

# Explaining Variation in Committee Representativeness

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## **Abstract**

Recent research argues that state legislative and congressional committee are rarely the unrepresentative outliers that distributive theories predict. However, we do not have a good theoretical or empirical model of why some committees in some states are more representative than other committees in other states. Here, I use a hierarchical linear model to explore hypotheses derived from a formal model of legislative institutional choice. I find that committee representativeness varies across states as a function of their effective number of parties, but that the jurisdiction of a committee has no stable effect on its representativeness.

## Introduction

A consistent refrain from state legislative scholars has been that state legislatures offer a compelling opportunity to do solid comparative research instead of the one- or two-chamber case studies that make up the literature on Congress. It is one thing to have a good model of why Congress has the internal institutions that it does, and how it came to have them (though we do not have such a model). It would be a better thing to have a model of how Congress fits into a wider world of legislatures: can we explain (empirically and theoretically) why Congress turned out as it did, and why the California legislature turned out as it did, and why any other legislature has evolved as it has, all within a single theoretical framework? Recently, there has been a trend towards doing such research, including work that marries the technical rigor common to the Congress literature with the comparative benefits of looking to the states (or other legislatures, such as the Confederate).

This paper examines one aspect of legislative life: committees and how representative they are of their parent chambers. This is a common target of congressional and more recently state legislative research, as it is at the focus of a conflict between three broad theories of legislative organization. Distributive theories argue that legislatures are set up to facilitate vote trades, informational theories argue that they are set up to maximize the welfare of the median member by providing him or her with needed information, and partisan theories argue that they are set up to benefit the majority party and its individual members. My goal in this paper is offer a very early stage of an empirical test of several hypotheses, derived elsewhere, about why one committee in one chamber is more or less representative of its parent chamber than is some other committee in some other chamber.

## Plan of the paper

In the next sections I review the small existing literature on predicting committee representativeness. I then look at the theoretical literature on committees and legislative institutions to set up hypotheses for a later empirical test. From there, I describe the independent and dependent variables, and discuss the multilevel modeling procedures I use to test the models. Finally, I discuss the results, and move on to offer some tentative conclusions and directions for future research.

## **Institutional variation and institutional choice**

The past 15 years have seen an explosion in theories of committees and theories of legislative organization. This has led to an energetic dispute over the rationale behind legislative committees, especially between proponents of distributive (Weingast and Marshall 1988, Shepsle and Weingast 1987) and informational (Gilligan and Krehbiel 1987, Gilligan and Krehbiel 1989, Krehbiel 1991, Krehbiel 1998) theories, though partisan (Cox and McCubbins 1993), multiple-principal (Maltzman 1997), and other theorists (e.g., Diermeier and Myerson (1999) have also added their voices.

In practice, this debate has been over which theory best accounts for the observed facts in Congress (which is to say the House). Relatively little work has focused on an opportunity that these varied theories provide us: there are many different equally rational reasons why a legislature might choose to divide itself into committees. While one legislature might choose to allocate power along distributive principles, another might be organizing along informational or partisan or some other as-yet-unexplored principle. Looked at through this lens, examining committees can be a window into larger questions of institutional choice. How can we explain why one legislature chooses different rules than another if both have rational legislators? Can we account for, empirically or theoretically, actual institutional choices in legislatures?

Obviously, doing so requires looking beyond the current U.S. House. One approach would be to look across time, and there is in fact some work which does so. (Adler 2000, eg) However, there is simply not much real variation in House institutions over the twentieth century to provide leverage on this problem. Another approach is to look across the state legislatures. This provides us a wider array of institutional choices, both across space and across time.

Squire (1988) looks at this question by comparing the institutions and memberships of the state legislatures of California, New York, and Connecticut. He argues that membership characteristics (in this case, progressive vs. static vs. discrete ambition) and institutional characteristics are intimately linked, though he is somewhat agnostic about the direction of causality. The empirical side of this work, however, is limited to a three-chamber case study with relatively impressionistic accounts of each chamber, as we might expect from an initial exploratory piece. While he explores broad questions of institutional choice, writing before informational theories took off and before partisan theories were written at all necessarily means that he does not deal with committee representativeness.

