WHO PREACHES PROTECTIONISM?
ECONOMIC AND ELECTORAL INFLUENCES ON TRADE-RELATED
POSITION TAKING IN THE SENATE

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Chapel Hill
2012

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ABSTRACT

ROBERT A. GALANTUCCI: Who Preaches Protectionism?
Economic and Electoral Influences on Trade-Related Position Taking in the
Senate
(Under the direction of Layna Mosley.)

Existing studies of Congressional behavior devote little attention to understanding legislators' trade-related position taking outside the context of roll call votes. Using a new dataset on bill sponsorship that spans fifteen congresses, the author explores the factors that affect a senator's propensity to introduce protectionist trade bills, including state-level manufacturing characteristics, economic cycles and electoral vulnerability. The results provide support for a number of the prominent economic-based explanations for trade policy preferences, including the Heckscher-Ohlin and Ricardo-Viner models, and also draw attention to several additional economic and political influences on policy outcomes. Beyond trade politics, these findings have implications for the expanding body of research on bill sponsorship as well as the literature on the role of Congress in U.S. foreign policy making.

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Introduction

In recent years, numerous bills ostensibly designed to deal with China's currency policy have been introduced in the U.S. Congress. Asserting that an artificially weak renminbi is harmful to domestic producers, legislators have argued that the U.S. government needs to respond to currency misalignment through a tougher trade policy, including the imposition of punitive tariffs on Chinese exports. In 2011, one such bill, the Currency Reform for Fair Trade Act, S.328, was introduced despite a lack of support from key members of Congress. David Camp (R-MI), chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, indicated that a currency bill was not a priority for 2011. Similarly, Speaker John Boehner expressed reluctance to risk a trade war with China over the currency issue. Even absent the necessary support from key Congressional leaders, whose backing would be necessary for passage of the legislation, Sherrod Brown [D-OH] and Olympia Snowe [R-ME] sponsored the legislation. If the bill – like so many similar bills before – was unlikely to be passed in both chambers, why did the sponsors devote time to sponsoring and garnering support for it?

Like most legislation, trade-related bills are frequently introduced despite the fact that they rarely become law. Even as the number of sponsored trade bills fluctuated over the last four decades, the number of bills that were ultimately enacted remained consistently low (see Fig. 1). Why would a legislator devote resources to sponsoring a bill that, as he or she is fully aware, is unlikely to make it past even the early stages of the legislative process? One prominent explanation is that legislators use sponsorship as a way to signal their policy positions to the electorate, interest groups and other members of Congress. A sponsor may anticipate an electoral benefit from staking out a politically popular position that resonates with the voting public (Mayhew 1974; Fiorina 1974; Arnold 1990). A similar dynamic is at work with organized business interests. Even if sophisticated interest groups

recognize some position taking as "cheap talk," sponsorship still creates a public and unambiguous statement of a legislator's position on a particular policy (Rocco and Gordon 2010; Schiller 1995, 2006). Accordingly, bill sponsorship can provide important insights into legislators' relationships with both voters and organized interest groups.

Relying on a new data set of trade bills sponsored in the Senate during the 93rd - 107th Congresses, I test a number of the prominent explanations for legislators' positions on trade policy. I consider how key influences, such as state-level manufacturing characteristics (i.e., import vs. export orientation) and factor endowment, drive protectionist bill sponsorship. I also explore whether business cycles and real exchange rate fluctuations impact protectionist position taking. Finally, I unpack the influence of electoral vulnerability as a potential influence on senators' support for certain types of trade policies. This paper is the only effort, to the author's knowledge, to systematically test these explanations using bill sponsorship data.

I find that economic and electoral factors have important effects on the propensity of senators to sponsor protectionist trade bills. State-level manufacturing profiles and changes in the macroeconomic climate influence the likelihood that a senator sponsors trade protection. Additionally, introduction of protectionist trade bills is more likely when a sponsoring senator is in a politically sensitive environment – in particular, when the sponsor holds a seat that is likely to be closely contested. These results are in line with my expectation that politically valuable position taking will increase when it can make the largest contribution to a legislator's reelection-seeking efforts. Although I focus on position taking in the context of trade policy, these results have more general implications for the expanding body of research on bill sponsorship, as well as the literature on the role of Congress in U.S. foreign policy making.

Trade Policy and Legislative Behavior

The scholarship on trade politics largely focuses on two areas. One body of research considers the economic conditions that contribute to underlying demands for trade protection; these are the so-called "demand-side" influences on trade policy. This work has examined how macroeconomic factors such as business cycles (McKeown 1984, Gallarotti 1985) and exchange rate fluctuations (Knetter, Michael and Prusa 2003, Oatley 2009) make constituent demands for protection more or less likely.

Another trade politics literature explores how these demands translate into interactions between constituents and political institutions; the "supply side" determinants of trade policy. This research has treated both the "selection" (electoral) and "influence" (lobbying) effects on policy (see, e.g., Fordham and McKeown 2003), and has examined how various factors such as constituency size and make-up (Bailey, Goldstein and Weingast 1997, Gilligan 1997, Rogowski 1987, Lohmann and O'Halloran 1994),[1] industry concentration (Busch and Reinhardt 1999, Pincus 1975), political geography (McGillivray 2004), relative factor endowment (Hiscox 2002) and institutional accessibility (Ehrlich 2009) impact trade policy outcomes.

Although the existing literature has explored the effect of political institutions on trade policy making, with a few notable exceptions, little attention has been devoted to the impact of election cycles. McArthur and Marks (1988) found that "lame duck" senators, i.e., senators in less vulnerable reelection circumstances, were more likely to support trade openness. Similarly, Tosini and Tower (1987) observed that preelection status increases support for trade protection. Conconi,

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[1] For example, Coughlin (1985) found that the importance of the automobile and steel industries in particular Congressional districts influenced voting on a domestic content bill for automobile manufacturing. Tosini and Tower (1987) observed that support for textile quota legislation was influenced by a district's overall export/import orientation, and Allen and Hopkins (1997) found that the percentage of state employment dedicated to textile and apparel production also affected legislative voting.

Facchini and Zanardi (2011) assessed roll call votes on major U.S. trade liberalization bills cast between 1973 and 2005, and considered whether members of the Senate were more willing to vote in support of trade-opening policies than members of the House. Controlling for constituency size, the authors found that senators' longer term length permitted them to be more supportive of free trade policies than their counterparts in the House, as Representatives essentially operate in a preelection period at all times. Although under-studied, electoral vulnerability may also have an influence on the types of trade policy positions that legislators will support.

