Congressional Position-Taking:

Influence of Agriculture on Roll-Voting for Latino issues.

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Abstract:

Despite comprehensive immigration reform and stricter border enforcement legislation, there continues a steady increase and dispersion of Latino's into areas not traditionally Latino immigrant or migrant destinations. Along with demographic changes, agriculture is shifting from small to large, industrial farms. I argue these two transitions are important cross-pressures on members of Congress' position-taking on Latino issues—especially Republican members who vote against their party's position. I use OLS regression to analyze NHLA vote scores of the 113th Congress (2013-2014) to examine roll-call positions supporting Latino issues. The percent of Latinos and percent of small farms in congressional districts have significant effects on Republican members' roll-call position-taking on Latino issue—but not Democratic members. This shows intra-party heterogeneity of positions related to immigration and other Latino issues among the Republican Party. This could indicate, in an era of hyper-partisanship Congress, an area growing bi-partisan agreement.

Since the 1990s, there has been a steady increase and dispersion of Latino's into areas of the United States not traditionally Latino immigrant or migrant destinations (Liaw & Frey, 2007; Massey, 2008)[1]. This im/migration continues despite comprehensive immigration reform and stricter border enforcement legislation, such as the *Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986* and the *Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996*. Congress failed, in 2006, to pass sweeping immigration reform and border security legislation during George W. Bush's presidency, and it remained elusive throughout Barack Obama's two terms. Against these failures, border security and immigration are top priorities for President Trump.

In June 2018, however, the latest border security and immigration reform legislation in Congress—H.R. 6136 the *Border Security and Immigration Reform Act of 2018—*was rejected in the U.S. House of Representatives. The intent of this bill (a compromise bill among Republican members) was to cut family-based lottery visas, decrease immigrant employment, increase border enforcement, explore a pathway for citizenship, and fund a Southern border wall (Congress.gov). Its failure, consequently, led to an impasse between President Trump and Republican Party leaders in the 115th Congress over the lack of border security funding, namely a border wall.

A bi-partisan majority—112 Republicans and 189 Democrats—voted against passage of H.R. 6136, which is a unique occurrence in a highly partisan House where members of Congress (MCs) often vote along party lines (Casellas & Leal, 2013; Neiman, Johnson, & Bowler, 2006; Siegel & Parkinson, 2018). Moreover, since the 1980s, MCs have increasingly used party cues for deciding their vote positions on immigration bills (Wong 2017: 60, 110). Despite these partisan cues, there is still intra-party heterogeneity of opinion on immigration. Today, compared to the

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[1] This dissertation uses the pan-ethnic term Latino rather than Hispanic or country-of-origin terms. Latino refers to people who come from Latin America where Spanish is the dominant language, has historical significance, or has a major cultural role. See Garcia Bedolla 2014; Garcia and Sanchez 2008.

1990s, MCs are more willing to vote against their party's immigration positions—as seen with the failure of H.R 6136 (Rocca, Sanchez, & Sanchez, 2018; Watts, 2002; Wong, 2017).

Since 2006, party identifiers have shifted their opinions on immigration. A June 2018 Pew Survey shows, between 2006 and 2018, there was a 20% increase in support for legal immigration among Democrats (20% to 40%) and a 7% increase among Republicans (15% to 22%) (Pew Research Center, 2018). Additionally, support for immigration restrictions also fell 10% among Republicans (43% to 33%) and 21% (37% to 16%) among Democrats. Moreover, sympathy toward the plight of undocumented immigrants evenly divides Republicans. These divisions are among those who seek tougher immigration restrictions and those who fear alienating Latino voters or estranging business owners who need laborers (Watanabe and Becerra, 2006).

The vote on H.R. 6136 highlights these Republican intra-party differences, especially among MCs from Midwestern rural, agricultural districts. For instance, Steve King, representing Iowa's' 4th congressional district, seeks stronger border security and tougher punitive policies (Congressman Steve King, 2018). Whereas Kristi Noem, from King's neighboring at-large district of South Dakota, advocates for labor needs in agriculture (Harris, 2018). Despite these differences, both MCs voted against Republican leadership's and President Trump's support of H.R. 6136. This is surprising since a majority of King's and Noem's constituencies support (and voted for) Trump's border security and immigration positions (Bloch, Buchanan, Katz, & Quealy, 2018; Wheat, 2018). So, why might these Midwestern Republican MCs' buck their party's position?

Much of the Midwest has been a majority white population for generations. Nonetheless, King's and Noem's districts are experiencing similar demographic shifts—a decreasing non-Hispanic white population and an increasing Latino one. Since 2000, King's district has seen an 11% decrease (from 93% to 82%) in the non-Hispanic white share of the population (Price, 2017).

Similarly, from 2000 to 2014, South Dakota experienced a 190% increase in its Latino population—the fastest growing in the nation at the time (Stepler & Lopez, 2016). (See Figure 1 for Latino population growth and dispersion, 2000-2014). Although the Latino population is small in these rural, ag districts compared to the Border States, this change is dramatic. These districts in the Midwest—like much of the United States—are fundamentally changing along demographic lines, which influences representation and policy.