Recently, Aldrich and Battista (2002) looked at the links between committees and parties. Using simple OLS regressions in a study of ten state legislative chambers, we found that committee representativeness did not vary systematically across jurisdictions, but did respond to some aspects of professionalization, to whether or not a committee was a joint committee, and to a measure of party competition and conditional party government. However, our focus (or at least my focus) here was not to construct an ultimate model explaining committee representativeness. Our focus was predominantly to merely supply an application of how conditional party government could be used to explain other aspects of life in state legislatures. In addition, our simple analysis ignored the multilevel aspect of our data, resulting in a serious danger that our chamber-level variables might only appear to be statistically significant. The data and methods section discusses this in greater detail.

In forthcoming work, Overby, Kazee and Prince (Forthcoming 2003) deal directly with the question of committee representativeness. Using a 45-chamber dataset, they regress the proportion of 0.05-level outlying committees against a broadly traditional set of independent variables including professionalization, region, the number of committees, and which party holds the majority. They also use the relative power of committees and parties (measured via survey), the ability of the minority to control its own appointments, and the Aldrich/Battista CPG measure. In separate regressions for control and non-control committees, they find, essentially, that the proportion of outliers is unpredictable. The only significant variable in either of their regression runs is the locus-of-power variable for control committees; almost all of the other variables have standard errors larger than their coefficients. Here too, though, the authors ignore the multilevel character of their data. Looking only at the proportion of committees with a p-score of 0.05 or less throws information away in two ways: first, it ignores other differences in the representativeness of committees. Second, it ignores any variation there might be among jurisdictions by looking only at the aggregate level.

## **Theory 1: Variation across jurisdictions**

Though few works ask why one committee might be more representative of its parent chamber than another, there is a substantial body of theory to provide guidance in devising hypotheses. At the within-chamber level, extant theory argues that the jurisdiction of the committees is the driving force.

A body of rational legislators might well choose to have some represen-

tative committees and others that are not. Cox and McCubbins (1993) offer one reason for this in their theory of committees as entities subservient to the party. Cox and McCubbins argue that the two critical factors are the extent to which a committee's actions affects members not on the committee (the *external effects* factor) and the extent to which the committee 'serves' a homogeneous, united clientele (the *extramural effects* factor). (Cox and McCubbins 1993, 200) To the extent that the committee's actions affect the rest of the party, the party will intervene by placing legislators on the committee who will not choose to harm the larger party. And to the extent that a committee deals with or serves a particular clientele, the benefits from adhering to their wishes increase as does the likelihood that they will lobby the party for 'appropriate' committee members. (Groseclose 1994, 199–200)

Maltzman (1997) offers a similar rationale in his conditional theory of committee behavior. His argument is that committees are the agents of multiple principals; that they exist to serve themselves (or their constituents or an interest group), and the party, and the chamber. If a committee is of low salience to the party or the rest of the chamber, neither will have any particular incentive to monitor or control the committee and the committee will behave as a classic high-demander. On the other hand, when committees deal with a highly salient jurisdiction they should act in ways compatible with the informational model or, when the majority party is strong, with the party-dominated model. (Maltzman 1997, 30-40)

Empirically, what this implies is that if either of these theories are correct, control committees such as taxing and spending committees ought to be more representative than ordinary substantive committees, which should in turn be more representative than are insignificant or inconsequential committees.

## Theory 2: Variation across states

Where theories of jurisdictional differences argue that the same people ought to choose differently over different committees, it is also possible to devise theories that attempt to explain why different people would choose differently over the same committees.

In other work (Battista Forthcoming 2003) I created a formal model of general legislative institutional choice using ambition theory. The model reverses the normal flow of ambition theory, asking how (differently) ambitious politicians with varying goals would choose to organize a legislature that could provide policy benefits and nonpolicy benefits to its members.

The results of the model indicate that legislatures should have heavily lopsided institutions (or provide heavily lopsided benefits) rather than a mix of policy and nonpolicy-oriented institutions. The practical upshot of this is that policy-oriented institutions should be linked with other policy-oriented institutions and vice versa.

As I wrote before, it is reasonably clear that informational, representative committees constitute a policy benefit to legislative officeholding. Representative committees should then, according to the general model, occur in company with other policy-oriented institutions. The challenge, then, is to consider what other institutions would also be policy institutions.

