

Online Appendix for:
**Separated Powers in the United States: The Ideology of Agencies,
Presidents, and Congress**

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Details of the Survey on the Future of Government Service

We obtained the contact information for all federal agency administrators and program managers from Leadership Directories, Inc., the firm that publishes the *Federal Yellow Book*. Of the 7,448 names provided, 297 turned out to be incorrect; they either were no longer in their position or their contact information was incorrect. The survey was web-based and conducted by the Princeton Survey Research Center. Each potential respondent was sent a letter on Princeton University letterhead inviting them to participate and giving them options about how to do so. Those for whom we had email addresses (77%) were told that they would be getting an email of the survey one week after the initial letter. They were also told they could go to a website and login immediately with information included in the invitation letter. All respondents for whom we had an email received an initial letter, an email invitation, up to three follow up email reminders, and a telephone call. The response rate from this group was 35%.

Those for whom we did not have email addresses were asked to provide us an email or go to the website directly and use the login and password provided. We then scheduled a series of follow up emails, letters, and ultimately, telephone calls. Those respondents whose email we did not have received an initial letter, a follow up letter, a telephone call, and a final reminder letter. The response rate for this group was 20%.

The overall response rate, once persons incorrectly included were excluded, is 34% (2,398/7,151). Of the 2,398 respondents, 2,069 completed the full survey. Agency-by-agency, the lowest responders were the Executive Office of the President (11%), the United States Post Office (15%), and the Department of the Treasury (20%). The highest responders were the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (56%), the Federal Trade Commission (63%), and the

National Archives and Records Administration (71%). Agencies closer to the president have lower response rates on average than other agencies.

The response rate was noticeably higher among career professionals than appointees. We have responses from 259 political appointees, compared to 2,021 career professionals. Of the appointees, 102 are Senate-confirmed appointees. Of the approximately 550 policy-relevant Senate-confirmed appointees, this amounts to a 19% response rate. There are 131 appointed members of the Senior Executive Service (SES) who responded out of approximately 700 total (19%), but not all of the 700 appointees in the SES are administrators or program managers. This suggests that the response rate from appointees in the SES is higher.

In the sample, PhDs and men were also more likely to respond to the survey. The original list also included 461 potential respondents from the National Science Foundation (NSF) because the firm incorrectly labeled NSF program officers as managers or executives. If NSF employees are removed the response rate is 33% (2,250/6,690).

Nonresponse weights based on available covariates such as gender, agency, and whether the appointee was a career civil servant or a political appointee were constructed and applied to the data when constructing the agency means, but no appreciable differences emerged from so doing.

Assessing Executive Ideology

The survey asked: “In addition to the general political background of executive officials, we are also interested to know your personal opinion about several key votes in Congress in the last few years. Specifically, would you have supported the following measures? [Yes, No, Don’t Know].” The fourteen votes, as presented to the respondents in the survey, are presented in Figure A1.

In addition to the general political background of executive officials, we are also interested to know your personal opinion about several key votes in Congress in the last few years. Specifically, would you have supported the following measures?

	Yes	No	Not Sure
A bill to authorize electronic surveillance of suspected terrorists without obtaining court approval (502/HR5825).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A bill to ensure access to federal courts for individuals who challenge government use of eminent domain to take their property (511/HR4772).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Efforts to amend the Constitution to prohibit desecration of the U.S. flag. (189/SJRes12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A bill to require photo identification and proof of citizenship for voters in a federal election. (459/HR4844).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A bill to create federal grants to support sex education programs (214/S403)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A bill to halt deployment of space-based missile defense systems (142/HR5122).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A bill to increase the minimum wage to \$7.25 per hour in two years (179/S2766)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A bill to prohibit funds for contracts with companies that incorporate offshore to avoid U.S. taxes (275/HR5576).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A measure to amend the Constitution to define marriage as the union of a man and a woman (378/HJRes88)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A bill to permit federal funds for embryonic-stem-cell research (206/HR810)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Confirmation of Samuel Alito as an associate justice on the Supreme Court (1/.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A bill to make it a federal crime to take a minor across state lines to obtain an abortion without parental notification or consent. (216/S403)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A bill to establish English as the national language and require immigrants to pass proficiency tests (131/S2611)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A bill to permanently reduce estate taxes (315/HR5638)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure A1: Screen Shot of *Survey on the Future of Government Service*.

In addition to these 14 items, we also asked executives about their partisanship and ideology using the standard five-point and seven-point scales respectively.