These various explanations for trade policy outcomes are frequently tested through analyses of roll call votes. Voting, however, is not the only form of legislative activity that is influenced by economic and political considerations.[2] Other behavior also provides an avenue for members of Congress to engage in electorally relevant position taking and credit claiming (Hill and Williams 1993, Mayhew 1974, Schiller 1995, Owen and Owens 2011). These efforts might include sponsoring/co-sponsoring legislation as well as making floor speeches, and issuing website statements and press releases (Jones 2003, Koger 2003, Highton and Rocca 2005).[3]

Although it occurs at earlier stages of the policy making process, bill sponsorship can be an important indicator of legislative preferences. Even proposed legislation that does not become law can be an unequivocal statement of a position on an issue – bills are highly public and often used as measures of accountability during elections. Moreover, non-roll call positions are used by interest groups to

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[2] A number of studies have emphasized the importance of considering non-roll call behavior, and have leveled numerous criticisms of over-reliance on voting behavior in empirical analyses (Shepsle and Weingast 1994, see also Clinton 2007).

[3] One noteworthy study that treated non-roll call behavior as it pertains to trade policy is Box-Steffensmeier, Arnold and Zorn (1997). The authors considered both legislators' announcement of their position on NAFTA, and their subsequent votes (see also Boehmke 2006, Darmofal 2009). They found that representatives' announcements of their positions on the NAFTA legislation reflected various signals received from constituencies, interest groups and policy leaders (see also, e.g., Gailmard and Jenkins 2009, Bernhard and Sala 2006).

acquire information about the direction and intensity of legislators' preferences, and this signaling has an important effect on attracting campaign contributions (Rocca and Gordon 2010). Sponsorship is important, then, even if strategic position taking is sometimes regarded by more sophisticated constituencies (such as organized interest groups) as "cheap talk." Accordingly, while the connection between bill sponsorship and policy outcomes is not always direct, sponsorship can nonetheless provide insight into the circumstances under which senators are more likely to embrace particular policies.

The existing literature on the determinants of trade policy could be valuably supplemented by increased attention to exploring whether, and under what circumstances, economic and political conditions influence non-roll call legislative behavior. In addition to gaining a deeper understanding of trade-related position taking, examining bill sponsorship can provide information that is relevant to explaining policy outcomes – if certain economic or electoral conditions make it more or less likely for a legislator to publicly embrace a particular position on trade, these same influences are likely to be relevant throughout the policy-making process, from sponsorship to voting.

Theory and Hypotheses

Trade bill sponsorship can be salient to both interest groups and voters. Interest groups are clear targets for trade-related position taking, as they are key participants in the trade policy making process (Grossman and Helpman 1994), and bill sponsorship has been shown to impact the level of financial support legislators receive from relevant interest groups (Rocca and Gordon 2010). Even bills that are unlikely to become law can be significant to industry groups, as they serve as signals of their sponsors' policy stances. And, although the public's role in the trade policy-making process may sometimes be less direct, public perceptions of an

ideal foreign policy (including trade policy) can be coherent and politically influential (Aldrich et al 2004; Aldrich et al 2006; Box-Steffensmeier, Arnold and Zorn 1997; Conely 1999, Wink, Livingston and Garand 1996, Xie 2006).[4] Accordingly, senators can appeal to both organized interests and voters through trade-related position taking.

The type of positions that are most likely to be rewarded, however, are clearly not uniform for all senators. A host of economic factors, such as state-level sectoral composition and factor endowment, determine the types of trade policy positions that a legislator is most likely to be rewarded for embracing. Additionally, economic cycles (at the state and national level) might also contribute to demands for particular trade policies. Lastly, electoral competitiveness and election proximity may also influence trade-related position taking. Drawing on these various explanations for trade policy preferences, I generate a number of hypotheses relating to senators' propensity to sponsor protectionist trade bills. Hypotheses 1-3 constitute a reapplication of the most notable economic explanations for trade policy preferences to the bill sponsorship arena. Hypotheses 4-5 relate to the potential impact of individual senators' election cycles on their position taking behavior.

Perhaps the most prominent explanations for trade policy preferences relate to a jurisdiction's sector and factor composition. The Ricardo-Viner, or sectoral, model of trade preferences predicts that state-level manufacturing characteristics determine levels of support for trade protection. According to this model, a senator from a state that is heavily reliant on import-competing manufacturing is more likely to support trade protection. Industry interest groups, as well individuals that are affected by the performance of these sectors, are more likely to prefer trade policies that protect local industry from international competition. In contrast, if a senator's state is heavily reliant on industries that are export-oriented, there should be more support for trade openness. Exporting interests in these states seek

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[4] Although significant research has suggested that public opinion on trade policy is politically relevant, I note that others have recently questioned the salience of trade as a voter issue (see, e.g., Guisinger 2009).

access to open markets abroad, and this is frequently achieved through mutual liberalization (Bailey, Goldstein, and Weingast 1997; Gilligan 1997).[5] Applying the predictions of the Ricardo-Viner model to the context of trade bill sponsorship leads to two initial hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1a*: Senators from states with increased levels of import-competing industry are more likely to sponsor protectionist legislation.*

Hypothesis 1b*: Senators from states with increased levels of export-oriented industry are less likely to sponsor protectionist legislation.*

The Heckscher-Ohlin model of trade preferences predicts that trade policy alignments are driven by relative factor endowments, as opposed to sectoral composition. Pursuant to the Heckscher-Ohlin model, a senator whose constituency exploits the abundant factor of production (capital/high-skill labor in the U.S.), should be more likely to support free trade. Individuals and firms utilizing the abundant factor have a comparative advantage in the production and export of their goods, and do not require trade protection to remain profitable. Moreover, these firms and individuals seek policies that will lead to open markets abroad. They, accordingly, oppose trade protection because, again, access to foreign markets is in large part achieved through the principal of reciprocity in trade liberalization. In contrast, if a senator's constituency primarily comprises low-skilled labor (i.e., the scarce factor of production in the U.S.), he or she should be more likely to support trade protection. Firms and individuals exploiting the scarce factor produce goods that are likely to be uncompetitive in the face of import competition from abroad. The predictions of the Heckscher-Ohlin model lead to my second set of hypotheses:

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[5] Additionally, consumers' preferences for lower cost goods would not have to be balanced against their interest in sustaining local industries through trade distortions.

