Unifying Majority-Minority Districts, Racial/Ethnic Incorporation, and Legislative Influence:

Latino Legislators in the American States

ABSTRACT

The creation of racial/ethnic majority-minority districts (MMDs) lies at the heart of debates regarding the utility of descriptive representation for minority policy advocacy. The general puzzle that emerges from these debates, however, rests on the possibility that by electing representatives who are policy outsiders, minority interests exert little influence in the policy decisions of median-dominated institutions. In this article we present a model that shows how MMDs can act to 1) increase the likelihood of electing minority representatives who are unique policy advocates, and 2) concurrently increase the level of institutional status of descriptive representatives. Focusing on Latino MMDs and Latino state legislators, our analysis employs a novel data set of observations on political, socio-demographic, roll-call and institutional position covering 20 states and over 2,600 state legislative seats and supports our theoretical predictions. MMDs thus allow Latino representatives to be both policy outsiders as well as institutional insiders.

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Much debate is focused on how the boundaries of legislative districts are drawn. While many scholars and policymakers are interested in the partisan implications for legislative control, these debates also have important consequences for the representation of racial and ethnic minorities. In this paper, we investigate the effects of district composition for both descriptive and substantive representation of Latinos in state legislatures, paying particular attention to the role of majority-minority districts (MMDs).

Scholars who study minority legislative representation in the United States are interested in a set of very fundamental questions, including the following: "Why are minority representatives found in some legislatures and not others?" or "Do minority legislators behave differently than their non-minority colleagues, and if so, why?" and finally, "How do minority preferences influence majority-dominated institutions?" The more sophisticated versions of these questions characterize ongoing puzzles in the literature. The first major puzzle is whether descriptive minority representation leads to substantive representation of minority interests. While most would assume that descriptive and substantive representation are positively related, it is possible that increasing the likelihood of minority descriptive representation may have no effect on, or even significantly *decrease*, the likelihood of substantive representation. This leads to a second puzzle. If electoral jurisdictions are drawn to ensure minority descriptive representation, then the very novelty of those districts' and their representatives' preferences potentially undermines the ability of descriptive representatives to influence policymaking decisions in majoritarian institutions. In other words, can descriptive representatives as policy outsiders ever be institutional insiders?

The more specific question addressed here is whether a particular political phenomenon, the MMD, can apply some theoretical and empirical leverage to the above puzzles. We enter the debate over the role of MMDs in producing minority legislative representation by presenting a multiple stage theory of MMDs' and minority representation—unifying the work done by previous scholars on MMDs that emerges from the areas of electoral politics, legislative behavior, and institutional power. This theory allows us to address the major questions underlying the study of MMDs and minority representation: Do MMDs produce representatives who look and/or behave differently from their legislative colleagues, and

do they actually have any influence over political outcomes once in office? Specifically, we argue that 1) MMDs are a mechanism to ensure the election of minority descriptive representatives who, in turn, are unique advocates for minority interests compared to non-minority legislators, and 2) MMDs provide descriptive representatives with an institutional advantage over non-MMD representatives that can overcome the disadvantages of being unique policy advocates in median-dominated institutions.

To test these propositions, we construct district- and legislator-level datasets for American state legislatures in twenty states during the 1999-2000 legislative sessions to examine relationships between the Latino population and Latino representation. The datasets are ideal for testing hypotheses concerning minority incorporation because they provide information about a number of different substantive characteristics, including the voting behavior of Latino and non-Latino representatives. It also allows for a degree of empirical leverage that is not available in studies at either the national or local levels by allowing comparisons of a large number of cases across numerous political, economic, and ethnic environments. The analysis generally supports our theoretical argument and provides an additional basis for the utility of MMDs in solving the puzzle of minority representation.

The Need to Examine Latino MMDs

We focus on Latinos for a variety of reasons. While some research on majority-minority districts includes Latinos as a substantive focus (de la Garza and De Sipio 1997; Lublin 1997; Meier et al. 2005), the overwhelming majority of research in this area is focused on African-Americans. Yet, Latinos stand as the largest racial or ethnic minority group in the United States, accounting for 14% of the population, and a growth rate that eclipses other racial and ethnic minority groups. At the same time, Latinos remain proportionately underrepresented (even relative to Blacks) in policy making bodies across the United States and at almost all levels of government. Latinos may thus be affected to a greater extent than other minority group members from the future reliance on MMDs as mechanisms for representation.

Second, Latinos are a much less cohesively liberal political "group" than Blacks. Depending on region, ethnic group, length of time in the U.S. and other factors, Latinos have more diverse ideological and partisan preferences than Black Americans (de la Garza and De Sipio 1997; McClain and Stewart

2005). This may explain some differences in political outcomes associated with Black versus Latino politics (Brockington et al. 1998; Leighley 2001). Since the utility of MMDs depends largely on the formation of a set of cohesive political preferences within the district, we need to know if the empirical findings for Blacks are applicable to Latinos.

Finally, the 1965 Voting Rights Act was originally intended for Blacks. Beginning in the late 1970's and early 1980's, Latinos incorporated themselves into the debate, but have had a more difficult time making the case that MMDs are necessary for their political survival (de la Garza and De Sipio 1997). Given the apparent success of MMDs for Blacks (at least in terms of descriptive representation), we must question whether the same policy will help overcome the severe under-representation of Latinos in the U.S.

<center>**MMDs, Representation, and Influence.**</center>

Descriptive representation characterizes situations in which politicians share distinct physical traits with their constituencies (Pitkin 1967). Substantive representation goes beyond mere ascriptive qualities to characterize policy or other outcome congruence between representatives and their constituents. Thus, as Dovi (2002) implies, it is the connection between descriptive representation and substantive representation that lies at the heart of policies that seek to ensure the election of descriptive representatives, such as MMDs (also see Mansbridge 1999).[1]

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[1] While some MMDs occur more naturally than others, we do not make any theoretical or empirical distinction between them here. First, it is not an empirical possibility at this time. Second, there is little theoretical development on this distinction, as the creation of MMDs on strictly ethnic or racial characteristics was ruled unconstitutional in *Shaw v. Reno* (1993) and *Miller v. Johnson* (1995). All legislative districts are inherently political creations, so while the intersection of partisan and ethnic concerns in drawing lines is an important issue, it does not appear to be a critical concern for the specific questions addressed here. Thus, we talk of MMDs as a policy, or a political device, but this is not intended to imply that the districts are created solely for the benefit of Latino representation.

The United States has used MMDs as a means to promote representation of historically excluded racial and ethnic minorities for over forty years. While previous research addresses a variety of potential effects of MMDs, scholars generally neglect the puzzle of how MMDs influence representative bodies' decisions if the unique substantive representation resulting from the election of minority lawmakers lies at the edge of the political spectrum (see Guiner 1992 for a discussion of this issue). Specifically, if there is a minority voter preference dimension that is distinct from a partisan preference space, then a representative of this minority interest is, by definition, operating at the margins of a large legislative body. These lawmakers' policy preferences are at best policy outliers, or at worst, marginalized through the racialization of political institutions (Hawkesworth 2003). There is, however, a broad set of scholarship that touches on various aspects of MMDs and political influence that provide some clues to the solution to the puzzle of how minority preferences achieve any type of legislative representation.

First, a good deal of research suggests that 1) electoral rules influence the probability of electing minority officials, and 2) these descriptive representatives exhibit different policy preferences than their colleagues. The former suggests that increasing the relative population of racial/ethnic minority groups within a district increases the likelihood of electing racial/ethnic minority lawmakers. Much of this research rests on evidence from comparisons between multi-member (at-large) and ward-based election systems primarily at the local level,[2] demonstrating a strong relationship between minority population size and minority officeholders (Davidson and Korbel 1981; Engstrom and MacDonald 1981, 1986, 1987; Karnig 1976; Karning and Welch 1982; Meier et al. 2005; Robinson and Dye 1978; Stewart et al. 1989; Welch 1990). Evidence regarding MMDs at other legislative levels confirms these positive descriptive

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[2] One of the key differences between local and state/national legislative bodies is the size of the body itself. Minority representatives can have a larger impact on smaller local boards or councils through agenda-setting, logrolling, or coalition formation (Browning, et al. 1984; Dahl 1961; Vaca 2004). In larger bodies, these activities become less effective. *Partisan affiliation* becomes critically important in these larger bodies as well, as most local councils are nonpartisan.

results, yet questions the need for a hard majority as a tipping point to elect minority representatives (Cameron, Epstein and O'Halloran 1996; Lublin 1997; 1999). It is not surprising that creating districts with a majority of racial/ethnic minority constituents produces minority electoral victories. These studies, however, focus almost exclusively on local or national level elections, and primarily Black constituencies and representatives, thus there is a need to expand the empirical base of knowledge to Latinos in state legislative districts.