Figure 1: Hispanic Population Growth across U.S. Counties, 2000-2014
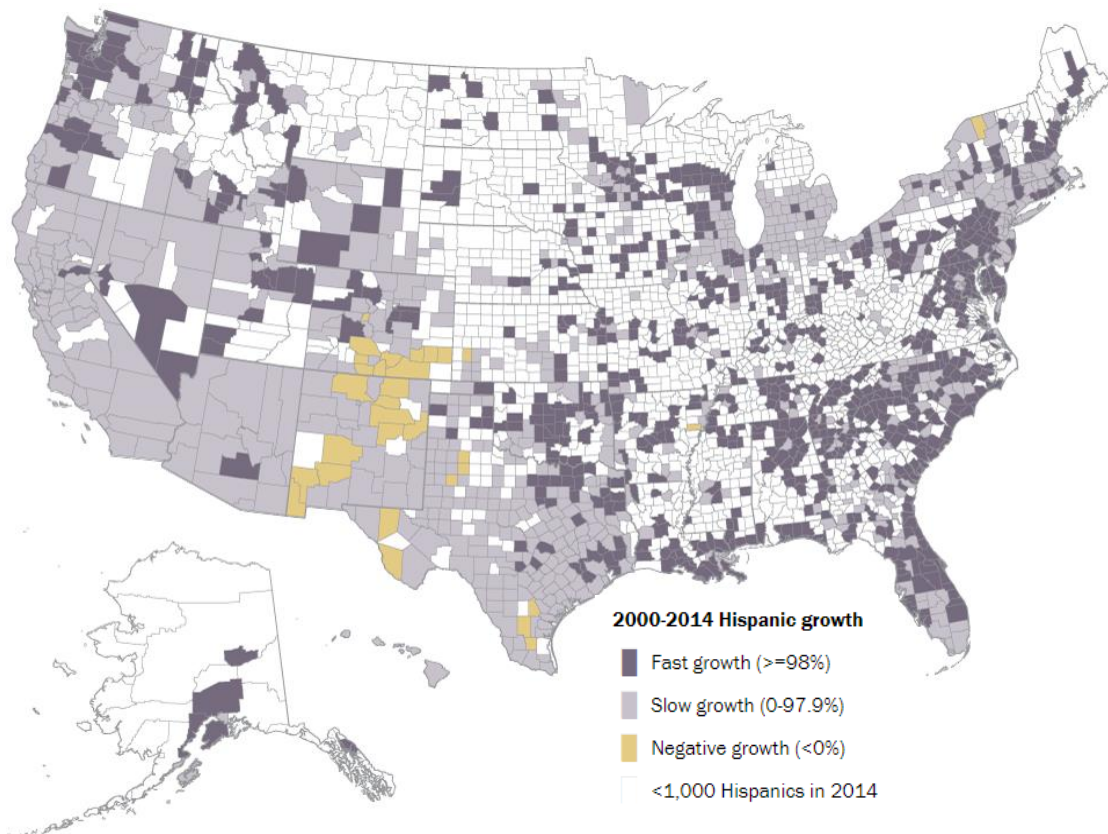
Source: Stepler & Lopez (2016) Pew Research Center.

Paralleling these Midwestern demographic shifts are economic changes. Agriculture is transitioning away from small family-owned farms to large-scale, industrial farms—and food-processing facilities are moving from urban to rural areas (Albrecht 1997; Pucci 2018; Viederman,

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MacDonald and Klett, 2010). This changes job and labor demand that Latinos often fill. In 2016, ag workers were 52.4% Latino compared to 42.3% non-Hispanic white (Hertz, 2018). Moreover, the jobs Latinos fill are low-skilled, low-wage, and outside the Southwest (Facchini & Steinhardt, 2011; Massey, 2008). The influx of Latinos into new migration destinations creates a backlash that culminates in support of the Republican Party and punitive policies (Abrajano & Hajnal, 2015; Leitner, 2012). Yet, contrary to the party's position, Republican MCs are voting against their party's immigration and border security policies. This begs the question, do changes in agriculture and demographics produce cross-pressures on MCs' support for Latino and immigration issues?

This paper argues these two important transitions (demographic and economic) are linked, which has important consequences for congressional roll-call behavior. I seek to evaluate the question—*do the agricultural transition and Latino population cross-pressure MCs roll-call position-taking on immigration and Latino issues, especially for Republican MCs?* I posit the transition to large, industrial ag has a positive influence on MCs' Latino issue position-taking. The goal of this paper is to undertake a preliminary evaluation of this assumption using the National Hispanic Leadership Association's (NHLA) roll-call vote scorecard for the 113th Congress (2013-2014).[2] In seeking an answer to this question, I expect to make two important contributions. The first contribution helps explain an increasingly salient real-world issue in U.S. politics, specifically why Republican Party MCs might vote against their party's positions on immigration and Latino issues. The second contribution relates to the classic dilemma in congressional position-taking literature on how MCs reconcile cross-pressuring interests in determining representation in Congress.

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[2] The 113th Congress is the last publicly available scorecard from the NHLA. Additionally, I evaluate MCs' roll-call support prior to the 2016 election cycle as a way to control for the Trump campaign's and President Trump's effect on immigration and border security positions, which may have solidified extreme positions on immigration issues.

Why study Ag and Demographic cross-pressures on MCs position-taking?

In 1920, farmers were 30% of the U.S. population and had significant influence in Congress (AP, 1988; Sanders, 1999). Yet, today, farmers are around 2% of the population, are marginal producers in a centralizing industry, and have a shrinking political monopoly over farm issues (Bosso, 2017; Harward & Moffett, 2010; Kaufman, 2016; Lobao & Meyer, 2001; Molnar & Wu, 1989). This demonstrates agriculture's diminishing national electoral influence, except in districts that have a large ag presence (Kaufman, 2016; Scala, Johnson, & Rogers, 2015). Additionally, there is a growing bifurcation between urban and rural preferences for parties and policies, as seen in the 2018 election and prior election cycles.[3] This has consequences for the parties in government to compromise on immigration, ag policies, and issues important to the Latino community (Gimpel & Karnes, 2006; Gimpel & Schuknecht, 2009; Wilson, 2018a, 2018b).