Figure A2 plots the cutpoints of these selected votes relative to the distribution of ideal points in the House and Senate generate using all roll calls. The votes partition the ideological center of the space and divide liberals from conservatives, but there are not many votes in the extreme. As a result, while the votes will allow us to partition executives located in the center of the ideological space relatively easily, the ability to distinguish between members more extreme than the most extreme cutpoint depends critically on the assumption of voting error.

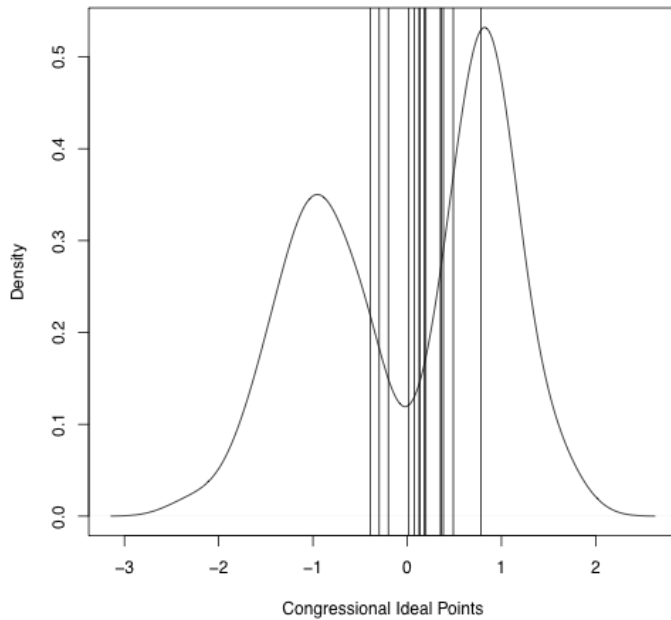


Figure A2: Cutpoints of Votes Used to Scale Executives: The density is the distribution of congressional ideal points based on the joint scaling of all roll calls. The cutpoints of the 14 votes used to assess executive opinion are plotted with vertical lines.

Table A1 reports the item discrimination and difficulty scores of the analyzed votes as well as the percent voting yea in Congress (*% Yea in Congress*) and in the bureaucracy (*% Executive Support*) from an estimation of congressional preferences using just these 14 votes. The selected voters are not party-line votes. The fact that the item discrimination parameter is distinguishable from zero in every case means that every vote is useful for estimating preferences; these 14 votes are all statistically related to the latent underlying dimension. The response rate of executives on the fourteen items reveals only limited item non-response. At worst, only 65% of the executives responding to the survey answered the question about whether federal courts should be an option for individuals challenging the government over issues involving eminent domain.

Bill	Issue	Item Diff.	Item Discrm.	% Yea in Congress	% Executive Support	Executive Response Rate
HR 5825	Electronic Surveillance w/o court order	0.16 (.12)	2.10 (.17)	55%	53%	80%
HR 4772	Court's rule on eminent domain	0.29 (.10)	1.60 (.12)	56%	47%	65%
SJRes 12	Const Amendmnt: Ban flag desceration	0.64 (.20)	1.66 (.28)	66%	45%	85%
HR 4844	Show ID to vote	0.06 (.19)	3.62 (.41)	54%	25%	86%
S403	Support Sex Education	1.21 (.67)	-6.03 (1.73)	48%	86%	87%
HR 5122	Halt Star Wars missile defense	-1.34 (.16)	-1.71 (.17)	29%	66%	75%
S2766	Raise Minimum Wage to \$7.25	3.88 (1.52)	-9.91 (2.23)	53%	63%	80%
HR 5576	No contracts if incorporate offshore to avoid taxes	-0.18 (.08)	-1.34 (.10)	46%	84%	86%
HJRes 88	Const. Amendmnt: Marriage = man + woman	0.20 (.10)	1.62 (.12)	56%	63%	71%
HR 810	Fed. Funds for stem cell research	0.49 (.09)	-1.64 (.12)	56%	62%	83%
	Alito for Supreme Crt	1.02 (.52)	5.14 (1.22)	58%	67%	84%
S 403	Parental Consent for Abortion	0.83 (.26)	2.32 (.41)	66%	25%	87%
S 2611	English as National Language	1.05 (.33)	2.96 (.58)	65%	20%	76%
HR 5638	Permanently Reduce Estate tax	1.05 (.16)	2.15 (.19)	63%	81%	74%

Table A1: Item Parameter Estimates: Table B1 reports the posterior means and standard deviations for the item parameter estimates resulting from scaling the items along with every other congressional roll call and using four contested votes on conference reports to “bridge” the chambers. *% Yea in Congress* and *% Executive Support* indicate the percentage of Congress and the bureaucracy voting yes respectively. *Executive Response Rate* refers to the percentage of respondents answering the issue question.