Hypothesis 2a: *Senators from states with increased levels of capital/high-skilled labor are less likely to sponsor protectionist legislation.*

Hypothesis 2b: *Senators from states with increased levels of low-skilled labor are more likely to sponsor protectionist legislation.*

The first two sets of hypotheses concern the impact of state-level economic profiles on senators' sponsorship of trade bills. There is also reason to believe that macroeconomic trends can influence firms' and individuals' trade preferences and, in turn, legislators' support for trade protection.

The political payoff for supporting trade protection is more pronounced in recessions, when U.S. industry is particularly vulnerable (Bagwell and Staiger 1995; McKeown 1984, Gallarotti 1985). When firms fail to remain profitable in light of decreased demand, trade protection can artificially support the domestic price of their goods. As constituencies seek new trade barriers, senators should be able to respond to, or anticipate, these demands by sponsoring legislation that signals their support for protection.

Additionally, exchange rate appreciations have been shown to lead to industry demands for trade protection (Oatley 2009). As the dollar appreciates, U.S. manufactures become more expensive relative to foreign goods. To offset this competitive disadvantage, legislators may respond by increasing their support for trade protection. Although an exchange rate appreciation could actually benefit some industries (those relying heavily on imported inputs, for example), I expect that the overall effect of appreciation will lead to increased efforts to seek trade protection. The interplay between these macroeconomic fluctuations and demands for trade protection leads to my next set of hypotheses:

Hypothesis 3a: *Contractions in the national economy increase senators' propensity to sponsor protectionist legislation.*

Hypothesis 3b: *Real exchange rate appreciation increases senators' propensity to sponsor protectionist legislation.*

The theoretical underpinnings of each of the hypotheses discussed thus far have been explored extensively in the trade politics literature. The contribution of this paper is primarily to test these existing explanations with a new type of data on bill sponsorship. The final set of hypotheses relate to the impact of senator-specific electoral environments on position taking behavior. As such influences have received little attention in the literature, I devote additional space here to exploring how trade protection may be an electorally attractive strategy.

A number of studies have found that trade protection, on average, carries greater appeal with voters than trade liberalization. Scheve and Slaughter (2001b), for instance, found that a plurality of American citizens are generally opposed to trade liberalization. Based on American National Election Studies ("ANES") survey data from 1992 and 1996, approximately 62 percent of respondents stated that they favored new trade restrictions. Similarly, Mayda and Rodrik (2001), based on survey results from 23 western nations, indicate that 58 percent of respondents favor increased protection. Confirming these results, a recent study, Blonigen (2011), notes that over 62 percent of respondents favored new restrictions on trade. Relying on data from the 1986-1998 ANES surveys, he finds that support for trade protection is high; in fact, support appears to be higher than we would expect based on the labor market attributes of survey respondents.[6] Although there are admittedly many caveats that affect responses to such surveys (see Hiscox 2006), these findings suggest that legislators may realize a net political gain from supporting protectionist policies.

These results, at first blush, seem counterintuitive because standard economic

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[6] In all of the surveys except one, the question posed to respondents was: "Some people have suggested placing new limits on foreign imports in order to protect American jobs. Others say that such limits would raise consumer prices and hurt American exports. Do you favor or oppose placing new limits on imports, or haven't you thought much about this?" In the one year under consideration where the wording of the question varied, the differences were minor.

theory suggests that most citizens who are not employed in, or are otherwise directly affected by, an import-competing sector would benefit from free trade. In states where import competition is high, it is not surprising that public support for protection is widespread. In other states, though, why might trade protection still be a politically attractive option?

As a number of studies have noted, despite the strong theoretical and empirical case for free trade, it is more difficult to rhetorically make the case for trade openness than for policies of protection (Krugman 2003). An analysis of the effect of framing on individuals' views on free trade confirms this proposition (Hiscox 2006). Even survey question framing that emphasized "the common arguments in favor of trade openness, that focus on job creation in export industries and lower prices for consumers, had no positive effect on overall levels of support for trade"; in fact, "respondents who were read protrade arguments were actually no more likely to express support for increasing trade than those who heard no introduction to the trade question" (Hiscox 2006, 774, 776-77).

The survey evidence, then, broadly indicates that trade protection has wide appeal with voters. Perhaps this is because voters perceive themselves as being affected by the performance of particular sectors (Scheve and Slaughter 2001a). Or, maybe the loss of jobs (e.g., in import-competing industries) is given greater subjective weight than the creation of new jobs (e.g., in exporting industries), as individuals are typically loss averse (Kahneman, Knetsch, and Thaler 1991). Or, maybe imposition of a trade barrier in any sector gives the impression that a legislator will do more to protect other local industries or the well-being of the national economy. While the survey evidence does not isolate a single mechanism as the driving force behind individuals' preferences, it does suggest that signaling support for trade protection can be a politically optimal strategy, despite the consensus that such policies are generally welfare-reducing in the aggregate.

Recognizing the appeal of trade protection to voters is important, as legislators' efforts to secure reelection affect the content and timing of their position taking

(Meinke 2008; Schiller 2006, 1995; Finocchiaro 2009; Campbell 1982; Wilson and Young 1997). A senator in a close election must appease both the voting public as well as interest groups (see, e.g., Mayhew 1974; Fiorina 1974; Rocca and Gordon 2010; Grier and Munger 1986). If, as the data suggest, imposition of a trade barrier carries broad political appeal with the public, a senator could reap a net political gain by including trade protection in his or her legislative program (Conconi, Facchini and Zanardi 2011; McArthur and Mark 1988; Tosini and Tower 1987). In predominantly import-competing states, protection-seeking industries and many voters will be satisfied. And, in states where the array of active interest groups is not decidedly protectionist, voters' receptiveness to trade protection might tip the balance in favor of support for import restrictions.[7] On average, then, I expect that sponsorship of protection is more likely when the sponsor is facing a competitive election:

Hypothesis 4a: *Senators are more likely to sponsor protectionist legislation when facing a competitive electoral environment.*

Hypothesis 4a reflects my expectation that trade protection can be a politically attractive option in states with varying levels of import-competing industry. This expectation notwithstanding, trade protection is clearly not an equally valuable strategy across states. For example, senators from states with extensive exporting interests, and a comparatively low level of import-competing industry, are less likely to view trade protection as the politically optimal strategy. This leads to a related hypothesis:

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[7] Even in states with extensive export-oriented industry, sponsorship of protectionist bills might still be rewarded by certain voters and sectors, while bills that do not restrict trade are also sponsored. For example, narrowly-targeted tariff suspensions could be used to satisfy both protection-seeking *and* export-oriented industries, while the sponsor also introduces protectionist bills to appeal to the electorate.

