The Conditional Lawmaking Benefits of Party Faction Membership in Congress*

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Abstract

Does joining a party faction in Congress enhance or undermine a member's lawmaking effectiveness? We examine the nine largest ideological caucuses over the past quarter century to test three hypotheses about the conditional lawmaking benefits of faction membership: (1) that benefits from faction membership are limited to those in the minority party; (2) that members of ideologically centrist factions gain the greatest benefits; and (3) that sizable factions exploit their pivotal positions to achieve legislative victories for their members' proposals. We find support for only the first of these three common conjectures, consistent with the argument that factions offer valuable resources to those in the minority party and that majority-party leaders counter the proposals arising from their own party's factions. The fact that faction membership offers no significant lawmaking benefit to majority-party legislators presents a major challenge to conventional wisdom.

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For more than 200 years, nearly all elected representatives in Congress have affiliated with at least one political party. Yet parties and their brands do not serve all members of Congress equally well. Seeking to differentiate themselves from the party line, or even to shift their party's positions, some lawmakers have developed or joined organized party *factions* (i.e., Thomsen 2017). Similar to the parties within which they are housed, these factions (formally referred to as *caucuses*) have become a common feature of the contemporary Congress, and their leaders have become increasingly visible spokespersons for their organizations.

Ideological factions collectively map onto a sizable share of seats in the U.S. House. In the 115th Congress (2017-18), for example, 81% of the voting Representatives were members of one of nine intraparty ideological factions, and each of these groups contained a sizable bloc of votes. The sheer number of Members of Congress who voluntarily choose to associate with these factions suggest that membership must be valuable; but in what ways?

The plausible benefits from faction affiliation could be collective or individual in nature (or both). At the collective level, factions might serve their members' needs by helping to set the legislative agenda or by ensuring that certain bills, which are of interest to all faction members, pass (or fail to pass) the chamber. At the individual level, faction membership might provide legislators with various electoral benefits (such as forging connections to political activists and campaign contributors) and policy benefits (such as additional legislative staff resources and policy expertise to help advance their bills through the lawmaking process).

While scholars have explored the evolution of particular party factions (e.g., Bloch Rubin 2017, Green 2019) and party factions more generally (e.g., Koger, Masket, and Noel 2009) to analyze their roles in the legislative process, much of this literature has focused largely on the scope of the collective organizational benefits and individual electoral benefits (e.g., Clarke

2020b) that follow from faction affiliation. In contrast, very little scholarship has explored whether there are any individual-level lawmaking benefits that accompany faction affiliation. Bluntly stated, it is not clear whether joining an intraparty faction contributes to, or detracts from, the lawmaking success of those members who seek to advance their own (individual) legislative agendas. As congressional politics has grown increasingly contentious and partisan in recent years, and questions have emerged regarding whether Congress has the capacity to fulfill its lawmaking duties (i.e., LaPira, Drutman, and Kosar 2020), intraparty factions may be poised to play an important role. Do they exist largely to present voters with an alternative voice to the major parties, or alternatively, do they have a meaningful impact on the policymaking process in a way that trickles down to individual members' legislative initiatives? As Olson (1965) establishes, understanding individual benefits experienced by group members helps elucidate what collective actions the group can achieve.

To understand the lawmaking impact of faction membership, we begin by considering the potential for factions to advance or obstruct the progress of legislative proposals. Doing so helps motivate three testable hypotheses regarding policy advancement that are rooted in conventional wisdom, journalistic accounts, and academic insights about congressional lawmaking. First, we consider the power and resources of factions relative to the parties (i.e., majority or minority) in which they are embedded. Second, we explore whether factions are only powerful if they are well-positioned ideologically. Third, we raise the possibility that faction influence is conditional on faction size.

For each of these three hypotheses, faction membership offers lawmaking benefits only when certain conditions are met. By examining the members of the nine largest ideological caucuses in the U.S. House of Representatives over twenty-four years (1995-2018), we are able

to isolate each of these conditions, determining when caucus members gain greater or lesser lawmaking success through their caucus membership. Our method of analysis employs a fixed effects estimation strategy to leverage outcomes that members achieve upon joining or leaving caucuses. We uncover strong support for the first hypothesis. Specifically, we find that affiliation with a minority-party faction tends to increase legislators' lawmaking effectiveness relative to comparable, unaffiliated legislators; but such a boost does not emerge for majority-party faction members. Our empirical findings run counter to the alternative theoretical arguments suggesting that the lawmaking effectiveness of factions should be correlated with their ideological positions or their sizes.

Contrary to the extensive media attention given to factions and their proposals, the overall null effect we uncover for faction members (and particularly those in the majority party) is quite surprising. The size and ideological positions of party factions do not matter for their members' legislative effectiveness, *per se*. Rather, factions are most likely to be influential when the parties in which they reside are most disadvantaged in the legislative process, due to their minority status. These findings have important implications for our understanding of party organizations in Congress, and they are also of practical value to members of Congress, who might question the value of joining a faction to advance their own lawmaking goals.

Factions in the American Political System

As alluded to above, a small but important literature has emerged that analyzes party subgroups in Congress. DiSalvo (2012) and Bloch Rubin (2013), for example, explore how factions have worked to reshape their parties and reform the political institutions in which they operate; Sin (2015) provides a comprehensive overview of the scope of intra-party divisions across the history of the U.S. Congress; and several scholars (e.g., Jenkins and Monroe 2014, Lucas and

Deutchman 2007, Medvic 2007, Seo and Theriault 2012) have studied how ideologically centrist groups of legislators influence policy outcomes. At the individual faction level, a voluminous body of literature (e.g., Bailey, Mummolo, and Noel 2012; Blum 2019, 2020; Ragusa and Gaspar 2016; Skocpol and Williamson 2012) has explored the development and impact of Tea Party Republicans.

Taken together, this literature has suggested that American party factions closely mirror the structure and practices of conventional political parties in government. Factions are hierarchical organizations, featuring elected leadership positions, whip systems, task forces, and communication directors. Faction leaders direct full-time staffers and coordinate the procedural and rhetorical strategies of their blocs. They also cultivate niche pockets of ideological donors, coordinate with activist organizations, and endorse candidates on a national scale (Clarke 2020b). As such, modern ideological factions have evolved to engage with different aspects of the policymaking process outside of the constraints imposed by a two-party electoral system.

In certain cases, factions appear to actually impose *greater* constraints on their rank-and-file members than their parent party organizations. Factions screen candidates on a number of criteria – particularly ideology – before a thorough vetting and sponsorship process can be completed. Several groups employ ostensibly binding rules to improve faction unity; and individuals who frequently defy these supermajoritarian requirements (e.g., the Freedom Caucus's "80% rule") may be removed from the faction.[1] Hence, unlike political parties, factions can control their rosters to maximize their chances of voting as a cohesive bloc.

Given this organizational strength, some factions seek to provide a blend of informational and electoral advantages to their members through a variety of means. First, they diversify the

[1] Author interview with House Freedom Caucus staffer, July 2015.

availability of policy information in the House, contrary to the objectives of party leaders, who might seek to centralize information acquisition and distribution (Curry 2015). Second, they may assist Representatives in signaling an ideological type to constituents within their parties (Gervais and Morris 2012), although the evidence for this effect is mixed (Miler 2011). Third, factions may also foster bridge-building between members and key political activists and donors (Clarke 2020b), to help enhance fundraising (Cox and Rosenbluth 1993, Hendry and Sin 2014).

In contrast to their electoral and informational benefits, the potential *lawmaking* benefits of faction affiliation have been understudied; and, while ideological caucuses may play significant roles in the advancement or obstruction of policy proposals at the aggregate level, it is difficult to attribute these broad patterns to specific faction membership. We explore these issues by considering all nine ideological factions that have existed across recent Congresses. Given that formally recognized "legislative service organizations" were abruptly abolished in 1995 (Clarke 2020a), we begin measuring faction membership in the 104th Congress (1995-96), which provides a clean starting point for all caucus institutions.[2] These factions include two centrist Democratic caucuses (the Blue Dog Coalition and the New Democrat Coalition) as well as two non-centrist Democratic organizations (the Congressional Progressive Caucus and the short-lived Populist Caucus). On the Republican side are one centrist organization (the Republican Main Street Partnership, which includes members of the informal Tuesday Group) and four non-centrist blocs (the large Republican Study Committee, the Tea Party Caucus, the House Liberty Caucus, and the House Freedom Caucus).[3] All nine groups were officially registered with the

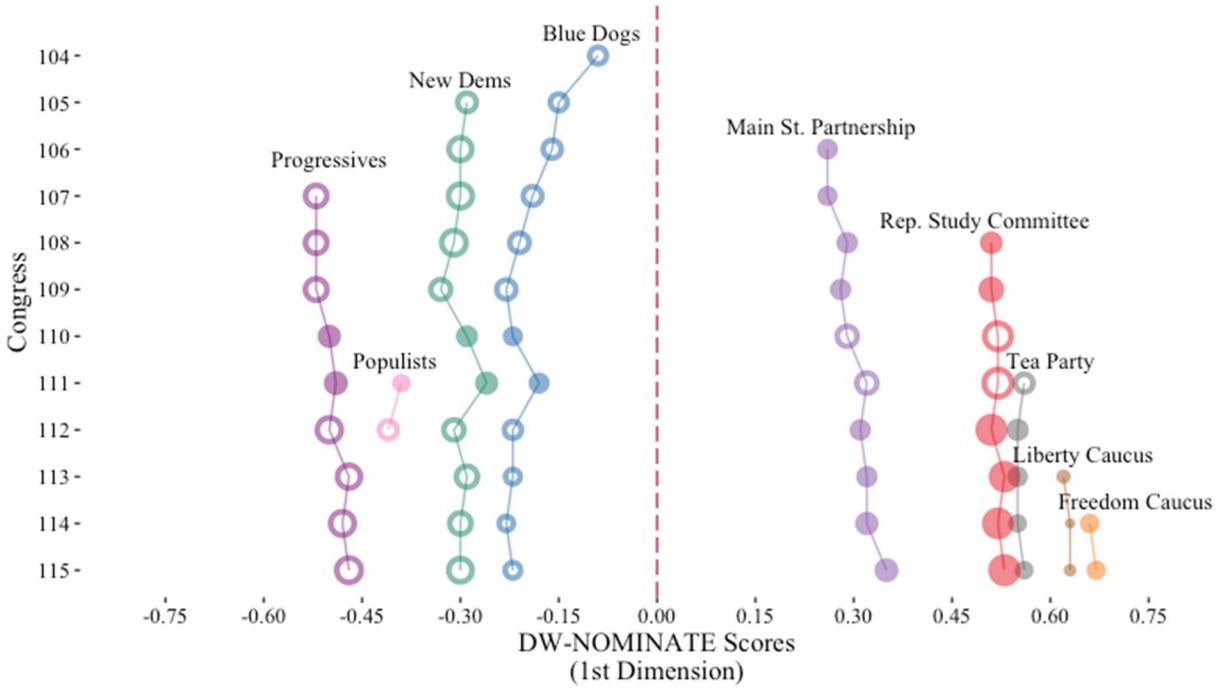
[2] Prior to the 104th Congress, there were numerous formally recognized "legislative service organizations" in the House, which were subsidized by House resources, but which were abolished when the Republicans took control of the U.S. House in the 104th Congress, to send "a strong message to rank and file members that caucuses would play no significant role in a centralized Republican Congress" (Pearson 2018).

[3] The results presented later in this article are robust to coding the Republican Study Committee or the Populist Caucus as centrist in alternative models.

House and self-identified in the public domain. Data on faction memberships were drawn from *CQ's Politics in America*, the archived websites of lawmakers, journalistic accounts of each group, and many phone calls to congressional offices.[4]

Figure 1 illustrates the mean ideological location, as approximated by first-dimension DW-NOMINATE scores (Poole and Rosenthal 1997), of each faction in each Congress that is covered by our analysis. Hollow circles represent minority-party factions, and each marker is scaled by faction size. Appendix Figure A1 characterizes the new and cumulative sizes of faction membership by Congress.

Figure 1: The Ideological Location, Party Status, and Size of House Factions



Notes: Each point indicates the average first-dimension DW-NOMINATE score among faction members in each Congress; the hollow circles represent minority-party factions, while filled circles indicate majority-party factions. All points are scaled by faction roster size.

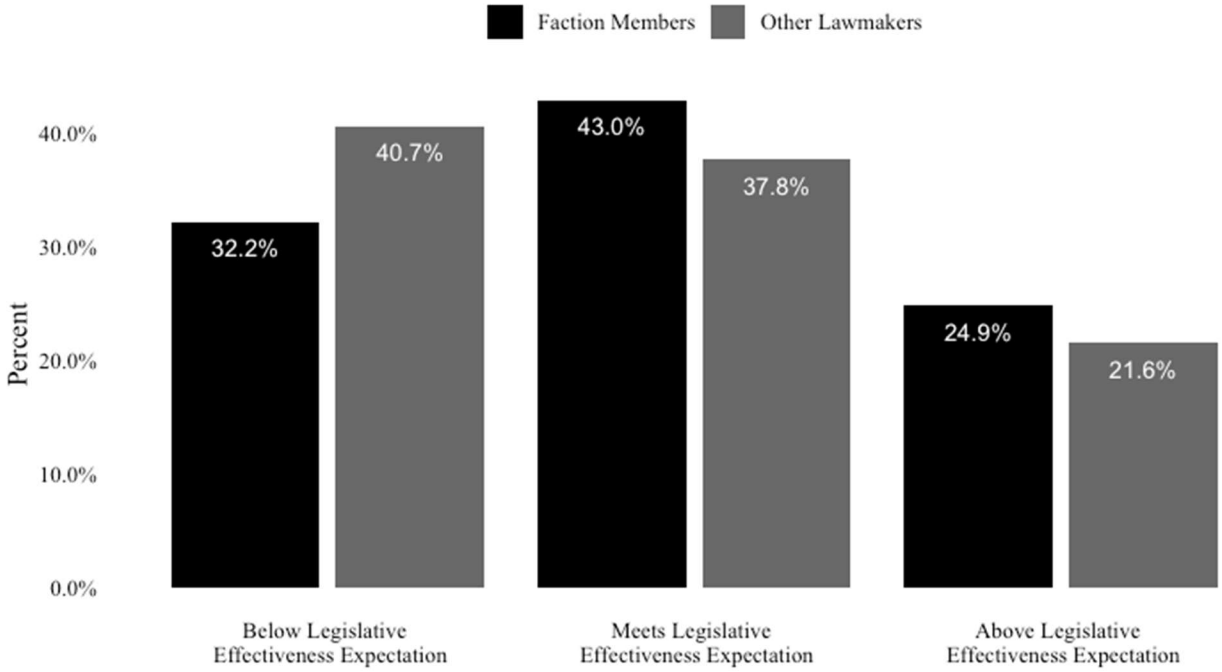
[4] See the appendix for a more detailed description of our faction data collection over the last five years.

At first glance, faction members do appear to differ from their non-faction counterparts in terms of lawmaking. In generating new laws, faction members introduce fourteen bills on average in each Congress, compared to twelve bills advanced by the average non-faction lawmaker. Yet, their subsequent success is more limited, with a much lower conversion rate for faction members than others in turning their bills into laws, especially among majority-party faction members.[5] Specifically, about 4.5% of faction members' bills become law, on average, compared to 6.1% for non-faction members.[6] Such findings raise a number of questions. Are legislators who are more interested in policymaking drawn to join factions, or does their faction spur them to be legislatively prolific? Do factions undermine subsequent lawmaking success, or are they simply comprised of legislators who are less senior, and less likely to hold key positions like committee chairs?[7]

To help us address this latter question, we turn to the ratings from the Center for Effective Lawmaking, which controls for seniority, committee and subcommittee chair positions, and majority-party status in characterizing each member of the House as "below," "meeting," or "above" expectations, in regards to their overall legislative effectiveness. As shown in Figure 2, compared to other legislators, faction members are less frequently in the "below expectations" category, while they are more frequently in the "meets expectations" and "exceeds expectations" groups.[8]

[5] The average difference in the percentage of bills that become law ($p < 0.001$) is driven by variation across majority-party status. Proposals arising from within minority-party factions do not appear to suffer the same drop-off as proposals arising from within majority-party factions, relative to proposals originating outside of factions.
[6] This difference is highly statistically significant ($p < 0.001$).
[7] Indeed, faction members are less senior ($p < 0.01$) and less likely to serve as committee chairs ($p < 0.05$) than non-faction legislators, on the whole.
[8] Each of these differences in proportions is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$).

Figure 2: Faction Members Appear to Be More Effective Lawmakers



Notes: Data from Center for Effective Lawmaking (www.thelawmakers.org). Benchmarks for each lawmaker are generated by regressing seniority, committee and subcommittee chair positions, and majority-party status on members' Legislative Effectiveness Scores. Those scoring significantly below or above those benchmarks are placed in the "below expectations" and "above expectations" categories, respectively. The figure shows faction members outperforming their benchmarks at a significantly higher rate than non-faction members.

That said, these overall patterns mask significant underlying variation. For example, the centrist Republican Main Street Partnership and New Democrat Coalition have a high proportion of their members exceeding expectations, while House Freedom Caucus members perform poorly by this measure. Might this be because ideologically centrist factions are especially well-positioned for lawmaking? Alternatively, would highly effective lawmakers achieve similar success had they not joined their caucuses in the first place?

Similar questions arise from a consideration of the blocking power of factions, which we explore in Table 1, where we see that factions actually vote against their parties quite frequently. We characterize a *Faction Opposition Vote* as an instance in which a majority of the faction's

members oppose a majority of the members of their party on a House floor vote. In the table we note the number of votes on which at least one of the nine factions defected from its party's position. Such defections occurred on about 22% of all votes across these Congresses, ranging from a 13% defection rate in the 111th Congress to 33% in the 104th Congress.[9]

Table 1: Factions Vote Against their Party at High Rates

Congress	Faction Opposition Votes	Total Votes	Percent Faction Opposition Votes
104 (1995-96)	440	1,321	33%
105 (1997-98)	230	1,166	20%
106 (1999-2000)	258	1,209	21%
107 (2001-02)	188	990	19%
108 (2003-04)	230	1,218	19%
109 (2005-06)	260	1,210	21%
110 (2007-08)	334	1,865	18%
111 (2009-10)	214	1,647	13%
112 (2011-12)	477	1,602	30%
113 (2013-14)	295	1,202	25%
114 (2015-16)	295	1,322	22%
115 (2017-18)	224	1,207	19%

Notes: Data from Vote View (www.voteview.com). Faction Opposition Votes are votes on which the majority of at least one faction voted against the majority of its party. The table shows such faction opposition occurs on nearly a quarter of all votes in Congress.

Once again, such aggregate analyses appear to mask significant and important variation. For example, opposition votes appear to be much more common for centrist factions than for more extreme factions. The centrist Blue Dog Coalition opposed the Democrats on half of all the *Faction Opposition Votes* identified in Table 1. But perhaps that is due to centrist legislators being naturally more predisposed to join with the opposing party, regardless of whether they were in a faction or not. Second, factions cast opposition votes much more frequently when in the minority party than the majority party. For example, Blue Dogs opposed their party on 2% of

[9] Over-time comparisons should be taken with some caution, as the number and nature of factions changed across these Congresses, as illustrated in Figure 1.

all votes when Democrats were the majority party, but once relegated to the minority, their opposition increased to 14%. When in the minority, their defection may be of little consequence to the outcome of the vote, and may not even have been of great concern to their party. Hence, it is difficult to discern when and where faction voting against the party actually obstructed an otherwise successful policy change; and much faction influence may take place behind the scenes, and therefore may not be observed by this sort of analysis.

On the whole, these aggregate patterns suggest that factions may be influential both in advancing and obstructing policy change. However, they point to significant challenges and potential paths forward for characterizing the lawmaking effects of ideological factions. Specifically, rather than a consistent and sizable effect on lawmaking across all factions, there appear to be *conditions* under which factions may have more or less influence. These conditions include whether the faction is within the majority or minority party, the ideological position of the faction within its party, and the extent to which the faction may be pivotal in advancing or denying policy change.