One category of institutions that might qualify is bound up with the process of legislative professionalization. Proponents of vigorous legislatures consistently wrote that increases in pay and staff support, as well as removing limitations on session length, were necessary to recruit more 'high-quality' legislators. As Rosenthal (1981) writes,

The people who serve as state legislators are not what they used to be. There is a new breed, unlike the old-timers—the court house politicians, the representatives of malapportionment, the old county board members, the slow-witted and cigar-smoking politicians. The new breed is young, well-educated, bright, hard-working, aggressive, and sometimes zealous. (Rosenthal 1981, 57)

The empirical implication of this is that *if* these proponents are correct in linking changes in institutional support to an increasingly policy-oriented legislature, then either an index of professionalization or the constituent measures themselves should be higher in states with more representative committees. However, note that benefits such as pay and personal staff are also clearly Downsian benefits, so that these increases may have actually been damping a change in personnel that would have been happening anyway (for instance, as newly created urban and suburban districts started electing members who differed from rural legislators).

A second category of institutions that are policy-oriented is competitive political parties.<sup>1</sup> In *Southern Politics in State and Nation*, Key (1949) offers some persuasive reasons to see parties as, *contra* Downs, policy-oriented organizations. Or, rather, to see *competitive* parties as policy-oriented, for his point of comparison is the one-party solid Democratic South.

Key cites several problems or limitations arising from one-party politics. The first is that the lack of a 'loyal opposition' prevents meaningful policy

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<sup>1</sup>This topic is explored more fully in Aldrich and Battista (2002).

discourse through the fluidity and discontinuity of faction. As he writes, it “both confuses the electorate and reflects a failure to organize the voters into groups of more or less like-minded citizens...” (Key 1949, 302) This happens because there is no clear opposition articulating competing claims and calling the current officeholders on their records. Key also argues that the factional politicking creates or breeds qualities such as demagoguery and oddball, attention-getting personalities rather than on qualities related to sober policy. Finally, Key writes that one-party politics leads to favoritism and distributive pork in an attempt to hold together the very fragile voting coalitions created by the lack of even the low levels of party discipline (and shared preferences) in other American legislatures. (Key 1949, 302–310)

The picture that emerges from this is one of an “issueless politics.” (Key 1949, 309) Key’s assertion is that without some sort of organization, democratic politics will remain in a swamp of distributive and personality politics, and that parties (or some other form of organization) are necessary to lift the attention of mass and elite into the policy arena.

To be sure, none of the states I examine is really directly comparable to the old one-party South. While some of the states are heavily dominated by Democrats, none are completely Democratic. But the point remains that without effective competition over policy, we are unlikely to see policy-oriented concerns dominate a legislature, and that without competitive parties we are unlikely to see competition over policy. Because of this, a competitive second party can be seen as a necessary condition for other policy-oriented institutions such as, here, more representative committees. Thus, party competitiveness should be positively correlated with the representativeness of committees.

## Data and methods

### Data

#### **Dependent variable – committee representativeness**

The dependent variable is a p-score – the probability of seeing a committee at least as far away from the chamber’s preferences as the actual committee using a random process. The dataset consists of p-scores for all committees in the lower chambers of Connecticut, Georgia, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Minnesota, and Rhode Island; the upper chambers of New Hampshire, South Carolina, and Vermont; and the single chamber of the Nebraska Legislature. I find p-scores by Monte Carlo simulation, creating 10,000 randomly-selected

(without replacement) sets of committees for each chamber. The variable ranges from zero for very unrepresentative committees to one for perfectly representative (zero divergence) committees, and there are several observations at both one and zero for the medians-based measure.

The underlying estimates of legislator preferences are unidimensional W-NOMINATE scores derived from roll-call votes in each chamber. The standard technique for comparing committee-chamber divergence is to compare the medians of both, relying on the median voter theorem. (Downs 1957, Black 1958) However, this is not merely a methodological choice. We know that the median-voter result is a knife-edge result dependent on pure unidimensionality – depart from that, even with a substantively insignificant dimension, and the result evaporates. That is, comparing medians embodies a substantive claim that the chamber in question really is completely unidimensional. Here, I have unidimensional scores that are intended to be mere simplifications of at least mildly multidimensional legislatures. My own sense is that in that case, we should compare means instead of medians, since they better capture the general properties of multidimensional solution concepts such as the convex hull of all possible medians, or the yolk, or the uncovered set. As this is at best highly controversial, I report results using both dependent variables.

### Independent variables

The primary independent variables are committee jurisdiction, party competitiveness, and professionalization.