Like the research linking electoral districts to descriptive representation, the literature addressing the policy advocacy of minority representatives is vast, yet marked by much less consensus. Several studies at the state and national level present evidence that minority lawmakers are stronger advocates, and more consistent voters, for minority group preferences (Bratton and Haynie 1999; Grose 2005; Haynie 2001; Lublin 1997; Mindola and Guiterrez 1988; Whitby 1997). However, these findings have been challenged by arguments that white *partisan* lawmakers represent their minority constituents' preferences in a manner that is similar, if not identical, to what would be expected from minority descriptive representatives (Cameron et al. 1996; Hero and Tolbert 1995; Swain 1995). In the balance, however, the body of evidence points to stronger substantive representation from descriptive representatives; although again, the evidence is almost entirely at the federal level, or for Black representatives

The second major issue pertinent to our study is the ability of minority representatives to actually influence policy outcomes. This distinction between minority representatives having different preferences or ideal points than their non-minority colleagues and actually being able to *do* anything about it (ie. influence legislative outcomes) is a crucial one for minority representation. Recent evidence suggests that increasing descriptive representation does indeed alter public policy, but that the relationship is often conditioned by contextual and institutional factors. Preuhs (2005) shows that Latino representation in state legislatures stops adverse policy proposals from advancing, but that Latinos must hold formal committee or party leadership positions in order to do so. For Blacks, evidence from state legislatures suggests that if descriptive representatives hold formal leadership positions they can exert

policy influence even in highly racialized contexts, while outside of such contexts, descriptive

representation itself leads to policy influence (Preuhs 2006; also see Owens 2005). Moreover, both

studies show that the level of institutional positions held by minority lawmakers is a direct function of the

size of the minority delegation and the degree to which they are members of the majority party. Thus,

descriptive representation can lead to institutional incorporation which in turn allows minority lawmakers

not only to advocate for their minority constituents' preferences, but also to influence policy outputs.

Missing from this literature is a clear conception of the linkage between electoral institutions, policy

preferences and policy influence.

A Model of MMDs, Latino Descriptive Representation and Latino Policy Influence

In this section we illustrate a representation model, highlighting three specific processes that

describe the relationship between district characteristics, particularly minority constituent size, and

descriptive characteristics, legislative behavior, and ultimately policy influence. First, we argue that the

foundation for minority influence in representative bodies is the majority-minority district. MMDs

significantly increase the probability of electing minority lawmakers. Second, we assert that minority

lawmakers are unique policy advocates, representatives that have preferences which cannot be completely

explained by party labels or other political factors. Finally, and simultaneously, MMDs allow minority

lawmakers to overcome their outlier status by creating safe seats from which seniority is gained and

subsequently translated into institutional leadership positions. This argument thus ties much of the

literature on MMDs, descriptive representation, and policy influence to the basic characteristics of the

electoral institutions from which representatives are elected.

MMDs and the Election of Minority Descriptive Representatives.

We begin with the proposition that Latino MMDs increase the likelihood of the election of Latino

lawmakers. Previous scholarship on Congressional elections has demonstrated that this is the case for

Blacks (Canon 1999; Lublin 1997), while other evidence implies that electoral systems such as MMDs

provide the same mechanisms at the local level (Meier et al. 2005). The causal mechanism for this

proposition appears straightforward.[3] In contexts such as the United States, where racial and ethnic group voting is a continuing phenomenon, representatives from numeric majority racial or ethnic groups are most likely to be favored by the majority of constituents in their district. Consequently, the likelihood of electing a minority candidate is very low in minority-minority districts, but increases substantially, from possible to probable, after the majority-minority threshold is met. Our first hypothesis is thus a basic one, yet it has not been tested broadly for Latino descriptive representatives at the state legislative level.

> H1: As the proportion of the district's population that is Latino increases, the probability of electing a Latino representative increases; however a threshold of 50% Latino population is required to ensure a probability of electing a Latino representative that is above 0.5.

MMDs, Latino Representatives, and Substantive Representation.

Once elected, do minority representatives from MMDs provide a unique level of policy representation and advocacy that would not otherwise be advanced? This question lies at the heart of the debate regarding the creation of MMDs. Two possible mechanisms, one indirect and one direct, may link MMDs and policy advocacy by minority legislators. First, minority legislators share common backgrounds and experiences with minority constituents and these shared experiences translate into policy advocacy that non-minority lawmakers lack (Mansbridge 1999). That is, the minority legislator that is selected is of a particular *type*. This classic rendition of the substantive benefit of descriptive representation is fairly well established for Black legislators' propensity to introduce Black interest legislation (Bratton and Haynie 1999; Haynie 2001), but lacks an empirical basis for Latinos, and more generally is not explored using Black legislative voting behavior outside of the U.S. Congress (Grose 2005; Whitby 1997). The claim that descriptive representatives behave differently than non-minority legislators in their voting and advocacy of minority interests suggests that MMDs act as *indirect*

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[3] Although it remains unclear whether election rule variation gives minority candidates a greater chance of winning (as is typically assumed), or instead simply produces a "less Anglo" candidate pool (see Gonzalez Juenke 2006).

mechanisms for minority advocacy. MMDs increase the probability of electing minority lawmakers who are in turn unique policy advocates regardless of minority population in their districts. The indirect mechanism leads to the following hypothesis:

> H2a: Latino legislators have different ideological preferences than non-Latino legislators, after controlling for all other political factors.[4]

Direct mechanisms may also link MMDs to legislative behavior. One fundamental prediction is based on a simple one dimensional model utilized by previous scholars (Meier et al. 2005) to demonstrate that ward-based elections are a key mechanism to enhance the election of minority policymakers and ensure heightened substantive representation of minority interests. Here, the basic assumption is that candidates and elected officials seek to represent the median voters in their districts in order to maximize the likelihood of winning elections (see Bender and Lott 1996; Burden 2004; Mayhew 1974). According to this model, MMDs create a context in which the median constituent is a minority voter and thus in order to gain and hold office, lawmakers will position themselves close to the minority constituent preferences.

Alternatively, outside of a minority MMD, officeholders must position themselves closer to non-minority median voters. This assumes that minority voters hold different policy preferences than non-minority voters, and that these differences lie outside of partisan and other political distinctions. In this scenario, rather than Latinos as the median voters in an MMD, non-Latinos become the median voter in a

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[4] This is an extremely important hypothesis and should be clarified. In an effort to demonstrate that there may be a "Latino" dimension to representative voting, we must first show that other political variables (the usual suspects include *party*, *income*, *education*, *urban/rural*, etc.) cannot explain all of the variation in Latino voting behavior. In lieu of looking at votes on some predetermined "Latino" bills (which is impractical across different legislatures), we should at least be able to demonstrate that Latino representatives behave differently than their non-Latino colleagues, and that traditional political variables cannot explain these differences.

district with fewer than fifty percent Latinos. Candidates and officeholders in this district are less

concerned with specific Latino preferences (all else equal) than MMD candidates, since in order to secure

electoral success a candidate or officeholder will position themselves closer to non-Latino median voters.

Thus, in addition to the indirect model of MMDs influence on substantive representation, the *direct* model

describes a clear electoral mechanism for how MMDs influence the behavior of representatives, and is the

basis for our second hypothesis:[5]

> H2b: Legislators from Latino MMDs have different ideological preferences than legislators from
>
> non-MMD districts, after controlling for all other political factors

Latino MMDs and Institutional Position.

The above propositions are presented in various forms in the literature. The puzzle that emerges

at this point is the question of how the differentiated quality of representation that stems from MMDs

translates into legislative *influence*. If MMDs produce Latino lawmakers that are indeed unique providers

of policy representation for Latino constituents, whether directly or indirectly, they are by implication left

with little power over the collective decisions of legislative bodies where majorities rule and median

lawmakers exert greater influence than outliers. The argument presented below is that while MMDs

produce unique policy preferences, the key mechanism for minority influence in majoritarian decision-

making bodies is the degree to which minorities are incorporated into the institutional power structure,

and MMDs actually increase the likelihood of incorporation.