Additionally, any explorations of such influence must account for such considerations as the status that faction members have within their parties (for example, whether they are comprised of senior or junior members). Such assessments are likely best achieved by focusing on individual legislators within factions, compared to those not belonging to factions, so that these additional considerations can be controlled for on a case-by-case basis. Finally, the assessment of faction influence on lawmaking may require us to engage with the counter-factual – would a group of lawmakers be equally successful if they were not part of the faction, but simply shared the same interests or ideological positions?

The Conditions for Effective Lawmaking by Faction Members

Drawing on their customized information, social networks (i.e., Hammond 2001; Ringe and Victor 2013; Victor and Ringe 2009), and dedicated staff resources, factions can serve as a natural starting place for their members' coalition-building activities. Building on this foundation, there are a range of circumstances for which we expect that faction membership might be valuable to legislators in their efforts to advance their bills.

First, it is important to recognize that majority-party leaders have strong incentives to suppress the influence of factions within their party's ranks, in part because, as Pearson (2015, 171) puts it, "intraparty coalitions have the potential to limit party leaders' ability to discipline their members by making demands on leaders for resources and opportunities." In response to these threats, party leaders have historically sought to centralize valuable political information (Curry 2015) and cut off resources that are available to factions within their ranks (Clarke 2020b). These efforts seem particularly important in an era of partisan parity, given that any fleeting hold on power in the modern House may be threatened by failing to rein in majority-party factions (Lee 2016, 209). The competing policy agendas of party and faction leaders can likewise obfuscate the majority party's core principles and weaken its electoral reputation (Grynaviski 2010, Lupu 2013). The House Freedom Caucus, for example, constantly evaluates policy positions that are staked out by party leaders, with the intention of publicly contradicting the party line if they find the GOP position to be deficient in some way.[10]

Given that majority-party leaders, through their agenda setting and committee assignment authority (e.g., Cox and McCubbins 2007), ostensibly possess the means to suppress faction influence, majority-party factions likely struggle in the face of their party's institutional

[10] Author interview with House Freedom Caucus staffers, April 16, 2019.

advantages. As one Freedom Caucus staffer put it, majority-party factions face "unbelievably intense partisan pressure" to get in line during "live-fire exercises" (i.e., when there is a real prospect of changing public law).[11] Even well-organized factions have few prospects for circumventing the agenda-setting capacity of their party leaders. Hence, they will likely have limited success at advancing their initiatives when their party is in the majority, if their agenda runs counter to leader priorities.

In contrast, minority-party leaders lack the means to rein in factions within their own ranks. While several procedural tools (e.g., the motion to recommit) remain squarely in the jurisdiction of the minority party (e.g., Krehbiel and Meirowitz 2002), and while majority-party leaders historically respect the minority-party leader committee requests (e.g., Krehbiel and Wiseman 2005), the minority party is effectively unable to forestall bill progression in Congress. As a result, minority-party faction members gain the resource benefits of faction affiliation without fearing that their own party's leaders will undermine their efforts. On this point, Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR) explained the Democratic Party's reaction to the Progressive Caucus's agenda when their party status changed from majority to minority:

> We were abused by our own leadership, to tell the truth.… Those people were holding down Democrats like myself who wanted to change course and wanted to offer a Progressive alternative, and those chains have been loosened. That could be one of the few truly good things to come out of this last [1994] election.[12]

In a similar vein, Bloch Rubin (2017, 199) quotes a long-time staffer who states that "being a minority in a minority is difficult on its face…[but]…the Blue Dogs didn't come to tilt at windmills. They were smart enough to form a group so that they could maximize their individual influence."

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[11] *Ibid.*

[12] Progressive Caucus (March 1995) press conference: https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4793415/progressive-caucus-welfare-reform

Consistent with this argument, in the 115th Congress (when Democrats were in the minority), the Blue Dog Coalition endorsed numerous pieces of substantive legislation, the Congressional Progressive Caucus, once again, released an annual budget ("The Better Off Budget"), and the New Democrat Coalition published a full-fledged policy agenda ("The American Prosperity Agenda"). While some of these proposals might have been advanced solely for position-taking purposes,[13] many others appeared to be earnest attempts to change public policy. Majority-party leaders, for their part, may allow the progression of legislation that is sponsored by minority-party faction members if they provide an opportunity to deepen schisms in the minority party and do not undermine majority-party goals. Although lawmaking opportunities are more limited for minority-party bill sponsors in recently polarized Congresses, nearly 100 substantive bills sponsored by minority-party members pass the House in each Congress we study, with about a third of them becoming law.[14]

In sum, majority-party leaders are likely able to rely upon agenda-setting privileges and other tools to suppress faction influence within their own ranks. Minority-party factions, however, are well-positioned to engage in policymaking activities, relative to their co-partisans; and leaders of the minority party are less able to prevent faction members from advancing proposals that conflict with the broader party coalition. Consideration of these inter- and intraparty dynamics motivates our first testable hypothesis:

Faction Party Status and Legislative Effectiveness Hypothesis*: Faction membership will increase a representative's legislative effectiveness for those in the minority party, but not for those in the majority party.*

[13] Green (2015, 155) provides an illustration of such a messaging strategy by the Republican Study Committee between 2009-2010.
[14] These are above and beyond commemorative bills passed in about equal numbers by minority- and majority-party lawmakers.

Competing with this partisan view is the perspective that ideological positions are more important than partisanship in determining policymaking success in Congress (e.g., Krehbiel 1993). Legislators in centrist factions, for example, have opportunities to build out their supporting coalition in either a liberal or conservative direction; and centrist factions may serve as valuable coalition partners for others because of their ideologically pivotal positions. Coalition leaders might make promises to advance the agendas of more ideologically centrist legislators in exchange for their votes (i.e., Snyder 1991), which would result in members of centrist factions being more effective lawmakers than members of ideologically extreme factions.

Consistent with this argument, political commentators often claim that moderate blocs of lawmakers can extract greater policy concessions from fragile governing coalitions. Along these lines, centrists have been observed to form sub-party, as well as bipartisan, coalitions to try to improve their influence in the House (e.g., Crabtree 2000);[15] and such centrist factions often portray themselves as being influential actors in the legislative process. The Republican Main Street Partnership, for example, advertises its organization as a force that "brings strength and cohesion to the ranks of governing Republicans" by "bringing together some of the most effective members of Congress" and "governing beyond partisan, political rhetoric."[16]

In contrast, non-centrist factions likely have fewer opportunities to build more extensive coalitions, given their far-right or far-left positions; and the legislative goals of the ideologically extreme factions of both parties may differ according to the substance of their policy agendas. As suggested by former Congressman Charlie Dent (R-PA), organizations such as the House Freedom Caucus might be viewed as a "group of rejectionists, who have no interest in

[15] Blue Dog Democrats and Main Street Partnership Republicans considered merging in the early 2000s, foreshadowing the development of new, bipartisan coalitions of centrists, such as the Problem Solvers Caucus.
[16] https://republicanmainstreet.org/ (accessed March 15, 2018).

governing" (Wallis 2016). Liberal factions, on the other hand, may readily embrace the prospect of advancing a large number of new government-sponsored initiatives, even if they have little chance of success (e.g., "The People's Budget," introduced by the Congressional Progressive Caucus in 2019). These theoretical observations and public statements motivate our second testable hypothesis:

Faction Ideology and Legislative Effectiveness Hypothesis*: Faction membership will increase a representative's legislative effectiveness for those in ideologically centrist factions, but not for those in ideologically extreme factions.*

In contrast to factions gaining power from being ideologically pivotal, faction strength may arise due to the faction's size. The House Freedom Caucus, for example, formed with the intention of recruiting at least 29 members – "enough so that if they voted as a bloc, they could defeat the leadership" (Alberta 2019, 221). Factions with expansive rosters have, at least on paper, the capacity to decide which party wins any given legislative skirmish. However, such influence only exists within the majority party. Majority-party leaders can safely ignore members of the minority party – including organized sub-groups – so long as their own party remains largely unified in support of, or opposition to, any policy proposal. By contrast, the Speaker and other key congressional leaders cannot ignore a faction of co-partisans that controls enough votes to hand the minority party a legislative victory. Such a powerful position could be exploited to advance the agenda items of the pivotal faction's members as part of a larger legislative bargain.

Consistent with this claim, following the 2018 elections, observers were quick to note that the Congressional Progressive Caucus would "have more power than at any time in recent history after adding at least 20 lawmakers," now comprising the votes of "about 40 percent of House Democrats" in the 116th Congress (Viebeck and Kane 2018). Likewise, in the aftermath of

the 2010 midterms, the ranks of the Republican Study Committee grew to 164 members, such that it was larger than a majority of the House majority party. Leading political observers subsequently declared that "no single subgroup drives the legislative agenda like the RSC" (Alberta 2013). Official faction press releases similarly boast of their numbers to emphasize their relative power. Representative Derek Kilmer (D-WA), the current leader of the New Democrat Coalition, highlighted its "100-strong" roster in the 116th Congress, which would allow the group to "push Congress to look at old problems through a new lens" (Kilmer 2019). These claims suggest that numerically pivotal majority-party factions can wield tremendous influence. These insights motivate our third and final testable research hypothesis:

Pivotal Factions and Legislative Effectiveness Hypothesis*: Faction membership will increase a representative's legislative effectiveness for those in numerically pivotal factions.*

Data and Research Design

To test these hypotheses, we constructed a dataset covering caucus membership from 1995-2018, as well as a pre-caucus lawmaking baseline extending back to 1973. The unit of analysis is a member of the U.S. House of Representatives in a two-year Congress. We exclude from our data those lawmakers who left the House prior to the 104th Congress.[17] As described above, the party factions in our data include four Democratic and five Republican caucuses.

To test our hypotheses, we first create a *Faction Member* indicator variable for whether a member of the House belonged to any of these nine ideological caucuses. Next, we create two dichotomous measures to test our *Faction Party Status and Legislative Effectiveness Hypothesis*. *Minority-Party Faction* members are coded as "1" if they are both a member of the minority

[17] Keeping these lawmakers in the dataset does not substantively affect any of the results reported below. Our results are similarly robust if we re-run our analyses with only those members who first entered Congress in 1995 or later.

party and a member of any ideological faction. *Majority-Party Faction* members are similarly coded as "1" if they are members of the majority party as well as being members of any faction, and "0" otherwise.

To test our *Faction Ideology and Legislative Effectiveness Hypothesis*, we create three variables that indicate membership in a liberal, centrist, or conservative faction. We code any member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus or the Populist Caucus as members of a liberal faction. Members of the New Democrat Coalition, the Blue Dog Coalition, or the Republican Main Street Partnership are coded as centrist faction members. Finally, affiliates of the Republican Study Committee, Tea Party Caucus, the House Liberty Caucus, or House Freedom Caucus are each coded as conservative faction members.[18]

To test our *Pivotal Factions and Legislative Effectiveness Hypothesis*, we construct a *Pivotal Faction* variable to indicate which lawmakers are affiliated with a majority-party faction that has the capacity to defeat the majority party's agenda. Specifically, we identify factions as *pivotal* if they are in the majority party and have rosters that are at least as large as half of the two-party seat margin in the Congress. For example, in the 110th Congress, Democrats held 233 seats, while Republicans held only 202; and the Blue Dogs had 43 members. Consequently, the Blue Dogs were coded as a *Pivotal Faction* because their roster exceeded the number of votes that was necessary to sink a majority party proposal if the group were to defect as a bloc and vote

[18] We explore an alternative measurement strategy in the appendix, presented in Figure A4, in which we employ the "interflex" package developed by Hainmueller, Mummolo, and Xu (2017) to flexibly estimate the marginal effect of faction affiliation at six ideological locations in DW-NOMINATE space (Poole and Rosenthal 1997) that roughly correspond to centrist, mainstream, and non-centrist areas in the distributions in the Republican and Democratic parties in Congress. The results are largely similar to the effects presented in the paper.

with the minority party.[19] For robustness we also examine whether the size of a faction matters, beyond this pivotal vs. non-pivotal dichotomy.[20]

To measure the lawmaking effectiveness of Representatives in our dataset, we employ Legislative Effectiveness Scores (LES) for every member of the U.S. House of Representatives who served between the 93rd-115th Congress (1973-2018). As constructed and defined by Volden and Wiseman (2014, 18) the LES measures the "proven ability to advance a member's agenda items through the legislative process and into law." More specifically, drawing on information from the Library of Congress website, www.congress.gov (and its predecessor, THOMAS), for each Representative, the LES accounts for how many bills they introduced in each Congress, how many of those bills received any sort of action in committee and/or action beyond committee, how many of those bills passed the House, and how many became law. Each bill is likewise coded to account for whether it was primarily commemorative in nature, "substantive," or "substantive and significant." These fifteen bill-level indicators (five lawmaking stages × three levels of significance) are then combined as a weighted average to produce a Representative's Legislative Effectiveness Score, which captures how successful a Representative is at moving their sponsored legislative agenda items through the lawmaking process in a two-year Congress in comparison to all other Representatives. Scores are normalized to take an average value of "1" within each Congress, facilitating easy comparison across legislators.[21]

[19] In this example, the absolute difference in the two-party seat share was 31. Hence, a Democratic defection of 16 votes would cause a Democratic loss on any roll call. The 43 Blue Dogs were more than double this minimal vote threshold, so the Blue Dogs were coded as being pivotal in this Congress.
[20] The results of these analyses mimic the main Pivotal Faction findings below, and are illustrated in Figures A8 and A9 in the Appendix. More broadly, we provide the frequency of changes in faction membership observations across various subsets in Appendix Table A1.
[21] Volden and Wiseman (2014, 51-54) demonstrate that there is a very high correlation between Legislative Effectiveness Scores that also account for amendment activity and the standard LES used in this analysis.

While Legislative Effectiveness Scores capture an individual lawmaker's proven ability to *advance* legislative proposals, they do not allow us to evaluate the effect of faction affiliation on many other aspects of legislative influence, including the ability to engage in effective obstruction or other forms of negative agenda power. We are likewise unable to estimate the impact of faction affiliation on group-level objectives (beyond those explored above), and we cannot speak to a faction's collective capacity to shape the policy agenda of their respective political party beyond the sum of their individual proposals. Nevertheless, given that our objective here is to identify whether (and how) faction affiliation contributes to Representatives' lawmaking successes, the use of Legislative Effectiveness Scores serves our purposes well.

That said, exploring the relationship between faction membership and legislative effectiveness raises an important measurement challenge. After all, Representatives voluntarily join each of these groups, which might induce a clear selection effect in each iteration of our key independent variables. Our results might easily be confounded if the reasons that lawmakers join a faction are correlated with their subsequent legislative performance. To address these concerns, we include both Congress and Representative fixed effects in our analyses,[22] so that we can interpret our results as the relative change in a Representative's legislative effectiveness after she joins an ideological faction, while also controlling for other factors.

We also include several control variables that are not accounted for by our fixed effects. Here, too, we rely upon data presented by Volden and Wiseman (2014), to include dichotomous indicators for whether a Representative is a committee chair, a subcommittee chair, a member of the majority party, and/or on a "power" committee (i.e., Appropriations, Rules, Ways and Means). We also account for a Representative's congressional seniority, a non-linear measure of

[22] As the appendix tables show, our primary findings are not dependent upon the inclusion of fixed effects.

her electoral security (based on her vote share in the previous election), and her ideological distance from the median member of the House (using DW-NOMINATE scores).[23] Appendix Tables A2-A6 present the results from regression analyses to assess the relationship between these variables and a Representative's Legislative Effectiveness Score across various model specifications. Summary statistics for each of our variables can be found in Appendix Table A7, and we present the mean value for each of our control variables, by faction affiliation, in Appendix Table A8.

Results

Before we test our three hypotheses, we first examine whether there is any unconditional benefit (for legislative effectiveness) associated with faction affiliation. The results in Table 2, where the dependent variable is Representative *i*'s LES in Congress *t*, suggest that after controlling for positions of institutional influence, electoral security, and a variety of other factors, membership in one of the nine ideological blocs in our dataset does not appear to significantly improve the legislative effectiveness of faction members. This null finding continues to hold when we disaggregate our *Faction Member* variable into nine faction-specific indicators included in a single model (again, with all control variables and fixed effects).[24]

The results suggest that, with the exception of the Blue Dogs, affiliating with any faction does not generally improve a Representative's Legislative Effectiveness Score.[25] Given that Blue Dogs were a minority-party faction in ten of the twelve Congresses, and that they are among the most centrist factions, their enhanced lawmaking effectiveness appears to be

[23] Our results do not depend upon the inclusion of these covariates.
[24] See Figures A2 and A3 for models that specify each individual faction in our dataset.
[25] Furthermore, we do not observe a general benefit from faction affiliation, conditional on party. Namely, membership in a Republican or Democratic faction does not necessarily improve a Representative's prospects at advancing her legislation.

consistent with both the *Faction Party Status and Legislative Effectiveness Hypothesis* and the *Faction Ideology and Legislative Effectiveness Hypothesis*.

Table 2: Faction Affiliation and Changes in Legislative Effectiveness

	DV: Legislative Effectiveness Score
Faction Member	0.05
	(0.06)
Majority Party	1.06***
	(0.20)
Vote Percent	0.04**
	(0.01)
Vote Percent (Squared)	-0.0002**
	(0.0001)
Majority Leader	0.40**
	(0.15)
Minority Leader	-0.14
	(0.11)
Chair	2.87***
	(0.27)
Subcommittee Chair	0.61***
	(0.10)
Power Committee	-0.15*
	(0.06)
Seniority	0.01
	(0.02)
Chamber Distance	1.26*
	(0.52)
Constant	-2.49***
	(0.73)
Observations	6,775
R-squared	0.58
Legislator Fixed Effects	Yes
Congress Fixed Effects	Yes

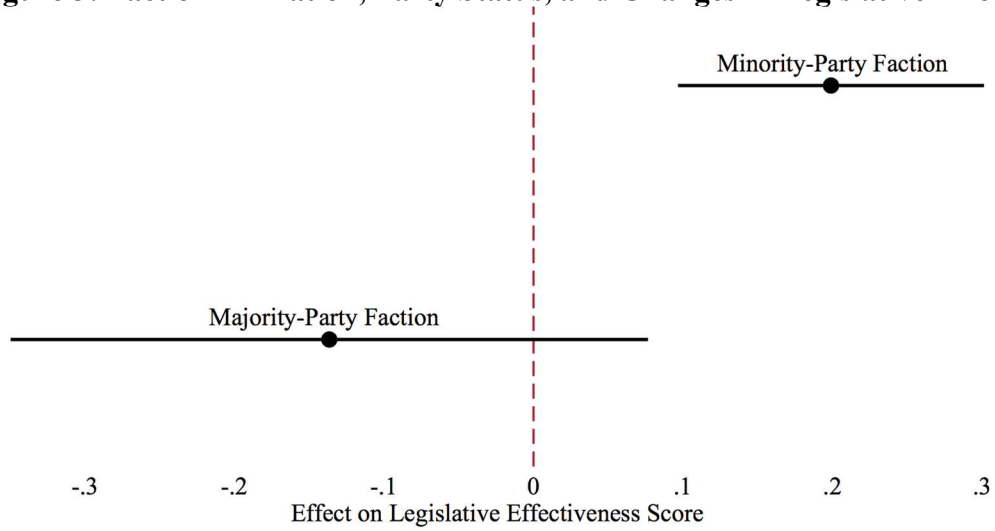
****p < 0.001, **p < 0.01, *p < 0.05*

Notes: Ordinary least squares regression coefficients with Representative fixed effects and Congress fixed effects, standard errors in parentheses clustered by Representative. Dependent variable is Representative *i*'s Legislative Effectiveness Score in Congress *t*. Our results indicate that the unconditional affiliation with any faction does not significantly increase a Representative's Legislative Effectiveness Score.

