

Who Heeds the Call of the Party in Congress?

William Minozzi The Ohio State University
Craig Volden University of Virginia

When party leaders seek support, who heeds the call and who remains unswayed? The canonical error-free spatial model of voting predicts the targeting of fence-sitting moderates. In contrast, we advance a random-utility-based model of party calls, wherein legislators who benefit the most from a common party position respond to the call of party leaders. This model predicts that extremists will heed the call of the party more than moderates, even upon controlling for baseline rates of voting with the party. To test this prediction, we develop a new method to identify “party-influenced votes,” to generate estimates of “party-free ideal points,” and to examine rates of responsiveness to political parties across members in the House of Representatives between 1973 and 2006. We find that, contrary to common portrayals of party influence, those most responsive to their parties are not the chamber moderates. Rather, responsiveness is greatest for ideological extremists in both the majority and minority parties, declining significantly among more moderate members. This finding sets the stage for new theoretical and empirical work on the role of parties in Congress.

A common portrayal of partisan coalition building in Congress involves the targeting of fence-sitting moderates.¹ Having secured the party’s base, majority party leaders work to win over swing-voting moderates, perhaps through concessions in the bill itself or through a variety of side deals. Yet, in so doing, more extreme members of the majority party (whether liberal Democrats or conservative Republicans) grumble that they may not be able to hold with the party any longer. Finally, a deal is struck, votes are cast, and a new policy is brought into being.

As compelling as this narrative may seem, this form of party influence in floor voting, while possibly important, is rare. Instead, we argue that the main role of party influence in congressional voting is one of coordination.² Given the number of votes cast, the complexity of issues, and the many pressures to which members of Congress must respond, lawmakers are unsure about just how to vote on many issues. When the party leadership determines that a particular position would be valuable to the party as a whole—to develop a brand name on a specific issue, to advance

a broader agenda, to thwart a presidential proposal—a call is sent out to party members to vote together in the best interests of the party. For those who most benefit from the party’s brand name, for example, this call resolves any uncertainty and brings these members in line with their party. For a lawmaker who had a well-formed opinion on the issue at hand (due to its salience to the member, her district, or favored interest groups), the party call does little to sway her vote. And for moderate members, who may actually benefit electorally by differentiating their positions from their party, this call may have little influence (or occasionally may lead to a vote *against* the party).

Unlike the rare persuasion of fence-sitting moderates on the occasional close and highly contentious vote, the call to coordinated party action is commonplace, detectable, and has systematic effects on voting patterns in Congress. Put bluntly, scholars may have been looking in the wrong place for party influence in floor voting.

In this article, we turn from the familiar questions of “whether” and “when” parties matter in Congress

¹An online appendix containing formal proofs and supplementary analyses is available at <http://journals.cambridge.org/jop>. Data and supporting materials necessary to reproduce the numerical results in the article will be available at polisci.osu.edu/faculty/minozzi upon publication.

²Cox and McCubbins (2005) highlight the role of parties even before the floor voting stage of the lawmaking process.

to questions of “who” and “how.”³ To do so, we devise and deploy a method for exploring who heeds the call of the party, while crucially controlling for ideology and the baseline propensity to vote with the party absent such influence. Specifically, we (a) separate party-influenced votes from party-free votes, (b) generate party-free ideological ideal points, (c) calculate support rates for each member on both party-influenced and party-free votes, and (d) examine which member attributes are associated with support on party-influenced votes *above and beyond* the baseline rates of voting with the party absent party influence.⁴ Using this procedure, we explain who responds to their party in the House of Representatives between 1973 and 2006. Although many factors affect party responsiveness, we focus on the role of ideology, controlling for other considerations.

In so doing, we uncover strong support for the theory of party calls. The main effect of party on roll-call voting is not the targeting of moderates on close votes, and it is not a constant effect across all members. Rather, in vote after vote, in Congress after Congress, the role of party is to issue a clarion call, a call to set aside other considerations and join with the party. Those who heed this call are the members who can do so at the lowest cost and at the highest gain, specifically the ideological extremists for whom a vote with the party tends to not be as much of a sacrifice of other considerations as it might be for more cross-pressured moderates.

Theory and Hypotheses

For at least 30 years, the spatial model has dominated theories of legislative behavior. Among the virtues of the spatial model is its limited and explicit set of assumptions. In the model, legislators make decisions

³In an early step in this direction, Roberts and Smith (2003) study how differences among representatives (e.g., being from the South, being of the “new breed,” or being moderate) contribute to party polarization. Canes-Wrone, Rabinovich, and Volden (2007) explore member-specific voting in their assessment of the classic “marginality hypothesis.”

⁴The clear correlation between ideology and partisan voting has long been known and can be demonstrated systematically. For example, Carson et al. (2010) study accountability in party unity voting; in so doing, they instrument for party unity with roll-call ideological extremism and show that the two are highly correlated. What is crucial to our study, however, is controlling for the baseline propensity of voting with the party (based on ideological or other considerations) in order to determine which members of Congress join with the party *even more strongly* upon hearing the party’s call to action.

solely based on policy, and policies are represented by points in a space, most commonly a single line running from “left” to “right.” Each legislator has a favorite policy, or *ideal point*, and her preferences over policies are based on their proximity to this point. Given these assumptions, a legislator’s vote on any particular roll call is perfectly determined by her ideal point and the points in the ideological space associated with voting Yea and Nay. Suppose for the sake of illustration that the Yea position is right of the Nay position. Then the model predicts that a legislator will vote Yea if and only if her ideal point is to the right of the cutpoint between the Yea and Nay positions.