In conjunction with a decreasing ag population is an increasing Latino one. In 2017, 34% of the U.S. population were Latinos, the second largest racial/ethnic group behind non-Hispanic whites (Flores, 2017). This contributes to a growing Latino influence within the electorate and on national politics. Moreover, the Latino population does not have to consist of voters, native-born, nor legal immigrants to factor into a legislator's policy positions—they can be undocumented, foreign-born, and non-voters (Wong, 2017; Ybarra, Sanchez, & Sanchez, 2016: 112, 148, 208).

As the U.S. moves toward a minority-majority nation, understanding the underlying cross-pressures on legislative decision-making can inform students of American politics about the future direction of U.S. immigration policies, Latino politics, and the effects of a changing ag economy.

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[3] Rural areas have greater support for the Republican Party and urban areas the Democratic Party. Scala, Johnson, and Rogers (2015) look at voter migration into amenity-based rural counties which increases the Democratic vote share, making them more competitive. Farm-based counties remain uncompetitive and overwhelmingly Republican.

In today's policy debates, MCs face the dilemma—either restrict the growth of the Latino population but place financial burdens on agriculture's labor needs or allow more Latino im/migration into areas not accustomed to a Latino presence but meet agriculture's labor demands (Facchini and Steinhardt 2011). A few Republican MCs appear to be moving in the latter direction.

Literature Review

This paper builds upon two areas of scholarship related to immigration and Latino issues. I build upon prior research that establishes the theoretical connections of immigration to agriculture and MC's position taking on Latino issues and immigration. The review first looks at agriculture's influence for Latino im/migration and then at district pressures on MCs' position-taking, namely roll-call votes. I undertake to add to congressional cross-pressure literature by evaluating the cross-pressuring influences of agriculture and the Latino population on MCs' support for Latino issues—especially for Republicans.

Agriculture and Immigration Labor

Since the 1940s, scholars have noted a growing "dualism" in U.S. farming (Albrecht, 1997). Smith (1969) describes this dualism as large farms getting larger, small farms becoming more profuse, and medium-size farms drop out (Danbom, 2017; Genoways, 2017; Koerth-Baker, 2016; Longworth, 2008; Strange, 2008). In combination with this dualism, meatpacking and food processing facilities are moving away from urban centers—closer to crop and ag operations in rural America. This puts the Midwest rural, ag districts in the center of an agricultural economic and structural transition (Jensen & Yang, 2009; Sisson, Zacher, & Cayton, 2007).

The ag transition is shown to put more economic pressures on farmers by creating greater job uncertainty, market volatility, and more low-wage employment. As Hirschman & Massey

(2008: 8) claim, industrial ag restructuring promotes decreasing production costs and increasing earnings; therefore, farm owners and processing operators seek to hire low-wage workers to mitigate rising costs. Conversely, several scholars argue that native-born, white laborers seek jobs with higher wages, more benefits, fewer hours, and that are less dangerous (Kritz, Gurak, & Lee, 2011, 2013; Martin & Taylor, 1998; Viederman, MacDonald, & Klett, 2010). Therefore, ag farms and facilities recruit Latino workers to fill labor demands.

As Allensworth and Rochín (1998) find studying rural California farming communities, the growth of Latino immigration and migration is a function of the shift away from non-Hispanic white workers to Latino farm workers. They show ag intensification, not farm size nor growth in wages, is a driver of Latino farm labor. Yet, Rowlands (2018) demonstrates that the number of farms, not ag intensification nor farm size, has implications for support of stricter immigration policies. Restrictive policies ultimately influence the continuation or slowdown of immigration and migration of Latino workers into areas beyond the Southwest region.

Latino immigrants have been working in the Midwest farming economy as far back as the early 20th Century. According to Popper (2013), many Latinos did not stay at that time due to intimidation and a tough job market, yet in the late 20th Century, they began to stay. This new pattern in Latino im/migration to the Midwest and South is occurring due to stricter border enforcement policies, decreasing living conditions in traditional (urban) migrant destinations, and unfavorable employment opportunities in traditional immigrant areas (Kandel & Cromartie, 2004; Liaw & Frey, 2007; Viederman et al., 2010; Saenz and Cready 1997; Valdes 1991; Urbano, Hanson, and Ringenberg 2012). Moreover, since 1975, the Midwest is experiencing an increase in out-migration of the native-born, white population and a net increase in native Latinos and immigrants migrating from the Southwest (Liaw and Frey 2007; Saenz and Cready 1997). Cantu

(1995), in a case study of Iowa communities, argues this is due to the new global economy—the declines in family farms, the rise of industrial agriculture, and the prevalence for recruiting low-wage, minority laborers—which increases Latino im/migration to the Midwest.