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[5] This direct mechanism should work on both Latino and non-Latino officeholders. It suggests that

officeholders act as delegates for the median constituency. Alternatively, the indirect model suggests that

only Latino officeholders (regardless of whether they are elected from an MMD or not) will represent

Latino preferences. Thus, MMDs might select a particular *type* of officeholder (the indirect model),

and/or, they might act directly on whatever type wins office. H2a and H2b test these different claims.

There is a lively literature on this question more generally (see Bender and Lott 1996; Burden 2004;

Mayhew 1974).

We begin with the assumption based on previous theoretical and empirical work that legislative incorporation leads to legislative influence (Haynie 2001; Preuhs 2005; Preuhs 2006). Incorporation includes both the actual election of minority lawmakers (which is presumed to increase through MMDs as per the discussion above) and institutional incorporation. Institutional incorporation is defined as the holding of formal leadership positions by minority lawmakers. Preuhs (2005; 2006) and Haynie (2001) demonstrate that both types of incorporation can alter collective policy decisions, with institutional incorporation being rather robust even in highly racialized contexts. We argue that MMDs provide a key mechanism that allows Latinos to gain leadership positions—seniority.

MMDs create safe districts from which minority lawmakers can gain seniority in their legislative chamber. Since MMDs are both ideologically distinct and compact, there is little competition for sitting representatives (de la Garza and DeSipio 1997). These officeholders thus do not have to compete against a wide variety of diverse interests—ethnic, racial, or otherwise—in order to maintain their seats. Nor do they risk losing re-election by a shuffling of diverse coalitions. Homogenous districts are quite simply stable districts. The process of amassing seniority in turn leads to a higher probability of attaining legislative leadership positions since attaining leadership is still a function of seniority in most states, whether it is based on the development of institutional knowledge and connections, or simple seniority rules. And, recent evidence from the states suggests that seniority and institutional leadership positions lead to greater legislative effectiveness (Padro I Miguel and Snyder 2006). Thus, MMDs can produce both *policy outsiders* and *institutional insiders*. We construct two hypotheses from this discussion based the effects of MMDs as they pertain to seniority and in turn seniority's effect on institutional position.

H3: Latino legislators from Latino MMDs serve for more terms than Latino legislators from non-MMDs.

H4: Latino legislators who have served more terms in office are more likely to hold formal institutional leadership positions than Latino legislators who have served fewer terms.

Data and Research Design

The empirical examination of these hypotheses turns to state legislative district data, the characteristics of the lawmakers representing these districts, as well as their voting behavior. State legislatures apply some needed empirical leverage to the study of MMDs relative to studies focusing on local or national level legislative chambers. First, unlike the U.S. Congress, there is a good deal of variation across the states in terms of the key variables of Latino representation, their legislative record, and institutional position. Second, relative to local school boards and city councils where much of the inferences have been drawn regarding descriptive representation, state legislatures are large complex bodies that are both highly partisan and maintain a general structure that allows for comparisons across states in terms of institutional positions. Moreover, state legislatures are understudied given the centrality of state power over a vast array of policies important to Latinos and the broader citizenry.

Our sample is comprised of all legislative districts in the twenty states where Latinos make up at least five percent of the total state population in 1997, with actual membership and behavior indicators coded for the 1999-2000 legislative sessions.[6] This sample covers forty legislative chambers, 2,644 legislative districts (although a few cases are omitted in various analyses due to missing data), 178 Latino lawmakers, or 94% of all Latino state legislators holding office during the time of the study, and includes the five most populous states as well as the least populous. In short, it is a broad sample that provides more than adequate variation to test the hypotheses and ample room to make generalizations regarding Latino descriptive representation.

The data come from multiple sources. By compiling roll call votes for each legislator for all contested roll calls, Gerald Wright's (2004) *Representation in the American Legislature* datasets provide a unique opportunity for us to examine the substantive policy impact of minority and non-minority state legislators in the 1999-2000 sessions. It also provides the partisan affiliation of all legislators in our sample. The *National Directory of Latino Elected Officials* from the National Association of Latino

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[6] States included in the sample are: AZ, CA, CO, CT, FL, HI, ID, IL. KS, MA, NV, NJ, NM, NY, OR, RI, TX, UT, WA, WY.

Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO 1999, 2000) allows for the coding of Latino state legislators, while the Council of State Legislators' *State Legislative Leadership* supplement (1999-2000) provides a means to code institutional positions of Latino legislators. Constrained by this time period (1999-2000), we code district demographic data from 1997 from the *Almanac of State Legislatures* (Lilley et al. 1999). The Data Appendix provides summary statistics for each variable utilized in the analyses.

Analyses

The analyses that follow examine the major propositions and hypotheses presented above. We begin with an analysis of the relationship between relative Latino population size and the probability of electing a Latino representative to examine the claim that Latino MMDs increase the likelihood of electing a Latino lawmaker. The analysis then turns to the question of the uniqueness of the quality of Latino representation. Finally, we examine the impact of MMDs on seniority, which in turn is applied to the question of institutional incorporation.

Latino MMDs and the Election of Latino Legislators.

Do Latino MMDs increase the probability of electing a Latino representative? We begin with simple bivariate analyses between a district's Latino population size and whether the district is represented by a Latino legislator (Table 1). Dividing legislative districts into four categories of Latino population, a clear bivariate relationship emerges from the data. In districts where Latinos comprise less than 30% of the population, only 1.2% of the legislators are Latinos. The percentage of legislators that are Latino rises dramatically to 74.6% above the 50% threshold, and when Latinos make up over 75% of the population, 100% of the legislators are Latinos. The lower portion of the cross-tabulation confirms this trend for both Latino Democrats and Latino Republicans, while it is clear that Latino Democrats' chances of election are affected by far the most. Since the twelve Latino Republicans elected from Latino MMDs represent districts in Florida, it may be reasonable to treat these legislators as unique irregularities, and simply state that MMDs generally lead to the election of Latino Democrats.

[Table 1 Here]

There are, of course, other factors that affect the probability of electing a Latino descriptive representative and we now turn to a regression model to examine the independent effects of Latino population size, and specifically Latino MMDs, on the probability of electing a Latino lawmaker. We model the binary outcome of Latino representatives (coded 1) with a Logit model. The key independent variables are the proportion of Latinos in a district (*Proportion Latino)* and a dummy variable for MMDs which is coded 1 if the proportion of Latinos is greater than 0.5 (*Latino MMD)*. These variables will allow us to test if there is a significant jump in the probability of electing a Latino legislator produced by MMDs independent of Latino population size, or if a simpler threshold effect is at work. In addition to these variables, the analysis controls for the proportions of the population that are Black and Asian (*Proportion Black* and *Proportion Asian*), the unemployment rate (*Unemployment*), median household income (*Household Income*), the overall population (*Population*), the proportion of the population with a college education (*Education*), and dummy variables for urban and rural districts (*Urban* and *Rural*). Since the partisan makeup of the district also may affect the chances of Latinos winning, we include a measure of *Democratic strength* for each district which is the percentage of the vote for the Democratic legislative candidate in the 1996 district election minus the mean vote for Democrats in their respective chamber.[7] Districts with Democratic strength values above zero are thus those with Democratic preferences above the state chamber average, and those below zero tend to vote for Republican candidates relative to their state chamber's average. While only a proxy, this variable serves as a meaningful measure of partisanship in the district given available data for the time period.

[Table 2]

Table 2 presents the results of the analysis. Models 1, 2, and 3 include the proportion Latino, the MMD dummy, and both variables, respectively, in order to evaluate the degree to which each explain variation in the election of Latino descriptive representatives. From Model 3, it is clear that Latino

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[7] Uncontested elections were coded 100 for the Democratic vote component of the measure if a Democrat held the seat, and 0 for the Democratic vote component if a Republican held the seat.