To explore these patterns more systematically across all factions, we turn next to a more explicit test of the *Faction Party Status and Legislative Effectiveness Hypothesis*, which suggests that Representatives who are members of a faction while they are in the minority party will be

more effective lawmakers, relative to their non-faction co-partisans. This hypothesis is examined in Figure 3, which presents the coefficients from a regression where the dependent variable is Representative *i*'s LES in Congress *t*, and the key independent variables capture whether a Representative is in a minority-party faction or a majority-party faction. Consistent with the *Faction Party Status and Legislative Effectiveness Hypotheses*, we see that Representatives who are in factions while in the minority party become notably more effective than their non-faction-affiliated minority-party counterparts. Majority-party faction members, however, become somewhat less effective; but this latter finding does not achieve statistical significance by conventional standards. Because the average LES for all minority-party legislators is 0.42, the coefficient on the minority-party faction variable represents a remarkable 50% increase in relative lawmaking effectiveness for these faction members.

Figure 3: Faction Affiliation, Party Status, and Changes in Legislative Effectiveness

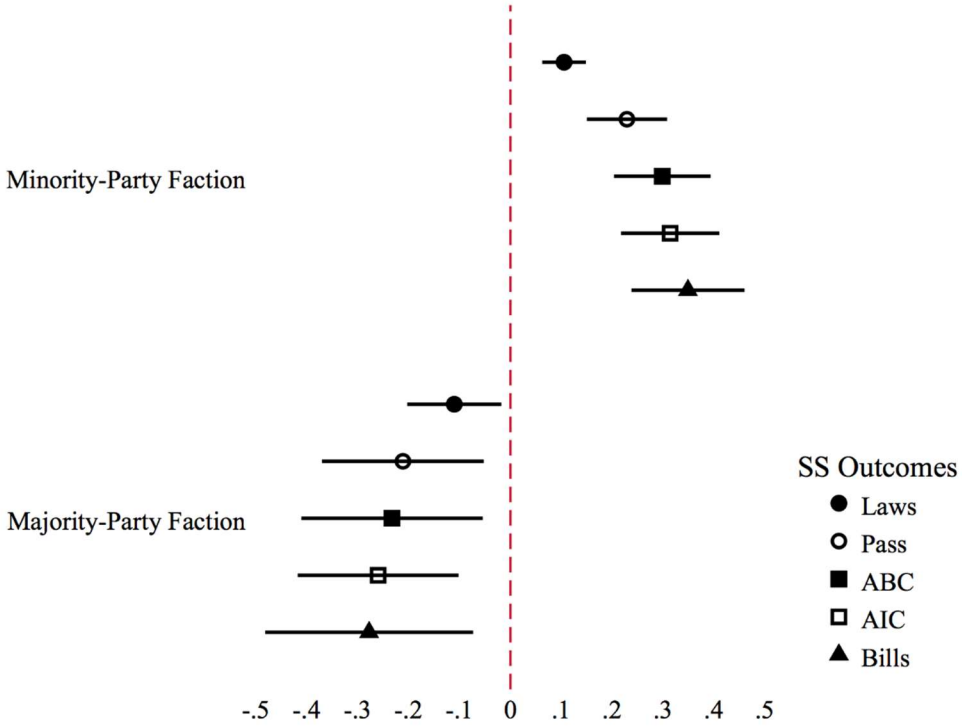


Notes: Ordinary least squares regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals, with Representative and Congress fixed effects and the control variables shown in Table 2. The dependent variable is Representative *i*'s Legislative Effectiveness Score in Congress *t*. The results indicate that affiliation with a minority-party faction – but not a majority-party faction – is associated with increases in a Representative's Legislative Effectiveness Score.

One may wish to dismiss these findings, and suggest that minority-party lawmakers are only successful at advancing modest or commemorative legislative proposals. In Figure 4, however, we focus on the most important "substantive and significant" bills and find that minority-party faction affiliation is positively related to a Representative experiencing greater success in advancing these bills through every stage in the legislative process. In contrast, faction affiliation appears to actually harm majority-party legislators' attempts to advance substantive and significant legislation. An in-depth consideration of these minority-party faction proposals reveals that they addressed a wide range of topics, including employment discrimination (H.R. 1755, 113th Congress), veterans health care (H.R. 3645, 107th Congress), welfare reform (H.R. 3266, 104th Congress), marijuana policy (H.R. 2652, 113th Congress), network neutrality (H.R. 5273, 109th Congress), and many additional weighty issues in American society.

Like the broader population of legislative proposals, the bills advanced by minority-party faction members also varied in their outcomes. Many of these bills lingered and died in committee. In some cases, however, these initiatives led to strange coalitions and swift passage. For example, Rep. Scott Garrett's (R-NJ) bill to amend the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (H.R. 3959, 110th Congress) proposed a hike in flood-insurance premiums as a means of raising millions of dollars in revenue for the National Flood Insurance Program. Garrett, a member of the conservative Republican Study Committee who would later help found the Freedom Caucus, received strong support for his bill from the Progressive Caucus and liberal majority-party member Barney Frank (D-MA), who stated that the bill "advances the legitimate concerns of both those interested in saving taxpayer money and those interested in environmental protection" (*Congressional Record* 2008). The bill passed the House by voice vote less than three months after Garrett introduced it.

Figure 4: The Effect of Faction Affiliation, by Party Status, on Substantive and Significant Legislative Outcomes



Notes: Ordinary least squares regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals from five distinct models with Representative and Congress fixed effects and all control variables shown in Table 2. The dependent variables in these regressions are: (1) Representative *i*'s number of substantive and significant legislative proposals (Bills), and the number of those proposals to (2) receive action in a committee (AIC), (3) receive action beyond the committee (ABC), (4) pass the House, or (5) become law in Congress *t*. The results indicate that affiliation with a minority-party faction increases a Representative's legislative productivity and success in reaching each stage of the lawmaking process for substantive and significant bills. Conversely, affiliation with a majority-party faction corresponds with a reduction in legislative productivity and success for these bills.

More broadly considered, on average, one in three minority-party non-faction lawmakers sees one of the substantive bills she sponsors pass the House. This is true for one in two minority-party faction members, however. In short, the results presented in Figure 3 do not merely capture a talent to name a series of post offices or to commemorate public spaces. Faction affiliation appears to increase a Representative's relative legislative effectiveness in important

ways, but *only* when those factions are in the minority party.[26] Hence, it appears that factions can meaningfully promote legislators' agendas, so long as their parties' leaders are not in a position to counter their legislative progress.

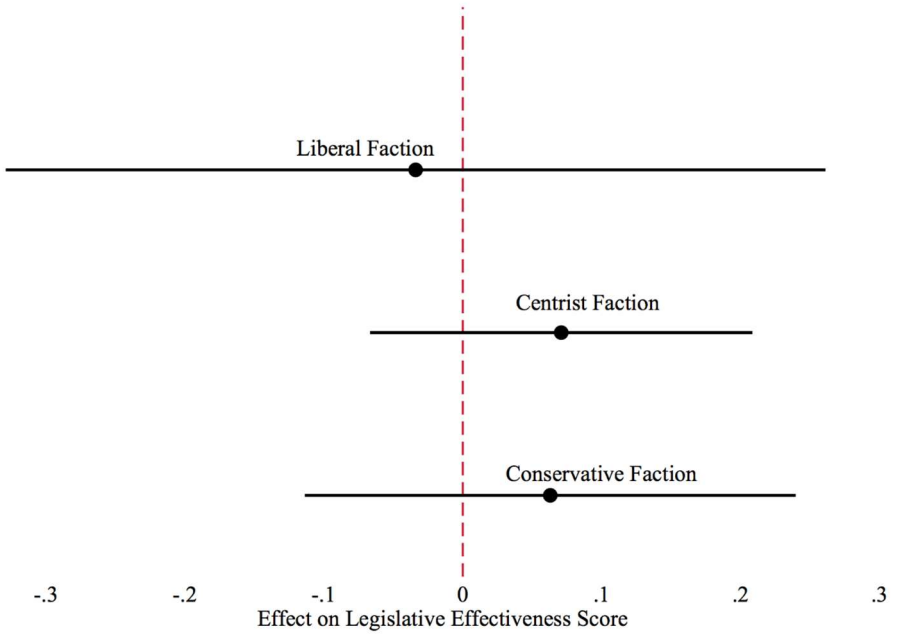
We interpret these results as an institutional resiliency effect of factions. Legislators who choose to affiliate with majority-party factions may be disadvantaged in the lawmaking process, but any such loss is more than fully reversed when in the minority. While losing the majority strips many elected officials of significant power, those who can draw upon the institutional support of ideological factions can continue to legislate with far less interruption. Committee chairs, party leaders, and other loyal members of the party face considerable setbacks after the House is lost to the opposition. Faction members, by contrast, continue to draw upon the same dedicated caucus staff to coordinate legislative action and capture valuable electoral resources.[27]

Next, we turn to our consideration of the *Faction Ideology and Legislative Effectiveness Hypothesis* by presenting the regression coefficients for liberal, centrist, and conservative faction membership. The results in Figure 5 suggest that membership in an ideologically centrist faction does not significantly contribute to a Representative's legislative effectiveness. While the Blue Dogs, New Democrats, and Main Street Partnership may appear poised to utilize their ideological position to build broad coalitions to advance their members' agendas, we find no evidence that membership in these groups leads to greater legislative effectiveness, relative to non-centrist factions, or even those legislators who choose not to affiliate with any ideological

[26] As an additional robustness check, we replicated our analyses in this section after iteratively dropping factions. Our results do not appear to be driven by any single faction, including the Blue Dogs.
[27] While it is difficult to quantify the organizational capacity of factions, appendix Figures A10 and A11 provide some evidence to support this interpretation.

faction. Moreover, contrary to the argument that liberal factions are more prone to legislative activism than are conservative factions, Figure 5 hints at the opposite pattern.[28]

Figure 5: Faction Affiliation, Ideology, and Changes in Legislative Effectiveness

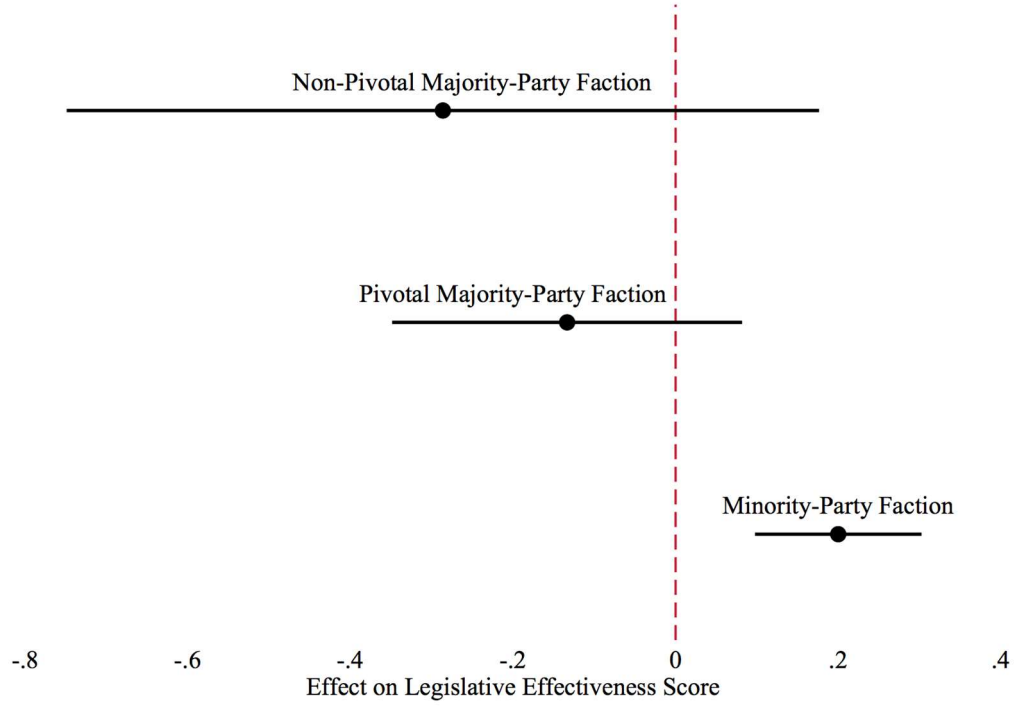


Notes: Ordinary least squares regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals, with Representative and Congress fixed effects and the control variables shown in Table 2. The dependent variable is Representative *i*'s Legislative Effectiveness Score in Congress *t*. The results do not support the claim that membership in a centrist faction increases a Representative's Legislative Effectiveness Score.

Finally, we turn to our consideration of the *Pivotal Factions and Legislative Effectiveness Hypothesis* in Figure 6, in which we present the results for pivotal and non-pivotal factions. As with all models presented in this section, these results continue to include the full array of control variables, in addition to Congress and Representative fixed effects.

[28] To explore these ideological patterns further, we separate the conservative, liberal, and centrist faction variables by their majority- or minority-party status. The results from this analysis are presented in in Figure A6. In Appendix Figure A7, we pool the conservative and liberal factions and re-estimate these models, controlling for whether a Representative is in a centrist or non-centrist faction. Our findings in both figures further support the claim that party status, rather than ideological positioning, is the relevant condition for improving the legislative effectiveness of faction members.

Figure 6. Faction Affiliation, Faction Size, and Changes in Legislative Effectiveness



Notes: Ordinary least squares regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals for different faction types with Representative and Congress fixed effects and the control variables shown in Table 2. The dependent variable is Representative *i*'s Legislative Effectiveness Score in Congress *t*. The results indicate that membership in a majority-party faction – irrespective of pivotality – does not increase a Representative's Legislative Effectiveness Score, whereas membership in a minority-party faction continues to aid their members' lawmaking success.

The results provide no evidence that pivotal majority-party factions can leverage their positions to advance their members' policy proposals. In fact, the coefficients for both pivotal and non-pivotal majority-party factions are negative, although statistically indistinguishable from zero. Being a member of a minority-party faction, however, continues to correspond to a statistically significant increase a Representative's Legislative Effectiveness Score. In the Appendix (Figures A8 and A9), we further evaluate subsets of pivotal factions as well as the

importance of faction size in both the minority and majority parties.[29] Those results, too, suggest that while minority-party factions of various sizes provide a relative lawmaking advantage to their members, majority-party factions offer no such benefits.[30]

In sum, across numerous specifications and tests, we find strong and consistent support for the *Faction Party Status and Legislative Effectiveness Hypothesis*, but not for faction centrality or size facilitating members' lawmaking success. This set of results is robust to different time periods – including the full set of legislators or only those who entered Congress after the start of the data in 1995, as well as limiting the analysis to the 108th-115th Congresses, for which we have complete faction membership data. The findings are also robust to different coding schemes for factions – treating the Tea Party Caucus and Taxed Enough Already (TEA) Caucus as the same or separate, coding the Populists as centrists or as liberals, coding the Republican Study Committee as centrists or as conservatives, and coding ideological positions as well as pivotal factions and faction sizes in multiple ways. The results also hold if we include those who belong to multiple factions as members of each, or if we exclude affiliates of multiple factions from the dataset entirely.[31] Finally, the results are also robust to dropping each faction individually from the analyses.

Through all of these examinations, we are highly confident that faction membership does not improve a lawmaker's effectiveness – with one notable and consistent exception. Faction

[29] Across numerous ways of measuring the impact of roster size (e.g., creating incremental bins of various sizes or estimating faction size as a percentage of the majority party), we do not find an individual lawmaking benefit from joining any size majority-party faction.

[30] As an additional robustness check, we evaluate whether membership in a majority-party faction is conditional on unified control of Congress or the government. Here, too, we find no evidence that majority-party factions improve their affiliates' prospects for advancing legislation, relative to their peers (although the minority-party faction benefit remains).

[31] About 11% of lawmakers in a given Congress were members of multiple factions between the 104th and 115th Congress. This number varies considerably throughout that time period; in some Congresses, overlapping membership was in the single digits, whereas more recent years included over 100 members in multiple factions.

members in the minority party are about 50% more effective as lawmakers, in comparison to their non-faction counterparts. They are more likely to introduce substantive bills and to see those bills pass the House and become law than are minority party members who do not join factions. This is true upon controlling for numerous characteristics that are important for individual lawmaking success, and upon including the fixed effects that compare these lawmakers to their own performance, when they were not part of the faction. It is also true when focusing only on the most substantive and significant proposals before Congress.

Conclusion

While journalists and pundits often comment on the positions of faction leaders to evaluate the likely fate of bills in the House, political scientists have provided scant evidence that factions and faction membership meaningfully contribute to policymaking in the U.S. Congress. We have drawn on new data on the membership of nine ideological caucuses and decades of legislative activity to test three hypotheses regarding the individual-level effect of intraparty faction affiliation on a Representative's legislative effectiveness. Our results indicate that membership in an ideological faction corresponds with an increase in a Representative's legislative effectiveness, but this relationship is highly conditional on other factors. We find little support for claims of a critical lawmaking role for members of centrist factions, or of ideologically extreme faction members eschewing lawmaking altogether. Nor do we find evidence that membership in large or otherwise pivotal blocs can improve a Representative's legislative effectiveness within the majority party. While such groups may play an important blocking role, we find no evidence that these caucuses help advance the proposals of their members.

These findings stand in contrast to much of the rhetoric surrounding ideological factions in the U.S. House. Some argue that "by developing factions within each party, moderates have a golden opportunity to reemerge as a power center in American politics" (Teles and Saldin 2019). Others claim that "ideological caucuses are looking to be a larger source of power in the majority" and, crucially, "numbers will matter for these groups" (McPherson 2018). Many of the null findings in this paper contribute to our understanding of ideological factions by failing to find evidence to support such claims.

By contrast, we find robust evidence that factions in the minority party – and only the minority party – improve their members' ability to advance their policy proposals. Such effects are large and extend even to the passage of high-profile substantive and significant legislation. These findings are consistent with the argument that factions possess the institutional capacity to support legislative activity for Representatives when they are in the minority party, but that their efforts are blunted (or even undermined) by an empowered set of party leaders when these same Representatives reclaim majority-party status in the House.

Although these findings are instructive, more research is needed to better understand the nature of American party factions in the contemporary Congress. While our initial aggregate explorations are suggestive, our analysis does not allow us to fully assess the ability of factions to *obstruct* a party's governing agenda or to evaluate more indirect forms of legislative influence (i.e., Green 2019). Additionally, our analysis focuses on the individual lawmakers within caucuses, rather than on each faction's collective goals. We also do not comment on the relative effectiveness of interparty/bipartisan factions, such as the "Problem Solvers Caucus," which, in the words of one of its members, "come[s] together nearly every week to engage in a common

sense approach to solving [the] nation's toughest issues."[32] Nor do we here study the numerous caucuses that focus on specific policy issues ranging from bicycles to bourbon and beyond. That said, we believe the approach we embrace here, exploring conditional effects and accounting for behavior prior to joining factions, helps pave the way for these further explorations.

[32] Quoted on the website of Problem Solvers' Co-Chair, Tom Reed (R-NY): https://reed.house.gov/issues/issue/?IssueID=14901 (accessed July 10, 2018).

