Congressional Committee Requests Revisited: Professional Expertise, Multiple Goals and Representation

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ABSTRACT

CHRISTOPHER FARICY: Congressional Committee Requests Revisited: Professional Expertise, Multiple Goals and Representation
(Under the direction of Erik Engstrom)

House members pursue multiple goals during their legislative career. The goals of reelection, good policy making and power affect member voting and committee composition. Yet in arguably a legislator's most important choice, committee request, only the goal of reelection has empirical support. I argue that a member utilizes all three goals when going through the committee process and requests a committee assignment that will maximize their utility across all legislative goals. Utility maximization is achieved when a member can gain influence within a policy jurisdiction through leveraging their prior expertise.

I employ a multinomial logit model in examining committee requests, for eight committees over fifty years. My findings indicate that across five of the eight committees a member's prior occupation is a strong and consistent predictor of a legislator's request. It is plausible, given the results that members pursue multiple goals in making their request for committee assignment.

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Introduction

One of the most significant contributions of positive theory to the study of politics is the finding that institutions within legislatures are endogenous (Riker 1980). House members have preferences over policy outcomes and these preferences determine the structuring of institutions in Congress. Therefore choices that members make over committees, rules, and procedures are attempts to facilitate legislative outcomes in their favor. There are three typologies of member goals that rotate depending on the member and situation: reelection, "good" policy making and power within the House (Fenno 1973). This categorization of member goals has been utilized to classify the types of committees in the United States House of Representatives. Members that are interested primarily in re-election seek assignment to constituency committees (Agriculture, Merchant Marines and Fishery), legislators driven to be influential in policy outcomes desire policy committees (Judiciary, Education and Labor) and House members concerned with gaining power request assignment on the control committees (Ways and Means, Appropriations).[1]

A House member's motivation in seeking assignment for committee is a window into their career goals and a predictor of legislative behavior. The wealth of literature on the committee assignment process has produced multiple theories of how House member's career goals shape legislative organization. Previous research extols the importance of

[1] Smith, Steven S. and Christopher J. Deering. 1983. "Changing Motives for Committee Preferences of New Members of the U.S. House" Legislative Studies Quarterly, Vol.8, No.2, pp.271-281

party, constituency interests and information in determining member requests and committee composition (Rohde 1991, Ferejohn, 1974 and Krehbiel 1991). The findings in most of these works support the hypothesis that legislators consider their constituents when requesting committee assignments. The other two member goals, of "good" policy making and power, have not been thoroughly tested to determine their influence on member requests. As other scholars have noted, the three major theories of Congressional behavior are often more in chorus then they are conflict. (Shepsle and Weingast 1995, Hurwitz, Moiles and Rohde 2001). If multiple goals are active in any legislative decision; then we should witness more then just reelection factors being considered by legislators requesting a committee assignment.

Do members universally look to constituency interests in choosing committee assignments or do personal policy preferences and a desire for power factor into their revealed preferences for committee work? In this study, I attempt to unveil the role that personal policy preferences and the desire for influence play in the legislative decision making process. I employ unique data sets of committee requests and representatives prior occupations in examining committee requests for eight congressional committees over fifty years. The initial results indicate that members are cognizant of multiple goals when requesting committees and this, in part, creates multidimensional committees. These findings have direct implications for what stimulates individual member behavior and how members of Congress design legislative institutions to serve their goals.

Member Preferences over Committees and Theories of Congressional Organization

The three main theories of Congressional organization: distributive, party and informational, have provided numerous empirical tests of legislative behavior. The motivations or goals of House members that stem from these theories are to seek reelection (Weingast and Marshall 1991, Cox and McCubbins 1993) and favorable policy outcomes (Krehbiel 1991).

