Lawmaking Behind Closed Doors: The Influence of
Career-Committee Congruence on State Legislative Behavior

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the role of career expertise in legislative committee assignments and its subsequent impact on legislative behavior and policy outcomes within the California State Legislature from 1993 to 2020. The study is structured around three core research questions: (1) What are the primary factors influencing committee assignments—district needs, partisan alignment, or professional expertise? (2) Do legislators whose committee assignment aligns with their pre-legislative career expertise (i.e., career-committee congruent members) exhibit higher levels of legislative entrepreneurship, and do they introduce more viable bills? (3) Are bills authored by these legislators more likely to advance through the legislative pipeline and receive higher support when put to a vote?

In Chapter 1, *Are You Qualified for This Position?: The Influence of Career Congruence on Legislative Committee Assignments*, logistic regression models analyze a newly constructed dataset, hand-collected from the California State Archives, to predict the assignment of over 600 state lawmakers to 62 standing committees in the State Senate and State Assembly over 30 years. The analysis reveals that occupational expertise is the most significant predictor of committee assignments, surpassing both district and partisan considerations. This finding suggests that career expertise plays a pivotal role in committee placements, regardless of political affiliation, and its influence is not limited to any one committee type.

Chapter 2, *The Impact of Career-Committee Congruence on Legislative Entrepreneurship*, employs zero-inflated negative binomial regressions to assess legislative entrepreneurship and co-authorship patterns. Using data on 8,000 bills authored over a decade by 253 legislators across eight major policy areas—agriculture, education, health, insurance, local government, public safety, transportation, and veterans affairs—the results show that career-committee congruent legislators introduce nearly twice as many bills within their areas of expertise compared to their non-expert peers. These bills, however, attract fewer coauthors at introduction, suggesting a preference to maintain control over bill content, at least at the outset, or to address specialized issues less appealing to a broader legislative audience of potential co-authors. These findings indicate that career-expert committee members often take it upon themselves to set the agenda in their areas of expertise, where they have also been institutionally empowered via the committee system.

Chapter 3, *Career Expertise and Committee Dynamics: Evaluating Bill Viability and Legislative Approval in the California State Legislature*, employs 2-step Heckman selection models to investigate bill viability and the outcomes of votes on bills in committee and on the chamber floor. The findings indicate that committee membership significantly increases the likelihood of a bill being put to a vote in committee and on the chamber floor. Furthermore, bills authored by career-committee congruent legislators receive higher vote shares in committee and floor votes, particularly in the Assembly and in highly-active policy areas such as education and health, where lawmakers face heightened competition for limited plenary time. This suggests that these legislators' expertise and committee membership advantage enhance the seriousness with which their bills are taken by colleagues, contributing to the attractiveness and success of their bills in advancing through the legislative pipeline.

This research concludes that career expertise is a crucial yet understudied driver of legislative behavior; in concert with committee membership, it can significantly shape the organization of the legislature itself and the volume of and support for legislative innovation in key public policy

areas. Career experts empowered through the committee system demonstrate heightened legislative entrepreneurship and produce more viable policy proposals, evidenced by their bills' higher survival rates and vote shares. This research contributes to our understanding of agenda-setting behind closed doors, emphasizing the need for further research into the legislative intent of the bills authored by career-committee congruent lawmakers.

Keywords: Committee assignments, career expertise, legislative entrepreneurship, state politics

Introduction

The goals of this dissertation project are twofold: (1) To evaluate how committee membership is assigned in a state legislature where competition for control of the agenda is heightened, and (2) To assess the subsequent impact of these committee assignment decisions on the legislative outputs of the affected lawmakers.

Significance of the Study: This research project aims to apply theories of committee assignments and their impact on legislative behavior from the federal level and comparative scholarship to state politics, focusing on the context of the California State Legislature. Leveraging proximity to the state capital and its extensive archival data, the study delves into a term-limited legislature characterized by high turnover and finite plenary time, where legislators are driven to enact significant policies with national implications.

Numerous comparative and US congressional studies underscore the pivotal role of committee membership in legislative functioning, shaping the balance of power between branches and influencing policy outcomes. Understanding the strategies behind committee assignments-and the ways different committee types (i.e., administrative, distributive, high policy, and public goods) are filled-offers insights into the goals of legislators, party caucuses, and chamber leaders.

Additionally, while previous research has explored the impact of pre-legislative careers on legislative behavior (e.g., Battista 2012; Hansen, Carnes, and Gray 2019; Makse 2019), this study advances that inquiry by examining "career-committee congruence" (Francis and Bramlett 2017), examining how the alignment of legislators' committee assignments and their occupational backgrounds affects their behavior and subsequent legislative outcomes.

Core Questions: The study is structured around three primary questions:

- **Factors Influencing Committee Assignments.** How are lawmakers assigned to committees? What are the primary factors that influence a lawmaker's committee assignments—the needs of their district, their usefulness (or risk) to their party, their occupational expertise, or some combination of the three?

- **Expertise, Committee Congruence, and Legislative Entrepreneurship.** Do legislators whose committee assignment aligns with their pre-legislative career expertise (i.e., career-committee congruent members) exhibit higher levels of legislative entrepreneurship, and are their proposals considered more viable by colleagues?

- **Bill Viability and Pipeline Success.** Are bills authored by these legislators more likely to advance through the legislative pipeline and receive higher support when put to a vote?

Chapter 1 — Are You Qualified for This Position?: The Influence of Career Congruence on Legislative Committee Assignments

Existing Theories of Legislative Organization

Existing work has relied on three major theories of legislative organization to explain lawmaking in the US Congress. Each theory—distributional (Weingast and Marshall 1988), informational (Krehbiel 1991), and partisan (Cox and McCubbins 1993)—features a different assumption about who controls the legislative agenda (individual members, the chamber median, or the party majority), for what ends (re-election, good governance, or the maintenance of majority party status), and how committee appointments are engineered to achieve those ends (via constituent service, high-quality lawmaking, or party discipline).

A Member-Focused Theory of Committee Assignments

In an attempt to pivot away from top-down theories of assignment, I present an alternative theory of committee appointments that highlights the motivations of the legislators themselves rather than the "hidden hand" controlling the assignments. Due to the finite

supply of and demand for committee seats, I propose that the appointment process is akin to a medical residency matching program. At the start of a new legislative session, a representative hopes to join a committee, much like a graduating medical student hopes to place in a hospital's residency program. This lawmaker possesses several attributes that make her an attractive potential committee member—such as occupational expertise, knowledge of her constituents' needs, and political ideology. The legislative committees also have distinct characteristics that set them apart, like their policy jurisdiction, power, and prestige. The goal of the committee appointments process is to find the best 'fit' for both entities based on the congruence between the *legislator's attributes* and the *type of committee* in question.

First, I argue that some committees, specifically those tasked with the broad distribution of resources or overseeing geographically-targeted programs, are more suited to constituency service. Shugart et al. (2021) refer to these as *public goods* and *distributive* committees. I hypothesize that legislators representing districts with significant constituent needs are more likely to be assigned to related committees than those from districts with average or below-average needs, especially when these committees handle public goods and services. Second, I hypothesize that legislators with professional experience relevant to a committee's portfolio are more likely to be assigned to that committee than those without such backgrounds, particularly for *public goods* and *distributive* committees.

Third, political ideology may distinguish legislators in committee assignments. Legislators may seek assignments in committees where they can exert the most policy influence while avoiding those focused on internal legislature functions, like *administrative*. Practically, a legislator must also be mindful not to stray too far from his colleagues' ideal-points at the risk of alienation and failing to accomplish his own policy goals. Therefore, I expect legislators closer to their chamber or party's ideological median to be more likely assigned to policy-oriented committees.

Methodology

To test my hypotheses, I constructed an original dataset on the California State Senate and State Assembly spanning from the 1993-94 session to the 2019-20 session. I employ a series of binomial logistic regressions to predict committee assignments based on a lawmaker's select attributes—prior occupation, district needs, and ideology. The model is first run on all committees and then by committee type. Committees are classified according to the typology described in Shugart et al. (2021), which organizes committees by the breadth of their portfolios, their functional responsibilities, and their importance to parties' reputations and electoral fortunes. Each model also controls for a variety of variables related to a representative's demographics, legislative tenure, and institutional context that may impact their committee assignments.

Key Findings

The results reveal a clear logic to the internal organization of the two chambers: Career congruence is the strongest and most consistent predictor of committee membership for all legislators across both chambers (Figure 1). Legislators with relevant occupational backgrounds are more likely to secure related committee seats, with career congruence boosting a senator's chances of assignment by 5.5 percentage points and an assemblymember's by 4 percentage points. This attribute is an asset for assignment to nearly all committees but has the strongest impact on assignment to public goods and distributive committees (Figure 2).

Ideology affects appointment decisions, with more extreme legislators (liberal or conservative) being less likely to secure committee assignments. Centrists are 1.3 times more likely than extremists to be assigned to a committee in the Senate and 1.5 times more likely in the Assembly. More extreme Democrats in both chambers are assigned to one to two fewer committees than centrists, particularly affecting assignments to highly-visible public goods committees.

Constituency congruence shows limited impact on committee assignments. Legislators

Figure 1: Career congruence is the most consistent predictor of committee membership across both chambers and both political parties, followed by ideology.

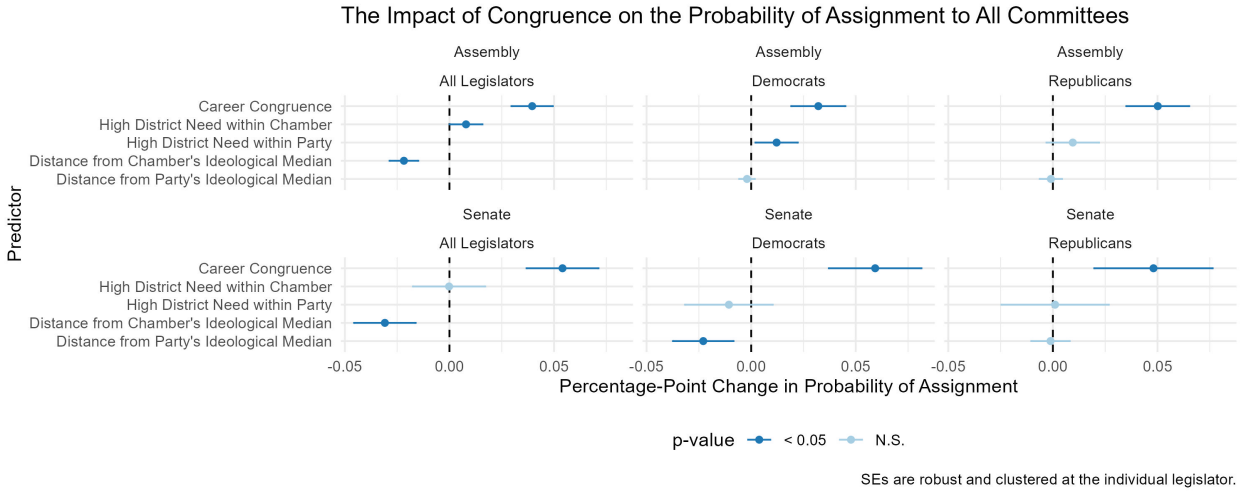
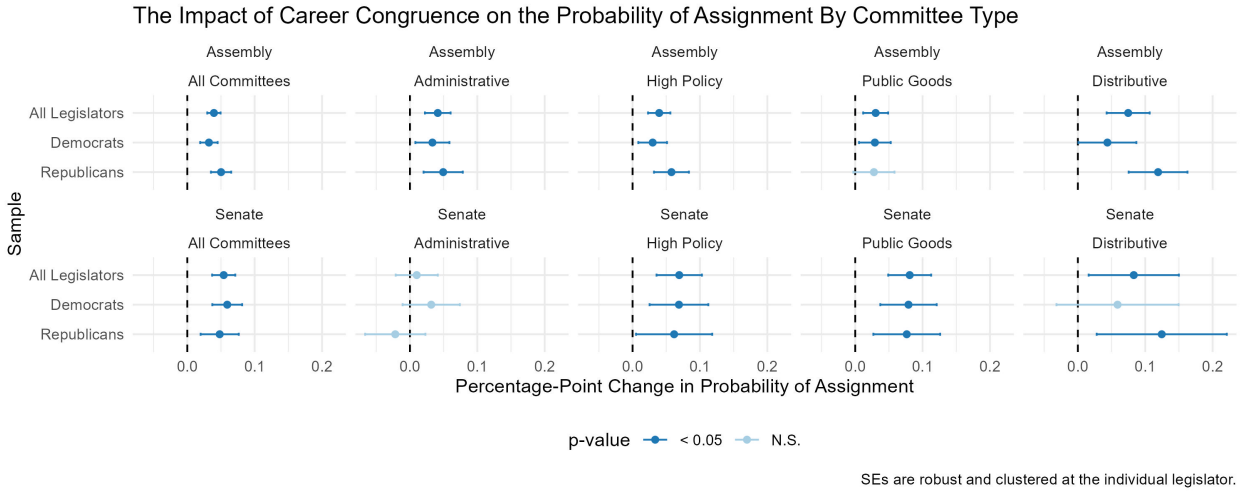


Figure 2: Legislators are consistently appointed to committees with portfolios that relate to their pre-legislative careers.



representing districts with above-median needs in an industry are only slightly more likely (by 2 percentage points) to be appointed to relevant committees. This effect is strongest for distributive committees (e.g., Agriculture), where legislators from high-need Assembly districts are 1.4 times more likely to be appointed than those from low-need districts.

The Consequences of Career-Committee Congruence

The evidence presented in Chapter 1 suggests that career congruence is the most consis-

tent positive predictor of assignment to a relevant committee, raising questions about the legislative impact of this assignment logic. These career-experts encounter lower barriers to policy specialization, which may elevate the quality of policies they introduce and guard against uninformed policymaking making it out of committee. However, these career-experts are also uniquely positioned to exploit non-experts. They may withhold information from the rest of the chamber, or even fellow committee members, if it serves their own interests. This prompts us to consider whether such actions constitute responsible and informed policymaking, or if the legislature is empowering legislators to exploit a committee appointments system overly reliant on private expertise at the expense of the common good. The next step in this research is to assess how effective these career experts are at accomplishing their policy goals in less visible policy spaces, how they prioritize their time, and what this behavior reveals about the laws they write.

Chapter 2 — The Impact of Career-Committee Congruence on Legislative Entrepreneurship

Defining Legislative Entrepreneurship

Legislative entrepreneurship refers to "a set of activities that a legislator engages in, which involves working to form coalitions of other members for the purpose of passing legislation by combining various legislative inputs and issues in order to affect legislative outcomes" (Wawro 2010, p. 4). These activities include acquiring information, bill drafting, coalition building, and pushing legislation, the first three activities of which are the core focus of this chapter.

A Theory of Career-Committee Congruence

Having demonstrated that career-committee congruence plays a significant role in committee assignments, I argue that occupational expertise is a key factor impacting the relationship between committee membership and legislative entrepreneurship. Career-committee

congruence encourages a member to focus their legislative efforts on the domains wher their professional expertise and committee membership overlap. Thus, I hypothesize that career-committee congruent lawmakers will introduce more bills within their area of expertise than non-expert co-committee members, non-experts overall, and experts not serving on the committee.

Additionally, privately-held industry knowledge may give a committee member an entrepreneurial edge relative to non-expert colleagues on that committee and experts not assigned to it. Co-committee members and the chamber at large may defer to the career-expert's professional instincts, allowing the expert to exhibit more innovative behavior. A career-expert may also demonstrate greater effort in building consensus and finding common ground with other committee members and legislators by leveraging their industry-specific knowledge to facilitate compromise. They may also serve as a proactive advocate for their committee's policy goals to non-committee colleagues and the broader public. Thus, I expect that bills authored by career-committee congruent lawmakers will attract more cosponsors.

Methodology

To test my hypotheses, I compiled an original dataset covering the California State Legislature's proceedings across five sessions from 2011-12 to 2019-20. The data features 90 senators and 183 assemblymembers (totaling 253 unique lawmakers) and a sample of 5,275 substantive Assembly bills and 2,706 substantive Senate bills in 8 key public policy areas-agriculture, education, health, insurance, local government, public safety, transportation, and veterans affairs.

I use zero-inflated negative binomial models to predict legislative entrepreneurship, measured as the total number of bills introduced by a primary author in a specific policy domain and the number of co-authors attached to a bill upon introduction. The primary predictors are the membership of the primary author to the policy committee to which a bill is first referred and whether the legislator has industry experience relevant to the bill's policy topic.

Each model controls for various factors such as a representative's demographics, legislative experience, and the institutional context potentially affecting a bill's introduction.

Key Findings

Are career experts and committee members more legislatively entrepreneurial? In Chapter 2, I find that, yes, career experts show significantly higher rates of bill authorship compared to non-experts, with a 42.5% increase in the number of Assembly bills introduced and a 53.4% increase in Senate bills introduced in a lawmaker's area of occupational expertise. Similarly, committee members demonstrate greater innovation within their committee's policy jurisdictions than non-members, leading to a 70.7% increase in Assembly bills introduced and a 50.9% increase in Senate bills introduced related to their committee's policy portfolio.

The data also support the hypothesis that career-committee congruent members are more engaged in policy areas where their expertise and committee membership align; they author 4 times as many bills in these policy domains than non-expert non-committee members, 2.5 times more bills than their non-expert co-committee colleagues, and 2.8 times more bills than career experts who share the same expertise but lack committee access. This underscores how institutional authority drives legislators with relevant professional backgrounds to introduce more bills in their areas of expertise, while institutionally-excluded experts are less inclined due to limited access to committee gatekeepers.

Are the bills introduced by career-committee congruent lawmakers more attractive to other lawmakers? According to the negative binomial findings, bills introduced by career-expert committee members in both chambers typically have 25% fewer co-authors on average compared to those authored by non-expert non-committee members. This suggests that career-committee congruent members may initially propose bills that are less appealing to colleagues or may exhibit greater protectiveness over their bills early in the legislative session. Alternatively, the specialized or technical nature of these bills may make them less attractive to lawmakers with broader interests.

Career-Committee Congruence Encourages Entrepreneurship, But What About Bill Viability?

Given the limited number of bills legislators can propose each 2-year session (50 in the Assembly, 40 in the Senate) and the numerous policy domains these bills could cover, the significance of introducing additional bills within a committee where the lawmaker is a member and a career expert is greatly amplified. If expert lawmakers on relevant committees introduce more proposals related to their committee's work than their counterparts, they have a significant opportunity to shape policy within that domain. This positions them to drive discussions, foster policy innovation, and exert considerable influence in a competitive policy landscape.

Chapter 2 focused on bill introductions and how the concentration of these introductions in an author's area of career expertise or committee focus reveals their legislative entrepreneurship and the initial attractiveness of their bills to potential co-authors. However, lawmakers can influence their bills' survival through other formal avenues, including committee and floor deliberations and votes. Chapter 3 addresses each in turn.

Chapter 3 — Career Expertise and Committee Dynamics: Evaluating Bill Viability and Legislative Approval in the California State Legislature

Defining Legislative Effectiveness

Volden and Wiseman define *legislative effectiveness* as "the proven ability to advance a member's agenda items through the legislative process and into law" (2014, p. 18). Typically, effectiveness is measured as an overall score reflecting a legislator's success in guiding bills through five key legislative steps: introduction, committee action, post-committee action, passage through both chambers, and enactment into law. However, this method assumes uniform effectiveness across different policy domains and overlooks opportunities for pol-

icy specialization. While Chapter 2 explored how lawmakers allocate their efforts under constraints, like limits on bill introductions, Chapter 3 focuses on the attributes of a bill's primary sponsor that increase the likelihood of the bill proceeding to a vote in committee and on the chamber floor, and gaining support in those votes.

A Theory on Career-Committee Congruence and Degrees of Bill Success

Bills introduced by career-experts often succeed due to their author's dedication and strategic crafting. Career-experts also introduce more bills in their field, enhancing their chances of success (Porter 1974). I predict these bills will advance to votes in committee and on the chamber floor more often than those by non-experts; once there, these bills will receive more favorable votes.

When committee members write bills related to committee business, I hypothesize that these bills are more likely to be voted on in committee and on the chamber floor. Committee members' deep understanding of the committee's formal rules, cultural norms, and subject matter helps their bills align with committee priorities. As active participants in the committee's deliberations, they can strategically advocate for their bills, increasing their chances of consideration. This credibility extends to their bills, making them more likely to be voted on and to receive favorable votes compared to bills from non-committee members.

Finally, I argue that the combined effect of career-committee congruence adds significant sway. Career-experts, when strategically positioned as specialists in their policy areas, can elevate the visibility of their bills and use committee authority to prioritize lawmaking in these domains. Empowered by party leaders, they shape the legislative agenda. Thus, these bills are more likely to be prioritized and garner greater support from fellow lawmakers and committee members.