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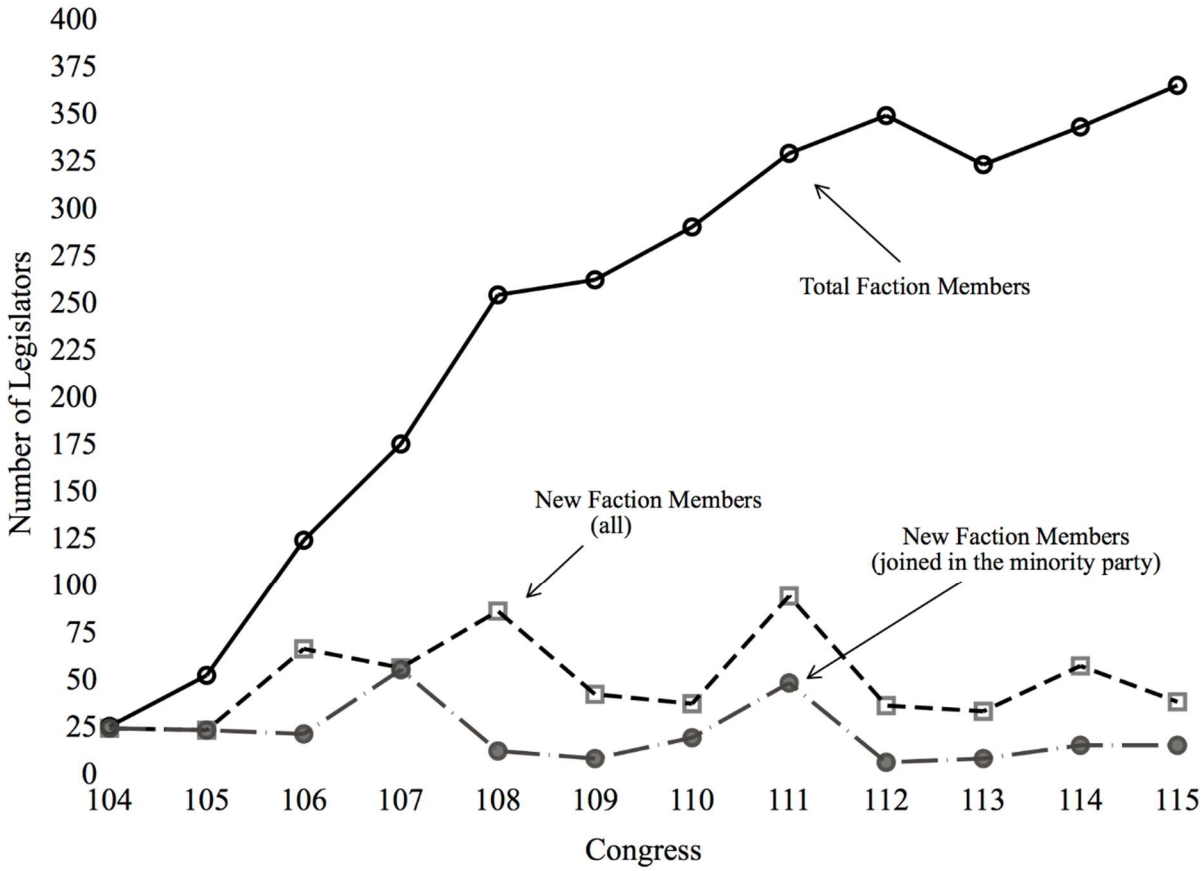
Supplemental Online Appendix for "The Conditional Lawmaking Benefits of Party Faction Membership in Congress"

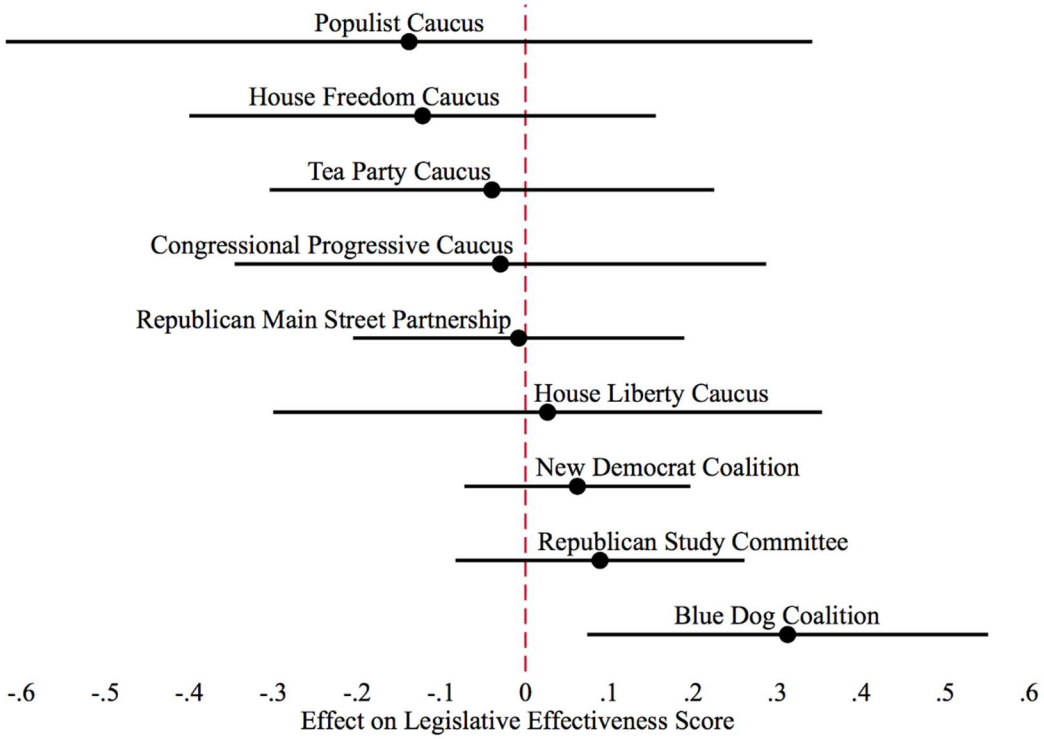
Contents:

Figure A1: Membership Patterns for Ideological Factions in the U.S. House



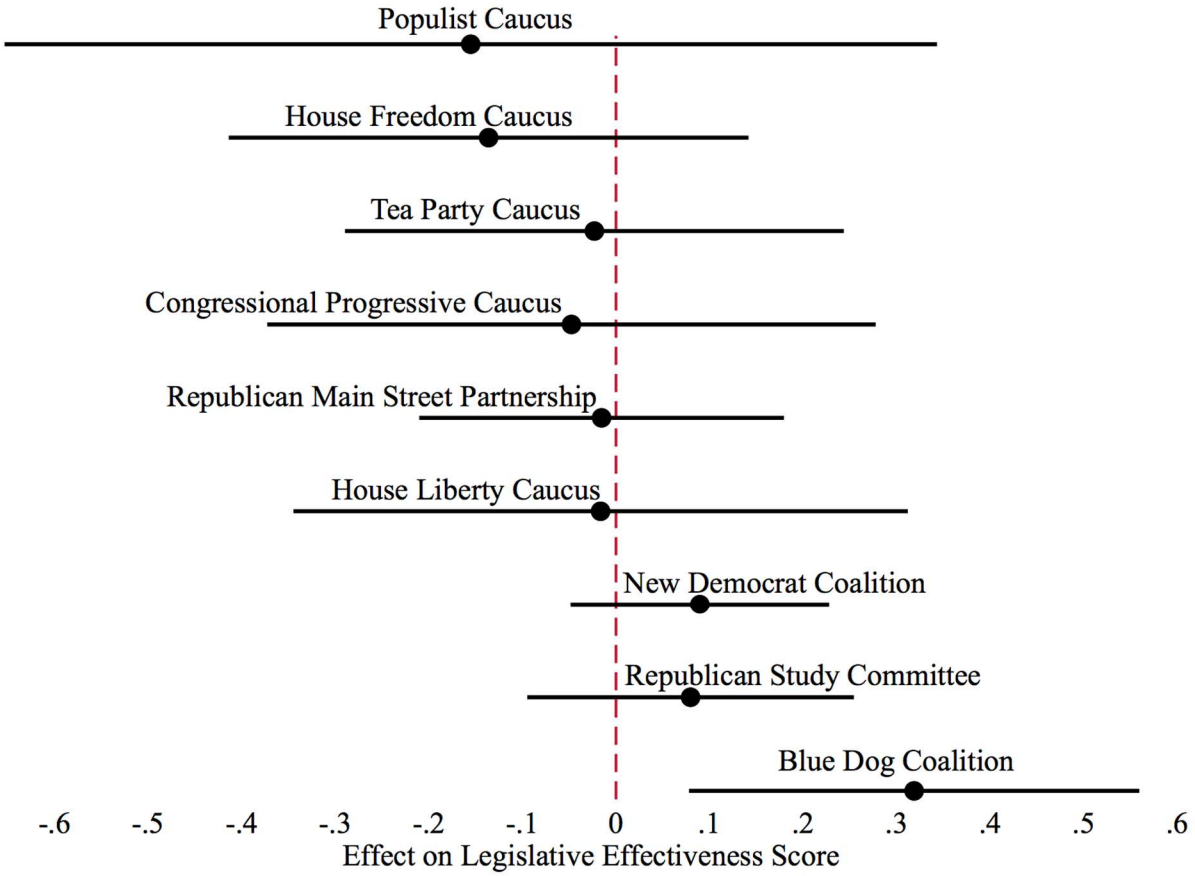
Notes: Three connected line plots illustrating faction membership patterns. The top line indicates the total number of lawmakers claiming membership in at least one of the nine factions considered in our analyses. The middle line indicates the total number of lawmakers that chose to join a faction in a given Congress. Lawmakers are coded as new faction members if they are a member of any of our factions at Congress *t* but did not claim an affiliation with that faction at Congress *t-1*. The bottom line indicates the total number of lawmakers that join a faction in the minority party, by Congress. Note that, because we are missing data on the Republican Study Committee and Progressive Caucus in several early Congresses, the extraordinary rise in total legislators affiliated with a faction may be overstated before the 108th Congress. Our multivariate results are robust to a more limited analysis of years for which we have complete faction data.

Figure A2: Faction Affiliation and Changes in Legislative Effectiveness, by Group



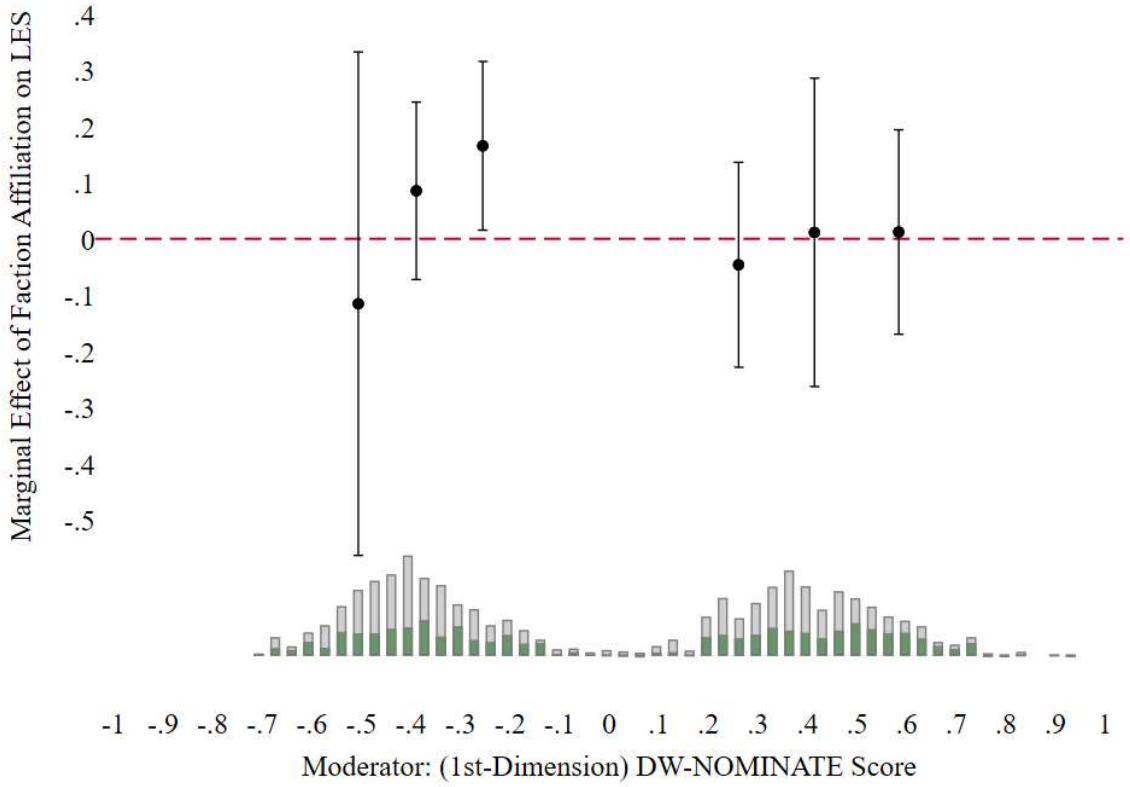
Notes: Ordinary least squares regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals, with Representative and Congress fixed effects and the control variables shown in Table 2. The dependent variable is Representative *i*'s Legislative Effectiveness Score in Congress *t*. The results indicate that affiliation with any individual faction does not generally increase a Representative's Legislative Effectiveness Score.

Figure A3: Faction Affiliation and Changes in Legislative Effectiveness, by Group, Across Nine Models



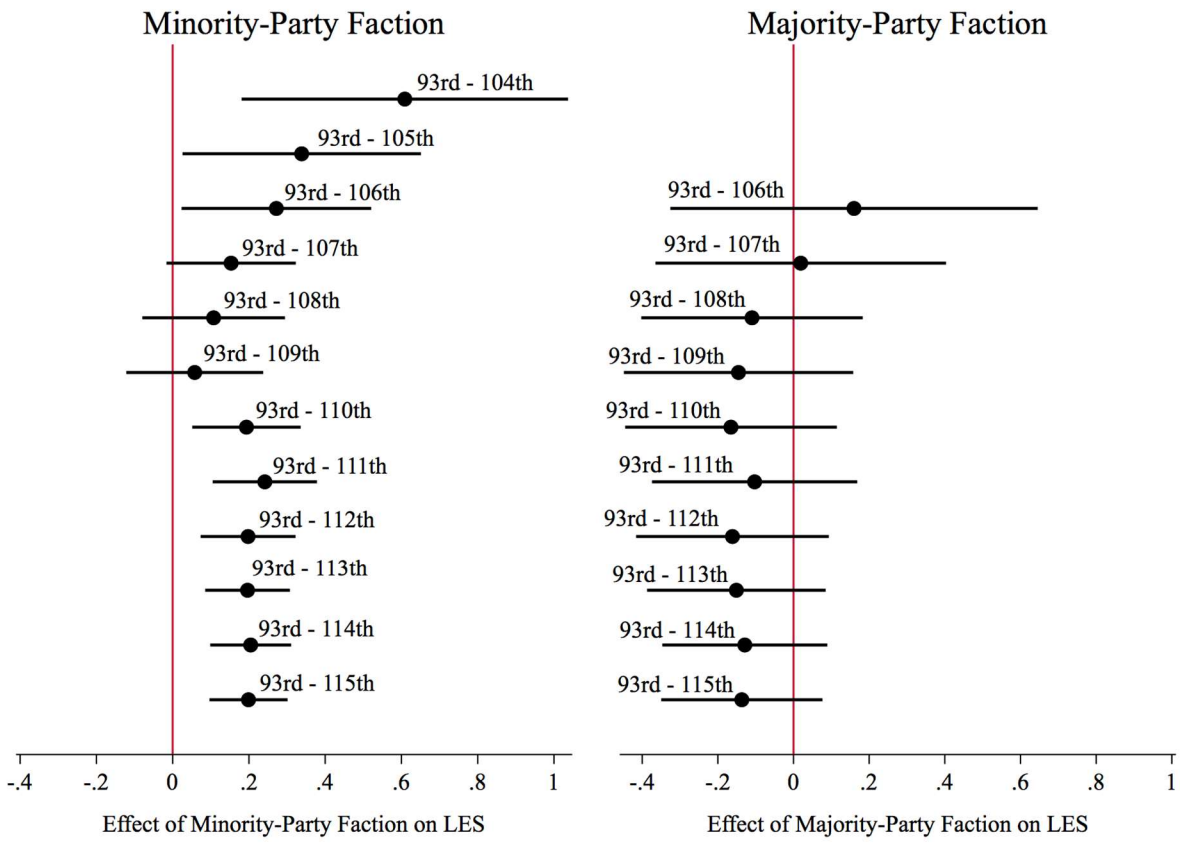
Notes: Ordinary least squares regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals from nine distinct models with Representative and Congress fixed effects and control variables shown in Table 2. Unlike Figure A2, each faction is tested individually (i.e., these coefficients are not from a single, pooled model). The dependent variable is Representative *i*'s Legislative Effectiveness Score in Congress *t*. Our results across these nine group-specific models indicate that an unconditional affiliation with any individual faction does not generally increase a Representative's Legislative Effectiveness Score.

Figure A4: Political Ideology, Faction Affiliation, and Changes in Legislative Effectiveness



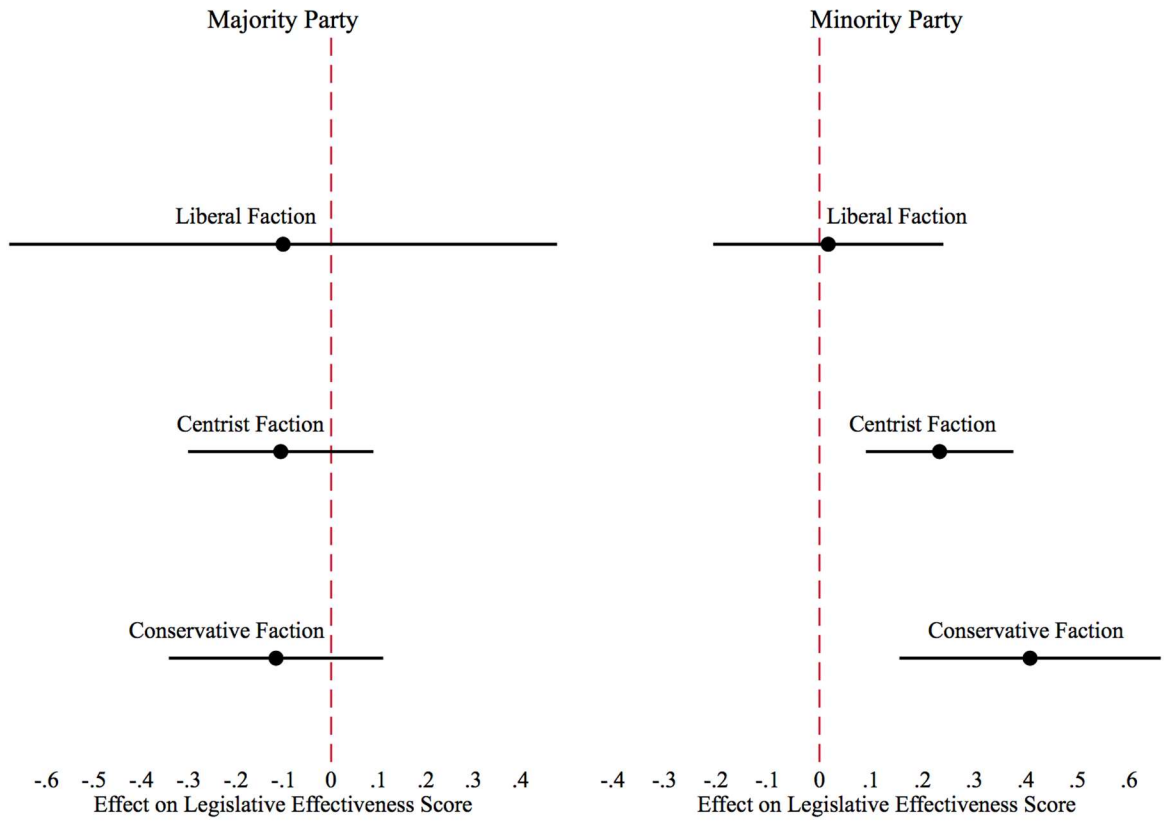
Notes: Binned coefficients, with 95% confidence intervals, representing the marginal effect of faction membership for Representatives of different ideologies. Estimates are from an interactive model, and include Representative and Congress fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered by Representative. The dependent variable is Representative *i*'s Legislative Effectiveness Score in Congress *t*. Our explanatory variable is membership in any faction, and the moderating variable is Representative *i*'s DW-NOMINATE score. The histogram indicates the distribution of faction members and unaffiliated Representatives across the range of observed DW-NOMINATE scores. The results provide some evidence that centrists' faction affiliation increases their legislative effectiveness, but this only appears to hold among centrist Democrats (who were in the minority party for a significant portion of the sample timeframe).