An unintended response to out-migration of the non-Hispanic white population, industrial restructuring, and the agricultural transformation is Latino population growth outside the Southwest (Viederman et al 2010). This net in-ward migration helps to offset population declines from out-migration, decreases in family size, and mortality. Also, Many of these new migrant-receiving destinations lean more Republican and support conservative policies due, in part, to white immigrant backlash, notions of symbolic threat, or perceived racial threat (Abrajano & Hajnal, 2015; Avery, Fine, & Márquez, 2017; Brettell & Nibbs, 2011). Dell's (2013) conclusions support this trend by looking at presidential voting patterns. She shows that communities with "superfarms" (industrial/corporate farming) that employ Latino labor are increasingly more Republican over time. This occurs despite farmers and traditional farm-based counties already learning more Republican compared to other populations and areas of the country (Kaufman, 2016; Scala et al 2015). This is counter to the expectation that new migrants would produce a lean toward the Democratic Party since Latinos are more likely to support Democratic policies (Frey, 2008).

Position-Taking and Immigration

Public opinion is important for MCs' understanding of constituent views. Nonetheless, scholars argue public opinion alone does not predict MCs' positions (Broockman and Skovron 2013; Lax and Phillips 2009; 2012). Recent work of Adler and his colleagues (2018) look at legislative roll-call votes when constituent opinion and district material conditions conflict. They show material conditions (like homeownership) within a district have an independent influence on MCs' decisions. This supports Runciman's (2009) claim that constituent opinions are not a good

predictor of position taking. Nonetheless, Miller and Stokes (1963) determine there is a correlation between domestic issues between constituency opinion and voting behavior in Congress. On the other hand, Achen (1978) claims this correlation is overstated.

Public opinion may not be a good predictor for position-taking, but it still matters. Adler and colleagues argue district demographics moderate whether MCs use material conditions or constituent opinions to justify their positions. Demographic characteristics, such as the size of the Latino population in a district, are shown to influence U.S. House immigration roll-call vote positions (Casellas & Leal, 2013; Rocca et al., 2018). Additionally, it is not just the size or number of immigrants, but the overall demographic characteristics of a district that factor into congressional position-taking on immigration and Latino issues (Casellas & Leal, 2013; Citrin, Green, Muste, & Wong, 1997; Llavador & Solano-García, 2011).

In the House of Representatives, demographic shifts are influential. Rocca, Sanchez, and Sanchez (2018) find a slight conditional relationship in 108th Congress between the Latino population in a district and votes on Latino issues. This trend continues in the 113th Congress, where Republican MCs increasingly take favorable positions on Latino issues because of an increasing Latino presence in their district. Yet, Democratic MCs already have high substantive representation of Latinos, thus, there is minor variation among Democrat's support for Latino issues. Whereas, Republicans are beginning to take notice of changing U.S. demographics and are shifting their positions accordingly (Hero & Tolbert, 1995; Knoll, 2009; Preuhs, 2005; Rocca et al., 2018).

Demographic shifts matter, but other district population characteristics are significant for position-taking stances as well. Facchini and Steinhardt (2011), evaluating U.S. House members' immigration votes from 1970-2006, find the labor market is a primary driver of immigration

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policies. As unskilled laborers increase (and education levels decrease) in a district, there are more restrictive immigration positions from MCs. Alternatively, when there are higher levels of skilled laborers (and higher education levels) in the marketplace, there are more progressive immigration positions (Facchini & Steinhardt, 2011; Scheve & Slaughter, 2001). Thus, district characteristic (such as race/ethnicity, skill-level, and education) influence position-taking.

Some academics note the inconsistency in scholarly findings that demographics influence position-taking (Casellas and Leal 2013, Bartels 1991). Economic competition is more prevalent in the Senate, yet in the House, the Latino population is correlated with more favorable immigration voting positions. Furthermore, there is uncertainty in the direct relationship between district demographic characteristics and constituency preferences on issues (Bishin 2000). Bartels (1991) suggests these inconsistencies exist because certain demographic and economic characteristics matter for certain issues positions but not others.

Recent work by Wong (2017) provides a thorough evaluation of how demographics and immigration are shifting the median MC preference away from punitive immigration policies in Congress; though, he overlooks possible cross-pressures put on MCs. Some scholars, such as Huang and Theriault (2012), study constituent and institutional cross-pressures on immigration for Senators but not Representatives. Moreover, their study focuses on the strategic timing of position-taking and not the positions taken. These recent studies indicate that economic factors, such as low-incomes, produce constituency pressures for reducing immigration (Citrin et al., 1997). However, these scholars do not account for agricultural structural changes and labor transitions.

Although it is shown that MCs are moving away from punitive immigration policies in Congress, there remains room for further examination of countervailing pressures that push MCs to vote against their party's position. The agricultural transition encourages Latino migration to

districts outside the Southwest, which affects public opinion and, ultimately, representation in Congress. The literature thoroughly documents demographics as a mechanism for influencing MCs' votes (Carcia & Sanchez, 2008; Rocca et al., 2018; Wong, 2017), yet, how are MCs' positions in Congress connected to district demographics and economic needs?

Theoretical Framework

Mayhew's seminal work *The Electoral Connection* (1974) shows that reelection is the primary goal of MCs. MCs engage in position-taking activities (which may conflict with their party's positions) to increase their reelection chances. Besides reelection, making good policy and political ambition are other goals, but are less achievable without reelection (Kingdon, 1977; Fenno, 1978). MCs increase their re-election advantage through advertising, credit-claiming, and position-taking (Mayhew, 1974). Of these activities, position-taking is a "political commodity," where MCs must consider the interest of the constituency, the party, the president, interests groups, and his/her own stances when taking positions (Brady, 1973; Bullock & Brady, 1983; Fiorina, 1975; Kingdon, 1977, 1989; Shannon, 1968). MCs make tough choices (especially roll-call decisions since they are on record), because taking "too extreme" of a position compared to constituency's preferences puts their reelection goal in peril (Carson, et al. 2010).

