

The Procedurally Polarized Congress

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This paper assesses the extent to which Democrats and Republicans disagree over policy in the U.S. Congress. No one disputes that the parties are increasingly voting differently from one another, but this paper calls into question the popular conception that the parties' policy stances are also becoming more divergent. An examination of cosponsorship reveals that bills, prior to being placed in the meat grinder of the legislative process, are as bipartisan now as they have always been. Furthermore, I present evidence that shows that it is the actual procedural machinations on the floor of both the House and the Senate that have driven the parties apart.

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This paper assesses the extent to which Democrats and Republicans disagree over policy in the U.S. Congress. No one disputes that the parties are increasingly voting differently from one another, but this paper calls into question the popular conception that the parties' policy stances are also becoming more divergent. An examination of cosponsorship reveals that bills, prior to being placed in the meat grinder of the legislative process, are as bipartisan now as they have always been. Furthermore, I present evidence that shows that it is the actual procedural machinations on the floor of both the House and the Senate that have driven the parties apart.

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Political observer and political scientist alike agree that George Wallace's axiom that there wasn't "A dime's worth of difference" between the political parties no longer applies to contemporary American politics. Scholar after pundit after politician decries the growing partisanship that pervades politics. Even those who dispute that the American electorate is not polarized see a raging "culture war" between Republican and Democratic elites. The most prominent critic of those arguing that the masses have not polarized, Morris Fiorina (2006, 19), after examining roll-call votes in both the House and Senate, summarizes: "What we call the political class in America definitely is polarized and probably has become more so in recent decades."

It would be foolhardy to argue that party elites are not polarized. The evidence is growing that Republicans and Democrats are voting increasingly dissimilar from one another in Congress. When it comes to roll-call votes, Republicans and Democrats are increasingly far apart. Such a conclusion, while suggestive, does not concretely show that the *policy beliefs* of Democrats and Republicans are increasingly far apart. It is much more difficult for political scientists to evaluate this claim. While "yeas" and "nays" of roll calls can be nicely reduced to "0"s and "1"s in a statistical program, the individual policy beliefs of members are exceedingly difficult to ascertain let alone quantify.

In this article, I begin the difficult task of measuring the divide between Democrats' and Republicans' policy beliefs in the U.S. Congress. I show evidence that calls into question the near unanimous conclusion that the substantive divide between the parties is growing. Beyond a doubt, their votes are more dissimilar, but it is not clear at all that their beliefs are. An examination of bill cosponsorship reveals that when legislative proposals are drafted, they frequently enjoy support from throughout the ideological spectrum in both the

House and the Senate. Bills, as measured by their cosponsors, have become slightly more polarized since the 1970s, though this polarization is dwarfed by the growing divide between the parties on roll-call votes. Furthermore, I find that the actual procedural machinations used on the floors of the House and Senate have a substantively large and statistically significant effect on the roll-call vote divide between the parties.

In the first section, I review the party polarization literature. In the second section, I present the results from the cosponsor tests. The third section explores the relationship among policy beliefs, procedures, and roll-call voting by examining cosponsorship, rule choice in the House, and the resulting roll-call votes. The fourth section concludes.

I. Party Polarization in the U.S. Congress

The polarization between the political parties is, perhaps, one of the most obvious and recognizable trends in Congress during the last thirty years, as evidenced by the quantity and quality of previous research (see, for example, Aldrich 1995, Coleman 1997, Collie and Mason 2000, Fiorina 1999, Fleisher and Bond 2000, 2004, Jacobson 2000, Roberts and Smith 2003, Rohde 1991, Sinclair 2000, 2006, and Stonecash et al. 2003, Mann and Ornstein 2006, Smith 2007, and Theriault 2008). In the early 1970s, the parties were as ideologically similar as they had been since the Civil War (McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2006). The difference between the Democratic and Republican means on Poole and Rosenthal's (1997) DW-NOMINATE scale in the 93rd Congress (1973-4) in both the House (see the thin solid line in figure 1) and the Senate (the thin dashed line) was 29.4 percent. Over the next 32

years, the parties became more ideologically distinct, such that the division between them in the 108th Congress (2003-4) was 43.4 percent in the House and 37.8 in the Senate.¹ The polarizing trend is: (1) highly correlated between the House and Senate (0.98; $p=0.00$), (2) present in both the North and the South, though the South has gone from being less polarized than the North to being more polarized, and (3) a consequence of both member replacement and adaptation (Fleisher and Bond 2004 and Theriault 2006).

Insert Figure 1

I develop my own measure for party polarization based on 4,462 roll calls on the 609 most important pieces of legislation, as designated by Mayhew (1991) and Edwards et al. (1997, 2000), from 1973 to 2004.² For each roll call vote, I compute the party difference score, which is the absolute difference between the percentage of Republicans and Democrats who vote the same way on a particular roll-call vote. For example, if all legislators voted together or if exactly half of the Democrats and half of the Republicans voted to pass a bill, the party difference score would be 0. If every Democrat voted against every Republican the measure would be 1. If 60 percent of Democrats sided with 90 percent of Republicans or vice versa, it would be 30 percent (the absolute difference between 90 percent and 60 percent). The thick solid and dashed lines in figure 1 show the three-congress

¹ This diverging trend between the parties is not a function of the Poole-Rosenthal DW-NOMINATE scores or the roll call votes on important pieces of legislation. Different scholars using different methods show the same basic pattern by analyzing different data including: party votes (Coleman 1997 and Stonecash et al. 2003), party unity scores (Coleman 1997, Rohde 1991, and Stonecash et al. 2003), Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) scores (Taylor 1996, Stonecash et al. 2003), American Conservative Union (ACU) scores (Collie and Mason 2000), and a mixture of ADA and ACU scores (Fleisher and Bond 2000). Shipan and Lowry (2001) and Theriault (2005) even show how the parties have diverged in a particular policy area. The overwhelming evidence suggests that party members throughout the last thirty to forty years have raced to their ideological homes.

