

Constitutional Amendment Proposals as Position-Taking Activity in the U.S. House of Representatives (1979–2020)

Abstract: It is almost impossible to change the United States Constitution, yet members of Congress (MCs) continue to introduce resolutions that propose to do so. Why do they engage in this seemingly futile activity? I argue that the sponsorship of constitutional amendments in modern congressional politics is a unique form of low-cost position-taking behavior. Examining MCs in the House of Representatives across four decades of constitutional stagnation (1979–2020), I investigate factors associated with amendment sponsorship: (1) ideological distance and career committee membership with which members engage in amendment sponsorship, and (2) electoral vulnerability and institutional status with when members engage in amendment sponsorship. Finally, I compare the sponsorship of amendments on abortion from 1979–1998 against donations from single-issue anti-abortion PACs to examine if this symbolic behavior pays off.

Keywords: congressional behavior; constitutional amendments; position-taking; symbolic politics; bill sponsorship

Adam Schiff just introduced an AMAZING Constitutional Amendment to overturn Citizens United!! We can finally put an end to Dark Money. Co-Sponsor this AMAZING bill NOW...

- Text messaged received from End Citizens United, July 26, 2022

Like the thousands of other proposed constitutional amendments introduced over the last half century, House Joint Resolution 80, Representative Adam Schiff's (D-CA) bill to reinstate limits on campaign contributions and undue the Supreme Court's ruling in *Citizens United v. FEC*, had virtually no chance of passage. Over the past five decades, Congress has passed only two amendment proposals—the Equal Rights Amendment and the DC Voting Representation Amendment—both of which failed to be ratified by the states. In today's highly polarized Congress, the requirement for an amendment to win a two-thirds vote in both chambers is virtually insurmountable, to say nothing of the odds of a successful ratification by 38 state legislatures. Despite these limited prospects for constitutional change, members of Congress (MCs) like Schiff continue to introduce amendment proposals each year. If failure is all but guaranteed, why do they do this?

Existing scholarship has neglected amendment proposals as a distinct type of legislation. In this paper, I undertake the first comprehensive analysis of the MCs who introduce constitutional amendment proposals. Focusing on the House of Representatives from 1979–2020, I argue that the sponsorship of constitutional amendments has largely served as position-taking behavior. Though amendment proposals are cheap, their symbolic consequences can be grand, as they often suggest radical changes to the structure of American government or society. I highlight the role of ideological distance, electoral vulnerability, and partisan-institutional status in determining which members sponsor amendments, and within which terms they choose to introduce them. I conclude with a brief examination of amendments to ban abortion in the 1980s and 1990s, establishing evidence of a relationship between amendment sponsorship and campaign donations from single-issue anti-abortion PACs.

The United States Constitution may be in a stagnant period, but constitutional politics, and the politics of amendment sponsorship, remain more active than many realize. Studying the sponsorship of amendments can thus offer new insights into congressional behavior, helping us to better understand the connection between legislators and the attentive public, and shedding light on the electoral connection in the process. In a landscape dominated by partisan polarization and legislative gridlock, MCs are left with little but symbolic gestures. It is thus more important than ever that we try to understand these position-taking tactics, and what differentiates those who take part in them from those who do not.

Amendment Proposals as Symbolic Position-Taking

The substantive and symbolic importance of constitutional amendments to American politics has been evident since the drafting of the Constitution itself. A central failure of the Articles of Confederation, the United States' first government, was that they required unanimous consent to approve any alterations—something that proved impossible among the fractious thirteen colonies. At the 1787 Philadelphia Convention, George Mason, a delegate from Virginia, expressed an early conviction that “amendments therefore will be necessary, and it will be better to provide for them, in an easy, regular and Constitutional way than to trust to chance and violence” (Farrand 1911, 202–203). James Madison wrote a similar sentiment in a letter to Thomas Jefferson during the period of ratification, noting that “the friends of the Constitution . . . are generally agreed that the system should be revised” (Madison 1788). The method of amendment that the Framers built in Article V has been more successful than that of the Articles of Confederation, but at the same time has still proven to be exceptionally difficult to navigate.

Article V provides two ways by which proposed constitutional amendments can be sent to the states for ratification. The first is the congressional path, which requires two-thirds approval in both the House and the Senate. All 27 successful constitutional amendments

were proposed in this manner. The second method allows two-thirds of the states to call a “convention for proposing amendments,” and though many have tried over the centuries, no convention call has cleared this threshold (Neale 2016). Once proposed, an amendment must then be ratified by three-fourths of the states, either by their legislatures or by ratifying conventions. This threshold has become markedly more difficult to reach as the number of states has increased. Where the ascent of 11 of 14 states was sufficient to ratify the Bill of Rights in 1791, a modern amendment needs the approval of 38 of the 50 states.

Scholars on constitutional amendments, often working in law rather than political science, have focused mainly on procedure and the difficulties associated with formal constitutional change (Manfredi 1997; Manfredi and Lusztig 1998; May 1987; Kay 2018). Woodward-Burns (2021) notes that the last four decades have been marked by a shift from federal to state constitutionalism amid repeated congressional failure. Two notable defeats were those of the Balanced Budget Amendment in 1995, and the Flag Desecration Amendment in 2006. Both measures passed in the House, and subsequently lost by a single vote in the Senate. To get this close to passage is far from the norm: since 1979, only 44 proposals—1.7% of those introduced across both chambers—have received a final roll call vote. Just eight of these proposals have passed, the most recent one being the aforementioned proposal to ban flag burning.¹ More than 12,000 amendment proposals have been introduced since 1789, and just 27 (0.2%) have been ratified. By contrast, 75% of the nearly 5,000 state constitutional amendments introduced between 1980 and 2018 were *successfully ratified* (Woodward-Burns 2021).

Constitutional amendments have a much lower rate of passage than other legislation. Of the more than 250,000 bills introduced in Congress since 1979, around 6% have been en-

¹Of the amendments that succeeded in one chamber between the 96th–116th Congresses, the House of Representatives passed the Flag Desecration Amendment each Congress between the 104th–109th Congresses, and the Balanced Budget Amendment in the 104th Congress. The Senate only passed a single amendment in this period, the Balanced Budget Amendment in the 97th Congress.

acted into law (GovTrack 2022). Amendment proposals evidently face uniquely high barriers compared to other bills, yet MCs still propose them each year.

Stohler et al. (2022) undertake a novel examination of the topics of all constitutional amendment proposals introduced between 1788–2020, investigating how the usage of Article V has shifted over time. Their findings suggest that amending activity has, since the mid-20th century, become a position-taking tool for MCs to respond to controversial judicial decisions and signal their opinions to their constituents. Some MCs may legitimately desire constitutional change, but we can thus assume that amendment proposals are introduced with the knowledge that they will fail. The political behavior associated with amendment sponsorship should instead share several characteristics previously associated with bill sponsorship as position-taking behavior.

Position-taking, defined by Mayhew (1974a) as a “public enunciation of a judgemental statement on anything likely to be of interest to political actors,” is a key congressional activity (61). Members take positions when they tweet about issues, speak on the floor, and cast roll call votes, among other activities. Position-taking allows MCs to make their views on a particular issue known to constituents, donors, and interest groups, as a part of their goal to win reelection. Importantly, “the electoral requirement is not that he make pleasing things happen but that he make pleasing judgmental statements” (Mayhew 1974a, 61). In a more recent analysis of congressional communication using computer-assisted clustering, Grimmer and King (2011) find that position-taking can be firmly distinguished from the other congressional activities in Mayhew’s (1974a) typology. Position-taking is regularly studied through roll call votes (Jones 2003; Bovitz and Carson 2006; Crisp and Driscoll 2012), as they are highly public moments when all MCs must make their opinion known. However, a focus on the positions taken through voting ignores the rest of the legislative process, including the vast majority of bills.

Bill sponsorship has been increasingly studied as a form of non-roll call position-taking (Koger 2003; Highton and Rocca 2005; Rocca and Gordon 2010). A key difference between

bill sponsorship and roll call voting is the former’s voluntary nature (Schiller 1995). MCs make the active decision of when to sponsor legislation, and they have discretion over the type and topics of bills they introduce. The positions taken through bills are likely more reflective of an MC’s preferences, and the intensity of those preferences, than the outcomes of yes or no voting (Highton and Rocca 2005; Finocchiaro and MacKenzie 2018). Additionally, positions taken via bill sponsorship may be intended as a signal not for constituents, but for the attentive public, which includes other MCs, key political actors outside Congress, and interest groups (Rocca and Gordon 2010).

A position-taking argument implies that the decision to sponsor legislation is driven by electoral considerations (Mayhew 1974a; Maltzman and Sigelman 1996). Other interrelated factors that have been tied to bill sponsorship include identity (Barnello and Bratton 2007; Rocca and Sanchez 2008; Platt 2015), and institutional status (Schiller 1995; Woon 2009). Even though few bills pass into law, there are also important policy implications to bill sponsorship (Wawro 2000; Woon 2009; Finocchiaro and MacKenzie 2018; Hosek and Peritz 2022).

Schiller (1995) notes that sponsorship has “resource, opportunity, and political costs” which legislators must overcome (188). When the benefits (i.e., increased electoral support, campaign contributions) outweigh the costs (i.e., time spent drafting a bill and not engaging in other work), sponsoring legislation can be a valuable means by which to publicly stake out an opinion (Rocca and Gordon 2010). While the cosponsorship of legislation is also studied as position-taking in the House (Mayhew 1974a; Wilson and Young 1997) its position-taking implications may be limited due to its low-cost and propensity to be seen as “cheap talk” (Campbell 1982; Kessler and Krehbiel 1996; Koger 2003).²

Similar to cosponsorship, the sponsorship of a constitutional amendment is a low-cost act, and may risk being seen as cheap talk (Koger 2003; Rocca and Gordon 2010). Amendment

²Cosponsorship has alternatively been described as unrelated to electoral concerns, and instead as a signaling device to pass preference information among legislators (Krehbiel 1995).

proposals are brief and formulaic (often copied directly from prior resolutions), and due to the immense barriers to passage, MCs are likely aware that no further action will be needed beyond the initial proposal. However, due to amendments' unique status as highly salient *symbolic legislation*, they may still hold value as consequential position-taking behavior.

Edelman's (1964) seminal book on symbolic politics demonstrates that amendments can function as "condensation symbols," in which a politically emotional topic is condensed into "one symbolic event, sign, or act" (6). Sponsoring a proposed constitutional amendment banning abortion may be "cheap talk" compared to a complex fiscal package, but the former carries with it an emotional symbolic weight that the latter likely cannot. Newig (2007) defines symbolic legislation as that which is both strategically effective and substantively ineffective. Though many amendment proposals would be substantively effective upon ratification, their general inability to pass renders supporting them an ineffective substantive solution to any given political problem. Beyond effectiveness, Elder and Cobb (1983) highlight the symbolism of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) as having generated significant "affective sentiments" in both support and opposition. It is unsurprising that suggesting fundamental changes to the Constitution, a document venerated within American Civil Religion (Bellah 1967; Loughlin 2022), might spark emotional responses outside the halls of Congress. Tager (2009) similarly discusses the symbolic implications of constitutional reform in the context of attempts to change the natural-born citizenship requirement for the presidency. Thus, while introducing a resolution to amend the Constitution may not require much effort on the part of the MC, the unique symbolic consequences of such a proposal imply a greater intensity, and potentially greater consequence, to the position-taking behavior.

Constructing a Model of Amendment Sponsorship

Recent analysis by Stohler et al. (2022) on the historical development of constitutional amendment proposals examines their content, along with several case studies on specific

proposals, to explore the theory that these resolutions have become a form of symbolic position-taking. I extend this argument towards the MCs themselves, testing the conditions under which representatives engage in the sponsorship of constitutional amendments. I consider the interplay between a legislator's ability to advance a substantive agenda and the appeal of symbolic action.

I approach the topic with two key questions. First, which members are likely to become constitutional amendment sponsors? Second, when are those members likely to introduce amendment proposals? On a broad level, I hypothesize that legislators resort to amendment proposals when they are more ideologically marginalized, and when they are more institutionally and electorally vulnerable than their peers. As gridlock stifles the substantive results of policy-making at the federal level, symbolic action has become an attractive avenue for influencing electoral outcomes and connecting with the public. This is especially true for MCs who don't toe the party line, and seek to make a name for themselves as, for example, a staunch progressive or conservative firebrand. At the same time, gridlock affects members differently, and pathways for successful substantive change depend on an MC's institutional position, legislative influence, and electoral safety.