MCs must strike a balance between competing pressures. Fenno (1974) shows that MCs have four constituencies they serve—the geographic, re-election, primary, and personal constituency. To achieve reelection, MCs must survive the party's primary election and then win the general election. Therefore, in Congress, MCs must either choose positions supporting key constituencies back home or risk sanctions and lose the party's favor—such as the loss of fundraising, attracting primary challengers, or missing out on congressional opportunities (Carson,

2005; Cox & McCubbins, 2007; Fiorina, 1974: 123; Kingdon, 1989; Rocca, 2007). Party leadership controls the House agenda and assignments; therefore, MCs seek to please the party, build their own legislative accomplishments through their party's reputation, and please partisans in their district by supporting the party's positions.

MCs, however, serve at the pleasure of their constituents and must look after their own reelection. Party loyalty on salient issues can be a liability for incumbent MCs if it is countervailing to constituent concerns, thus district constituencies factors into both roll-call and non-roll call positions (Carson, Koger, Lebo, & Young, 2010; Highton & Rocca, 2005). MCs respond to the pleas of important constituency interests first even though they may be cross-pressured by a popular president, party leaders, or other MCs (Carson et al., 2010; Fleisher & Bond, 2004; Kingdon, 1989; Schier, 1992; Wink, Livingston, & Garand, 1996). Furthermore, scholars have thoroughly looked at roll-call voting cross-pressures between constituents and the party (Bailey & Brady, 1998; Brady, 1973; Bullock & Brady, 1983; Caldeira & Zorn, 2004; Fiorina, 1975; Kingdon, 1977, 1989; Shannon, 1968) and in such areas as fiscal issues and budgets (Schier, 1992), trade policy (Biglaiser, Jackson, & Peake, 2004; Peake, Jackson, & Biglaiser, 2007; Wink et al., 1996), and presidential coalition building in Congress (Covington, 1988).

The constituency back home in the district, however, is still the primary pressure for MCs. Position-taking activities signal to constituents that MCs are representing their issues in Congress and increase their reputation for reelection by connecting with district constituencies through their roll-call records (Pearson and Dancy, 2011; Diermeier, et al., 2011; Schiller 1995, 2000). When constituents and party align on an issue, members do not have countervailing pressures on their roll-call vote; but when positions differ, MCs are cross-pressured to take a particular position (Kingdon, 1977). Often, MCs choose the least controversial positions and justify it to their

constituency (Bovitz & Carson, 2006; Broockman & Skovron, 2013; Canes-Wrone, Brady, & Wilkerson, 2002; Miller & Stokes, 1963). Yet, there are times the constituency may be split on preferences, and MCs look at other pressures to generate "backer" interest in the next election (Burgin, 1993). The constituency votes for the MC; but, on the other hand, the party can help reelection chances as well. Thus, elections motivate position-taking in Congress.

This paper argues that agriculture and demographic changes are two electoral considerations that pressure MCs into taking a position favorable to the needs of the district constituency. The assumption is that agriculture's transition to larger farms increases the Latino population in a district due to ag labor needs. Therefore, the Latino population and agriculture cross-pressure MCs where the presence of more small farms [larger farms] promotes a decrease [increase] on MCs' support for Latino issues. Therefore, I expect for Republicans

> H_1: As the percent of small farms increases in a district, Republican MCs' NHLA scores decrease.

> H_2: As the percent of small farms decreases in a district, Republican MCs' NHLA scores increase.

Conversely, for Democrats

> H_3: As the percent of small farms increases in a district, Democrat MCs' NHLA scores decrease.

> H_4: As the percent of small farms decreases in a district, Democrat MCs' NHLA scores increase.

Data and Methods

The goal of this paper is to examine the possible effects of the Latino population and ag transition on MCs position-taking—primarily Republican MCs. Therefore, the unit of analysis is the member of Congress. I follow Rocca, Sanchez, and Sanchez's (2018) study and use the National Hispanic League Association's (NHLA) scorecard as the dependent variable.[4] The dependent variable is measured as the percent of MCs roll-call votes supporting Latino issues, ranging from no support (0%) to complete support (100%). The vote score includes votes on bills and amendments covering three broad areas—immigration, political appointments, and economic empowerment—salient to the Latino community in the 113th Congress.

There are two main independent variables of interest—farm size and Latino population. The first main independent variable is measured as the percentage of small farms in the district. This data is compiled from the 2012 Census of Agriculture, which the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) conducts every five years. I use the USDA's classification of small farms— farms having $250,000 in gross annual sales. The assumption is, the higher the percent of small farms in a district indicates fewer large farms (gross $250,000-$500,000) and/or fewer very large farms (gross over $500,000) present in the district.[5] Additionally, the second main variable, Latino population, is measured as the percent of Latinos in a congressional district, which is collected from the 2010 U.S. Census. The expectation is, the higher the Latino population in a district equates to more support for Latino issues (Wong 2017; Rocca, et al. 2018).

Other variables control for district and member characteristics that can influence position-taking. I include Obama's 2012 vote percentage to account for partisan leanings of the district. The

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[4] NHLA is a coalition of Latino organizations that advocate and promote policies affecting the Latino community.
[5] I include controls for farmland in a district (logged) as a means to account for the land size of farms, but it does not change the significance of *percent of small farms* or add much variance to the models.

expectation is that as the percent of the democratic presidential vote share increases, MCs will have higher NHLA scores due to the party's high levels of support for Latinos issues (Wong, 2017). Additionally, considering descriptive representation, I account for whether the member is a Latino (a dummy variable). Conversely, percent of Blacks in a district is included to account for the possible effect of minority group competition, where the higher the Black population in a district led to less support for Latinos.