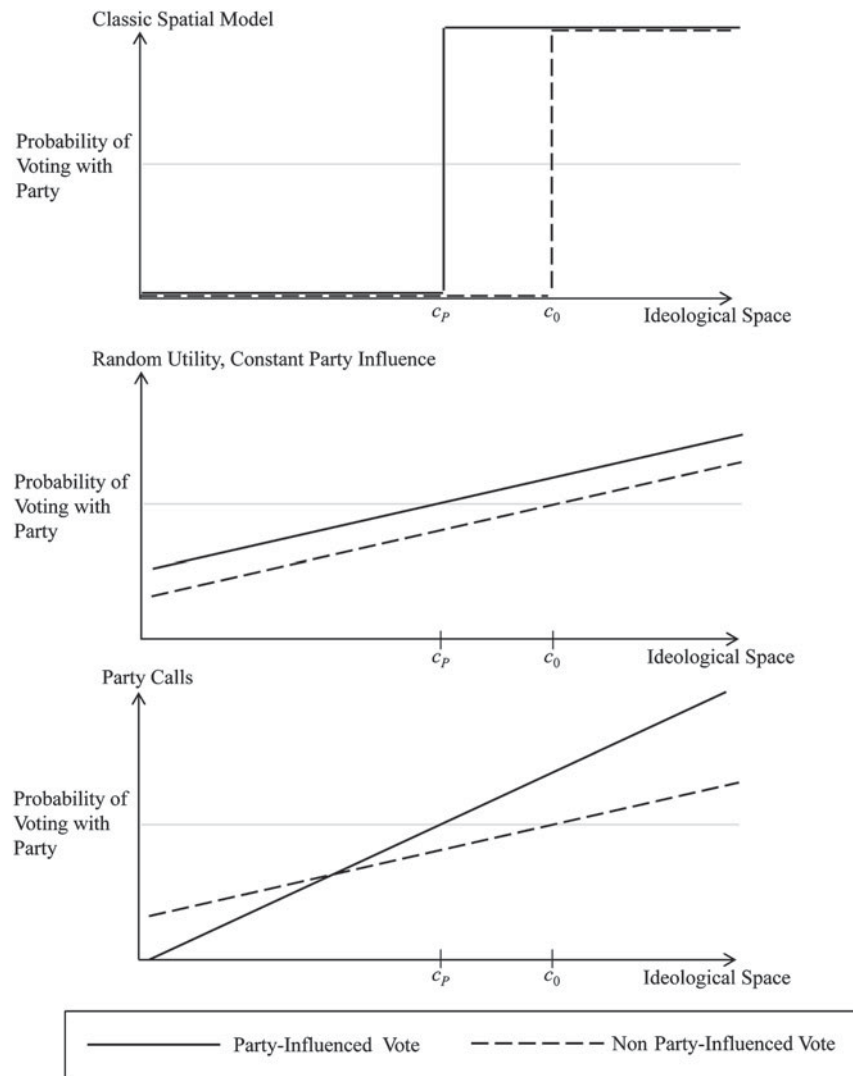
But the classic spatial model is as notable for what it lacks as for what it includes. Krehbiel (1993) famously calls attention to a key omission: the spatial model lacks parties. To include parties in the spatial model, we must make an assumption about how parties affect legislators’ vote choices. The simplest and most common such assumption is that the party offers a constant lump-sum inducement to any party member (or perhaps any legislator, regardless of party membership) who votes in the party’s preferred direction.⁵ Returning to the illustration from above, suppose that the party prefers its members to vote Yea. The constant inducement assumption implies a shift in the behavior of legislators near the middle. Some legislators now vote Yea but would have voted Nay in the absence of such an inducement. Specifically, these legislators have ideal points just to the left of the original cutpoint between Yea and Nay.

The top panel of Figure 1 illustrates this prediction. In each panel of the figure, the horizontal axis represents ideological space, and the vertical axis measures the probability that a legislator will vote in the direction preferred by the party trying to exert influence (here assumed to be the party on the right). For simplicity, we illustrate the concepts here with a single party exerting influence. The two lines in each panel then capture the relationship between ideology and the probability of voting with the party both with and without party influence. The solid line represents this probability with party influence; the dashed line, without.

In the classic spatial model of the top panel, the probability of voting with the party jumps from 0 to 1 as soon as a legislator’s ideal point exceeds a cutpoint. The effect of party involvement is to shift the pivotal cutpoint from the nonparty-influenced c_0 to the

⁵We can easily extend this assumption to the setting with competing parties if we regard this inducement as the difference between the amounts offered by the two competing parties.

FIGURE 1 Theoretical Relationships between Ideology and Party Voting



Note: The figure summarizes three theoretical models for how members' ideological preferences translate into probabilities of party voting with and without party influence. The Classic Spatial Model predicts moderates to be most responsive to party influence. The Random Utility, Constant Party-Influence Model predicts responsiveness to not be associated with ideology. The Party-Calls Model predicts ideological extremists to be most responsive to party influence.

party-influenced c_p by making the rightist Yea position more attractive. Upon doing so, legislators near the median (between c_p and c_0) switch from voting Nay to voting Yea, and the party moves from defeat to a narrow victory. Thus, the classic spatial model yields the following hypothesis:

Responsive Moderates Hypothesis: Responsiveness to party decreases in ideological distance from the median.

This hypothesis is consonant with much work on parties in Congress. In the classic spatial model, the floor median in the House is pivotal, crucial to overcoming gridlock (Brady and Volden 2006; Krehbiel 1998).

Scholars often search for party effects by focusing on moderates. McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal, for example, argue that “[p]arty discipline generally involves getting moderates to vote with extremists” (2001, 676). Moderates may respond to the party more than extremists simply because extremists have nowhere else to go.

While the classic spatial model generates a useful hypothesis about who is most greatly influenced by political parties, the model is overly deterministic, generating a *certainty* of expected voting patterns to the left or right of cutpoints that may be better represented in *probabilistic* terms. In moving from theoretical to empirical examinations, such probabilistic

expectations become clearer. For example, ideal point estimation techniques such as those of Poole and Rosenthal (1985) or of Clinton, Jackman, and Rivers (2004) are built on a version of the spatial model that includes the possibility of error, in the form of “random utility.” In substantive terms, members of Congress base their legislative behavior on district pressures, interest group lobbying, personal preferences, institutional maintenance concerns, and views about good policy (e.g., Fenno 1973; Mayhew 1974), as well as on partisan or ideological concerns. Therefore, each member should be conceived of as having a probability of voting with her party on any particular issue.⁶ Formally, in addition to policy-based preferences, each legislator also receives an unobservable, random shock to her utility from voting a particular way.⁷ Given this assumption, each legislator has some probability of voting against the position dictated by her ideological leanings alone. This probability decreases the further a legislator’s ideal point is from the cutpoint of the available policy options, as she moves from near indifference to a strong preference for one policy over the other. Not only does this overall prediction differ from that of the classic spatial model, but party influence is also predicted to have a different effect in the random utility setting. Because all legislators may now vote against the party with particular probabilities, an inducement has the potential to affect many legislators, not just those with ideal points near the midpoint.

The middle panel of Figure 1 illustrates this prediction of the random utility model with constant party influence across members. The dashed line represents the probability of voting with the party absent influence, and the solid line represents that probability with influence. In contrast to the classic spatial model, the prediction of the constant inducement assumption in the random utility model is that the effects of party influence are widespread. Again, the cutpoints c_0 and c_P are illustrative, with a majority of legislators to the right of c_0 voting Yea absent party influence and a majority to the right of c_P voting Yea in response to party influence. However, the effect of party influence here is not deterministic in changing the exact votes of moderates, but probabi-

listic. Moreover, because the inducement is assumed to be constant across members, party influence is predicted to be constant as well, yielding the following:

No Ideological Responsiveness Hypothesis: Responsiveness to party is not associated with ideology.

This hypothesis does not mean that liberals and conservatives vote with the Republicans equally, regardless of ideology. As the middle panel of Figure 1 illustrates, conservatives will vote with Republicans more frequently both with and without party influence. Rather, this hypothesis suggests that there will be no ideological explanation for voting with the party *above and beyond the baseline rate of voting with the party absent party influence.*

Of course, this hypothesis could obtain for other reasons. If parties are unable to influence their members, then little responsiveness is expected from any members whatsoever.⁸ Another possibility is that parties do exert pressure on their members, but, because parties only need support on close votes, because close votes are uncommon, because only a few legislators are targeted on any such vote, and because the targeted group may vary from vote to vote, statistical tests are simply incapable of perceiving such direct party influence (Smith 2007, 85).