Which MCs are likely to sponsor at least one constitutional amendment over the course of their careers? Rooted in the theory that those on the margins have an incentive to pursue highly symbolic legislation, I consider an MC's ideological distance to their party's center. Amendment proposals (as opposed to most traditional legislation) ask to reshape foundational aspects of the United States' government or social order. In recent years, these proposals have touched on key political debates including abortion, same-sex marriage, free speech, the powers of government, taxation and spending, and the reform of electoral institutions. As these resolutions recommend significant changes to the status quo, and a strong intensity of opinion associated with position-taking behavior, I hypothesize the following:

H1a: MCs who are more ideologically distant from their party will be more likely to

sponsor constitutional amendments during their career.

This hypothesis suggests that this relationship is equivalent in both directions, such that, for example, a very liberal (extreme) Democrat is equally as likely as a very conservative (moderate) Democrat to sponsor an amendment. I also consider an alternative hypothesis (similar to Maltzman and Sigelman (1996)):

H1b: MCs who are more ideologically distant from their party will be more likely to sponsor constitutional amendments during their career, but MCs who are more ideologically extreme will have a different likelihood of sponsorship than MCs who are equally as ideologically moderate.

The ideological center of both parties has shifted substantially since 1979, yet most conventional measures of ideology interpret an MC's ideology as a fixed characteristic. Because this temporal variation is largely driven by differences *between* members and not a change in an individual member's views (Bafumi and Herron 2010), I consider ideological distance fixed to party ideology when each MC first entered Congress. I expand on the rationale for this choice in the discussion of my data and in Appendix A.

An important career-level control is an MC's interest in constitutional amendments, measured through committee membership. The House Judiciary Committee has jurisdiction over amendment proposals, and prior research demonstrates the importance of committee membership to specific kinds of bill sponsorship (Schiller 1995; Finocchiaro and MacKenzie 2018). Committee membership has also been described as driven by member's goals (Fenno 1973), and Perkins (1980; 1981) suggests that the reasons for serving on the House Judiciary Committee are divided between reelection, policy, and the pursuit of other careers. Among those who chose the committee for policy, Perkins (1981) explicitly notes that interest in subject matter including "constitutional rights" is a driving force (355).³ Because the House Judi-

³The policy orientation of these MCs is not inconsistent with my hypothesis that amendment sponsorship is a position-taking activity tied to reelection concerns. As I note later, my model considers *career* committee membership, rather than membership in a given term, to reflect that *selection* into amendment sponsorship

ciary Committee covers a breadth of legislative topics, I look more narrowly at membership on the Subcommittee on the Constitution, which holds initial jurisdiction on amendment proposals.⁴ I expect career subcommittee membership to serve as a better proxy for this interest than subcommittee membership in a given term, as this interest should not vary with majority status, seniority, and subsequent committee membership opportunities.

Turning to my second hypothesis, I consider which MCs are more likely to introduce at least one amendment proposal in a given term of Congress. I explore how an MC's vulnerability and inability to deliver substantive policy may drive them toward symbolic politics and position-taking through amendment proposals. As position-taking is an activity driven by reelection concerns (Mayhew 1974a), I examine direct and indirect characteristics that could facilitate changes in an MC's behavior.

As an exercise in position-taking, amendment sponsorship should be directly related to an MC's electoral prospects, and feelings of electoral vulnerability:

H2a: MCs will be more likely to sponsor constitutional amendments when they did not win their previous election by a large margin.

Representatives face a constant pressure to win reelection, and that pressure is likely to be strongest after a close victory. Members may see symbolic gestures like amendment proposals as a means to garner endorsements and donations before their next election. I also consider two partisan-institutional factors which are indirectly linked to electoral behavior: (1) majority status and (2) presidential party. Members tend to sponsor more in the majority party (Schiller 1995), as minority party MCs have a reduced ability to move bills. However, the inability of minority party members to pass policy-based legislation may translate into their proposing more radical, symbolic bills, with no intention of passage and an eye toward

may be tied to overall policy interests, but the *outcome* of when selected members choose to sponsor is linked to electoral and institutional concerns.

⁴This subcommittee has had different names over the years, including (1) the Subcommittee on the Constitution, (2) the Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice, and (3) the Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties.

the next election. I thus hypothesize the following:

H2b: MCs will be more likely to sponsor constitutional amendments while in the minority party.

Like majority status, presidential party should impact amendment sponsorship. Though the president plays no formal role in the amendment process, the electoral connection implies that MCs have incentives to behave differently when in the opposite party of the president (Koger 2003). In a similar, but separate effect from minority status (as only 8 of the last 21 Congresses have had a House majority of the same party as the president), having an out-party president may motivate members to introduce more proposals that (1) are electorally salient and play well with voters and the attentive public; and (2) are under little pressure to become law in the immediate future.⁵ This leads me to my final hypothesis:

H2c: MCs will be more likely to sponsor constitutional amendments when the president is not in their party.

There are several other institutional elements that should impact likelihood of sponsorship. These include whether a member is serving in a partisan leadership position in a given term and an MC's seniority. Findings by Schiller (1995) show that members in leadership generally sponsor less legislation, due to their disparate congressional responsibilities. Likewise, Schiller (1995) and Finocchiaro and MacKenzie (2018) establish that more senior MCs are more prolific sponsors in both chambers, introducing more bills as they learn the legislative game in Congress and narrow on topics of interest. However, Campbell (1982) and Wilson and Young (1997) show that more senior members in the House are also less likely to cosponsor legislation. Amendment sponsorship is a distinct activity from traditional sponsorship, with similarities in cost to cosponsorship. It is possible that amendment sponsorship is similar to overall sponsorship, and that MCs who serve for longer periods of time

⁵The Republican Party's Contract with America, which centered the 1994 midterm elections around a series of policies that included the Balanced Budget and Term Limits amendments, is demonstrative of this potential effect.

will be more likely to introduce them. However, it could be that more senior members are less likely to introduce amendments, due to the changes in institutional power, experience, and electoral concerns that come with seniority. Freshman status likely plays a unique role, as freshman members, the most inexperienced in Congress, are less likely to sponsor bills of any kind than those more senior. Finally, I consider the potential impact of a member sitting on the Subcommittee on the Constitution in a given term, although I do not expect to find a strong relationship given the predicted link between *career* committee membership and *interest* in amendments.

Specifying the Model

If we analyze each question (*who* sponsors over the course of their career, and *when* in their career do they sponsor?) separately, we risk selection bias in the results of the latter, due to the large, likely non-random number of MCs who never proposed an amendment at any point in their career. The question of *when*, then, is contingent on the question of *who*.

To address this potential selection bias among amendment sponsors, I use a Heckman selection model. Prior studies of Congressional behavior, including [Rottinghaus and Waggoner \(2018\)](#) and [Battaglini et al. \(2020\)](#), have employed the two-step model to correct for selection bias in their analyses. In this application, the selection stage determines *who*; which MCs choose to engage in amendment sponsorship. Legislators elect whether or not to invest their time in sponsoring constitutional amendment proposals, and this selection of MCs is far from random. The outcome stage determines *when* legislators deploy this symbolic strategy, i.e. *when* in their careers do they sponsor amendment proposals. The selection model allows us to analyze when MCs sponsor while considering the impact of which MCs sponsor. At the same time, this method allows us to account for correlation between the error terms of the selection and outcome stages. Without taking into account the non-random selection of MCs into amendment sponsorship and the possible correlated disturbances between the

two stages, it is plausible to expect that there will be selection bias in the coefficients of the outcome regression.

Of critical importance to the Heckman model is that the characteristics which condition the selection process—in this case, ideological distance—do not subsequently condition the outcome. In other words, the critical variables that determine how MCs select into career engagement with amendment sponsorship should not be statistically related to when the selected members do or do not sponsor amendments.⁶

The selection stage of a Heckman model is always estimated as a probit model. While the outcome equation is typically a linear regression, I instead estimate a second probit model, as the dependent variable of my outcome stage is binary.⁷

Data and Measurement

I focus on the House of Representatives, analyzing 1,808 unique representatives between 1979–2020 for a total of 9,253 member-term observations.⁸ I choose this period for two reasons. First, Congress last successfully passed a constitutional amendment in 1978 (the unratified DC Voting Representation Amendment). My data thus covers what is nearly the longest drought of successful amending activity in American history. Some proposals

⁶A Heckman selection model is properly identified when variables in the first stage satisfy the exclusion restriction, and by the assumption that the error terms for both stages are distributed bivariate normal. [Bushway et al. \(2007\)](#) discuss the importance of utilizing substantively valid exclusionary restrictions in selection models. See Appendix A for a full description of the model used in the paper.

⁷The two-stage probit method has been employed by papers including [Van de Ven and Van Praag \(1981\)](#) and [Keil et al. \(2017\)](#), and has been described as analogous to the traditional selection model developed by [Heckman \(1979\)](#).

⁸I removed observations for MCs who served fewer than six months, as well as for non-voting members and delegates from U.S. Territories and the District of Columbia. [Poole and Rosenthal \(1997\)](#) assign separate ICPSR identification numbers and DW-NOMINATE ideology scores to MCs who serve in both parties. See Appendix A for more details.

have nearly gone to the states during this period (on balancing the budget, banning flag burning, term limiting Congress, and banning same-sex marriage), but none have passed in both chambers. Second, 1979 also marks a critical rule change in the House allowing for an unlimited number of bill cosponsors. Cosponsorship first became a legislative tool in 1967, but until 1979, only 25 MCs could sign onto a bill. Members would thus frequently reintroduce identical bills with every 25 cosponsors acquired (Oleszek 2021).

Figure 1 plots the total number of amendments introduced in the House from 1889 through 2020, with a dotted vertical line demarcating 1979. Though the object of this paper is not to investigate the spike in amendment proposals in the 1960s and 70s, a cursory examination at the period's data suggests it may be related to (1) cosponsorship rules encouraging duplicate proposals, and (2) political conditions tied to a number of key political events in the 1960s.⁹

Recognizing these conditions before 1979, I narrow my study on the MCs who, between the 96th and 116th Congress, introduced 1,997 amendments in the House. These proposals cover a wide range of topics, the most popular of which are plotted across each Congress in Figure A.1 in Appendix A. With nearly 500 proposals, the Balanced Budget Amendment has been by far the most popular topic in this period. It is followed in frequency by proposals on term limiting congress, banning abortion, instituting campaign finance regulations, and

⁹These include the assassination of John F. Kennedy, controversial decisions by the Warren Court, the 1968 election, and the resurgence of the Equal Rights Amendment. Kennedy's assassination sparked numerous proposals to fix the system of presidential succession, disability, and vice presidential appointment, provisions now found in the 25th Amendment. The Supreme Court's decisions in *Brown v. Board* and *Engel v. Vitale* led to many amendment proposals opposing integration and pushing for the return of prayer in public schools. After the 1968 presidential election, many were concerned about a "wrong-winner" scenario in the Electoral College. The proposed Bayh-Celler Amendment, which would have instituted a national popular vote for president, passed the House in 1969 but was filibustered in the Senate. The Equal Rights Amendment faced a resurgence in the 1960s in the context of the second wave of the feminist movement. The 91st Congress, the most prolific year for amendment sponsorship in American history, saw 270 variations of the ERA introduced by 255 individual members of the House.