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MMDs do not provide an additional boost to the probability of electing a Latino legislator.[8] Moreover, the addition of the Latino MMD variable actually reduces, albeit slightly, the proportional reduction in error (PRE) and pseudo-R^2 relative to a model with only the population indicator.[9] Overall, the models do perform well, reducing error at a low of 56% to a high of 61% relative to a naïve model. To better interpret the effects, Figure 2 presents the estimated mean probability of electing a Latino legislator from Model 1, along with the 95% confidence intervals (C.I.), across the range of Latino population variables, while holding all other factors at their means. We estimated these effects with CLARIFY (Tomz, Wittenberg and King 2003; King, Tomz and Wittenberg 2000). The figure also includes a scatter plot of the predicted probabilities of electing a Latino for each observation based on their actual values for all independent variables. Note that while there is not an independent jump in the probability produced at the 50% Latino population mark, the mean probability of electing a Latino crosses the 0.5 threshold , or from possible to probable, at exactly this point. Moreover, the lower bound of the 95% C.I. crosses this threshold at just about the point where Latinos comprise 55% of the population.[10] The scatter plots further highlight the influence of Latino population size on the election of Latino lawmakers, with very little variation in the predictions due to other factors. These findings thus generally support H1. Latino MMDs, while not the nearly exclusive mechanism to ensure the election of Latino legislators as Black

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[8] An interaction term between Proportion Latino and Latino MMD was also tested. It was not significant, nor did it alter the significance levels or substantive conclusions presented here.

[9] While not of central importance to this study, it is worth noting that unlike findings regarding the election of black Congressmen, the size of other minority group's populations does not increase the probability of electing a Latino legislator. Latinos, in seems, do not rely on inter-group coalitions to gain descriptive representation.

[10] This is exactly the point that Lublin (1999) found to be the threshold for black populations and their ability to elect black Members of Congress.

MMDs are for Blacks, do reflect the point where the probability of electing a Latino legislator exceeds 0.5.

[Figure 1 Here]

Latino population may produce different types of Latino lawmakers and we want to make sure that these results hold across partisan orientations. It may be that Latino Republicans, for example, do not experience the same shift in probability at the 50% Latino threshold as do Latino Democrats given a variety of factors including preference differences in key Latino subgroups. Since Latino Republicans and Latino Democrats are part of our sample, we can determine if different thresholds exist. To do so, we conducted a multinomial logit analysis using Republican lawmakers as the baseline group and regressed the four category nominal variable (Republicans, Democrats, Latino Republicans and Latino Democrats) on the set of independent variables utilized in our first analysis. The full results are reported in Appendix A.[11] Increasing proportions of Latinos in a district increases the odds of electing Latinos, either Republican or Democrat. Figure 2 presents the mean estimated probabilities for all four groups over the range of Latino population size while holding all other factors at their mean. We again relied on CLARIFY to simulate the means. As Figure 2 illustrates, the probability of electing a Latino Democrat exceeds the probability of electing a non-Latino Democrat at between 45% and 50% Latino. For Republicans, the threshold is slightly higher—just below the 55% threshold. And, from this point on, the probability of electing a non-Latino from either party diminishes greatly. MMDs are thus most likely to produce Latino Democrats, and mark the general threshold for a clear shift from a non-Latino Republican to a Latino Republican as well.

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[11] Note that while only a proxy, the Democratic strength variable performs well in these models indicating that greater Democratic strength increases the likelihood of electing Democrats over Republicans. Another interesting, yet tangential result is that while the proportion Black increases the likelihood of electing a Democrat, it does not affect the probability of electing a Latino Democrat which confirms the findings about Black-Latino electoral coalitions reported above.

[Figure 2 Here]

Latino MMDs and Legislative Behavior.

Latino MMDs produce Latino lawmakers, but are Latino lawmakers unique representatives for Latino constituents in legislative decisions (the indirect model) or do MMDs themselves lead to unique representation (the direct model)? Unlike previous studies that examine these questions with a black-box approach that relies on identifying linkages between the relative magnitude of descriptive representation or MMDs in representative bodies and policy outputs or outcomes, we utilize measures of legislators' relative ideology as our main dependent variable. This approach proved useful in the study of Black MMDs at the national level, but has not been utilized outside of the context of the U.S. Congress. Furthermore, it allows us to take a broader look at the impact of Latino MMDs and descriptive representation compared to focusing on any one single policy decision.

To measure ideology, we employ roll call data from the *Representation in the American Legislature* project (Wright 2004) to construct W-Nominate scores for each member based on a scaling procedure for parametric unfolding binary choice data that is applied to the roll calls votes for each legislator in our sample (See Poole and Rosenthal 1997)[12]. Nominate scores have become the staple measure of ideological orientations of individual members of Congress over the last ten years, and are now being applied in various versions to the study of state legislative behavior as well as legislative bodies throughout the world (c.f. Wright and Schaffner 2002). The benefit of Nominate scores for our purposes is that they provide a uniform composite scale from -1 to 1 for each member within each chamber using a large number of roll call observations to more accurately measure broad ideological orientations. In all of the states in our analysis, a single dimension dominated roll call decisions and was consistently explained by a Democratic-Republican split. We call this first dimension the traditional left-right, or liberal-conservative, dimension and it serves as the primary focus for our analysis. All scores

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[12] Wright (2004) only reports contested votes, and thus we are able to use all of the votes in the roll call data sets collected by the *Representation in the American Legislature* for each chamber.

were coded such that negative values indicated a more liberal (or Democratic) orientation while positive scores indicate a more conservative (or Republican) orientation within each legislator's respective chamber.

Since the raw Nominate scores for each legislator are appropriately applied only to estimate ideology within chambers, we constructed two types of measures of relative ideology that are comparable across states and chambers. The uniform scale of Nominate scores allows one to estimate the distance from the median legislator and the distance from the median legislator of the representative's own party which become reasonable estimates of the degree to which individual legislators deviate from their chambers and parties. This *directional distance* from either the chamber or party indicates whether legislators are more liberal (negative values) or more conservative (positive values) than their respective chamber or party medians. Thus, we have two unique measures for a wide ranging sample from which to evaluate the effect of MMDs on ideological orientations.[13]

We examine the claims of uniqueness by testing if Latino MMDs produce legislators with a distinct directional distance from their chamber and party. The dependent variables are the directional distance for each legislator from both their chamber median and their party's median. Our key independent variables are dummy variables for the four-category measure of MMDs utilized in Table 1 and a set of dummy variables for *Latino Democrats*, *Latino Republicans* and *Republicans*. Non-Latino Democrats and districts with less than 30 percent Latinos are included in the baseline. To illustrate the effect of Latino population size on relative liberalism, Figure 3 presents a scatter plot of the proportion of

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[13] We also constructed a standardized distance measure to account for variability within chambers by dividing the Nominate score by the standard deviation of Nominate scores for each chamber or party. Since the Nominate score is already a standardized measure, this measure is actually a standardized measure of a standardized measure. It is not surprising to find that these new measures were highly correlated with the previous measure (r > .90), and did not change the substantive conclusions presented below. We opted to present the basic measure to maintain some clarity in interpretation of the results.

the population that is Latino and the directional distance from the chamber median for each legislator in our sample, with labels for Latino Democrats, Latino Republicans, and non-Latino Democrats and Republicans. Note that Democrats generally fall below the median (negative values) and Republicans lie above the median (positive values)—a good sign for the validity of our ideological measure. As indicated in the previous analyses, most Latino Democrats are found in districts that have relatively high proportions of Latinos. They also consistently lie on the liberal (negative) ideological side of their chamber.

[Figure 3 Here]

Our multivariate analysis adds several control variables to test the proposition of a more liberal legislator emerging from Latino MMDs. We include the demographic and Democratic strength variables presented in the previous analyses, a dummy variable for *Upper Chamber* (1 = upper chamber), a dummy variable coded 1 if a legislator is a *Member of the Majority Party*, and the Nominate score for each *Chamber/Party Median*. This last variable is the chamber's median raw Nominate score for the chamber distance models and the raw Nominate score for the member's party's median in the party distance models, and is included to control for a ceiling effect.

[Table 3 Here]

Table 3 presents the results of the OLS regression estimates. Models 1 and 2 present the results when the directional distance from the chamber serves as the dependent variable, while Models 3 and 4 are the estimates for the model of the directional distance from the legislator's party. The negative and significant coefficients for Latino Democrats in Models 1 and 3 indicate that Latino Democrats are more liberal than their chamber and party medians when compared to other non-Latino Democrats, after controlling for all other relevant political factors. And, while Latino Republicans are more conservative than non-Latino and Latino Democrats, they are no less conservative than other Republicans relative to

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their chamber medians (Model 3).[14]   Thus, for Latino Democratic lawmakers, who comprise 87% of the

Latino legislators in our sample, the indirect ideological difference hypothesis (H2a) holds. Latino

Democratic legislators are more liberal than their non-Latino counterparts and MMDs serve to bolster

substantive representation at least indirectly. Note however, the lack of significance of the Latino

population variables in these two models. Relative Latino population size does not have an independent

effect on the ideological orientation of the representative. This initial evidence undermines the direct

model's proposed linkage between MMDs and legislative behavior.[15]

Models 2 and 4 examine each of these respective relationships with only the sample of 178 Latino

legislators to determine if the broad differences between Latino members and non-Latino members are

masking the effects of MMDs on these two measures of ideology. While Latino Democrats continue to

be more liberal than Latino Republicans, as indicated by the negative and significant coefficient for the

Democrat dummy variable in Model 2, there is no discernable effect of Latino population size on

liberalism in these subsamples.[16]

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[14] An F-test revealed that the coefficient for Latino Republicans (.99) and the coefficient for Republicans

(1.02) were statistically indistinguishable.

