in their present policy-change calculus.

It is worth noting that a possible addition or alternative to this design might be to tie electoral fortunes to the majority party's policy success in the present round. In other words, one may consider endogenizing electoral outcomes to policy decisions in the present round. In this model, I do not endogenize elections however, for a few key reasons. First, the conditions under which policy change or stasis harm a majority party are unclear. If little policy change occurs, the majority party may be punished for a refusal to compromise. If, however, the majority party does make major changes, they may be punished for unpopular policies or poor outcomes (such as Democrats in the 2010 election). Second, many gains and losses to a

[17] The specific issue area is here redacted due to IRB agreements to preserve the anonymity of interviewees.

majority party's seat holdings are cyclical and predictable. For example, the president's party typically loses seats in midterm elections. It is the effect of this sort of predictable change, upon which majority party leaders can reliably condition their actions, that is the focus of this study. Future work, however, may well examine how endogenous elections further complicate majority agenda-setting and aggregate policy change.