That said, we question the assumption that the benefit of voting with the party is constant across members. In keeping with the random utility model, we assume that, without any party influence, every legislator has some probability of voting with the party. However, we conceptualize party influence not as a payment (e.g., Groseclose and Snyder 1996) nor as pressure on particular members, but as a *call* to all members to vote with the party. Party calls may be issued for a variety of reasons, such as to build the party’s brand name, by associating it with particular positions (e.g., Snyder and Ting 2002; Woon and Pope 2008). Party calls may be issued in a variety of forms, ranging from use of the whip system (e.g., Burden and Frisby 2004; Meinke 2008), to caucus meetings (Sinclair 1995), to notes, flyers, or (more recently) emails informing members of the party’s position (Carson, Crespin, and Madonna 2012).⁹

⁸By its nature, this hypothesis takes the form of a null, against which the others are tested.

⁹The signal by party leaders is akin to the “bell cows” strategy that Trent Lott used as party whip when he served in the House. He used a small group of “natural leaders” to signal how the party wished members to vote, “much as a rancher bells the lead cow so the herd can follow” (Lott 2005, 82). Future work examining specific coordination mechanisms may be fruitful. Carson, Crespin, and Madonna (2012) offer a good start in this direction with their study of majority leader position statements, yielding results consistent with the theory of party calls.

⁶This probability does not capture legislators’ “mistakes” so much as the vast number of possible reasons why any particular legislator might vote Yea or Nay on any particular roll call.

⁷Specifically, in the formalized version of the model in supplemental Appendix A, we assume that each legislator gets an additive random utility shock ε for voting Yea. For simplicity, we assume ε is uniformly distributed with mean 0. Thus, the shock has the potential to tilt a legislator either toward Yea (if ε is positive) or toward Nay (if ε is negative).

When the party calls on its members, the importance of all other considerations diminishes somewhat, as members decide whether to heed the call. The utility for voting with the party depends on the value of the party brand to a legislator. Members for whom other considerations are not salient (legislators from nonfarm districts in voting on agricultural policy, for example) may be more likely to heed the party's call. Members for whom the party's brand name produces electoral value, such as Democrats from districts packed with Democratic voters, likewise heed the call. Such an effect distinguishes the theory of party calls from the classic spatial model and is entirely consistent with recent works noting that political parties are endogenous, designed for the general benefit of their members (Patty 2008; Volden and Bergman 2006).¹⁰ If the benefit for voting with the party increases with ideological extremity, then, when the party calls, the members most ideologically predisposed to the party's position go along, while those who are ideologically torn hold firm to their former commitments.

The bottom panel of Figure 1 illustrates this prediction, based on the formalization provided in supplemental Appendix A. As in the above two panels, the dashed line represents the probability of voting for the party's preferred position absent party call or influence. However, the solid line now increases much more sharply as the ideal point of a legislator becomes more extreme, and the difference between the probabilities of voting for the party's position with and without a call is largest for those at the far right. Notably, for some legislators, the probability of voting for the party's preferred position decreases when the party calls, as some members may gain from distancing themselves from their party (or especially from the opposing party) on particular issues. Put another way, the costs of voting with the party are much lower for extremists than for moderates who would more likely be voting against their constituents.¹¹ As before, c_p and c_o again illustrate the points beyond which a majority (in expectation) vote Yea with or without party influence, respectively. However, because the party is motivated not only by winning the vote at hand, but also by establishing a brand name that may serve the party electorally and for years to come, party calls need

not be limited to close votes that require party influence for victory. With respect to ideological positions, the party calls model generates the following hypothesis:¹²

Responsive Extremists Hypothesis: Responsiveness to party increases in ideological extremism, with liberals more likely to respond to Democratic calls and conservatives more likely to respond to Republican calls.

Ultimately, the theory of party calls rests on three assumptions that differ from the canonical spatial model. First, consistent with empirical assessments of ideological ideal points, we incorporate a random utility assumption, because voting in Congress is probabilistic and complex rather than determined solely by a cutpoint on a line. Second, consistent with theories of party brand names, we allow the benefits of party voting to vary across members, because members from liberal districts benefit more from voting with Democrats than do members from conservative districts. Third, party influence is not limited to winning close votes; rather, party calls are issued broadly, even when they do not affect the specific vote outcome at hand.

Empirical Approach

To test the above hypotheses, it would be useful to know which votes involved party calls or pressure and then to examine the ideological nature of the responses to those party actions. However, due to the varied means at the disposal of party leaders and due to the fact that party calls need not be solely (or even mainly) on particular types of votes (such as close votes over which there are recorded whip counts), such a research strategy must be refined. Thankfully, the above competing hypotheses can instead be assessed in terms of which members support the party at a greater rate in the presence or absence of a high degree of partisan voting. To do so, we merely need to separate votes into those that are highly partisan and those with lower partisan activity and then to examine member support rates across those two types of votes.

This research strategy, while theoretically straightforward, is not without its own challenges. The classic approach to discerning when party influence is relevant for roll-call voting was to simply isolate "party votes," those where a majority (or more) of one party opposed a majority of the other party, and to compare

¹⁰Unlike these works, however, we find the effects of party calls to hold regardless of majority party's size, as documented in supplemental Appendix D.

¹¹Because moderates benefit much less from party calls than do extremists, parties may need to compensate them in other ways, consistent with Jenkins and Monroe (2012).

¹²Other, possibly nonlinear, patterns between ideology and responsiveness are explored and rejected in supplemental Appendix B.

those votes to all others. “Party support scores” or “party unity scores” are also easily generated by looking at how frequently each member voted with her party leader or with most of her party. Yet such measures are problematic. Party votes may occur simply because of an alignment of ideological preferences. And party-support scores do not account for how frequently a member would *already* support the party *absent* party influence, merely based on ideology or other factors.

What we seek, therefore, is a way to isolate votes with significant party influence above and beyond ideological alignment and then to measure the degree to which members are responsive to the party as revealed by their votes with the party across party-influenced votes and votes without such influence. While isolating such votes and measuring differential response rates is difficult, scholars who have been trying to discern *whether* parties matter have made significant advances upon which we build (e.g., Snyder and Groseclose 2000).

Specifically, we apply a three-stage process to test the above hypotheses. First, we discern which votes in the House of Representatives exhibit a significant party effect, above and beyond baseline voting patterns that arise naturally from ideological dispositions of members. Second, we use these sets of “party-influenced” and “party-free” votes to measure how frequently members vote with their copartisans on these two sets of votes. Third, we use these support rates to explore the association between members’ party support on “party-influenced votes” and their ideological positions, controlling for their party support on “party-free votes” and other factors. Each stage presents challenges, and thus we discuss each in detail.

Identifying Party-Influenced Votes and Generating Party-Free Ideal Points

The main challenge in identifying which votes are subject to partisan influence and which are not comes from determining how members would naturally vote in the absence of party influence, based on their ideological preferences. Measuring such ideological ideal points based on members’ overall voting patterns and then using those ideal points to analyze the votes themselves is problematic in its circularity. However, without accounting for ideology, the underlying voting patterns of members cannot be well explained. We seek to overcome these problems by generating a set of ideal points that are based on “party-free” votes and then using those ideal points to

assess who votes with the party on “party-influenced” votes.