Figure A5: Robustness Checks After Iteratively Expanding Time Series



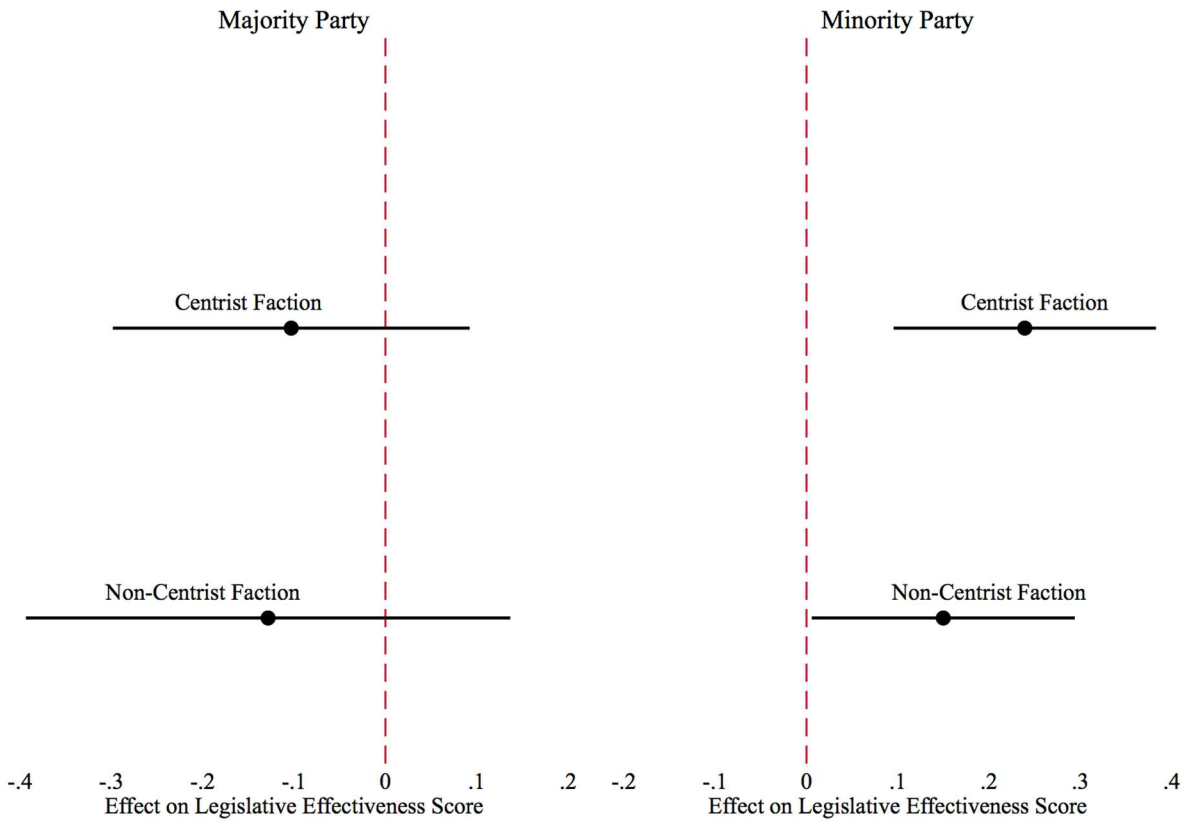
Notes: Minority-party and majority-party faction coefficients with 95% confidence intervals from our full model specification after iteratively adding years to our time series. Note that we do not have data on minority-party factions prior to the 104th Congress or majority-party factions prior to the 106th Congress. While majority-party faction status does not improve legislative effectiveness for the duration of our time series, the minority-party faction coefficient was uniformly positive and, with few exceptions, achieved statistical significance. These results give us some confidence that the findings from our two-way fixed effects model are consistent over time.

Figure A6: Evaluating the *Faction Ideology* and *Faction Party Status* Results



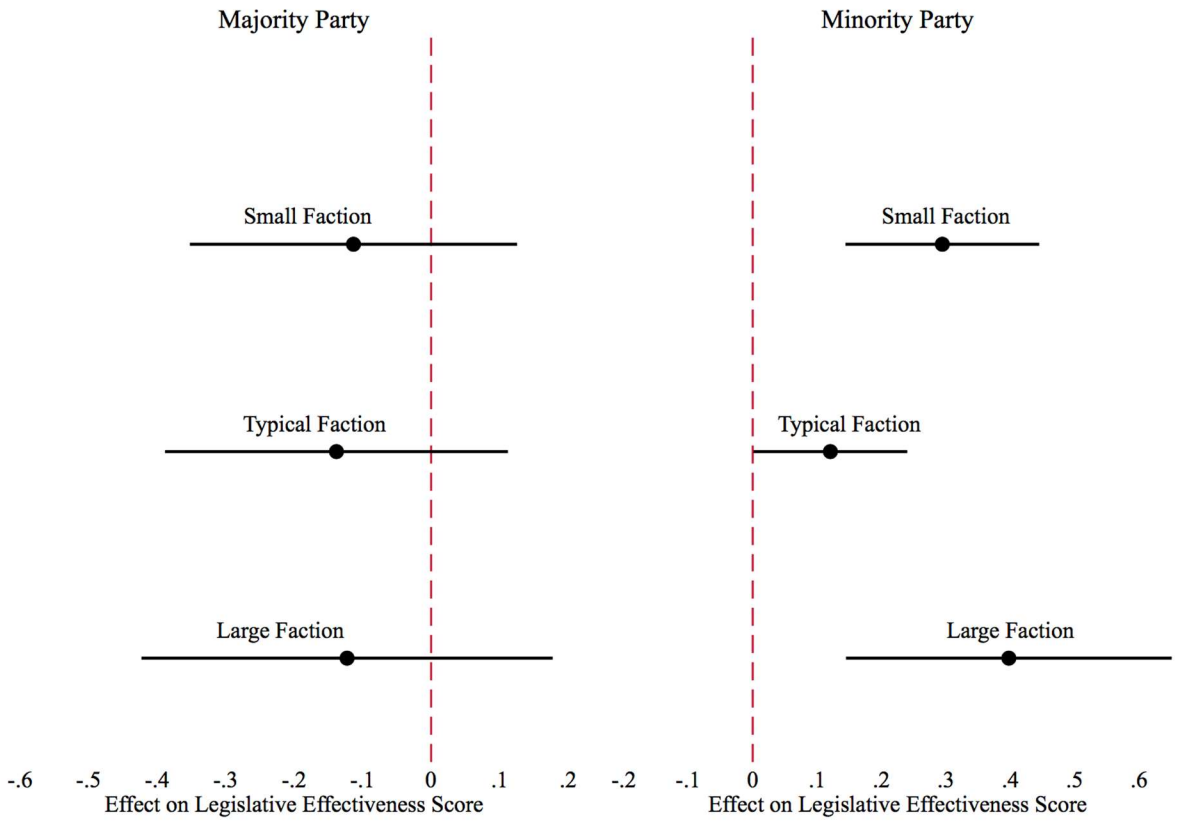
Notes: Ordinary least squares regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals, with Representative and Congress fixed effects and the control variables shown in Table 2. The dependent variable is Representative *i*'s Legislative Effectiveness Score in Congress *t*. The top pair of coefficients represents the effect of affiliation with a liberal faction, the coefficients in the middle indicate the effect of affiliation with a centrist faction, and the bottom two coefficients indicate affiliation with a conservative faction, by party status. The left pane indicates coefficients for each faction type in the majority party, while the right pane presents coefficients for ideological factions in the minority party. Results provide further support for the argument that affiliation with a minority-party faction improves legislative effectiveness, but they do not provide clear support for the argument that ideological centrism increases lawmaking capacity.

Figure A7: Reevaluating the Faction Party Status Results (Centrist v. Non-Centrist)



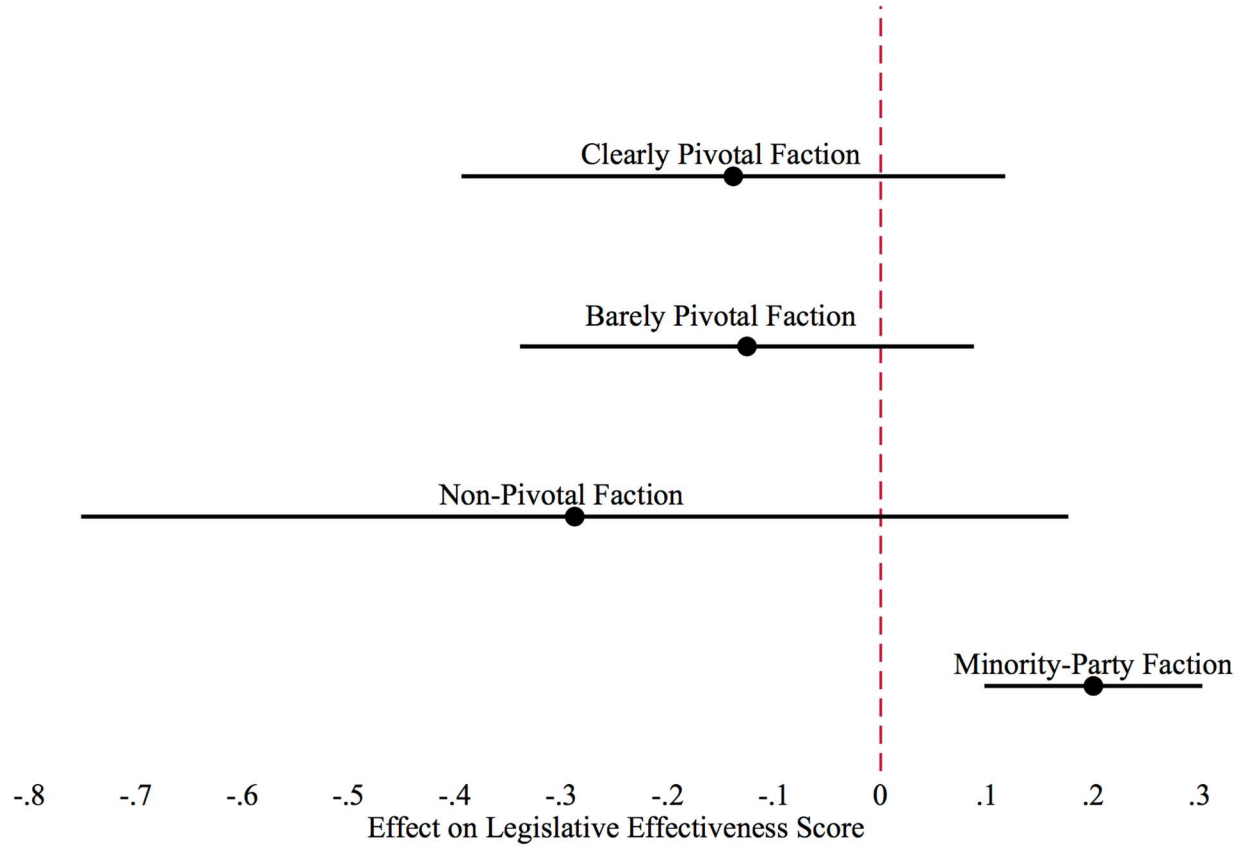
Notes: Ordinary least squares regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals, with Representative and Congress fixed effects and the control variables shown in Table 2. The dependent variable is Representative *i*'s Legislative Effectiveness Score in Congress *t*. The coefficients on the right indicate the effect of affiliation with centrist (i.e., the Republican Main Street Partnership, the Blue Dog Coalition, or the New Democrat Coalition) or non-centrist factions (the Freedom Caucus, the House Liberty Caucus, the Tea Party Caucus, the Republican Study Committee, the Populist Caucus, or the Progressive Caucus) in the minority party; the left pane indicates similar coefficients for those in the majority party. Results provide further support that affiliation with a minority-party faction improves legislative effectiveness – irrespective of faction centrism.

Figure A8: Evaluating Faction Size and Party Status



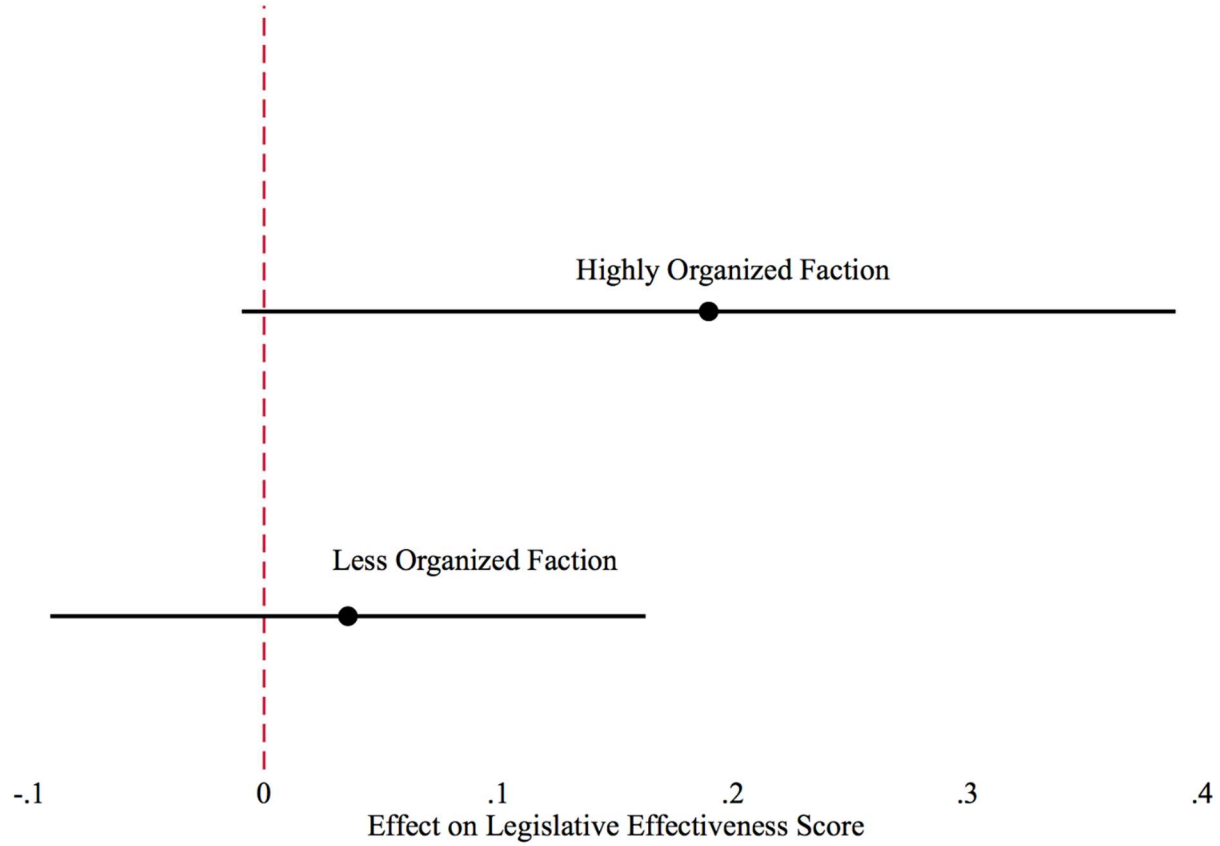
Notes: Ordinary least squares regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals, with Representative and Congress fixed effects and the control variables shown in Table 2. The dependent variable is Representative *i*'s Legislative Effectiveness Score in Congress *t*. The coefficients in the right panel indicate the effect of affiliation with a minority-party faction of various sizes on a Representative's LES; the left panel presents the results of similar coefficients for majority-party faction members. Small factions are all those groups that are at least one standard deviation smaller than the average faction roster size in our dataset. Large factions are those that are one standard deviation or more above the average faction. Typical factions are all others. Our results indicate that affiliation in a minority-party faction – irrespective of faction size – increases a Representative's Legislative Effectiveness Score.

Figure A9: Faction Affiliation, Faction Size, and Changes in Legislative Effectiveness



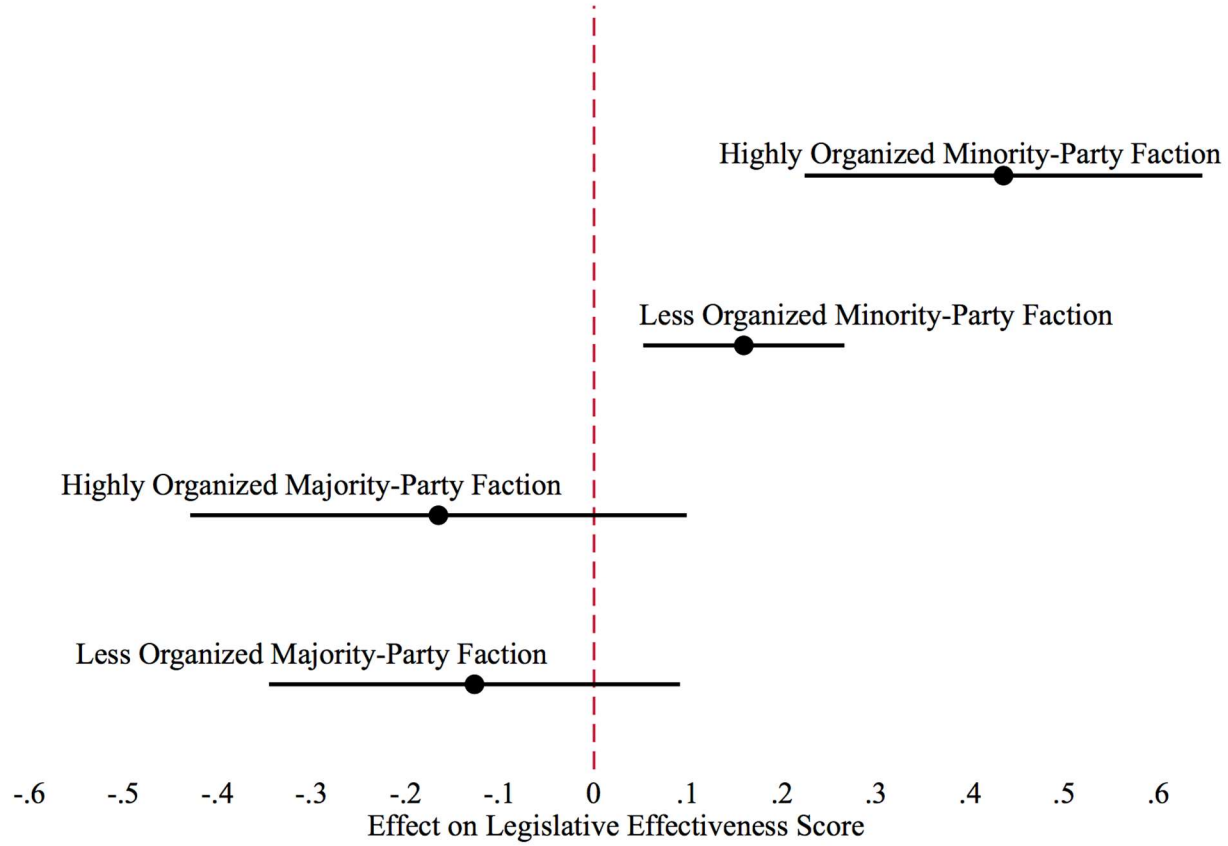
Notes: Ordinary least squares regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals for different faction types with Representative and Congress fixed effects and the control variables shown in Table 2. The dependent variable is Representative *i*'s Legislative Effectiveness Score in Congress *t*. Clearly Pivotal Factions are the half of the Pivotal Factions with the largest memberships, whereas Barely Pivotal Factions are the half of the Pivotal Factions with the smallest memberships. The results indicate that membership in a majority-party faction – irrespective of pivotality – does not increase a Representative's Legislative Effectiveness Score, whereas membership in a minority-party faction continues to aid their members' lawmaking success.