For committee jurisdictions, I use a set of dummies for each of the following jurisdictions:

- Money (taxing and spending)
- Rules and legislative management
- Education
- Environment, natural resources, or fish-and-game related
- Health or human services / welfare
- Banking or insurance
- Judiciary
- Transportation
- Agriculture



- Government management (managing relations between branches or between levels of government)
- Labor, labor-business relations, or industrial relations
- Ethics or other internal housekeeping
- Criminal justice or public safety
- Other (a variety of possibly-substantive committees)
- Other, clearly minor (obviously non-substantive committees, such as Naming State Constructions, Internships, or Invitations)

A committee receives a “1” for each jurisdiction that falls under its purview. For example, a Health, Education, and Welfare committee receives a 1 in both the education and HHS variables, and the one Agriculture and Natural Resources committee receives a 1 in both the agriculture and environments variables. Likewise, most chambers will have multiple “hits” in at least one variable. Most states have separate taxing and spending committees that each receive a 1 in the money variable, and a state with separate Health and Human Services committees would get a 1 under the HHS variable for each committee.

In practical terms, it is difficult to hypothesize which jurisdictions should be most prone to outlying committees. However, theory clearly predicts that control committees should be more representative than non-control committees as they are more highly salient to the party. While it is always possible to quibble about whether or not a given legislative-management committee or substantive committee is a control committee in its chamber, there seems little room to doubt that taxation and spending committees should be control committees. By their very nature, they constrain the resources that other committees have to work with. From this, Cox and McCubbins as well as Maltzman should predict that money committees should be more representative than others; that the money variable should be significant and positively signed.

To measure party competitiveness, I use a measurement from economics and the comparative literature – the effective number of parties. This is simply the reciprocal of a Herfindahl index, which is used by economists to measure market concentration. The Herfindahl index is simply the sum of the squares of the market share of every firm. By taking the reciprocal, one arrives at a number of equal-sized firms producing a market as concentrated as the real one. This has been used in the comparative literature, most recently by Kollman and Chhibber (1998). There are of course several ways to measure the “market share” of a party. Kollman and Chhibber use vote percentages and here I use seat percentages. In states here, the effective number

parties is bounded by one and two and ranges between 1.333 in Rhode Island to 1.996 in Minnesota. As I am using this to measure party competition, I coded the nonpartisan Nebraska legislature (with at best very little party competition) as 1.

To measure professionalization, I use Squire's professionalization index based on pay, session length, and staff support in 1995. (Squire 2000) This is the closest year for which professionalization data are readily available to my own data, which are variously from 1997, 1997–1998, or 1999.

## Methods

Theory suggests that variation in committee p-scores is caused by committee-level (jurisdiction) and chamber-level (effective number of parties, professionalization). Because the data are grouped by chamber, I use a hierarchical multilevel approach to estimate the model. Multilevel modeling allows the user to model changes in the regression constant and the coefficients of theoretically-relevant lower level variables as functions of upper level variables. (Steenbergen and Jones 2002, Pinheiro and Bates 2000, Raudenbush and Bryk 2002) In earlier work (Aldrich and Battista 2002), we used the simpler approach of merely including chamber-level variables and committee-level variables in the same OLS regression; this had the effect of underestimating the standard errors of chamber-level coefficients as they are imbued with a falsely large  $N$  and falsely high levels of independence. (Steenbergen and Jones 2002, 233).

Here, I use a hierarchical model to take into account the statistical issues caused by grouped or clustered variables. In particular, I use a random-intercept model. A random-intercept model allows the mean p-score to vary across chamber, and models those means with the chamber-level variables. It does not allow the coefficients on the jurisdiction variables to vary from state to state, however. As Cox and McCubbins as well as Maltzman argue that control committees should be *consistently* more representative than non-control committees, this restriction makes theoretical sense.

The random-intercept approach models the p-score of committee  $i$  in chamber  $j$  as:

$$pscore_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \sum_{n=1}^{N-1} (\beta_{nj} juris_n) + \epsilon_{ij}$$

and

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01} parties + \gamma_{02} prof. + u_{0j}$$

Substitution yields

$$pscore_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01} parties + \gamma_{02} prof. + \sum_{n=1}^{N-1} (\beta_{nj} juris_n) + \epsilon_{ij} + u_{0j}$$

I used the `lme` function of Pinheiro and Bates' `nlme` package for *R*, an open-source freeware workalike of *S*, to estimate all of the models in this paper. The *R* code for the estimations is in an appendix.