² Mayhew updates his list every Congress. The most important legislative enactments can be found at: <http://pantheon.yale.edu/~dmayhew/data3.html>. Using Edwards' methodology, I updated his list of major failures. The list can be downloaded at: <http://www.la.utexas.edu/~seant/failure.html>.

rolling average for the party difference measure since the 93rd Congress in the House and Senate, respectively. In the early 1970s, it hovered around 33 percent. By the congresses in the early 2000s, it had more than doubled. Figure 1 shows that the trends based on DW-NOMINATE understate the polarization relative to the trends based on the roll-call votes of major legislation.

Rohde (1991), Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart (2001), Cox and Poole (2002), and Theriault (2008) find that the overwhelming majority of this increase in party polarization has occurred on procedural votes. Due to the increasing proportion of the votes on the floors of both the House and Senate and the increasing polarization on those votes, procedural votes alone account for 72 percent of the increase in House party polarization and 84 percent of the increase in Senate party polarization (Theriault 2008).

Some scholars would reject the very notion of dividing up the votes into procedural, amendment, and final passage categories. They would argue that any procedural vote is simply a mask for “substance” and, as such, is no different than amendment or final passage votes. Second, they would point to the vast political science literature that shows the mixing of procedure and substance both empirically and theoretically. More than 40 years ago, Froman and Ripley (1965, 56) argued, “Most votes, of course, involve both procedural and substantive questions. Even a motion to adjourn can sometimes be partly a substantive issue, if the motion is directed at postponing action on a bill.” Put more simply and contemporarily, Arnold (1990, 105) claims: “Conflict over substance can quickly evolve into conflict over procedures.”

Robin Farquharson (1969), in his seminal book, *Theory of Voting*, shows how the procedures surrounding a sequence of votes affect the voters’ ultimate decisions. Using his

logic, Riker (1986, ix) developed his “heresthetic” argument to describe the practice of “structuring the world so you can win.” “Agenda control,” which procedures establish, is, according to Riker (1986, 130), “a concentration of the opportunity for heresthetical manipulation.” But, Riker (1986, 140) warns, “Heresthetical resources of parliamentary leaders are entirely dependent on a supportive majority.” Denzau, Riker, and Shepsle (1985, 1118) show how heresthetics work in the legislature: “Result- or outcome-oriented legislators should regard the alternatives on the floor at any stage of the voting process (but the last) not as objects of choice per se, but rather as vehicles that carry the process into the next stage of the sequence.” For example, even the procedural move to recommit a bill, according to Krehbiel and Meirowitz (2002), provides the minority party a substantive check on the majority party at the penultimate stage of the legislative process in the House. These arguments assume, of course, that members are forward looking and sophisticated enough to understand that by adopting certain procedures in a bill’s debate, they are significantly affecting their ability to alter substantively the bill’s language in the future. Such an assumption is not particularly heroic as suggested by Chairman John Dingell’s famous quip: “If you let me write the procedures and I let you write the substance, I’ll [beat] you every time.”³

While this literature suggests that procedural votes are fraught with substantive effects, none of the aforementioned would deny that procedural votes are generally more invisible than either amendment votes or final passage votes. Again, Froman and Ripley (1965, 59) explain, “The only fully visible kind of voting is roll-call voting on final passage of measures.” Den Hartog and Monroe (2006, 11) provide the same reasoning more than 40

³ Quoted from Oleszek (1996, 12). John Jackley (1992, 113) attributes a similar quote to Tony Coelho when he was Majority Whip: “Give me process and the other guy substance, and I’ll win every time.”

years later: “Votes on motions to table and votes on amendments are not equivalent in the public eye, because a vote on a tabling motion is less visible to the public, and less easy to interpret, than is a direct vote on an amendment or a bill.” Procedural votes may be substantive votes in hiding, though because of their less visible nature, members may treat them differently. The point at which members treat them differently, the tests that members take change in a fundamental way.

Therault (2008) finds that members’ parties and their constituency in the early 1970s affect their voting on both procedural and final passages votes. By the 108th Congress, however, the constituencies have almost no affect on members’ procedural votes in either the House or the Senate. While it remains likely that conflict over substance is backing up into procedural disputes, these findings at least raise the specter that party polarization is not an entirely substantive conflict.

II. Cosponsorship as True Preference Revelation

This section examines a completely new data set to evaluate whether procedures – independent of the substance behind the debate they are establishing – have caused party polarization in the U.S. Congress. Two independent tests, which are presented in the next two sections, utilize the cosponsors of important legislation to confirm that procedures – again, independent of substance – are a primary culprit behind the divergence between the parties. First, the polarization of cosponsors has, indeed, increased since the 1970s, but that increase is roughly 25 percent less than the increase in member polarization. Second, the

increase in procedures, controlling for the bill's substance, exacerbates the divide between the parties.

Cosponsoring Legislation

The utility of examining members' cosponsoring activities has not been lost on political scientists. Talbert and Potoski (2002, 869) argue, "Bill cosponsoring is one of the first opportunities for members to take a formal position on an issue and thus provides the most distance between events for comparing member action in pre-floor and floor decisions." Krehbiel (1995) and Kessler and Krehbiel (1996) take the argument a step further in finding that cosponsoring legislation is almost completely a preference-driven activity.⁴ In several other studies, scholars have opted for using cosponsorship as a true measure of position taking rather than roll call voting, which imbues procedure with substance.⁵

The aggregate result from the cosponsoring studies is that cosponsorship offers, perhaps, the cleanest proxy for position taking on legislation. The implicit (sometimes explicit) assumption in these studies is that roll-call voting is corrupted by the procedures used to arrive at the particular vote. For example, a member might vote against the substance of legislation simply to protest the procedures used to arrive at the substantive vote. The glory of cosponsorship is that it is typically done before heavy procedural machinations begin.