Methodology

For this chapter, I gathered data on all substantive Assembly and Senate Bills from the

2011-2012 to the 2019-2020 sessions, resulting in 8,309 bills across 8 major policy areas: agriculture, education, health, insurance, local government, public safety, transportation, and veterans affairs. Using a 2-stage Heckman selection model, I first estimate the propensity of a bill to receive a committee vote using a probit model. Then, I predict the percentage of 'ayes' using OLS regression. This process is repeated for bills advancing to the floor of both chambers. The main independent variables are the primary author's committee membership and occupational expertise related to the committee's policy portfolio. Control variables include author demographics, legislative tenure, and other institutional factors.

Committee Membership Facilitate Votes, Career-Expert Committee Members Garner More Approval

Do career-expert committee members outperform their non-expert counterparts and experts without committee influence? Bills authored by committee members are more likely to receive a vote in their first policy committee and on the floor of the bill's chamber of origin compared to those authored by non-committee members. Most notably, in the most active policy spaces-education, health, public safety, and transportation-bills authored by career-committee congruent members receive significantly higher support on the Assembly floor, with an average increase of 5 more 'aye' votes when all 80 assemblymembers cast votes, suggesting growing momentum for these bills. This alignment of a member's professional background with their empowerment via the committee system appears to significantly benefit the lawmaker's proposal, highlighting the value of career-committee congruence, where the author's dual roles seem to enhance their credibility and influence. However, these findings are primarily from the Assembly, where factors like greater competition for time and a higher cap on bill introductions may influence outcomes more than in the Senate.

Lawmaking Behind Closed Doors: The Influence of Career-Committee Congruence on State Legislative Behavior

In examining the impact of career-committee congruence on state legislative behavior,

this research reveals key insights about legislative organization and its impact on legislative outputs. Chapter 1 underscores the significance of career-congruence in determining committee assignments for state lawmakers, particularly evident in committees handling public goods and distributive matters. This emphasizes lawmakers' interest in shaping policy areas aligned with their expertise, facilitated by the legislature's willingness to empower them through coveted committee seats.

Building on this foundation, Chapter 2 delves deeper into the behavior of career-committee congruent members, demonstrating their heightened entrepreneurial spirit. These members introduce more bills at the intersection of their areas of expertise and their committees' jurisdictions. Despite their bills initially featuring fewer co-authors, these congruent members concentrate their legislative efforts on their specialized domains, taking the lead in setting the agenda and driving policy debates.

In Chapter 3, a significant trend emerges: bills authored by career-committee congruent members tend to receive more support when brought to a vote compared to those by incongruent authors. This indicates a growing momentum for these bills, attributed to the occupational and institutional attributes of their authors. These congruent lawmakers may exhibit higher individual effectiveness in advancing their proposals, introducing and shepherding bills with heightened viability through the legislative pipeline.

The next phase of this research agenda should aim to unravel the underlying reasons behind this phenomenon. Are these bills of higher quality? Do they address niche or technical topics, or offer bolder policy prescriptions? Are these career-committee congruent members more willing to compromise to see their vision enacted into law? Understanding these dynamics will provide deeper insights into career-committee congruence's impact on legislative outcomes, shedding light on state legislative behavior in typically opaque environments.

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Are You Qualified for This Position?:

The Influence of Career Congruence on Legislative Committee Assignments

Abstract

Committees are the workhorses of state legislatures. If a state legislator hopes for influence over a specific area of public policy, she must find a way to land on a committee dealing with that policy jurisdiction. In this paper, I evaluate committee assignments from the perspective of individual representatives, asking what factors—a legislator's occupational experience, the needs of their constituents, or their ideology—increase their chances of landing on a legislative committee. Using an original dataset of state legislators and committee assignments in the California State Legislature over nearly 30 years, I find that occupational expertise plays the strongest and most consistent role in the appointments process, regardless of partisanship or committee type, followed by a demand for ideological centrism from members of the most public-facing committees. I also discover that the needs of constituents only play a very modest and narrow role in appointment politics, calling into question the nature of substantive representation. I conclude with a discussion of what this reliance on occupational expertise means for the quantity and quality of policy that flows from the legislature.

Keywords: California politics, committee assignments, legislative biographies

For over a decade, Willie Brown, Jr., was the most powerful man in California. Nicknamed the "Ayatollah of the Assembly" (Nieves 1998), Brown led the California Assembly from the Speaker's Office from 1980 to 1995. A Democrat, Brown was first elevated to the speakership by a bipartisan coalition of assemblymembers and even managed to hold onto the position when his party lost its majority in 1994. Yet Brown's climb to the top of California politics was an arduous one. In his first ever vote in the Assembly in 1965, Brown voted against the then-incumbent speaker, Jesse Unruh, who went on to win the leadership post again in resounding fashion. Brown was immediately punished, stripped of his committee seats, and moved to one of the smallest, most remote offices the Assembly had to offer.[1] At the time, he felt underutilized but made the most of his situation.[2] Brown quickly learned to use his legal background as a criminal defense attorney and his political skills from his time in San Francisco politics to his advantage, turning less glamorous committee assignments into seats of power and influence.[3] Much later, when he found himself in charge of appointments as Assembly Speaker, he emphasized the importance of committee assignments, likening the process to sports: "You always have to field a full team. You ought to put your best team on the field. You should never have somebody trying to be chairman of the Ways and Means [Committee] who can't read or write" (Brown and Morris 1999, p. 111).

This paper is about fielding a full team. In a crowded legislature with finite committee

[1]When later asked what the consequences had been for his dissension, Brown said, "You get the worst committee assignments, the ones nobody else wants. And you get the worst physical accommodations on the floor, as well as office space. And you get the worst parking stall" (Brown and Morris 1999, p. 102). Brown would later use these same disciplinary tactics to punish defectors in his own party, called the Gang of Five, who dared vote against him in a revolt against his speakership in 1988.

[2]Lamenting being sidelined by the next speaker after Unruh, Brown said, "My services were not utilized and my time was not utilized by Mr. McCarthy. But you assumed that would be the case, where your opponent wins. I appropriately respected that kind of a rule and absented myself from the arena so as not to be a problem for his administration. That only lasted for a couple of years. By 1976 or so, his troops had leaned on him to make sure he understood that he couldn't exist without utilizing all the talent in the place and that I was at least a part of that. So I got an assignment" (Brown and Morris 1999, p. 178).

[3]Asked about the growing importance of the Revenue and Taxation Committee under his watch, Brown enthusiastically defended the Committee, saying, "The assault on the property tax structure, the whole question of indexing of income taxes, renter's tax relief, all of those are subject matters to be dealt with in the late seventies. I chaired the Rev and Tax Committee through all of that, through Proposition 13, through the compliance, through the bailout afforded to local governments as a result of Proposition 13, the renter's tax credit which was Mike RODS' bill, written in my committee. All of that occurred in Rev and Tax. And it was not a terribly glamourous [sic] place in which to be but it was the workhorse committee of the late seventies" (Brown and Morris 1999, p. 181).

seats available, members must compete with one another over choice committee assignments, something Brown learned the hard way. Some members will be more skilled or knowledgeable in a certain policy area than others. Some will promise to be loyal to leadership while others prioritize the needs of their constituents back home. This paper asks, who gets what and why? Why are some legislators appointed to certain committees over others, and are the criteria for appointments universal across all committees?

Existing work has relied on three major theories of legislative organization meant to explain lawmaking in the US Congress. Each theory—distributional, informational, and partisan—features a different assumption about who controls the legislative agenda (individual members, the chamber median, or the party majority), for what ends (re-election, good governance, or the maintenance of majority party status), and how committee appointments are engineered to achieve those ends (via constituent service, high-quality lawmaking, or party discipline). Strides have been made to port these theories to state politics, but there is little consensus as to which theory is most applicable across time and space. Though scholars have largely set aside the distributional approach (for one exception, see Battista 2006), the influence of expertise in committee composition has proven limited and difficult to generalize across whole committee systems (Hamm, Hedlund, and Post 2011), and despite the growing importance of parties to committee composition (Hedlund and Hamm 1996), scholars disagree about whether assignments are a reward for or an antecedent to party loyalty (Kanthak 2009).

In an attempt to pivot away from top-down theories of assignment, I present an alternative theory of committee appointments that highlights the motivations of the legislators themselves rather than the "hidden hand" controlling the assignments. Due to the finite supply of and demand for committee seats, I propose that the appointments process is akin to a medical residency matching program. At the start of a new legislative session, a representative hopes to join a committee, much like a graduating medical student hopes to place with a hospital's residency program. This lawmaker has several attributes that make her

an attractive potential committee member—e.g., her occupational expertise, knowledge of her constituents' needs, and her political ideology. The legislative committees available also have different characteristics that set them apart, like their policy jurisdiction, power, and prestige. The goal of the committee appointments process is to find the best 'fit' for both entities based on the congruence between the *legislator's attributes* and the *type of committee* in question.

To test my theory, I use an original dataset of committee appointments in the California State Legislature over nearly 30 years. I find that occupational expertise plays the strongest and most consistent role in the appointments process, regardless of committee type, followed by a demand for ideological centrism from members of the most public-facing committees. I also discover that the needs of constituents actually play a very modest and narrow role in appointment politics. This finding calls into question how committee members can claim to substantively represent their constituents when they don't have a seat at the proper table. These results have implications for scholars who study legislative capacity and are concerned with the behavior of representatives behind closed doors and for practitioners who question the quality of governance that flows from state chambers across the country.

The Significance of Committee Assignments

Committees are the workhorses of most legislatures. Like firms, committees streamline and routinize legislative activity by reducing transaction costs in the production and exchange of ideas (Weingast and Marshall 1988). Without committees, lawmaking is chaotic, inefficient, and unresponsive to the needs of lawmakers and their constituents (Cox 2008). With committees, legislatures are better able to control the political agenda (Hedlund and Hamm 1996; Fernandes, Riera, and Cantú 2019; W. L. Francis and Riddlesperger 1982) and constrain the executive branch (Russell and Gover 2017). To wield any political influence, then, a legislator has to play the committee game. Belonging to the right committee can be extremely beneficial to an individual legislator. It allows a member to credit-claim in

front of key constituency groups (Fouirnaies, Hall, and Payson 2019; Osborn 2014), magnifies the flow of contributions to her campaign coffers (Grimmer and E. N. Powell 2013; Munger 1989), raises her political profile (Fenno 1973), and increases the odds of success for her own political agenda (Stacy, Volden, and Wiseman 2019). Any ambitious legislator will do her best to join powerful or prestigious committees while avoiding less glamorous posts because committee membership is critical to achieving canonical goals like reelection, policy influence, and political power.

Competing Theories on the Organization of State Legislatures

Yet previous scholarship has conceived of committee appointments not from the perspective of the individual member but from the perspective of those responsible for making such appointments. The three major theories—distributional, informational, and partisan—argue that committees are staffed in ways that enable the appointers to achieve objectives that would be more difficult or otherwise impossible absent such organization. As the agents in this arrangement, members are often sidelined and their goals co-opted to align with those of the appointers (principals), be they chamber or party leaders. Each major theory has its own assumptions about who the "hidden hand" behind appointments is and what their goals are, and these differences have potential implications for why some criteria are privileged over others in committee appointment decisions.

The first theory, distributional, says that the key principals are constituents and, by extension, the legislators themselves. Constituents demand public goods, leading legislators to prefer to serve on committees they believe will have the greatest impact on their constituents and thus their own electoral fortunes (Weingast and Marshall 1988). Committees are responsible for policy jurisdictions with minimal overlap, and committee members serve as policy dictators over their assigned portfolios (Laver and Shepsle 1996; Martin and Mickler 2019). Distributional theory implies that committees are stacked with "high-demanders"; compared to non-members, committee members are above-average supporters of the com-

mittee's purpose and its associated interest groups (Weingast and Marshall 1988). These high-demanders self-select unto their preferred committees, facing minimal screening during the committee appointments process.

The second theory, informational, puts the chamber majority in charge of committee appointments with the common goal of passing high-quality public policy (Gilligan and Krehbiel 1987). The chamber majority relies on committees to provide specialized information to the body to reduce uncertainty and minimize unintended policy outcomes (Krehbiel 1991; Martin and Mickler 2019). Accordingly, committee seats are distributed to legislators who have some level of experience with or expertise in the policy jurisdiction(s) of a given committee. That is, the plenary 'taps the talents' of its members in assigning committee seats (Hamm, Hedlund, and Post 2011). Yet doing so poses a risk of agency loss for the chamber majority. Policy experts on committees may withhold key information or mislead the chamber about the state of the world without the chamber realizing. To avoid this, the chamber majority may protect itself at the committee assignment stage by instead building committees that are ideologically representative of the chamber as a whole or by placing opposing ideological extremists on the same committee. Both strategies are mean to encourage the accurate dissemination of pertinent information necessary for governing well.

In the third theory, partisan (also known as party-coordination or party-cartel), the majority party in a chamber is the primary principal. To protect the party's brand and its majority status, a party uses committees to cartelize the legislative process, constraining representatives' behavior and controlling the plenary's agenda (Cox and McCubbins 1993). Partisan theory implies that committee assignments are not self-selected; instead, party leaders use committee appointments strategically to reward loyal partisans and punish disloyal ones. Loyalists are assigned to the most desirable committees (e.g., Appropriations, Rules) in an attempt to protect the party while party mavericks are shunted to the less desirable ones where they can inflict the least damage to their party's image (Martin and Mickler 2019).

Applied to state politics, evidence for each theory is somewhat limited and often inconclusive. Attempting to adjudicate between the three, Battista (2006) finds that committee voting in California is more unanimous than the highly-partisan voting on the chamber floor, and he interprets this as support for the distributional theory.[4] But there is mounting evidence in support of the informational theory. Studies suggest that state legislative committees, especially those that control the legislative agenda or money (e.g., Rules or Budget), are often ideological microcosms of their parent chamber (Battista 2004; Prince and Overby 2005; Overby and Kazee 2000). Hamm, Hedlund, and Post (2011) show that state legislatures lean on members' occupational expertise and previous committee experience when constructing committees but at varying rates by committee and over time, and Battista (2012) demonstrates a growing trend in stacking committees based on families' financial connections to relevant industries but not necessarily their policy expertise. Growing stronger still is scholarship in support of a party-cartel model of assignments: Kanthak (2009) shows that parties use committee assignments to reward legislators under the right institutional circumstances, and Hedlund and Hamm (1996) find that majority parties are often numerically over-represented on important control and fiscal committees relative to their minority counterparts. Even when parties do not have formal control over committee appointments, as in Arkansas, they still manage to stack the most powerful committees with reliable partisans to control committee outputs (Broockman and Butler 2015).

Limitations to the Current Study of Committee Assignments

Notably, research on committee assignment politics at the state level has faced a number of challenges: First is the difficulty in generalizing any conclusions across time and place. Many studies concentrate on just a handful of committees over considerable periods of time (e.g., Hamm, Hedlund, and Post 2011) or a large number of committees (or committee systems)

[4]Specifically, Battista (2006) interprets this homogeneity in committee voting as evidence that committees are generally composed of homogeneous high-demanders who express their true preferences for more 'goods' behind closed doors but are then encouraged to vote along party lines on the record.

over much shorter increments of time (e.g., Battista 2012). The present paper aims to take advantage of the benefits of both a longer time horizon and a larger sample of standing committees by studying assignments to nearly all the committees in a single committee system over a 30-year period. This deep-dive on a single committee system across both the upper and lower chambers lets us to test the longitudinal evolution of assignments while also allowing for more precise measures of career expertise and constituent need than possible in research that has come before. While the present work does not have the benefit of cross-state comparison, it does offer a more accurate and stable way to measure the careers, constituent needs, and ideology of legislators over a longer time period.

A second challenge stems from committee-specific modeling, or the prediction of assignment to one committee at a time. While specific committees will certainly require different skills/attributes from their members, this committee-specific approach makes it much tougher to make broader claims about how the entire committee appointments process unfolds. A legislator rarely sits on a single committee at a time but is instead appointed to several at once; thus, studying appointments on a committee-by-committee basis limits our ability to know if a skill or attribute that advantaged a member in appointment to one committee will confer a similar advantage for assignment to a different one. To preview, I will later argue the benefit of studying appointments in a pooled-model and then by committee-type, as promoted by Shugart et al. (2021), to see if appointments vary with the function and importance of the committees in question.

Third is the matter of observationally-equivalent hypothesis testing. It is often difficult to affirm or falsify the major theories of legislative organization because they share identical observable implications. For instance, if we found that all the committee members on the Agriculture Committee represented farming districts, we might take this as obvious support for distributional theory since legislators are motivated to pursue constituency service to get re-elected. However, such assignments could also be indicative of informational theory. If the chamber's goal is to produce high-quality policy, like cost-efficient spending, then it

could exploit legislators' private knowledge of constituents' needs to get public goods, like farm subsidies, to those most in need of them. This congruence between constituency need and committee membership could also benefit the majority party as partisans advertise their party's programmatic successes and, in doing so, bolster the party brand.

Findings related to legislative expertise are similarly affected by the observational-equivalence problem. That is, appointing policy experts to relevant committees is appealing regardless of who is controlling the assignments. If legislators themselves are in charge, then policy experts might self-select onto committees where they can use their skills to serve their re-election goals (distributional theory). However, when these experts sit on congruent committees, they may also be contributing to better public policy outcomes that align with the goals of the parent chamber (informational theory). A legislature intent on good governance should aim to, as Willie Brown once put it, "field a full team" by creating efficient committees that are already familiar with existing policy debates and can provide an adequate check on the ambitions of the other branches.[5] Additionally, policy experts may assist parties with advancing their agendas (partisan theory). A policy expert should be more knowledgeable of what will help or harm his party, which would allow for more effective agenda-setting when bills reach the committee stage.

Lastly, appointing ideologues to committees should appeal to all principals, be they the members themselves, the chamber, or the majority party's leaders. State representatives should voluntarily participate in the committee system because committee membership is the most straightforward way to influence policy in a specific ideological direction, especially for a back-bencher. This self-selection may limit the ideological diversity within committees, producing committees that are especially dedicated to the mission of the committee (distributional theory). A member's ideology also makes her predictable to both chamber

[5] Asked about appointing experienced legislators to important committees, Willie Brown remarked, "There has to be a point person or some point persons on each one of the committees just to offset the enormous power that bureaucrats accumulate by years in place, just to offset the enormous power that special-interest organizations and their representatives accumulate by longevity and by resources and by being similarly directed at their issue. That creates a serious imbalance unless there is somebody equal in stature, equal in ability and equal in memory of what has gone before them and what has been traditionally a ripoff of the public, so to speak, an exploitation of the public" (Brown and Morris 1999, p. 179).

and party leaders, allowing either principal to appoint committees in ways that incentivize faithful policymaking while limiting agency loss due to asymmetric information (e.g., bad policy outcomes in informational theory or rolling the party in partisan theory).

This problem of observational-equivalence highlights a larger challenge of selecting the proper unit of analysis for this research. Instead of studying individual-level committee assignments to adjudicate between the theories, it may be more optimal to examine committee-level variables, like the size and scope of the committee system or the quality and quantity of bills referred out of committees, to understand how legislatures are organized. Who ultimately controls the committee system—the members, the chamber, or the parties–and how they benefit from such control are important questions, but the empirical evidence assembled thus far is one step removed. In reality, the committee system likely serves all three "hidden hands" in some capacity, which allows disagreement to persist.[6]

Finally, existing theories, despite focusing on individual committee assignments, neglect the role that the individual legislators actually play. Instead of asking how principals benefit from certain committee arrangements, I propose we refocus our attention to what the representatives themselves hope to accomplish with these appointments. Committees are only useful to the extent that their members are willing to serve and can do so capably; only then can a committee member be rewarded or sanctioned for his behavior behind closed doors. This member-focused approach allows us to sidestep the issue of observational equivalence. Despite the value of the debates over the "hidden hand," I am agnostic here as to who is doing the assigning. Instead, I emphasize the ambitions of the members by shifting the target of the analysis to legislators and their attributes. Why do members seek particular committee assignments over others, and what considerations influence their success at achieving them?

[6]For a canonical discussion of competing principals, see Maltzman (1998).

A Member-Focused Theory of Assignment

I endeavor to study committee assignment politics from the perspective of individual legislators. This theory starts with the assumption, supported by existing research, that committees can aid legislators in their pursuit of re-election, policy change, and political power. When a state legislator enters a chamber, she has the opportunity to join a legislative committee(s). However, there is a finite supply of committee seats, and not all committee assignments are of equal value. This scarcity results in a competitive appointments process. Like medical students in a residency matching program, representatives are equipped with resumes full of unique *attributes* that distinguish one potential committee member from another. These attributes include occupational expertise, knowledge of constituents' needs, and political ideology. Similarly, committees, like hospital residency programs, vary in specialization, power, and prestige. The segmenting of legislative duties across dozens of committees ensures that not all committees will serve the same function or be expected to produce the same outputs. Some committees are primarily tasked with executive oversight rather than the creation (or review) of public policy. Some handle the flow of legislative affairs; others cater to narrow constituency groups. These different types of committees attract different legislators based on their skills and goals and require different skills/attributes from their members. The committee appointments process, then, is meant to find the best 'fit' for both entities based on the congruence between the *legislator's attributes* and the *type of committee* in question.