## Results

Table 1 gives the results for the all-committees hierarchical model for both the median-based and mean-based dependent variables, with 176 degrees of freedom for the committee-level jurisdiction variables and 8 for the chamber-level party and professionalization variables. Three items of interest come away from this. First, the median-based and means-based results are broadly similar in that variables with low p-values in one tend to have low p-values in the other. However, there remain some substantial differences, at least among the jurisdiction variables. This indicates that median-based and means-based dependent variables are not good substitutes for each other. Researchers might be justified in using means-based scores if that better accords with their underlying theory, but one should not use means-based scores merely because they are simpler to compute than median-based.

Second, there are little to no effects for the committee jurisdictions. The omitted jurisdiction is Other, which is a hodgepodge of apparently-substantive committees. The coefficient on money committees (the only ones for which extant theory makes a clear prediction) are in the wrong direction, substantively small, and do not approach statistical significance. The only jurisdiction that achieves 0.05-significance is Other (Clearly minor), which has a negative effect on representativeness in the means-based measure (and approaches significance for median-based scores).

Third, the effective number of parties is significant or nearly so in both regressions, and is in the predicted direction. This is weakly confirmatory of the ambition-theoretic, institution-linking theory of organization. However, professionalization is clearly not significant. However, this may be due to it being an index – while pay, session length, and staff support covary, they do so very imperfectly and decomposing that variable into its parts might be useful.

However, this includes many committees that we as theorists and researchers probably care little about. Whether the Georgia House's Interstate Cooperation and Journals committees are representative or not, or how well the Maine House's Engrossed Bills or Leaves of Absence committees or the Rhode Island House's Naming State Constructions committee resemble their parent chambers are probably not serious matters of contention in the cham-

Table 1: Hierarchical model results, all committees

Fixed effects	Median-based		Mean-based	
	Coef (SE)	<i>p</i> (2-tailed)	Coef (SE)	<i>p</i> (2-tailed)
Intercept	0.107 (0.291)	0.714	0.054 (0.326)	0.868
Taxing & spending	-0.054 (0.075)	0.476	-0.016 (0.074)	0.827
Rules and Legis. Mgmt.	-0.074 (0.090)	0.412	-0.058 (0.089)	0.516
Education	-0.063 (0.087)	0.471	0.104 (0.086)	0.228
Enviro./NR/ Fish & Game	-0.035 (0.074)	0.633	-0.042 (0.073)	0.560
HHS	-0.037 (0.088)	0.675	-0.061 (0.086)	0.475
Banking & Insurance	0.007 (0.087)	0.938	-0.015 (0.086)	0.862
Judiciary	-0.042 (0.089)	0.641	-0.003 (0.087)	0.974
Transportation	-0.004 (0.089)	0.964	-0.012 (0.087)	0.890
Agriculture	0.102 (0.108)	0.346	-0.064 (0.106)	0.546
Gov't Mgmt.	-0.039 (0.069)	0.575	-0.089 (0.068)	0.190
Labor & Industrial Rel.	0.037 (0.100)	0.710	0.105 (0.098)	0.284
Ethics & Housekeeping	-0.105 (0.088)	0.232	-0.020 (0.086)	0.817
Crim. Justice & Public Safety	0.013 (0.128)	0.917	-0.050 (0.126)	0.692
Other (clearly minor)	-0.166 (0.118)	0.161	-0.247 (0.116)	0.035
Eff. # parties	0.237 (0.130)	0.106	0.337 (0.146)	0.050
Professionalization	0.337 (0.956)	0.734	-0.107 (1.078)	0.923
Random effects				
Intercept	0.113		0.132	
Residual	0.263		0.258	

bers themselves, much less among people interested in the broad flow and ebb of policy decisions. Further, there are serious disparities in the number of committees, which range from 11 in the Vermont Senate to 32 in the Georgia House. This can pose a minor problem for a hierarchical model, which functions ideally when the design is “balanced” with an equal number of units per group (committees per state). To deal with both of these problems, I re-estimated with a reduced dataset consisting only of those committees whose jurisdictions appeared in at least nine chambers. These nine “core” jurisdictions are:

- Money (taxing and spending)
- Rules and legislative management
- Education
- Environment, natural resources, or fish-and-game related
- Health or human services / welfare
- Banking or insurance
- Judiciary
- Transportation
- Labor, labor-business relations, or industrial relations

It should be noted that there still remains some disparity in the number of committees, which ranges from 7 in the Rhode Island House to 17 in the Georgia House.