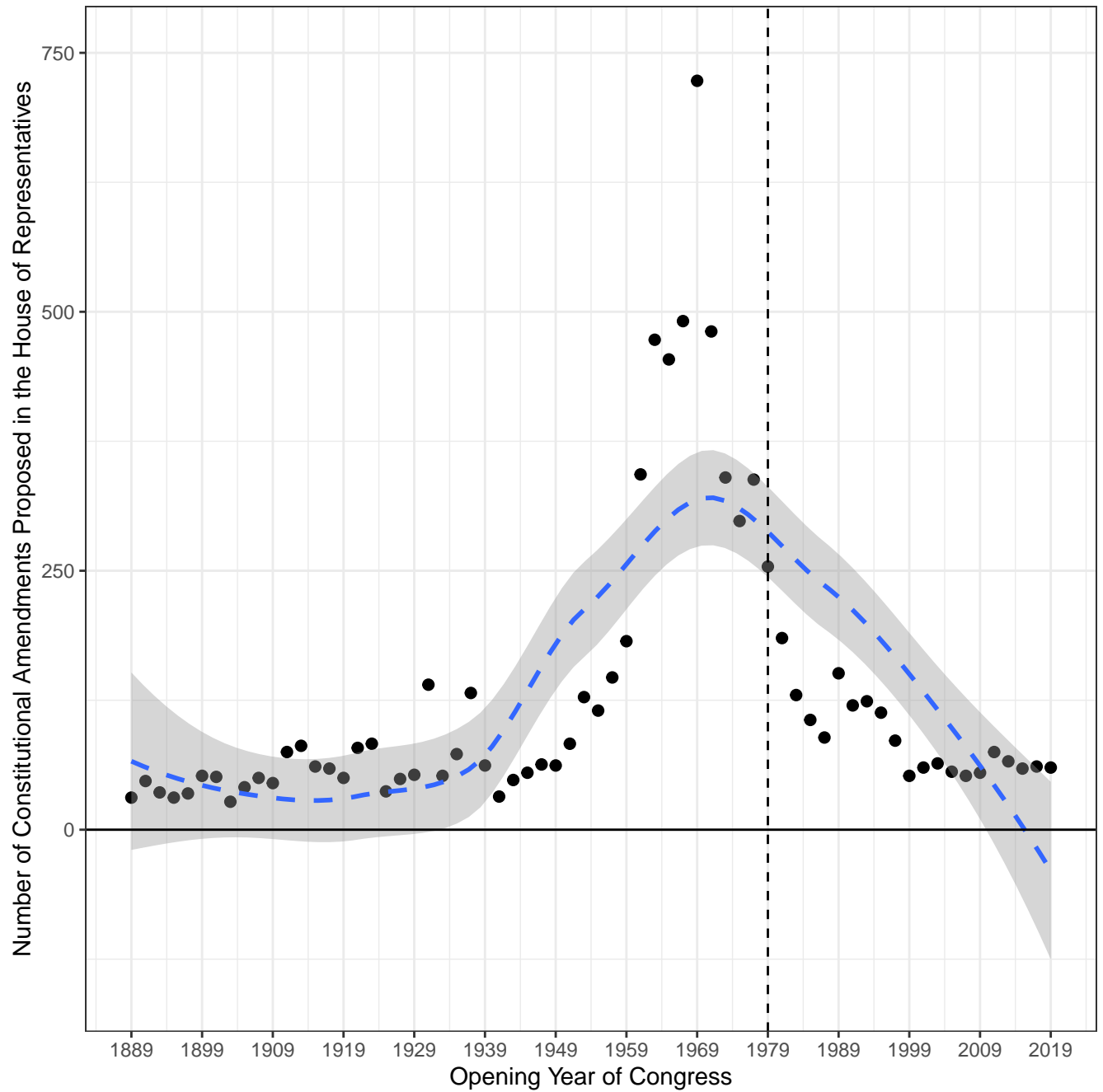


Figure 1: Total number of constitutional amendments introduced in the House of Representatives in each Congress, 1889–2020. $N = 1,997$. LOESS trend line is displayed with 95% confidence interval.

allowing for prayer in public institutions. Other common but less frequent amendment topics include a ban on flag burning, providing the president with a line item veto, and abolishing the Electoral College in favor of a national popular vote for president.

The underlying dependent variable of the initial selection stage of the model is career amendment sponsorship, or whether an MC sponsored a constitutional amendment at any point in this 42-year span. I code this binary dependent variable as 1 if an MC sponsored an amendment at least once in this period, and as 0 if an MC has never participated in amendment sponsorship. 35% of member-term observations (3,253 out of 9,253) select into amendment sponsorship (representing 511 unique representatives, or 28% of MCs). This data comes from the National Archives' Amending America dataset (Archives 2016), with additional coding from Congress.gov to include the years 2014–2020.

The identifying explanatory variable of the first stage of my model is ideological distance. I measure this concept as a fixed characteristic using first-dimension DW-NOMINATE ideology scores (Poole and Rosenthal 1997; Lewis et al. 2022). For each MC, I subtract their DW-NOMIMATE score from their party's median ideology in their first term of service, taking the absolute value of this distance.¹⁰ This use of absolute distance from the party's center reflects hypothesis H1a. I pin each MC's distance to their first entry to reflect that being on the margins early in one's career (1) shows us how an MC initially identifies themselves in relation to their party, and (2) may impact behavior later in their career, even if they grow closer to the party (see Appendix A). For those members who entered Congress before the start of the data, I use their ideological distance relative to the party medians in 1979. Given the previously discussed institutional and historical developments that occurred in the years preceding 1979, I believe that it is sensible to root members' ideological distance *within* the period of concern.

Turning to H1b, I also split my single measure of ideological distance into two variables,

¹⁰I code Independent and third party MCs as Republican if their DW-NOMINATE scores are positive, and as Democratic if their scores are negative.

representing ideological moderation and ideological extremism. All MCs whose first term ideological distance places them between the centers of their party and the other party are given a moderation score equal to their ideological distance, and an extremity score of 0. The reverse is applied for those who are ideologically between their party's center and the poles. Like ideological distance scores, the moderation and extremity scores are restricted to values greater than or equal to 0.

Under both H1a and H1b, these measures of ideological distance should act as the identifying variables of the two-stage selection model. To this extent, they should be strong predictors of selection into amendment sponsorship, but not be correlated with a member's decision to sponsor in a given term. As a fixed characteristic that is not directly tied to a member's electoral and institutional vulnerability, I believe that ideological distance should satisfy the exclusion restriction of the Heckman model.

A critical control in the selection stage is each member's career service on the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution. I gather committee service records from both C-SPAN's committee database and the Congressional Directory (C-SPAN 2022; Directory 2022). MCs are scored as 1 if during any term between the 96th-116th Congresses they served on this subcommittee, and 0 if otherwise. 76 members have sat on this subcommittee, representing 528 (6%) member-term observations.

I then control for an MC's party (Republican or Democrat), race (white, Black, Latino, or Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI)), gender (Female or Male), and geographic region (Northeast, South, Midwest, or West), to account for alternative characteristics that may be related to selection into sponsorship (Lewis et al. 2022; BioGuide 2022). I also account for first entry into Congress, using two dummy variables to represent three periods of entry: before the 96th Congress (1,885 member-term observations), the 96th through 104th Congress (4,225), and the 105th Congress through the 116th Congress (3,147). Levels of amendment sponsorship have fluctuated over time, and this control accounts for how periods of entry may affect behavior.

We now move to the second stage of the selection model. The dependent variable of the outcome stage is amendment sponsorship in a given term, conditional on an MC having proposed an amendment during their career. As in the selection stage, this variable is binary. An MC scores a 1 if they sponsored at least one amendment in a given term of Congress, and a 0 if they did not sponsor any that term. While some MCs have proposed multiple amendments in a single Congress, 72% of member-term observations in which an MC sponsors contains only a single amendment proposal (see Table A.3 in Appendix A).

The low likelihood of sponsorship and limited dispersion in the data lead me to believe that a binary specification is warranted over a count model. In these data, we observe amendment sponsorship in 40% of selected observations (1,327 member-terms). Because the outcome stage only considers the respondents who are selected by career amendment sponsorship, all observations for MCs who never sponsored an amendment are censored during this stage. Among the 1,808 representatives we considered in the selection stage, 511 are examined in the outcome stage. The outcome stage thus considers 3,253 of the 9,253 total member-term observations, censoring 6,000 observations.

To measure electoral vulnerability, I utilize Congressional elections data (MIT 2022; FEC 2022). For the election prior to each member-term observation, I calculate each MC's margin of victory over the second-place candidate. Using a variation of Mayhew's (1974b) definition of marginal districts, I create a dummy variable equal to 1 if an MC's margin of victory is less than 10%, indicating that with a 5% swing in votes, the member would have lost the election.¹¹ Within the censored outcome data, 347 elections were marginal, accounting for 11% of observations.

I control for a number of institutional factors that may impact an MC's propensity to sponsor legislation or take positions in a given term, including majority status, presidential

¹¹In Table C.5 in Appendix C, I test alternative specifications for this variable, setting the marginal election level equal to a 5%, 15%, and 20% difference between the candidates, as well as treating it as a continuous variable.

party, leadership status, seniority, and freshman status (see Appendix A for full description of these variables). To account for changes in sponsorship rates, legislative techniques, and political context over time, I include time fixed effects on each Congress in the outcome stage. In both stages of the model, I cluster the standard errors around each MC, to reflect that all MCs who served multiple terms are repeated entrants in the data.

Estimation and Results

Table 1 presents several specifications of the first stage of the selection model, accounting for both hypotheses of ideological distance, career level and demographic control variables, and regional fixed effects. As expected, greater ideological distance from the party and career membership on the Subcommittee on the Constitution are both positively associated with sponsoring at least one constitutional amendment during a member's career. In support of H1b, ideological extremity appears to be a stronger predictor of amendment sponsorship than ideological moderation, although in each specification both scores are positively associated with sponsorship.

In Table 2, I present the results of the outcome stage. Model 2a utilizes only the core variables of interest, while Models 2b through 2e introduce various specifications of controls, fixed effects, and tests of the exclusionary restriction for the identifying variables of ideological distance. For each second stage model, I utilize the full specification of the selection stage, Model 1f, to calculate the Inverse Mills Ratio (IMR). The results of the outcome stage show support for hypotheses H2a, H2b, and H2c. In a given term of Congress, MCs who had a close previous election are more likely to sponsor amendments, while majority party members and those who share a party with the president have a reduced likelihood to introduce a constitutional amendment proposal.

The significant IMR in the second stage model means we can reject the null hypothesis that the two stages are independent, and supports the usage of a selection model. This

IMR implies a negative selection bias, whereby some estimates without selection would be biased downwards. I demonstrate this bias in Table C.4 in Appendix C, running the outcome model with no censorship. Additionally, the lack of significant correlation between ideological distance and amendment sponsorship in a given term suggests that first term extremity and moderation sufficiently specify the selection equation.

For ease of interpretability, I graph the change in expected probabilities of sponsorship when moving along the ranges of the key explanatory and control variables in Figure 2. For the binary variables, this reflects a movement from a value of 0 to 1. For ideological extremity and moderation, this is a movement from the 5th percentile value of ideological distance to the 95th percentile value (to allow for an even comparison between the two measures). To account for the freshman effect, I shift seniority from 2 to 14 terms. All other values are held at their medians when simulating these expected probabilities.

In the selection stage, membership on the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution raises an MC's likelihood of sponsoring a constitutional amendment during their career by around 25 percentage points, moving from a 40% to a 65% likelihood of career sponsorship. A legislator who is very ideologically extreme from their party, akin to Barbara Lee (D-CA) or Jim Jordan (R-OH), has a 56% likelihood of sponsoring during their career, approximately 20 percentage points greater than a legislator near the party's center, a grouping that includes Al Gore (D-TN) and Bobby Jindal (R-LA). Meanwhile, an equally distant ideologically moderate MC—someone like Kirsten Synema (D-AZ) or John Katko (R-NY)—only has a 47% likelihood of sponsorship.

While the predicted change in probability for extremity is double that of moderation, the large confidence intervals of these estimates means that we cannot conclude that the groups are different. I check this by additionally performing a linear hypothesis test on the null hypothesis that the two variables are equal. This test returns a p -value of 0.15, indicating that while we cannot reject this null at the 95% confidence level, further analysis may yet uncover a difference between these two forms of ideological distance.

Table 1: First Stage Probit Selection Models of Constitutional Amendment Sponsorship in the House of Representatives, 1979–2020

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>					
	Sponsored Amendment Ever?					
	1a	1b	1c	1d	1e	1f
Ideological Distance	1.65*** (0.40)		1.42*** (0.40)		1.47*** (0.40)	
Ideological Extremity		1.84*** (0.46)		1.61*** (0.47)		1.80*** (0.47)
Ideological Moderation		1.35** (0.46)		1.16* (0.48)		1.05* (0.48)
Career Subcomm. on Const.			0.71*** (0.18)	0.69*** (0.18)	0.70*** (0.18)	0.66*** (0.18)
Career/Demographic Controls			✓	✓	✓	✓
Region Fixed Effects					✓	✓
Observations	9,253	9,253	9,253	9,253	9,253	9,253
Log Likelihood	-5,930.65	-5,926.75	-5,470.16	-5,467.44	-5,412.26	-5,405.18
Akaike Inf. Crit.	11,865.29	11,859.50	10,960.32	10,956.87	10,850.52	10,838.37

Note:

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Robust SEs are clustered on MC in each model to account for repeated entries. Observations consist of 9,253 member-terms of 1,808 representatives. Career and demographic controls account for first entry into Congress, party, race, and gender. Region fixed effects divide between Northeast, South, Midwest, and West. Full estimates are available in Table B.1 in Appendix B.