On paper, rules governing appointments to standing committees differ only slightly across the country. In a majority of state chambers, top leaders (e.g., Senate presidents, House speakers, majority and minority party leaders) are solely responsible for appointing state legislators to standing committees. But, in a handful of chambers, like the California State Assembly and State Senate, legislators are formally appointed to committees by a committee on committees or a rules/management committee. In practice, however, the actual criteria used to match legislators to appropriate committees varies substantially. Common

considerations include member preferences, seniority, committee tenure, political party, prior occupation, legislative and executive experience, legislative skill and competency, geography, gender, and racial/ethnic heritage (State Legislatures 2010).[7] Because those distributing appointments are given considerable leeway in their decision-making, in theory, any member could receive an assignment to any committee. Previous literature suggests they might prioritize members' electoral security, experience (either their pre-legislative careers or legislative seniority), or ideological predisposition, but which of these criterion wins out may vary across time, place, and by committee. I offer my own predictions below.

Constituency Congruence

First, I argue that some committees will lend themselves more obviously to constituency service than others—specifically, those committees that are tasked with the broad distribution of resources across the state or that oversee programs targeted at geographically-clustered recipients. Shugart et al. (2021) call these *Public Goods* and *Distributive* committees, respectively. I expect that when committees' jurisdictions are more obviously linked with particular types of constituency needs, members representing the most in-need districts will be most likely to be assigned to those committees.

Constituency-committee congruence serves several purposes. First, a state legislator has a clear electoral incentive to cater to the needs of her district. When seeking re-election, she will want to demonstrate she is striving to meet the needs of her constituents; thus, the more one's district requires service in a specific policy area, the stronger incentive one has to join a committee dealing with that district need. A member from a coastal district might prefer a seat on the Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture, but an inland-based representative will set her sights on the Committee on Agriculture instead.

[7] In California, the Senate Rules Committee and the Senate President pro Tempore are instructed to "give consideration to seniority, preference, and experience... [and] as far as practicable, give equal representation to all parts of the state" (Legislature 2019). In contrast, the California Speaker of the Assembly is only asked to "consider the preferences of the Members" in appointing chairs, vicechairs, and members of standing (and sub-) committees (Legislature 2019).

Second, state legislators in a majority of states are legally required to reside in the district from which they are elected (Ballotpedia 2019). This requirement is meant to ensure that the legislator brings to the chamber a district-specific perspective of the world and a more nuanced (localized) understanding of the polices and programs that will best serve his district's core constituency groups. Because constituency need varies greatly across legislative districts and is often unevenly-distributed across a state's geography, policymakers representing districts with outstanding policy needs relative to other districts will prioritize assignment to committees that best address those needs.

> ***H1:*** *A legislator who represents a district with an outstanding constituent need will be more likely to be assigned to a related committee than a member whose district has an average or below-average need in that same policy area, especially when the committee in question deals with the distribution of public goods and services.*

Career Congruence

Career-committee congruence, as K. Francis and Bramlett (2017) call it, is the matching of one's pre-legislative occupation to a committee with a related policy jurisdiction.[8] Career congruence is an obvious benefit for both the member and her chamber or party. Before representatives enter a legislature, most work in other industries. Some even maintain those careers while serving in less professionalized legislatures. Occupational experience in a given industry demonstrates a representative's professional interest in a particular field and provides her with a set of industry-specific skills that are not as readily available to her colleagues.

Like constituency congruence, some committees will lend themselves to 'career congruence' more than others. Committees whose jurisdictions entail more specific areas of public policy will be more likely to feature occupational experts (e.g., the Health Committee and medical professionals) as opposed to those committees that handle broader legislative affairs

[8]For my purposes, the careers referred to here are pre-legislative and are separate from representatives' legislative careers, which instead I refer to as their legislative seniority.

(e.g., Governmental Organization). The more field-specific one's professional experience, too, the more successful one will be at landing on a related committee. For instance, in my dataset, the population of California state legislators is largely dominated by lawyers, businessmen, and local government officials. The abundance of these professionals means their occupational expertise is less unique and thus less advantageous than that of their colleagues employed in rarer career fields.

> ***H2:*** *A legislator with professional experience in an occupation relevant to a committee's portfolio will be more likely to be assigned to that committee than a member with no relevant occupational background, especially when the committee in question lends itself more readily to career-matching (e.g., public goods and distributive committees).*

Ideological Congruence

A final member-attribute that may distinguish a representative from her colleagues is her political ideology. The policies and programs that a member supports or opposes while in office are the substance of legislative decision-making, but policymaking itself can be, frankly, unglamorous. Legislating at the state-level is time-consuming, often underappreciated by voters and the media, and historically ill-compensated (State Legislatures 2021). Due to high opportunity costs of working in a state legislature, it is conceivable that a representative's main priority once in office is the pursuit of a specific policy agenda (Fenno 1973). Regardless of who controls the appointments process, individual legislators must be internally motivated enough to do the work when no one is watching, and such motivation is rooted in a legislator's conviction that she can influence public policy in a direction that is ideologically favorable to her.

As before, some committees will lend themselves more to ideological congruence than others. In seeking a committee assignment, legislators may be especially drawn to committees where they think they will have the most policy influence. That is, an ideologue who wishes to join a committee might aim to join one that deals in public policy while avoiding committees

that handle the internal workings of the legislature. Shugart et al. (2021) refer to these latter, less visible types of committees as *Administrative* and *High Policy* committees.[9] A member's ideology can make him more agreeable to his colleagues, too. Practically, a legislator must be mindful of not straying too far from his colleagues' ideal-points at the risk of alienation and failing to accomplish his own policy goals. Thus, there is little value to playing the "maverick" in the appointments game; legislators who are closer to the chamber or party median may face better odds of landing on a committee than an ideological extremist, especially when that committee is more public-facing than behind-the-scenes.

> ***H3:*** *A legislator who is closer to her chamber or party's ideological median will be more likely to be assigned to a policy-oriented committee rather than a committee that handles the internal organization of the state and legislature.*

Making the Case for the California State Legislature

The California State Legislature is an ideal case to study committee assignment politics because it is highly professionalized, institutionalized, and even more active than the US Congress. Legislative *professionalization* refers to "the capacity of the legislature to perform its role in the policy-making process with an expertise, seriousness, and effort comparable to that of other actors in that process" (Mooney 1994, pp. 70–71). California consistently ranks first the nation in terms of legislative professionalization; its legislators are full-time, well-compensated, and have large staffs (Mooney 1994; Squire 2007). These conditions have contributed to the rise of political careerism in California over the last 50 years (State Legislatures 2021). Such an emphasis on legislating as a full-time job encourages representatives to specialize in specific policy areas and to pursue longer-term social and economic programs. A member with political longevity is also a member who may form a deeper connection with her district and a more productive relationship with her colleagues and co-partisans.

[9] Specifically, Shugart et al. (2021) term *Administrative* those committees that deal with bureaucratic management of government, including bill flow, executive-legislative relations, oversight of the civil service and police, and local government affairs. *High Policy* committees, in contrast, are those that deal with economic management and the legal or constitutional functioning of the state government.

Though professionalization and institutionalization often go together, they are distinct. *Institutionalization* refers to "the establishment of well-defined boundaries, the growth of internal complexity, and the adoption of universalistic criteria and automated methods for internal decision making" (Squire 1992, p. 1028). California is heralded as one of the most institutionalized state legislative systems in the country with a robust committee system and a predictable internal hierarchy of chamber and party leaders (Squire 1992). California has also long-funded a legislative research office—the Legislative Analyst's Office—that operates as a non-partisan body intended to support the drafting, vetting, and review of the legislature's bills and the Governor's annual budget. These institutions, in combination with the state's professionalization, encourage high productivity relative to other less-institutionalized and less-professionalized bodies. When representatives are incentivized to pursue policy goals to the extent they are in California, they are more invested in their committee assignments (Price 1978). A routinized committee system is one that encourages buy-in from its members and makes assignment politics that much more meaningful. If we are to find anything pertaining to what individual members want from the committee system, it will be in California.

Yet California is different from the US Congress in two major ways, one institutional and the other partisan. Institutionally, the enactment of term limits in the 1990s represents one of the most profound changes to democratic politics since legislative professionalization in the 1970s (Rarick 2013). Enacted in 1990, Proposition 140, enacted in 1990, limited state senators to two 4-year terms and assemblymembers to three 2-year terms. Legislators were banned from running again for the same office after reaching these chamber-specific limits. These restrictions were later altered in 2012 by Proposition 28, which set a 12-year term limit for all state legislators to be served in any configuration in either chamber. Lawmakers are barred for life from future service in the California Legislature after these 12 years are up (Caress and Kunioka 2012).

Term limits have been praised for bringing new, more diverse people with fresh ideas into

power, and proponents argue that restricting the number of years a legislator is eligible to serve frees them from the perpetual election cycle. In theory, without the pressures of an 'endless campaign', no one legislator becomes too influential or too complacent (K. Hansen 1997; Douzet, Kousser, and Miller 2008; J. Thompson and Moncrief 1993). However, term limits have often had the opposite effect. Since their enactment, legislators have become more reliant on special interest groups and career staffers for policy-making. They are less inclined to become expert in any one policy field, and the urgency of post-office career-planning has been amplified (Kurtz and Niemi 2009; Sarbaugh-Thompson, L. Thompson, et al. 2006; Sarbaugh-Thompson, Strate, et al. 2010; Carey, Niemi, and L. W. Powell 2009).

Though term limits might hinder good governance in California, they are not all bad for our purposes. Term limits have dramatically increased legislative turnover, which results in more turnover in committee membership. One problem that routinely plagues the study of committee assignments is the lack of vacancies on the most desirable committees; once a member joins a committee, they establish 'property rights' over that committee seat and are rarely relieved of that post unless by choice, retirement, or the loss of an election (Squire et al. 2005). But with more vacancies on committees due to term limits, we have the opportunity to see how representatives compete over a much larger supply of available committee slots. Additionally, the shorter time-horizon afforded by term limits leaves members with less time and fewer opportunities to develop policy-relevant expertise *while in office* than before. A member who once had 20 or more years to become a skillful lawmaker now only has 12 years to accomplish her same goals. This limitation on in-office development puts added emphasis on the attributes and accomplishments of a legislator—like her professional expertise, knowledge of her constituents' needs, and ideological orientation—*before* she joins the chamber. Lastly, though term limits may limit the generalizability of the California case, 20 other states have adopted legislative term limits over the years, 6 of which have since have repealed them, so they're not unheard of elsewhere in the country (State Legislatures 2020).

A second feature unique to the political landscape in California is the increasing domi-

nance of the Democratic Party at the expense of the Republican Party. What was once a competitive state has become a reliably blue stronghold in national and state politics. Democratic voters now outnumber Republicans nearly 2-to-1, and there are more Independents in the state than there are registered Republicans (State 2021). This pattern is reflected in the partisan control of the state's executive and legislative branches. Democrats have controlled the State Senate since the mid-1970s, dominated the Assembly continuously since 1997, and have maintained a Democratic trifecta since 2011 (Ballotpedia 2014). In 2018, the Democratic Party secured a veto-proof super-majority in the legislature, assuring full Democratic control of state affairs.

Given the enduring dominance of the Democratic Party, it is reasonable to question how a *de facto* one-party system handles its committee appointments and whether it is organized differently than a chamber with a more competitive party system. Democrats' numeric dominance also means that the Republican Party has very few members requiring committee assignments in the first place. In 1992, there were 14 Republicans in the State Senate and 32 in the Assembly; by 2020, these numbers had dropped considerably to just 9 Republican senators and 19 Republican assemblymembers remaining (Ballotpedia 2014). Because the committee matching game will be less competitive for this undersized caucus, we can think of Republican committee assignments as a study in what various legislators would do were they given any committee assignment they wanted.

Still, California is hardly alone in its experience of extreme partisan imbalance. As of November 2021, of the 99 partisan chambers in the country (not including Nebraska's non-partisan unicameral legislature), only 6 of them approach party parity (Ballotpedia 2021).[10], [11] Because a true balance in the partisan composition of the legislature is now out of reach in

[10] *Party parity* is reached when the percent of seats the majority party controls is no more than 10 percentage-points greater than the percent of seats controlled by the minority in the chamber. For example, in the chamber with the most party parity in the US, the Arizona House of Representatives, the Republican majority controls 51 percent of seats to the Democratic minority's 48 percent.

[11] In order of greatest to least party parity, these are the Arizona House of Representatives, the Virginia House of Delegates, the Minnesota House of Representatives, the Michigan House of Representatives, the New Hampshire House of Representatives, the Minnesota State Senate, the Virginia State Senate, and the Arizona State Senate.

a majority of states, we can make claims about California, its dominant Democratic majority, and its dwindling Republican minority that may also apply elsewhere.

Research Design

Data

To test my hypotheses, I constructed an original dataset on the California State Senate and State Assembly spanning from the 1993-94 session to the 2019-20 session. My primary data source is the *California Joint Legislative Handbook*, which is typically published at the start of every 2-year session. Data were hand-collected in 2020 and 2021 from the California State Archives.[12] The *Joint Handbook* provides self-reported biographical information for all state representatives, committee rosters, chamber rules, and more. *Joint Handbooks* published before the 2013-2014 session are available in hard-copy through the California State Archives and via HathiTrust. More recent publications are publicly-available online. This original dataset also draws upon information collected from state legislators' websites, Ballotpedia, the Office of the California Secretary of State, CalMatters, the California Citizens Redistricting Commission, and the California Employment Development Department.

Data is unbalanced panel data; state legislators may appear in multiple session-years, in either chamber, and may also change from year to year due to legislative turnover. Members who join or leave the legislature mid-session are included in the data insofar as they were assigned to a committee(s) at the time of the *Handbook*'s publication. In total, there are 571 legislator-years (190 unique senators) in the Senate and 1,140 legislator-years (455 unique assemblymembers) in the Assembly. A majority of state representatives are registered Democrats and White men.

[12]This research would not have been possible without the valuable contributions of Dr. Rachel Bernhard's Identity Lab at the University of California, Davis. I thank Alisa Horiike, Chloe Porath, Juliet Bost, Supreet Sandhu, and Tavi Singh for their efforts collecting data from primary sources. A subset of this data was randomly cross-validated by at least one other coder. All errors in the accuracy of the data are my own.

Methodology

I rely on a series of binomial logistic regressions to predict assignment to a legislative committee based on the attributes on a member's resume—i.e., his prior occupation, the needs of his district, and his ideology. Each row in the dataset corresponds to a single member and their membership status on a single committee. For instance, if there are 40 senators and 24 committees in a session, there will be 960 rows in the data that correspond to each member-committee pair in that session alone. In total, there are nearly 12,500 senator-committee pairs and 29,000 assemblymember-committee pairs in the dataset. I then calculate the average marginal effect (AME) of each legislator-attribute.[13] This value may be interpreted as the average percentage-point difference in the probability of assignment between a legislator who has that attribute and one who lacks it (i.e., the average of the marginal effect of the predictor at every observed value of the model). For continuous variables, the AME is the average percentage-point difference moving across the interquartile range of the variable's distribution.

The dependent variable, ***Assignment to a Committee***, is binary and takes the value of '0' if the state legislator does not serve on this committee in the session-year in question (t_0) and '1' if the legislator is a member on the committee in t_0. This variable does not distinguish between types of committee membership (i.e., committee member, vice chair, or chair). I treat all members alike regardless of committee leadership status because each committee only ever has one chair and one vice chair, thus limiting the number of committee leaders in the sample. Additionally, committee chairs and vice chairs are technically members of the committee, too, even if they are afforded greater rights and privileges in committee proceedings.

It should be noted that both chambers of the legislature reserve the right to reorganize

[13] I present the results as average marginal effects (rather than marginal effects at representative values, means, or medians) because "AMEs provide a natural summary measure that respects both the distribution of the original data and does not rely on summarizing a substantively unobserved or unobservable X value" (Leeper 2021).

their standing (and special) committees at the will of the chamber majority.[14] As such, not all standing committees survive the full duration of the period under study, though committees are far more durable in the Assembly than in the Senate. Setting aside joint committees, I include in my analysis the most frequently-occurring standing committees in both chambers, bringing the total to 26 unique Senate committees and 36 unique Assembly committees. Descriptions of their jurisdictions and membership sizes are provided in the appendix.

The model is run first on all committees and then by committee-type. Committees are classified in Table 1 according to the Shugart et al. (2021) typology, which organizes committees by the breadth of their portfolios, their functional responsibilities, and their importance to parties' reputations and electoral fortunes. Shugart et al. (2021) posit that there are four broad categories of committees in democratic legislatures—Administrative, High Policy, Public Goods, and Distributive.

The key explanatory variables in the model are Career Congruence, Constituency Congruence, and Ideological Congruence. ***Career Congruence*** refers to whether the legislator has previously worked in an industry related to a committee's portfolio ('1') or not ('0'). For example, if we are predicting assignment to the Local Government Committee in the Assembly, the relevant occupation for this committee is "Former Local Government Official." Several former occupations may apply to a given committee, and some careers are more readily matched to committees than others. The most common occupations in the dataset are former businessmen, educators and school administrators, lawyers, and local government officials (e.g., mayors, city councilmen). Table 2 lists the careers aligned with each committee.

Constituency Congruence refers to the extent that a legislator's district might need something (e.g., a good or service) from a committee. First, raw district need is measured as the percent of a state legislative district's adult population that is employed in a

[14] For an overview of when and why chambers expand or contract the size of committees in state legislatures, see (Hamm and Hedlund 1990).

Table 1: California Standing Committees Classified by Shugart et al.'s (2021) Typology

Administrative	*Distributive*
Appropriations	Agriculture
Government Efficiency*	Housing*
Governmental Organization	Natural Resources
Government Modernization	Rail Safety
Local Government*	Transportation+
Public Safety	Water*
Rules	
High-Policy	*Public Goods*
Banking	Communications and Conveyance*
Budget and Fiscal Review	Education
Business	Energy and Utilities
Consumer Protection*	Environmental Quality
Economic Development*	Entertainment*
Elections	Health
Judiciary	Higher Education*
Privacy=	Human Services
Revenue and Taxation*	Insurance
	Labor and Industrial Relations
	Military and Veterans Affairs
	Public Employment and Retirement
	Senior Care*

* Committee only exists in the Assembly.
+ Committee is combined with Housing in the Senate.
= Committee is combined with Consumer Protection in the Senate.

committee-relevant industry. For example, if we are predicting assignment to the Committee on Agriculture, the industry we most care about is agriculture. Employment data is from the California Employment Development Department and the US Census Bureau and provided anew every redistricting cycle.[15] Employment data is provided at the census tract-level and then aggregated up to the state legislative district (see appendix). Next, the constituency congruence measure is created by classifying each member's district as above or below the chamber median in a given session. A second version of this variable identifies a member's

[15]Though district-level employment data is an imperfect proxy for district need it is, at least, coded consistently across the state. Future work should consider other measures that more accurately capture district need, like economic output.

district as above or below his party's median. Employing relative measures allows us to compare the needs of different legislative districts against one another in the pool of potential committee members. Table 2 provides an overview of the industries associated with each committee, as classified by the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS).

Ideological Congruence is represented by two variables. The first, *Distance from the Chamber Median*, is the absolute value of the distance between the state legislator's W-NOMINATE score and the median W-NOMINATE score among all legislators in a given chamber-session.[16] The second measure, *Distance from the Party Median*, measures the absolute distance between the state legislator's ideal point and that of the median member of his party in a given chamber-session. Democrats and Republicans are anchored on their respective parties, and Independents or third-party representatives are dropped from the analyses using this second, party-centric measure. The theoretical range for both distance variables spans from 0 to 2 with larger values indicating greater distance between the legislator and the chamber (or party) median in a given chamber-session. Distributions of these variables may be found in the appendix.

I rely on ideological scores from the current legislative session ('postassignment') rather than the previous session's score because, as Maltzman (1998) argues, state legislative leaders are usually well-aware of members' ideological dispositions before they are assigned to committees. Many representatives have backgrounds in local politics before entering state politics, and viable political candidates are often recruited by legislative leaders or state and local party apparatuses (Sanbonmatsu 2006). These paths to office provide appointers with valuable information about what representatives care most about and how they will behave moving forward. Second, because turnover is so high in the period under study, looking only at prior-year ideology shrinks the sample size considerably. Models using legislators' lagged (t-1) ideology do not produce substantially different findings and may be found in

[16]W-NOMINATE scores are based on state legislators' roll-call voting record (Poole et al. 2008). Final-passage roll-call data for 1993 to the present was collected by Jeff Lewis and updated by CalMatters (Christoper 2020). W-NOMINATE scores are standardized between -1 and 1 with higher (lower) scores indicating greater conservatism (liberalism) on the traditional left-right scale.

the appendix.

Each model also controls for a selection of variables related to a representative's demographics, legislative history, and institutional context that others have theorized may impact the assignment of members to legislative committees. ***Gender*** and ***Race*** are binary, representing 'woman' and 'minority', respectively. Fouirnaies, Hall, and Payson (2019) find that women are more likely to serve on committees relating to "women's issues," though the same trend has not yet been demonstrated for racial minorities and "minority issues."