Figure A10: Evaluating Highly Organized Factions



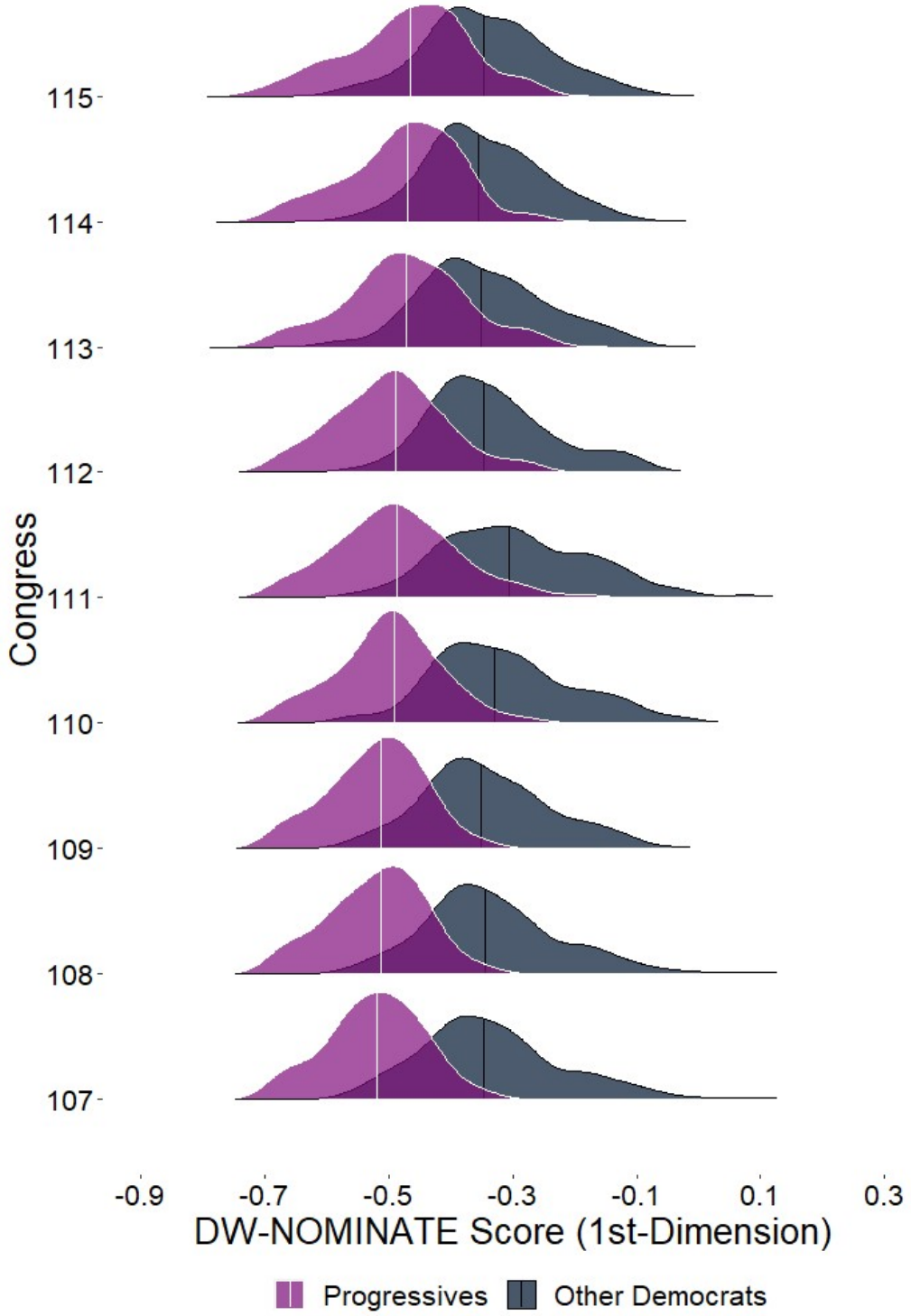
Notes: Ordinary least squares regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals, with Representative and Congress fixed effects and the control variables shown in Table 2. The dependent variable is Representative *i*'s Legislative Effectiveness Score in Congress *t*. The coefficients indicate the effect of affiliation with a highly organized faction on a Representative's LES. Highly organized factions are those with political action committees, dedicated staff, elected leadership, and ostensibly binding internal rules. Our results may suggest that affiliation with a highly organized faction corresponds with an increase in a Representative's Legislative Effectiveness Score ($p = 0.06$).

Figure A11: Evaluating Highly Organized Factions, by Party Status



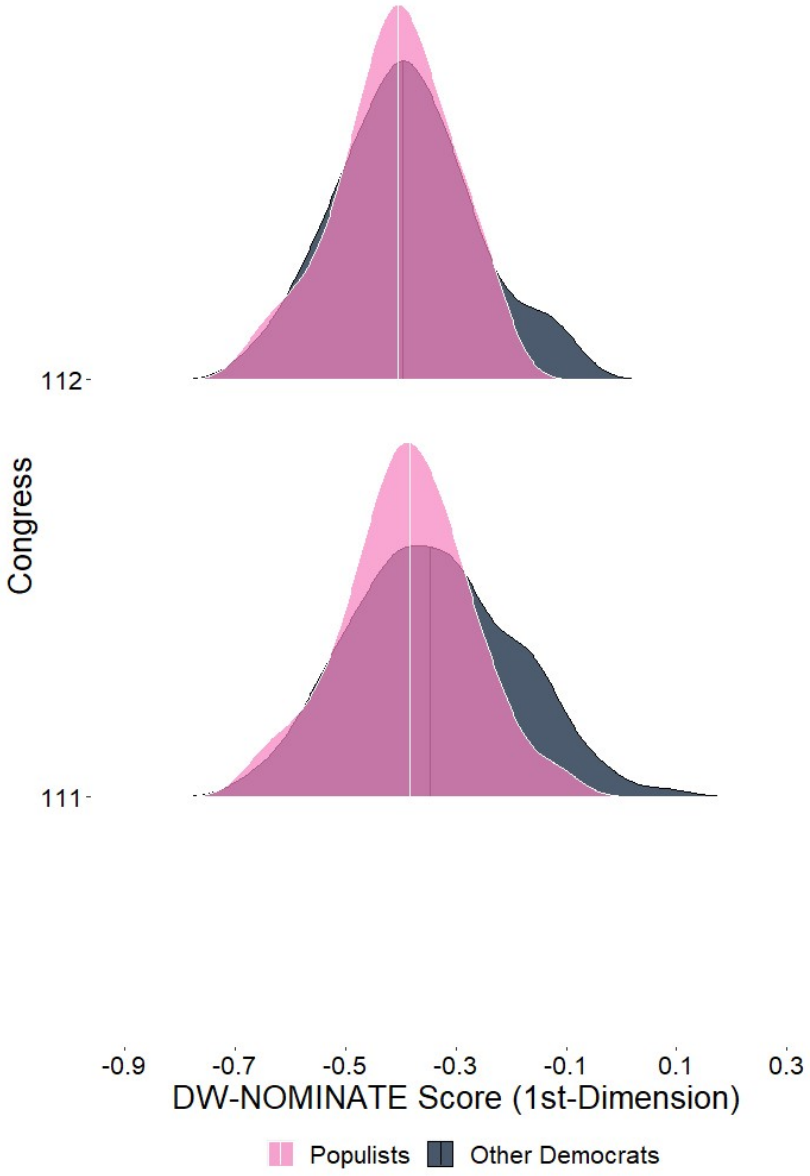
Notes: Ordinary least squares regression coefficients and 95% confidence intervals, with Representative and Congress fixed effects and the control variables shown in Table 2. The dependent variable is Representative *i*'s Legislative Effectiveness Score in Congress *t*. The coefficients indicate the effect of affiliation with a highly organized faction on a Representative's LES. Highly organized factions are those with political action committees, dedicated staff, elected leadership, and ostensibly binding internal rules. Our results suggest that affiliation with a minority-party faction corresponds with an increase in a Representative's Legislative Effectiveness Score, and the effect is more than twice as large for highly organized factions.

Figure A12: The Relative Ideological Distribution of the Congressional Progressive Caucus



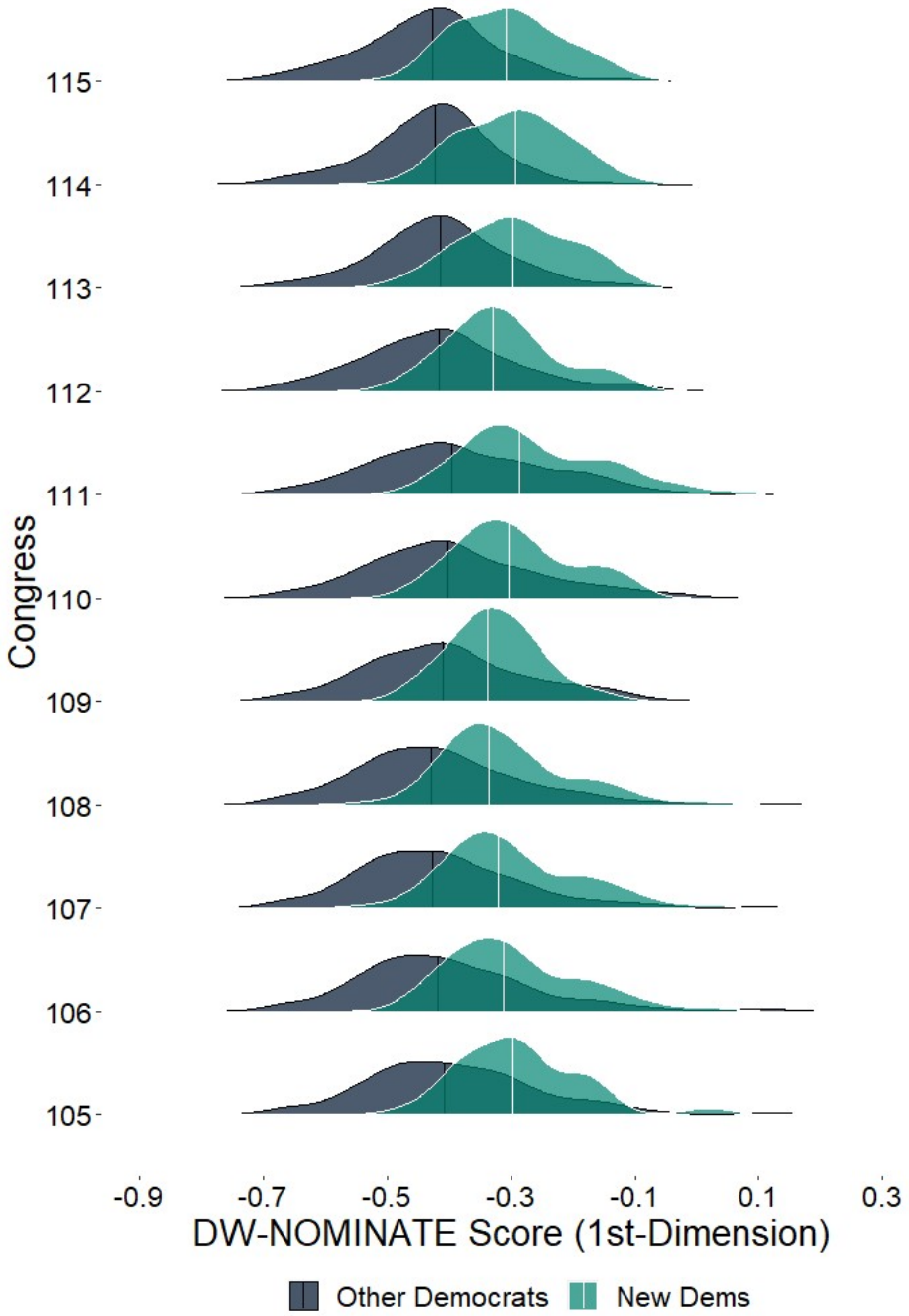
Notes: Each density plot indicates the distribution of Progressive Caucus members (purple) and other Democrats (dark blue) along a left-right ideological dimension estimated using DW-NOMINATE Scores (1st-dimension). Vertical lines indicate the median for each group. Republican lawmakers are omitted. Progressives are consistently more liberal than other members of the House Democratic Caucus.

Figure A13: The Relative Ideological Distribution of the Populist Caucus



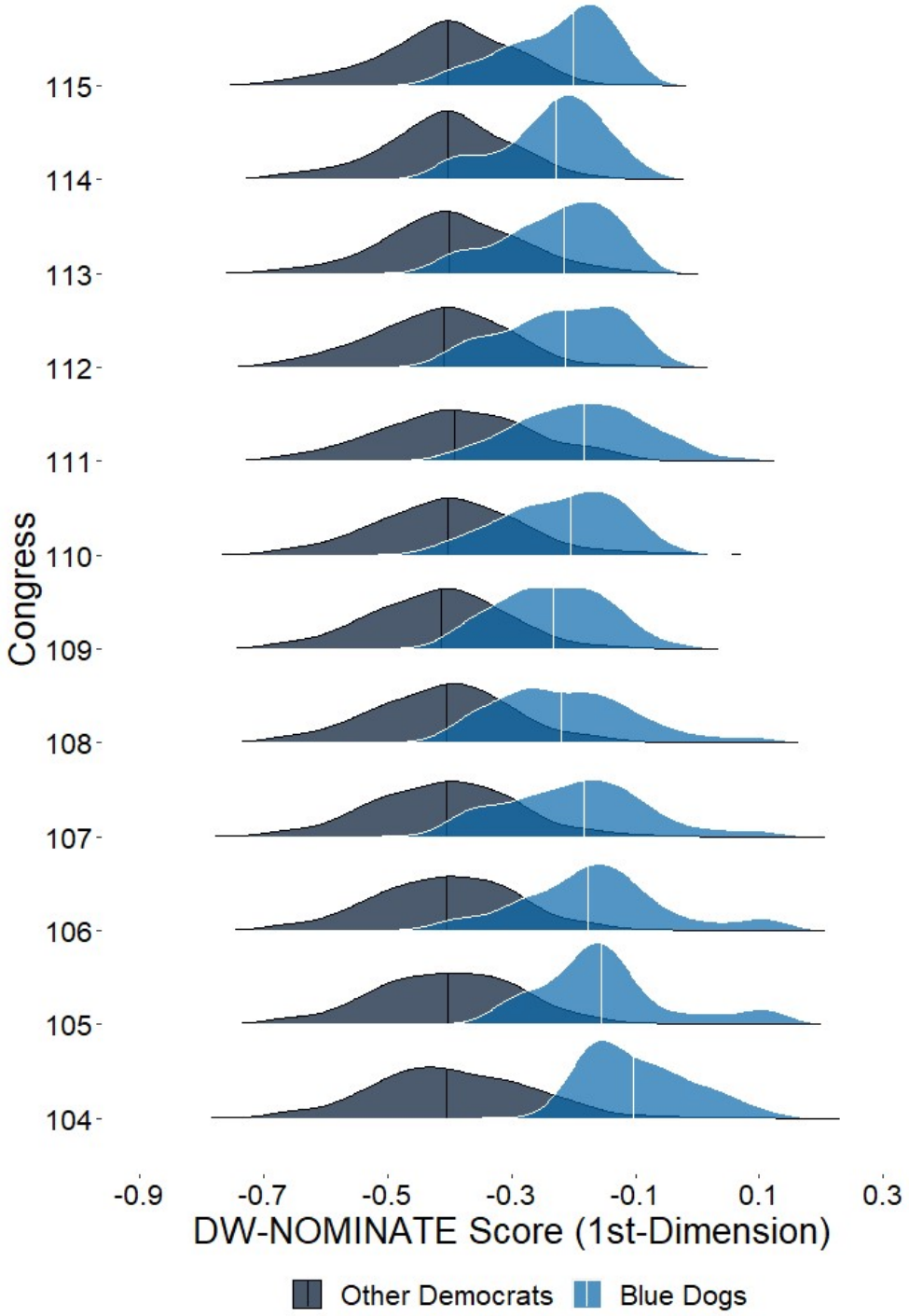
Notes: Each density plot indicates the distribution of Progressive Caucus members (purple) and other Democrats (dark blue) along a left-right ideological dimension estimated using DW-NOMINATE Scores (1st-dimension). Vertical lines indicate the median for each group. Republican lawmakers are omitted. Populists are indistinguishable from other members of the House Democratic Caucus.

Figure A14: The Relative Ideological Distribution of the New Democrat Coalition



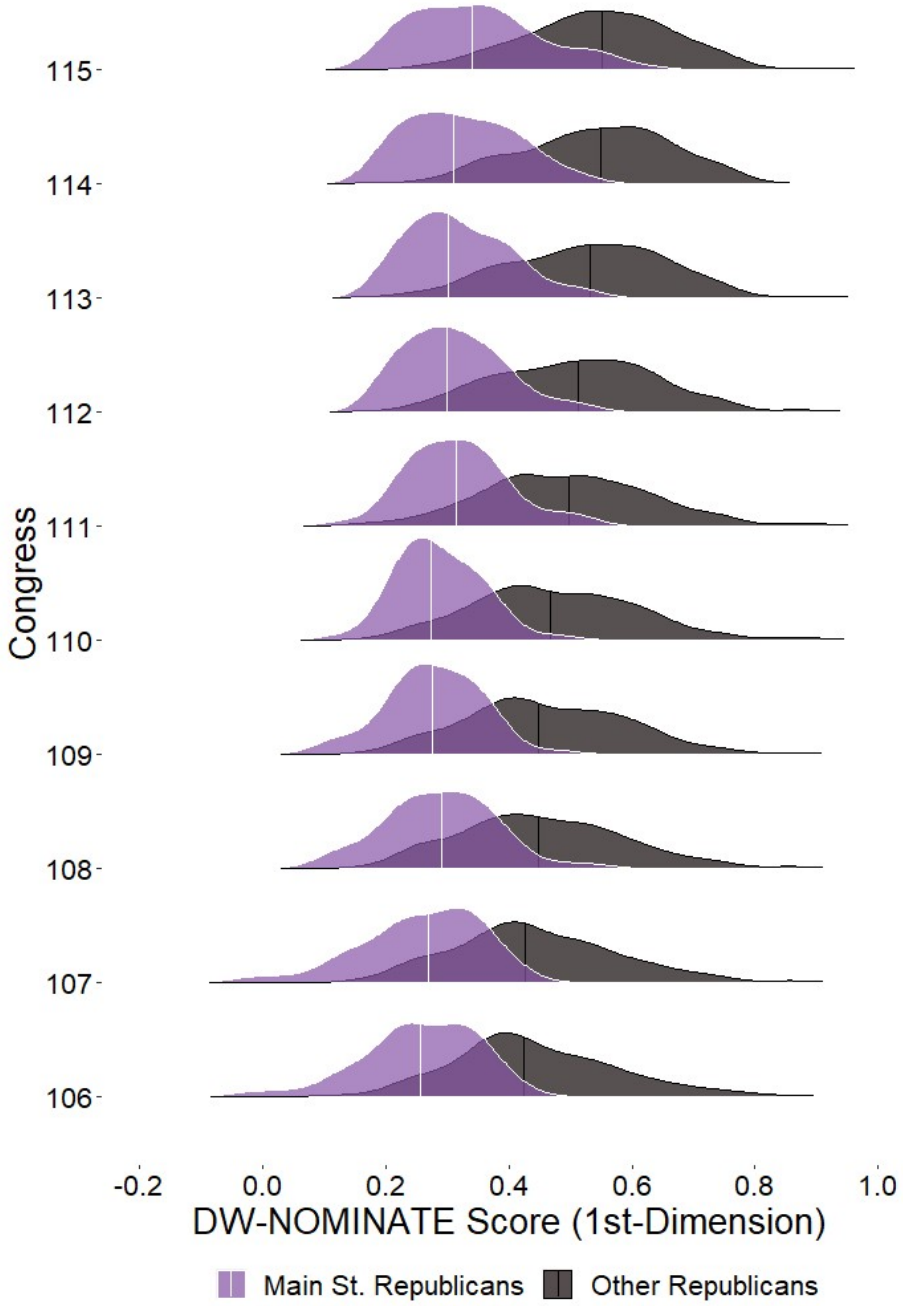
Notes: Each density plot indicates the distribution of New Dems (green) and other Democrats (dark blue) along a left-right ideological dimension estimated using DW-NOMINATE Scores (1st-Dimension). Republican lawmakers are omitted. Vertical lines indicate the median for each group. Republican lawmakers are omitted. New Democrats are generally more conservative than other members of the House Democratic Caucus.