To validate the ideal points that result from scaling the items described in Figure and Table A1, Figure A3 graphs the relationship between the average ideal point for bureaucrats located at each labeled response against the standard self-reported partisanship scale and a seven-point ideology scale. The top graph of Figure A3 reassuringly reveals that self-identified conservatives have very different average ideal points than self-identified liberals. Moreover, the modal career executive self-identifies as a “Moderate” (671 respondents), and there are slightly more “Liberal” and “Somewhat Liberal” bureaucrats than there are bureaucrats who self-identify as “Conservative” or “Somewhat Conservative.”

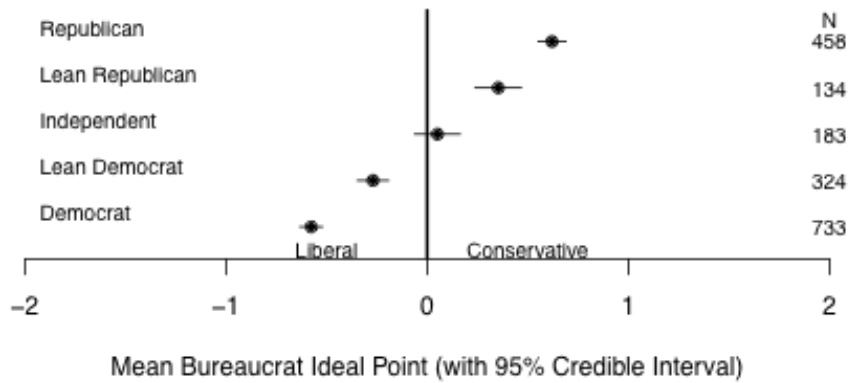
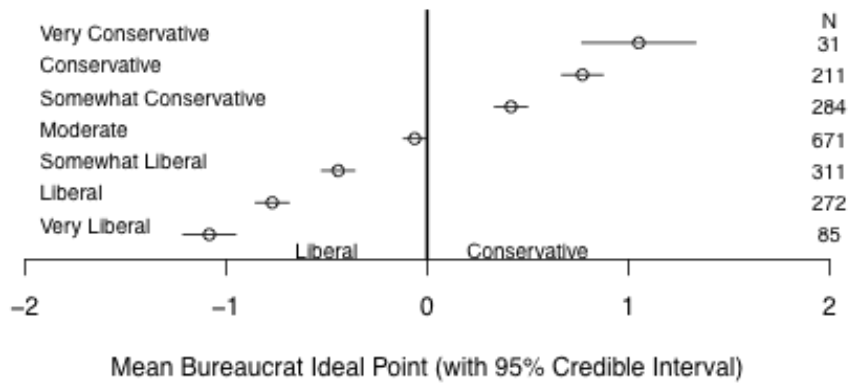


Figure A3: Comparing Ideal Points, Self-Reported Ideology, and Partisanship for Career Executives: The points denote the average ideal point for each response level and the 95% credible interval for the mean ideal point along with the sample size used to compute each estimate from the 2007-2008 *Survey on the Future of Governmental Service*.

The bottom graph in Figure A3 presents the relationship between the estimated ideal points and the bureaucrats' self-reported partisanship. The relationship is again unambiguous and reassuring with respect to the ability of the ideal point estimates to reflect bureaucrats' ideological diversity. The 733 respondents who identify with the Democratic Party are the most liberal bureaucrats, and the average ideal point is more moderate than the subset of respondents who consider themselves either "Very Liberal" or "Liberal." An analogous relationship is also evident for the 458 respondents who self-identify as Republicans. Finally, the modal bureaucrat self-identifies with the Democratic Party, and there are considerably more bureaucrats who either consider themselves Democrats, or lean towards the Democratic Party than there are bureaucrats who favor the Republican party.