Related to the duration of a state representative's stay in the legislature, ***Electoral Safety*** is measured as the difference between the percentage of the vote won by the state legislator and that won by the state legislator's nearest challenger, regardless of political party, in the legislator's most recent general election.[17] According to the electoral-constituency model of committee appointments, in systems with exclusively single-seat districts, like California's legislative districts, political parties will adjust their committee assignments to advantage co-partisan legislators elected from the most competitive districts (Shugart et al. 2021).

[17]On average, Republicans are elected from far more competitive elections than Democrats. The average win margin for all state senators is a 32 percentage-point lead over their nearest challenger, though a handful of senators (usually Democrats) are elected from uncontested races. The average win margin for state assemblymembers is a 33.53 percentage-point lead over their nearest general election challenger. One unintended consequence of term limits has been a decline in the competitiveness of primary and general elections of state representatives (Rarick 2013), a trend which is reflected in my data.

Table 2: Career and Constituency Congruence for Senate and Assembly Standing Committees

Committee	*Relevant Careers*	*Relevant Constituency Needs*
Aging and Long-term Care*	Medical Professional, Other	Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance
Agriculture	Farmer	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Mining
Appropriations	Businessman, Financier	Unemployment Rate
Arts, Entertainment, Sports, Tourism, and Internet Media*	Utilities Professional, Other	Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food Services
Banking and Financial Institutions[a]	Businessman, Financier	Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing
Budget and Fiscal Review[b]	Businessman, Financier, Executive/Legislative Staffer	Public Administration
Business, Professions, and Economic Development[c]	Financier, Labor Organizer	Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing
Communications and Conveyance*	Utilities Professional	Information
Consumer Protection*	Businessman, Financier, Labor Organizer	Wholesale Trade
Economic Development*	Businessman, Financier, Labor Organizer	Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities
Education	Educator	Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance
Elections and Constitutional Amendments[d]	Lawyer	Public Administration
Energy, Utilities, and Communications[e]	Utilities Professional	Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities
Environmental Quality[f]	Environmentalist, Utilities Professional	Construction

Continued on next page

Table 2 – continued from previous page

Committee	*Relevant Careers*	*Relevant Constituency Needs*
Governance and Finance	Businessman, Financier	Public Administration
Government Efficiency*	Businessman, Financier	Public Administration
Governmental Organization	Local Government Official	Public Administration
Government Modernization^{+}	Local Government Official	Public Administration
Health	Medical Professional	Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance
Higher Education*	Educator	Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance
Housing* [g]	Housing Professional	Construction
Human Services	Social Worker, Other	Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance
Insurance	Insurer, Financier	Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing
Jobs, Economic Development, and the Economy*	Businessman, Financier, Labor Organizer	Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities
Judiciary	Lawyer, Law Enforcer	Public Administration
Labor, Public Employment, and Retirement[h]	Businessman, Labor Organizer	Manufacturing, Construction
Legislative Ethics	Executive/Legislative Staffer, Lawyer	Public Administration
Local Government*	Local Government Official	Public Administration
Natural Resources and Water[i]	Environmentalist, Farmer, Utilities Professional	Construction
Privacy[j]		
Public Safety	Law Enforcer	Public Administration
Rail Safety	Transportation Professional	Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities
Revenue and Taxation*	Businessman, Financier, Executive/Legislative Staffer	Retail Trade

Continued on next page

Table 2 – continued from previous page

Committee	*Relevant Careers*	*Relevant Constituency Needs*
Rules	Lawyer	Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Management Services
Transportation[k]	Transportation Professional	Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities
Veterans Affairs[l]	Military Official	Military
Water, Parks, and Wildlife* [−]	Farmer, Utilities Professional	Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities

* Committee only exists in the Assembly.

[+] Government Modernization in the Senate.

[−] Committee was sometimes absorbed by others in the Senate.

[a] Banking and Finance in the Assembly.

[b] Budget in the Assembly.

[c] Business and Professions in the Assembly.

[d] Elections in the Assembly.

[e] Utilities and Energy in the Assembly.

[f] Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials in the Assembly.

[g] Housing and Community Development in the Assembly.

[h] Labor and Employment in the Assembly.

[i] Natural Resources in the Assembly.

[j] Privacy and Consumer Protection in the Assembly.

[k] Committee is combined with Housing in the Senate.

[l] Military and Veterans Affairs in the Assembly.

Seniority is the total number of years a state representative has previously served in their current chamber at the start of the new legislative session.[18] Seniority is a strong congressional norm impacting assignment to the most important committees (Hedlund and Hamm 1996), but Jewell (1986) suggests that this norm is weaker in state politics. ***Term-limited Status*** refers to whether the state representative is eligible for reelection to their current chamber.[19] I also include an interaction term, ***Seniority*** $\times$ ***Term-limited Status***, meant to account for the different rules of term limits under each period of reform. For example, a senior state senator with only 6 years of experience in the Senate would be ineligible for re-election to the Senate in 2008 but would be re-election eligible to either chamber in 2018. In the appendix, I drop the interaction term, keeping seniority alone, and instead extend the model to test the influence of congruence over the two periods of term-limits in the data. These different specifications do not alter the key congruence findings of the model.

A legislator's institutional position at the start of a new session is captured by two variables: First, ***Prior Committee Service*** is binary and indicates whether the state legislator has served on the committee in question in at least one previous session in their *current* chamber, though this service may be nonconsecutive.[20] In both congressional and state politics research, "committee property rights," i.e., when members are returned to the same committees year after year, are one of the strongest predictors of committee assignments (Katz and Sala 1996). Second, ***Leadership Status*** is a binary variable of value '1' if the

[18]Partial years (e.g., due to a special election) are counted as whole years for ease of analysis. In the sample, the average number of years incumbents have served in the Senate to date is 7 years with a median of 4 years. The average number of years incumbents have served in the Assembly to date is 4 years with a median of 2 years, reflecting high turnover in an era of term limits.

[19]The original 1990 term-limits reform restricted senators to just 2 terms in the Senate (8 years total) and assemblymembers to 3 terms (6 years total). The current rule, enacted in 2012, limits representatives to 12 years total, to be served in either chamber over a legislator's whole political career. For ease of analysis, a member who was term-limited in the Senate (Assembly) but still eligible for service in the Assembly (Senate) receives the same score on this variable ('1') as a senator (assemblyman) who has served the maximum total years allowable in either chamber and is ineligible to serve in the legislature again.

[20]Prior service does *not* account for whether the state legislator has previously served on an identical committee during their time in the other chamber. Standing committees in the Assembly far outnumber those in the Senate, making a direct comparison of service between chambers more challenging due to overlapping committee jurisdictions in the Senate that are not present in the Assembly.

state representative is a member of the chamber (or party caucus) leadership in the current session-year and '0' if not.[21] Like more senior legislators, legislative leaders are expected to serve on the most important administrative committees (i.e., Appropriations, Budget, and Rules) over the chamber's rank-and-file.

Lastly, I control for two variables related to institutional context. ***Committee Vacancies*** are measured as the number of seats that have opened up on a committee at the start of the new session.[22], [23] Given the strength of committee property rights, realistically, a legislator can only join a committee when a becomes available, either due to prior members retiring, losing an election, or transferring to a new committee. ***Session-years*** are captured by a series of dummy variables for the legislative year in question. There are 14 unique session-years in the Senate data (1993-2019) and 13 sessions in the Assembly data (1995-2019).

Centrism is Good, but Expertise is Better

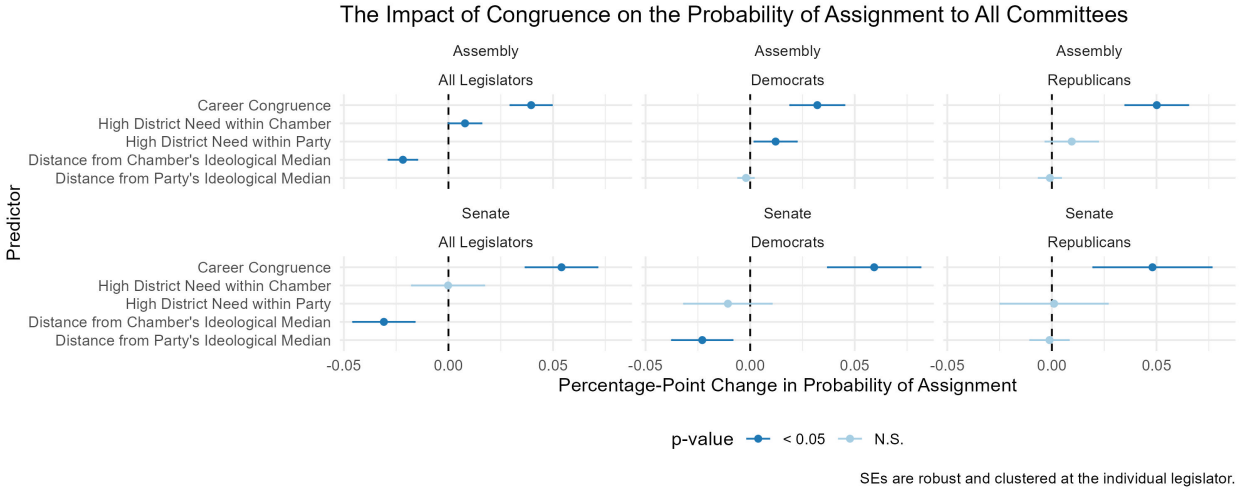
When legislators compete over finite committee seats, why do they seek particular committee assignments over others, and what considerations influence their success at achieving them? The results of my analyses of nearly three decades of committee appointments in the California State Legislature underscore a clear logic to the internal organization of the two chambers: Career congruence is the strongest and most consistent predictor of committee

[21] Officers include the president pro tempore, minority leader, majority and minority whips, and the Democratic and Republican caucus chairs and vice chairs. Contrary to expectations, the most senior members of the state legislature are not guaranteed to serve as officers, perhaps reflecting how high legislative turnover depletes the pool of senior legislators who might serve as chamber officers. Cain and Kousser (2004) suggest that term limits may have incentivized party leaders to groom their successors earlier than in the pre-term limits era, resulting in a younger crop of legislators deemed worthy of leadership roles in the next regime.

[22] Vacancies were calculated by counting the number of members in the prior session who did not return to the committee in the current session. This count of vacancies is a more accurate reflection of the available number of committee seats compared to the size of the committee itself. Due to the strength of committee property rights, committees are realistically not as 'open' as a raw count of the committee's membership size would suggest.

[23] It is unusual, though not unheard of, for members to be reassigned to new committees mid-session. Sometimes, vacancies are left unfilled until the start of the next regular session, especially in the Assembly, except in the case of vacancies on prestigious committees (e.g., Appropriations).

Figure 1: Career congruence is the most consistent predictor of committee membership across both chambers and both political parties, followed by ideology.



membership for all legislators, and even all partisans, across both chambers. When a state legislator has an occupational background in a field related to a committee's policy jurisdiction, she is more likely to secure a seat on that committee, and this influence exceeds that of ideological predisposition and even the needs of one's constituents (Figure 1). The baseline predicted probability of assignment to any committee, regardless of committee type, is approximately 14.5 percent in the Senate and just under 6 percent in the Assembly when all predictors are set to their median values. Being career-congruent with a committee gives a senator a boost of roughly 5.5 percentage-points and confers a 4 percentage-point advantage to an assemblymember.[24]

This boost may appear modest, but in terms of relative risk, a career-congruent representative is nearly 1.4 times more likely than a career-incongruent legislator to be assigned to a committee in the Senate and is 1.6 times as likely in the Assembly. The same advantage is conferred on partisans. Career-congruent Democrats and Republicans are 1.4 times more likely to be assigned to a committee than their career-incongruent co-partisans in the

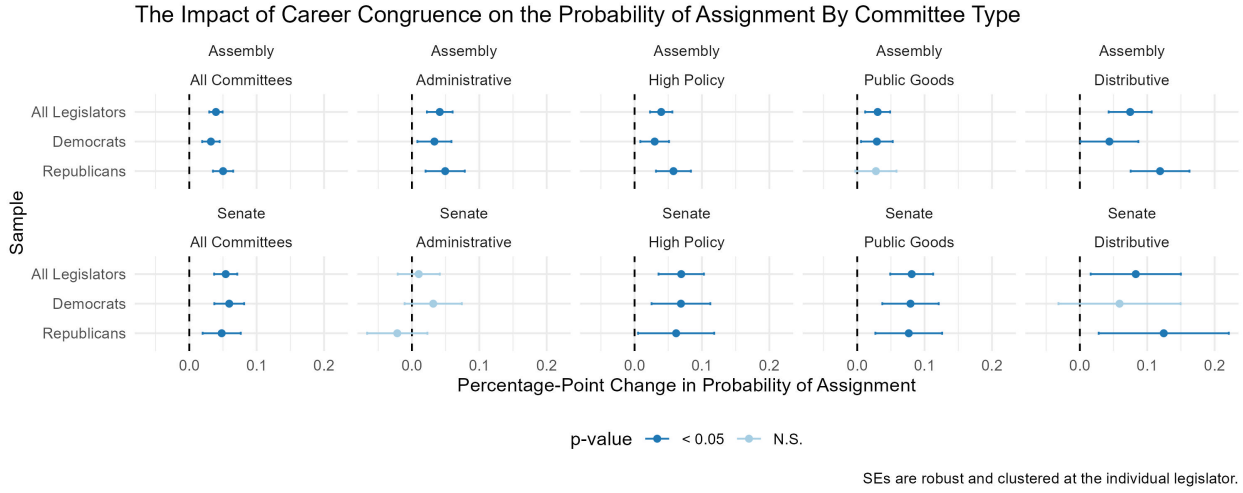
[24]The median senator is not career congruent, represents a district with below-median need, holds the median ideology in the chamber, is not a prior committee member, is a White man, won his last general election by 28 percentage-points, is not a chamber or party leader, is not term limited, has only been in the Senate for one year prior, and is angling for a committee with just two vacancies. The median assemblymember shares the same profile except he won his last general election by 10 percentage-points, has been in the Assembly for 2 years already, and is angling for a committee with three vacancies.

Senate. Assembly Democrats with aligned career expertise are 1.5 times more likely to be assigned to a committee than their non-expert counterparts, and Assembly Republicans receive an even greater boost at nearly 2 times the likelihood of non-experts in their caucus. If the committee appointments process is a "giant jigsaw puzzle," as Shepsle (1978) coins it, then members can clearly set themselves apart from their colleagues by leveraging their occupational expertise to their advantage.

Examining the effect of career congruence by committee type (Figure 2), we also see that the large, positive effect of career congruence holds for all four types of committees, with the exception of administrative committees in the Senate. Average marginal effect sizes range from a modest 3 percentage-point benefit among Assembly Democrats looking to be assigned to public goods committees (1.75 times more likely than a non-expert) to a whopping 13 percentage-point boost (2 times more likely) among Senate Republicans hoping to join distributive committees. Aligned with my expectations, career congruence is a valuable asset for assignment to nearly all committees and has the strongest impact on the probability of assignment to public goods and distributive committee-types. The advantage of industry expertise in policy-oriented spaces and the specificity of careers that are relevant to policy committees' portfolios do render career knowledge more important for these committees than others.

Turning to the role ideology plays in appointment decisions, Figure 3 reveals that, on average, being more extreme relative to the chamber median (in either a liberal or conservative direction) is detrimental to a legislator's chances of assignment to a committee. Extremists are docked approximately 3 percentage-points in their probability of assignment in the Senate and 2 percentage-points in the Assembly compared to ideological centrists. Compared to the baseline centrist legislator, extremists are 0.79 times as likely (and therefore *less* likely) to land a committee seat in the upper chamber and 0.66 times as likely to land a seat in the lower chamber. Stated differently, a centrist is 1.3 times as likely as an extremist to be assigned to a committee in the Senate and nearly 1.5 times as likely in

Figure 2: Legislators are consistently appointed to committees with portfolios that relate to their pre-legislative careers.

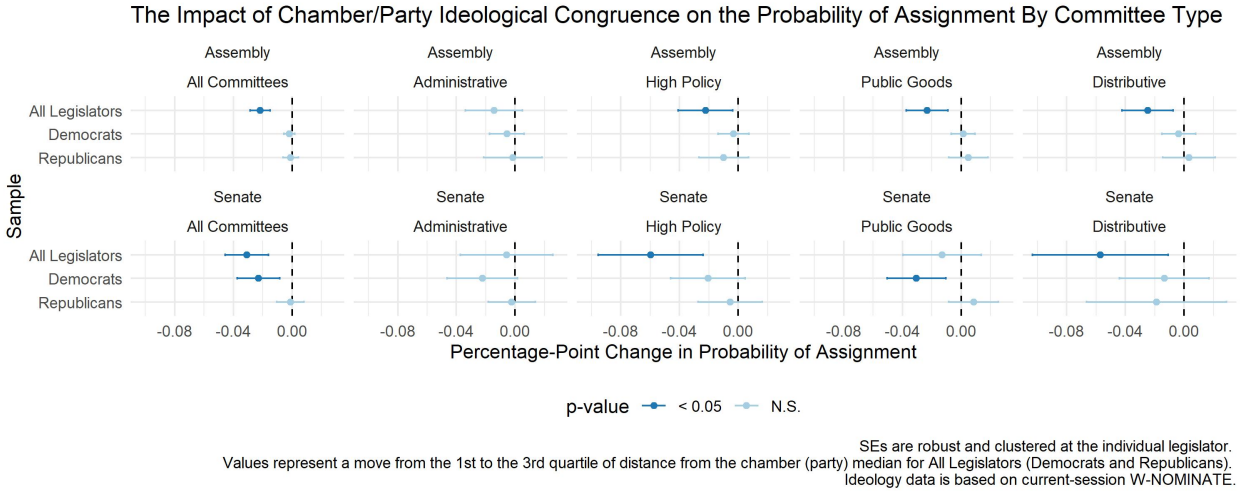


the Assembly. Elsewhere, I find that more extreme members of both the Senate and the Assembly are, on average, assigned to one to two fewer committees overall than their centrist counterparts (see appendix). As expected, significant results are also concentrated in the non-administrative committee categories, suggesting that ideological extremists are penalized for their divergence from the body by being blocked from the public policy workhorses of the committee system.[25] That is, ideological centrists gain favorable access to committees with broad, statewide policy implications.

Examining results by party, Republicans face minimal consequences (or rewards) for their ideological positions. Here, the Republicans' numerical disadvantage is evident. For context, there were only 9 Republicans remaining in the Senate, compared to 30 Democrats, after the 2020 election cycle. The earlier evaluation of career-congruence revealed that the lack of competition over committee seats in the caucus allows Republican career-experts easy access to committees that are aligned with their pre-legislative professions. But this also means that Republicans' increasing irrelevance in the California Legislature, and especially the Senate, has rendered ideological discipline both untenable and impracticable in the allocation of

[25] An examination of the model's control variables suggests that members who wish to serve on administrative-type committees have the best opportunities when they are more senior members of the legislature or when they occupy a role in the chamber or party leadership circle.

Figure 3: Ideological congruence provides a slight boost to one's probability of being assigned to a committee, especially a public-facing one.

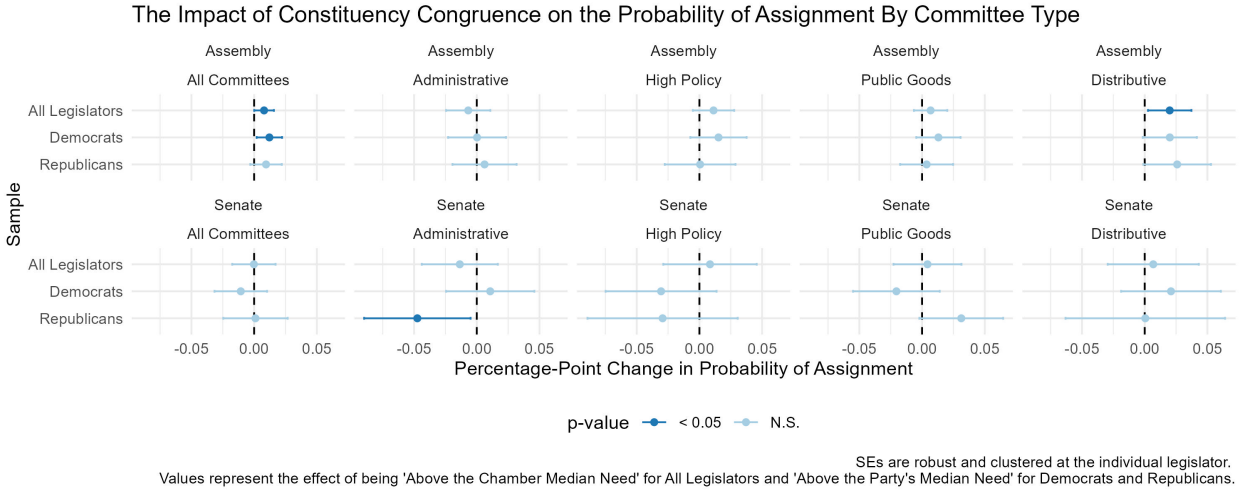


committee seats to caucus members.[26] Extremists in the Republican caucus are no more or less likely to be assigned to committees than party faithfuls. Surprisingly, ideology is neither a benefit nor a detriment to Democrats in the Assembly, but centrism does provide Senate Democrats with a 3 percentage-point boost in the committee matching game, making them 1.5 times more likely to be assigned to a committee. Broken down by committee type, this benefit is limited to highly-visible public goods committees, though.