Hypothesis 4b: *Senators are more likely to sponsor protectionist legislation when they are facing a competitive electoral environment, and are from states with increased levels of import-competing industry and low levels of export-oriented industry.*

The second impact that I anticipate is related to election cycle timing. Whether a senator is in a reelection cycle may influence his or her decision to sponsor a particular piece of legislation. Schiller (1995), based on numerous interviews with senators' legislative directors, observed a potential preelection impact on sponsorship. As one director noted, in "[t]he two-year cycle right before the election . . . you [i.e., senators] are probably more concerned with the political side of bills. You are definitely more cautious." Preelection concerns, then, influence both the content and number of bills sponsored (Schiller 1995, 194-95).

I expect politically valuable trade-related position taking to be increasingly common in the period leading up to an election. With regard to the general public, such a strategy is optimal because voters heavily discount past behavior (Mayhew 1976; Fiorina 1981; Schiller 1995). Although such position taking might be beneficial throughout a senator's term, he or she can only devote a limited amount of time and resources to sponsorship. Accordingly, placing a late-term emphasis on the most favorable position taking, which I hypothesize to be trade protection under many circumstances, is the most effective/efficient strategy.[8] These expectations lead to my final hypothesis:

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[8] While many voters may be influenced by preelection posturing, it is less clear that a strategically-timed adoption of a popular position would resonate with sophisticated constituencies. Protection-seeking groups may realize the electoral impetus for this behavior. In this regard, preelection position taking is no more valuable to these groups than sponsorship at any other time. On the other hand, bill sponsorship is not an entirely costless signal, and senators have incentives to appeal to interest groups when they are electorally vulnerable (Rocca and Gordon 2010; Grier and Munger 1986, 1991).

Hypothesis 5: *Senators are more likely to sponsor protectionist legislation in preelection periods.*

Through a systematic treatment of trade-related bills sponsored over the course of fifteen Congresses, I explore the economic and political factors that contribute to protectionist position taking. I expect that many such factors, some of which have not been explored in depth in the existing trade literature, will be significant in explaining legislative behavior.

Data and Research Design

Running a series of negative binomial event count models, I explore the factors that determine whether, and to what extent, senators sponsor legislation imposing barriers to trade.[9] The time period under consideration runs from 1973 to 2001, encompassing a number of important economic and political developments. Economically, the U.S. underwent several periods of contraction and growth. Politically, the period covers Democratic and Republican administrations, as well as multiple periods of Democratic and Republican control of Congress.

My unit of analysis is a senator-congress. The dependent variable, PROTECTIONIST BILLS, is a count coded as the number of protectionist import regulations introduced by a senator in a particular congress. The bills were drawn from the bills designated as trade-related in the Congressional Bills Project database. Bills that imposed (or facilitated) increases to tariff rates, quantitative restrictions, labeling and/or licensing requirements, were all classified as trade-restrictive import regulations. My focus is on border measures, and other forms of trade protection,

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[9] The models were also run as Poisson regressions. However, there was clear evidence of overdispersion, making the negative binomial model most appropriate for the data.

such as export subsidies, are not treated here.[10]

Categorization of bills as protectionist was in many cases straightforward. Sometimes, the bills in question were nominally protectionist, such as a bill that increased the tariff rate on a particular product. Other bills did not make imposition of a trade restriction mandatory, but made increased trade protection at some point in the future more likely, or created an obstacle to liberalization. For example, a bill might provide that a president had the authority to impose quotas if a set of trade negotiations failed. Or, a bill might restrict the ability of the president to pursue liberalization in a particular sector. Bills such as these were also coded as protectionist, and were included in the dependent variable count used in Models 1-3.

I also experimented with a more restrictive dependent variable coding. Under this coding scheme, I only included bills that appear to make a new barrier to trade imminent. A bill that made imposition of quotas discretionary following a future publication of a Congressional report on the status of an industry, for example, would not be coded as "protectionist" here. Instead, only bills that explicitly called for increased protection, or appeared to make the provision of protection likely, were included in the sample. As discussed in the results section below, I experimented with a number of different coding schemes, and the results were robust across specifications.[11]

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[10] I do not expect that the type of trade restriction has an impact on anticipated position taking gains realized from sponsorship. Typical voters are unlikely to have particularly nuanced views on the ideal form of trade protection. And, while sophisticated protection-seeking interest groups may have a strong preference for one type of import regulation over another, they may also be aware of the legal requirements under the GATT and similar institutions that constrain the use of such measures. Accordingly, the type of protection contained in a bill is not primarily dictated by the public or industry players, but rather is a reaction to external forces. Accordingly, I expect that the type of trade restriction included in a sponsored bill is probably driven primarily by factors exogenous to the constituency/Congress dynamic.

[11] There were a substantial number of bills that reduced restrictions on trade – such as suspensions of existing tariffs – that have not be treated as protectionist under either coding scheme. By not coding them as protectionist I do not mean to suggest that tariff suspensions demonstrate a sponsor's support for free trade. Indeed, the motivation behind a tariff suspension is to assist domestic producers by temporarily eliminating or reducing duties on goods that are required as inputs. Clearly, reducing the costs of inputs raises the existing effective rate of protection. As such, whether a tariff suspension is protectionist in practice depends on whether the lower costs

The first four independent variables included in the analyses relate to the sectoral and factor make-up of a legislator's constituency. I include two variables to account for the economic importance of export-oriented and import-competing manufacturing in each state, following a number of similar studies (see, e.g, Fordham 2008, Bailey and Brady 1998; Fordham 1998). IMPORT-COMPETING is an index that measures the production of manufactured goods produced in the state that are also imported from abroad, as a proportion of state personal income. EXPORT-ORIENTED is similarly measured as manufacturing exports as a share of state personal income (Fordham 2008, 630-32).

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT is included because higher levels of education can decrease support for trade protection in two related, but distinct, ways. Education can serve as a proxy for the factor endowment of a state. In this regard, high-skilled labor/capital (i.e., evidenced by higher average levels of education) are generally export-oriented, and prefer trade openness. Educational attainment may also capture the effect that increased levels of education have on individuals' propensity to view free trade policies as nationally optimal (Hainmueller and Hiscox 2006; Mansfield and Mutz 2009). This variable is coded as the average years of educational attainment of individuals in the senator's state. This data is from the decennial U.S. Census.