These theories present differentiated arguments for what motivates House members in congressional decision making, from their initial committee request to the final roll-call votes. The distributive theory of congressional committees (Ferejohn, 1974, Weingast and Marshall 1988) claims that members request committee assignments based primarily on constituency interests. Committees with varying preferences from the floor median, participate in an aggregated exchange that allows gains from legislative trading. [2] The major party theories attributed to Rohde (1991), as well as Cox and McCubbins (1993) assume exogenous member preferences, for reelection and constituency concerns, and endogenous ones, such as party pressure. The legislative consequence of party organization is that committees produce bills that align with the majority party's median member. Keith Krehbiel's (1991) informational theory of legislative organization argues that the House of Representatives is a majoritarian body that places members on committees in order to gain specialized information. In Krehbiel's theory, members are

[2] Shepsle, Kenneth A. 1978. The Giant Jigsaw Puzzle: Democratic Committee Assignments in the Modern House. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

matched by their expertise with a committees' jurisdiction so that they can construct low cost, high value legislation that aligns with the preferences of the floor median.[3]

Although the informational theory recognizes reelection as an important legislative goal, the individual goals of House members are deemphasized and committee assignments are treated as a collective process. This is where there is tension in Krehbiel's analysis of the committee assignment process. He claims that members are motivated by the "values, needs and wants of the electorate" yet final committee composition is conducted by a "legislature that appoints to committees members who can specialize"; the exogenous goal does not match the endogenous committee structure (1991 77,136). *Why would rational members, interested in electoral benefits, create institutions that focus on specialization rather then constituency interests?* As Rick Hall (1995) noted the informational theory deals with this inconsistently by "smuggling a bit of distributional theory back in. The committee specialist gets a "greater payoff", a "distributional commission" or a "distributional bonus" in return for working in a committee area that may not have any electoral relevance to the member. Here in lies the rub, do members receive a "payoff" for the policy specialization they work so hard to develop through committee work? I argue that members do receive a "payoff" for policy specialization in the form of influence within the House of Representatives.

The Role of Professional Expertise in Requesting Committee Assignments

We have noted that House members have multiple goals, yet empirically only reelection is supported as a motivation for committee requests. If Congressional scholars agree that

[3] Krehbiel, Keith. Information and Legislative Organization. 1991. Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press.

all legislators are motivated by reelection, "good" policy making and power then why would political professionals only consider one of these goals when making, arguably, their most important career decision?

I offer a different interpretation of how member motivations influence their requests for committee assignments that utilize aspects of three legislative incentives. House members, as rational and strategic actors, attempt to maximize their utility in making committee requests that are a function of multiple goals and not just reelection. If members are found to operationalize all three goals in committee requests then the organization of committees that follows would create multidimensional policy space within each committee. A recent study concluded that members on the Agricultural committee demonstrate voting behavior that reflects the multidimensionality of committee jurisdictions and legislative preferences (Hurwitz, Moiles and Rohde 2001). And as Smith and Deering (1983) concluded, "mixed motives are the norm rather then the exception for both members and committees".

A major claim of the distributional and informational theories is that member preferences are driven primarily by reelection. Adler and Lapinski (1997) present a robust test of this argument by examining the composition of committees against the "needs" for the committee's policy in a member's district. They find that many committees, both policy and reelection orientated, are composed of "high need" members. These results support the distributive theory of committee assignment in which members self-select onto committees in order to receive gains from the exchange of "private" legislative goods.[4] A substantial aspect of a member's request reflects their desire for reelection by meeting constituency demands through committee work.

[4] The validity of self-selection is constantly under debate and will not be addressed in this paper other then to postulate that a nontrivial percentage of members have there requests honored by House and Party leaders in the committee assignment process.

The various attempts to capture a legislator's ideology have proven difficult given that it is a latent set of policy preferences. The inability to measure personal policy preferences has inhibited our observations of members requesting committees for policy purposes. Studies have attempted this measure using member surveys, elite surveys, roll call voting and interest group scores; each of which is problematic. The surveys are not able to be issued consistently over time and interest group ratings only measure a subset of policy. The most popular measure of member ideology, NOMINATE scores, suffer endogeneity problems.[5] It is difficult to parse out party influences from personal preferences from constituency interests in analyzing roll call votes. Although the second dimension of NOMINATE scores may indicate personal ideology, the first dimension captures most of the variation.[6] In this study, I use a member's past professional career as a proxy for their broad personal preference for a policy area. Representatives have ideological goals separate from their constituency and make policy choices based on these preferences (Evans 2001). Prior occupation is by no means fully representative of a member's vested interest in a policy jurisdiction, nevertheless it has many advantages.