Lastly, these results offer limited evidence that constituency congruence increases the probability of assignment to a relevant committee (Figure 4). When a legislator represents a district with an above-median need in an industry (relative to their colleagues), her probability of being appointed to a constituency-congruent committee increases by, at most, 2 percentage points. In other words, she is a modest 1.16 times more likely to receive that committee assignment than her less-needy counterparts. Importantly, the magnitude of constituency congruence's effect is small, and much smaller than that of career congruence or

[26] Hayes Clark (2015) argues that minority partisans have more influence over legislative outcomes in conditions of low polarization, decentralized governance structures, and scarce staffing resources, but these conditions do not describe the California case. However, in an era of increasing Democratic dominance, Republican lawmakers may recognize the need to work with the enduring majority party to accomplish smaller policy goals from the minority. In pursuit of at least some governing influence, then, Republican lawmakers may deviate from their party more often, meaning that ideological discipline is less important for committee assignments.

Figure 4: The effect of constituency congruence is modest and limited to the Assembly.



ideological congruence. Constituency congruence influences appointments in a much more limited way than career congruence, and it rarely impacts the assignment of senators or Republicans to committees.

Broken down by committee type, the influence of constituency-congruence is also limited to those committees that are in the best position to distribute policy benefits directly to constituents in the first place (i.e., distributive committees). Representing a high-need Assembly district makes a legislator 1.4 times more likely to be appointed to a distributive committee than representing a low-need district.[27] These distributive committees, like the Committee on Agriculture, theoretically pose the easiest test for constituency congruence. Agricultural policies, unlike, say, election laws, can be targeted to reach easily identifiable, often geographically-concentrated recipients. This concentration of industry employment in a district may limit the willingness of assemblymembers from lower-need districts to serve on these committees. What need does a representative from Alpine County, the most rural in the state, have for a seat on Housing and Community Development? Such self-selection should further whittle down the candidate pool, meaning those who want seats on these

[27]Results in the Senate may be insignificant due to the sheer size of Senate districts—both in terms of population and geography. Assemblymembers serve over 400,000 constituents, but senators represent more than twice that number. With more populous districts covering larger swaths of land, senators may face many more competing demands for public resources than their lower-chamber counterparts. This greater diversity in constituent need may lessen the claim any one senator has over a specific committee seat.

distributive committees are more often granted them. Alternatively, if demand is low, this may mean that less-qualified legislators will be appointed to serve despite their district not benefiting directly from the committee's mission, thus weakening the overall influence of constituency-congruence.

The Potential Consequences of 'Expert' Lawmaking

At the start of every session, representatives in the California State Legislature are assigned to serve on legislative committees. Some members, like freshmen, are appointed to new committees while others are reassigned or are returned to the same committees year after year. In this piece, I ask why legislators seek particular committee assignments over others, and what considerations influence their success at receiving them. In the fight over finite committee seats, what legislator attributes most stand out?

Departing from prominent theories that discuss assignments from the perspective of the appointers, I focus on the motivations of the appointed. I theorize that individual members arrive to the chamber with attributes that are unique to them, like their pre-legislative careers, knowledge of how best to serve their district, and their political ideology. These attributes form a resume that legislators, like applicants in a medical residency matching program, use to distinguish themselves from one another. But just as no two legislators are identical, committees also vary in function, power, and prestige and will attract different legislators accordingly. This produces a committee appointments process dedicated to finding the proper committee 'fit' for all involved. However, in the absence of universally-agreed upon criteria for achieving that goal, I offer that legislators will be assigned to committees in ways that are congruent with their personal and professional attributes.

Using assignment data from the California State Legislature, I find that career congruence is the strongest and most consistent predictor of appointments to committees in the State Senate and State Assembly. When a legislator has previously worked in an industry related to a committee's portfolio, she is as much as 2 times more likely to sit on that committee

than another less-congruent member. This trend of matching occupational experts to related committees, while not a guarantee of assignment, is more apparent than the limited influence of outstanding constituency need or ideological centrism.

What does it mean, then, for a legislature to be most reliant upon career congruence in the allocation of committee seats to its members? First, it suggests that representatives' pre-legislative careers play a sizable role in structuring their (unobserved) preferences over committee appointments. A legislator who has worked in an industry prior to serving in the legislature has a demonstrated professional interest in that line of work. This occupational interest puts the representative in a coveted position to influence that industry via the committee system. These career-congruent assignments, then, may be the product of sheer self-interest.

Second, the importance of career congruence leads us to question the impact that putting career-experts in positions of power on a committee might have on the quality and quantity of policy that flows through the committee system. How does the nature of substantive representation change when a majority of committee members are industry experts? On the one hand, if a committee's composition is majority-expert, then we might expect its members to legislate responsibly, even admirably, over their assigned policy jurisdiction. Pre-legislative careers confer industry-specific knowledge to legislators that is more costly to acquire for non-expert colleagues. A legislator who is a military veteran will have a great deal more insight as to the needs of veterans across the state than will a former insurance salesman. Likewise, a former underwriter may make more informed decisions about insurance regulations than a veteran put in a similar position. By empowering individuals in ways that take advantage of their expertise, we might expect greater legislative efficiency and higher-quality policymaking to emanate from the committee system.

On the other hand, such a reliance on self-made policy experts in committees presents significant risk to other actors in the political system. For example, if a legislator is singularly focused on her work in a committee related to her pre-legislative career, then her district risks

under-representation in other important policy areas or committees to which she belongs. A career-congruent member may be more motivated to log-roll, offering support for other experts' policy programs in exchange for backing on her own agenda. But voters elect their legislators to represent them on all legislative matters, not just those that most appeal to the legislators themselves. This may be perceived as an abdication of legislative duties that falls short of substantive representation.

Additionally, if committees are more informed than the body due to a concentration of career expertise, then committees may pull policy toward their members' ideal points, or misrepresent information about the state of the world, in ways that harm constituents, the chamber, or the political parties (Yordanova 2009). When preference outliers self-select onto committees, they face lower barriers to policy specialization but are also in a unique position to take advantage of non-committee members. They may withhold information from the rest of the chamber, or even fellow committee members, if doing so serves their own interests. There is also danger in the potential emergence of sub-governments, or alliances between pressure groups and relevant legislative committees. For instance, E. R. Hansen, Carnes, and Gray (2019) demonstrate a reluctance among former insurers to police insurance agencies, often exercising negative agenda-setting powers to kill bills that propose such oversight. Does this constitute responsible and informed policymaking, or has the legislator meddled to take advantage of a system of committee appointments that is overly-reliant on private expertise at the expense of the common good?

This work has attempted to demonstrate that the previous theories of committee assignments have been insufficient for understanding committee membership in state legislatures, especially in cases, like California, where the appointments process lacks transparency despite its importance to the functioning of the branch. The evidence presented here suggests that, of all the attributes that might aid a legislator in appointment politics, career congruence is the most consistent positive predictor of assignment to a relevant committee. The next step in this research is to determine how effective these career experts are at accomplishing

their policy goals behind closed doors when few are watching and what this behavior reveals about the laws they write and how they choose to represent us.

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The Impact of Career-Committee Congruence on Legislative Entrepreneurship

Abstract

Since the mid-1990s, reduced funding for legislative aides and research offices has diminished legislative capacity in many states. This paper posits that a legislator's pre-legislative career experience can partially offset this decline, particularly when aligned with their committee assignments. This theory of career-committee congruence suggests that legislators with relevant professional backgrounds will prioritize and excel in their committee's policy areas, despite constraints on bill introductions and intense competition for plenary time in California.

With a dataset of over 8,000 bills authored by 253 state lawmakers in California over the past decade, I examine eight major public policy areas–agriculture, education, health, insurance, local government, public safety, transportation, and veterans affairs–to assess whether career-expert legislators act as policy specialists, concentrating their legislative efforts to their areas of expertise and outperforming their non-expert colleagues. The analysis reveals that career-expert committee members introduce nearly 4 times as many bills as other authors within their committee's jurisdiction but that these bills attract 25% fewer co-authors upon introduction, suggesting a strong inclination towards legislative entrepreneurship and a desire to maintain control over the bill's content, at least initially. This study highlights the potential of leveraging career expertise in congruence with committee membership to enhance legislative innovation and set the state's agenda.

Keywords: Committees, policy expertise, legislative entrepreneurship, California politics

> *"[Senator] Pan is unusual because he has the knowledge and belief in science, but also the conviction to act on it. That takes courage. He's had a tremendous impact in California, and there's going to be a hole in the legislature when he's gone."*
>
> – Karen Smith, Director of the California Department of Public Health (2015-2019)[1]

When Richard Pan was first elected to the California State Assembly in 2010, he brought a wealth of expertise with him. A former pediatrician, he quickly earned a reputation as a health policy specialist, advancing to the State Senate and eventually becoming Chair of the Senate Health Committee. As chair, he exercised great influence over the bills heard in committee and was lauded for his willingness to work across party lines in pursuit of his legislative agenda. For example, in 2019, Senator Pan successfully sponsored a bill to strengthen California's vaccine requirements for schoolchildren despite stiff opposition from anti-vaccine activists. His bill ultimately passed into law with overwhelming bipartisan support.

Senator Pan is a prime example of how occupational expertise and committee membership can significantly influence policymaking. Crafting and advocating for bills, soliciting co-sponsors and support, negotiating amendments, and pushing for committee and floor votes all require significant time and effort. Yet plenary time is finite and disagreement over the direction of public policy is unavoidable. Thus, not every legislator can expect to achieve all of her individual goals. However, occupational experts—legislators who have a professional background relevant to a particular policy jurisdiction—may have both the necessary skills and the motivation to tackle these difficult legislative tasks. Assigned to the right committees, i.e., ones whose jurisdiction matches their expertise, these career-experts may exercise outsized influence over the fate of bills that fall under their committee's jurisdiction.

To investigate this, I analyze a unique dataset of over 22,000 bills penned by 245 state lawmakers in California over the past decade, focusing on roughly 8,000 bills pertaining to eight key public policy areas—agriculture, education, health, insurance, local government, public safety, transportation, and veterans affairs. My findings indicate that career-expert

[1] Quoted in Hart (2022).

committee members author more bills related to their committees' jurisdiction but that these bills feature fewer co-authors on average. While not all bills introduced by occupational experts pass into law, these findings suggest that their expertise still contributes to the capacity and willingness of legislators to draft and advocate for bills aligning with their area of knowledge, and, in doing so, they contribute to the legislative entrepreneurship of the chamber at large.

What Makes a Legislator Effective?

Volden and Wiseman define legislative effectiveness as "the proven ability to advance a member's agenda items through the legislative process and into law" (2014, p. 18). Most often, effectiveness is measured as an overall score that captures how successful a legislator is at shepherding her bills through five major steps in the legislative pipeline—i.e., introduction, action in committee, action post-committee, passage out of both chambers, and passage into law. However, this approach assumes a legislator is uniformly effective across different policy areas and does not allow for policy specialization. Alternatively, some gauge legislative effectiveness by counting the number (or percentage) of bills introduced by a legislator that successfully become law in a specific policy domain. Although simpler, this method acknowledges the possibility of lawmakers specializing in certain policy areas and doesn't presuppose that (in)effectiveness in one domain transfers to others.

Past research, especially pertaining to Congress, demonstrates that the legislative effectiveness of an individual member is greatest when the legislator is a chamber or party leader (Ellickson 1992), a more senior lawmaker (Miquel and Snyder 2006), a member of the majority party (Callaghan and Karch 2021), or an integral part of a network of other policymakers (Battaglini, Sciabolazza, and Patacchini 2020; Victor 2020). Lawmakers are more successful when they author bills on salient policy topics (Weissert 1991) and attract a larger number of bipartisan cosponsors to their bills (Harbridge-Yong, Volden, and Alan E Wiseman 2020). Even minority party legislators may improve their individual effectiveness

by joining an ideological caucus (Clarke 2020).

Structurally, committee memberships also impact legislative effectiveness. Committees play a crucial role in state legislatures as they simplify and systematize legislative activity by minimizing transaction costs in the production and exchange of ideas (Weingast and Marshall 1988). State legislators who want to influence a particular area of public policy will strive to be seated on a committee dealing with that issue. Being a member of the right committee can be highly advantageous to a legislator as it enables them to claim credit in front of key constituency groups (Fouirnaies, A. B. Hall, and Payson 2019; Osborn 2014), attract more donors and contributions (Grimmer and Powell 2013; Munger 1989), enhance their political profile (Fenno 1973), and increase the chances of success for their political agenda (Stacy, Volden, and Alan E Wiseman 2019). Occupying a committee seat, or serving as a committee's chair or vice-chair, can improve a legislator's effectiveness in a particular policy area above that of their excluded colleagues (Lewallen 2020; Berry and Fowler 2018). However, this boost in productivity is temporary, and once the legislator leaves that privileged institution position, the benefits tend to diminish.

Another factor that could potentially enhance a lawmaker's effectiveness, but has received less attention, is their occupational experience or career expertise acquired before joining the legislature. In the past, many studies have taken this "personal biography approach" to the study of political elites (Krcmaric, Nelson, and Roberts 2020), examining the influence of race and gender on legislative effectiveness. For instance, Bryant and Marin Hellwege (2019) demonstrate that working mothers in Congress are more likely to introduce bills related to parenting, like children's health and welfare, but bills introduced by women on broader "women's issues" are actually less likely to survive the vetting process in committee settings (Volden and Alan E. Wiseman 2018). Likewise, Black legislators participate in congressional committee proceedings at greater rates than their White colleagues on both race-related and unrelated bills (Gamble 2007), but these Black lawmakers are generally less effective at moving their own bills through later stages of the legislative pipeline (Orey et al. 2006).

Others disagree, arguing that racial/ethnic minority legislators are no more or less effective (Rocca and Sanchez 2011; Jones 2008). In short, many have examined other subsets of legislators on descriptive characteristics but fewer have examined legislators' occupations in this manner.

What literature does exist focuses on the impact of a state legislator's occupation but does not account for the legislator belonging to a career-congruent committee. Makse (2022) shows that legislators with professional expertise in a policy area—especially agriculture, financial services, and law—have more success seeing related bills pass out of committee and eventually pass into law, but he does not account for the conditional effect of committee membership. Swift (2020) demonstrates that legislators on committees that match their policy interests tend to be more effective, especially in states that endow committees with stronger agenda-setting powers. However, Swift measures policy interests by examining the percentage of bills a legislator introduces in a particular policy area, rather than considering the legislators' professional backgrounds. This can be problematic as legislators may change their sponsorship behavior after being assigned to committees, regardless of their preferences for committee assignments (Miler 2017). As a result, the concentration of bills introduced is a post-treatment variable that may not accurately reflect a legislator's policy interests pre-assignment.

Meanwhile, Lin (2015) finds that states with more informative committees, measured as the ideological resemblance of committees to their parent chamber (Battista 2009), see fewer bills introduced overall, but those that are introduced are more efficiently amended and passed into law. This suggests that diversity in the ideological makeup of a committee enhances its willingness to gatekeep, but it is unclear if the same can be said for occupational diversity. One study by Hansen, Carnes, and Gray (2019) demonstrates a reluctance among former insurers to police insurance agencies, often exercising negative agenda-setting powers to kill bills that propose such oversight. However, the study does not necessarily tie these negative agenda-setting powers to the committee membership of these former insurance

professionals, as I propose to do below.

A Theory on Career-Committee Congruence

While previous research has shown the advantages of committee members in the lawmaking process, a more intriguing question remains: What factors differentiate co-committee members who share the same privileged institutional positions? I argue that occupational expertise is a key intervening variable impacting the strength of the relationship between committee membership and legislative effectiveness. When a member of a legislative body is assigned to a standing committee whose policy jurisdiction is related to that member's pre-legislative occupation, that member achieves *"career-committee congruence"* (Francis and Bramlett 2017).[2] Most, if not all, state legislators have worked in a different industry before running for public office. Those in less professionalized legislatures may even continue this non-legislative work once elected.

In Chapter 1, I demonstrated that having a career background that matches a committee's jurisdiction is the primary factor in determining committee membership in the California State Legislature, outweighing the influence of partisanship and district need in the competition for limited committee seats (Pellaton 2022). The prioritization of career expertise in committee assignment politics was especially true for committees whose areas of responsibility are more closely aligned with certain professions, such as public goods committees like Health and Education and distributive committees like Agriculture and Transportation.[3] However, without access to committee request data, we cannot know if legislators with relevant professional backgrounds intentionally seek out occupation-related committees, at least

[2]To clarify, my primary focus is on a legislator's career prior to being elected, rather than their accumulated experience within the legislature, such as tenure or seniority. However, the models in this chapter do account for freshman status and term-limited status.

[3]Shugart et al. (2021) asserts that there are four broad categories of committees in democratic legislatures—Administrative, High Policy, Public Goods, and Distributive—organized by the breadth of their portfolios, their functional responsibilities, and their importance to parties' reputations and electoral fortunes. Public Goods committees are those tasked with the broad distribution of resources across the state where as Distributive committees are those that distribute resources and programs to geographically-clustered recipients.

in California, though others have demonstrated they do at the congressional level (Francis and Bramlett 2017).

Thus, I expect that legislators with occupational expertise will focus their attention more on effecting change in fields related to their profession, leading to superior performance compared to non-expert committee members, non-committee members, and experts without relevant committee assignments. Career-committee congruence enhances a legislator's effectiveness through intrinsic motivation to influence policy, private information from their professional experience, industry-specific network connections, and the potential deference of colleagues during committee deliberations, particularly amid declining institutional resources for supporting quality lawmaking.

First, intrinsic motivation is crucial for effective policymaking. Social cognitive career theory suggests that a pre-legislative career reflects a legislator's interest in a specific field (Lent, Brown, and Hackett 1994). When a legislator's committee assignment aligns with their career interests, they are likely more motivated to engage deeply in that policy area, sponsoring more bills related to their expertise and investing the necessary effort to see these bills through the legislative process. Hall refers to these individuals as purposive actors, or political elites "who participate because they want to" (1987, p. 121).

> ***H1:*** *Career-committee congruent lawmakers will introduce more bills within their area of concentration than non-expert co-committee members, non-experts overall, and experts not serving on the committee.*

Second, a lawmaker's pre-legislative career provides unique and private knowledge that reduces the costs of acquiring policy-relevant information for committee members. This enables career-committee congruent legislators to evaluate proposed legislation more quickly and accurately, contributing sooner and more substantively to committee deliberations. According to the Hansen, Carnes, and Gray (2019) cultural capture model, a representative's industry background shapes their perceptions of good or bad public policy for that industry. This expertise allows the lawmaker to be more entrepreneurial, leveraging their familiarity

with ongoing policy debates and key stakeholders to identify potential unintended consequences of proposed policies and propose more informed alternatives. Consequently, the bills authored by these entrepreneurial legislators may be prioritized or carry more weight compared to those written by non-experts.

Relatedly, a career-expert's professional background may provide greater ties to the industry from which they emerge, fostering a more entrepreneurial approach to policymaking. This connection may make them more receptive to feedback from industry affiliates and extra-legislative groups about pressing issues that require legislative action or inaction. For example, Hansen, Carnes, and Gray find that "state legislatures with more insurance professionals in them tend to spend less time considering new insurance regulations" (2019, p. 18), although it is unclear if these former insurers leveraged the committee system to resist proposals to expand state oversight.[4] Nonetheless, such receptiveness may enhance a career-expert's ability to sponsor and advance bills related to their former industry, as they are more adept at garnering support or avoiding criticism from other political actors invested in that policy jurisdiction. This entrepreneurial capability enables them to navigate the legislative process more effectively and strategically.

Fourth, privately-held industry knowledge may give a committee member an entrepreneurial edge relative to non-expert colleagues on that committee and those experts who were denied a seat on that committee. Co-committee members, and the chamber at large, may choose to defer to the career-expert's professional instincts, allowing the career-expert to exhibit more innovative behavior than their non-expert counterparts. Since the mid-1990s, numerous states have substantially cut funding for legislative aides and research offices, putting a premium on experienced staff (Crosson et al. 2018) and increasing the legislature's reliance on extra-legislative groups for cue-taking and drafting legislation (Hertel-Fernandez 2014;

[4]Importantly, the content (e.g., regulatory posture, cost) of introduced bills is beyond the scope of this paper, except when the content of a bill is identified as primarily ceremonial (e.g., renaming an airport) as opposed to substantive (e.g., building an airport). I make no claims about why career-experts on career-congruent committees introduce and promote these bills—be they self-interested, industry-aware, industry-motivated, or something else. Assessing the content of these bills would require a sentiment analysis, which I do not undertake here but would like to address in future iterations of this work.

Kroeger 2017).

To reduce uncertainty and provide a check against extra-legislative influences, lawmakers may rely more heavily on their colleagues who possess industry expertise, as the committee and its parent chamber strive to maintain business as usual with fewer resources. Additionally, a career-expert may demonstrate greater effort in building consensus and finding common ground with other committee members and legislators by leveraging their industry-specific knowledge to facilitate compromise. They may also serve as a more proactive advocate for their committee's policy goals to non-committee colleagues and the broader public, showcasing their legislative entrepreneurship through innovative solutions and strategies in the policymaking process.