Table 2: Second Stage Probit Outcome Models of Constitutional Amendment Sponsorship in the House of Representatives, 1979–2020, utilizing Selection Stage Model 1f

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>				
	2a	Sponsored Amendment This Term?			2e
		2b	2c	2d	
Marginal District in Last Election	0.19* (0.08)	0.21* (0.09)	0.20* (0.09)	0.21* (0.09)	0.21* (0.09)
Majority	-0.16** (0.06)	-0.17** (0.06)	-0.18** (0.06)	-0.17** (0.06)	-0.18** (0.06)
Same Party Pres.	-0.10* (0.05)	-0.11* (0.05)	-0.12* (0.05)	-0.11* (0.05)	-0.12* (0.05)
Ideological Extremity				0.25 (0.40)	0.19 (0.41)
Ideological Moderation				0.61 (0.43)	0.76 (0.48)
Subcomm. on Const.		0.17 (0.15)	0.24 (0.16)	0.15 (0.16)	0.24 (0.17)
Leadership		-0.40* (0.16)	-0.39** (0.15)	-0.40* (0.16)	-0.40** (0.15)
Freshman		-0.32*** (0.09)	-0.36*** (0.10)	-0.33*** (0.09)	-0.38*** (0.10)
Terms		-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.03** (0.01)	-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.03** (0.01)
Institutional Controls		✓	✓	✓	✓
Congress Fixed Effects			✓		✓
IMR	-0.33***	-0.42***	-0.37*	-0.35**	-0.24
Observations	3,253	3,253	3,253	3,253	3,253
Log Likelihood	-2,180.19	-2,152.26	-2,088.74	-2,149.35	-2,084.45
Akaike Inf. Crit.	4,370.38	4,322.53	4,235.48	4,320.71	4,230.90

Note:

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Robust SEs are clustered on MC in each model to account for repeated entries. Observations consist of 3,253 member-terms of 511 representatives, with 3,000 member-term observations of 1,297 representatives censored from the first stage.

Turning to the outcome stage, an electorally vulnerable MC has a likelihood of sponsorship in a given term of 36%, around 7 percentage points more than a safe member. Being in the minority party as opposed to the majority raises an MC's likelihood of sponsoring from 29% to 36%. Those in the same party as the president are 4 percentage points less likely to sponsor than opposition party members at 29%, and party leaders are 12 percentage points less likely than other MCs with a likelihood of 17%. Compared to second-term representatives, who have a 31% likelihood of sponsorship, freshman members are 10 percentage points less likely to sponsor an amendment. Members in their 14th term, meanwhile, are 12 percentage points less likely to sponsor than those in their second term. Unlike in the selection stage, membership on the Subcommittee on the Constitution does not appear to predict amendment sponsorship. This supports the concept that this membership may be seen as a proxy for interest, something that does not vary with an MC's actual position on the committee.

Is this relationship moderated by partisanship? While many of the key outcome stage variables, such as majority status and presidential party, depend on cross-party comparisons, I turn back to the selection stage. I analyze the two measures of ideological distance on subsets of my data, broken down to only Republicans and only Democrats. The full results of these models are available in Table B.2 in Appendix B. Simulating expected probabilities of sponsorship across the selection stage variables, Figure 3 shows that the effect of ideology is driven by *extremists* in the Republican Party, and *moderates* in the Democratic Party. In other words, *the more conservative members in each respective party are more likely to become amendment sponsors*. The size of the effect for extremity in the Republican Party is double that of moderation in the Democratic Party. This result pushes against H1a and H1b, and demonstrates that conservatism, whether expressed as far-right extremism, or Blue Dog centrism, has been a much stronger motivator of amendment sponsorship over the last few decades than liberal Republicanism or progressivism. Given that four of the five most popular topics proposed during this period are conservative policy goals, this is sensible.

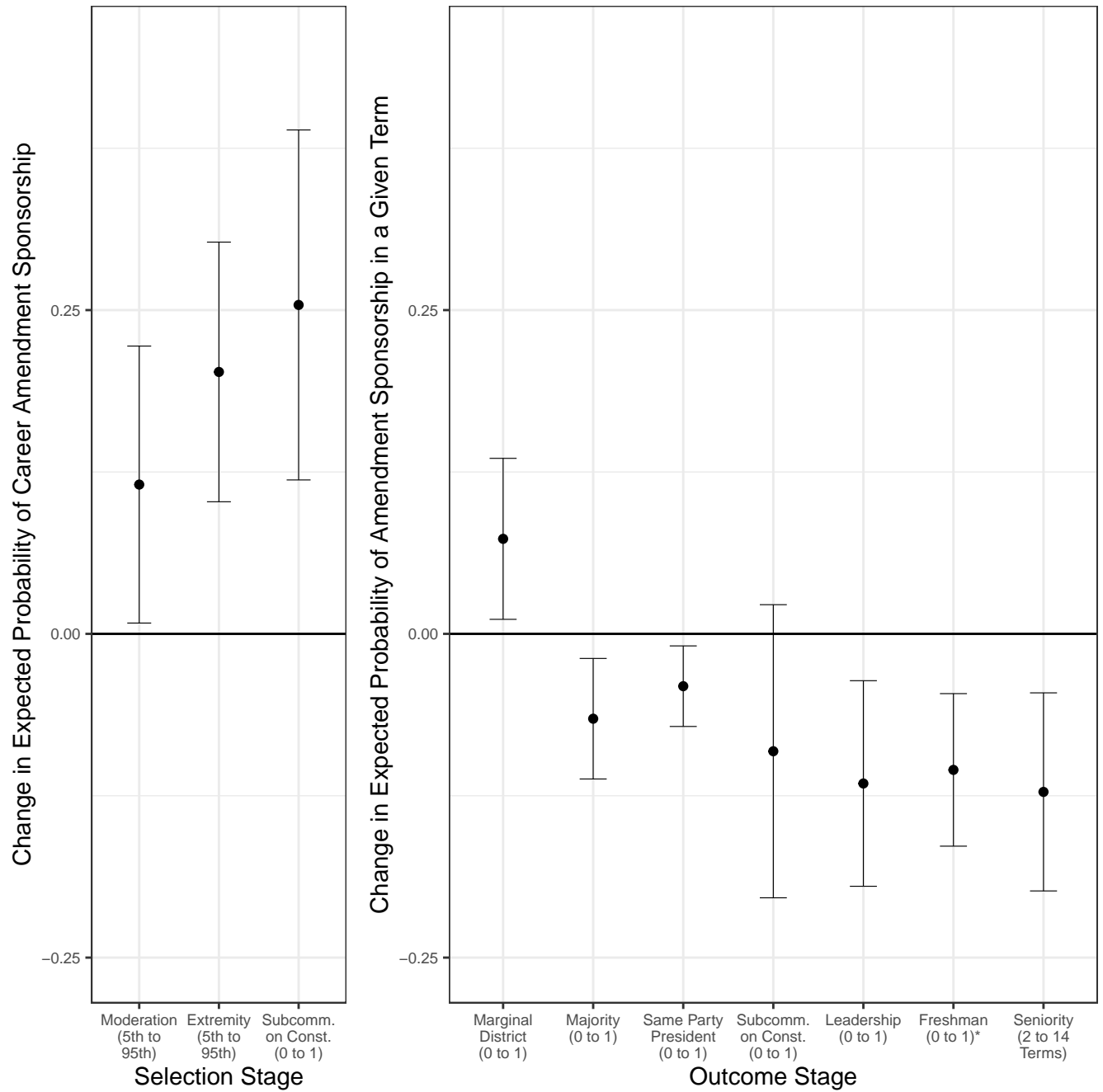


Figure 2: Changes in expected probability from both stages of the model. In each simulation, all other variables are held at their median values. The data in the outcome stage is simulated for the 106th Congress. Bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

*The change in probability for Freshman additionally represents a movement from one to two terms in office.

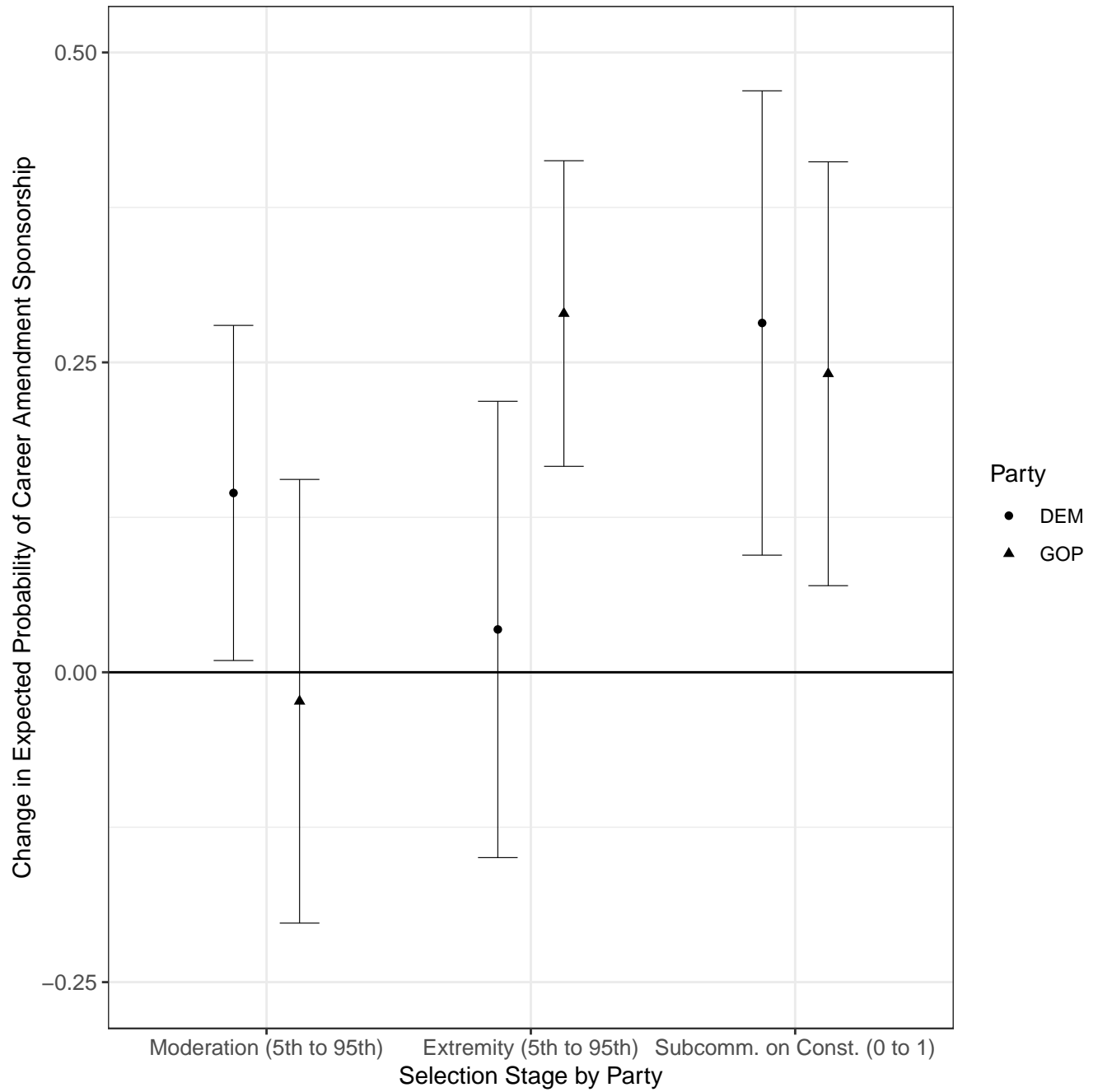


Figure 3: Changes in expected probability for selection stage variables among Republicans and Democrats. In each simulation, all other variables are held at their median values. The data in the outcome stage is simulated for the 106th Congress. Bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

The Payoffs of Amendment Sponsorship

The prior analysis has demonstrated that the timing of amendment sponsorship correlates to MC's electoral and institutional vulnerability. This supports the theory that amendment sponsorship is a form of position-taking. But is there a successful payoff to this behavior? Does the sponsorship of amendments impact the relationship between representatives and interest groups? Examining campaign donations and the sponsorship of anti-abortion amendments in the 1980s and 90s, I test whether sponsorship pays dividends. While not causal in nature, this analysis suggests the presence of a relationship between amendment proposals and campaign contributions.