⁴ The cosponsoring literature has two other branches. First, a number of studies examine the influence that the number of cosponsors has on successful lawmaking (Fenno 1989, Light 1992, Browne 1985, Krutz 2005, Koger 2003, Wilson and Young 1997). Second, several studies look at the determinants of cosponsorship (Campbell 1982, Schiller 1995, Brown and Ringquist 1985, and Panning 1982). This latter group of studies does not yield any findings that should call into question the results from this chapter.

⁵ See Highton and Rocca's (2005) study on abortion policy, Gilmour and Rothstein's (1994) and Theriault's (2005) study on term limits, and Schickler, McGhee, and Sides's (2003) study on House reform as examples.

Both of the tests in this article rely upon cosponsorship of the combined and updated Edwards' and Mayhew's lists of important legislative areas. The simplicity of that sentence belies the complexity of the legislative process. Every legislative area does not equate to one single bill, but rather, frequently to a number of bills. The debate surrounding health care in the 102nd Congress, for example, included not only the bill sponsored by the Democratic leadership and reported by the House Ways and Means Committee (HR 5502), but also the the Dingell-Waxman bill calling for universal coverage (HR 5514), the House single-payer plan (HR 1300), the Senate single-player plan (S 2320), the House Republican alternative (HR 5325), and the Senate Finance reported bill (S 1872). So long as the bill was mentioned in the *CQ Almanac* story about the particular legislative proposal, I include it in the data set of bill cosponsors. All of the aforementioned health care bills received coverage, so all of them were included in the data set.

The 609 policy proposals resulted in 1252 bills. Of these 1252 bills, I deleted 284 bills because they did not have any cosponsors. For the remaining 968 bills, I coded the DW-NOMINATE score and party for each of the bill's sponsor and cosponsors. I then determined the cosponsors' average ideology and the percentage of cosponsors that came from each party. In deriving these measures, I also included the sponsor's party and ideology. The percentage of cosponsors from one party proxies the bipartisanship among the cosponsors, while the average ideology indicates the basic ideological lean of the primary proponents of the bill. The absolute value of the average ideology provides a measure for the polarization of the particular bill. As a spot check on these calculations, table 1 shows the ideological lean of the health care related bills from the 102nd Congress.

Insert Table 1.

The Partisanship of Cosponsors

A rough first cut at the dynamics of cosponsorship examines only the partisanship of the cosponsors. If Congress were as polarized along party lines as suggested by politicians, political scientists, and commentators, we should see a drastic change in how willing Democrats are to sign up with Republicans on major legislation. During the heyday of compromise and “the end of ideology” of the late 1960s and early 1970s, Democrats and Republicans should sign up for cosponsorship almost without regard to party. As the divide between the parties became more ossified in the 1990s and 2000s, little bipartisanship should exist on bill cosponsorship.

For this analysis, I calculate the percentage of cosponsors who came from one party for all major bills that have at least one cosponsor. The closer that number gets to one, the less bipartisan the cosponsorship; the closer the number gets to one-half, the more bipartisan. The bold line in figure 2 shows how the proportion of cosponsors coming from one party has changed over the 32 years under investigation. In the early 1970s, roughly 75 percent of House and Senate cosponsors came from one party (i.e., one Republican signing on to a bill with three Democrats). Thirty years later, the number now hovers around 80 percent (i.e., one Democrat signing on to a bill with four Republicans). The thin line in figure two presents the polarization score based on DW-NOMINATE to provide a baseline for a comparison of polarization.

Insert Figure 2.

Table 2 shows that with each passing congress, the bills become 0.6 percent more partisan in both the House and the Senate. While cosponsorship has become less bipartisan,

the trend toward partisanship is much greater on roll-call based measures. Comparing the growth in bill cosponsor partisanship to the divergence between the parties based on DW-NOMINATE reveals much greater partisanship. With each passing congress in the House, the party polarization based on actual votes increases 1.1 percent in the House and 0.8 percent in the Senate. The rough cut analysis on cosponsorship suggests that the parties are not nearly as divided on the legislation as they are on the particular votes taken on the legislation.

Insert Table 2.

The Polarization of Cosponsors

Cosponsoring legislation, according to various political science studies, is the truest form of position taking available to members. If the partisan divide is not driven in part by the procedures of the legislative process, the polarization of bill cosponsors should increase at the same rate as the polarization of the membership in the House and Senate. Figure 3 shows the polarization of DW-NOMINATE scores and bill cosponsorship for the House (panel A) and Senate (panel B). Both trends are polarization scores, which means that they are the absolute value of the DW-NOMINATE score and the average ideology for a bill's cosponsors. The dashed line in the figure is the trend line.

Insert Figure 3.

Both panels show that the absolute value of the DW-NOMINATE scores is increasing at a higher rate than the absolute value of the average ideology of bills' cosponsors. Table 2 provides estimates for these trends by regressing the congress on the two polarization scores. According to these estimates, the members are polarizing 38 percent faster than the

cosponsors of major bills in the House and almost three times faster in the Senate. These results are a clear indication that something more than substance is driving a significant part of the party polarization in Congress.

III. The Polarization Caused by Procedures

Cosponsor polarization has increased since the early 1970s, but not nearly as much as member polarization. What has increased more than even member polarization is the presence of procedural battles in both the House and the Senate. In this section, I show how the intense use of procedures increases the partisan divide.