We develop and deploy an iterative procedure to identify the set of party-influenced votes and estimate party-free ideal points.¹³ Following Snyder and Groseclose (2000), we start by classifying all lopsided votes as an initial candidate for the set of party-free votes and all close votes as an initial candidate for the set of party-influenced votes. The partition of roll-call votes into close and lopsided categories has been criticized for biasing ideal points (McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2001), and accordingly, our process does not depend on this criterion for very long. Instead, the first step of each iteration is to use the Bayesian model developed by Clinton, Jackman, and Rivers (2004) to estimate ideal points using only the candidate set of party-free votes.¹⁴ The second step is to identify a new candidate set of party-influenced votes by fitting a series of logistic regression models.¹⁵ For each roll call, we regress legislators’ votes on our newly estimated “party-free” ideal points and a binary indicator for party. We then use the coefficient on party for each roll-call vote to determine whether the vote was party-influenced.

A roll-call vote is included in the new candidate set of party-influenced votes if the coefficient on party is statistically significant at the threshold of $p = 0.01$.¹⁶ Such votes may arise from activities of *either* or *both* parties, a distinction that affects neither the theory of party calls nor the tests of hypotheses. All other votes are included in the new candidate set of party-free votes, and the process repeats, with new “party-free” ideal points estimated and new sets of party-influenced and party-free votes identified. Of course, any threshold used to label some votes as

¹³The technical details of this approach are characterized in supplemental Appendix C.

¹⁴We use the Bayesian model because of its flexibility and its parsimonious representation of the spatial model (Clinton and Jackman 2009).

¹⁵The logistic model is appropriate for this sort of binary setting and does not suffer from biasing the results in favor of finding party support as does a linear regression model (Cox and Poole 2002). Because separation (i.e., one regressor perfectly predicting the outcome) becomes a problem, we apply a penalized likelihood logistic regression model (Zorn 2005). More generally, McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal (2001) offer a series of critiques of the Snyder and Groseclose (2000) procedure, which we seek to overcome in our approach, as detailed in supplemental Appendix C.

¹⁶This threshold divides votes into nearly equal halves. Other thresholds yield substantively similar results on the hypothesis tests below.

party-influenced and some as party-free will result in classification errors. For example, there may be many votes on which parties played a significant role, but not one detected with 99% confidence. However, for our purposes, it is sufficient to define a set of votes on which the party influence was *relatively greater* than for the other set. The method used here does just that.

For each Congress from the 93rd to the 109th, we iterate this procedure until it stabilizes.¹⁷ Once put into practice, the process quickly moves from the initial lopsided and close subsets into new and stable categories.¹⁸ Significant partisan voting blocs emerge in nearly half of all votes, above and beyond what can be explained by simple ideological similarity.¹⁹

Table 1 reports cross-tabs of roll-call votes comparing our categorization with existing vote categorizations, combining data from all 17 Congresses we analyze. First, while parties do influence their members on many lopsided votes and fail to exert influence on many close votes, the close/lopsided distinction seems to be a good starting point. About 69% of lopsided votes are classified as party-free, and 66% of close votes as party-influenced. A chi-squared test indicates that a significant positive relationship exists between close votes and party-influenced votes ($\chi^2 = 1764.0$, $p < 0.001$). Likewise, there is a statistically significant pattern of greater party influence on procedural votes than on substantive votes ($\chi^2 = 33.8$, $p < 0.001$), consistent with earlier scholarship (e.g., Jenkins, Crespín, and Carson 2005). Finally, there is a statistically significant relationship with CQ's "party unity votes" ($\chi^2 = 1601.9$, $p < 0.001$).²⁰

Table 1 serves two main purposes. First, the table provides evidence that the classification scheme used

TABLE 1 Classifying Types of Votes

93 rd –109 th Congresses (1973–2006)	Party- Free Votes	Party- Influenced Votes	Total
Lopsided votes	5234	2322	7556
Close votes	2302	4443	6745
Total	7536	6765	14,301
Substantive votes	5488	4626	10,114
Procedural votes	2048	2139	4187
Total	7536	6765	14,301
CQ Partisan votes	3078	5015	8093
Consensus votes	4450	1750	6200
Total	7528	6765	14,293

here is capturing an underlying set of votes that exhibit party influence. The validity of the classifications made here is evaluated positively by the high degree of correlation between our approach and the traditional beliefs that party influence is greater on close votes, on procedural votes, and on commonly labeled "partisan votes." Second, the table provides initial evidence in support of the theory of party calls over the classic spatial model of party influence. The classic model predicts influence only on close votes, in the rare instances where such influence is exerted to change the outcome.²¹ Instead, consistent with party calls, party influence is evident on nearly half of all votes, even relying on a strict 99% confidence interval for labeling a vote as party-influenced. Moreover, thousands of these votes are lopsided, substantive, and/or "consensus" votes according to previously used criteria. That is, they are votes where party calls may be relevant and useful, but where classic patterns of targeted party activities to win the vote at hand are likely irrelevant or ineffective.

In addition to classifying votes into party-influenced and party-free, the set of party-free votes from the last iteration of our classification procedure is used to estimate a final set of *Party-Free Ideal Points*, which is scaled with mean 5.0 and standard deviation 1.0 and ranges from 0 for the most liberal members to 10 for the most conservative members.²² Although we only utilize the party-free votes to

¹⁷Although it would be theoretically possible to build tests of our hypotheses into these individual-vote analyses with variables capturing relative responsiveness based on ideological positions, such inclusion of such measures at this stage raises difficulties in cleanly separating party-free from party-influenced votes. We therefore conduct individual-level hypothesis tests once these different types of votes emerge from our iterative procedure.

¹⁸Implicit in this empirical approach (and in the above theory building) is an alignment of members in a single dimension. We comment on possible multidimensionality in the conclusion.

¹⁹Ansolahehere, Snyder, and Stewart (2001) and Snyder and Groseclose (2000) likewise find sizable numbers of party-influenced votes using their approaches.

²⁰Cross-tabs comparing our classification approach to that of Cox and Poole (2002) shows a significant positive relationship as well ($\chi^2 = 645$, $p < 0.001$). In contrast, the correlation between party-influenced votes and whip-count votes identified by Larry Evans (e.g., Evans and Grandy 2009) is not statistically significant, perhaps indicating that party calls extend well beyond the limited number of relatively close votes that require whip counts.

²¹King and Zeckhauser (2003) offer compelling evidence that this sort of activity does exist, by way of "hip-pocket votes," even if it may not be the most pervasive form of party influence.

²²Altering the mean and variance of this measure has no effect on the substantive interpretation of results below, but the scaling used here does ensure that all ideal points are positive and eases the interpretation of results.

generate these ideal points, they seem to be tapping into the same underlying ideological dimension as revealed using procedures that include all votes; but the ideal points generated here simply are not biased (as significantly) toward also capturing party-influenced ideological considerations. For example, our Party-Free Ideal Points correlate highly with Poole and Rosenthal's (1997) first-dimension NOMINATE scores.²³

Measuring Baseline Rate and Responsiveness Rate

We now wish to assess not *whether* members were influenced by party activities on any given vote, but *who* was influenced the most on average across votes. For each legislator, we calculate the percentage of the time that the legislator voted with her party on the sets of party-free and party-influenced votes identified above.²⁴ We label these variables *Baseline Rate of Voting with the Party* and *Rate of Responsiveness to Party Influence* and refer to them as the "Baseline Rate" and "Responsiveness Rate," respectively.²⁵

Examples of members and their voting rates can help illustrate this approach. James Traficant (D, OH-17) was an independent thinker in Congress who engaged in unprecedented levels of floor amendment activity across a wide array of issues, deriving his positions from sources legal, illegal, and extraterrestrial.²⁶ Unsurprisingly, he had among the lowest baseline rates of support for his party throughout his tenure (about 35%). But on party-influenced votes,

he came much more into line with the party, setting aside his other concerns and voting with Democrats about two-thirds of the time. In contrast, Ron Paul (R, TX-14) had a generally high baseline level of alignment with his party (voting with Republicans about 70% of the time) given his libertarian leanings. However, on party-influenced votes, he was unswayed, holding strongly to those libertarian principles (voting with the party about half the time).²⁷ While nearly all members fit between these two, these archetypes show the behaviors captured by our measures. What we wish to explore is whether those who follow the party on party-influenced votes (relative to their baseline rate of support) tend to be the moderates, as expected by the canonical error-free spatial model, or the extremists, in line with the theory of party calls.