I focus my attention on amendments to ban abortion for a critical reason: there are identifiable, single-issue political action committees (PACs) on the subject. While there are interest groups that lobby in support of many other popular amendment topics, there are few organizations *singularly* devoted to implementing proposals like the Balanced Budget Amendment. By narrowing our analysis to anti-abortion amendments, we can (1) more easily identify campaign contributions from relevant groups, and (2) more conclusively claim that said contributions were made in relation to a *specific* issue, rather than an MC's general policy platform. I look only at member-term observations from 1979–1997, as this is the period in which amendments to ban abortion were most common. As pictured in Figure A.1 in Appendix A, 104 amendments on this topic were proposed across the entire data, with 98 of these introduced within the aforementioned period. Using campaign finance data from [Bonica \(2016\)](#) and information from the Open Secrets [\(2022\)](#) top contributor database on single-issue anti-abortion organizations, I identify and subset donations to incumbent MCs from single-issue pro-life PACs (see Appendix D). The resulting data contains \$6,213,278 in contributions from 48 national, state, and local anti-abortion organizations. 61.9% of these donations, comprising 79.7% of the dollars contributed, come solely from the National Right to Life Political Action Committee. While there are likely other PACs (and individuals) that made donations directly tied to their views on abortion policy during this window, we can

only identify the single-issue groups with any degree of certainty.

I merge these contributions with my data, along with information on total campaign contributions from [Bonica \(2016\)](#). I additionally remove all member-term observations in which an MC did not run for reelection. This new dataset covers 1,008 MCs across 3,913 terms between 1979 and 1997. 255 (25.2%) of these members took money from these PACs across 914 of the observations. Building on the theory that MCs sponsor amendments so that they can signal to the attentive public, I hypothesize the following relationships:

H3a: MCs who propose anti-abortion amendments will be more likely to receive at least one donation from an anti-abortion PAC during that election cycle.

H3b: MCs who propose anti-abortion amendments will receive greater total contributions from anti-abortion PACs.

Similar to my measure of amendment sponsorship, I create a binary dependent variable for anti-abortion PAC contributions, coded 1 if a member received any contribution in a given term from the organizations I previously isolated. Though some members receive multiple donations from a single PAC in one election cycle, 75% of MCs *only* receive donations from a single anti-abortion PAC in any one election. I also create a variable equal to the total contributions from these PACs received by each member in a given term.

First, I estimate a probit regression comparing amendment sponsorship to the propensity of receiving a contribution from an anti-abortion PAC. I control for the total number of donors for each member-term, reflecting the fact that MCs with more donors are more likely to be receive more than one donation. Additionally, I control for the sponsorship of other constitutional amendments. If the behavior of these PACs are *specifically* related to the sponsorship of anti-abortion amendments, then we should not expect any strong correlation between contributions and amendments on non-abortion topics. I also include several demographic, institutional, and electoral controls, as well as regional and congressional fixed effects to account for the differences in campaign contributions across the place and time. In these models, I control for ideology, rather than ideological distance, as banning abortion

is an explicitly conservative policy goal and should not be theoretically linked to median distance. As in my selection model, I employ robust standard errors clustered around each MC. The results of these models can be found in Table D.1 in Appendix D.

Across each specification, the impact of sponsoring an abortion amendment is positive and significant. This lends support for hypothesis H3a. As expected, there is no significant relationship between these donations and the sponsorship of other, unrelated constitutional amendments. I graph the first differences of these results for several key explanatory variables in Figure 4. Sponsoring an anti-abortion amendment is associated with an increase in expected probability of receiving a donation from an anti-abortion organization of 31 percentage points. This effect is not trivial: it is far larger than that of being in a marginal district, at 8 percentage points, and is similar in size to the impact of moving from an incredibly liberal MC to an incredibly conservative one, at 37 percentage points.

Do we see a similar result when we considering the size of the contributions? I estimate several linear models where the dependent variable is each MC's total receipts from anti-abortion PACs in a given year. I utilize the same controls and fixed effects specifications, but I additionally control for the total amount of other contributions received by each member. The full results from these models can be found in Table D.2 in Appendix D. Holding all else equal, these results suggest that members do receive more campaign donations from these PACs during the terms in which they sponsor anti-abortion amendments.

Establishing that an MC receives a contribution during the same cycle in which they sponsor an amendment does not imply a causal relationship. A member could sponsor an amendment and receive a PAC contribution in return, but they could also feel obligated to sponsor an amendment *after* receiving a contribution. Rather than suggesting a causal pathway, I include this brief analysis to demonstrate that amendment sponsorship is intertwined within the complex, cyclical relationship between MCs and PACs.

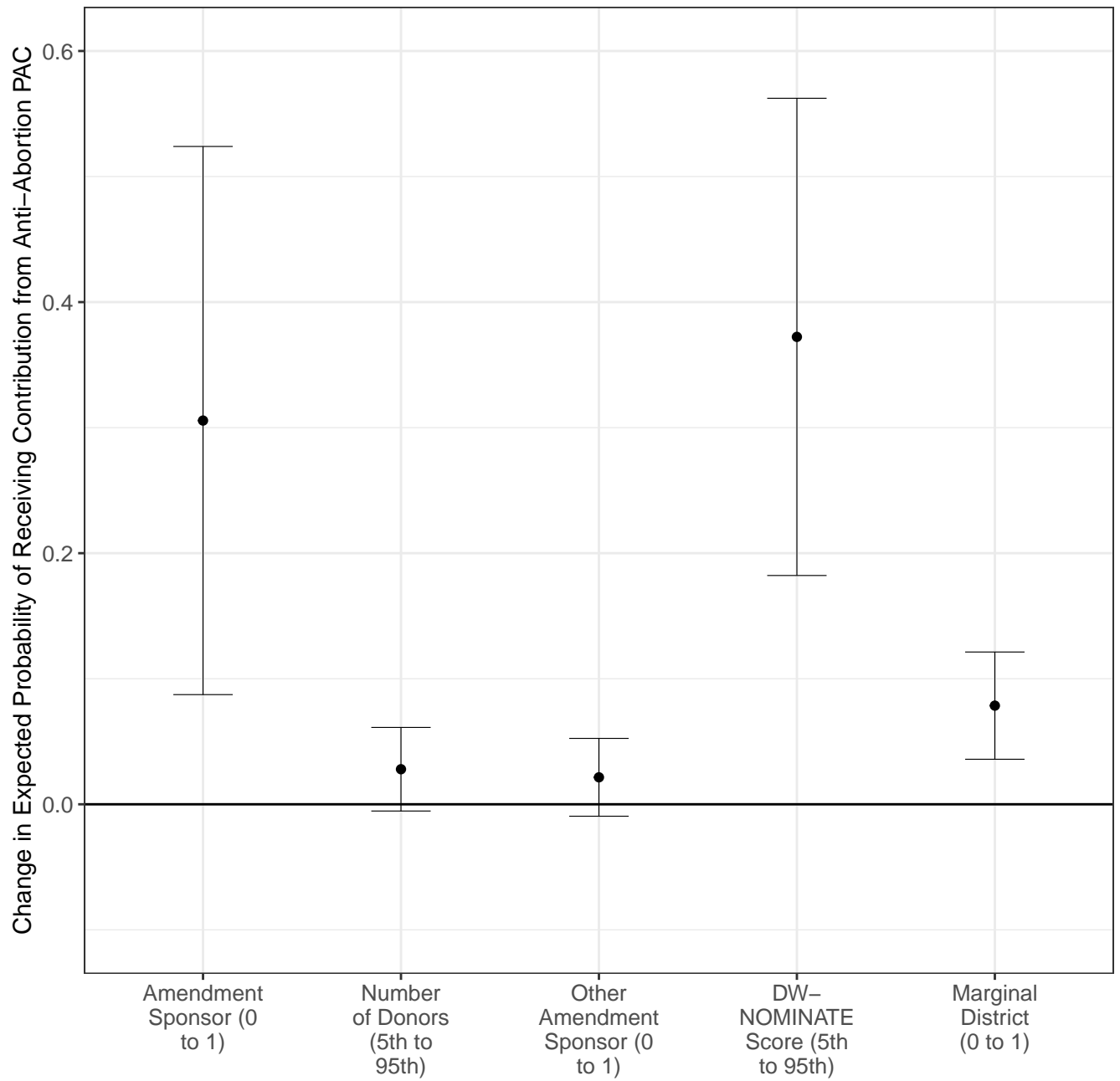


Figure 4: Change in expected probability of receiving a donation from an anti-abortion PAC. In each simulation, all other variables are held at their median values. The data is simulated for the 100th Congress. Bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Discussion and Conclusion

This analysis has demonstrated several important findings about the sponsorship of constitutional amendment proposals. Amendment sponsorship appears to be an activity undertaken by ideologically distant MCs in terms where they are more electorally vulnerable and hold less institutional power. These findings offer insight into congressional behavior, opening a window into an understudied region of symbolic politics. They also allow us to reflect on our current constitutional dormancy. The rise in elite partisan polarization, the end of a long period of full Democratic control of Congress, and the slimming majorities in both chambers all mean that passing a partisan amendment proposal has become a much more arduous task than it was in the 1960s and 70s. The few attempts by Congressional majorities since have most often ended in dramatic and embarrassing failure. The results of this model suggest that members may be cognizant of these trends, and that successful constitutional change is not the intention of modern amendment proposals.

Even if we do consider *most* amendment proposals to be primarily a low-cost, symbolic form of position-taking, that does not mean that the U.S. Constitution will never be amended again. Many of the amendments that were eventually added to the Constitution were introduced by the same member(s) dozens of times across decades before they eventually passed (i.e., the 17th Amendment for the Direct Election of Senators, the 19th Amendment for Women's Suffrage, and the 26th Amendment for Youth Suffrage). To do so again will certainly require a stark change in political conditions, but at numerous prior moments in American history, many were certain that the Constitution had reached its final form only to be quickly proven wrong (Kowal and Codrington 2021).

Amendment proposals may be position-taking behavior, but are they consequential? Or is sponsoring an amendment a bit of cheap talk that goes virtually unnoticed? The symbolic argument, and historical evidence surrounding past amendment proposals such as the ERA, suggests there to be some significance to these proposals, but additional work is required to understand their reception. Future work on this topic should also consider the Senate, and

whether behavior in the upper chamber mirrors that of the lower.

If amendment proposals are tied to electoral vulnerability, there are likely some links between an MC's sponsorship behavior and their relationship to both interest groups and voters. My analysis of anti-abortion amendments and campaign finance reveals some evidence of this relationship on a singular topic. Though I cannot attribute any causal inference, and it would be difficult to identify political contributions tied to many other amendment topics, this preliminary analysis suggests ties between MCs and the attentive public. A focus on the constituency angle would need to consider that constitutional amendments are not built equal, and that a proposal's topic—whether it be abortion or balanced budget, highly symbolic or structural in nature—likely plays a role in its reception.

Of final note is the public messaging on amendments, the study of which could provide further insight into how sponsors frame these measures and potentially tie them to elections. Like the text message quoted at the beginning of this paper, this messaging may also demonstrate connections between amendment proposals, lobbyist and activist organizations, and political donations. After all, End Citizens United concluded their text with a link to donate to their organization. The “amazing” amendment, like all the others now proposed in Congress, had virtually no chance of passage or ratification. Yet as a signaling device, and a tool to potentially motivate donation and collaboration between an MC and interest groups, constitutional amendment proposals may be working just as intended.

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Online Appendix: Constitutional Amendment Proposals as Position-Taking Activity in the U.S. House of Representatives (1979–2020)

1 Appendix A: Descriptive Statistics

Figure A.1 graphs the most popular amendment topics each Congress. Table A.1 and A.2 present descriptive statistics for the key independent variables and controls. Individual member observations in Table A.1 are only recorded for static career and demographic statistics, as dynamic characteristics can only be observed on a member-term level.