Structuring the Legislative Agenda

During the “Textbook Congress” that reigned in the mid-twentieth century, committee decisions were typically rubber stamped on the floor by the entire chamber. Beginning in the early 1970s, however, committee decisions were increasingly subject to scrutiny and to amendments from legislators who did not serve on the committees that reported the bill (Shepsle 1989, Smith 1989). As the norms of reciprocity, specialization, and committee division of labor began to weaken, committees continued to exercise their power through the use of the ex post veto – e.g., their membership on conference committees – and by fighting fire with fire – e.g., their ability to offer second degree amendments (Shepsle and Weingast 1987, Weingast 1992). Nonetheless, the floor became an important place to get the work of the House done. As more internally homogeneous rank and file representatives and

senators gradually ceded more authority to their party leaders, the majority party began to assert not only structure, but also more importantly its will on the floor. The powers the individual members took away from the committees were seized by party leaders.

As floor-amending activity increased and as the majority party's margin decreased, the party leaders were under pressure to exert more control over the rampant floor deliberations (Binder 1997, Dion 1997, and Schickler 2001). Through different legislative means, the majority party leadership in both chambers restricted floor deliberation. In the House, the Democratic leadership increasingly relied upon restrictive rules. As late as the 99th Congress (1987-8), more than two-thirds of the most important bills in the House were debated under an open rule (see panel A of figure 4). Over the next four congresses, the proportions reversed as more than two-thirds were debated under a restrictive rule. In leading up to their takeover in the 1994 elections, the Republicans vowed to bring democracy back and deliberation to the floor of the House. They pointed to the increasing number of closed and restricted rules as a sign of the Democratic leadership's arrogant use of power. True to their word, the percentage of bills that received an open rule more than tripled from 10 percent in the 103rd Congress (1993-4), the last one in Democratic hands, to 37.5 percent in the 104th Congress (1995-6), the first one in Republican hands. Since then, however, the percentage of restrictive rules has climbed, such that by the 107th Congress (2001-2), the Republicans used a higher percentage of restricted or closed rules than the Democrats ever did. In the 107th (2001-2), the House debated no major piece of legislation under an open rule, and only one major piece had an open rule in the 108th Congress (2003-4).

Insert Figure 4.

While not blessed with the same powers as house leadership, senate leadership has also made its presence felt procedurally. Smith (1989) nicely demonstrates how Unanimous Consent Agreements have become more complex over time. In the 1970s, the Senate Majority Leader (or his designee) would simply ask the presiding officer to begin debate on a bill. In the 1990s, it is not rare for UCAs to not only specify what amendments are in order and the order in which they will be debated, but also the time allotted to their debate and whether second degree amendments are in order. Oleszek (2005) defines the former as “simple” and the later as “complex.”

One difficulty of working with UCAs is that they are not numbered and categorized like Special Rules in the House. So, finding them can sometimes be rather difficult. A team of researchers has uncovered 129 UCAs for the 203 major pieces of legislation that have been debated on the Senate floor since the 101st Congress (1989-90). Unlike with the House’s Special Rules, the Senate’s UCAs have not become necessarily complex. This initial brush with Senate data is fairly inconclusive because of the number of missing UCAs and the lack of any UCAs until 1989.

The Consequences Stacking the Deck Procedurally in the House

The test in this section reveals the extent to which procedures drive the parties apart. The dependent variable in this analysis is the party difference scores of bills with both final passage roll-call votes in both the House and the Senate and a value for the average ideology of bill cosponsors, which, of course, does not include bills without any cosponsors.

According to column A in table 3, the 228 bills that have both cosponsors and a final passage

vote in the House have become 2.8 percent more divisive each congress. This estimate is similar to the trend depicted as bold lines in figure 1.⁶

Insert Table 3.

With relief that the coefficient in table 3 seems reasonable, I add two additional independent variables to measure the effect procedures have on final passage voting. The first independent variable is an estimate of the bills' polarization as measured by the absolute value of the cosponsors' DW-NOMINATE average. The more polarized the bills' sponsors, the bigger the party difference should be on the final passage vote. The second independent variable is an indicator for the kind of rule governing debate of that bill on the floor of the House of Representatives. Using the categories developed by the Congressional Research Service, I combine closed, modified closed, and structured rules into the restricted rule category, which takes on a value of 1 for the indicator variable.

The overall model does an adequate job of predicting the party difference on the final passage votes – an R^2 of 0.40 – with three significant independent variables. Unsurprisingly, the polarization of cosponsors has a direct and large effect on the party difference of the final passage roll-call vote. A 10-percentage point increase in the party polarization of cosponsors results in 7.3 percentage point increase in the party difference. Closed rules cause a 9.5 percentage point increase in the party difference on the final passage vote. This coefficient estimate, of course, controls for the polarization of the underlying bill.

The Consequences Stacking the Deck Procedurally in the Senate

⁶ The 95 percent confidence interval for the 228 bills includes the coefficient estimate in panel B of table 8.2.

Because the time trend analysis in the Senate does not extend back to the 93rd Congress, the results in column A of table 4 do not reflect the increasing polarization trend in figure 1. The regression results in table 4 do match the trend as depicted in the second half of the trend from figure 1. Just as column B from table 3, column B from table 4 includes a measure of polarization prior to the legislation reaching the floor (cosponsor polarization) and an indicator variable for procedural machinations on the Senate floor – each of the bills debated on the Senate floor under a complex UCA are coded “1,” whereas all the simple UCA bills are coded “0.”

Insert Table 3.