UNION MEMBERSHIP. Manufacturing industries are typically among the most unionized in the private sector, and they often stand to lose from import competition and outsourcing. Higher proportions of unionized employees in a state should decrease support for trade liberalizing legislation. This variable is calculated as the percentage of the state's labor force that belonged to a union in the first year of the congress in question. For the first six congresses, the data are taken from E.

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faced by consumers of the output good outweigh the gains to the producers by virtue of the reduction in their input costs. That said, and as this ambiguity demonstrates, a tariff suspension hardly serves as a signal of a legislator's support for trade protection. While the benefits of tariff suspensions are highly valuable to specific manufacturers, this would probably not be recognized by the electorate more broadly. It is for this reason that such bills are not included in the dependent variable count.

Scott Adler's "Congressional District Data File, [93rd - 97th Congress]." University of Colorado, Boulder, CO. The data for nine subsequent congresses are taken from the Union Membership and Coverage Database compiled from the Current Population Survey (Hirsch and Macpherson 2003).

The next three independent variables are related to economic cycles. Numerous scholars have found a positive relationship between economic contractions and demands for trade protection (Bagwell and Staiger 1995; McKeown 1984, Gallarotti 1985). I include several variables to capture the current economic climate. NAT'L UNEMPLOYMENT is measured as the national unemployment rate during the first year of the congress in question. The data are from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. Additionally, I include a variable, STATE UNEMPLOYMENT, to account for state-level business cycle contractions. This data is drawn from Adler's "Congressional District Data File, [93rd - 105th Congress]" and the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

REERΔ, change in the real exchange rate, is included to measure any relationship between exchange rate fluctuations and constituency demands for trade protection. I anticipate that demands for trade protection will rise as the dollar appreciates, and sponsorship of trade protection will increase. This variable is constructed from an index of the dollar's real trade-weighted value against other major currencies (Oatley 2009).

My first variable related to election cycles is COMPETITIVE ELECTION. If a sponsor's decision to introduce protectionist legislation is driven by electoral concerns, then it should be anticipated that such sponsorship is more likely when an election is highly competitive. In contrast, where a senator holds a safe seat, the political impetus for supporting a protectionist bill should be reduced. This variable is coded as 1 if the sponsor, or his or her predecessor, won less than 60 percent of the vote in the previous election; 0 otherwise. The data were taken from the Congressional Quarterly elections database.

PREELECTION. My second election-related variable is a dummy variable in-

dicating whether a sponsor was in his or her reelection congress. It is expected that position taking is most valuable (at least to the public) at this time, and accordingly, sponsorship of protectionist legislation should be more likely. PRE-ELECTION is coded as 1 if the sponsoring senator was in the final congress before an election, and 0 otherwise.[12]

DEMOCRAT. Partisanship is frequently believed to be associated with trade policy preferences. By the 1960s, the historically strong Republican support for trade protection began to diminish, and party affiliation was a weaker predictor of views on trade policy (Nollen and Quinn, 1994). By the 1970s and 80s, though, the parties' positions switched, and Democrats became more likely to support trade protection. Accordingly, for much of the covered period it is expected that Democrats are more likely to sponsor protectionist legislation. DEMOCRAT is coded as 1 if the sponsor is a Democrat, and 0 if he or she was Republican.

Finally, I included a variable, TOTAL BILLS, to control for the number of bills introduced by a sponsor in a particular congress. As my dependent variable is a count, I need to ensure that an increase in sponsorship of trade protection is not a function of an overall increase in bill sponsorship.

Results and Analysis

The results of my event count regressions provide strong support for most of my hypotheses. Model 1 tests the sector and factor-based explanations for trade policy preferences, Model 2 adds the economic cycle variables to these models, and Model 3 adds the electoral variables. I present all models to demonstrate the robustness of my findings across model specifications, but I primarily discuss the

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[12] I also included an alternate coding of this variable, coding it as 1 if an election was scheduled for the seat in question, even if the sitting senator did not run.

third model in my analysis, as it achieved the best model fit.[13]

In accordance with the Ricardo-Viner model of trade preferences, my results indicate that senators' positions on trade vary according to the trade orientation of the most prominent industries in their state. Senators in states with extensive import-competing production are most likely to sponsor bills providing trade protection. In contrast, extensive export-oriented industry decreases a senator's propensity to support trade protection. As expected, the variables relating to these state-level characteristics are important to explaining support for protection. The signs and significance levels of these variables were all in accord with expectations. IMPORT-COMPETING has a positive and statistically significant relationship, at the .01 threshold, with sponsorship of protectionist border measures. EXPORT-ORIENTED is negative and statistically significant, at the .05 level. In substantive terms the impact of these variables is large. Holding all other variables at their means/medians, a senator on average sponsors three times more protectionist trade bills if he or she is from a state that is predominantly import-competing, with low levels of export-oriented manufacturing.[14]

I also find support for the Heckscher-Ohlin model of trade preferences, which predicts that trade policy alignments divide along factoral lines. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT serves as a proxy for a state's factor endowment: as the average level of educational attainment increases, more and more workers are engaged in employment involving capital and skilled-labor (export-oriented), and are more likely to support free trade. If a senator's constituency is primarily comprised of low-skill labor, the comparatively scarce factor, he or she is more likely to support trade protection. The coefficient for EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT is negative and

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[13] Models 4-6 are presented to emphasize the robustness of my results when using an alternate coding on my dependent variable. As Table 1 indicates, the results are largely consistent across the models, so I limit my interpretation and discussion to Models 1-3.