[15] We also tested a number of alternative measures of Latino population, such as the ratio level measure of

the proportion Latino, a MMD dummy variable, and interactions between population and Latino

legislators. None of these variables were significant and/or their inclusion did not alter the substantive

results presented here.

[16] Since Latino Democrats may react to MMDs in a different way than Republicans, we also ran separate

regressions of these models that either 1) removed Florida from the sample due to its large contingent of

Republican lawmakers from Latino MMDs, or 2) removed Republicans from the sample since Latino

Republicans were not ideologically distinct from non-Latino Republicans in Models 1 and 3. Neither

analyses produced significant results, nor changed the direction of the coefficients.

Overall, the results support the indirect model linking MMDs to substantive influence while lending doubt to the direct model. Latino MMDs are more likely to produce Latino Democrats, who are in turn more liberal than other Democrats. However, there is not a direct and independent effect of MMDs on liberalism. Once Latino Democrats are elected to office, they are uniformly more liberal than Non-Latino Democrats and all Republicans regardless of the relative size of the Latino population in their district. This finding leads to a slightly different conclusion than previous findings regarding the role of MMDs on policy outputs that do not account for the individual behavior of minority representatives (Meier et al. 2005). Instead of a direct effect of MMDs on descriptive representative's quality of minority advocacy, state legislative MMDs act as indirect factors by substantially increasing the likelihood of electing descriptive representatives that are themselves unique policy advocates.

Latino MMDs and Institutional Position.

We now turn to the examination of the final two hypotheses, H3 and H4. H3 suggests that MMDs create safe seats, and thus should lead to greater seniority for legislators from MMDs when compared to legislators that are not from MMDs. Because of this outcome, H4 states that seniority should increase the probability of Latinos attaining leadership positions, a key to influence in legislative politics. We limit the sample in this portion of the analysis to Latino lawmakers since the hypotheses speak to the effects of MMDs on Latino legislators and to avoid confounding effects between Latino legislators and Latino MMDs.

To conduct the analysis, we utilized NALEO's *Directory of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials* (various years) to code how long each Latino legislator served in their chamber by identifying whether a legislator who served in 2000 was also included in the previous years' *Directories*. Since the *Directory* was first published in 1984, this measure had an upper limit of 17 years (1984 through 2000).[17] Once seniority was coded in years, the length of a term for each legislative chamber, and the most recent

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[17] Fifteen Latino legislators, or 8.4% of the sample, were coded as serving 17 years, and thus may have served more.

election year, were utilized to code the number of *Terms* each legislator had served leading up to, and including the 2000 legislative session. Legislator names were then mapped to data from the Council of State Government's *State Legislative Leadership, Committees and Staff* directory to determine if members were chairs of standing committees, party caucus leaders or chamber leaders (minor institutional positions, such as party whips, were not included). If the legislator held any position, they were coded 1 for a variable measuring *Any Leadership Position*, while a subset of positions, *Committee Chairs*, were coded 1 only if the legislator was a chair of a standing committee. We removed the six cases where legislators served only as party or chamber leaders from the sample in the models of holding a committee chair. All other legislators were coded zero for these two variables.

[Table 4 Here]

To examine the validity of H3, we model the number of terms a Latino lawmaker served as a function of the Latino population size and a set of independent variables used in previous analyses to control for district demographic, chamber, and partisan effects. The results are presented in Table 4. The model also includes a dummy variable, *Term Limit State*, which is coded 1 if term limits would have applied to members during the 1998 elections which were the immediately preceding elections. Model 1 indicates that term limit states had significantly lower legislative terms, while districts with high household income tended to have longer-serving members. Democrats from strong Democratic districts tended to serve longer than Democrats from weak Democratic districts, while the converse held for Republicans as indicated by the negative coefficient for the Democratic strength variable and the positive coefficient for an interaction between Democratic strength and Democrat. Model 1 forms a baseline line model to compare the effects of Latino population size and MMDs.

To test the effect of MMDs on seniority, Model 2 introduces the three dummy variables capturing varying levels of Latino populations within the district. As predicted by H3, Latinos from Latino MMDs served significantly longer terms than those from non-MMDs, while influence districts (30-49% Latino) produced no detectable increase in seniority relative to districts with less than 30% Latino populations. An F-test revealed that the coefficients for the two MMD variables were not

statistically distinguishable. Term limited states continue to offset the effects of Latino MMDs, and the significance of the remaining variables from Model 1 carry through in this model as well. In short, holding all other factors constant, MMDs produce Latino legislators with more chamber experience relative to Latino representatives from non-MMDs as proposed by H3.

Having established that MMDs lead to greater seniority, the issue of whether seniority affects the likelihood of attaining a committee or leadership position comes to the fore. We use the two binary dependent variables indicating if Latino legislators held any leadership position and if they were a standing committee chair to test these final hypotheses. Both are coded 1 if such a position was held. The independent variables include the previous set of district demographic controls and party affiliation. Since term limits have been proposed as both a benefit and a drawback to minority incorporation, we also include a dummy variable for term limit states. In addition, we control for whether a legislator was a *Member of the Majority Party* and their *Ideological Absolute Distance to their Party's Median*. The ideological absolute distance is simply the absolute value of the directional distance score described above. We expect that the interaction of these variables, also included as a control, will be negative. That is, when members' parties control the chamber, they will be more likely to attain a leadership position as they approach the party median.[18] The same logic leads us to control for the *Ideological Absolute Distance from the Chamber Median* since chamber moderates may have a better chance of being appointed to leadership positions, particularly if the opposition party controls the chamber. Finally, since the size of the Latino population within each district may be directly driving the attainment of leadership

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[18] Proximity to the party median may plausibly be related to MMDs. To establish an empirical link, we ran auxiliary analyses to estimate the potential effects of MMDs on legislators' proximity to party medians. No significant effects were revealed.

positions through a chamber's desire for diversity in incorporation, we control for the three categories of Latino population utilized above.[19]

[Table 5]

Table 5 presents the results of the Probit regression analyses of the two dependent variables. The coefficient for the number of terms in office is positive and significant in both models. Longer terms increase the probability of Latinos holding leadership positions, whether those positions are solely committee chairs or include party and chamber leadership positions. This supports H4, and demonstrates the indirect effect of MMDs on institutional incorporation as it acts through the increasing level of seniority. The lack of significant direct effects from Latino population size codifies this interpretation.

While our analysis' focus is on the effect of seniority, there are additional findings of note given this unique data set and measures of ideological proximity to party and chamber medians that previous studies have not utilized. First, the probability of serving as a legislative leader is significantly increased as a legislator's ideological position approaches the chamber median. Second, the interaction term between members of the majority party and their distance from the chamber is negative, quite large, and highly significant. This implies that Latino legislators whose ideological orientations are close to their party's are much more likely to attain institutional positions of power when their own party maintains majority status. This result underscores the argument that proximity to party medians enhance legislative influence, even among Latino lawmakers, which in turn implies that mainstream politics works in favor of Latino legislators, at least when their party holds power. Keep in mind that a district's Latino population size is not related to ideological proximity once partisanship is taken into account. Thus, while MMDs create liberal lawmakers, among those, they are still more likely to be incorporated through their seniority advantage than pushed into the rank-and-file by a systematic uniqueness stemming from their MMD status.

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[19] Removing these variables from the models does not change the statistical inferences or substantive interpretation of the results presented above.