First, past professional experience is truly an exogenous measure of a member's interest that in no manner is tainted by constituency or party pressures. In fact a person's career is likely to inform their choice of political party and personal ideology. It is not hard to imagine a successful agribusiness woman from a farming district choosing to run for a House seat; since she shares personal policy interests with the majority of her potential constituents. Secondly, sociology research has demonstrated that a person's values and

[5] NOMINATE scoring is a method of analysis for party and ideological voting developed by Poole and Rosenthal (1985).

[6] In a number of studies the first dimension captures around 70% of the total variation (Cox and McCubbins 1993).

beliefs are reflected and acted out in their career choice (King 2000). As Hall (1996) notes, “An aide to a junior member of the House Agriculture Committee attributed his boss's active involvement in commodities exchange regulations to his experience as a commodities broker. Another agriculture member mentioned his experience as a public advocate for the poor in discussing his interest in international hunger relief and domestic nutrition issues. And a member of the House Commerce Committee observed that "it was only natural' that he get involved in the fight over oil and gas deregulation, given his background as a consumer advocate”. If a member is choosing to do committee work that reflects their values they are likely to bear the substantial costs that go into putting together a bill and navigating it through the chamber. Therefore, a member’s personal policy preference, as represented by prior job experience, can predict which members will want to do the heavy lifting involved in becoming a policy specialist.

The third goal of a representative in making a committee request is to gain influence within the chamber. Influence, as it is used here, operates differently then the legislative goal of institutional power. A legislator interested in formal power would seek assignment to the Rules, Ways and Means or Appropriations committee, none of which are included in this analysis. Influence is the informal power of a legislator that is created by the member through the process of policy specialization. Through policy specialization a representative earns the prestige and reputation as being one of a select few that can move policy in a certain direction within the chamber through their expertise. Influence is the “payoff” or “distributional benefit” discussed in the informational theory that members receive for their efforts in becoming low cost policy specialists in committee. Krehbiel admits “occupational variables are very good measures- perhaps the best measure- of low cost

specialization" (1991 136). Legislators align their area of expertise with a committee that offers similar specialized resources (committee staff, specialized jurisdiction, interest group access and hearings) to gain influence within a narrow policy area. A past study provides support for this assumption: "a (congressional) staff member explained that his boss had no desire to serve on a committee that would necessitate learning a new subject. Two others asked for committees handling topics with which they worked as local office holders, and two wanted to continue working on items they had handled while holding statewide office".[7] A House member that develops policy influence can use this to create particularized legislative benefits for her constituents or to trade with other members across committees.

The member goal of policy influence is activated when Congress operates under a hybrid model of the distributional and informational theories. The committee system is structured to encourage policy specialization and members use their specialization in trades for personalized benefits (Weingast and Marshall 1988). In this way the legislature operates in a similar fashion to an international market of trade. In the Ricardian model of comparative advantage countries have differentiated allocation of resources.[8] These countries have heterogeneous consumer demands that can not be efficiently meet through the production of goods just using a country's domestic resources. Therefore, they choose to specialize in production based primarily on the unique resources available to their industry. A country's synthesis of unique resources and concentrated production allows

[7] Bullock, Charles S. III.1976. "Motivations for U.S. Congressional Committee Preferences: Freshman of the 92nd Congress," Legislative Studies Quarterly 1:201-212

[8] The philosopher and economist David Ricardo is created for the creation of the comparative advantage theory of international trade.

them to sell selected goods at a relative lower price and use the surplus production for trade.

In my analogy, incoming House members evaluate their personal resources, such as professional experience and expertise, and decide to specialize in the production of legislation in an area in which they can quickly gain a comparative advantage over other members in the House. A comparative advantage by definition allows someone to produce more legislative products with equal or lesser resources then a competitor. A legislator faces various consumer demands (Party leaders, the floor median, and constituents) and has at her disposal a unique set of resources (professional expertise). Since a member can not divide her time and efforts equally or efficiently in meeting the various demands, she concentrates in the specialization of one policy area that is of personal interest and reflects her past experience. A member that chooses a committee based on personal interest and expertise is better able to use the committee staff, committee jurisdiction, and access to interest groups in creating policy influence that is recognized by both their constituents (through credit claiming) and other legislators (in trading). This moves us forward in solving the collective action problem left from Krehbiel's informational theory: Why would members spend their time specializing in committee policy if the benefits are captured by the House's median member?[9] One possible explanation is that the primary benefits are captured by the individual member and not the floor median.