> ***H2:*** *Bills authored by career-committee congruent lawmakers will attract more cosponsors.*

The Case of the California State Legislature

With this theory in mind, I now argue that California, with its professionalized legislature and numerous demands for political action from industry groups and constituents alike, is an ideal setting to test how career expertise, conditioned on institutional access via career-congruent committee memberships, influences legislative effectiveness. First, California is a highly professionalized legislature that compensates its representatives well enough to make lawmaking a full-time job. These lawmakers dedicate more of their time and energy to legislating than those in citizen legislatures, who often have other occupations and commitments outside of the legislature (State Legislatures 2021). Professionalized legislatures also attract candidates from more diverse occupational backgrounds, maximizing opportunities for career-committee congruence and ensuring variation in the types of policy specialists who seek to join the body (Makse 2019). Additionally, term limits in California mean that occupational expertise may be more important for legislative productivity than in states without term limits. Term-limited legislators have far less time to learn on the job than they do in

states where a longer tenure is possible.

Moreover, given the intense competition for plenary time in California, there are limits on the number of bills any one senator or assemblymember may introduce each session. This cap "raise[s] the batting average, suggesting that when constrained, legislators focus on measures with better chances of passing, rather than wasting introductions on throwaway bills" (Squire 1998, p. 29). The high volume of work tasked to the legislature has also produced a relatively stable and routinized committee system with infrequent reorganization of committees' jurisdiction and size (Squire 1992). While side deals do occur, committees are not often outright bypassed, as evidenced by the number of bills that die in committee on "suspense day" in the legislature's power committees (Nixon 2022).

Lastly, Democrats have controlled the State Senate since the mid-1970s, dominated the Assembly continuously since 1997, and have maintained a Democratic trifecta since 2011 (Ballotpedia 2014). In 2018, the Democratic Party secured a veto-proof super-majority in the legislature, assuring full Democratic control of state affairs. This minimal interparty electoral competition has allowed the majority caucus to focus more on policymaking than holding onto power. Likewise, interbranch competition between the legislature and the executive, while still omnipresent, is less of a hurdle in the chaptering of laws than in other states. These factors minimize political friction and allow us to key in on the role of expertise and committee membership in legislative effectiveness.

Research Design

Data

To test my hypotheses, I constructed an original dataset on the California State Legislature spanning five sessions from 2011-12 through 2019-20. These sessions were chosen to avoid significant disruptions to the legislative agenda, including the Great Recession (2008-09) and the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-21), which could alter both the content of legislative

proposals and the ability of lawmakers to conduct business as usual.[5]

My primary data source is the *California Joint Legislative Handbook*, which is typically published at the start of every 2-year session and available through the California State Archives and HathiTrust.[6] The *Joint Handbook* provides self-reported biographical information for all state representatives, committee rosters, chamber rules, and other relevant information. I also obtained data from state legislators' websites, Ballotpedia, the Office of the California Secretary of State, and CalMatters as needed. Raw bill data is drawn from the Official California Legislative Information archives.

The data exists in two formats: The first is an unbalanced panel dataset, which uses a legislator-committee pair as the unit of analysis. For example, if there are 40 senators and 22 standing committees in a given Senate session, the dataset will have 880 rows representing each possible legislator-committee-year. State legislators may appear in multiple sessions in either chamber and may change from year to year due to turnover; those who join or leave the legislature mid-session are included if they introduced at least one bill and were assigned to at least one committee at the start of the session.

Over five sessions, the dataset includes 90 senators and 183 assemblymembers (253 unique lawmakers in total), a majority of whom are registered Democrats, White, and men (Table 1). While the committee system changes from year to year, there are fewer changes (e.g., reorganization, membership size) to the Assembly's committee system than the Senate's. This dataset connects legislators to the bills they introduce and the fate of those bills.

The second dataset is pooled cross-sectionally, where the unit of analysis is a bill. This dataset traces each bill's progress through the legislative pipeline from introduction to final status and links each bill to its primary author(s) and the committee(s) to which it is referred. The full dataset includes 14,347 Assembly Bills and 6,920 Senate Bills introduced over five sessions. The distribution of introduced bills by topic may be found in the appendix.

[5]For instance, in 2008, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger called the legislature to five special sessions on the economy and state budget, while in 2007, he called for just one (Young 2009).

[6]This research would not have been possible without the valuable data collection efforts of Juliet Bost. All errors in the accuracy of the data are my own.

Table 1: State Legislator Demographics, 2011-2020

Attribute	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Median	Min	Max
Senator	279	1.33	0.47	1.00	1.00	2.00
Republican	252	1.66	0.94	1.00	1.00	3.00
Woman	249	1.29	0.46	1.00	1.00	2.00
White	247	1.57	0.50	2.00	1.00	2.00

Note: Two lawmakers changed parties in the dataset. Assemblymember Chad Mayes left the Republican Party to serve as an Independent, and Assemblymember Brian Maienschein left the Republican Party to become a Democrat. Additionally, 28 lawmakers switched chambers during the period under study.

Selecting Committees, Bills, and Authors

My inquiry focuses on a specific set of standing committees that have a clear alignment with a legislator's professional background (see Table 2), including the Assembly and Senate Committees on Agriculture, Education, Health, Insurance, Public Safety, Transportation, and Veterans Affairs, as well as the Assembly Committee on Local Government.[7] These committees were chosen because their jurisdiction readily overlapped with an easily identifiable industry (or industries) outside of the legislature. For instance, committees whose jurisdictions entail more specific areas of public policy will be more likely to feature occupational experts with unique professional backgrounds (e.g., the Health Committee and medical professionals) as opposed to those committees that handle broader legislative affairs (e.g., Governmental Organization). In California, a significant portion of state legislators come from backgrounds in law, business, and local government. Although valuable, these backgrounds might offer broader expertise compared to individuals with more specialized careers, such as former doctors. Notably, these specific standing committees represent some of the most active policy committees in both chambers, excluding administrative committees like Appropriations and Rules.

To ensure that my analyses focus on substantive bills and not ceremonial ones, I follow the screening procedure developed by Volden and A. Wiseman (2014) that identifies and

[7] Information on committee jurisdictions may be found in the appendix.

Table 2: Career-Committee Congruence in the CA State Legislature

Committee	Committee Type (Shugart et al. 2021)	Relevant Career
Agriculture	Distributive	Farmer
Education	Public Goods	Educator
Health	Public Goods	Medical Professional
Insurance	Public Goods	Insurer
Local Government*	Administrative	Local Government Official
Public Safety	Administrative	Law Enforcement
Transportation+	Distributive	Transportation Professional
Veterans Affairs=	Public Goods	Veteran

* *Committee exists only in the Assembly.*

\+ *Committee is combined with "Housing" in the Senate.*

= *Committee is called "Military and Veterans Affairs" in the Assembly.*

removes bills with titles or subjects that contain certain phrases typically associated with ceremonial bills.[8] Upon closer inspection, I screened out ceremonial bills with titles or subjects containing other commemorative phrases upon first introduction.[9],[10] Out of the total number of bills in the dataset (over 21,000), a specific subset of bills was selected for analysis based on their referral to the committees of interest. Specifically, this subset includes 5,275 Assembly bills (ABs) and 2,706 Senate bills (SBs), as outlined in Table 3.

Lastly, my main interest is in evaluating the entrepreneurship of *individual* lawmakers and the success of their legislative agendas. To achieve this, I focus solely on bills introduced

[8]Specifically, "commemoration", "commemorate", "for the private relief of", "for the relief of", "medal", "mint coins", "posthumous", "public holiday", "to designate", "to encourage", "to express", "to provide for the correction of", "to name", "to redesignate", "to remove any doubt", "to rename", and "to retain the name."

[9]"Day", "Month", "remembrance", "Week", "[m/M]emorial", "[a/A]anniversary", "Year", "birthday", "Celebration", "landmark", "Cesar Chavez", and "legislative intent". A careful reader may suggest that I have overlooked other words commonly associated with additional ceremonial legislative activity. Some keywords I considered, but ultimately decided against, include: "Americ[a/n]", "annual", "appreciate" (due to its relation to bonds), "aware" (due to its fiscal implications), "club", "[h/H]eritage" (due to overlap with "Day", "Month", and "Week"), "history" (due to overlap with "Day", "Month", and "Week"), "honor", "flag", "monument" (due to maintenance appropriations), "national" (due to disaster preparedness and relief), and "prayer".

[10]To ensure the accuracy of this coding, a research assistant was asked to independently hand-code a random sample of 3,000 bills as ceremonial or substantive based on the bills' titles. The text-predictor and hand coder had a 2.7 percent rate of disagreement (Cohen's kappa = 0.763, z = 41.9, p-value = 0), indicating high inter-coder reliability. Of the 21,000+ bills introduced during the study, 5.57 percent were coded as ceremonial and subsequently removed from the analysis.

Table 3: Distribution of Substantive ABs and SBs, 2011-2019

Committee	ABs	SBs
Agriculture	127	56
Education	983	679
Health	1,031	550
Insurance	265	97
Local Government	595	—
Public Safety	1,289	727
Transportation	863	532
Veterans Affairs	122	65

by the *primary author*, excluding those written by committees. While a bill may have several lead authors, principal co-authors, and co-authors, only one person is considered the primary author upon introduction.[11] The primary author is the first name appearing in association with a bill, listed by the preference of the bill's author(s) (Micheli 2022). Primary authors are typically viewed as those with the most invested in the bill's success (e.g., removal from the suspense file), as evidenced by name association, unlike other co-authors who contribute in a more limited capacity.

During a regular session, a senator may introduce up to 40 bills while an assemblymember may introduce no more than 50 bills. These limits are 'soft' and may be overruled with the consent of a chamber's Rules Committee. Members in leadership or serving on powerful committees sometimes exceed this limit, such as Assistant Majority Leader Rob Bonta (2017-20) and Budget Chair Philip Ting (2015-2022). It's important to note that simply co-authoring a bill doesn't count towards a legislator's limit and is thus a less demanding form of legislative entrepreneurship compared to primary authorship. However, I'm also interested in modeling the number of co-authors a bill attracts based on the primary author's career and committee attributes to explore the perceived quality of the lawmaker's entrepreneurship and assess whether the primary author is introducing viable policy initiatives.

[11]The Legislature defines a sponsor as "[t]he legislator, private individual, or group who developed a piece of legislation and advocates its passage"; a principal co-author as "[a] legislator singled out to share credit along with the author of a bill or resolution"; a co-author as "[a]ny member of either house, with the agreement of the author of a bill, [who] may add his or her name on that member's bill as a co-author, usually indicating support for the proposal."

Methodology

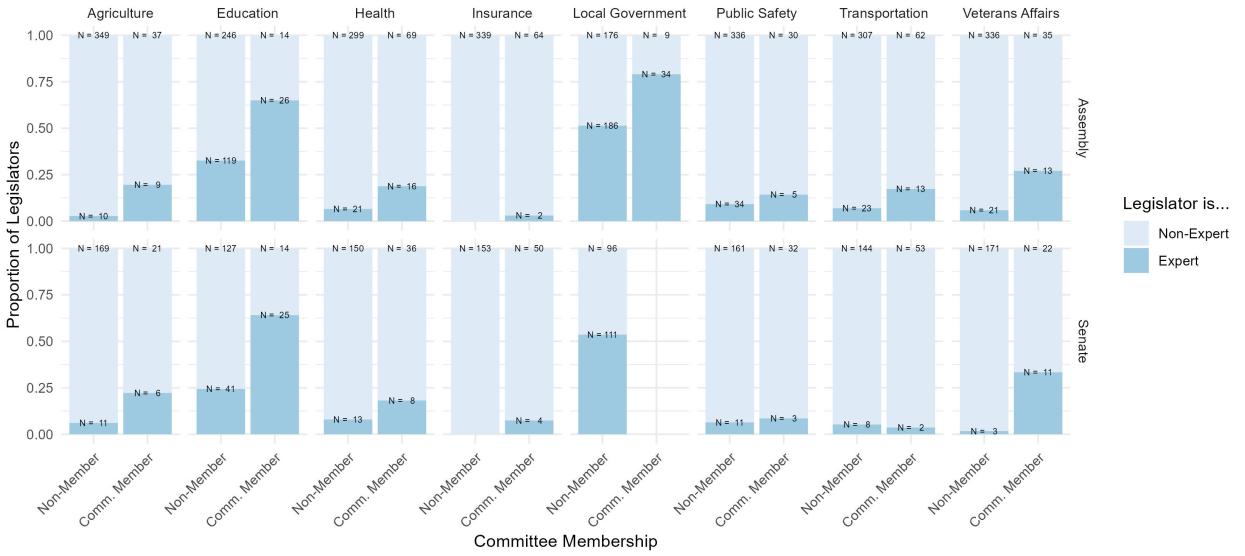
The models include two main predictors. The first is a binary variable, Committee Member, which takes the value of '1' if the state legislator is a member of the committee at t_i and '0' if the legislator does not serve on this committee at t_i.[12] The second predictor is Career-Expert, which indicates if the legislator has previously worked in an industry related to a committee's portfolio ('1') or not ('0'). For instance, to predict the introduction of Assembly bills related to local governance, I determine whether the assemblymember has worked in local government before becoming a legislator. The most common occupations in the dataset are former businessmen, educators, lawyers, and local government officials such as mayors and city council members. Occupations are coded to accommodate instances where a lawmaker has one or more prior occupations. I then interact the two predictors to create a Career-Committee Congruence measure (Figure 1) that denotes if the occupational expert has been assigned a seat on an occupationally-relevant standing committee.

An examination of Figure 1 reveals significant variation in the distribution of career expertise among committee members and non-members, particularly in education and local government, where a majority of committee members possess relevant experience in these policy domains. While a substantial portion of these committee members are considered career experts, many such experts are also shut out of the committees. This diversity highlights the importance of investigating how a lawmaker's blend of occupational expertise and institutional authority impacts their legislative entrepreneurship.

This study uses two dependent variables to capture *legislative entrepreneurship*. The first relates to bill introductions and measures the total number of bills a primary author introduces that are referred to a specific committee. The distribution of introductions by

[12] I treat all committee members equally and do not differentiate between committee leadership positions, such as committee chair or vice chair. This approach is adopted due to the limitation of each committee having only one chair and one vice chair, thereby constraining the number of committee leaders in the sample. It is important to note that committee chairs and vice chairs are still considered committee members, notwithstanding their additional rights and privileges in committee proceedings.

Figure 1: Career-Expertise Varies Greatly Between Committee Members and Non-Members, Excepting the Committees on Education and Local Government, 2011-2020



Note: There is no Senate Local Government Committee, though over 50% of senators have local government experience.

chamber and bill topic is given in Figure 2.[13], [14], [15] The second measure is a proxy for bill viability and is captured as the total number of co-authors a bill attracts beyond the primary author with the expectation that bills that are viewed as more viable upon introduction will attract more collaborators.

I use a zero-inflated negative binomial (ZINB) model to predict the number of bills introduced by a lawmaker in a specific topic area, the distribution of which is given by Figure 3 and in the appendix.[16] A zero-inflated negative binomial model is ideal for this

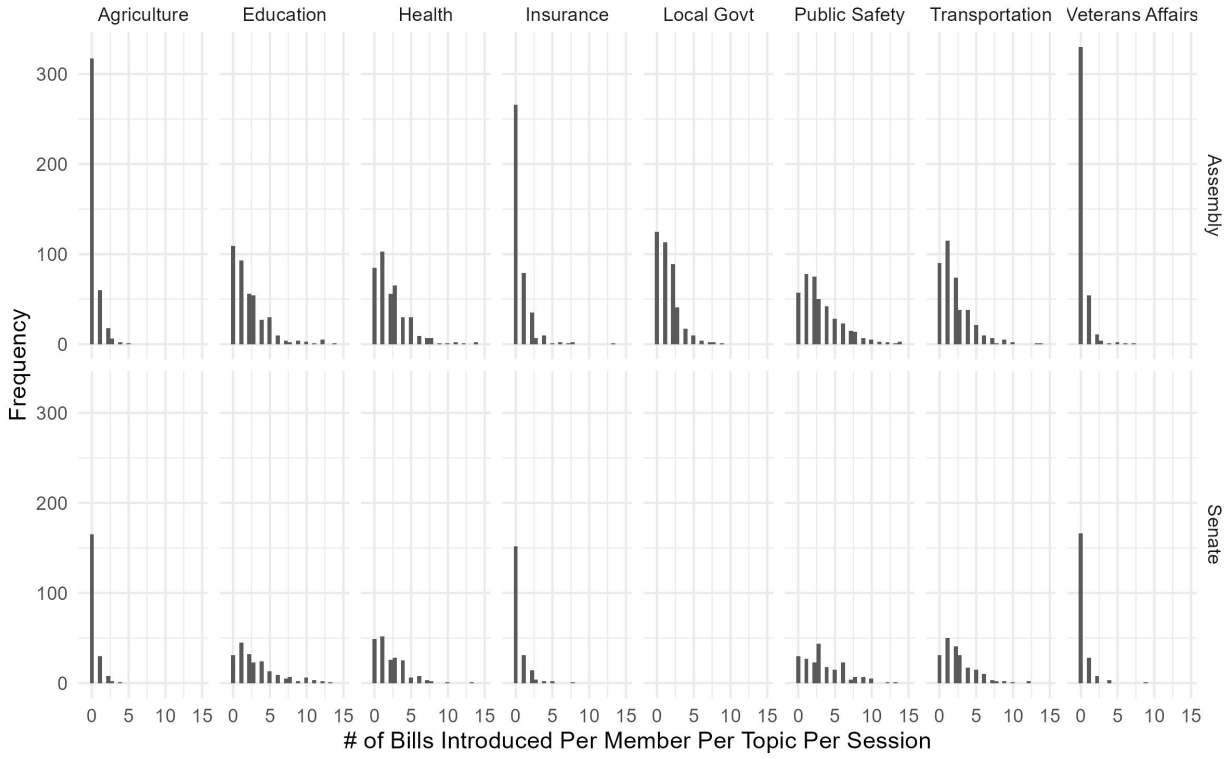
[13]In the appendix, I also model the rate of bill introductions as the percentage of bills authored by a lawmaker that is referred to a committee divided by the total number of bills the lawmaker introduces in a given session.

[14]Chapter 3 of this dissertation, takes it a step further to examine the probability the bill receives a vote in the first policy committee to which it is referred and predicts the outcome of that vote.

[15]In the appendix, I also consider a measure of bill survival by examining the number (and percent) of bills authored by a lawmaker that are referred to a committee and ultimately passed into law. Admittedly, this is a high hurdle to pass, and the results of the exercise should be interpreted with caution as there are numerous other factors influencing a bill's enactment beyond my main focus on legislator attributes.

[16]In the appendix, I run Poisson models for predicting bill introductions, but diagnostic tests identified overdispersion stemming from the high frequency of zeroes in the dependent variable.

Figure 2: The Number of Bill Introductions Per Topic Varies Greatly by Member, 2011-2020



Note: The outlying 14 authors who authored more than 15 bills in a given topic area are excluded from the display. These authors are concentrated in Education and Health.

dataset because of the high instances of zeroes in the count data.[17],[18],[19] I also predict the number of co-authors a bill has when it is first introduced with a zero-inflated negative binomial model. All models feature standard errors clustered on the individual legislator or bill ID.[20]

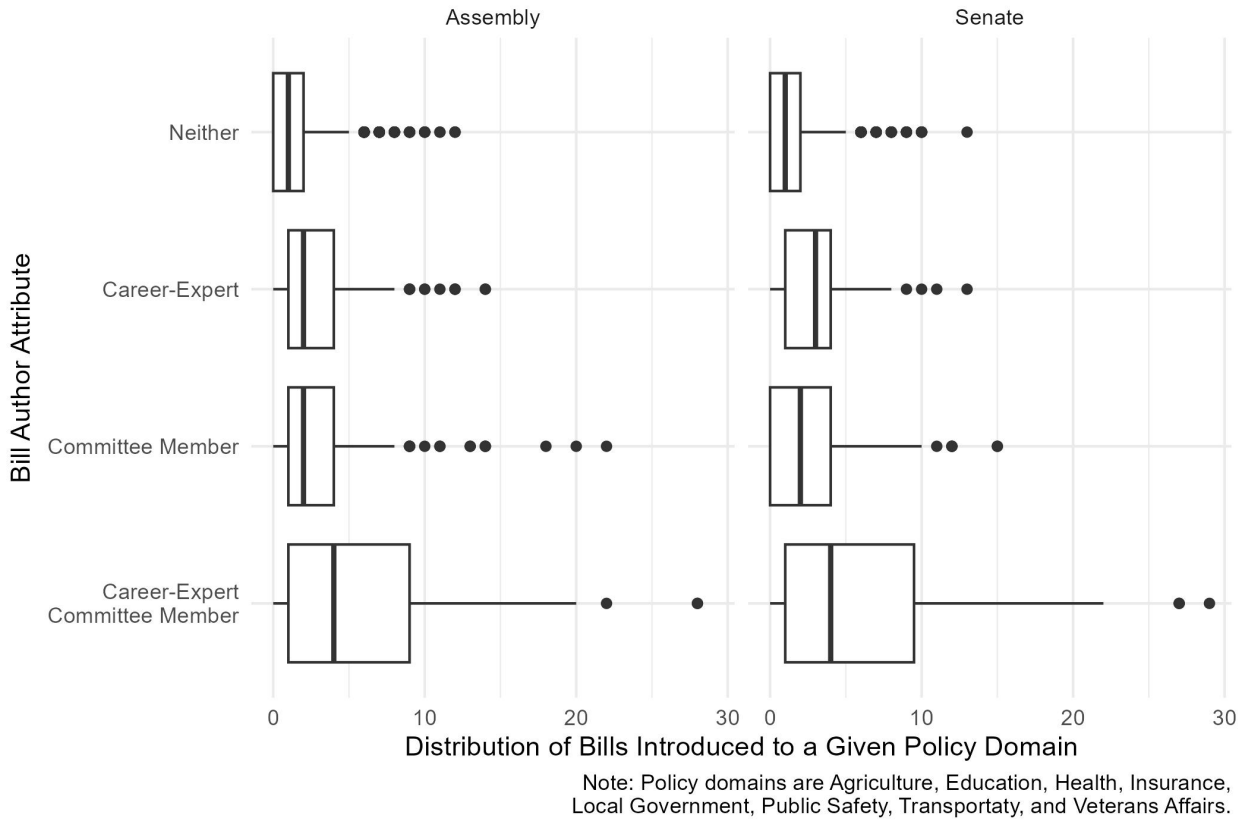
[17]In a comparison between a negative binomial model and a zero-inflated negative binomial model, see appendix, a Vuong test confirmed the ZINB was a better model fit (Vuong z-statistic to -3.811 and the p-value to 0.000).