[Figure 4 Here]

In short, Latino MMDs produce a distinct indirect benefit that leads to formal institutional incorporation or, in more specific terms, the attainment of legislative leadership positions by way of creating opportunities for more seniority.   To better understand the indirect effect of MMDs on Latino institutional incorporation, Figure 4 presents the estimated probabilities of Latino members attaining leadership positions across the four categories of Latino population that were used in the analysis. The estimates reported highlight the indirect effect of the Latino population in a district on incorporation as it flows from population, to seniority, and ultimately to incorporation.[20] As the graph indicates, there is no significant increase in the probability of attaining a leadership position as one compares districts with less than 30% Latino population to districts with more than 30% but less than 50% Latinos. However, a large bump in the probability of attaining a leadership position occurs at the MMD threshold, and continues thereafter. The effects are fairly substantial, with probabilities of attaining leadership hovering around .01 to .02 for legislators from non-MMDs, and increasing to above .10 for those legislators from districts where Latinos make up more than 75% of their constituents.

Discussion and Conclusion.

This paper addressed a major puzzle in the literature regarding MMDs, minority representation and policy influence: How does the election of minority representatives, through the creation of districts that may be drawn for their unique policy preferences, also create opportunities for minority influence in majoritarian representative bodies? We propose that there are several phases in which MMDs act upon the electoral success, legislative behavior, and institutional positions where distinct advantages of MMDs

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[20] To estimate the indirect effects, the population coefficients from Model 2 in Table 4 were used to estimate the mean number of terms for a legislator across each category, with only the significant population coefficients treated as different from zero, and all other variables held at their means. These estimates where then entered into the models of committee chairs and leadership positions, again holding all other variables at their means.

provide at least a partial solution to this puzzle. In short, we find that while Latino MMDs increase the probability of electing a Latino legislator, they do not independently affect the voting behavior of Latino legislators. Once elected, Latino legislators are themselves unique policy representatives, regardless of the majority-minority status of their district. MMDs thus have only an indirect effect on the quality of representation—a finding that deviates from the theoretical basis of some recent research on MMDs and policy responsiveness (Meier et al. 2005), but reflects the uniqueness of legislative responsiveness found in other studies (Grose 2005). This does not imply that MMDs do not matter, nor does it solve the puzzle of minority influence in a majoritarian body. Latino legislators still must face the collective decision-making body as outliers. This is where MMDs provide a unique advantage. We find that MMDs are associated with greater seniority, which in turn, was shown to help Latino legislators from MMDs gain leadership positions—an advantage that Latino legislators from non-MMDs do not hold. Thus, indirectly through the election of Latino legislators and increasing legislative seniority, Latino MMDs increase the likelihood of institutional incorporation. And, institutional incorporation has been shown to be a key mechanism for policy influence (Francis 1984; Jewell and Whicker 1994;).

Our study extends the scholarship on racial and ethnic minority group representation in several important ways. First, while there have been numerous studies addressing the effects of electoral district design on the election of racial and ethnic group lawmakers, few have examined this issue at the state level and/or through the lens of Latino representation. Our dataset supports the existing evidence for Blacks—MMDs are important tools for increasing Latino representation and the diversity of legislative institutions broadly. Second, our application of Nominate scores to evaluate the voting behavior of Latino state legislators is a first to our knowledge. The benefits of a large number of roll calls in the measurement of ideology are well documented, and while there are some drawbacks, we were able to demonstrate the linkages between district demographic characteristics and legislative behavior at the sub-national level. Combined with the variation in representation, ideology and institutional position, we present a powerful new tool for examining minority legislative representation. Finally, while scholars of legislative politics have long understood some of the linkages that we apply in our partial solution to the

puzzle of unique advocacy and policy influence, this study is the first to explicitly apply and adequately test the key mechanisms that are often only assumed. The quality of representation generated by MMDs is one such assumption that our findings question. Yet at the same time, it confirms some basic assumptions about factors leading to incorporation, such as seniority and ideological moderation which previous aggregate studies simply could not uncover. Overall, our attempt to address an important theoretical puzzle with a partially unexplored theoretical argument and a unique dataset has produced some rather important findings for the study of racial/ethnic politics and representation.

Nevertheless, the process of inquiry provided fertile ground to raise additional questions. Recent studies present strong evidence from local-level politics regarding the direct linkage between MMDs and policy outcomes based on the assumption of the unique policy representation from MMDs. Our null findings regarding this assumption suggest that 1) some other mechanism is at work within local bodies that should be identified, or 2) our measure of ideology does not adequately capture the "quality" of representation in legislative bodies. Since we show a strong relationship between MMDs and the election of Latino Democrats, and in turn their unique voting behavior, there is reason to believe the Nominate score approach is sound. However, future research may seek out Latino legislation, specific roll calls, or even other "dimensions" that may uncover a more nuanced relationship between MMDs and policy advocacy. If such points of advocacy do exist, then the secondary question would be to address if, and how, the MMD advantages that lead to institutional incorporation we have uncovered translate to influence over the legislative outcomes of these more specific issues or Latino agendas.

In conclusion, what is most striking about our findings is the demonstration that MMDs provide a mechanism from which Latinos may influence public policy. Other mechanisms found to affect potential influence, however, are not unique to Latinos. Median positions, seniority and the manipulation of district characteristics are all well established in the literature as mechanisms of legislative behavior. While future research may reveal that racialization dampens some of these effects for Latinos as it does for Blacks (See Hawkesworth 2003; Preuhs 2006), besides the obvious existence of ethnic group voting,

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it is worth noting that at least the major mechanisms of democratic institutions are robust for Latino

representation.

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Data Appendix: Descriptive Statistics for the Full Sample of Legislative Districts (N = 2637)

Variable	Mean/Proportion	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Latino Democrat	.059 (n=155)		0	1
Democrat	.462 (n=1217)		0	1
Latino Republican	.009 (n=23)		0	1
Republican	.470 (n=1238)		0	1
Proportion Latino	0.13	0.17	0.00	0.94
Proportion Black	0.08	0.14	-0.03	0.86
Proportion Asian	0.05	0.11	0.00	0.85
Democrat	0.52	0.50	0.00	1.00
Upper Chamber	0.29	0.45	0.00	1.00
Household Income	0.52	0.19	0.21	3.22
Population	11.51	13.77	0.00	91.93
Unemployment	0.06	0.03	0.02	0.26
Education	0.40	0.13	-0.35	0.85
Proportion Urban	0.33	0.47	0.00	1.00
Proportion Rural	0.27	0.44	0.00	1.00
Distance from Chamber	0.01	0.68	-1.75	1.81
Distance from Party	0.01	0.29	-1.58	1.51
Proportion < 30% Latino	.884 (n = 2331)		0	1
Proportion 30% to 49% Latino	.054 (n=143)		0	1
Proportion 50% to 74% Latino	.049 (n=126)		0	1
Proportion > 75% Latino	.014 (n=37)		0	1

Data Appendix: Descriptive Statistics for Models with Latino Members Only (N = 178)

Variable	Mean/Proportion	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Democrat	0.87	0.34	0.00	1.00
Proportion Black	0.07	0.09	0.00	0.57
Proportion Asian	0.03	0.06	0.00	0.33
Upper Chamber	0.27	0.45	0.00	1.00
Household Income	0.39	0.11	0.21	0.94
Population	17.04	18.76	0.73	85.12
Unemployment	0.10	0.03	0.03	0.22
Education	0.27	0.12	0.04	0.73
Proportion Urban	0.57	0.50	0.00	1.00
Proportion Rural	0.16	0.37	0.00	1.00
Distance from Chamber	-0.39	0.54	-1.71	1.52
Distance from Party	-0.03	0.16	-0.60	0.91
Proportion Term	2.84	2.23	1.00	9.00
Proportion Term Limit	0.34	0.47	0.00	1.00
Absolute Distance from Chamber Median	0.52	0.42	0.00	1.71
Absolute Distance from Party Median	0.52	0.42	0.00	1.71
Proportion Member of Majority Party	0.69	0.47	0.00	1.00

Appendix A: Multinominal Logit Estimates for Election of Latinos by Party Affiliation.