[9] This question was asked in Rick Halls' article "Empiricism and Progress in Positive Theories of Legislative Institutions" (1995)

Data and Methodology

I employ a multinomial logit model that combines the theoretical and methodological postulates of rational choice theory. Each House member is operationalized as a rational actor faced with a probabilistic choice over seven different committees.[10] The seven committees represent both constituency and policy interests and in order are: Agriculture, Armed Services, Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs, Education and Labor, Interior, Energy and Commerce, and Public Works and Transportation. The multinomial model treats each observation as a utility maximizer, their utility contains two elements: personal, such as personal policy interests and the desire for influence, and categorical, in that each committee has various benefits to a member's constituency needs. Additionally, each choice has random and probabilistic components that represent the uncertainty in how a member's request will be received by the party leadership.[11]

This is one of the few studies that tests member goals in Congress by examining committee requests. The majority of literature of the committee assignment process explores committee's final composition (Adler and Lapinski 1997, Hall 1996). Studies that do utilize member requests have tested committee desirability (Rhode and Shepsle 1973, Munger 1988), preference outliers (Shepsle 1978) or party loyalty (Cox and McCubbins 1993). The data used in this study includes both freshman requests and transfer requests,

[10] The power and other smaller committees are not included. The power committees have too heterogeneous a policy jurisdiction to examine without focusing on the sub-committee level, which is a future project.

[11] House members, especially freshman, are uncertain just how the various committee jurisdictions fit with their policy and careers goals. Additionally, committee's have heterogeneous policy areas, members have numerous interested constituencies and multiple legislative goals. Finally, member requests are colored by the availability of committee, the committee's prestige and are only honored sporadically.

both of which are the revealed preferences of members for a particular policy jurisdiction. Only a member's first request is used in order to provide a strict test of personal ideology.

A member's request is not a perfect reflection of a member's preferences since their request represents, in part, the probability that they will receive the requested assignment (Shepsle 1978). Additionally, the data results can not communicate in which direction a member wants policy to move. Yet, if members are requesting committee assignments based off their prior occupations then we have information on which members will seek to be influential within specific policy areas. And since power in the House is fragmented, largely along the line of committee jurisdictional boundaries, understanding the swath of legislators with the prior ability and desire to affect a policy area informs our understanding of policy outcomes.

The model as applied here, tests the preferences of members over seven committees from 1947-1997. The data set includes close to 1,000 observations that contain all the necessary categories in order to test over 26 variables. In a multinominal logit model the dependent variable is a collection of dummied choices, in this study a legislator's choice for one of seven different committees.[12] These committees are of theoretical interest in that they represent committees such as Agriculture, known to attract members interested in serving their district and Judiciary, which is primarily a policy-making committee with little re-elective benefit. If my hypothesis is correct that members utilize multiple goals in selecting committees then we would expect both a representative's prior occupation and constituency interests to be significant predictors.

[12] The interior committee was originally included but dropped out when no member recorded having a prior profession that related to the interior committees jurisdiction.

The first set of independent variables represents personal policy preferences and the utility of influence; this is represented by a member's previous occupation. It is important to note that Shepsle discovered a correlation between prior occupation and committee requests in 1978.[13] Keith Krehbiel (1991) notes, "in the eight equations reported in Shepsle's table 4.4, the only types of variables that are consistently strong and significant are not those pertaining to constituency characteristics but rather those pertaining to members' occupations. The best predictor of Agriculture requests is "farm-related occupational background." The best predictor of Banking and Currency requests is "financial or real estate occupational background." Similarly, education or labor occupational backgrounds are the only significant predictors to the Education and Labor Committee, and being a lawyer is the only significant predictor of requests to Judiciary" (1991, pp.135-136). The data for House member's prior career were obtained from the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research. There are 46 different occupations identified in the ICPSR data and occupations were categorized together in to embody a legislator's personal preference for a policy area (Table 1A). For example, any member that previously was an urban planner, economist, accountant, CEO, banker, or social worker is qualified as having an occupation related to the policy jurisdiction of the Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs committee. The data set includes occupational listings for every member that ever served in Congress and when combined with Kelly and Frisch's request data result in over 10,000 observations across seventy years.