Estimation Uncertainty

Imprecision in the individual ideal point estimates occurs for two reasons – ideological extremity and the lack of nearby roll calls, and the paucity of roll calls. Figure A4 plots a random sample of executives, Representatives, and Senators to provide a sense of the precision of the resulting ideal point estimates. Not only are extremists more imprecisely estimated than centrists in every institution, but the individual ideal points of executive are far more imprecisely estimated than the most imprecisely estimated member of Congress. The reason for the disparity is due to the fact that whereas the House and Senate estimates are based on every roll call taken in each chamber, the ideal point estimates for executives is based on 14 votes. (The imprecisely estimated executives located in the center of the ideological space is due to a the executives failing to answer enough of the questions).

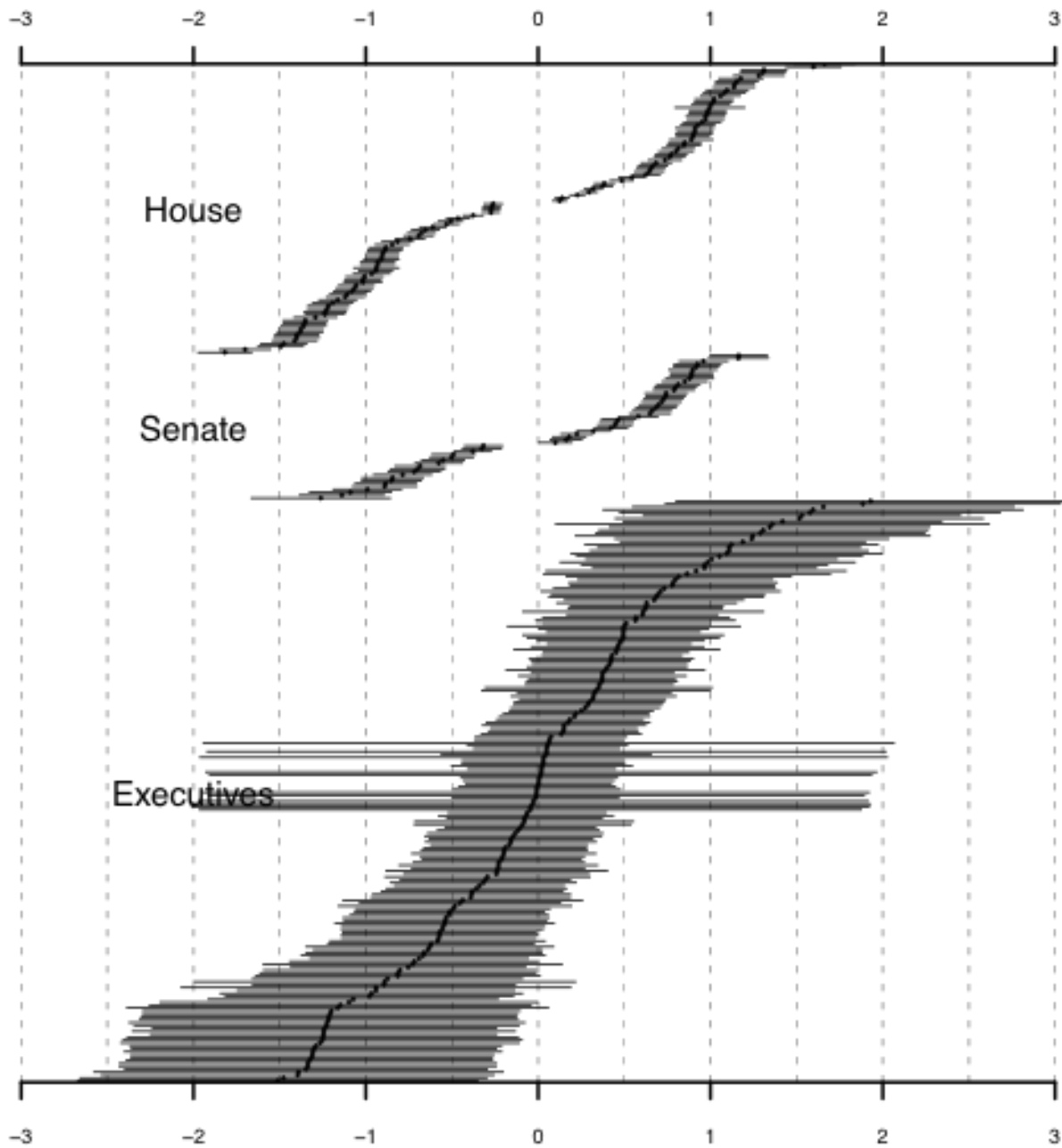


Figure A4: Random Sample of Individual Ideal Point Means (and 95% Credible Intervals): A random sample of Representatives, Senators and executives was selected and their ideal point (along with the associated 95% credible interval).