Testing Hypotheses

The dependent variable for the analyses is the Responsiveness Rate, developed and discussed above.²⁸ Given our focus on the differing responsiveness across members with different ideological positions, the key independent variables are derived from the Party-Free Ideal Points. However, responsiveness to party could be a function of numerous considerations. Therefore, we incorporate a large number of control variables as part of the analysis, falling into four categories.²⁹ First, we include a member's Baseline Rate to anchor our inferences about responsiveness. Failing to do so would merely show the standard alignment between ideology and partisanship, without any ability to

²³Correlation coefficients vary between a low of $|\rho| \approx 0.873$ for the 93rd Congress and a high of $|\rho| \approx 0.984$ for the 103rd, with the median correlation across our Congresses being 0.972.

²⁴We also reran our analyses using the party leader's and party whip's positions to determine the position of the party, yielding similar results to those discussed below.

²⁵The Baseline Rates average about 84.8% across members, and the Responsiveness Rates average about 83.4%. At first, this seems implausible, with rates of support for the party position being higher absent party influence. However, this odd finding reflects the high correlation between lopsided and party-free votes. Baseline Rates may be higher than Responsiveness Rates because vast majorities of both parties took the same position on many highly lopsided votes. Inspecting support rates on the subsets of party-free and party-influenced votes in which parties took opposing positions confirms this conjecture, with a substantial reduction in the average Baseline Rate and a slight increase in the average Responsiveness Rate.

²⁶Often ending his floor speeches with the *Star Trek* phrase "Beam me up," Traficant was convicted on federal corruption charges in 2002.

²⁷In addition to his unsuccessful campaigns for President as a Republican, Paul has been the presidential nominee of the Libertarian Party and affiliated with the Tea Party movement.

²⁸Although one may be interested in the *difference* between the Responsiveness Rate and the Baseline Rate, using such a difference as the dependent variable in our analysis is likely to be problematic. Due to the differing nature of votes with and without party influence, these rates are not immediately comparable. Conducting regressions with Responsiveness Rate as the dependent variable and Baseline Rate as an independent variable allows for the baseline rate to be properly accounted for, without forcing its coefficient to take a value of one (which would be assumed upon using the difference in rates as the dependent variable). As reported below, such a control variable is indeed an important predictor of the responsiveness rate, and its coefficient is found to be statistically distinct from one.

²⁹Regressions that also include the amount that members receive in campaign contributions from the party and its members' political action committees (available in recent Congresses) show no significant differences in support for the hypotheses from the results discussed below.

discern an *added* effect of responsiveness to party calls, thus producing a bias toward the Responsive Extremists Hypothesis.

Second, we control for district-level variation using three variables: the *Presidential Vote Share* won by the Democratic candidate for president in the member's district in the most recent previous election, an indicator for whether a member was from the *South*, and the *Vote Share* won by the member herself in the previous election. Third, we control for personal characteristics, including indicators for whether a member was *Female*, *African American*, *Latino*, a *Freshman*, or a *Retiree* at the end of the term, and a measure of *Seniority* equal to the number of terms a member served up to and including the current term.³⁰ Finally, we include institutional variables, including indicators for whether a member was a *Party Leader*, a member of a *Power Committee*,³¹ *Speaker*, or a *Committee Chair*, as well as a measure of a member's *Best Committee* assignment based on the ordinal rankings of Groseclose and Stewart (1998). All variables, their descriptions, data sources, and summary statistics are given in the appendix.

The effects of our main independent and control variables differ across parties, and so we estimate models that isolate members by party and use ideological independent variables constructed for each hypothesis.³² First, to test the Responsive Moderates Hypothesis, we use *Distance from Floor Median*, the absolute difference between a legislator's Party-Free Ideal Point and that of the median legislator.³³ Second, *Ideological Extremism*, used to test the Responsive Extremists Hypothesis, is simply Party-Free Ideal Point for Republicans and Party-Free Ideal

Point multiplied by -1 for Democrats.³⁴ All models are estimated using OLS with robust standard errors.³⁵

Results

We conduct analyses separately for each Congress from the 93rd (1973–74) through the 109th (2005–06). Given the statistical strength of the findings in nearly every Congress (as reported below), it is unsurprising that a pooled analysis (not reported here due to space considerations) also shows the same results. But first, we offer detailed results for a selection of three of the 17 Congresses we studied: the 97th (1981–82), 102nd (1991–92), and 107th (2001–02), spanning the decades of our study.

Table 2 displays the results from separate models for these three Congresses by party, regressing Responsiveness Rate on Distance from Floor Median and the control variables. A negative coefficient on this distance variable would provide support for the Responsive Moderates Hypothesis, demonstrating that members near the floor median are most responsive to party influence, all else equal. However, the coefficient is positive and significantly different from zero in each case, providing initial evidence against the No Ideological Responsiveness and Responsive Moderates Hypotheses.

Table 3 presents alternative models of Responsiveness Rates for these three Congresses by party, replacing the Distance from Floor Median with Ideological Extremism. A positive coefficient on this variable would lend support to the Responsive Extremists Hypothesis, and this is indeed what we find ($p < 0.001$ in each case). This second set of models indicates that more ideologically extreme

³⁰In an alternative specification, we also included the squares of the Vote Share and Seniority variables to account for possible nonlinear effects, but these did not alter the substantive impact of our results. Similarly, we estimated alternative models without the African American indicator variable for Republicans, yielding no substantive changes to our results.

³¹These are coded to include Appropriations, Budget, Ways and Means, and Rules.

³²Chow tests show that we can reject the null hypotheses that there are no structural differences between majority and minority parties for each model within each Congress.

³³For robustness, all of the ideological distance measures used to test the article's main hypotheses are also recreated based on first-dimension NOMINATE scores rather than our Party-Free Ideal Points. This alternative yields no substantive differences in our findings.

³⁴Each of these key independent variables imposes a particular structure on the form of the ideological variable and its relationship to estimated party responsiveness scores. In contrast, we ran Taylor expansion-based models that included instead a fifth-order polynomial of the Party-Free Ideal Points, which allowed nearly any nonlinear effect of ideal points on responsiveness to be revealed. The results show a striking resemblance to those detailed below—very strong support for the Responsive Extremists Hypothesis above all others.

³⁵A series of Breusch-Pagan tests shows that we can reject the null hypothesis of homoskedastic standard errors for almost every model we present here. Given the theoretical upper and lower bounds on the dependent variable, we also estimated tobit models for all equations, with results substantively similar to those discussed below.