As noted in the text, there are a number of representatives who switched parties during this period. I consider the eleven party switchers in the data (Virgil H. Goode, Jr., Rodney Alexander, Andrew Ireland, Robert Stump, Eugene Vincent Atkinson, William Phil Gramm, Wilbert Joseph Tauzin, Ralph Moody Hall, Tommy Franklin Robinson, Michael Parker, and John Nathan Deal) to be distinct individuals conditional on their party ID. They are thus represented multiple times in the individual member data. There are six other party switchers who either switched in their final term (William Carney, Parker Griffith, Justin Amash, Paul Mitchell), before their first term (Jo Ann Emerson), or whose post-switch terms extend beyond the range of the data (Jeff Van Drew). These members are each only represented by a single ICPSR identification number in this dataset. As noted in the text, I code the relatively few Independent and third party MCs as Republican if their DW-NOMINATE

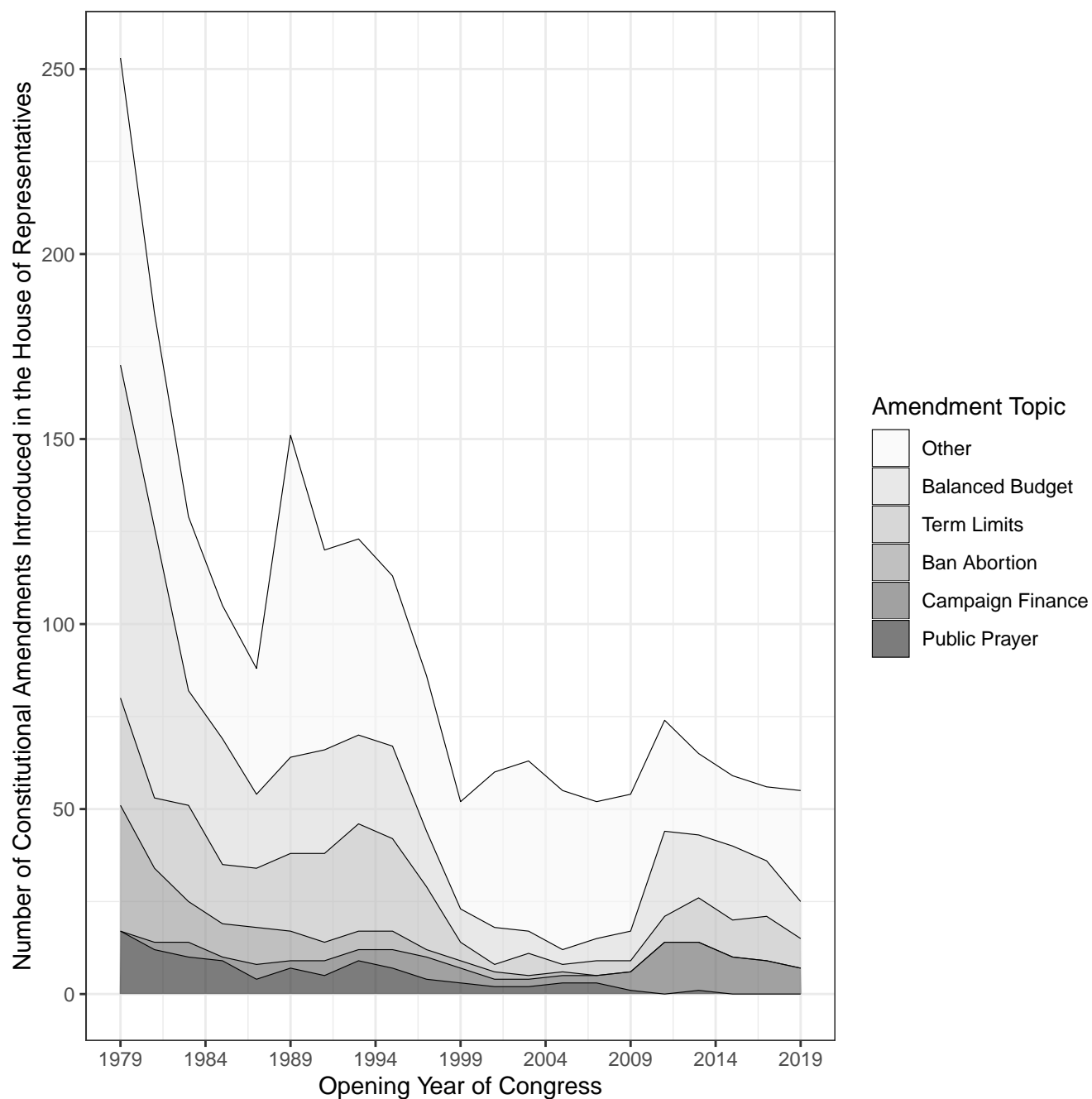


Figure A.1: Top categories of constitutional amendments introduced in the House of Representatives, 1979–2020. Some Balanced Budget Amendment proposals contain multiple topics or are phrased in terms of debt reduction or limits on taxation.

scores are positive, and as Democratic if their scores are negative.

With respect to congressional leadership, MCs are scored as 1 if they serve in any of the following positions in a given Congress: Speaker of the House, Party Floor Leader, Party Whip, and Conference or Caucus Chair. I code each member’s seniority, with 1 equal to “in the first term,” 2 equal to “in the second term,” and so on. MCs who won special elections and served for partial terms before being elected to a full term are counted as freshman in both their partial term and their full first term. I also include a freshman dummy variable, equal to 1 if an MC is in their first term.

There is potential concern with pinning each member’s distance to their first entry. Some members may enter Congress as extremists, and leave as moderates. Indeed, between 1979 and 2019, the Republican Party’s median ideology shifted from 0.279 to 0.513, a difference of 0.234. The Democratic Party experienced a smaller change, moving from a median ideology of -0.32 in 1979 to -0.377 in 2019. However, the GOP has, on average, only become .01 units more conservative with each passing Congress, and the Democrats have only moved around .003 units to the left each Congress. MCs do not typically serve across multiple decades (the average length of service in the data is 5 terms), and these trends suggest that for most members, being ideologically distant from the party is a *relatively* fixed state, even amid some ideological migration. Another possible issue with connecting ideology to amendment sponsorship is that DW-NOMINATE scores are calculated using roll call votes, which means that these scores actually incorporate MC’s decisions on certain amendments. Given the minuscule number of amendment proposals that have received votes in recent years—44 final roll call votes since 1979—compared to the total number of roll call votes MCs take, it is unlikely that votes on amendments would have significant leverage on ideology.

In Table A.3, I show the frequency of amendment sponsorship across the entire dataset. While the vast majority of member-term observations do not record amendment sponsorship activity, it is important to note that in most of the terms in which members sponsor amendments, they only sponsor one.

Table A.1: Descriptive characteristics of binary independent variables for MCs observed in both full and censored samples

		Selection Stage (Full Sample)		Outcome Stage (Censored Sample)	
		Member-Terms	Members	Member-Terms	Members
<i>Party</i>					
	Republican	4356	894	1729	287
	Democrat	4897	914	1524	224
<i>Gender</i>					
	Female	1138	245	241	39
	Male	8115	1563	3012	472
<i>Race</i>					
	AAPI	119	31	22	5
	Black	715	114	129	15
	Latino	418	71	67	7
	White	8001	1592	3035	484
<i>Region</i>					
	Midwest	2227	437	876	141
	Northeast	1878	367	547	78
	South	3179	633	1280	207
	West	1969	371	550	85
<i>Prior Marginal Election?</i>					
	Yes	1272		347	
	No	7981		2906	
<i>Chamber Status</i>					
	Majority	5202		1755	
	Minority	4051		1498	
<i>Same Party President?</i>					
	Yes	4440		1608	
	No	4813		1645	
<i>On Subcomm. on Const?</i>					
	Yes	211		117	
	No	9042		3136	
<i>In Leadership?</i>					
	Yes	156		65	
	No	9097		3188	
<i>Freshman?</i>					
	Yes	1491		347	
	No	7762		2906	
<i>N</i>		9253	1808	3253	511

Table A.2: Summary statistics of continuous independent variables for MCs observed in both full and censored samples

	Selection Stage (Full Model)		
	Median	Mean	Std. dev.
Ideological Distance	0.101	0.121	0.095
Ideological Moderation	0.096	0.114	0.095
Ideological Extremity	0.107	0.127	0.095
Seniority (Terms)	4	5.37	4.15
	Outcome Stage (Censored Model)		
	Median	Mean	Std. dev.
Ideological Distance	0.116	0.137	0.108
Ideological Moderation	0.106	0.126	0.109
Ideological Extremity	0.128	0.145	0.106
Seniority (Terms)	5	6.45	4.65

Note: $N = 9,258$ for the full model.

$N = 3,258$ for the censored model.

Table A.3: Frequency of Amendments Proposed in a Given Congress by one MC

Number of Amendments	Freq
0	7926
1	956
2	229
3	73
4	31
5	12
6	12
7	6
8	6
9	2

Note: $N = 1,997$ proposed constitutional amendments by 511 unique members across 1,327 member-terms.

2 Appendix B: Model and Extended Results

The selection stage of the Heckman model utilized in the main text is written as:

$$d_i^* = Z_i\gamma + \nu_i \tag{1}$$

In this equation, d_i is our binary variable of career amendment sponsorship for each MC, $Z_i\gamma$ is a vector of covariates, and ν_i the error term. The subsequent outcome equation is:

$$Y_i^* = X_i\beta + \delta_i + \hat{\lambda}_i\beta + \epsilon_i \tag{2}$$

This equation considers only those Y_i s for which $d_i = 1$. Here, $X_i\beta$ is our vector of covariates, δ_i is a Congressional fixed effects term, $\hat{\lambda}_i$ is our estimate of the Inverse Mills Ratio (IMR) from the selection equation, and ϵ_i is the error term. A significant coefficient on $\hat{\lambda}_i$ indicates correlation between the errors of the two stages, and thus the presence of a selection effect. An insignificant IMR does not mean there is *no* selection bias, but it does signal that the selection equation may not be properly specified.

Table B.1 contains the complete results from the various specifications of the selection stage of the model (Table 1 in the main text). Table B.2 displays the primary selection model (1f) from Table B.1, along with two additional selection models among only Republican MCs (model 4a) and only Democrats (model 4b). Models 4a and 4b were used to generate the simulated data in Figure 3 of the main text.

Table B.1: First Stage Probit Selection Models of Constitutional Amendment Sponsorship in the House of Representatives, 1979–2020

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>					
	Sponsored Amendment Ever?					
	1a	1b	1c	1d	1e	1f
Ideological Distance	1.65*** (0.40)		1.42*** (0.40)		1.47*** (0.40)	
Ideological Extremity		1.84*** (0.46)		1.61*** (0.47)		1.80*** (0.47)
Ideological Moderation		1.35** (0.46)		1.16* (0.48)		1.05* (0.48)
Career Subcomm. on Const.			0.71*** (0.18)	0.69*** (0.18)	0.70*** (0.18)	0.66*** (0.18)
1979-1997 Career Start			-0.43*** (0.11)	-0.43*** (0.11)	-0.43*** (0.11)	-0.43*** (0.11)
1997-2019 Career Start			-0.88*** (0.11)	-0.87*** (0.11)	-0.89*** (0.11)	-0.89*** (0.11)
GOP			0.22* (0.09)	0.21* (0.09)	0.20* (0.09)	0.18 (0.09)
Female			-0.18 (0.14)	-0.17 (0.14)	-0.14 (0.14)	-0.13 (0.14)
Black			-0.58** (0.21)	-0.62** (0.22)	-0.64** (0.22)	-0.71** (0.22)
Latino			-0.50* (0.23)	-0.51* (0.23)	-0.48* (0.23)	-0.49* (0.23)
AAPI			-0.27 (0.39)	-0.29 (0.39)	-0.14 (0.39)	-0.15 (0.39)
South					0.34** (0.12)	0.35** (0.12)
Midwest					0.26* (0.13)	0.25* (0.13)
West					0.01 (0.14)	-0.02 (0.14)
Constant	-0.58*** (0.06)	-0.58*** (0.06)	-0.15 (0.11)	-0.14 (0.11)	-0.33* (0.13)	-0.31* (0.14)
Career/Demographic Controls			✓	✓	✓	✓
Region Fixed Effects					✓	✓
Observations	9,253	9,253	9,253	9,253	9,253	9,253
Log Likelihood	-5,930.65	-5,926.75	-5,470.16	-5,467.44	-5,412.26	-5,405.18
Akaike Inf. Crit.	11,865.29	11,859.50	10,960.32	10,956.87	10,850.52	10,838.37