As with the House, the overall Senate model is fairly accurate. The R^2 is 0.41 and the two additional variables both achieve significance at the 0.95 level. The cosponsor polarization variable again nicely predicts the level of disagreement between the parties on the final passage vote. As with closed rules in the House, complex UCA agreements also drive the parties apart. The party difference score on the final passage vote is nearly 15 percent greater on bills debated under a complex UCA than on bills debated under a simple UCA.

As the parties increasingly rely upon procedures, they are pushing themselves further apart above and beyond the substance of their policy proposals. The substantive decisions that members make, whether measured by final passage votes or the willingness to cosponsor major legislation, are exceedingly homogenous within their parties, but not nearly as the procedural somersaults that have been increasingly frequent in the legislative process.

IV. Conclusion

These results in this paper are merely preliminary. Further analysis should be brought to bear on these questions before adopting any of the conclusions. Nonetheless, the results are highly suggestive that we need to rethink the party polarization question in the U.S. Congress.

As partisan warfare has been waged in Congress, problems and issues remain unresolved. Perhaps most ironic about this state of affairs is that the battleground is increasingly on procedures and yet policy is what suffers as well as the American public's confidence in the government. This article suggests that the parties in Congress, while being increasingly polarized on procedures, are only marginally more polarized on the substance of the legislation. Furthermore, this article provides evidence that the procedural strictures of the legislative process exacerbate the divide between the parties. Having controlled for a bill's underlying ideology, legislation passed under a restricted rule in the House increase the party divide by almost 10 percent and bills passed under a complex Unanimous Consent Agreement in the Senate increase the party divide by nearly 15 percent.

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Figure 1: Party Polarization in Congress, 93rd to 108th Congresses (1973-2004)

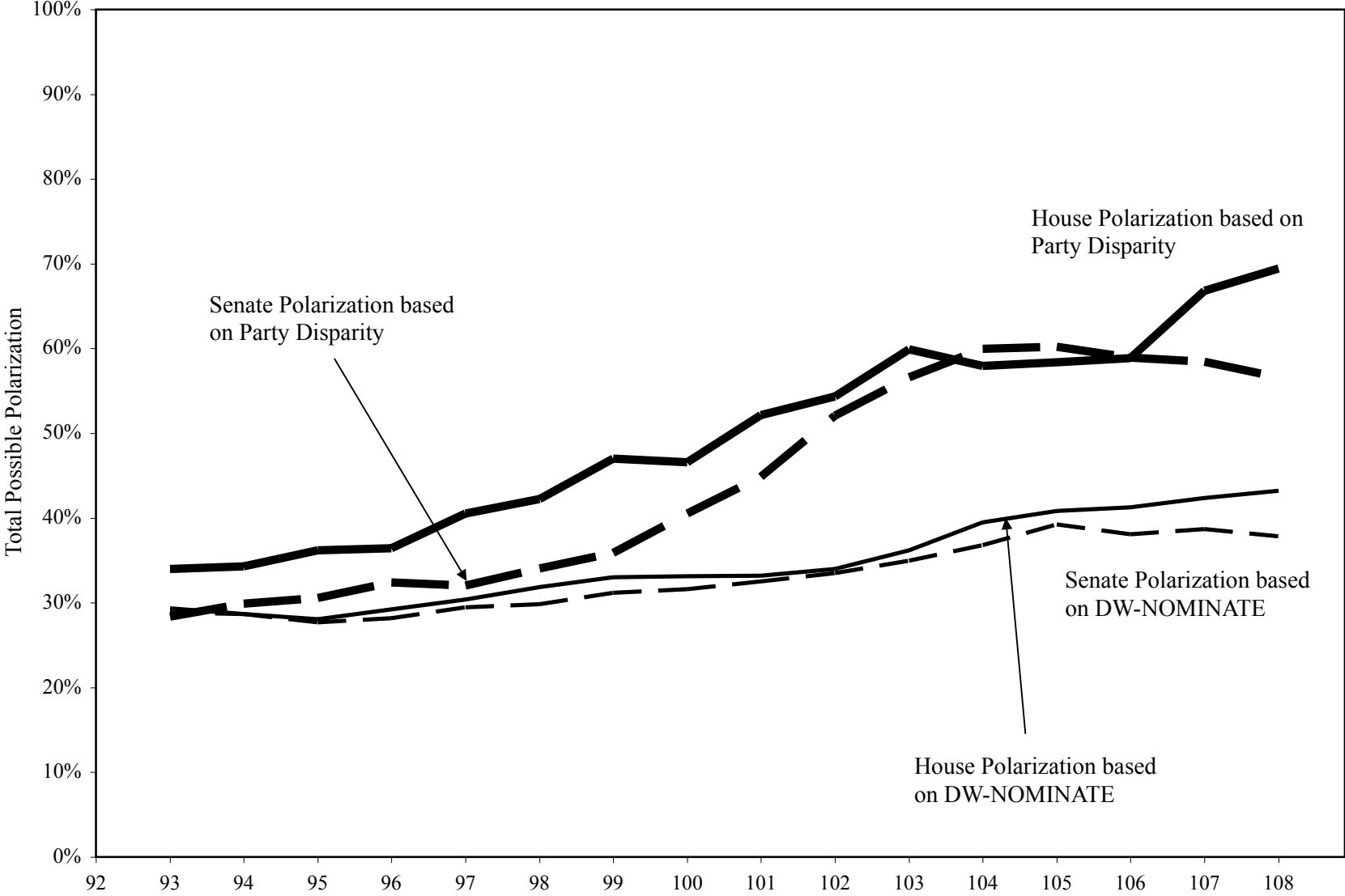


Table 1: Health Care Bills Mentioned in *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, 102nd Congress (1991-2)