[14] The average number of bills introduced per congress was .05 for senators from predominantly export-oriented states (i.e., with EXPORT-ORIENTED at its 3rd quartile value, and IMPORT COMPETING at its 1st quartile), and .17 for senators from import-competing states (EXPORT-ORIENTED at its 1st quartile value, and IMPORT-COMPETING at its 3rd quartile).

statistically significant at the .01 threshold across models.[15]

Union Membership, however, was not statistically significant across models. At first blush this might be somewhat surprising, as higher rates of unionization are generally expected to have a positive relationship with support for trade protection. Though, the measure used here is an admittedly loose proxy for capturing factor endowment. In particular, the measure used includes public sector employees, which make up a large proportion of union members. These are not the type of union members that are most likely to benefit from trade protection (that is, low skilled manufacturing employment). In fact, when using an alternate measure restricted to the state-level unionization rate in private sector manufacturing, the variable is statistically significant at the .05 level. Doing so, though, restricts my sample by well over half of the observations available, as this more disaggregated union membership data is not available for the full time period under consideration. Accordingly, the reported models use the broader measure of overall unionization rates.[16]

My results yield support for the existing macroeconomic explanations for support for trade protection. Under macroeconomic conditions that pose a threat to domestic industry and employment, senators are more likely to sponsor trade protection. Across models the coefficient on Nat'l Unemployment was positive and statistically significant at the .01 threshold. State-level business cycles had a similar effect; sponsors from states with higher levels of unemployment were more likely to sponsor trade protection. This variable was significant at the .05 thresh-

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[15] I note that there is an alternative explanation for the relationship between education levels and trade preferences. It is sometimes suggested that schooling increases support for trade on theoretical grounds, as more education may lead to increasingly "global" views on foreign policy and increased knowledge of standard economic theory, which in turn makes support for free trade more likely (Hainmueller and Hiscox 2006, Mansfeld and Mutz 2009).

[16] It is worth noting that the coefficient of Union Membership was radically different based on the economic make-up of the state. For example, when I interacted Union Membership with Import Competing, the coefficient was positive and statistically significant at the .01 level. High levels of union membership *and* substantial import-competing manufacturing, make sponsorship of trade protection increasingly likely – even notwithstanding the use of overall unionization rate data (not reported).

old in all three models. In other words, when downturns make employment and trade protection an important issue, senators' have a greater propensity to take a position in support of trade protection.

Real exchange rate appreciations also increase sponsorship of trade protection. As the dollar appreciates, and U.S. products become comparatively less competitive, domestic industries increase their pressure for trade protection. Accordingly, senators respond to, or anticipate, these demands by attempting to provide trade protection – or by at least signaling their support for such measures. The regression results are in accord with this expectation, as REERΔ was significant across models at the .05 level.

To get a sense of the substantive impact of the variables discussed thus far, I calculated the change in predicted counts while varying the observed value for the variable in question. In Figure 2, four predicted count plots demonstrate the effect of changes to EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, STATE UNEMPLOYMENT, NAT'L UNEMPLOYMENT and REERΔ. For each of these variables, I calculated the anticipated effect that changes to the variable's value (on the x-axis) would have on the outcome variable (y-axis). I did this for both import-competing (solid lines) and export-oriented (dotted lines) states.[17]

As STATE UNEMPLOYMENT, NAT'L UNEMPLOYMENT and REERΔ increase, protectionist bill sponsorship is more likely. The effect of changes to each of the variables, as expected, varies according to the manufacturing profile of each senator's state. As the plots illustrate, increasing the state unemployment rate from its lowest to its highest level leads to a threefold increase in the number of protectionist bills a senator introduces; a similar change in national unemployment leads to a twofold increase. An increase to EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT decreases sponsorship of trade protection.

The variables related to electoral vulnerability received mixed support. In all

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[17] For the import-competing calculation, I held IMPORT COMPETING at its third quartile value and EXPORT-ORIENTED at its first quartile value; I did the inverse for the export-competing calculation.

models, the coefficient for ELECTORAL COMPETITION was positive and statistically significant at the .05 level. In Figure 3, I provide a predicted count plot demonstrating the substantive effects of ELECTORAL COMPETITION. Senators facing closely contested elections were more likely to introduce protectionist legislation. The effect, again as expected, was much stronger for senators representing states that had comparatively high levels of import-competing manufacturing compared with export-oriented production.

While electoral competitiveness was a statistically significant influence on the dependent variable, the role of PREELECTION appears to be sensitive to particular economic/constituency-based factors. For example, interactions between PREELECTION and other variables, such as UNION MEMBERSHIP, were statistically significant and positive in some models. However, the results were highly sensitive to the specification chosen, and are not presented here. Electoral proximity, if a significant impact on protectionist position taking, appears to be highly conditional on constituency type.

The coefficient on DEMOCRAT was not statistically significant in any specification, and the direction of its sign was unstable. Although I expected the coefficient to be positive, this result is not entirely surprising. First, while trade protection has become more commonly associated with the Democratic party, the shift was still underway for part of the period under consideration. Second, this result is in part the consequence of a few Republican Senators, and particularly Heinz (R-PA), being very active individual sponsors of protectionist legislation in the period under consideration. These facts tempered my expectation that DEMOCRAT would have a strong positive relationship with sponsorship of trade protection.

To test the robustness of my results, I ran the regressions using several variations on my dependent variable. The results from Models 1-3 reflect the most inclusive coding scheme. This dependent variable consists of all bills containing any form of protectionist, or potentially protectionist, restrictions on foreign trade. I tried running the models using a variation on this coding, where I only included

a more narrow class of trade barriers in the count. First, under the restrictive specification, I excluded some of the less blunt types of trade restrictions, such as labeling requirements, from the count. Second, I excluded any trade restrictions that appeared to be potentially motivated by non-trade policy considerations. For example, I removed bills that imposed bans on goods produced by child labor, or bills that prevented the U.S. from importing any good produced in Afghanistan or Cuba. Removing such bills was an effort to isolate *trade-related* position taking, as opposed to position taking that concerns other foreign policy goals relating to human rights or Cold War politics.[18] The results were robust to a host of coding schemes that fell in between the most restrictive (Models 1-3) and least restrictive (Models 4-6) schemes.[19]

As another robustness check, I ran the models as quasipoisson models. I obtained results that were consistent with those reported. I also experimented with a zero-inflated binomial regression model, as there were a large number of zeros recorded for the dependent variable. In no instance was the zero-inflated model a statistically significant improvement over the standard negative binomial count model, according to the results of a series of Vuong tests comparing the two model types.

To summarize the results of the models, I found strong support for most of my hypotheses. The predictions of the Ricardo-Viner and Heckscher-Ohlin models of trade preferences can be applied to the context of trade-related position taking. The business cycle and real exchange rate also have substantively important effects on trade bill sponsorship. Finally, electoral competitiveness was important in explaining levels of support for trade protection; a competitive election increases

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[18] I do note, however, that attention to human rights concerns may in part be driven by senators' economic interests (Cutrone and Fordham 2010).