Party cues, according to past research, are important for MCs position taking. To account for inter-party differences, I run the regression models for Democratic MCs and Republican MCs separately. The primary focus of the analysis is on Republican MCs, since Democrats have high support of Latino issues. Republican MCs are expected to have greater variation in their vote scores, since they represent districts that are more rural and ag-based relative to the more amenity-based and urban districts represented by Democrats.

Results

There were 201 Democrats and 234 Republicans representatives serving in the 113th Congress. Five House members resigned or died during their term. These new members, four Republicans and one Democrat, are included in the dataset. Hence, there are 440 total observations in the dataset (238 Republicans; 202 Democrats). See Table 1 for descriptive statistics. The average NHLA vote score for Democrats was 96% with a range of 29% to 100%. Compare this to the average Republican NHLA score of 2.6%, which ranges from 0% to 57%. The average Latino population size in Democratic districts is 22.5%, while Latinos make up 11% of an average Republican district. Democratic and Republican districts have nearly the same average percent of small farms in their districts, 91% and 90% respectively.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Democrats and Republicans, 113th Congress

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Range
Democrats				
NHLA Score	202	96.03	11.67	29 – 100
Latino MC	202	0.11	0.32	0 – 1
Obama 2012 Vote Share	202	65.13	11.70	30.2 - 96.7
Black%	202	16.83	18.46	0.7 – 64.6
Latino%	202	22.48	21.22	0.8 – 86.5
% Small Farms	183	90.85	7.76	62.6 – 100
Republicans				
NHLA Score	237	2.61	7.89	0 – 57
Latino MC	238	0.02	0.14	0 – 1
Obama 2012 Vote Share	238	39.80	7.35	18.5 – 57.2
Black%	238	8.91	7.96	0.4 – 35.2
Latino%	238	11.13	12.01	0.9 – 73.7
% Small Farms	237	90.4	7.31	60.4 – 100

I run reduced and full regression models for each party. Model 1 and 2 are Democrat models and Republican models are Models 3 and 4. See Table 2 for Democratic and Republican regression models. The only variable consistently significant across the Democratic and Republican models is Obama's vote share in 2012, as expected there is a significant positive effect of the presidential Democratic vote share in a district on MC's NHLA vote scores. Since the Democratic Party already has little variance and high support scores for Latino issues, as assumed, the percent of Latinos in Democratic districts is insignificant for roll-call position-taking on Latino issues.

The percent of small farms in a district, however, is also insignificant for Democrats, which was not expected.[6] A possible explanation is that Democrats are representing districts that are more non-agricultural, amenity-based (Scala, Johnson, and Rogers, 2015). On the other hand, the percent of Blacks in a district represented by a Democrat does have significant negative effects on NHLA vote scores ($p<0.01$). Being a Latino MC is statistically insignificant on NHLA vote scores, therefore they do not vote differently compared other MCs. The inclusion of the small farm percentage increases the R^2 value by 0.03 from 0.27 in Model 1 to 0.30 in Model 2.

Table 2: Regression Results for Democrats and Republicans NHLA Vote Scores

	Democrat MCs		Republican MCs	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Latino MC	-3.28	-1.29	4.78	5.87
	(2.58)	(3.13)	(4.98)	(4.67)
Obama 2012	0.65***	0.79***	0.29***	0.22***
	(0.15)	(0.18)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Black%	-0.19**	-0.22**	0.00	0.03
	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.04)	(0.05)
Latino%	-0.04	-0.06	0.26**	0.26***
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.08)	(0.08)
% Small Farms	--	0.11	--	-0.25*
		(0.13)		(0.10)
Constant	58.04***	40.68*	-12.09***	13.04
	(9.04)	(15.68)	(2.91)	(9.16)
Observations	202	183	237	236
R2	0.27	0.30	0.29	0.34

Note: * *p*<.05; ** *p*<.01; *** *p*<.001; robust standard errors reported in parentheses

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[6] The 2012 Census of Ag does not have congressional district profiles for many highly urban districts that Democratic MCs represent (e.g, NY-5; CA-12; PA-1; IL-4). Therefore, Democratic observations decrease by 19 when adding farm variables and Republican observations decrease by 1.

Compared to Democratic models, both Republican models show a significant positive relationship between the percentage of Latinos and their NHLA scores. In Model 3, without the percentage of small farms, the percentage of Latinos is statistically significant at the 99% level, and in Model 4—with the inclusion of percent of small farms—it is significant at the 99.9% level. Holding all else constant, a one-unit percent increase in the Latino population in a district increases a Republican MC's NHLA vote score by 0.26 percentage points. This holds across both models. Additionally, the percent of Blacks in a Republican district is insignificant, possibly due to the demographic make-up or low percentage of Blacks in Republican districts.

Adding the percent of small farms increases the R^2 variance by 0.05 between the Republican models (0.29 in the reduced model and 0.34 in the full model). The percentage of small farms in a district has significant effects for Republican MCs support for Latino issues via their NHLA vote score but not Democrats. Small farms are statistically significant at above the 95% level; therefore, the null hypotheses, for H_1 and H_2, that there are no effects of agriculture on MCs roll-call position taking can only be rejected. We cannot reject the null hypotheses for Democratic MCs for H_3 and H_4. Therefore, among Republican MCs, a one-unit percent increase of small farms in a district decreases a MC's NHLA score by 0.25%, holding all else constant. Conversely, as the percent of small farms decreases, there is greater support for Latino issues among Republican (GOP) MCs.