Figure A15: The Relative Ideological Distribution of the Blue Dog Coalition



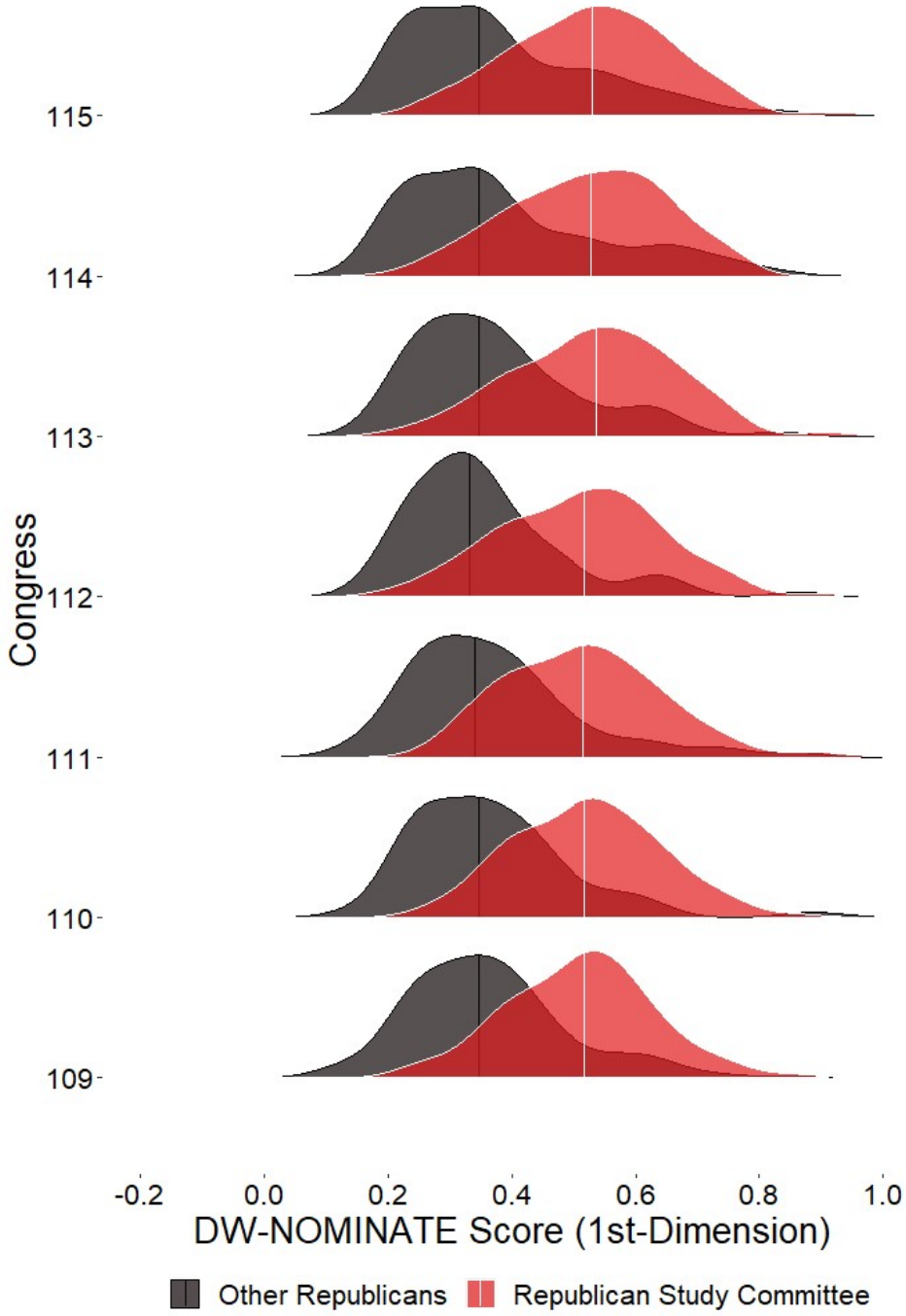
Notes: Each density plot indicates the distribution of Blue Dogs (light blue) and other Democrats (dark blue) along a left-right ideological dimension estimated using DW-NOMINATE Scores (1st-Dimension). Republican lawmakers are omitted. Vertical lines indicate the median for each group. Republican lawmakers are omitted. Blue Dogs are consistently more conservative than other members of the House Democratic Caucus.

Figure A16: The Relative Ideological Distribution of the Republican Main St. Partnership



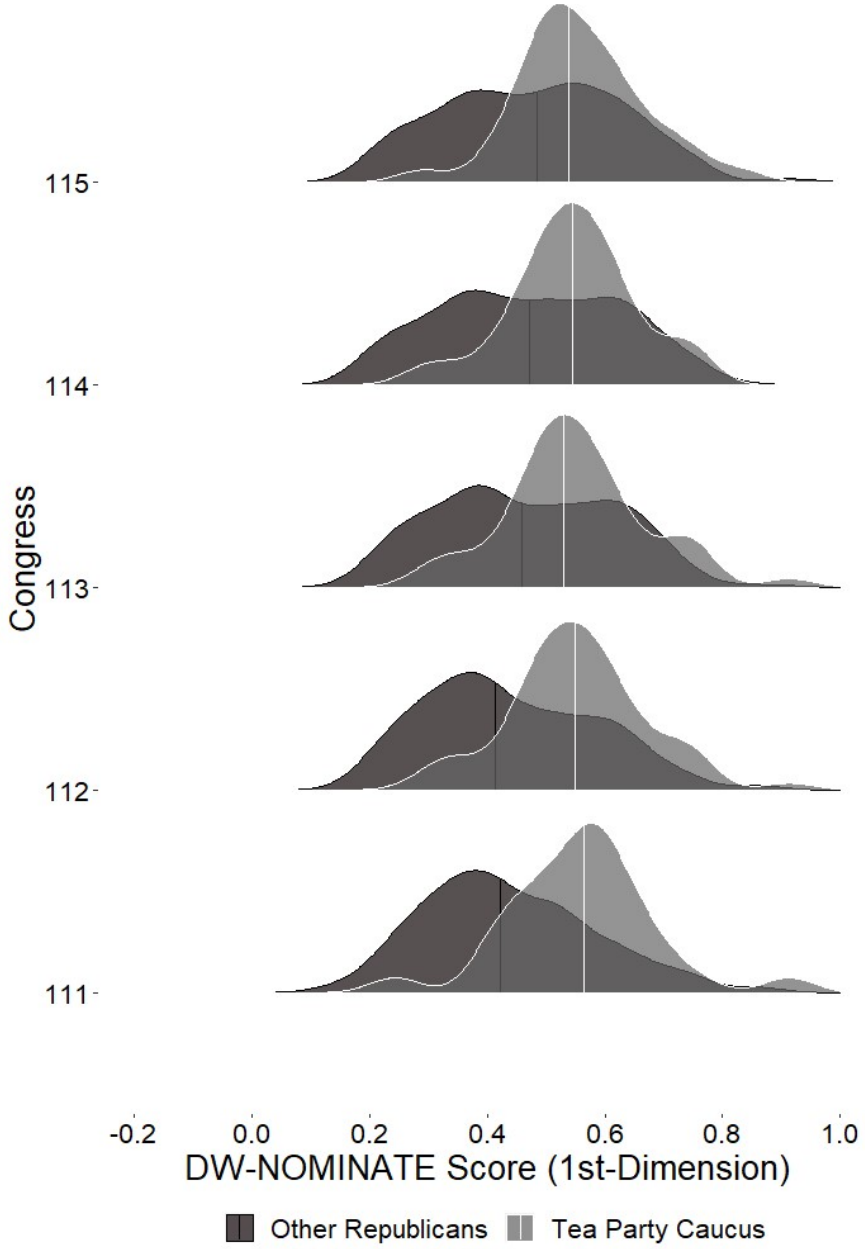
Notes: Each density plot indicates the distribution of Main St. Republicans (lavender) and other Republicans (smoky black) along a left-right ideological dimension estimated using DW-NOMINATE Scores (1st-Dimension). Democratic lawmakers are omitted. Vertical lines indicate the median for each group. Main St. Republicans are consistently less conservative than other members of the House Republican Conference.

Figure A17: The Relative Ideological Distribution of the Republican Study Committee



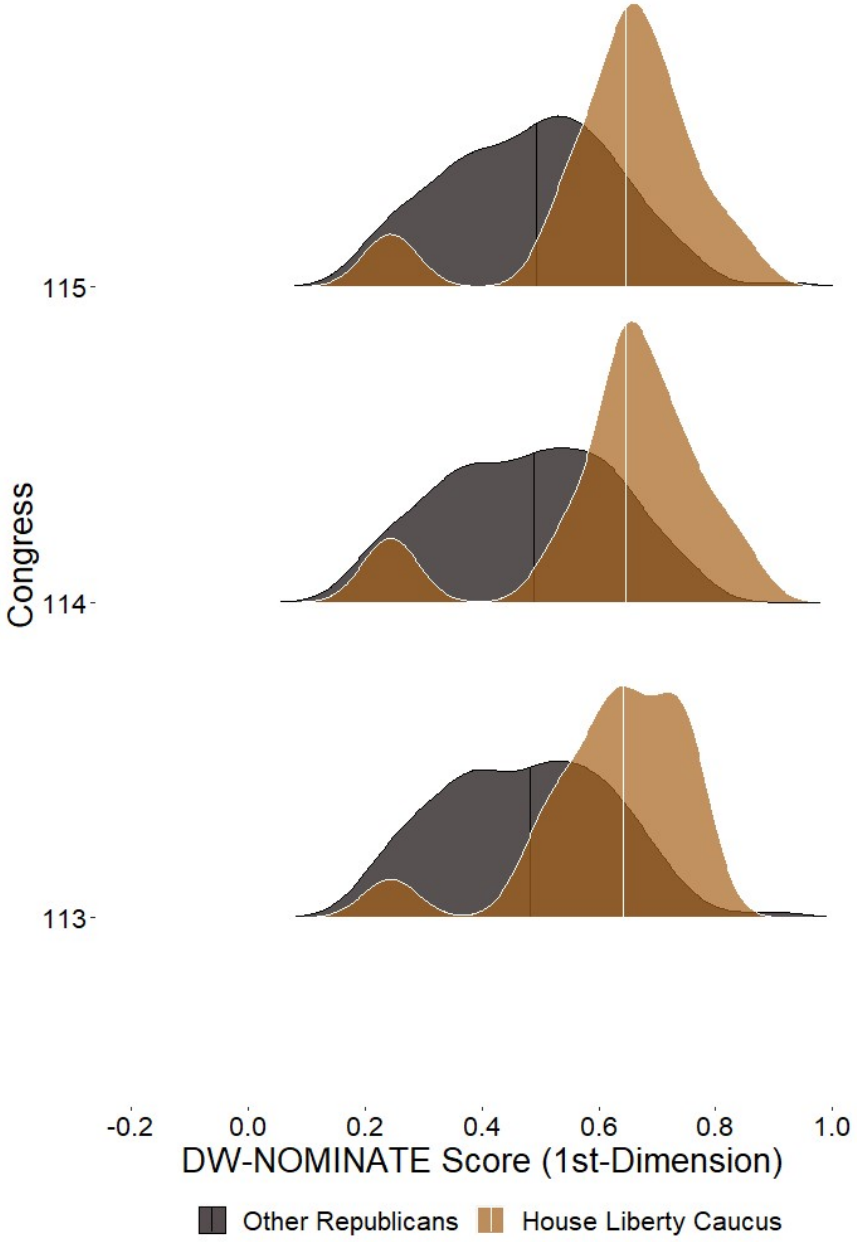
Notes: Each density plot indicates the distribution of Republican Study Committee (red) and other Republicans (smoky black) along a left-right ideological dimension estimated using DW-NOMINATE Scores (1st-Dimension). Democratic lawmakers are omitted. Vertical lines indicate the median for each group. Republican Study Committee members are generally more conservative than other members of the House Republican Conference.

Figure A18: The Relative Ideological Distribution of the Tea Party Caucus



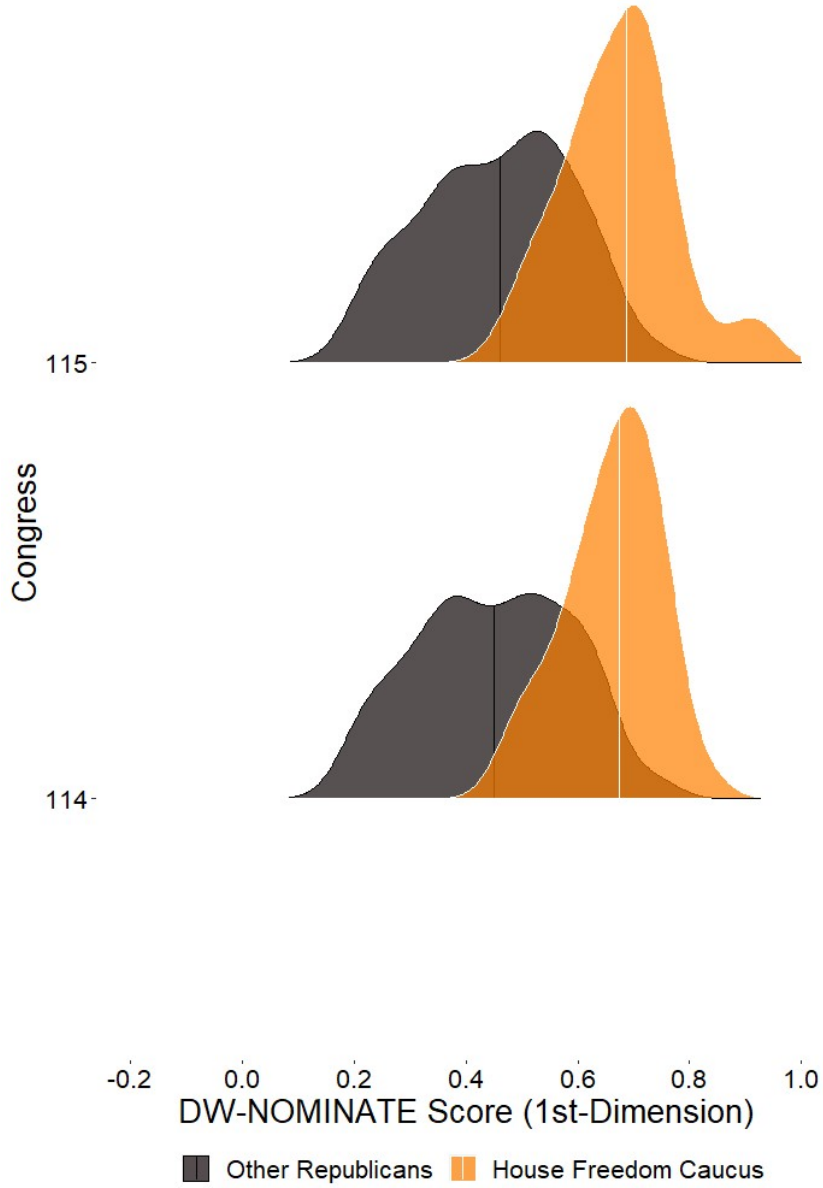
Notes: Each density plot indicates the distribution of Tea Party Caucus (grey) and other Republicans (smoky black) along a left-right ideological dimension estimated using DW-NOMINATE Scores (1st-Dimension). Democratic lawmakers are omitted. Vertical lines indicate the median for each group. Tea Party Caucus members are very slightly more conservative than other members of the House Republican Conference.

Figure A19: The Relative Ideological Distribution of the House Liberty Caucus



Notes: Each density plot indicates the distribution of House Liberty Caucus (golden brown) and other Republicans (smoky black) along a left-right ideological dimension estimated using DW-NOMINATE Scores (1st-Dimension). Democratic lawmakers are omitted. Vertical lines indicate the median for each group. House Liberty Caucus members are generally more conservative than other members of the House Republican Conference, but the caucus has something of a bimodal distribution within its ranks.

Figure A20: The Relative Ideological Distribution of the House Freedom Caucus



Notes: Each density plot indicates the distribution of House Freedom Caucus (yellow) and other Republicans (smoky black) along a left-right ideological dimension estimated using DW-NOMINATE Scores (1st-Dimension). Democratic lawmakers are omitted. Vertical lines indicate the median for each group. House Freedom Caucus members are considerably more conservative than other members of the House Republican Conference.

Table A1: Number of Members Changing Faction Status by Congress

Congress	Any Faction	Min. Party Faction	Maj. Party Faction	Liberal Faction	Centrist Faction	Conservative Faction	Non-Pivotal	Pivotal Faction
104	22	22	0	0	22	0	0	0
105	20	20	0	0	20	0	0	0
106	59	14	45	0	59	0	0	45
107	52	51	1	50	3	0	0	1
108	81	8	73	5	17	61	0	73
109	38	4	34	1	8	29	0	34
110	34	126	123	11	9	15	0	123
111	44	24	20	21	19	16	8	12
112	15	129	132	2	6	11	0	132
113	12	5	7	1	14	4	2	6
114	29	17	12	12	11	12	1	13
115	19	11	8	7	17	6	0	8
Total	425	431	455	110	205	154	11	447

Notes: Each cell indicates the number of Representatives in a given Congress to switch from a 0 to a 1 for the relevant faction indicator. These counts exclude Representatives who immediately join a faction upon winning an election, although our models account for these switches in the instance of a switch from 1 to 0. These counts include instances in which a Representative changes faction status without selecting into a new group. For example, a Representative may be a member of the Blue Dogs in the majority, but that Representative enters a Minority Party Faction (i.e., switches from a 0 to a 1 for that variable) after Democrats lose the House – even as her underlying faction affiliation remains unchanged.

Table A2: Faction Affiliation and Changes in Legislative Effectiveness

	Dependent Variable: Legislative Effectiveness Score			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Faction	-0.02	-0.02	-0.01	0.05
	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Majority Party	1.00***	0.48***	0.96***	1.06***
	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.20)	(0.20)
Vote Percent		0.01	0.04**	0.04**
		(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Vote Percent (Squared)		-0.0001	-0.0002**	-0.0002**
		(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
Majority Leader		0.33*	0.41**	0.40**
		(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.15)
Minority Leader		-0.12*	-0.16	-0.14
		(0.06)	(0.11)	(0.11)
Chair		2.87***	2.92***	2.87***
		(0.26)	(0.28)	(0.27)
Subcommittee Chair		0.64***	0.63***	0.61***
		(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Power Committee		-0.24***	-0.16*	-0.15*
		(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Seniority		0.06***	0.05***	0.01
		(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Chamber Distance		-0.22	1.03*	1.26*
		(0.18)	(0.52)	(0.52)
Constant	0.43***	0.02	-2.56***	-2.49***
	(0.03)	(0.38)	(0.68)	(0.73)
Legislator Fixed Effects	No	No	Yes	Yes
Congress Fixed Effects	No	No	No	Yes
R^2	0.12	0.38	0.57	0.58
N	6,943	6,775	6,775	6,775

****p < 0.001, **p < 0.01, *p < 0.05 (two-tailed).*

Notes: Results from ordinary least squares regression models with observations clustered by Representatives. The dependent variable is Representative *i*'s Legislative Effectiveness Score in Congress *t*.

Table A3: Faction Affiliation, Party Status, and Changes in Legislative Effectiveness

	Dependent Variable: Legislative Effectiveness Score			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Minority-Party Faction	*0.10****	*0.10****	*0.17****	*0.20****
	(0.02)	*(0.03)*	*(0.04)*	*(0.05)*
Majority-Party Faction	*-0.12*	*-0.12*	*-0.21**	*-0.14*
	(0.09)	*(0.07)*	*(0.11)*	*(0.11)*
Majority Party	1.09***	0.56***	0.87***	0.97***
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.19)	(0.20)
Vote Percent		0.01	0.04**	0.04**
		(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Vote Percent (Squared)		-0.0001	-0.0002**	-0.0002**
		(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
Majority Leader		0.34*	0.41**	0.41**
		(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.16)
Minority Leader		-0.11*	-0.14	-0.13
		(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.11)
Chair		2.86***	2.91***	2.86***
		(0.26)	(0.28)	(0.27)
Subcommittee Chair		0.64***	0.64***	0.62***
		(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Power Committee		-0.23***	-0.15*	-0.14*
		(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Seniority		0.06***	0.05***	0.01
		(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Chamber Distance		-0.26	0.36	0.65
		(0.18)	(0.52)	(0.53)
Constant	0.38***	-0.06	-2.37***	-2.26**
	(0.02)	(0.38)	(0.66)	(0.72)
Legislator Fixed Effects	No	No	Yes	Yes
Congress Fixed Effects	No	No	No	Yes
R^2	0.12	0.38	0.57	0.58
N	6,943	6,775	6,775	6,775

****p < 0.001, **p < 0.01, *p < 0.05 (two-tailed).*

Notes: Results from ordinary least squares regression models with observations clustered by Representatives. The dependent variable is Representative *i*'s Legislative Effectiveness Score in Congress *t*.