[19] I came across a limited number of bills that I was unable to confidently code as being protectionist. There is no reason to suspect that these cases are systematically protectionist or not protectionist. To ensure that my results were not sensitive to the coding of these cases, I ran the regressions with all such bills coded as protectionist and again as not protectionist. Doing so had only a negligible impact on my results.

a senator's propensity to engage in protectionist position taking.

Conclusion

Previous empirical analyses have used different types of data, including roll call votes, lobbying/PAC contributions and petitions to administrative agencies, to test the various explanations for trade policy outcomes. No previous empirical study, however, has analyzed trade-related legislative behavior by focusing on the type of position taking data used here – data on primary bill sponsorship. In this regard, this paper constitutes a first effort to test a number of the existing explanations for what drives trade policy with new data. Further efforts might extend the research design here to other types of non-roll call position taking behavior. For example, analyses might explore how economic and political variables influence the amount of time that senators devote to trade policy by considering floor speeches, press statements and various other forms of position taking.

This paper has demonstrated that trade-related position taking is sensitive to the factor endowment and sectoral profile of a sponsor's jurisdiction. Economic fluctuations in the macroeconomy, and at the state level, also have important influences on such position taking. Additionally, factors that are often overlooked, such as electoral vulnerability, may very well be relevant to explaining the sponsorship of protectionist trade policies. The findings here, then, confirm and supplement earlier work that seeks to explain elected officials' public positions on trade policy. The degree of support for a trade bill, regardless of its stage within the legislative process, is likely to be influenced by the various factors treated here. Recognizing the role of these influences on trade-related position taking has important implications for elected officials' behavior throughout the legislative process, from sponsorship to roll call voting.
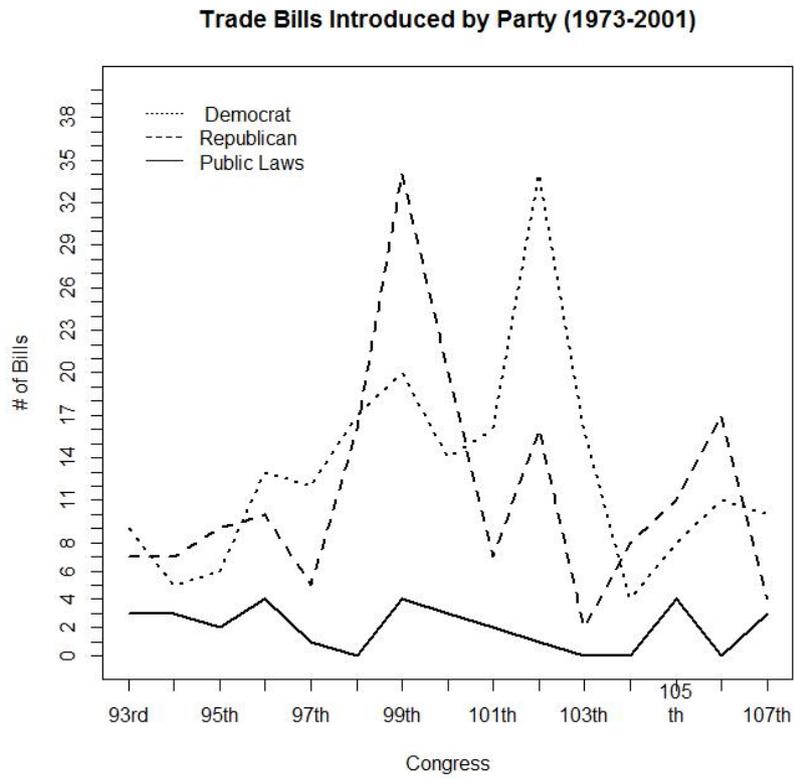
Appendix

Fig. 1: Sponsorship Statistics

Trade Bills Introduced by Party (1973-2001)

Table 1: Event Count Regressions - Protectionist Trade Bill Sponsorship

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
(Intercept)	−1.9***	−3.2***	−3.4***	−1.8***	−3.3***	−3.5***
	(0.4)	(0.6)	(0.6)	(0.4)	(0.6)	(0.6)
NUMBILLS	0.0***	0.0***	0.0***	0.0***	0.0***	0.0***
	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)
DEMOCRAT	−0.0	−0.0	0.0	−0.1	−0.1	−0.0
	(0.1)	(0.1)	(0.1)	(0.2)	(0.2)	(0.2)
IMPORT COMPETING	0.6***	0.5***	0.6***	0.8***	0.7***	0.7***
	(0.2)	(0.2)	(0.2)	(0.2)	(0.2)	(0.2)
EXPORT ORIENTED	−0.6***	−0.4**	−0.4**	−0.8***	−0.6**	−0.7**
	(0.2)	(0.2)	(0.2)	(0.2)	(0.2)	(0.2)
ED. ATTAINMENT	−0.1***	−0.0***	−0.1***	−0.1***	−0.1***	−0.1***
	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)
UNION MEMBERSHIP	−0.0	−0.0	−0.0	0.0	0.0	−0.0
	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)
STATE UNEMPL.		2.2**	22.0**		15.2**	16.3**
		(8.5)	(8.5)		(9.7)	(9.7)
REERΔ		0.0***	0.0***		0.0***	0.0***
		(0.0)	(0.0)		(0.0)	(0.0)
NAT'L UNEMPL.		13.6***	13.5***		16.4***	16.2***
		(5.0)	(5.0)		(5.6)	(5.5)
CONTESTED			0.3**			0.3
			(0.1)			(0.2)
PREELECTION			0.1			−0.0
			(0.1)			(0.2)
N	1517	1517	1517	1517	1517	1517
AIC	1712.0	1705.0	1704.4	1418.4	1410.7	1410.5
BIC	1903.7	1939.3	1981.3	1610.1	1644.9	1687.4
$\log L$	−820.0	−808.5	−800.2	−673.2	−661.3	−653.3