Table 2 presents the results of the estimation runs for these data, again for both median-based and means-based p-scores. There are 101 degrees of freedom for the jurisdiction variables and again 8 for the chamber-level party and professionalization variables, and Labor and Industrial Relations is the omitted jurisdiction. The results of these models are broadly similar to those on the full data. The effective number of parties is in the right direction and remains significant or nearly so, and is more significant than in the full dataset. Professionalization is still highly insignificant. The mix of coefficients on the jurisdiction dummies is more complex. For the medians-based dependent variable, no has a significant coefficient. For the means-based measures, Rules & Legislative Management, Environment/Natural Resources/Fish and Game, and Health & Human Services are all significant at the .10 level, and Taxing & spending committees are nearly so – but in the wrong direction for Cox and McCubbins or Maltzman.

Table 2: Hierarchical model results, core committees

Fixed effects	Median-based		Mean-based	
	Coef (SE)	<i>p</i> (2-tailed)	Coef (SE)	<i>p</i> (2-tailed)
Intercept	0.109 (0.353)	0.758	0.022 (0.334)	0.947
Taxing & spending	-0.122 (0.101)	0.232	-0.152 (0.096)	0.118
Rules & Legis. Mgmt.	-0.143 (0.114)	0.212	-0.201 (0.108)	0.067
Education	-0.123 (0.107)	0.254	-0.023 (0.102)	0.824
Enviro./NR/ Fish & Game	-0.102 (0.102)	0.317	-0.183 (0.097)	0.061
HHS	-0.100 (0.107)	0.353	-0.190 (0.102)	0.066
Banking & Insurance	-0.055 (0.110)	0.619	-0.145 (0.105)	0.168
Judiciary	-0.107 (0.112)	0.342	-0.140 (0.107)	0.191
Transportation	-0.069 (0.112)	0.537	-0.149 (0.107)	0.164
Eff # parties	0.287 (0.154)	0.100	0.417 (0.146)	0.021
Professionalization	0.168 (1.123)	0.885	0.123 (1.061)	0.911
Random effects				
Intercept	0.130		0.122	
Residual	0.258		0.246	

## Conclusions and future research

What can we take away from all this? In general, the empirical results broadly if weakly support an ambition-driven account of legislative organization. Committee representativeness seems to be explainable much more as a chamber-to-chamber matter than as a committee-to-committee matter. The coefficient on the effective number of parties is consistently in the right direction and is significant or nearly so in all estimations; this inspires some confidence that it is not merely a spurious result (though an analysis of all 99 chambers might show otherwise, of course). Professionalization is not significant, but we might expect that given the mixed Downsian / policy nature of a professionalization index containing staff, session length, and pay.

Knowing a committee's jurisdiction tells us next to nothing about whether it is likely to be inlying, outlying, or (like most committees) not clearly one or the other. This poses a small problem for the partisan theory. This effect is, likewise, consistent across estimations, with the few exceptions rising occasionally. One possible reason for this is that the salience of committee jurisdictions might vary across chambers, and in hard to predict, idiosyncratic ways. A committee that is tightly reined-in in one state in order to enhance the majority party's brand name might, in another state, be a committee of little consequence that there is little reason to police. However, this can only explain the "ordinary" committees – that a taxing or spending committee would be low-salience seems very unlikely.

Overall, the representativeness of a given committee remains difficult to predict. In fact, it would be hard to reject a null hypothesis of random selection within each party. While this leaves room for future research, it may well be that this process really does not generally pay much attention to the estimated ideal points of legislator. It might also be the case that in the higher-turnover setting of state legislatures, figuring out a legislator's preferences could be unreasonably difficult, rendering selection of representative (or unrepresentative) committees as an intentional act rather difficult.