[18]The ZINB model assumes that there are two distinct processes contributing to the occurrence of zero counts: In the first process, a logistic regression estimates the probability of observing zero counts independently of the factors included in the count model (e.g., district characteristics). In the second process, a negative binomial regression predicts the count distribution of the number of bills introduced per policy domain per lawmaker based on the predictors in the model.

[19]Note that I do not include an exposure term as all lawmakers are subject to the same rules and timing restrictions on bill introductions in California.

[20]Clustering by lawmaker acknowledges that the outcomes of bills introduced by the same lawmaker may be more similar to each other than to those introduced by other lawmakers, even after controlling for observable attributes. Similarly, clustering by bill recognizes that multiple bills introduced by the same legislator may share similarities and that these bills may be more similar to each other than to bills introduced by other legislators.

Figure 3: Median Bill Introductions by Career-Committee Congruent Members Are Higher Compared to Others, 2011-2020



Each model includes control variables related to a representative's demographics, legislative experience, and institutional context that others have theorized may impact the introduction and survival of bills through the legislative pipeline. First, I include measures of a legislator's gender, race, and partisanship interacted with a measure of the lawmaker's distance from their party median. Related to a representative's legislative tenure, I include a binary variable for the lawmaker's freshman status.[21]

Two additional variables capture a state legislator's institutional position at the beginning of a new session: Prior committee service is a binary indicator for whether the state legislator has previously served on the committee in question during at least one session in their current

[21]I also replaced this variable with a measure of chamber seniority and then a measure capturing a lawmaker's term-limited status; however, neither tenure variable significantly altered the model's core results.

chamber,[22] and leadership status indicates whether the state representative is a member of the chamber or party caucus leadership in the current session-year.[23]

Lastly, I control for two variables related to the broader institutional context. Committee size captures the number of seats on a given committee as committees with larger memberships face more demands on the same allotted meeting time as smaller committees. This increased demand could potentially lead to more bill introductions to the committee or more complexity in the actions taken on those bills, with a larger number of committee members contributing to the decision-making process. I also include session-year and committee fixed effects to adjust for differences in the political context over time or across committees (e.g., legislative rules) that may influence bill introductions and viability.

Career-Committee Congruence Encourages Authorship

Are career experts and committee members more legislatively entrepreneurial? The results of the zero-inflated negative binomial model suggest they are in eight major areas of state policy: agriculture, education, health, insurance, local government, transportation, public safety, and veterans affairs. Table 4 presents the main findings of three event count models broken down by chamber.[24] First, the zero-inflation coefficient for committee membership is negative and statistically significant in the Assembly, as well as for the third model run on both chambers. This indicates that legislators who are members of committees in the Assembly are less likely to have an excess number of zero bill introductions compared to those who are not committee members. This finding suggests that committee membership

[22]Committee membership need not be consecutive, but this variable does not account for whether the legislator has served on a similar committee in the sister chamber. The Assembly has more standing committees than the Senate, making it difficult to directly compare committee service between the chambers due to overlapping committee jurisdictions in the Senate that do not exist in the Assembly.

[23]Leadership includes the president pro tempore, minority leader, majority and minority whips, and the Democratic and Republican caucus chairs and vice chairs. While it might be expected that the most senior members of the state legislature would hold leadership positions, this is not always the case due to high legislative turnover. Cain and Kousser (2004) suggest that term limits have incentivized party leaders to groom their successors earlier, resulting in a younger crop of legislators deemed worthy of leadership roles in the next regime.

[24]Full model results can be found in the appendix.

drives a more focused or targeted legislative agenda, encouraging committee members to be more actively engaged in introducing bills related to their committees' policy jurisdictions. Interestingly, occupational expertise alone, or in combination with committee membership, does not emerge as a significant predictor of zero bill introductions.

Moving to predict the number of bills introduced per policy domain per lawmaker, I find that career expertise, committee membership, and career-committee congruence are statistically significant positive predictors of the number of bills introduced to a policy domain where the author possesses occupational expertise, institutional authority, or both. In essence, after factoring in that not every lawmaker will introduce a bill to a particular policy domain, the negative binomial components of the models indicate that career experts, committee members, and career-expert committee members are all inclined to introduce more bills, on average, than their non-expert counterparts.

Substantively, these effects are illustrated in Table 5, presenting the incidence rate ratios (IRRs) for the main predictors. Across both chambers, committee members introduce up to 1.6 times as many bills related to the committee's portfolio compared to non-committee members, with slightly stronger effects observed in the Assembly. Similarly, career-experts introduce up to 1.4 times as many bills in their area of expertise as non-experts. These findings indicate that, akin to committee membership alone, career-expertise alone encourages the concentration of one's legislative efforts when choosing how to allocate one's time, energies, and limited number of allowable bill introductions each session.

The IRRs in the third row suggest that combined career-committee congruent members introduce nearly 4 times as many bills as non-expert non-committee members. This effect is most pronounced in the Senate, where senators who are both career-experts and assigned to a committee related to their occupational expertise introduce as many as 5.2 times as many bills as non-expert non-committee member senators. This finding strongly supports the hypothesis that career-committee congruent members are particularly engaged in policy areas where their career expertise aligns with committee membership. It represents a whopping

Table 4: Predicting the Number of Bill Introductions Per Policy Domain by Chamber, 2011-2020

	Assembly		Senate		Both	
	Zero-Inf.	*Neg. Bin.*	*Zero-Inf.*	*Neg. Bin.*	*Zero-Inf.*	*Neg. Bin.*
Committee Member	-1.042*	0.535***	-1.129	0.411***	-1.239***	0.467***
	(0.530)	(0.078)	(0.663)	(0.092)	(0.371)	(0.059)
Career-Expert	-0.429	0.354**	-0.895	0.438**	-1.868	0.331***
	(1.199)	(0.110)	(1.485)	(0.152)	(1.923)	(0.084)
Career-Expert Committee Member	0.344	0.403*	0.191	0.806***	1.647	0.570***
	(1.505)	(0.169)	(1.948)	(0.227)	(2.026)	(0.132)
Log (theta)		1.144***		1.213***		1.144***
		(0.110)		(0.146)		(0.088)
Constant	-15.810*	1.116*	-4.725*	0.638	-3.035	0.716***
	(6.434)	(0.444)	(2.030)	(0.373)	(1.842)	(0.191)
Chamber FEs					✓	✓
Controls+	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Committee FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Session FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	1,944	1,944	994	994	2,903	2,903
Theta	3.14		3.672		3.139	
N-Iterations	86		64		122	
Log-likelihood	-2,937 (df = 43)		-1,529 (df = 31)		-4,430 (df = 45)	

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

+ *Controls include prior committee membership, committee size, partisanship, distance from the party median, officer status, freshman status, gender, and race. Full model results may be found in the appendix.*

Table 5: Incidence Rate Ratios (IRRs) of Main Predictors, 2011-2020

	Assembly		Senate		Both	
	Zero-Inf.	*Neg. Bin.*	*Zero-Inf.*	*Neg. Bin.*	*Zero-Inf.*	*Neg. Bin.*
Committee Member	0.353*	1.709***	0.323	1.508***	0.290***	1.595***
	(0.530)	(0.0.078)	(0.663)	(0.0.092)	(0.371)	(0.059)
Career-Expert	0.651	1.425**	0.409	1.550**	0.154	1.392***
	(1.199)	(0.110)	(1.485)	(0.152)	(1.923)	(0.084)
Combination	0.324	3.637***	0.159	5.236***	0.232	3.922***
	(1.948)	(0.216)	(2.534)	(0.288)	(2.819)	(0.167)

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

423.6% increase in the number of bill introductions to a given policy domain.

Additional insights emerge from analyzing the incidence rate ratios (IRRs) among different groups of advantaged authors, as detailed in Table 6. When comparing committee members to career-experts, a committee member introduces 1.2 times more bills than a career-expert; this effect is modest and varies by chamber. However, more notably for this study, career-expert committee members introduce 2.5 times as many bills related to a committee's work as non-experts sitting on the same committee. This underscores the combined importance of career-committee congruence, suggesting that expertise offers an advantage even within committee membership.

Further, comparing experts on a related committee to those career-experts not part of the committee system, we find that career-committee congruent members introduce as many as 2.8 times more bills in their area of expertise than those experts not included on that committee. This underscores how institutional authority encourages legislators with relevant professional backgrounds to introduce bills in specific policy areas, while those experts excluded from committee membership may be less inclined to do so due to limited access to committee gatekeepers.[25]

[25]In the appendix, I repeat this exercise in just the 4 most active policy spaces in the dataset-education, health, public safety, and transportation. The results are much the same. I also conduct a related exercise on a committee-by-committee basis in each chamber, which reveals heightened career and committee effects in education, health, and public safety.

Table 6: Comparison of Relative Incidence Rate Ratios of Number of Bill Introductions, 2011-2020

Author Attribute vs. Reference Group	*Relative IRR*		
	Assembly	Senate	Both
Committee Member vs. Career-Expert	1.198***	0.973***	1.146***
	(0.099)	(0.081)	(0.078)
Career-Committee Member vs. Committee Member	2.127**	3.475	2.459*
	(0.121)	(0.108)	(0.105)
Career-Committee Member vs. Career-Expert	2.551***	3.376***	2.820***
	(0.126)	(0.122)	(0.0119)

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Bills Authored by Career-Expert Committee Members Feature Fewer Co-authors

Are the bills introduced by career-committee congruent lawmakers more attractive to other lawmakers? To assess the viability of new legislative proposals, I examine the number of co-authors on a bill when it is first introduced. I anticipate that bills authored by career-committee congruent members will garner the most initial support from colleagues in terms of co-sponsorship. The results, however, are contrary to my expectations.

Table 7 displays the results of a series of zero-inflation negative binomial models predicting the number of co-authors a bill has upon introduction, and Table 8 provides the IRRs for the main predictors.[26] First, career-committee congruent members are far, far more likely than other lawmakers to introduce bills in their specialty area that feature no coauthors. Further, of the bills that do have co-authors attached, these bills typically feature 24.5% *fewer* co-authors, on average, compared to bills authored by non-expert non-committee members.[27]

[26] I also employed a generalized linear model to predict the change in the number of co-authors a bill attracts or loses from its introduction to final action, which ranged from a loss of 26 co-authors to the addition of 88 co-authors with an average of 1 additional co-author. However, the results for the key predictors did not provide conclusive findings.

[27] Initial co-authorship ranges from 0 to a maximum of 45 co-authors, with an average of 0.577 co-authors.

These results suggest that career-committee congruent members initially propose bills that are less appealing to their colleagues, or they may exhibit a higher degree of protectiveness over their bills at the outset of the legislative session. I initially anticipated that career-expert committee members would introduce bills that garnered more support from fellow lawmakers, especially considering that co-authorship is relatively costless and does not count towards a legislator's bill introduction limit. I had also anticipated that these privileged members might collaborate with colleagues between bill proposal cycles to craft bills with broader appeal or that they would actively seek endorsements for their proposals.

Instead, what I find is that bills introduced by lawmakers with extensive professional expertise and institutional authority tend to attract fewer co-signatories initially compared to those introduced by their counterparts. This trend could be attributed to several factors. For instance, my earlier findings suggest that career-committee congruent lawmakers, particularly in the Senate, focus their legislative efforts on their areas of expertise and committee authority. Consequently, these primary authors may feel a strong sense of ownership over their policy proposals, leading them to be more protective of their bills and less inclined to entertain co-authors during the drafting and introductory stages. Additionally, these lawmakers may feel compelled to offer more sincere and less conciliatory or collaborative bills than their colleagues, wary of diluting the bill's intent or hindering its progress through later stages of the legislative pipeline.

Conversely, bills authored by career-experts and/or committee members may simply be less appealing to potential co-authors. For instance, these bills might delve into highly specialized or technical aspects of a policy domain, making them less attractive to lawmakers with broader interests, such as those colleagues who are neither career-experts nor committee members. Additionally, the bills introduced by these authors could involve bolder or less familiar policy proposals, which might deter potential collaborators. These legislators may feel more confident introducing legislation that closely aligns with their stance on the subject, potentially limiting its appeal to lawmakers with differing viewpoints or priorities.

Table 7: Predicting Bill Co-authors by Chamber, 2011-2020

	Assembly		Senate		Both	
	Zero-Inf.	*Neg. Bin.*	*Zero-Inf.*	*Neg. Bin.*	*Zero-Inf.*	*Neg. Bin.*
Committee Member	1.778	0.098	-0.162	-0.035	59.208*	0.109
	(1.166)	(0.171)	(0.656)	(0.260)	(23.932)	(0.128)
Career-Expert	1.892*	0.194	0.811	0.349	64.295*	0.211
	(0.945)	(0.172)	(0.623)	(0.300)	(25.670)	(0.137)
Career-Expert Committee Member	-2.272	-0.538*	-1.487	-1.263**	-34.645*	-0.601**
	(1.503)	(0.267)	(1.811)	(0.452)	(15.071)	(0.207)
Log (theta)		-2.118***		-1.838***		-2.211***
		(0.059)		(0.127)		(0.039)
Constant	-14.205	-1.433***	0.388	-0.153	-72.654***	-1.554***
	(1,233.149)	(0.360)	(0.904)	(0.422)	(26.147)	(0.367)
Controls	✓+	✓+	✓=	✓=	✓	✓
Committee FEs	✓	✓			✓	✓
Session FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	4,972	4,972	2,472	2,472	7,444	7,444
Theta	0.120		0.159		0.110	
N-Iterations	173		76		395	
Log-likelihood	-3,622 (df = 47)		-2,701 (df = 33)		-5,709 (df = 51)	

Note: *$p<0.05$; **$p<0.01$; ***$p<0.001$

+ *Assembly model omits committee size.*

= *Senate model omits committee size.*

Table 8: Incidence Rate Ratios (IRRs) of Main Predictors, 2011-2020

	Assembly		Senate		Both	
	Zero-Inf.	*Neg. Bin.*	*Zero-Inf.*	*Neg. Bin.*	*Zero-Inf.*	*Neg. Bin.*
Committee Member	5.92^{***}	1.103	0.850	0.966	$2.166\ x\ 10^{25*}$	1.115^{***}
	(6.444)	(0.188)	(0.557)	(0.251)	($5.178\ x\ 10^{27}$)	(0.143)
Career-Expert	6.63^{***}	1.213	2.250	1.417^{***}	$5.005\ x\ 10^{27*}$	1.235^{***}
	(1.788)	(0.209)	(1.402)	(0.425)	($1.284\ x\ 10^{29}$)	(0.169)
Combination	4.05^{*}	0.781^{*}	0.432	0.386	$4.18\ x\ 10^{38***}$	0.755^{**}
	(1.896)	(0.374)	(1.707)	(0.462)	(59.194)	(0.266)

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

From the perspective of the potential co-author, signing onto a bill is relatively low-cost. The risks are minimal, mainly involving potential missteps in front of constituents or risking one's reputation among colleagues or interest groups. Therefore, while bills proposed by career-committee congruent members might be substantively appealing, there may be no immediate political imperative to attach one's name to a bill until its viability becomes more apparent. Additionally, there are few rules preventing lawmakers from joining a bill's authorship group later in the legislative pipeline, allowing lawmakers to engage in discussions over and offer support for a bill without necessarily affixing their name to it.

A Balancing Act: Maximizing Legislative Opportunity under Constraint

With the start of a new session, state legislators are invited to submit new bills for consideration by their chamber, but they face limits on the number of bills they can introduce–40 for senators and 50 for assemblymembers–and decisions must be made about where to allocate one's time and efforts. Under these constraints, how do members prioritize their legislative work? One strategy is to focus on introducing bills that correspond with their committee membership. Committee membership grants greater access to decision-making in a policy

area, affording a legislator the institutional power to shepherd the bill through the legislative process and prevent it from being killed in committee.

A second strategy is to introduce more bills that align with a legislator's occupational background. State legislators bring unique knowledge and insights from their professional experiences outside of politics, offering perspectives not readily available to their colleagues. This private information can help navigate the intricacies of policy change and manage relationships among stakeholders with conflicting interests. By proposing bills that intersect with their professional expertise, legislators can make more compelling contributions to the decision-making process. Further, some legislators may combine both strategies, leveraging their committee position and professional knowledge simultaneously to drive change in specific policy areas.

Departing from prior research that examines how a legislator's demographic background influences their legislative productivity, my study shifts focus to the lawmaker's occupational expertise and the institutional variation in access granted to policy spaces via the committee system. Using bill sponsorship data from the California State Legislature over the last five legislative sessions, this study investigates the legislative behavior of lawmakers with career expertise that aligns with their committee assignments. The findings reveal that legislators who serve on committees matching their occupational backgrounds exhibit higher levels of legislative entrepreneurship compared to their non-expert, non-committee member counterparts. On average, these career-committee congruent lawmakers introduce 2.24 times more bills per session in the areas where their expertise and committee membership overlap compared to lawmakers who are non-experts and non-committee members. Further, among colleagues on the same committee, a co-committee member who is a career-expert will introduce, on average, 1.27 times more bills related to their committee work than a non-expert co-committee member.

Considering the capped number of bills that legislators can propose every 2-year session (50 in the Assembly, 40 in the Senate), and the imperative for these proposals to span vari-

ous policy areas, the significance of introducing a few extra bills within a committee where the lawmaker possesses career expertise is greatly heightened. If these expert lawmakers, seated on relevant committees, introduce more legislative proposals pertaining to their committee's work than their counterparts, they possess a significant opportunity to shape policy change within that policy domain. This positions them to drive conversations, maximize opportunities for policy innovation, and exert substantial influence in a competitive policy landscape.

Furthermore, the bills authored by career-committee congruent lawmakers feature, on average, 25% fewer co-authors upon initial introduction compared to bills introduced by others in the same policy domains.[28] This finding challenges my initial expectation that these career-expert committee members would be more collaborative and would propose more enticing bills to colleagues for co-authorship. Instead, the results suggest that career-expert committee members may initially adopt a more protective stance towards their bills. Future research should explore possible qualitative differences in these bill proposals. For instance, are they longer, more niche, or more technical in nature compared to bills authored by non-experts and non-expert co-committee members? How does the language or the ambition of these bills evolve over time, and does having fewer co-authors attached impact the bill's viability over its lifespan?[29]

This chapter has been focused on bill introductions and what the concentration of bill introductions in a given author's area of career expertise or committee focus says about their legislative entrepreneurship. However, it is important to acknowledge that lawmakers can influence the survival of their bills through numerous other formal avenues, including bill amendments, committee deliberations, and floor speeches. For instance, Chapter 3 delves into the viability of these legislative proposals behind committee doors, assessing the likelihood of a bill being brought up for a vote in committee or on the floor of its

[28] An alternative model (not depicted) also found that career-expertise and committee membership are not significant predictors of the number of additional co-authors a bill attracts or loses after introduction.

[29] I conducted a preliminary assessment (not depicted) of how much a bill's subject changes from introduction to the final action taken on the bill (i.e., enactment or death) using a Levenshtein distance measure of text change. However, the results of this exercise were inconclusive.

chamber of origin. Furthermore, I scrutinize the voting outcomes of these bills, investigating whether they garner more support from colleagues compared to those authored by other lawmakers. Exploring these additional aspects of the legislative process could offer a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of career experts who sit on coveted committees in the legislature.