Bill		Sponsor	Cosponsors		Bill Ideology	Bill Polarization
			Dem.	GOP		
<i>House of Representatives Bills</i>						
H.R. 1300	Single-Payer Bill	Russo (D)	70	0	-0.475	0.475
H.R. 5325	Republican Alternative Bill	Michel (R)	0	98	0.366	0.366
H.R. 5502	Ways and Means Committee Reported Bill	Stark (D)	7	0	-0.368	0.368
H.R. 5514	Universal Coverage Bill	Dingell (D)	8	0	-0.412	0.412
<i>Senate Bills</i>						
S. 1872	Finance Reported Bill	Bentsen (D)	16	11	-0.058	0.058
S. 2320	Single-Payer Bill	Wellstone (D)	2	0	-0.610	0.610

Figure 2: Average Proportion of Cosponsors from One Party, 93rd to 108th Congress

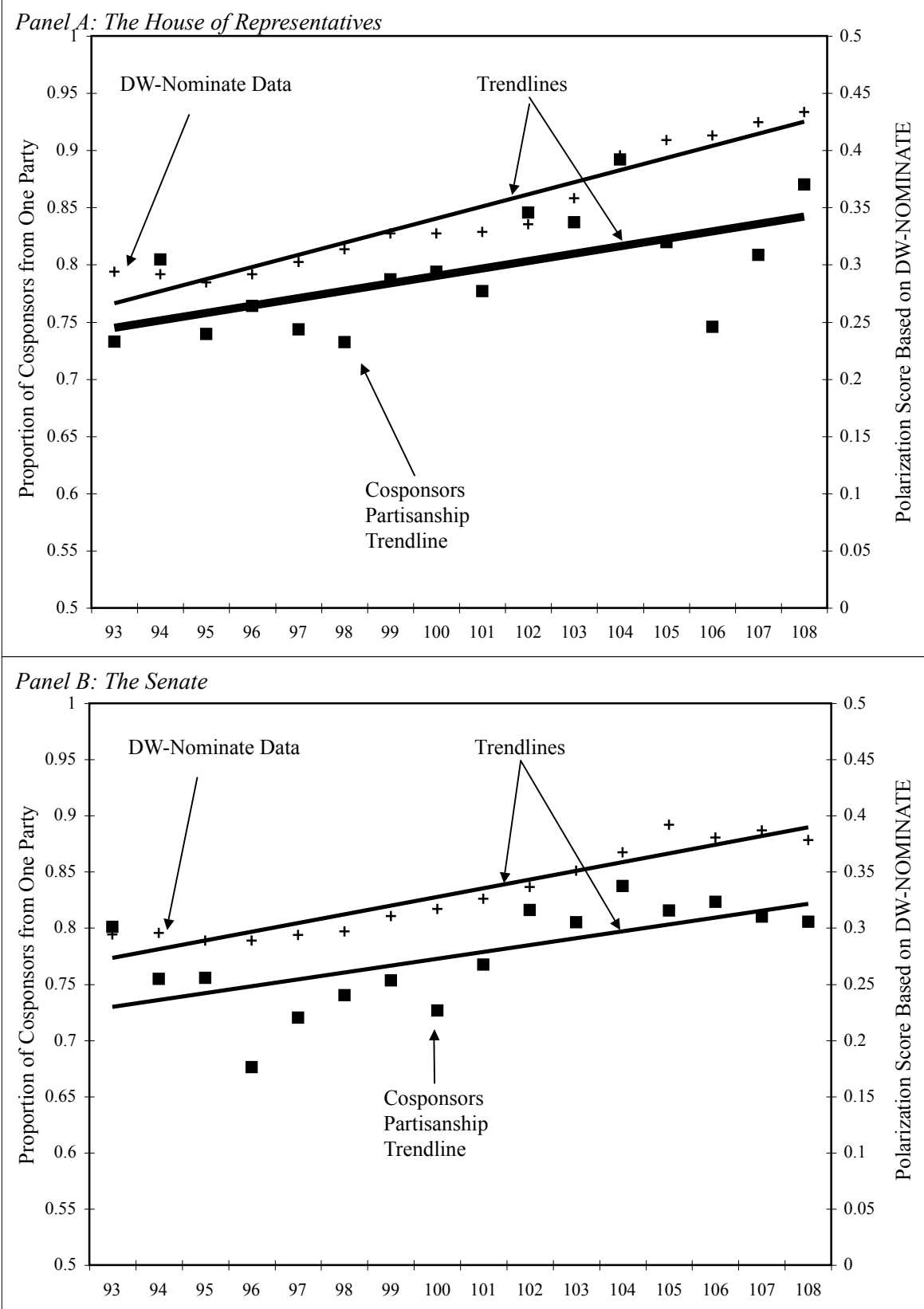


Figure 3: Comparing Cosponsor Polarization to Member Polarization, 93rd to 108th Congress