Where do we go from here? Several possibilities present themselves. First, it is possible to break up the professionalization index into its components. Doing so might reveal that representativeness is driven in different directions by staff support and pay. However, there are already very few degrees of freedom in the chamber-level analysis and this will likely have to wait for a 50- or 99-chamber dataset to be available. Second, the same model could be replicated using other datasets, to see if there is any difference using interest-group or constituency-characteristic-based estimates of ideal points as opposed to NOMINATE. Third, it might be possible to split up the commit-

tee jurisdictions into broader categories, such as Ferro's control committees, re-election committees, and policy committees, or by scoring them on their propensity to be "captured" by interest groups or along some other dimension. The tricky part is, of course, finding the right classification scheme in either case.

The multilevel nature of the data themselves also provides opportunities. A full hierarchical model, with random (and predicted) coefficients, would allow me to explore the effects of chamber-level variables on the coefficients on jurisdictions. Doing so would allow me to empirically predict when money (or other) committees are more representative than that chambers committees generally and when they are less representative. Obviously, this would become unwieldy absent a simple control/non-control distinction or some other classification method. It would also require a good theoretical sense of what might be driving that variation in effects, which I at present do not have.



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## Appendix

### R code

```
#load nlme library

library(nlme)

#load data -- allcmtes.csv and core.no.agri.csv, which is the 9
#jurisdictions in at least 9 of the 11 states

#nebraska eff # of parties ==1

alldata <- read.table(
  'c:/my documents/research/new_cmte_data/allcmtes.csv',
  sep=',',
  header=T)
coredata <- read.table(
  'c:/my documents/research/new_cmte_data/core.no.agri.csv',
  sep=',',
  header=T)

#create grouped datasets to examine pscores based on means and
#medians in all committees and in core committees only

allmedian <- groupedData(p.median ~ money|stateid, data=alldata)
allmean <- groupedData(p.mean ~ money|stateid, data=alldata)
coremedian <- groupedData(p.median ~ money|stateid, data=coredata)
coremean <- groupedData(p.mean ~ money|stateid, data=coredata)

#fit simple hlm, all cmtes, median-based, random-intercept model
#level 1: p.median = b0 + b1(money) + e
#level 2: b0 = g0 + g1(effpty) + g2(prof) + u

lme1<-lme(
  p.median ~ money + effpty + prof,
  random = ~1|stateid,
  data = allmedian)

#now try more complex model
```

```
#dummies for all cmtes, 'other' excluded

lme2<-lme(
  p.median ~ money + ruleslm + educatio + envnrfg + hhs + bankinsu +
  judiciar + transpor + agricult + govtmana + labor + ethicsot +
  cjpublic + othercle + effpty + prof,
  random = ~1|stateid,
  data = allmedian)

#fit simple hlm, all cmtes, mean-based, random-intercept model
#level 1: p.median = b0 + b1(money) + e
#level 2: b0 = g0 + g1(effpty) + g2(prof) + u

lme3<-lme(
  p.mean ~ money + effpty + prof,
  random = ~1|stateid,
  data = allmean)

#now try more complex model, all cmtes, "other" is excluded

lme4<-lme(
  p.mean ~ money + ruleslm + educatio + envnrfg + hhs + bankinsu +
  judiciar + transpor + agricult + govtmana + labor + ethicsot +
  cjpublic + othercle + effpty + prof,
  random = ~1|stateid,
  data = allmean)

#now repeat for core-competency cmtes only

#fit simple hlm, core cmtes, median-based, random-intercept model
#level 1: p.median = b0 + b1(money) + e
#level 2: b0 = g0 + g1(effpty) + g2(prof) + u

lme5<-lme(
  p.median ~ money + effpty + prof,
  random = ~1|stateid,
  data = coremedian)

#now try more complex model
#dummies for all core cmtes, 'labor' excluded
```

```
lme6<-lme(
  p.median ~ money + ruleslm + educatio + envnrfg + hhs + bankinsu +
  judiciar + transpor + effpty + prof,
  random = ~1|stateid,
  data = coremedian)

#fit simple hlm, core cmtes, mean-based, random-intercept model
#level 1: p.median = b0 + b1(money) + e
#level 2: b0 = g0 + g1(effpty) + g2(prof) + u

lme7<-lme(
  p.mean ~ money + effpty + prof,
  random = ~1|stateid,
  data = coremean)

#now try more complex model, all cmtes, "other" is excluded

lme8<-lme(
  p.mean ~ money + ruleslm + educatio + envnrfg + hhs + bankinsu +
  judiciar + transpor + effpty + prof,
  random = ~1|stateid,
  data = coremean)
```