TABLE 2 Responsive Moderates in Three Congresses?

Independent Variables	Democrats			Republicans		
	97 th	102 nd	107 th	97 th	102 nd	107 th
<i>Baseline Rate of Voting with Party</i>	1.08*** (0.09)	1.36*** (0.12)	0.52*** (0.10)	0.66*** (0.09)	0.96*** (0.10)	0.37*** (0.03)
<i>Distance from Floor Median</i>	1.59* (0.86)	4.25* (2.20)	9.08*** (1.70)	7.36*** (0.90)	6.86*** (1.22)	1.99*** (0.47)
<i>Presidential Vote Share</i>	0.15*** (0.05)	0.21*** (0.04)	-0.01 (0.12)	0.16** (0.07)	0.15 (0.09)	0.11*** (0.03)
<i>South</i>	-3.81*** (1.17)	-4.41*** (0.89)	-1.26 (1.09)	0.49 (1.04)	2.12** (1.02)	-0.58 (0.47)
<i>Vote Share</i>	-0.06* (0.03)	-0.06** (0.03)	0.10 (0.08)	0.04 (0.05)	-0.005 (0.024)	-0.04*** (0.01)
<i>Female</i>	0.42 (2.60)	0.05 (0.97)	0.03 (0.66)	-4.06* (2.12)	-0.97 (2.78)	-1.26 (1.06)
<i>African American</i>	0.12 (2.27)	-3.06** (1.36)	0.27 (1.44)	—	-2.68* (1.45)	-1.59 (1.11)
<i>Latino</i>	2.47 (2.59)	0.43 (1.45)	2.52** (1.13)	—	-4.33 (3.08)	1.00 (0.82)
<i>Seniority</i>	-0.05 (0.13)	0.15 (0.12)	0.03 (0.14)	0.10 (0.15)	0.17 (0.16)	-0.09 (0.07)
<i>Freshman</i>	-0.99 (1.60)	0.97 (1.48)	0.46 (1.46)	3.99*** (1.21)	1.99 (1.57)	0.41 (0.54)
<i>Retiree</i>	0.29 (1.16)	-0.06 (1.19)	1.41 (1.60)	1.66 (1.84)	-0.14 (0.97)	0.92 (0.68)
<i>Best Committee</i>	0.06 (0.09)	0.13 (0.12)	0.12 (0.19)	0.16* (0.09)	0.006 (0.107)	0.10 (0.07)
<i>Party Leader</i>	3.72*** (1.46)	-0.46 (1.08)	1.80 (1.57)	3.60*** (1.19)	2.01 (3.60)	1.63*** (0.59)
<i>Power Committee</i>	1.61* (0.91)	1.27 (1.06)	-1.05 (1.63)	-3.74*** (1.22)	-0.25 (1.20)	1.13*** (0.44)
<i>Committee Chair</i>	2.43 (1.60)	0.73 (1.45)	—	—	—	1.01** (0.50)
<i>Intercept</i>	-18.25*** (8.71)	-50.52*** (11.09)	27.98*** (12.02)	2.20 (8.43)	-20.44* (11.01)	53.38*** (3.97)
N	235	264	209	187	163	216
R ²	0.79	0.74	0.49	0.62	0.71	0.66

Note: Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) estimates of coefficients (robust standard errors). Dependent variable: Rate of Responsiveness to Party Influence.

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed).

representatives heed party calls at a greater rate than do the more moderate members. For example, in the 107th Congress, Democrats who are one unit (equivalent to one standard deviation) more liberal than their copartisans exhibit almost a 12% higher Responsiveness Rate, which is about equal to one standard deviation for the dependent variable.

Overall, the models designed to explain Responsiveness Rates fit the data well, explaining more than two-thirds of the variance in the dependent variable. Across all models and specifications, strong support

emerges for the Responsive Extremists Hypothesis from the theory of party calls, coupled with strong evidence against the Responsive Moderates and No Ideological Responsiveness Hypotheses. Beyond the ideological distance measures, other independent variables also help to explain which members are most responsive to party calls on party-influenced votes. For example, the very significant coefficients on Baseline Rate of Voting with the Party show a strong positive relationship between those voting with the party without being called upon and those voting with the party when called. Controlling for

TABLE 3 Responsive Extremists in Three Congresses

Independent Variables	Democrats			Republicans		
	97 th	102 nd	107 th	97 th	102 nd	107 th
<i>Baseline rate of Voting with Party</i>	0.82*** (0.07)	0.83*** (0.14)	0.55*** (0.11)	0.58*** (0.07)	0.96*** (0.10)	0.37*** (0.03)
<i>Ideological Extremism</i>	5.68*** (0.83)	13.98*** (2.30)	11.61*** (2.13)	8.92*** (0.78)	6.86*** (1.22)	2.62*** (0.44)
<i>Presidential Vote Share</i>	0.04 (0.04)	0.11*** (0.05)	-0.10 (0.11)	0.02 (0.05)	0.15 (0.09)	0.08*** (0.02)
<i>South</i>	-0.98 (0.82)	-3.71*** (0.85)	0.21 (0.95)	-1.00 (0.87)	2.12** (1.02)	-0.63 (0.47)
<i>Vote Share</i>	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.05* (0.03)	0.11 (0.07)	0.06* (0.04)	-0.004 (0.024)	-0.03*** (0.01)
<i>Female</i>	-0.39 (1.96)	0.74 (1.06)	-0.51 (0.66)	-1.74 (1.27)	-0.97 (2.78)	-0.87 (0.86)
<i>African American</i>	-2.41 (1.92)	-3.94*** (1.35)	0.05 (1.22)	—	-2.68* (1.45)	-1.08 (0.86)
<i>Latino</i>	2.11 (3.04)	0.43 (1.21)	2.77*** (1.12)	—	-4.33 (3.08)	0.97 (0.68)
<i>Seniority</i>	-0.05 (0.11)	0.07 (0.11)	0.05 (0.11)	0.17 (0.12)	0.17 (0.16)	-0.05 (0.06)
<i>Freshman</i>	-0.92 (1.38)	0.63 (1.35)	0.65 (1.52)	3.83*** (0.97)	1.99 (1.57)	0.47 (0.51)
<i>Retiree</i>	-0.28 (1.29)	-0.36 (1.09)	1.27 (1.58)	1.38 (1.64)	-0.14 (0.97)	0.86 (0.53)
<i>Best Committee</i>	0.06 (0.08)	0.12 (0.11)	0.06 (0.14)	0.10 (0.07)	0.003 (0.106)	0.07 (0.05)
<i>Party Leader</i>	4.46*** (1.21)	-3.08 (1.78)	0.76 (0.95)	2.22*** (0.78)	2.01 (3.60)	1.41*** (0.48)
<i>Power Committee</i>	1.59** (0.80)	1.26 (1.00)	-1.37 (1.34)	-3.33*** (0.94)	-0.25 (1.20)	1.27*** (0.41)
<i>Committee Chair</i>	2.51* (1.40)	0.60 (1.41)	—	—	—	0.97* (0.51)
<i>Intercept</i>	30.82*** (10.32)	63.62*** (22.34)	88.14*** (4.16)	-28.62*** (7.07)	-52.11*** (11.80)	42.15*** (4.98)
N	235	264	209	187	163	216
R ²	0.84	0.77	0.66	0.76	0.71	0.69

Note: Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) estimates of coefficients (robust standard errors). Dependent variable: Rate of Responsiveness to Party Influence.