The second set of independent variables are committee characteristics as represented by Adler and Lipinski's census data that identifies salient electoral characteristics relating to

[13] Shepsle, Kenneth A. 1978. The Giant Jigsaw Puzzle: Democratic Committee Assignments in the Modern House. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

each committee's policy area. As stated in their article on committee outliers these data were created "to determine which constituencies or characteristics of the electoral district would have a compelling interest in the authority of specific committees" (Adler and Lipinski, p.897, 1997). For example, a member would be more likely to select the Agriculture committee if their district had a significant number of constituents involved in agriculture or large swaths of farm land. There are 18 variables used to represent the constituency interests of seven different committees (Table 1B). The variables range from the number of union members in a district to the number of school children enrolled in public schools to major military installments. The model contains seven dependent variables as symbolized by the committee requests and 26 independent variables.There is a range of constituency variables, with the Agriculture and Public Works and Transportation having a minimum of two predictors and Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs containing a total of six. An example being that a member hypothesized to have constituents concerned in the Armed Services committee will report a high number of military installments, major military installments and a large military population. There are similar predictors for each of the committees represented in this study. The first model tests to determine if a member's prior occupation correlates with committee requests. The second model includes both prior occupation and constituency variables.

Results and Analysis

The findings indicate support for the hypothesis that prior profession helps predict committee requests. The odds ratio coefficients are robust and consistent across five of the seven committees. In the Agriculture, Armed Services, Banking, Finance and Urban

Affairs, Education and Labor and Judiciary committees only the occupational predictor of interest is a significant cause. Interestingly, the variables that represent district and constituency interests performed inconsistently.[14]

In the second table, just the occupations were regressed onto the committee choice of close to 1,000 members from 1947-1997. The occupational categories, that are theorized to encompass a member's expertise and policy interest, achieve significance in over 70% of the committee cases. The Interior committee is the baseline for all the tables in this section. In a multinomial logit, the coefficients are to be interpreted as odds ratios, so the values represent the chances of making a request as a legislator moves from an interior occupation to an occupation of interest.[15] For example, in Table 1 as a member moves from an interior occupation to being a lawyer they are over eleven times more likely to request the Judiciary committee over other committees. In examining requests for the Agriculture committee, having a past career in agriculture is significant and proved eight times more influential in requesting the Agriculture committee over other assignments. The Armed Services committee produces the expected results in that members with past experience as a ranked solider or military officer have greater odds of requesting the committee then those members without military service experience. The Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs committee requests presents a clear picture, in that the only the significant predictor for requesting this committee, is having been involved in a banking or urban related occupation. In examining the results for the Education and Labor Committee, coming from an education or labor background demonstrated the most significance, causing a member

[14] This is predominantly due to the violation of the IIA assumption and not to lack of constituency influence for committee requests.

[15] The Interior professions were businesses related to energy, and forest services along with environmental professions.

to be more then 12 times more likely to request the Education and Labor committee, as compared to being in law which also increased the odds of selection. Finally in Table 2, the Energy and Commerce and Public Works and Transportation columns reported no variables of significance. This could be due to a misspecification of occupations that relate to those committee's policy jurisdictions, the lack of committee desirability, or an insufficient amount of observations for those two committees. The business occupations used for the Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs committee could also be relevant to Energy and Commerce and Public Works and Transportation. This model was absent of any predictors for district interests. The next set of models includes variables that represent constituency interests as well as legislators prior occupations.