Standard errors in parentheses

* indicates significance at $p < 0.1$; ** at $p < 0.05$; *** at $p < 0.01$

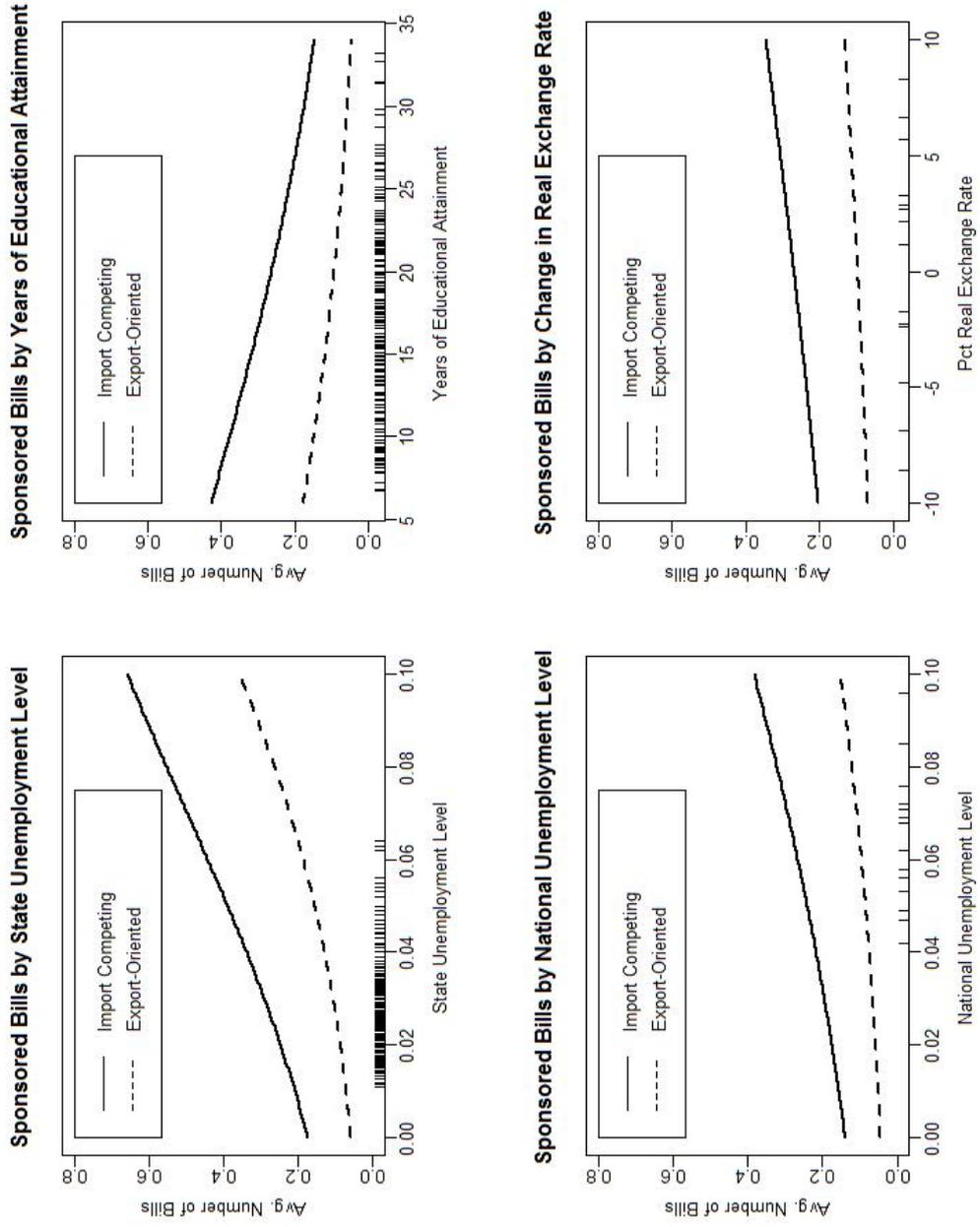*Fig. 2*: Predicted Event Counts - Sector/Factor/Business Cycle Variables

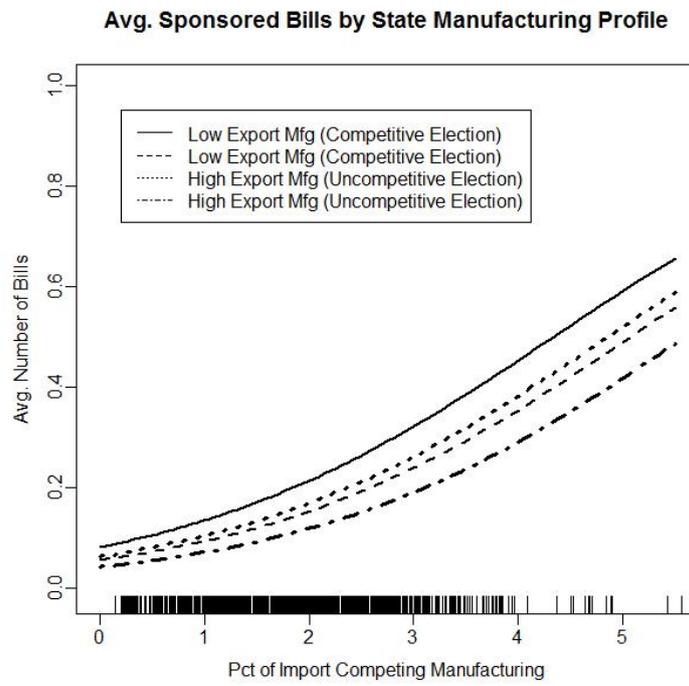*Fig. 3:* Predicted Event Counts - Electoral Competitiveness

Avg. Sponsored Bills by State Manufacturing Profile

Low Export Mfg (Competitive Election)
Low Export Mfg (Competitive Election)
High Export Mfg (Uncompetitive Election)
High Export Mfg (Uncompetitive Election)

Avg. Number of Bills

Pct of Import Competing Manufacturing

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

	Min.	1st Qu.	Median	Mean	3rd Qu.	Max.
PROTECTIONIST BILLS	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.24	0.00	11.00
TOTAL BILLS	0.00	16.00	26.00	31.41	42.00	180.00
DEMOCRAT	0.00	0.000	1.00	0.52	1.00	1.00
IMPORT-COMPETING	0.15	1.12	1.81	1.88	2.61	5.56
EXPORT-ORIENTED	0.12	0.98	1.44	1.45	1.92	3.99
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	6.70	14.90	18.30	18.95	22.40	33.20
UNION MEMBERSHIP	3.30	11.10	18.20	18.69	23.20	46.80
STATE UNEMPLOYMENT	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.06
REAL EXCHANGE RATE CH.	−8.62	−2.42	2.15	0.85	5.72	8.29
NAT'L UNEMPLOYMENT	0.04	0.05	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.10
CONTESTED	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.30	1.00	1.00
PREELECTION	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.60	1.00	1.00

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