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed).

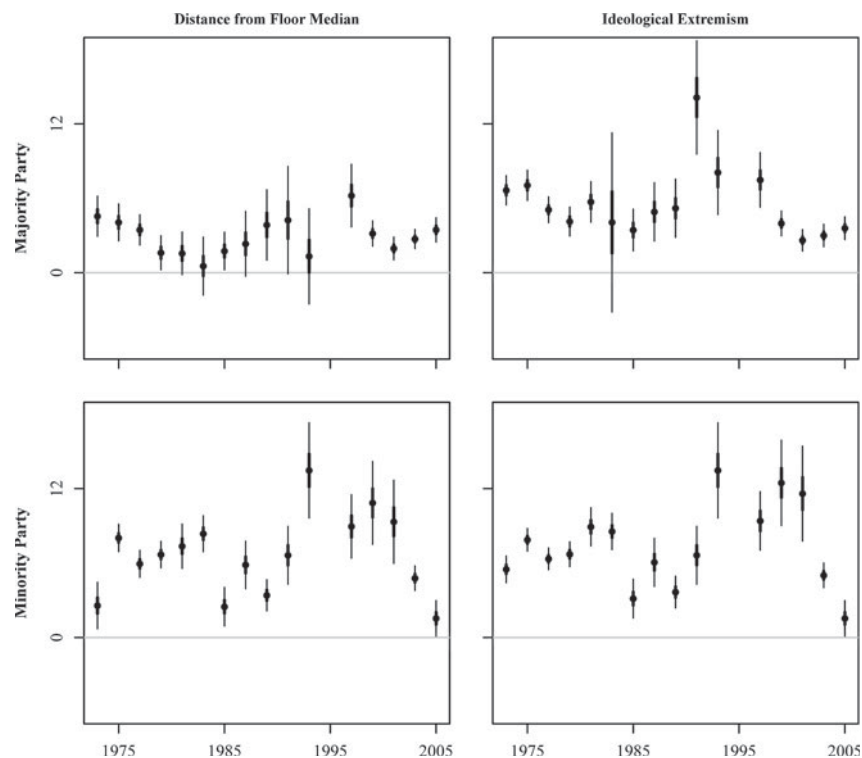
these natural coalitional tendencies is crucial because we wish to understand the *additional* support received on party-influenced votes above and beyond this baseline rate of support.

We replicate our analyses for each party in each Congress from the 93rd through to the 109th (1973–2006). Figure 2 depicts the estimated coefficients and confidence intervals for Distance from Floor Median and Ideological Extremism that emerge from regression models similar to those in Tables 2 and 3. The top row includes only members of the majority party, while the bottom row is limited to the minority party. For each column, a single

model is replicated across the 16 included Congresses. The 104th Congress, ushering in Republican control, is excluded from the figures as a significant outlier.³⁶

³⁶For example, whereas the coefficient on Ideological Extremism for the majority party in Figure 2 ranges from about 2.6 to about 14.0, that for the 104th Congress is 33.8, with a standard error of 3.7. Despite this larger coefficient size, the findings from this transitional Congress are altogether consistent with those of other Congresses, including support for the same hypothesis. The substantially larger coefficient sizes are intriguing and may be indicative of a greater heeding of party calls in the uncertain times following a change in party control of the House.

FIGURE 2 Ideology and the Call of the Party in the House of Representatives, 1973–2006



Notes: Coefficients with 50% and 95% confidence intervals for models of Responsiveness Rates on different ideological distances. The 104th Congress, which was elected in 1994, is excluded. Years indicate the start of each Congress. Included control variables are Baseline Rate of Party Support, Presidential Vote Share, Vote Share, South, Female, African-American, Latino, Seniority, Freshman, Retiree, Best Committee, Party Leader, Power Committee, and Committee Chair.

The first column shows the results of models specified as in Table 2. Negative and significant coefficients would support the Responsive Moderates Hypothesis. Strikingly, however, the consistently positive coefficients decisively reject this hypothesis. Moreover, this first column litigates against the No Ideological Responsiveness Hypothesis. For the majority party, the 95% confidence interval includes zero in only five of the 16 Congresses, and the 50% confidence interval does so in only two. For the minority party, the 95% confidence interval includes zero for only the 109th Congress (2005–06).

The second column of Figure 2 replicates the models in Table 3 and displays the results for Ideological Extremism for each Congress. Consistent with the Responsive Extremists Hypothesis, the two panels show strongly positive coefficients on Ideological Extremism, statistically significant in all Congresses except the 98th (1983–84) for majority party members and the 109th for minority party members. These coefficients suggest an increase of 3% to 14% for majority party members

and 2% to 14% for minority party members per unit of extremism.³⁷

Put another way, consider a typical Congress, where the coefficient on Ideological Extremism takes a value of about 6.0 and the average Responsiveness Rate is 83%. Controlling for the baseline rate of support for the party, a member who is one standard deviation more moderate than the party median will heed the call of the party about three-fourths of the time. In contrast, a member one standard deviation more extreme than the party median will heed the call about nine out of 10 times. Across the approximately 400 party-influenced votes in any given Congress identified in Table 1, this extreme member

³⁷We also conducted an out-of-sample test of our hypotheses, by replicating our analyses for the 111th Congress (2009–10). Results for this Congress mimic those from the 109th, with a coefficient on Ideological Extremism of 2.38 ($t = 3.31$) for the majority party and 1.35 ($t = 1.78$) for the minority party, once again supporting the theory of party calls. Given the growth of “Tea Party” membership in such recent Congresses, future work exploring responsiveness among party factions (such as Tea Party, Southern Democrats, or others) may be worthwhile.

will respond to her party's calls on about 50 more votes than will her moderate co-partisan. Compared to the limited instances where votes are extremely close, each member is pivotal, and moderates are targeted and won over with concessions, the partisan effects uncovered here are substantial indeed.

Put simply, all else equal, for both the majority and minority parties, when party leaders seek support, extremists heed the call.³⁸ This is true even controlling for likelihood of voting with the party absent party influence. The findings are consistent across Congresses, seemingly unaffected by time trends, unified or divided government, and party control of Congress.³⁹

Implications and Future Directions

In this article, we isolate roll-call votes that are highly partisan from those exhibiting low partisan behavior, controlling for natural ideological alignments. We show that ideological extremists vote with their party on these party-influenced votes much more frequently than do moderates, controlling for baseline rates of partisan voting absent party influence. This finding is consistent with the theory of party calls we advance. Of course, such a voting pattern could be consistent with other theories. However, one theory that the evidence is *not* consistent with is that built upon the classic spatial model, which predicts party influence to persuade fence-sitting moderates on close votes, and which has dominated the study of Congress in recent decades.⁴⁰

³⁸One may fear that the results found here would appear even absent party calls, merely due to party members sharing a common understanding of the benefits of voting together on particular issues that are partisan in nature. To address and explore this possible alternative, in supplemental Appendix E we limit our analysis only to the procedural votes over which such position taking is less obvious and find the same results—support for the theory of party calls.