	Independent Variable	Coefficient	Std. Err.
Latino Republicans	Proportion Latino	12.64***	1.87
	Proportion Black	-3.54	6.09
	Proportion Asian	2.47	3.55
	Unemployment	0.30	16.78
	Household Income	-1.85	1.67
	Population	0.00	0.01
	Education	5.73	3.07
	Urban	-0.42	0.66
	Rural	-0.47	0.82
	Democratic Partisanship	-0.04***	0.01
	Constant	-8.62***	1.74
Democrats	Proportion Latino	0.94	0.67
	Proportion Black	4.14***	1.22
	Proportion Asian	6.02***	0.77
	Unemployment	31.24***	4.41
	Household Income	-0.76*	0.41
	Population	-0.03***	0.00
	Education	2.73***	0.70
	Urban	-0.10	0.14
	Rural	-1.14***	0.16
	Democratic Partisanship	0.07***	0.00
	Constant	-2.46***	0.44
Latino Democrats	Proportion Latino	12.76***	1.16
	Proportion Black	1.39	2.43
	Proportion Asian	5.59***	1.67
	Unemployment	31.71***	11.72
	Household Income	-3.69*	2.01
	Population	-0.02*	0.01
	Education	6.30**	2.11
	Urban	-0.94*	0.42
	Rural	-1.65***	0.47
	Democratic Partisanship	0.07***	0.01
	Constant	-7.37***	1.48

Note: Republicans are the baseline category. Unstandardized Logit coefficients and robust standard errors are reported. * $p < 05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$ in a one-tailed test of significance. N = 2638, Wald Chi-squared=1042.16 with $p < .000$. Pseudo $R^2 = .48$.

Table 1. Cross-tabulation of Latino Population and Latino Representation.

	< 30 % Latino	30 % to 49 %	50 % to 74%	> 75% Latino
Latino Legislator	1.20% (28)	13.19% (19)	74.60% (94)	100.00% (37)
Non-Latino Legislator	98.80 (2309)	86.81 (125)	25.40 (32)	0.00 (0.00)
Total	100 (2337)	100 (144)	100 (126)	100 (37)

Column Percentages and (observations) reported in cells.
Chi-Square = 1600, p < .000. N = 2644

	< 30 % Latino	30 % to 49 %	50 % to 74%	> 75% Latino
Latino Democrats	0.81% (19)	11.89% (17)	69.05% (87)	86.49% (32)
Latino Republicans	0.39 (9)	1.40 (2)	5.56 (7)	13.51 (5)
Non-Latino Democrats	47.56% (1110)	60.14 (86)	21.43 (27)	0.00 (0)
Non-Latino Republicans	51.24 (1196)	26.57 (38)	3.97 (5)	0.00 (0)
Total	100 (2334)	100 (143)	100 (126)	100 (37)

Column Percentages and (observations) reported in cells.
Chi-Square = 1600, p < .000. N = 2640, reflecting the loss of four cases from the previous cross-tabulation. All were non-Latino, unaffiliated legislators from districts with fewer than 50% Latino. The 13 Latino Republicans from districts with greater than 50% Latinos were members of the Florida legislature.

Table 2. Estimated Effects of District Characteristics on Election of Latino Legislators.
(Dependent Variable: 1 if Legislator is Latino, 0 otherwise)

Independent Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Coef.	SE	Coef.	SE	Coef.	SE
Proportion Latino	12.25***	0.93			11.46***	1.00
Latino MMD			4.50***	0.49	0.47	0.38
Proportion Black	-2.45	2.27	-4.35*	2.32	-2.27	2.38
Proportion Asian	0.48	1.52	-0.05	1.30	0.49	1.46
Unemployment	3.85	12.27	13.87**	4.76	2.98	12.76
Household Income	-2.81	1.86	-2.75*	1.53	-3.02	1.90
Population	0.00	0.00	0.01*	0.01	0.00	0.00
Education	4.34**	1.51	0.66	1.54	4.36**	1.47
Urban	-0.80**	0.32	-0.20	0.22	-0.81**	0.32
Rural	-0.77*	0.45	-0.95*	0.48	-0.77*	0.45
Democratic Strength	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01
Constant	-5.90	1.57	-3.29	0.80	-5.62	1.59
Wald χ^2	631.01***		396.43***		787.47***	
Pseudo R2	.63		.54		.63	
N	2641		2641		2641	
PRE	.61		.56		.60	

Note: Unstandardized Logit coefficients and robust standard errors (SE) corrected for clustering within states are reported.
* $p < 05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$ in a one-tailed test of significance.

Figure 1. Estimated Effect of Latino Population on the Probability of Electing a Latino Legislator.
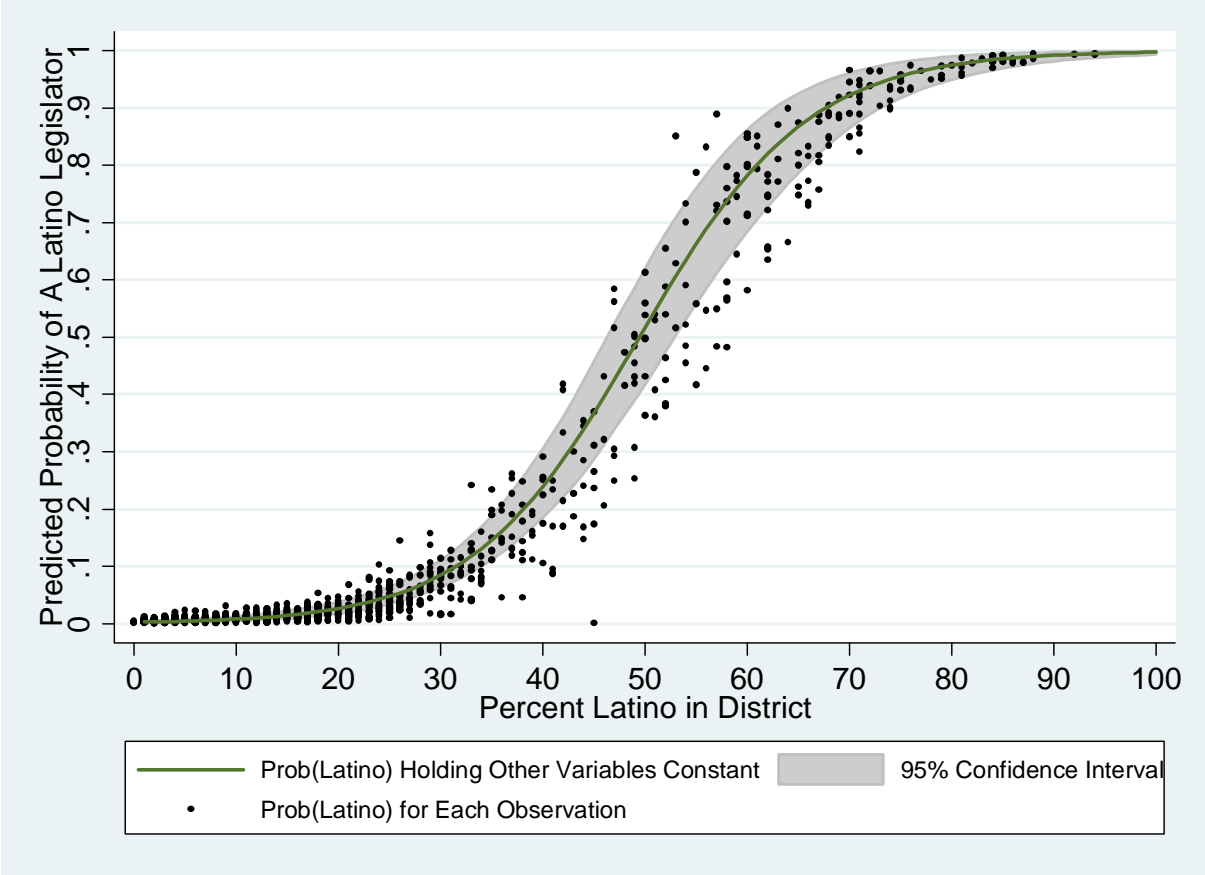
Figure 2. Estimated Effect of Latino Population on the Probability of Electing a Latino or non-Latino by Party Affiliation.