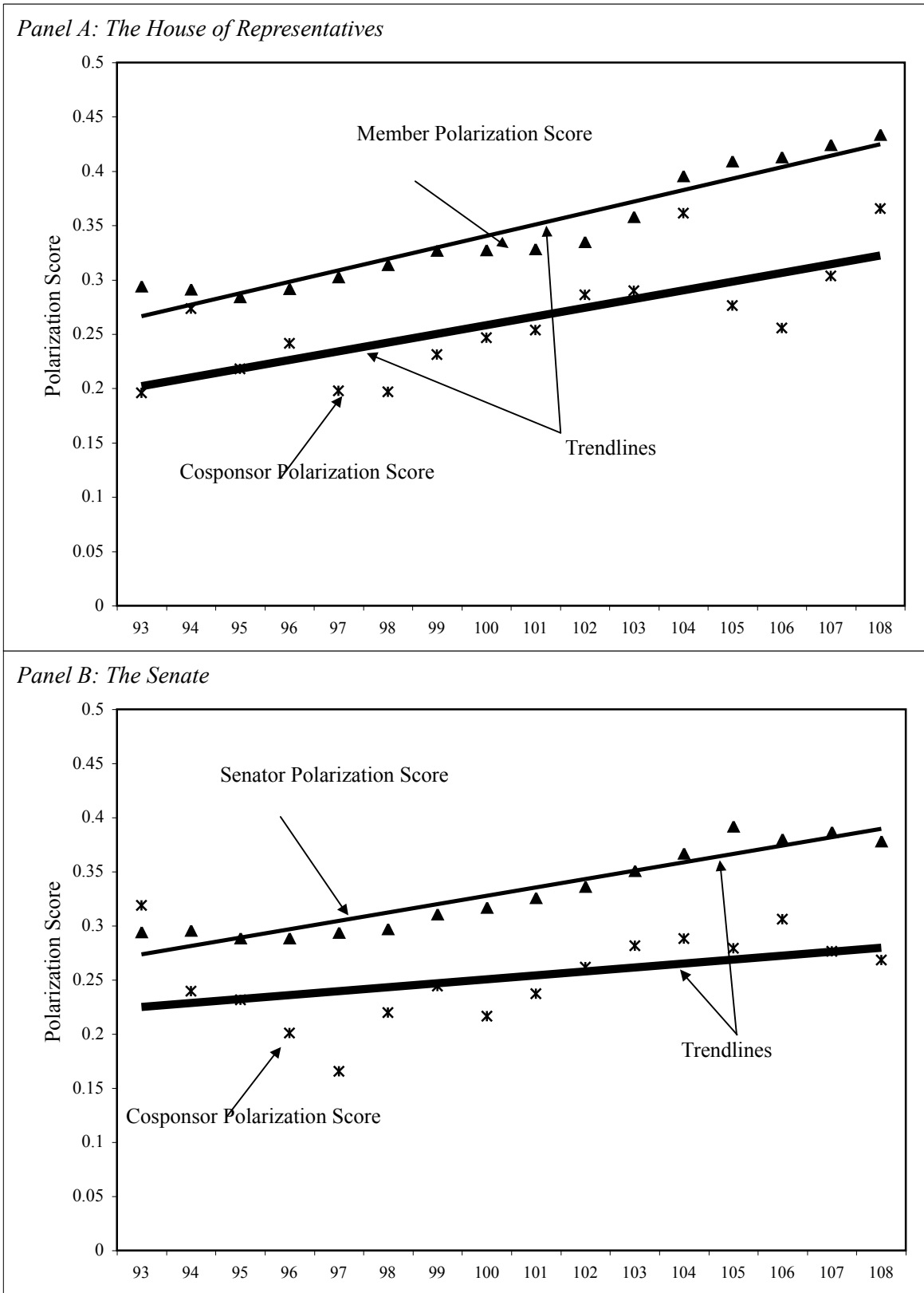
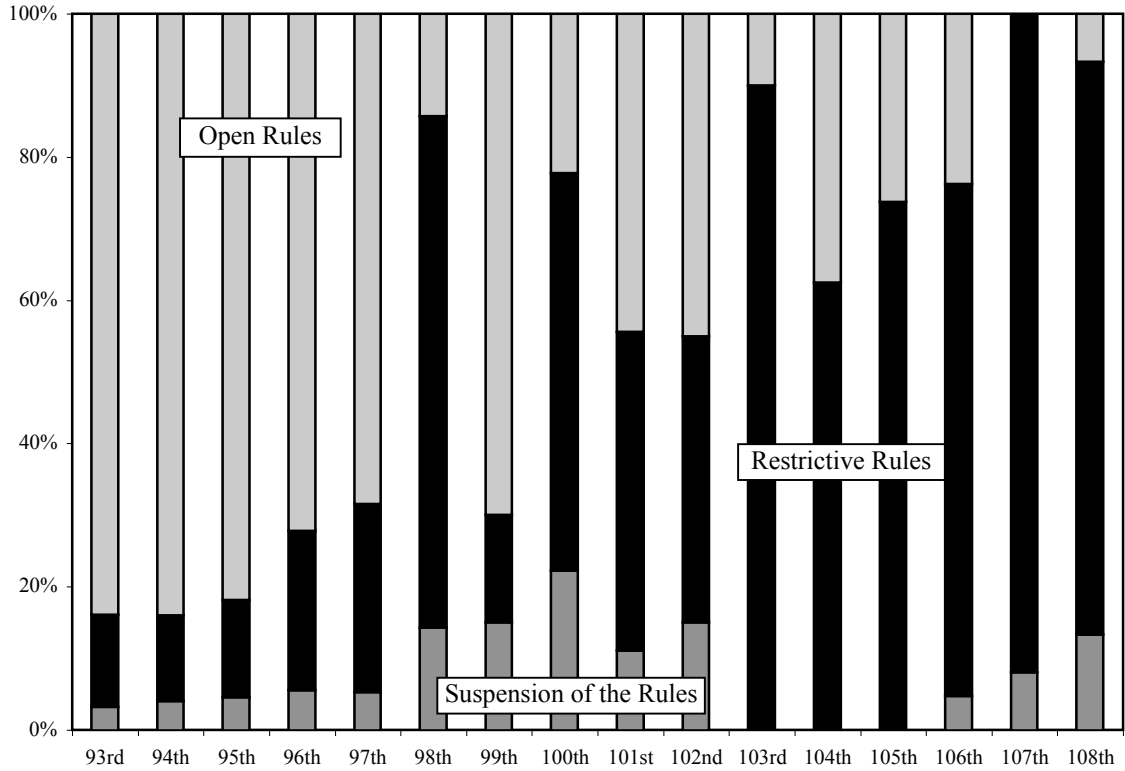