³⁹One might wonder what explains the variation in the coefficients shown in Figure 2 across Congresses. To address this question, we conducted a meta-analysis by conducting pair-wise regressions of the point estimates of the coefficients of Ideological Extremism on party (Democrat or Republican), majority party status, a time trend, and the percentage of the Congress that were freshmen. In none of these cases did we find a statistically significant relationship, as detailed in supplemental Appendix D. The appendix also shows a series of tests for whether artificial extremism based on the relative numbers of close and lopsided party-influenced votes in each Congress is driving our findings. The results dismiss this possibility.

⁴⁰This is not to suggest that parties do *not* also pressure or induce member votes on specific bills of interest to the party. Persuasion (of moderates or others) may indeed be a second strategy of parties, following upon the more commonplace coordination activities uncovered here.

In contrast to the classic model, we offer a new understanding of parties in Congress. Absent party influence, members of the House of Representatives often focus on many different considerations in deciding how to vote. Constituent and personal preferences, interest groups and campaign contributors, and even misunderstandings about the nature and content of the issues at hand, all combine to lead to messy patterns of roll-call votes. Often, however, party leaders signal the party's preferred position and ask members to support the party if they are able to do so. Such a request, alone, may be sufficient to inform members about the issues at hand and to direct them regarding how to vote. Those best able to vote with the party are the members whose preferences most align with the party and who benefit the most from a strong, unified voice for their party. Such members are not typically the conflicted moderates, but the conservative Republicans and the liberal Democrats. Indeed, it may well be that these party calls explain a significant part of the close relationship between ideology and party voting.

This revised narrative of how parties exert influence in floor voting resolves a number of questions that have puzzled scholars of parties in Congress. First, partisan votes are found much more frequently here and elsewhere (e.g., Snyder and Groseclose 2000) than would be expected were party influence limited to the targeting of moderates on rare close votes. We argue, instead, that the main role of parties on the floor involves cutting through the complexity of hundreds of roll-call votes, signaling what position the party prefers, and asking members to join if they can. Such "party calls" are common, influential (at least on extremists), and therefore quite detectable. Second, because party influence is therefore not limited to moving the cutpoint between the parties, an approach such as McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal's two-cutpoint model may yield little evidence of parties, even as their party-switcher analysis finds strong support. Not only does our study call into question such earlier scholars' assumption that "only moderates need to be disciplined" (2001, 677), but it also suggests that observable party effects have less to do with moving voting cutpoints consistently across members than with inducing those on opposite sides of the cutpoint to vote based on ideology, rather than on other considerations. Third, because both House and Senate leaders can engage in party calls, it is unsurprising that recent evidence suggests strong partisan activities in the U.S. Senate as well as the House (e.g., Gailmard and Jenkins 2007; and contributions to Monroe, Roberts, and Rohde 2008).

If the role of party on most votes in Congress is to issue a call that is then heeded by those members most aligned with the party's common goals, further empirical regularities should result as well. For example, first, recent research has questioned the claim of a single dimension structuring most votes in Congress (e.g., Crespin and Rohde 2010). Consistent with the theory of party calls, we suspect that voting is much more likely to be multidimensional on the party-free votes that we isolate than on the party-induced votes, on which the call of the party induces members to line up ideologically. We thus expect Wright and Schaffner's (2002) finding of lower dimensionality in partisan Kansas than in nonpartisan Nebraska to be evident also in the U.S. Congress, in comparisons between our party-influenced votes and all others. Second, neither the most extreme nor the most moderate members vote with the majority of their party all of the time. New insights may be gained by exploring whether responsiveness to party calls varies by which issues are most salient to members' districts, by which members receive campaign contributions from party leaders or interest groups, or by other considerations.

Further questions are more open-ended, but can be answered through our methodological approach. Why do party leaders issue a call for support on some votes and not on others? On which votes are the

extremists most responsive? Does the pattern of who votes with the party affect the nature of the final policy chosen, making it more liberal or conservative? Among what we offer here are new tools (the isolation of party-free from party-induced votes, the generation of party-free ideal points, and the calculation of both a baseline rate of voting with the party and a rate of responsiveness to party influence) that may be of use in such explorations, and which, at least initially, offer new insights and new directions for future research.

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Appendix Descriptive Statistics of Independent Variables

Variables	Description	Democrats Mean (Standard Deviation)	Republicans Mean (Standard Deviation)
<i>Rate of Responsiveness to Party Influence</i>	Dependent variable: Percentage of party-influenced votes in which a member voted with the party majority	82.63 (11.75)	84.32 (10.19)
<i>Baseline Rate of Voting with the Party</i>	Percentage of party-free votes in which a member voted with the party majority	85.31 (7.59)	84.19 (8.04)
<i>Party-Free Ideal Point</i>	Described in text	4.30 (0.64)	5.89 (0.56)
<i>Distance from Floor Median</i>	Absolute value of Party-Free Ideal Point minus that of the floor median	0.81 (0.55)	0.91 (0.60)
<i>Presidential Vote Share'</i>	Percentage of vote received by Democratic presidential candidate in previous election in member's district	53.53 (14.24)	41.08 (8.61)
<i>South</i>	Equals "1" if member's district is in the South (KY, OK, and confederate states)	0.34 (0.47)	0.31 (0.46)
<i>Vote Share²</i>	Percentage of vote received in previous election	70.39 (14.63)	66.31 (12.52)
<i>Female²</i>	Equals "1" if member is female	0.10 (0.29)	0.06 (0.24)

Appendix (Continued)

Variables	Description	Democrats Mean (Standard Deviation)	Republicans Mean (Standard Deviation)
<i>African American</i> ²	Equals "1" if member is African American	0.10 (0.30)	< 0.01 (0.05)
<i>Latino</i> ²	Equals "1" if member is Latino	0.03 (0.17)	0.01 (0.10)
<i>Seniority</i> ²	Number of terms served by member in Congress	5.54 (4.22)	4.67 (3.39)
<i>Freshman</i> ²	Equals "1" if member is in first term	0.14 (0.35)	0.17 (0.38)
<i>Retiree</i> ³	Equals "1" if member retired at the end of the current Congress	0.05 (0.22)	0.06 (0.23)
<i>Best Committee</i> ⁴	Equals 23 minus Groseclose and Stewart's (1998) ordinal ranking of best committee on which member served	15.47 (5.35)	15.63 (5.23)
<i>Party Leader</i> ²	Equals "1" if member is in party leadership	0.01 (0.12)	0.02 (0.14)
<i>Power Committee</i> ⁴	Equals "1" if member serves on Appropriations, Budget, Ways and Means, or Rules	0.26 (0.44)	0.26 (0.44)
<i>Speaker</i> ²	Equals "1" if member is Speaker of the House	< 0.01 (0.02)	< 0.01 (0.04)
<i>Committee Chair</i> ⁴	Equals "1" if member is a committee chair	0.06 (0.24)	0.04 (0.20)

Data sources: ¹Constructed by authors based on data provided by Gary Jacobson. ²Constructed by authors based on *Almanac of American Politics*, various years. ³Constructed by authors based on data provided by Daniel Butler. ⁴Constructed by authors based on Nelson (1992) and Stewart and Woon (2005).

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William Minozzi is an Assistant Professor of Political Science, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 43210-1373.

Craig Volden is a Professor of Politics and Public Policy, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA 22904-4893.