Figure 1 depicts the adjusted linear NHLA score predictions over the percent of small farms while holding all other variables constant at their means. Figure 1 shows, districts with 65% small farms give a predicted Republican (GOP) MC support score that is just above 6% in the 113th Congress. To put another way, as the percent of large or very large farms increases, the percent of small farms decreases in Republican-held districts, which leads to more roll-call positions

supporting Latino issues. When there are fewer large/very large farms in a district and a greater percentage of small farms, there is less support for Latino issues by Republican MCs. Specifically, when small farms make-up 90% of a district, Republican MCs do not support Latino issues— a predicted NHLA vote score of zero or lower.

Figure 1: Predicted NHLA Score for GOP Members of Congress over District Percent of Small Farms
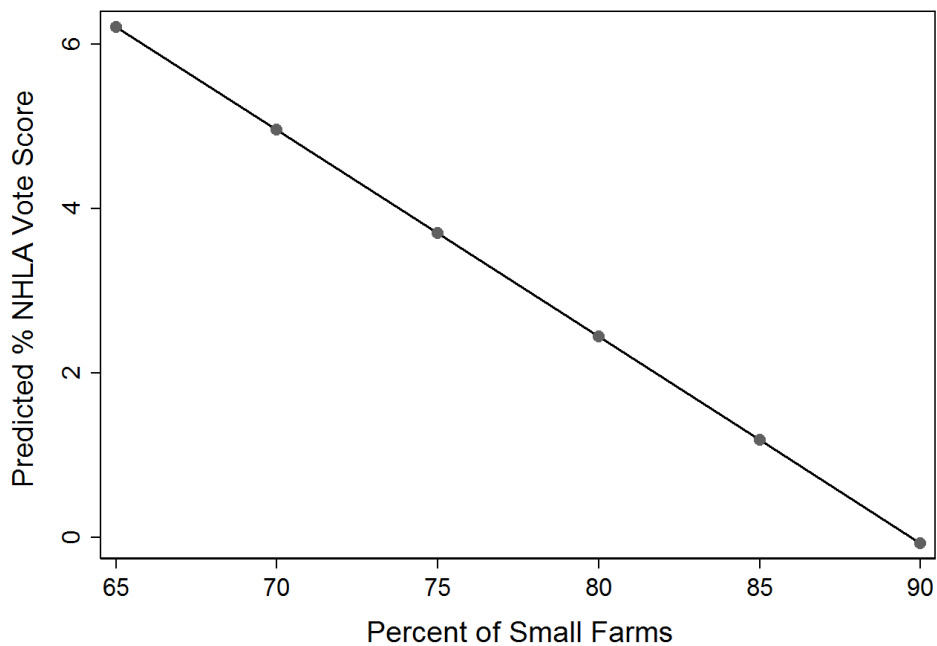
Note: All varibles held constant at their means

Part of the argument is that large farms influence the size of the Latino population in a district. The expectation is—as the number of large farms in a district increases, there is a larger Latino population, which, in turn, leads to greater support for Latino issues. Figure 2 shows the predicted Republican (GOP) MCs NHLA scores over the percent of small farms in a district at various levels of Latinos in the district (See Figure 2). When the percentage of small farms in a district is high (90%) and there are no Latinos in a district (0%) the adjusted NHLA score is 0%,

meaning no support for Latino issues. However, if there are 90% small farms with a Latino population of 30% the predicted Republican MC vote score is approximately 8%.

On the other hand, when there are fewer small farms (70%)—meaning more large or very large farms in the district—and there are no Latinos present (0%), the predicted Republican NHLA score is around 5%. This shows that as the presence of larger farms increase the MC's support for Latino issues increases, even though there is no Latino population present in the district. Yet, when the Latino population increases to 30% and the district is comprised of 70% small farms, the predicted NHLA Republican score jumps to 12.5%. This shows the percent of small farms and the Latino percent in a district changes Republican MC's support levels on Latino issues.

Figure 2: Predicted GOP Members of Congress NHLA Score versus District Percent of Small Farms and District Latino Percent
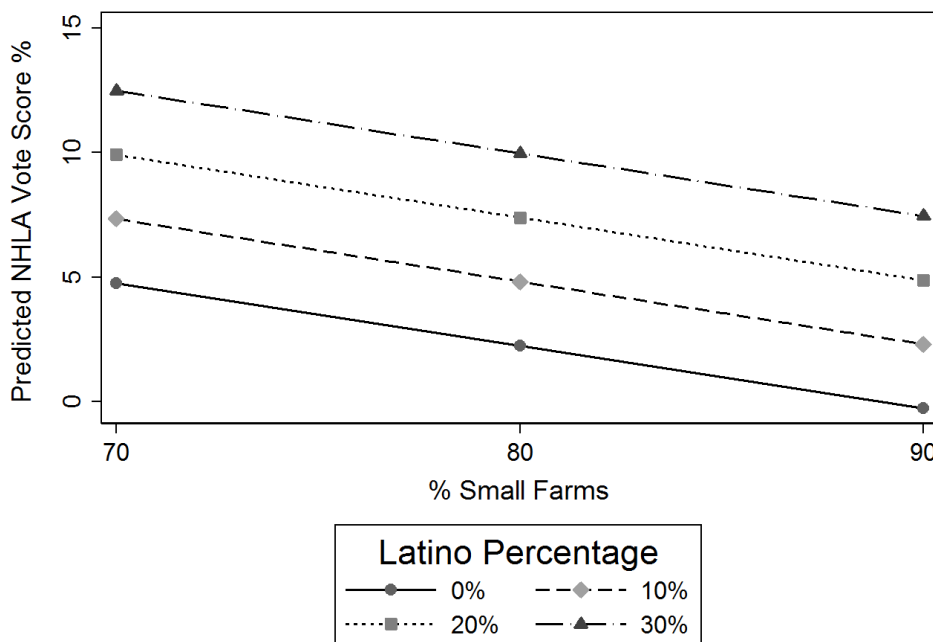
Note: All varibles held constant