In this multinomial logit regression there are still seven committee choices for which members can make a request but now I have added a total of 26 independent variables that include not only the occupation predictors discussed previously, but 18 new variables that represent constituency interests in the policy jurisdictions of the various committees. The results of this model were complex and protracted to say the least; there is one table for all the committee choices with 26 different odds ratio coefficients and a constant for each one. I choose to report the variables of theoretical interest and variables that displayed statistical significance.[16] Most interestingly, the constituency predictors perform moderately, while all the occupational variables retain their significance and stout. In the full model of the Agriculture committee (Table 3) agricultural occupation maintains significance along with the number of farmers within a member's district. In Table 4, the number of major military installations along with the percentage of the population employed by the military was

[16] The full tables were not included in that most of the variables listed are not of interest and placing these in would have eaten up at least 15 pages of just tables.

significant in predicting the Armed Services committee – again the occupational variables hold their saliency. This pattern is repeated in five out of the seven committees, in which some district characteristics as well as the occupational variables demonstrate predictive power for member's committee requests.

In further analysis of this model it became apparent that the Independence from Irrelevant Alternatives assumption (IIA), necessary in multinomial logit, was violated by the introduction of the constituency variables.[17] The IIA postulate is "that if new alternatives become available, then all probabilities for the prior choices must adjust in precisely in order to retain the original odds" (Long 1997, 183). Therefore some representatives may have very weak preferences over the seven committee choices. By definition the constituency variables correlate with one another to represent a latent "need" for that committee's jurisdiction a district population.[18] Additionally, the constituency variables are raw numbers and not percentages so larger districts are weighted higher in most categories. Secondly, the number of observations drops from 999 in the first model to 634 in the full model and there is no certainty that the decrease was nonsystematic. These concerns provide little confidence in being able to interpret the results of the second model.[19]

Conclusion

Ambitious women and men sacrifice much to run and win election into the House of Representatives. Once they have won, they desire to have influence within the chamber so

[17] I ran a Hausman test and the negative test statistic of -75.12 indicates that the IIA assumption in violated.

[18] I ran a series of Pearson's correlations on variables that were connected by committee such as the number of farmers and amount of rural farmland and they were all highly correlated.

[19] The only good news is the degrees of freedom from having 26 variables helps support the occupational coefficients in that the low df's raises the bar in being able to receive significant coefficients.

they may successfully pursue the goals of re-election, constructing "good" policy and gaining institutional power. The difficulty for an individual member is that 434 other strategic actors desire the same broad legislative outcomes for themselves. The engagement of multiple goals in the committee process results in multidimensional committees that are malleable and can be shaped to serve the committee members needs as they arise.

These results prove damming for the informational theory of committee assignment. The data here strongly indicate that members lean heavily on their past professional experience when requesting committee work. They are not assigned to committees by House leaders to be low cost specialists, instead they choose to be low cost specialists in order to better position themselves to create and trade personalized legislative benefits.

If a legislator's previous experience is in some way a proxy for their broad policy interests these results could potentially be additional support for the "policy outlier" line of congressional literature. The next stage of this research will be to test the hypothesis that members requesting committees aligned with their previous occupation are more likely to have their request honored then members making a request based on other factors.

I argue that a theory of legislative influence can augment the existing three theories of Congressional organization. Along with predicting the success of committee requests it has the potential to explain which members are active in the committee mark up process and navigating committee bills through the chamber. In building off the work of Richard Hall, it could be theorized that members with an informational comparative advantage would be more inclined to participate in the complexity of bill construction and feel more efficacious in representing the committee with non members in negotiating the bill through conference

committee. Additionally, I would expect to find that not only do interest groups lobby committees that share the same preferences but also that share the same previous occupation and policy expertise (Kollman, 1997). Decisions are made by those who show up and in Congress policy is made by those who show up with relevant expertise in specific policy making areas.

Table 1: Personal Policy Variables for Seven Committees from 1947 - 1997

Agriculture	Armed Services	Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs	Education and Labor	Energy and Commerce	Judiciary	Public Works and Transportation
Agriculture Business	Military Officer	Urban Planner	Teacher	Advertising	Lawyer	Engineer
Farming Business	Ranked Solider	Accountant	High School Administrator	Manufacturer Business	Policy Analyst	Transportation Business
		Economist	College Administrator	Retailing Business	Political Activist	Contractor
		Social Worker	Professor	Petroleum/Mining Business	Journalist	
		Investments	Librarian	Communication Company Executive	Minister	
		Banking	Laborer	CEO	Party Officer	
		Insurance	Union Officer		Political Consultant	
		CEO	Educational Administrator			
			School Counselor			