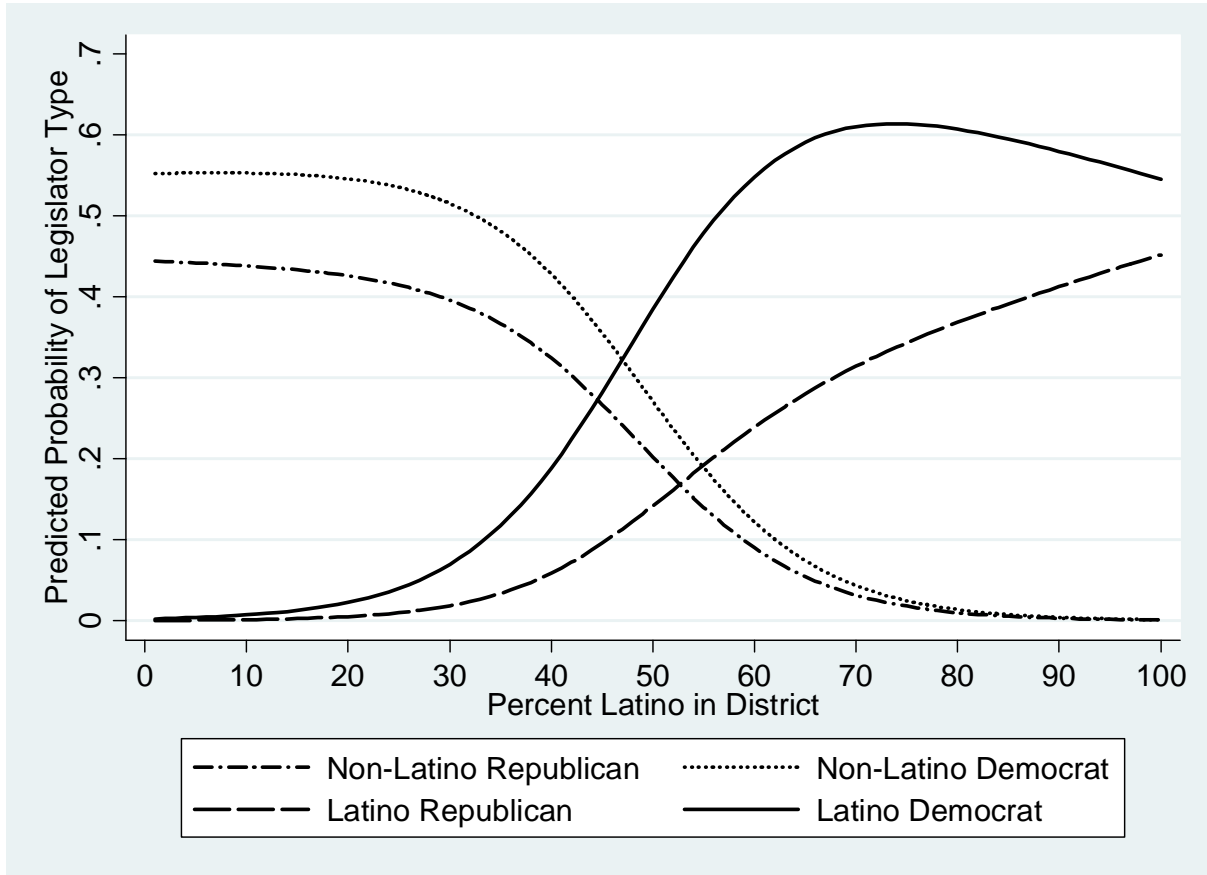**Figure 3. Legislator's Ideological Distance from the Chamber Median by Latino Population.**

Table 3. Estimated Effects of Latino Representation and Latino Population on Legislators' Ideological Distance from their Chamber and Party Medians.

	Distance from Chamber Model 1		Distance from Chamber Model 2 (Latinos Only)		Distance from Party Model 3		Distance from Party Model 4 (Latinos Only)	
	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE
Latino Democrat	-0.21***	0.06			-0.10***	0.03		
Latino Republican	0.90***	0.10			-0.05	0.06		
Republican	0.97***	0.10			0.02	0.06		
30-49% Latino District	-0.03	0.06	-0.01	0.04	-0.04	0.04	0.01	0.04
50-74% Latino District	0.01	0.04	-0.01	0.05	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.03
> 75% Latino District	0.05	0.07	0.04	0.08	0.03	0.05	0.04	0.06
Democrat			-1.18***	0.10			-0.30	0.18
Upper Chamber	-0.01	0.03	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.02
Household Income	0.20*	0.10	0.24	0.24	0.08	0.06	0.17	0.23
Population	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Unemployment	0.64	0.79	1.46	0.92	-1.03**	0.30	1.07	0.83
Education	-0.39***	0.09	-0.06	0.17	-0.41***	0.09	0.05	0.13
Proportion Black	-0.18	0.19	0.06	0.29	-0.07*	0.04	-0.17	0.21
Proportion Asian	0.06	0.13	0.00	0.22	-0.12*	0.06	-0.38*	0.18
Urban	-0.08*	0.03	0.02	0.03	-0.05**	0.02	0.00	0.02
Rural	-0.02	0.06	0.03	0.03	0.06**	0.02	0.00	0.03
Member of the Majority	0.03	0.06	0.05	0.06	0.01	0.01	-0.04	0.03
Chamber/Party Median	-0.87**	0.06	-0.87***	0.06	-0.12**	0.04	-0.33**	0.10
Democratic Strength	-0.002*	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.001*	0.000	0.00	0.00
Constant	-0.44	0.11	0.23	0.18	0.18***	0.05	-0.10	0.16
F	39445***		13479***		405.11***		115.21***	
R^2	.76		.91		.08		.20	
N	2632		178		2632		178	

Note: Negative values for both measures of the DV indicate more liberal votes relative to the chamber/party. Unstandardized OLS coefficients and standard errors corrected for clustering by state (See Williams 2000).* $p < 05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$ in a one-tailed test.

Table 4: Estimated Effects of District Characteristics on Latino Legislators' Terms in Office. (DV: Number of Terms Served as of 2000)

Independent Variables	Model 1		Model 2	
	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE
30-49% Latino District			1.01	0.64
50-74% Latino District			1.19**	0.42
> 75% Latino District			1.81**	0.59
Term Limit State	-1.32***	0.28	-1.48***	0.34
Upper Chamber	-0.38	0.58	-0.32	0.63
Household Income	3.63*	1.55	2.72*	1.42
Education	-0.04	3.37	1.91	3.60
Population	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01
Unemployment	8.16	12.57	3.70	9.70
Proportion Black	-2.42	1.78	-0.59	1.55
Proportion Asian	-3.51	3.15	-1.43	2.17
Urban	-0.01	0.44	-0.08	0.48
Rural	-0.14	0.62	0.02	0.70
Democrat	1.29**	0.45	0.83*	0.39
Democratic Strength	-0.03*	0.01	-0.02*	0.01
Democrat*Democratic Strength	0.03*	0.01	0.02*	0.01
Constant	0.04	2.11	-0.45	2.05
F	34.10***		289.66***	
R^2	.13		.16	
N	178		178	

Note: Unstandardized OLS coefficients and standard errors (SE) corrected for clustering by state are reported (See Williams 2000).
* $p < 05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$ in a one-tailed test of significance.

Table 5. Estimated Effects of Seniority and Ideological Distance on Obtaining Leadership Positions among Latino Legislators.

Independent Variables	Any Leadership Position		Committee Chairs	
	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE
Term	0.32***	0.06	0.32***	0.06
Term Limit State	-1.09*	0.58	-1.56*	0.79
30-49% Latino District	0.98	0.78	0.18	1.06
50-74% Latino District	1.00	0.61	0.96	0.72
> 75% Latino District	0.81	0.77	0.97	0.90
Member of the Majority Party	0.95	0.99	1.71*	0.99
Ideological Absolute Distance from the Member's Party	1.66	2.22	4.26*	2.06
Member of the Majority Party X Ideological Absolute Distance from Their Party's Median	-6.59*	3.20	-9.24**	3.18
Ideological Absolute Distance From the Chamber Median	-2.02**	0.81	-2.31**	0.89
Democrat	-1.54**	0.62	-1.34*	0.74
Upper Chamber	0.87*	0.39	0.86*	0.42
Proportion Black	-5.47	3.36	-2.88	3.30
Proportion Asian	6.95**	2.89	4.05	3.84
Household Income	2.93	2.52	3.49	3.15
Education	-4.96*	2.68	-5.06*	2.75
Unemployment	-4.80	8.52	-9.34	9.51
Population	0.03**	0.01	0.04*	0.01
Urban	0.48	0.39	0.14	0.39
Rural	0.59	0.49	0.52	0.52
Constant	-1.01	2.01	-1.48	2.21
Wald χ^2	76.44***		90.62***	
Pseudo R^2	.48		.50	
PRE	.41		.38	
N	178		172	

Note: Unstandardized OLS coefficients and robust standard errors are reported. Clustering for states was not possible since it would completely determine several cases. The sample size reduction in the committee chair model reflects the elimination of party and chamber leaders.
* $p < 05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$ in a one-tailed test of significance.

Figure 6. Estimated Probability of Attaining Leadership Positions for Latinos, by Category of Latino Population Size.