Note:

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table B.2: First Stage Probit Selection Models of Constitutional Amendment Sponsorship in the House of Representatives, 1979–2020, Split by Party

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Sponsored Amendment Ever?		
	1f	4a	4b
Ideological Extremity	1.80*** (0.47)	2.67*** (0.62)	0.31 (0.89)
Ideological Moderation	1.05* (0.48)	−0.28 (0.92)	1.27* (0.64)
Career Subcomm. on Const.	0.66*** (0.18)	0.63** (0.24)	0.75** (0.28)
1979-1997 Career Start	−0.43*** (0.11)	−0.66*** (0.17)	−0.36* (0.14)
1997-2019 Career Start	−0.89*** (0.11)	−1.27*** (0.17)	−0.68*** (0.17)
GOP	0.18 (0.09)		
Female	−0.13 (0.14)	0.02 (0.20)	−0.18 (0.19)
Black	−0.71** (0.22)	−0.23 (0.69)	−0.56* (0.24)
Latino	−0.49* (0.23)	−0.06 (0.44)	−0.56* (0.27)
AAPI	−0.15 (0.39)	−4.14*** (0.19)	0.08 (0.40)
South	0.35** (0.12)	0.21 (0.21)	0.26 (0.18)
Midwest	0.25* (0.13)	0.12 (0.21)	0.29 (0.18)
West	−0.02 (0.14)	−0.04 (0.22)	−0.18 (0.20)
Constant	−0.31* (0.14)	0.17 (0.25)	−0.28 (0.17)
Career/Demographic Controls	✓	✓	✓
Region Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓
Observations	9,253	4,356	4,897
Log Likelihood	−5,405.18	−2,574.76	−2,744.09
Akaike Inf. Crit.	10,838.37	5,175.52	5,514.19

Note:

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

3 Appendix C: Robustness Tests

I perform a number of alternate analyses to ensure the robustness of my main results. Of first potential concern is that due to the nature of the data, the selection model is run across repeated observations of each member who served more than one term, despite the fact that the independent variables in this stage are all career-level, and thus unchanging. In Table C.1, I run an alternate series of selection models on a reduced dataset that only considers each representative a single time ($N = 1,808$). Unlike the main model, this reduced model does not cluster standard errors around each MC. Comparing these results in model 1f against those in model 5f from table B.1, we observe that the two are relatively similar in coefficient values, sign, and standard errors. This is notably true for the key selection stage variables of ideological extremity and moderation. This analysis demonstrates the presence of repeated units in the first stage selection model does not significantly bias the results.

I next consider an alternative dependent variable specification in the second stage. While my primary analysis is estimated with a binary dependent variable (whether an MC sponsored at least one constitutional amendment in a given term), I check the results when utilizing the actual number of amendments a member introduced. In Table C.2, I compare the results of my original probit outcome (model 2c from Table 2 in the text) to a linear outcome model with the number of amendments as the DV (model 6a). While marginal district status is not significantly correlated with the number of amendments sponsored, the other independent variables remain significant in the expected direction.

A two-stage selection model is typically run with a probit selection stage, and an OLS outcome stage. To ensure that my findings hold up under the traditional model, I run the outcome stage as a linear model with the original binary dependent variable. These results are presented in Table C.3. The statistical flaws of the linear probability model notwithstanding, OLS performs nearly identically to the probit models utilized in the main text. For a clear comparison, I present simulated results of the probit and LPM models in Figure C.1.

As an additional check, I again consider the necessity of using a selection model. While the significant IMR in the outcome stage presented in the main text does suggest non-random selection bias (and thus, the warranted use of a selection model), I here estimate a single model that incorporates the independent variables and controls from both stages, without censoring any of the observations. In Table C.4, I present variations of this combined model. Although most of the IVs are robust between the selection and non-selection models, two key changes signal support for a selection model. First, in no non-selection specification is marginal district status significant. This stands in direct contrast to the censored outcome. Because the non-selection model compares all members across all member terms, it includes the decisions of MCs who would never sponsor an amendment under any circumstances, even when faced with a competitive district. By comparing observations among members who are not "of the same type"—that is, those who are not likely to become encouraged towards amendment sponsorship—this model fails to identify a relationship where the selection model could.

A second issue with the results of this combined model is that ideological moderation and extremity appear to have a very strong impact on *when* members sponsor. Recall that as the key selection stage variables in the main text, these measures of ideological distance must pass the exclusion restriction, such that they have no significant or theoretical impact on the outcome stage DV. In Table 2 of the main text, I demonstrate that these measures are statistically unrelated to when members sponsor, *among* the selected MCs. If we were to forgo the selection model in favor of model 8c, we would be under the impression that there is a strong relationship between ideological distance and the timing of sponsorship. This is a highly misleading result, and again points to the valid use of the selection model to mitigate this bias.

To check the robustness of my measure of district competitiveness, I test several alternative specifications the variable . First, instead of a 10% margin cutoff, I set the dichotomous marginal election variable equal to 1 for those elections with a margin less than 5%, 15%

and 20%, respectively. Second, I employ a continuous variable for the margin of victory over the second place candidate, rather than a dichotomous variable. As seen in Table C.5, the results are robust at the 5% and 15% cutpoint, but no longer significant at 20%. This is not of particular concern, as a 20% margin of victory—winning a seat with 60% of the vote—would not often be classified as a close or competitive election. The continuous specification does not produce similar results, although this is likely related to the high number of unchallenged races in which incumbents won with a 100% margin of victory.

Table C.1: First Stage Probit Selection Models of Constitutional Amendment Sponsorship in the House of Representatives, 1979–2020, with Reduced Dataset

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>					
	Sponsored Amendment Ever?					
	5a	5b	5c	5d	5e	5f
Ideological Distance	1.46*** (0.31)		1.41*** (0.33)		1.41*** (0.33)	
Ideological Extremity		1.99*** (0.37)		1.83*** (0.40)		1.87*** (0.40)
Ideological Moderation		0.98** (0.36)		1.04** (0.38)		1.01** (0.39)
Career Subcomm. on Const.			0.63*** (0.15)	0.59*** (0.16)	0.60*** (0.15)	0.56*** (0.16)
1979-1997 Career Start			-0.48*** (0.09)	-0.48*** (0.09)	-0.48*** (0.09)	-0.48*** (0.09)
1997-2019 Career Start			-0.92*** (0.09)	-0.91*** (0.09)	-0.94*** (0.09)	-0.93*** (0.09)
GOP			0.27*** (0.07)	0.23** (0.07)	0.25*** (0.07)	0.21** (0.07)
Female			-0.16 (0.11)	-0.16 (0.11)	-0.13 (0.11)	-0.13 (0.11)
Black			-0.44** (0.16)	-0.51** (0.17)	-0.49** (0.17)	-0.57*** (0.17)
Latino			-0.53* (0.22)	-0.55* (0.22)	-0.52* (0.22)	-0.53* (0.23)
AAPI			-0.09 (0.28)	-0.11 (0.28)	-0.01 (0.28)	-0.03 (0.29)
South					0.39*** (0.09)	0.38*** (0.09)
Midwest					0.34*** (0.10)	0.33** (0.10)
West					0.12 (0.11)	0.08 (0.11)
Constant	-0.76*** (0.05)	-0.76*** (0.05)	-0.32*** (0.08)	-0.30*** (0.08)	-0.55*** (0.11)	-0.52*** (0.11)
Observations	1,808	1,808	1,808	1,808	1,808	1,808
Log Likelihood	-1,065.53	-1,062.15	-979.90	-978.19	-968.75	-966.79
Akaike Inf. Crit.	2,135.06	2,130.31	1,979.81	1,978.38	1,963.51	1,961.57

Note:

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table C.2: Alternate Outcome Stage of Constitutional Amendment Sponsorship in the House of Representatives, 1979–2020, utilizing Selection Stage Model 1f

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Sponsored Amendment This Term?	Number of Amendments Sponsored This Term
	<i>probit</i> 2c	<i>OLS</i> 6a
Marginal District in Last Election	0.20* (0.09)	0.11 (0.07)
Majority	-0.18** (0.06)	-0.16** (0.06)
Same Party Pres.	-0.12* (0.05)	-0.12*** (0.04)
Subcomm. on Const.	0.24 (0.16)	0.05 (0.11)
Leadership	-0.39** (0.15)	-0.35*** (0.06)
Freshman	-0.36*** (0.10)	-0.30*** (0.07)
Terms	-0.03** (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
Congress Fixed Effects	✓	✓
IMR Coef	-0.37	-0.25
IMR p-val	0.02	0.08
Observations	3,253	3,253
R ²		0.06
Adjusted R ²		0.05
Log Likelihood	-2,088.74	
Akaike Inf. Crit.	4,235.48	
Residual Std. Error		0.99 (df = 3224)
F Statistic		7.47*** (df = 28; 3224)

Note:

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Robust SEs are clustered on MC in each model to account for repeated entries. Observations consist of 3,253 member-terms of 511 representatives, with 3,000 member-term observations of 1,297 representatives censored from the first stage.

Table C.3: Second Stage OLS Outcome Models of Constitutional Amendment Sponsorship in the House of Representatives, 1979–2020, utilizing Selection Stage Model 1f

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>				
	Sponsored Amendment This Term?				
	7a	7b	7c	7d	7e
Marginal District in Last Election	0.07* (0.03)	0.08* (0.03)	0.08* (0.03)	0.08* (0.03)	0.08* (0.03)
Majority	-0.05* (0.02)	-0.07** (0.02)	-0.07** (0.02)	-0.07** (0.02)	-0.06** (0.02)
Same Party Pres.		-0.04* (0.02)	-0.04* (0.02)	-0.04* (0.02)	-0.04* (0.02)
Ideological Extremity				0.23 (0.17)	0.28 (0.18)
Ideological Moderation				0.09 (0.16)	0.07 (0.15)
Subcomm. on Const.		0.07 (0.06)	0.09 (0.06)	0.06 (0.06)	0.09 (0.06)
Leadership		-0.14** (0.05)	-0.13** (0.05)	-0.14** (0.05)	-0.13** (0.05)
Freshman		-0.12*** (0.03)	-0.13*** (0.03)	-0.13*** (0.03)	-0.14*** (0.03)
Terms		-0.01*** (0.003)	-0.01** (0.004)	-0.01*** (0.004)	-0.01** (0.004)
Institutional Controls		✓	✓	✓	✓
Congress Fixed Effects			✓		✓
IMR Coef	-0.13	-0.16	-0.14	-0.13	-0.09
IMR p-val	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.17
Observations	3,253	3,253	3,253	3,253	3,253
R ²	0.01	0.03	0.07	0.03	0.07
Adjusted R ²	0.01	0.03	0.06	0.03	0.06
Residual Std. Error	0.49 (df = 3249)	0.49 (df = 3244)	0.48 (df = 3224)	0.48 (df = 3242)	0.48 (df = 3222)
F Statistic	11.34*** (df = 3; 3249)	11.89*** (df = 8; 3244)	8.20*** (df = 28; 3224)	10.12*** (df = 10; 3242)	7.95*** (df = 30; 3222)

Note:

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Robust SEs are clustered on MC in each model to account for repeated entries. Observations consist of 3,253 member-terms of 511 representatives, with 3,000 member-term observations of 1,297 representatives censored from the first stage.