Table 2: Constituency Variables for Seven Committees from 1947 - 1997

Agriculture	Armed Services	Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs	Education and Labor	Energy and Commerce	Judiciary	Public Works and Transportation
Farmer - number of persons identifying employment in farming	Military Installations -Number of military installations in the district	Black - number of persons identifying as African American	Blue Collar - number of "blue collar workers in district	Transportation - number of persons identifying employment as transportation and public utilities	Black - number of persons identifying as African American	Unemployed - number of persons identified as unemployed
Rural - population living in rural farm area	Major Military - number of major military installations in the district	Bank - bank assets in state-millions	Union - percent unionized in state	Wholesale Retail - number of persons identifying employment as wholesale or retail trade	City-labeled 1 if district contained on of fifty largest cities	Tranport - number of persons identifying employment as transportation and public utilities
	Military Population	City - labeled 1 if district contained one of fifty largest cities	Median - median family income in the district		Urban - population living in Urban Area	Flood - flood potential for district
		Unemployed - number of persons identified as unemployed	Enroll - number of persons enrolled in public elementary and high schools			Construction - number of persons identifying employment in construction
		Urban - population living in Urban Area				

Table 3:
Committee Requests in the House of Representatives from 1947-1997 as Predicted by Prior Occupation

Committee Request	Agriculture	Armed Services	Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs	Education and Labor	Judiciary	Public Works and Transportation
Agriculture Occupation	***8.51****	.81	4.77	1.64	1.42	3.12
	(3.51)	(.53)	(3.77)	(.87)	(.94)	(1.90)
Rank Solider	1.15	***2.16****	1.19	1.15	1.36	1.03
	(.24)	***(.51)***	(.27)	(.33)	(.34)	(.30)
Military Officer	1.04	***2.09****	1.18	1.04	1.48	1.06
	(.27)	***(.53)***	(.29)	(.48)	(.33)	(.33)
Bank, Finance Occupation	1.38	1.30	***2.84****	.13	1.07	1.40
	(.45)	(.37)	***(1.18)***	(.85)	(1.18)	(.45)
Education and Labor Occupation	2.90	1.11	2.73	***12.46*****	1.21	1.29
	(1.49)	(.41)	(.46)	***(4.54)***	(1.18)	(.48)
Judiciary Occupation	1.28	-.17	1.19	1.99	***11.19*****	1.50
	(.29)	(.24)	(.31)	(1.47)	***(6.84)***	(.32)
Public Works and Trans. Occupation	.99	-.41	.97	1.57	.31	3.69
	(.70)	(.63)	(1.08)	(1.12)	(.85)	(.58)

N=999
The baseline committee is Interior; therefore all the coefficients represent the odds ratio of requesting a committee when moving from an Interior occupation. The standard errors are in parenthesis below the coefficients.
P<.001 ***, P<.05** and P<.010* (two-taled tests)

Table 4:
Agricultural Committee Requests in the House of Representatives from 1947-1997

Member and District Characteristics	Coefficient
City	.36* (.66)
Farmer	***1.00***** ***(.00)***
Rural Farmland	***.99*** ***(.00)***
Previous Occupation in Agriculture	***2.85****** ***(.80)***

N=634

The baseline committee is Interior; therefore all the coefficients represent the odds ratio of requesting a committee when moving from an Interior committee request. The standard errors are in parenthesis below the coefficients.

P<.001 ***, P<.05** and P<.010* (two-tailed tests)

Table 5:
Armed Services Committee Requests in the House of Representatives from 1947-1997

Member and District Characteristics	Coefficient
Military Installations	***.97*** ***(.15)***
Major Military Installations	***1.83**** ***(.31)***
Military Population	***1.00**** ***(.00)***
Previously a Ranked Solider	***2.74***** ***(.86)***
Previously a Military Officer	***3.02**** ***(1.19)***
Constant	-3.30** (1.78)

N=634
The baseline committee is Interior; therefore all the coefficients represent the odds ratio of requesting a committee when moving from an Interior committee request. The standard errors are in parenthesis below the coefficients.
P<.001 ***, P<.05** and P<.010* (two-tailed tests)