Discussion

The questions is—do changes in agriculture and the Latino population cross-pressure MCs' position-taking on Latino issues? The analysis supports the proposition that district demographics and the agricultural transition cross-pressure Republican MCs to take favorable positions on immigration, political appointments, economic empowerment, and other issues salient to the Latino community. Albeit, this is only generalizable to the 113th Congress, but the analysis still gives us valuable insights into the dynamics of intra-party differences and cross-pressures on Republican MCs, and especially in districts that have a small Latino population. Having a greater presence of large and very large farms in a district appears to have a positive relationship for support of Latino issues. The one aspect we cannot answer from the evaluation is the direct relationship between agricultural and demographic changes within districts for potential interaction effects, which is outside the parameters of the current analysis. Yet, the interaction of agriculture and demographic changes is ripe for further research for cross-pressures on MCs' position-taking in Congress.

While limited in scope, this paper does add to our understanding of factors influencing representation in Congress. The finding that the percentage of Latinos in a district has significant effects for Republican MCs is consistent with Rocca, Sanchez, and Sanchez's (2018) and Wong's (2017) findings that the median position in the U.S. House is shifting toward greater support for immigration and Latino issues. This shift is largely a phenomenon among Republican MCs, which provides insights on recent roll-call votes showing intra-party position differences, namely H.R. 6136.

The analysis also supports Casellas and Leal's (2013) claim that demographics influence position taking although demographics work differently in each party. The Latino demographic is

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significant in Republican districts, whereas it is the percentage of Blacks in Democratic districts that significantly influence position-taking. The percent of Latinos in districts represented by Democrats is insignificant, due to high levels of substantive representation for Latinos already (Rocca, et al. 2018; Preuhs, 2005). Yet, for Republican MCs, more Latinos in a district are significant for greater substantive Latino representation in Congress—especially in districts with more large and/or very large farms.

This research shows agriculture has a role to play in MCs shifting Latino issue position-taking. Again, like the Latino population, the changes in ag appear to have insignificant effects on Democrats. On the other hand, changes in agriculture appear a possible mechanism for influencing Republicans to buck their party's preferred positions on Latino issues, which is particularly interesting considering the current era of hyper-partisanship in Congress (Siegel & Parkinson, 2018; Neiman, Johnson, & bowler, 2006). With the ag and the Latino population promoting greater support for Latinos, there may be an opening for bi-partisan coalitions—or even shifts in party's platforms—that can bridge policy differences on immigration, border security, other Latino issues, and agricultural policy. Moreover, recent farm bills have had inter-party contentiousness in Congress due to the needs of urban and rural districts over subsidies and food aid (Bosso, 2017). Coupling ag issues with the growing Latino population might develop new district and electoral coalitions which would increase the salience and influence of agriculture among Democrat MCs representing non-agricultural districts and Republicans representing ag districts and districts with a growing Latino presence.

The findings highlight the need for further study of the relationships between agriculture, the Latino population, and position-taking in Congress. Even though, this paper only touches on public opinion, it has potential influences on MC position-taking. As the Latino population

increases in homogeneously white districts, there may be a "backlash" pressuring MCs to vote against Latino and immigrant issues (Abrajano & Hajnal, 2015; Leitner, 2012). This can give us further insight into real-world pressures that involve agriculture, the Latino population, and public opinion on MCs position-taking. Furthermore, analysis of other Congresses can help us understand if the findings of ag's influence on Republicans continues beyond the 113th Congress. This is especially important after the 2016 election outcome and President Trump's stances on immigration, Latinos, and border security.

Moreover, President Trump's trade and tariff policies have hurt the U.S.'s agricultural economy. Not only has trade tariffs diminished farm incomes, but President Trumps' immigration actions have diminished the willingness of Latino im/migrants to fill agricultural jobs (Duvall, 2019). Thus, agriculture continues to shift as farmers and other ag sectors have a harder time producing, selling their goods, and keeping their farms. At the same time, as the failure of H.R. 6136 shows, getting border security and immigration reform enacted is still elusive in Congress. The 113th Congress shows the influence of agriculture on support for Latinos, perhaps this intra-party heterogeneity of opinion continues to divide and create tension among Republican MCs' in recent Congresses.

The latest government shutdown in December 2018 and January 2019, relating to border security, shows a growing impasse between and within the political parties on immigration and border security policies. Therefore, understanding district and electoral cross-pressures MCs face may outline a potential solution to end further gridlock. The discoveries from this paper have potential implications for finding compromises and solutions on national issues among congressional politicians, especially among Republican MCs who are bucking their party leaderships' positions. This research helps add to our knowledge on the continuing effects of the

agricultural transition on Latino issue, on position-taking, and adds to potential knowledge on how the transition of the United States to a majority-minority nation might unfold through congressional politics.

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