Table C.4: Non-Selection Probit Models of Constitutional Amendment Sponsorship in the House of Representatives, 1979–2020

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Sponsored 8a	Amendment 8b	This Term? 8c
Marginal District in Last Election	-0.08 (0.06)	0.03 (0.07)	0.03 (0.07)
Majority	-0.16*** (0.05)	-0.22*** (0.05)	-0.23*** (0.05)
Same Party Pres.	-0.03 (0.03)	-0.07* (0.03)	-0.08* (0.03)
Ideological Extremity	1.77*** (0.37)	1.83*** (0.35)	1.87*** (0.36)
Ideological Moderation	1.37*** (0.33)	1.03** (0.34)	1.00** (0.34)
Subcomm. on Const.		0.15 (0.19)	0.18 (0.19)
Leadership		-0.34* (0.16)	-0.37* (0.16)
Freshman		-0.24*** (0.06)	-0.28*** (0.06)
Terms		-0.02 (0.01)	0.001 (0.01)
Career Subcomm. on Const.		0.35* (0.17)	0.35* (0.17)
1979-1997 Career Start		-0.58*** (0.09)	-0.39** (0.12)
1997-2019 Career Start		-0.72*** (0.10)	-0.36 (0.21)
GOP		0.16* (0.07)	0.17* (0.07)
Female		-0.06 (0.14)	-0.05 (0.14)
Black		-0.59** (0.20)	-0.59** (0.21)
Latino		-0.22 (0.23)	-0.22 (0.23)
AAPI		-0.33 (0.26)	-0.35 (0.26)
South		0.26* (0.10)	0.25* (0.10)
Midwest		0.22* (0.11)	0.22* (0.11)
West		-0.03 (0.12)	-0.04 (0.12)
Constant	-1.16*** (0.06)	-0.70*** (0.13)	-0.57*** (0.14)
Career/Demographic Controls		✓	✓
Institutional Controls		✓	✓
Region Fixed Effects		✓	✓
Congress Fixed Effects			✓
Observations	9,253	9,253	9,253
Log Likelihood	-3,741.52	-3,492.47	-3,451.48
Akaike Inf. Crit.	7,495.03	7,026.95	6,984.96

Note:

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

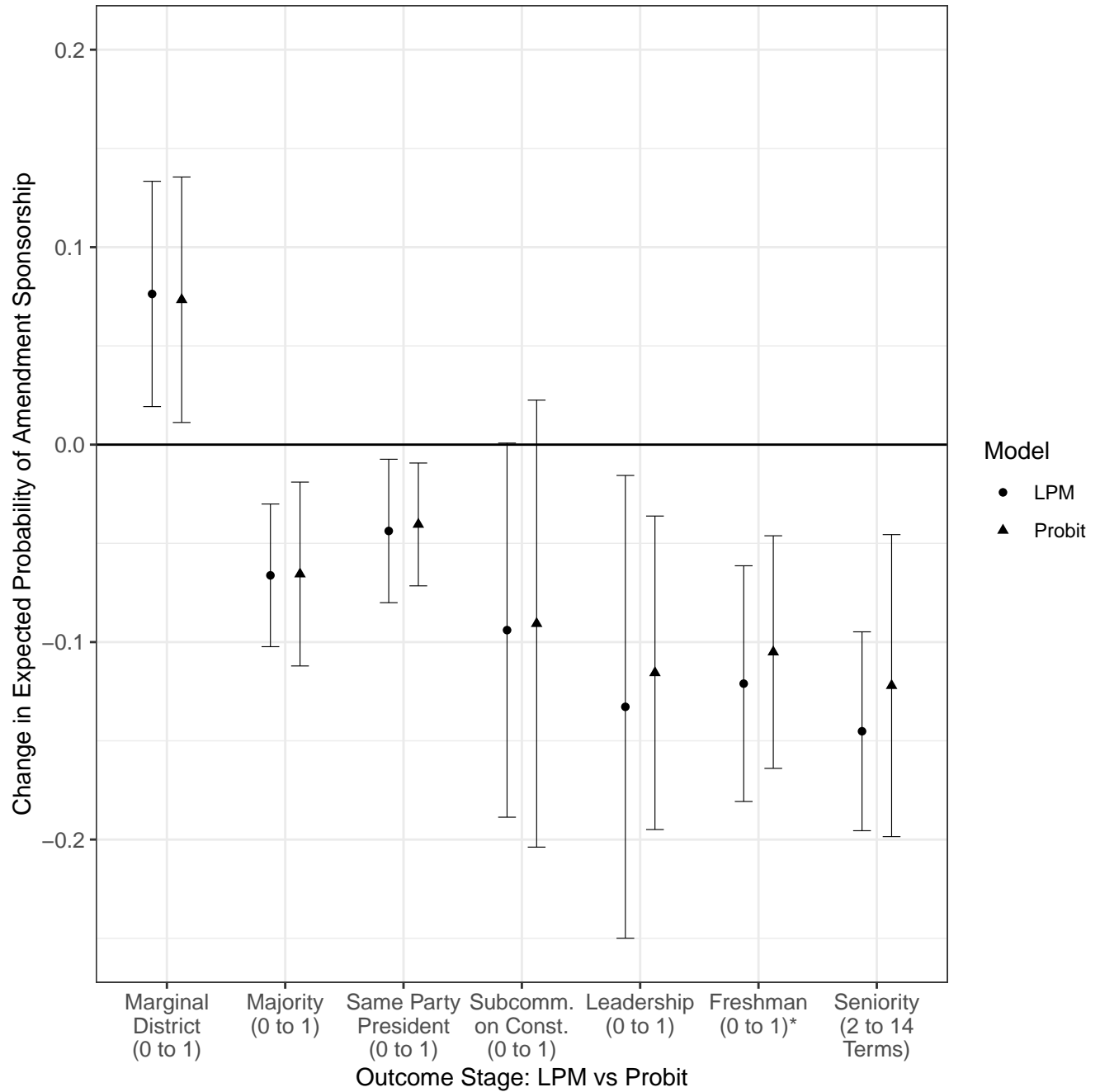


Figure C.1: Changes in expected probability for outcome stage variables, comparing performance of probit and OLS models. In each simulation, all other variables are held at their median values. The data in both models is simulated for the 106th Congress. Bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Table C.5: Second Stage OLS Outcome Models of Constitutional Amendment Sponsorship in the House of Representatives, 1979–2020

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>				
	Sponsored Amendment This Term?				
	1f	9a	9b	9c	9d
Marginal District (10 pct)	0.20* (0.09)				
Marginal District (5 pct)		0.25* (0.11)			
Marginal District (15 pct)			0.16* (0.07)		
Marginal District (20 pct)				0.10 (0.07)	
Continuous Margin					0.02 (0.13)
Majority	-0.18** (0.06)	-0.19** (0.06)	-0.18** (0.06)	-0.19** (0.06)	-0.19** (0.06)
Same Party Pres.	-0.12* (0.05)	-0.12* (0.05)	-0.12* (0.05)	-0.12* (0.05)	-0.12* (0.05)
Subcomm. on Const.	0.24 (0.16)	0.24 (0.16)	0.24 (0.16)	0.24 (0.16)	0.23 (0.16)
Leadership	-0.39** (0.15)	-0.39** (0.15)	-0.40** (0.15)	-0.39** (0.15)	-0.39** (0.15)
Freshman	-0.36*** (0.10)	-0.35*** (0.09)	-0.36*** (0.10)	-0.34*** (0.10)	-0.30** (0.09)
Terms	-0.03** (0.01)	-0.03** (0.01)	-0.03** (0.01)	-0.03** (0.01)	-0.03** (0.01)
Institutional Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Congressional Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IMR Coef	-0.37	-0.37	-0.37	-0.37	-0.37
IMR p-val	0.02	-0.37	0.02	0.02	0.02
Observations	3,253	3,253	3,253	3,253	3,253
Log Likelihood	-2,088.74	-2,089.25	-2,088.94	-2,090.55	-2,091.99
Akaike Inf. Crit.	4,235.48	4,236.49	4,235.88	4,239.10	4,241.99

Note:

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

4 Appendix D: Abortion Case Study

I identify single-issue, anti-abortion political action committees (PACs) first through the Open Secrets contributor database. While non-exhaustive, this data provides a sense of the contributory landscape. Then, from the set of all contributions to incumbent congressional candidates between the 1980–1998 election cycles ($N = 3,591,737$ donations), I extract all contributions from the organizations whose names contain the words “for life”, “to life”, “susan b anthony list,” and “pro-life” ($N = 9,562$).

Tables D.1 and D.2 contain the full results of the brief examination of constitutional amendments to ban abortion and political contributions to incumbent MCs from single-issue anti-abortion PACs between 1979–1998. Model 10c was used to simulate Figure 4 in the main text.

The models in Table D.1 consider the probability of receiving a donation from a single-issue anti-abortion PAC in a given term. Those in Table D.2 utilize the total amount in contributions from these PACs as the dependent variable. Model 11c suggests, thus, that holding all else equal, a given MC who sponsors an anti-abortion amendment takes in around \$1200 more from these groups than a similar member who doesn’t. As noted in the main text, the nature of this data cannot infer a causal relationship.

Table D.1: Probit Models of Contributions from Anti-Abortion PACs to MCs, 1980-1998

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Received Contribution?		
	10a	10b	10c
Abortion Amendment	0.91*** (0.25)	0.94** (0.30)	1.06*** (0.30)
Number of Donors		0.001** (0.0002)	0.0003 (0.0002)
Other Amendment		0.07 (0.08)	0.12 (0.08)
DW-NOMINATE Score		1.60*** (0.30)	1.55*** (0.30)
Marginal District in Last Election		0.36*** (0.07)	0.37*** (0.07)
Majority		0.27** (0.08)	0.27*** (0.08)
Same Party Pres.		0.02 (0.06)	0.02 (0.06)
GOP		0.12 (0.22)	0.15 (0.22)
Terms		-0.003 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
Freshman		0.03 (0.07)	0.02 (0.07)
Leadership		0.02 (0.26)	0.11 (0.26)
Black		-0.72* (0.29)	-0.83** (0.29)
Latino		0.14 (0.21)	0.08 (0.21)
AAPI		-0.56* (0.25)	-0.68** (0.25)
Female		-0.14 (0.19)	-0.17 (0.19)
South		-0.25 (0.13)	-0.25* (0.13)
Midwest		0.29* (0.13)	0.29* (0.13)
West		-0.30* (0.13)	-0.31* (0.13)
Constant	-0.75*** (0.04)	-1.13*** (0.22)	-1.53*** (0.22)
Institutional and Demographic Controls		✓	✓
Region Fixed Effects		✓	✓
Congressional Fixed Effects			✓
Observations	3,913	3,913	3,913
Log Likelihood	-2,106.54	-1,705.86	-1,644.63
Akaike Inf. Crit.	4,217.08	3,449.73	3,345.26

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001
Robust SEs are clustered on MC in each model to account for repeated entries. Observations consist of 3,913 member-terms of 1,008 representatives.

Table D.2: OLS Models of Contributions from Anti-Abortion PACs, 1980-1998

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
		Total \$ Contributed	
	11a	11b	11c
Abortion Amendment	922.53 (518.95)	1,082.09* (432.67)	1,222.86** (432.67)
Number of Donors		0.28 (0.52)	0.26 (0.52)
Other Total Contributions		0.001** (0.0003)	0.001** (0.0003)
Other Amendment		160.70 (167.91)	196.89 (167.91)
DW-NOMINATE Score		2,200.60*** (624.78)	2,068.84*** (624.78)
Marginal District in Last Election		991.67*** (227.95)	1,034.81*** (227.95)
Majority		291.68* (123.97)	373.93** (123.97)
Same Party Pres.		81.97 (96.69)	182.88 (96.69)
GOP		-356.74 (395.24)	-239.94 (395.24)
Terms		4.00 (10.32)	-2.65 (10.32)
Freshman		131.71 (153.50)	173.02 (153.50)
Leadership		-676.47* (273.83)	-535.08 (273.83)
Black		495.83* (199.42)	449.03* (199.42)
Latino		310.57* (146.08)	273.60 (146.08)
AAPI		142.79 (217.82)	150.58 (217.82)
Female		-92.63 (180.16)	-102.11 (180.16)
South		-158.99 (162.73)	-150.87 (162.73)
Midwest		36.28 (180.77)	26.22 (180.77)
West		-167.90 (186.48)	-167.97 (186.48)
Constant	686.75*** (64.12)	13.22 (245.40)	-474.86 (245.40)
Institutional and Demographic Controls		✓	✓
Region Fixed Effects		✓	✓
Congressional Fixed Effects			✓
Observations	3,913	3,913	3,913
R ²	0.002	0.08	0.10
Adjusted R ²	0.002	0.08	0.09
Residual Std. Error	3,113.68 (df = 3911)	2,989.21 (df = 3893)	2,969.28 (df = 3884)
F Statistic	6.88** (df = 1; 3911)	18.84*** (df = 19; 3893)	15.15*** (df = 28; 3884)

Note:

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Robust SEs are clustered on MC in each model to account for repeated entries. Observations consist of 3,913 member-terms of 1,008 representatives.