Table 6:
Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs Committee Requests in the House of Representatives from 1947-1997

Member and District Characteristics	Coefficient
Banks	***-9.38***
	(4.52)
City	***-.74***
	(.60)
Finance	***-.06***
	(.00)
Unemployment	***-.05***
	(.00)
Union	.06**
	(.02)
Urban	***9.67****
	(3.90)
Black	***.01****
	(.00)
Previously a Ranked Solider	.86*
	(.48)
Previous Occupation in Banking, Finance or Urban Affairs	***1.58****
	(.68)
Previous Occupation in Judiciary	.92*
	(.51)
Constant	-4.8**
	(1.92)

N=634

The baseline committee is Interior; therefore all the coefficients represent the odds ratio of requesting a committee when moving from an Interior committee request. The standard errors are in parenthesis below the coefficients.

P<.001 ***, P<.05** and P<.010* (two-tailed tests)

Table 7:
Education and Labor Committee Requests in the House of Representatives from 1947-1997

Member and District Characteristics	Coefficient
Blue Collar Jobs	***.06*** ***(.00)***
School Enrollment	***-.05*** ***(.00)***
Median Income	***.02**** ***(.00)***
Unemployed	-.03*** (.00)
Union	***.04*** ***(.03)***
Previous Occupation in Education or Labor	***3.33*** ***(1.12)***
Previous Occupation in Judiciary	1.91** (.93)
Previously a Military Officer	-1.7* (.93)
Constant	-4.25** (2.7)

N=634
The baseline committee is Interior; therefore all the coefficients represent the odds ratio of requesting a committee when moving from an Interior committee request. The standard errors are in parenthesis below the coefficients.
P<.001 ***, P<.05** and P<.010* (two-tailed tests)

Table 8:
Energy and Commerce Committee Requests in the House of Representatives from 1947-1997

Member and District Characteristics	Coefficient
Blue Collar Jobs	.04* (.00)
Median Income	.02*** (.00)
Transportation	***-.06*** ***(.00)***
Unemployed	-.01** (.00)
Wholesale Retail Jobs	***-8.22*** ***(.04)***
Previous Occupation in Energy or Commerce	***-.97*** ***(.69)***
Previous Occupation in Judiciary	.79** (.42)
Constant	-1.62** (1.54)

N=634

The baseline committee is Interior; therefore all the coefficients represent the odds ratio of requesting a committee when moving from an Interior committee request. The standard errors are in parenthesis below the coefficients.

P<.001 ***, P<.05** and P<.010* (two-tailed tests)

Table 9:
Judiciary Committee Requests in the House of Representatives from 1947-1997

Member and District Characteristics	Coefficient
Black	***5.17***
	(8.22)
Blue Collar Jobs	.09***
	(.00)
City	***-.93***
	(.86)
School Enrollment	-.07***
	(.00)
Median Income	.03*
	(.00)
Urban	***6.98***
	(5.71)
Previously a Ranked Solider	1.29*
	(.68)
Previous Occupation in Judiciary	***1.56****
	(.79)
Constant	-4.23
	(2.3)

N=634
The baseline committee is Interior; therefore all the coefficients represent the odds ratio of requesting a committee when moving from an Interior committee request. The standard errors are in parenthesis below the coefficients.
P<.001 ***, P<.05** and P<.010* (two-tailed tests)

Table 10:
Public Works and Transportation Requests in the House of Representatives from 1947-1997

Member and District Characteristics	Coefficient
Blue Collar Jobs	.05** (.00)
School Enrollment	-.03** (.00)
Flood	***.04*** ***(.02)***
Median Income	.03*** (.00)
Transportation	***.02*** ***(.00)***
Unemployment	***-.01***** ***(.00)***
Union	.05** (.02)
Previous Public Works and Transportation Occupation	21.5 NS(?)
Previously a Military Officer	-1.2** (.60)
Constant	-2.18** (1.98)

N=634
The baseline committee is Interior; therefore all the coefficients represent the odds ratio of requesting a committee when moving from an Interior committee request. The standard errors are in parenthesis below the coefficients.
P<.001 ***, P<.05** and P<.010* (two-tailed tests)

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