Table A4: Faction Affiliation, Ideology, and Changes in Legislative Effectiveness

	Dependent Variable: Legislative Effectiveness Score			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Liberal Faction	*0.18**	*0.08*	*-0.11*	*-0.03*
	(0.08)	*(0.07)*	*(0.14)*	*(0.15)*
Centrist Faction	*0.001*	*0.06*	*0.08*	*0.07*
	(0.05)	*(0.05)*	*(0.06)*	*(0.07)*
Conservative Faction	*-0.16**	*-0.11*	*-0.07*	*0.06*
	(0.07)	*(0.06)*	*(0.09)*	*(0.09)*
Majority Party	1.05***	0.53***	0.98***	1.09***
	(0.06)	(0.08)	(0.21)	(0.22)
Vote Percent		0.01	0.04**	0.04**
		(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Vote Percent (Squared)		-0.0001	-0.0002**	-0.0002**
		(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
Majority Leader		0.33*	0.41**	0.40**
		(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.15)
Minority Leader		-0.12*	-0.15	-0.14
		(0.06)	(0.11)	(0.11)
Chair		2.88***	2.92***	2.87***
		(0.26)	(0.28)	(0.27)
Subcommittee Chair		0.64***	0.63***	0.61***
		(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.09)
Power Committee		-0.24***	-0.16**	-0.15*
		(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Seniority		0.06***	0.05***	0.01
		(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Chamber Distance		-0.17	1.09	1.33*
		(0.21)	(0.57)	(0.56)
Constant	0.41***	-0.03	-2.63***	-2.55***
	(0.03)	(0.39)	(0.69)	(0.74)
Legislator Fixed Effects	No	No	Yes	Yes
Congress Fixed Effects	No	No	No	Yes
R^2	0.12	0.38	0.57	0.58
N	6,943	6,775	6,775	6,775

****p < 0.001, **p < 0.01, *p < 0.05 (two-tailed).*

Notes: Results from ordinary least squares regression models with observations clustered by Representatives. The dependent variable is Representative *i*'s Legislative Effectiveness Score in Congress *t*.

Table A5: Evaluating the Faction Ideology and Faction Status Results

	Dependent Variable: Legislative Effectiveness Score			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Liberal Minority-Party Faction	*0.19***	*0.15***	*-0.05*	*0.02*
	(0.04)	*(0.05)*	*(0.10)*	*(0.11)*
Centrist Minority-Party Faction	*0.06**	*0.08**	*0.27****	*0.23***
	(0.03)	*(0.04)*	*(0.07)*	*(0.07)*
Conserv. Minority-Party Faction	*0.03*	*0.09**	*0.25***	*0.41***
	(0.04)	*(0.05)*	*(0.09)*	*(0.13)*
Liberal Majority-Party Faction	*0.21*	*-0.02*	*-0.24*	*-0.10*
	(0.24)	*(0.19)*	*(0.29)*	*(0.29)*
Centrist Majority-Party Faction	*-0.04*	*0.04*	*-0.13*	*-0.11*
	(0.09)	*(0.08)*	*(0.10)*	*(0.10)*
Conserv. Majority-Party Faction	*-0.21**	*-0.16**	*-0.23**	*-0.12*
	(0.09)	*(0.07)*	*(0.11)*	*(0.12)*
Majority Party	1.09***	0.56***	0.91***	1.01***
	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.20)	(0.21)
Vote Percent		0.01	0.04**	0.04**
		(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Vote Percent (Squared)		-0.0001	-0.0002**	-0.0002**
		(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
Majority Leader		0.34*	0.40**	0.40*
		(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.16)
Minority Leader		-0.12*	-0.13	-0.12
		(0.06)	(0.11)	(0.11)
Chair		2.88***	2.89***	2.84***
		(0.26)	(0.28)	(0.27)
Subcommittee Chair		0.64***	0.62***	0.61***
		(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.09)
Power Committee		-0.24***	-0.14*	-0.14*
		(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Seniority		0.06***	0.06***	0.01
		(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Chamber Distance		-0.21	0.48	0.69
		(0.22)	(0.54)	(0.55)
Constant	0.38***	-0.06	-2.55***	-2.37**
	(0.02)	(0.39)	(0.67)	(0.73)
Legislator Fixed Effects	No	No	Yes	Yes
Congress Fixed Effects	No	No	No	Yes
R^2	0.12	0.39	0.57	0.58
N	6,943	6,775	6,775	6,775

****p < 0.001, **p < 0.01, *p < 0.05 (two-tailed).*

Notes: Results from ordinary least squares regression models with observations clustered by Representatives. The dependent variable is Representative *i*'s Legislative Effectiveness Score in Congress *t*.

Table A6: Faction Affiliation, Faction Size, and Changes in Legislative Effectiveness

	Dependent Variable: Legislative Effectiveness Score			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Pivotal Majority-Party Faction	*-0.11*	*-0.11*	*-0.21*	*-0.13*
	(0.09)	*(0.07)*	*(0.11)*	*(0.11)*
Non-Pivotal Majority-Party Faction	*-0.70****	*-0.31*	*-0.37*	*-0.29*
	(0.19)	*(0.22)*	*(0.25)*	*(0.24)*
Minority-Party Faction	*0.10****	*0.10****	*0.17****	*0.20****
	(0.02)	*(0.03)*	*(0.04)*	*(0.05)*
Majority Party	1.09***	0.56***	0.86***	0.97***
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.19)	(0.20)
Vote Percent		0.01	0.04**	0.04**
		(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Vote Percent (Squared)		-0.00	-0.00**	-0.00**
		(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Majority Leader		0.33*	0.41**	0.41*
		(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.16)
Minority Leader		-0.11*	-0.14	-0.13
		(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.11)
Chair		2.86***	2.90***	2.86***
		(0.26)	(0.28)	(0.27)
Subcommittee Chair		0.64***	0.64***	0.62***
		(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Power Committee		-0.24***	-0.15*	-0.14*
		(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Seniority		0.06***	0.05***	0.01
		(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Chamber Distance		-0.26	0.36	0.65
		(0.18)	(0.52)	(0.53)
Constant	0.38***	-0.07	-2.36***	-2.26**
	(0.02)	(0.38)	(0.66)	(0.72)
Legislator Fixed Effects	No	No	Yes	Yes
Congress Fixed Effects	No	No	No	Yes
R^2	0.12	0.39	0.57	0.58
N	6,943	6,775	6,775	6,775

****p < 0.001, **p < 0.01, *p < 0.05 (two-tailed).*

Notes: Results from ordinary least squares regression models with observations clustered by Representatives. The dependent variable is Representative *i*'s Legislative Effectiveness Score in Congress *t*.

Table A7: Summary Statistics for Key Independent Variables

Variable	Description	Mean	Std. Dev
Minority-Party Faction[a]	1 = member of faction within minority party	0.19	0.39
Majority-Party Faction[a]	1 = member of faction within majority party	0.22	0.42
Liberal Faction[a]	1 = member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus or Populist Caucus	0.09	0.28
Centrist Faction[a]	1= member of Republican Main Street Partnership, Blue Dogs, or New Democrats	0.19	0.39
Conservative Faction[a]	1= member of the Republican Study Committee, Tea Party Caucus, House Liberty Caucus, or House Freedom Caucus	0.16	0.36
Non-Pivotal Majority-Party Faction[a]	1 = member of a majority-party faction with a roster size less than half the two-party seat margin in the House	.002	0.05
Pivotal Majority-Party Faction[a]	1 = member of a majority-party faction with a roster size at least half the two-party seat margin in the House	0.22	0.41
LES[b]	Legislative Effectiveness Score	0.97	1.44
Majority Party[b]	1 = Majority Party Member	0.55	0.50
Vote Percent[b]	Percent vote share in most recent election	67.93	13.44
Majority Leader[b]	1 = in majority party leadership as identified in *Almanac of American Politics*	0.02	0.14
Minority Leader[b]	1 = in minority party leadership as identified in *Almanac of American Politics*	0.02	0.15
Chair[b]	1 = Committee chair	0.05	0.21
Subcommittee Chair[b]	1 = Subcommittee chair	0.21	0.41
Power Committee[b]	1 = Representative sits on Appropriations, Ways and Means, or Rules Committee	0.26	0.44
Seniority[b]	Count of number of 2-year Congresses that Representative served in	5.21	4.06
DW-NOMINATE (1st)[c]	First dimension DW-NOMINATE Score of Representative	0.02	0.43
Chamber Distance[c]	Absolute distance from Representative's first-dimension DW-NOMINATE Score to that of floor median	0.39	0.23

Sources:
[a]Constructed by authors from *CQ's Politics in America* series, archives websites of faction leaders, journalistic accounts of each group, and phone calls with congressional offices.
[b]Center for Effective Lawmaking data (www.thelawmakers.org).
[c]Vote View data (www.voteview.com).

Table A8: Observable Differences, by Faction Affiliation

Variable	Unaffiliated Mean	Faction Mean	Difference
Committee Chair	0.05	0.04	0.01
Subcommittee Chair	0.21	0.22	-0.004
Power Committee	0.27	0.25	0.02
Majority Leader	0.02	0.02	-0.004
Minority Leader	0.02	0.02	0.0003
Majority Party	0.56	0.54	0.02
Vote Percent	68.71	66.84	1.87***
Seniority	5.27	5.12	0.15
DW-NOMINATE (among Democrats)	-0.38	-0.36	-0.01**
DW-NOMINATE (among Republicans)	0.40	0.46	-0.06***

****p < 0.001, **p < 0.01, *p < 0.05 (two-tailed).*

Notes: Group means and t-test results for each variable, by affiliation with any of the nine ideological factions we consider in our analyses. Faction members appear to receive a slightly smaller percent of the general election vote. They are also a bit more conservative than their co-partisans. Generally speaking, the two groups look quite similar across these key predictors of legislative effectiveness (chair, seniority, majority party).

Description of Faction Membership Data Collection Process

This research is interested in understanding the impact of membership in an ideological faction on individual-level outcomes in the legislative process. More specifically, we operationalize the term "faction" to be any ideological caucus – formally, a congressional membership organization (CMO) – that self-identifies on a left-right ideological scale. This is, admittedly, a narrow view of American party factions. We have chosen to focus on ideological caucuses for the following reasons:

1. *Membership data is considerably more difficult to collect for non-ideological caucuses.* This is true, in part, because the vast majority of non-ideological caucuses are less organized and publicly engaged than their ideological counterparts. Rather than analyzing the hundreds of (often ephemeral) groups that exist within the U.S. House of Representatives on a range of issues, we have set our scope conditions to only include a subset of the most prominent group routinely covered by Capitol Hill journalists. We do believe, however, that future work could generalize our approach to other non-arbitrary subsets (e.g., analyzing the effect of issue-specific caucus membership on paired issue-specific policy outcomes).

2. *We restrict our analysis to legislative factions in an attempt to understand legislative outcomes.* Undoubtedly, networks of party activists, donors, professional staff, and interest groups strive to carve out influence both within the legislative process and the internal decisions made by the campaign organizations of the major parties. Coding individual-level membership in this sprawling network of individuals across the ideological spectrum would be a monumental task. Even if we were able to map the full scope of unelected faction affiliates, a more expansive measure would incorporate individuals that cannot directly introduce new policy proposals. We prefer to focus on legislative factions to better understand legislative affairs.

3. *Legislators publicly identify with ideological caucuses, reducing our measurement error in identifying factions.* In other words, we take lawmakers at their word when they tell us that they belong to an ideological faction. There are many other clever approaches in the literature that attempt to detect unspoken, latent networks of voters, but ideological caucuses have the virtue of providing a less model-dependent approach to identifying factions. We feel confident that lawmakers that are readily identifiable with the House Freedom Caucus are members of a conservative faction, and this approach has the additional benefit of allowing for a clear method of communicating our measurement to the broader public.

4. *Finally, as we have documented throughout this article, journalists and politicians routinely attribute legislative influence to the organizations in our sample.* As such, this research sets out to investigate the empirical evidence to support or refute those claims of political power in the U.S. Congress.

Below we provide additional details on the process employed to identify members of each group in our dataset. Whenever possible, we attempted to verify our list of faction members with multiple sources. For example, we evaluated countless news articles and official press releases

produced by *each* group in our dataset, in addition to the sources listed below. In general, we chose to err on the side of inclusivity if there was substantial uncertainty about the status of a given member. The archived websites of House members were critical to our efforts; these can be accessed either through archive.org or the United States Congressional Web Archive hosted by the Library of Congress

Congress Progressive Caucus

We coded membership-level data on the Congressional Progressive Caucus from *CQ's Politics in America* series from 2002-2015 and Rep. Raúl Grijalva's (D-AZ) official website for the 114th and 115th Congresses. We were unable to obtain reliable data for the early years of the Congressional Progressive Caucus (102nd – 106th Congress). We also reached out to official staffers of the organization in June of 2016 and July of 2015, but we were unable to supplement our official records.

Populist Caucus

The modern incarnation of the Populist Caucus had a short tenure in the House (111th-112th Congress). To identify Populist Caucus members, we relied heavily on the official rosters provided by former Rep. Bruce Braley's (D-IA) official website. We also conducted an interview with a staffer affiliated with the organization on May 22, 2015.

New Democrat Coalition

Like other organizations, *CQ's Politics in America* series provided a first pass of our New Democrat data from 2002-2015. We supplemented these records with recently archived websites of New Democrat leaders (e.g., Jim Himes (D-CT) and Ron Kind (D-WA)). Tracing archived websites of official members allowed us to confirm the CQ records for many years in our database, but the earliest years of the organization proved more difficult to track down. Eventually, we were able to locate an archived website of the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC), which, in turn, housed several archived newsletters, press releases, and related publications that provided a record of the earliest members of the New Democrat Coalition.

Blue Dog Coalition

We were able to code a complete record of all members of the Blue Dog Coalition from 1995 to 2018. We began by coding the membership listed in *CQ's Politics in America* series from 2002-2015. Next, we combed archived websites of official lawmakers known to be both incumbents in earlier congresses and Blue Dogs in the 107th Congress. The official website of Rep. John Tanner (D-TN) from 1995-2000 proved to be an invaluable source of data on early Blue Dog membership, and several contemporaneous journalistic accounts confirmed individual members listed on that website. We then attempted to trace the official rosters on Blue Dog leader's websites for each of the years in our dataset. For example, Rep. Kurt Schrader's (D-OR) official website included a roster for Blue Dogs in the 114th Congress, and the website of Rep. Jim Costa (D-CA) supplied a list of members for the 115th Congress.

Republican Main Street Partnership

The Republican Main Street Partnership, unlike most organizations in this database, has a robust extra-legislative web presence that includes current and former lawmakers active in the organization's efforts. *CQ's Politics in America* series provides a baseline roster for 2001-2008,

but we rely heavily upon the official records of current RMSP members from 1999-2018. We initially hoped to secure more detailed information about the organization through phone calls with affiliated staff and interviews with a prominent former legislator in the organization, but RMSP affiliates consistently told us that they lacked additional archival records on bylaws and membership records.

Republican Study Committee

The Republican Study Committee is the oldest organization in our database. Staff affiliated with the organization referred us to the written account provided by a key figure in RSC history (Ed Feulner) to learn more about the early membership records. While the book was informative, we were unable to locate consistent membership lists through our background research and interviews in the pre-CMO era (years before the 104th Congress). Moreover, we were unable to obtain reliable data for the early years of the Republican Study Committee (104th – 107th Congress) in the wake of the Republican reforms of the mid-1990s; it seems the RSC did not have the early web presence that other organizations did through this time period. *CQ's Politics in America* series provided extensive data for our records (2003-2014), and more recent records of the organization on RSC leadership pages allowed us to both confirm these membership lists and expand upon them in the 114th and 115th Congress (e.g., Bill Flores' (R-FL) website).

Tea Party Caucus

Unlike the sprawling network of Tea Party organizations across the country, the Tea Party Caucus in the House of Representatives was relatively disorganized. Early records of the group's membership lists were taken from prominent news articles, *CQ's Politics in America* entry for the 112th Congress, and an official list presented on Rep. Michele Bachmann's (R-MN) official website. After Rep. Bachmann's failed bid for the Republican presidential nomination, the group quickly ceased much of its public activities. However, the organization reformed as the Taxed Enough Already (TEA) Caucus in the 115th Congress. We code members of the TEA Caucus, collected through *Legistorm*'s comprehensive list of caucus members, as members of the same Tea Party Caucus for our primary analyses. We were unable, however, to locate a comprehensive roster for the Tea Party Caucus in the 114th Congress. Ultimately, we coded any lawmaker identified as both a member of the Tea Party Caucus in the 113th Congress and the TEA Caucus in the 115th Congress as Tea Party Caucus members in the 114th Congress. To increase our confidence in our measure of Tea Party affiliation, we combed the archived websites of individual lawmakers to expand upon this list. For example, Representatives Tom Price (GA), John Fleming (LA), Paul Gosar (AZ), Tim Huelskamp (KS), and Blake Farenthold (TX) were coded as Tea Party members after scouring their official websites. Please note that our results do not change if we treat the Tea Party Caucus as disbanded after the 113th Congress (or if we exclude the Tea Party Caucus from our analysis altogether).

House Liberty Caucus

The House Liberty Caucus is arguably the most elusive group of lawmakers in our database. Our data began with a record of Liberty Caucus members hosted to Justin Amash's (R-MI) archived website in the 113th Congress. *Legistorm* provided an updated roster for the 115th Congress. While we were able to locate isolated confirmations of Liberty Caucus members through press releases, social media accounts, and news reports, we ultimately decided to impute Liberty Caucus membership data by coding all lawmakers affiliated with the group in both the 113th and

115th Congress as Liberty Caucus members in the 114th Congress. We then supplemented these efforts by confirming, when possible, the membership status of key figures through their archived websites. For example, Rep. Dave Brat (VA), Rep. Jason Chaffetz (UT), Rep. Paul Gosar (AZ), and Rep. Thomas Massie (KY) were all readily confirmed through such means. Several attempted interviews with members and staffers of the organizations failed to provide reliable information on the group's history.

House Freedom Caucus

The House Freedom Caucus is an ostensibly secretive organization, which posed obvious measurement challenges for our faction data. We relied upon more sources to confirm the rosters of the House Freedom Caucus than any other single organization in our dataset. When the faction formed in 2015, we began by calling over 140 congressional Republican offices (omitting the most moderate wing of the GOP) over several days in July. Some of these offices confirmed their membership. Others confirmed – vehemently – that they were neither currently affiliated nor interested in the new group. We are keenly aware of the limitations of this approach to our early data collection efforts; interns answering phones may have dodged our question or incorrectly confirmed that their member was not affiliated by simply browsing their own website (rather than speaking with more senior aides). We supplemented our internal records with the reporting done by several prominent sources (e.g., Pew Research) and direct confirmations provided by lawmakers across articles in the LexisNexis database. Finally, we had a chance to interview a key Freedom Caucus staffer off the record in the summer of 2015 in a member's office; this was fortunate, as subsequent attempts to sit down with Freedom Caucus affiliates after Speaker John Boehner's (R-OH) resignation proved fruitless. We followed a similar process in coding membership in the 115th Congress, but we also supplemented our efforts with *Legistorm* data and an exhaustive list of Freedom Caucus press releases. While the organization remained ostensibly secretive, the group's public endorsements of candidates seeking a House seat and increased media presence made our efforts considerably easier in this second round.

As we note in the main text, our results do not appear to be driven by some of the tough coding decisions we faced with one single faction or year. For example, our results are not dependent on the inclusion or exclusion of any single faction; the interpretation of our results remains the same if we iteratively drop the Tea Party Caucus, the House Liberty Caucus, or any other organization (and leave the remaining groups in the dataset).