Table 2: The Increase in Polarization based on Members' DW-NOMINATE, Cosponsors' DW-NOMINATE, and Proportion of Cosponsors from One Party

	(A)	(B)	(C)			
	Polarization Scores based on Members' DW-NOMINATE Scores	Proportion of Cosponsors from One Party	Polarization Scores based on Co-Sponsor DW-NOMINATE Scores			
Panel A: Coefficient Estimates Based on Regressing Time¹						
The House of Representatives	0.011 *** (0.0004)	0.006 ** (0.002)	0.008 *** (0.001)			
The Senate	0.008 *** (0.001)	0.006 ** (0.002)	0.003 * (0.001)			
Panel B: Fitted Values for the 93rd and 108th Congresses based on the Regression Results in Panel A						
	93rd	108th	93rd ²	108th ²	93rd	108th
The House of Representatives	0.266	0.425	0.745	0.842	0.204	0.319
Percent change from 93rd to 108th	59.6%		39.7%		56.2%	
The Senate	0.273	0.390	0.730	0.821	0.234	0.273
Percent change from 93rd to 108th	42.5%		39.9%		16.6%	
¹ The numbers in Panel A are the coefficients of the time trend variable (congress) with the various dependent variables as indicated. The numbers in parentheses are the standard errors of the coefficients.						
*Statistically Significant at 0.05; **Statistically Significant at 0.01; ***Statistically Significant at 0.001.						
² The numbers for the proportion of cosponsors from one party are adjusted to account for its range of 0.5 to 1.0.						

Figure 4: Measuring the Complexity of the Legislative Process in Congress

Panel A: Special Rules for the Most Important Pieces of Legislation in the House



Panel B: Complex Unanimous Consent Agreements in the Senate

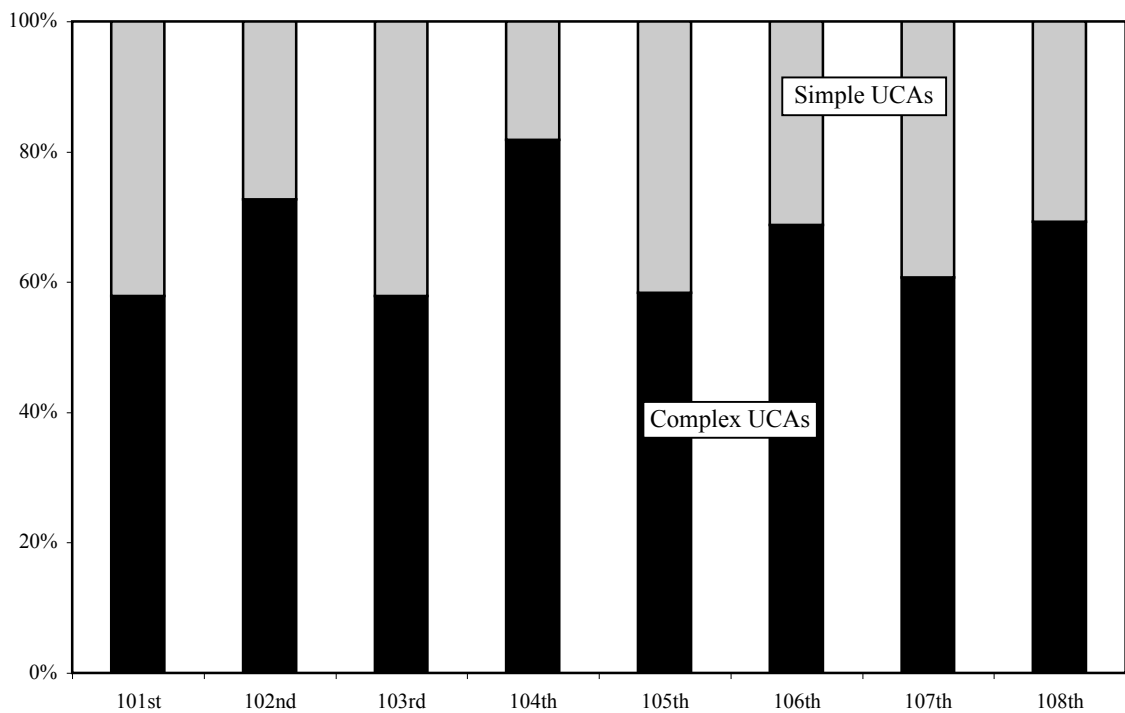


Table 3: The Effect of Closed Rules on Final Passage Party Difference Scores

	(Column A)	(Column B)
	Simple Model	Full Model
Time Trend	0.028 *** (0.003)	0.016 *** (0.003)
Cosponsors Polarization		0.775 *** (0.11)
Closed Rules		0.095 ** (0.03)
Constant	-2.452 *** (0.35)	-1.498 *** (0.37)
R ²	0.23	0.40

Note: N=228; the dependent variable is the final passage party difference score.

*Statistically Significant at 0.05; **Statistically Significant at 0.01; ***Statistically Significant at 0.001.

Table 4: The Effect of Complex UCAs on Final Passage Party Difference Scores

	(Column A)	(Column B)
	Simple Model	Full Model
Time Trend	-0.001 (0.02)	-0.019 (0.02)
Cosponsors Polarization		1.371 *** (0.27)
Complex UCA		0.148 * (0.07)
Constant	0.473 (2.11)	1.969 (1.68)
R ²	0.00	0.41

Note: N=228; the dependent variable is the final passage party difference score.

*Statistically Significant at 0.05; **Statistically Significant at 0.01; ***Statistically Significant at 0.001.