Assessing Agency Ideology

Akin to the construct validity checks conducted above, we also compare the average ideal point in each agency to the average partisanship and average self-reported ideology.

Figure A5 reveals---similar to the results of Figure A1---that the three measures are highly

correlated (the average ideal point correlates with the average partisanship and ideology at .93 and .95 respectively). The average agency ideal point estimates are therefore reassuringly able to account for the variation across agencies in self-reported ideology and partisanship and able to be directly compared across institutions.

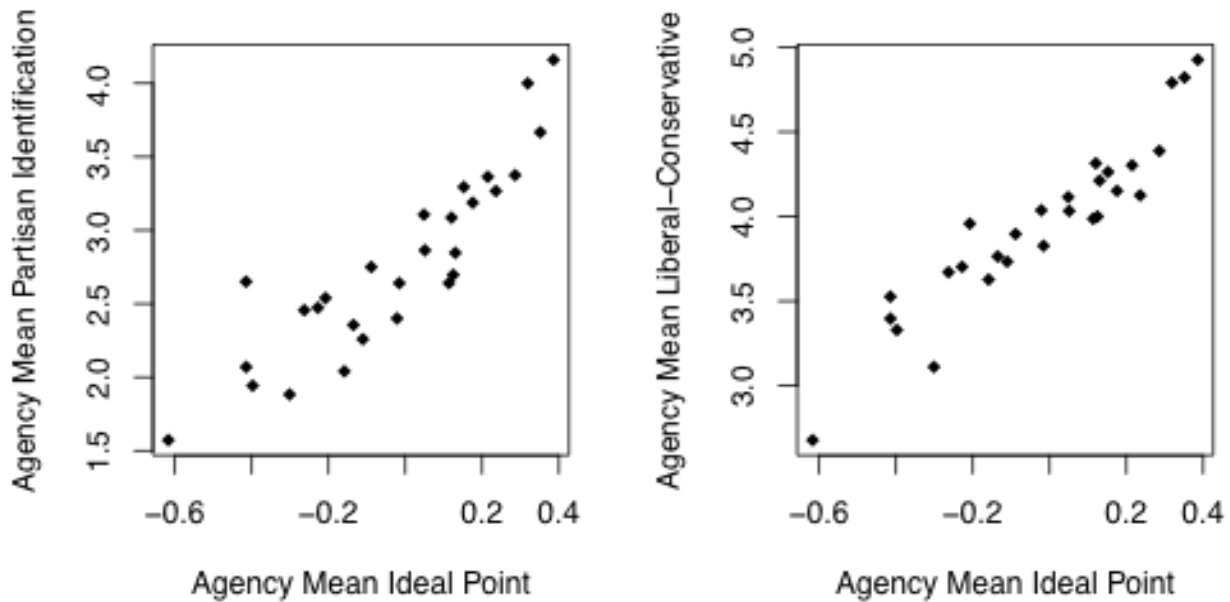


Figure A5: Comparing Agency Preference Measures: The points denote the relationship between the sample mean of bureaucrats within an agency using ideal points, self-reported ideology, and self-reported partisanship for agencies with more than 20 respondents. The correlation between the average agency ideal point and the average agency partisanship (left) is .89, and the correlation between the average agency ideal point and the average partisanship in an agency (right) is .94.

Variable	Observations	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
<i>log(Discretion)</i>	208	7.36	1.73	4.17	13.11
<i>Agency-floor distance (All)</i>	213	0.55	0.18	0.08	1.08
<i>Agency-floor distance² (All)</i>	213	0.33	0.19	0.01	1.17
<i>Agency-floor distance (Careerists)</i>	213	0.61	0.20	0.15	1.04
<i>Agency-floor distance² (Careerists)</i>	213	0.41	0.23	0.02	1.09
<i>Agency-floor distance (Influence Wgt)</i>	213	0.29	0.14	0.02	1.31
<i>Agency-floor distance² (Influence Wgt)</i>	213	0.10	0.13	0.0004	1.72
<i>Policy certainty</i>	208	0.73	0.18	0	1
<i>Expertise (prop. technical)</i>	208	0.17	0.09	0.03	0.44
<i>Expertise (prop. professional)</i>	208	0.25	0.11	0.05	0.65

Table A2: Summary Statistics for Table 3: This table reports the summary statistics for the variables used to analyze the amount of discretion given to agencies in public laws enacted in the 109th Congress.