In conclusion, this study has aimed to emphasize the importance of pre-legislative careers in providing lawmakers with industry-specific knowledge that may be more difficult for non-expert colleagues to obtain. When granted access to coveted committee seats in active policy domains, such as education and health, how do they utilize that expertise? This research suggests that career experts serving on relevant committees commonly introduce bills at a higher rate in their area of concentration but with fewer co-authors attached. This heightened legislative entrepreneurship raises important questions about whether they are using their expertise to promote the public interest and stimulate policy innovation, or if they are leveraging their committee position and expertise to steer policy in alignment with their personal agendas. Understanding the potential conflicts between these objectives is essential for gaining insight into legislative dynamics behind closed doors.

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Career Expertise and Committee Dynamics: Evaluating Bill Viability and Legislative Approval in the California State Legislature

Abstract

In this study spanning 10 years and eight major policy domains within the California State Assembly and State Senate, I delve into the influence of lawmaker attributes on agenda-setting and legislative outcomes. Utilizing 2-step Heckman selection models, I find that committee membership consistently propels bills towards both committee and chamber floor votes while bills authored by career-committee congruent lawmakers tend to secure greater support in those votes, particularly in crucial policy areas such as education and health. Notably, these advantages are chiefly observed in the Assembly, underscoring the careful dynamics shaping legislative cue-taking and bill success amid heightened competition for finite plenary time.

Keywords: Committees, bill votes, legislative effectiveness, agenda-setting, California

"I don't love this... [This bill] conflicts with multiple different values I hold. [But] I trust the author's motives and intent, and... I'm not going to be the reason you get held in the first committee."

– Assemblymember Isaac Bryan commenting on AB 484 (2023)[1]

In 2023, Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel, a Democratic lawmaker from Los Angeles, introduced AB 484, a bill intended to re-impose sentencing enhancements for Californians convicted of the most severe and costly incidents of theft and property losses of $275,000 or more. Referred first to the Assembly Committee on Public Safety, the bill was praised for its renewed focus on harsher punishments for white-collar criminals, who often target some of the most vulnerable Californians, such as the elderly and disabled. In committee, the bill was heard alongside a similar bill proposing to enhance sentencing for certain sex crimes. Noting a preference for consistency, one committee member remarked, "It feels like a very slippery slope here when we're talking about enhancements. We can't say yes to some and no to others" (Ortega 2023). Yet, while the related sentencing bill died in committee, Assemblymember Gabriel's bill was unanimously voted out of committee. A former constitutional rights litigator, Gabriel had earned the deference of his colleagues on the Public Safety Committee, with Chair Reggie Jones-Sawyer noting, "I think part of why people have expressed concern but are willing to let this move forward is because of you. Because they trust you" (Hoeven 2023). This paper explores that professional trust and the institutional advantage it confers to a bill's author behind closed doors in the committee halls of the California State Legislature.

In what follows, I investigate the role that a lawmaker's occupational expertise and committee membership play in advancing their legislative agenda. Do career-experts and committee members introduce bills that are taken more seriously than others introduced in the same policy domain, and do their bills garner more support in committee voting? Do these author traits influence a bill's passage through its chamber of origin and increase its chances of survival in the opposite chamber? In Chapter 2, I demonstrate that career experts

[1] Quoted in Hoeven (2023).

and committee members tend to exhibit heightened legislative entrepreneurship within their areas of expertise. Specifically, career expert committee members produce, on average, nearly double the number of bills compared to others in the policy domain where their expertise and committee membership intersect. In this chapter, I investigate the seriousness of these policy proposals, proxied by whether a bill is brought to a vote in committee or on the chamber floors, and the success of these bills, measured by the percentage of 'aye' votes, conditional on receiving a vote at all.

My theory hinges on two key traits of a bill's author: First, I expect that career-expert lawmakers are in a unique position, holding private information that may make their bills higher quality than those of their colleagues, thereby meriting legitimate legislative attention; that these lawmakers care more about the survival and success of their bills, even if they are willing to subject their bill to more external amendments; and that their colleagues, recognizing their occupational expertise, will exhibit a certain amount of deference or trust in the lawmaker's proposal, thus contributing more support to the bill's final passage vote in committee and on the chamber floors.

Second, I hypothesize that committee members will also see their bills taken more seriously than those authored by non-committee members, as they occupy an institutional position that enables them to protect their bills from dying without due consideration. A committee member can privately lobby a chair to schedule a bill's hearings or extend the time allotted for the bill's debate. Likewise, their contact with co-committee colleagues enables them to work closely to address concerns with their proposal. They are in a stronger position to call outside experts and interest groups to testify as to their bill's merits, and they have the time to invest in shepherding the bill through the first policy committee to which it is referred, more so than other non-committee member authors who are bogged down with other committee assignments and bills requiring their divided attention. This institutional position, then, will not only increase the likelihood a bill is brought to a vote but also its overall support in that vote, at least in committee voting.

In concert, I anticipate an even stronger effect. That is, if a bill author's career expertise and committee membership are beneficial to a bill's passage through the legislative pipeline, I expect that a bill author whose career expertise aligns with their committee's policy jurisdiction will be even more advantaged. This career-committee congruence affords a bill's author a deeper understanding of the policy area under consideration, allowing a lawmaker to craft legislation that is not only well-informed but also tailored to the specific politics of the policy domain. Indeed, while Chapter 1 underscores the robust predictive ability of career-congruence in committee assignments across both chambers, and Chapter 2 reveals that these career-committee congruent members were more inclined to focus on crafting bills within their areas of expertise, this chapter delves deeper into the consequences of advancing a lawmaker's legislative agenda.

Utilizing a series of 2-step Heckman selection models across 10 years and 8 policy domains in the California State Assembly and State Senate, I find that while committee membership consistently predicts a proposal's journey to a vote in both the policy committee and the chamber floor, the predictive power of career-expertise and career-committee congruence varies. Most notably, bills authored by career-committee congruent legislators can expect to receive more support in committee and chamber voting than those authored by non-expert non-committee members. This translates to a substantial advantage, ranging from as few as 3 additional 'ayes' on an 80-member floor vote to as many as 8 additional 'ayes' in floor voting in critical policy areas like education, health, public safety, and transportation. Additionally, my findings reveal that the advantages linked to author traits are primarily observed in the Assembly. This discrepancy may reflect the Senate's more deliberative proceedings and assemblymembers' greater reliance on author cues to guide their voting decisions: Demonstrating relevant professional background and active committee involvement can be key to garnering the necessary support for a lawmaker's legislative proposals.

A Theory on Career-Committee Congruence and Degrees of Bill Success

Legislative effectiveness refers to "the proven ability to advance a member's agenda items through the legislative process and into law" (Volden and Wiseman 2014, p. 18). This concept is distinct from party achievements or the governor's agenda success, focusing instead on an individual member's legislative entrepreneurship and their demonstrated skill in navigating bills through the committee pipeline and onto the chamber floor, ensuring due consideration at each stage. While Chapter 2 examines how lawmakers allocate their efforts under constraints, such as limits on the number of bills they can introduce each session, this chapter focuses on the attributes of a bill's primary sponsor that increase the likelihood of the bill being brought to a vote and receiving support.

In existing state politics research, numerous institutional variables predict the probability a bill will come up for a vote in committee or on the chamber floor and predict the outcomes of said votes. These include factors such as party control of the legislative and executive branches (Bowling and Ferguson 2001), the site of calendar control (Anzia and Jackman 2013), a bill's interference with federal politics (Callaghan and Karch 2021), opportunities for lobbying interference (Grasse and Heidbreder 2011), the target populations served by a bill (Boushey 2016; Craig 2023), compatibility of a proposal with existing policy (Makse and Volden 2011), and bill topic (Yano, Smith, and Wilkerson 2012). In a study comparing voting in committee to voting on the floors of the California Legislature, Battista (2006) finds that committee and floor votes follow a partisan model of committee voting consistent with Cox and McCubbins (1993) and exhibit greater party-line voting in the most important control committees.

The Insights and Initiative of Career-Experts

Shifting the focus from the broader legislative context, I focus instead on traits specific to a bill's primary author.[2] There is notably less systematic state-level research on how personal biographies influence a bill's chances of advancing through committee and onto the chamber floor. At the congressional level, Volden and Wiseman provide a qualitative account of the influence of occupational expertise on legislative effectiveness, writing:

> Legislators found a policy focus that was drawn from their own experiences, which was personally meaningful to them, and which motivated them to undertake the necessary efforts to develop expertise in these topics. Consistent with the informational theories of legislative organization..., the expertise acquired by these members was ultimately recognized and rewarded by their House colleagues in that it facilitated their respective legislative successes and overall effectiveness. (Volden and Wiseman 2014, p. 173)

Bills written by career-experts may be more legislatively successful due to several factors. First, career-experts often possess an entrepreneurial spirit and a deep dedication to their area of expertise, which drives them to carefully craft and advocate for their bills.[3] Their willingness to put in the necessary work to see a bill through the legislative process may be a critical component of their success. Additionally, career-experts are more likely to draft a higher number of bills within their specialty and see those bills survive longer in the legislative pipeline (Porter 1974). These experts have the potential to craft higher-quality bills that are taken seriously in committees and by their chamber colleagues from the start. A career-expert may be more adept at anticipating and addressing potential political and practical obstacles to policy change, allowing them to more efficiently move their bills through the

[2]The evidence regarding the impact of co-sponsorship on a bill's success is mixed (e.g., Wilson and Young 1997). However, Bernhard and Sulkin (2013) propose that a higher number of co-sponsors may signify a stronger commitment to support the bill during final passage votes, while Kessler and Krehbiel (1996) argue that higher-quality bills tend to attract more co-sponsors compared to lower-quality ones. Holman, Mahoney, and Hurler (2022) find that, in state legislatures, women who cosponsor with other women are more successful, and Arnold, Deen, and Patterson (2000) find that Ohio state legislators who shared committee assignments were more likely to vote together as were those who considered themselves friends.

[3]Future research should examine the complexity of a bill's language and the extent to which the bill proposes to alter existing law, with the hypothesis that career-experts craft more technical legislation than their non-expert counterparts.

various stages of the legislative process.

Bills authored by career-experts may also be granted more deference by colleagues than those written by non-experts. This deference is rooted in the trust and respect that legislators have for their colleagues' expertise; respect is crucial to cue giving and cue taking and is not evenly distributed within a legislature, stemming "more from expertise than from affect" (Caldeira, Clark, and Patterson 1993, p. 15). For instance, Mooney (1991) finds that state legislators cite their colleagues as their most used and trusted source of information when deciding whether to support a bill. This reliance is echoed in a survey of Michigan state lawmakers:

> One senior legislator acknowledged that he could not become well informed on matters in areas outside of his own specialty but then pointed out: "It isn't necessary to do this. I have a high opinion of my colleagues in their specialties and there are a few whose integrity I trust. When I am not well informed I vote with members whose judgment I respect, who could explain it to me if we had time. I buy their conclusions, not their data." (Porter 1974, p. 710)

This deference extends to the use of various forms of communication and persuasion. Zwier (1979) finds that policy specialist lawmakers rely on a broader range of policy research than non-specialists, who tend to depend more heavily on evidence from colleagues and staffers.[4] The need for technical expertise further underscores the importance of career-experts. In a survey of state lawmakers on their need for technical expertise, a Kentucky lawmaker noted, "There's a realization... that nothing is really more important than having good technical information. And if you have good technical information, you can control policymaking" (Guston, Jones, and Branscomb 1997, p. 454). This sentiment reflects the high regard in which expert lawmakers are held and the significant influence they wield in the legislative process.

> ***H1:*** *Bills written by career-expert lawmakers in their area of expertise are more likely to receive a vote in committee and on the floor of the bill's chamber of origin*

[4]Similarly, Box-Steffensmeier, Christenson, and Craig (2019) highlight the effectiveness of "Dear Colleague" letters in Congress as tools for promoting interest group support for a lawmaker's bill to her colleagues, persuading them of the bill's merits, and ensuring it progresses through the legislative pipeline.

than bills written by non-expert authors. Conditional on a vote being held, the votes will be more favorable for bills authored by career-experts than for those authored by non-experts.

The Institutional Advantage of Committee Membership

I also expect that when a committee member writes a bill pertaining to committee business, that bill will be more likely to come up for a vote in committee and on the floor of the chamber of origin for several reasons: First, committee members have a deeper understanding of the legislative process and the specific subject matter of their committee (Hall 1987). This insider knowledge allows them to draft bills that are more aligned with the priorities and norms of the committee, increasing the likelihood that their bills will be scheduled for a vote.[5]

Second, as active participants in the committee, members have a direct influence on the committee's agenda. They can strategically champion their own bills during discussions and voting, thereby assisting these bills in navigating what Krutz (2005) calls "winnowing," or the initial processing of a bill where committee or chamber leaders decide which bills warrant meaningful consideration and which are unlikely to progress further. This strategic advantage is less accessible to non-committee members, who must rely on external advocacy and negotiation to get their bills considered. Furthermore, their daily interactions with other committee members and leadership positions often place them in influential roles that facilitate the progression of their bills through the legislative stages. Committee members frequently collaborate on legislation, co-sponsoring bills and lending their expertise to refine proposals, and this interpersonal connection may in turn facilitate legislative success (Curry and Roberts 2022).

If a bill authored by a committee member is brought for a vote, I expect that the vote share will be more favorable than that of bills authored by non-committee members. Like

[5] Crosson et al. (2018) also demonstrate the value of experienced legislative staff, particularly for committee chairs who can attract highly knowledgeable support staff, and for freshman congressmen, whose inexperience can be mitigated by investing in expert staffers, for advancing more legislation and more significant legislation at that.

career-experts, committee members are often perceived as subject matter experts in their respective fields, which may lend credibility to their bills. Other lawmakers, trusting the committee members' judgment, may be inclined to vote 'aye' on their bills, believing that they are well-considered. Further, committee membership may encourage lawmakers to engage in reciprocal voting, where legislators support each other's bills as a part of mutual agreements and political favors within and between committees.

> ***H2:*** *Bills written by committee members on committee-related policies are more likely to receive a vote in committee and on the floor of the bill's chamber of origin than bills written by non-committee members. Conditional on a vote being held, the votes will be more favorable for bills authored by committee members than for those authored by non-members.*

The Combined Value of Career-Committee Congruence

Lastly, I posit that the combined influence of career-committee alignment will be significant. Francis and Bramlett (2017) demonstrate that members of Congress aligned with their career expertise and committee assignments are more prone to introduce legislation in their primary policy domains. Similarly, Volden and Wiseman (2014) reveal that tailoring one's legislative agenda to align with institutional roles leads to notable improvements in legislative effectiveness scores, potentially attributable to a blend of specialization, perseverance, and institutional leverage.

In terms of specialization, expertise gained through both career experience and committee membership lends credibility to a lawmaker's proposals, making them more convincing to fellow lawmakers, other committee members, and external stakeholders. Accordingly, bills authored by these individuals may be seen as more legitimate, having been vetted by individuals with firsthand knowledge of the relevant issues and the institutional encouragement to address such matters. Regarding perseverance, aligning one's legislative priorities with career expertise and committee assignments often requires a sustained effort to navigate complex legislative processes. This persistence demonstrates a lawmaker's commitment to their

policy objectives. They may invest more effort and energy into crafting promising policy in their area of expertise and committee assignment because they are genuinely dedicated to making a significant impact in these domains.

Furthermore, these career-experts are strategically positioned as leaders and authorities in their respective policy areas, which not only elevates the visibility of their bills but also grants them the authority to prioritize lawmaking in these policy domains. They are empowered by leaders of their party to set the agenda, leveraging their expertise and committee assignments to shape legislation in line with their policy objectives. This dual specialization enhances the perceived importance of their bills and relevance within the legislative agenda. Consequently, these bills are more likely to be prioritized for consideration and receive greater support from fellow lawmakers and committee members.

> ***H3:*** *Bills crafted by career-committee congruent members within their area of expertise are more likely to secure a vote in committee and on the floor of the bill's originating chamber compared to legislation authored by their counterparts. Conditional on a vote being held, bills authored by career-committee congruent members will receive more favorable votes than those authored by individuals lacking relevant occupational expertise or committee membership.*

The Case for California

California is an ideal case for studying career-committee congruence, bill sponsorship, and bill survival for several reasons: In Chapter 1 of this dissertation, I find that Democrats are particularly predisposed to assign career-experts to relevant policy committees. This tendency may be driven either by member demand or by the majority party's strategy to position its lawmakers in roles where they can craft high-quality policy in their areas of expertise. Furthermore, in Chapter 2, I show that these career-experts and committee members are notably more enterprising within their areas of expertise or policy concentration, introducing more bills in these domains than their non-expert and non-committee member counterparts.

As the most professionalized legislature in the nation, competition for plenary time and state resources is exceptionally high in California. With adequate salaries, support staff, and a lengthy legislative session, lawmakers can fully dedicate themselves to crafting and enacting legislation. Volden and Wiseman (2014) demonstrate that congressional lawmakers promoted from more professionalized state legislatures are more legislatively effective than those from less-professionalized bodies. In terms of institutional characteristics, term limits in California create a similar imperative for legislators to be proactive and productive during their limited time in office. Unlike in other states where legislators may serve indefinitely, term limits may compel California lawmakers to make meaningful contributions to legislation and policymaking within a constrained timeframe.[6]

Furthermore, term limits ensure consistent turnover of personnel, facilitating the influx of new ideas and, crucially for my research, a diversity of occupational experts in and out of the legislature. Term limits also prevent lawmakers from acquiring extensive policy expertise over time; if lawmakers are not allowed to stay in the legislature for more than 12 years total, they are limited in the amount of policy specialization they can acquire from direct legislative experience. Consequently, legislators may rely more heavily on their colleagues' prior occupational expertise and committee positions as cues for forming opinions on the major policy debates of the day.

Practically speaking, the transparency of California's legislative process, with comprehensive data on bill sponsorship, committee membership, legislators' occupational backgrounds, and voting records, provides a significant advantage for this kind of research. For example, both chambers require roll call voting in standing committees and on the respective chamber floors. As California is ahead of many other less professionalized states in terms of its

[6]Even if bill introductions serve primarily as symbolic acts of position-taking, they still impact a lawmaker's ability to introduce additional bills due to imposed limits. California senators are limited to introducing 40 bills per two-year session, and assemblymembers are limited to 50 bills per two-year session. These limits do not change in the 10 years under study, though there have been legislative efforts, especially by Republican lawmakers, to even further curtail introductions (Sanchez 2024). Moreover, to advance the conversation within a specific policy area, it is still essential to ensure that the bill is heard and considered in committee and on the chamber floor. Given the multitude of technical ways to kill a bill, a bill that is dead on arrival hardly moves the conversation forward, sets a new legislative agenda, or serves as a legitimate credit-claiming effort in a low-salience state political environment.

digitization of records, if there is an influence of career expertise and committee membership on bill advancement and survival, it is likely to be found within this state legislature.

Research Design and Methods

To investigate the influence of occupational expertise and committee membership on bill support in the CA State Legislature, I collected data on all Assembly and Senate Bills introduced from the 2011-2012 legislative session through the 2019-2020 session. This timeframe excludes periods marked by exceptional circumstances such as the Great Recession and the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, characterized by heightened demands on legislators' attention, unconventional business proceedings, and unusual budgetary circumstances. Bill data is derived from the California Legislature's website. After filtering out bills classified as ceremonial using the Volden and Wiseman (2014) schema (see Chapter 2), the dataset comprised 21,267 bills across 5 sessions (see Table 1).

Table 1: Distribution of ABs and SBs Introduced, 2011-2020

Session-Year	# of ABs	# of SBs
2011-2012	2,578	1,462
2013-2014	2,586	1,352
2015-2016	2,766	1,390
2017-2018	3,119	1,371
2019-2020	3,298	1,345

I categorized each bill's topic by utilizing the Assembly and Senate Rules Committees' referral system. A bill was designated as primarily concerning a specific policy area based on the initial substantive policy committee to which it was referred by Rules. Out of these bills, 6,378 failed to progress in Rules and were never formally referred to a substantive policy committee. Only in 17 instances did the first policy committee recommend re-referral to a different policy committee, resulting in a total of 14,872 ABs and SBs undergoing policy committee action.

Following this, I narrowed the dataset to bills relating to committees where lawmakers' occupational expertise was most readily identified, as indicated by their biographies provided in the annually-published *Joint Legislative Handbook*. This process resulted in 8,309 bills remaining across 8 substantive policy areas: agriculture, education, health, insurance, local government, public safety, transportation, and veterans affairs (see Table 2).

Table 2: Career-Committee Congruence in the CA State Legislature

Committee	Committee Type (Shugart et al. 2021)	Relevant Career	# of Bills
Agriculture	Distributive	Farmer, Agribusinessman	179
Education	Public Goods	Educator, School Administrator	2,198
Health	Public Goods	Medical Professional	1,538
Insurance	Public Goods	Insurer	355
Local Government*	Administrative	Local Government Official	582
Public Safety	Administrative	Law Enforcement Official	1,969
Transportation+	Distributive	Transit Professional	1,333
Veterans Affairs=	Public Goods	Veteran	155

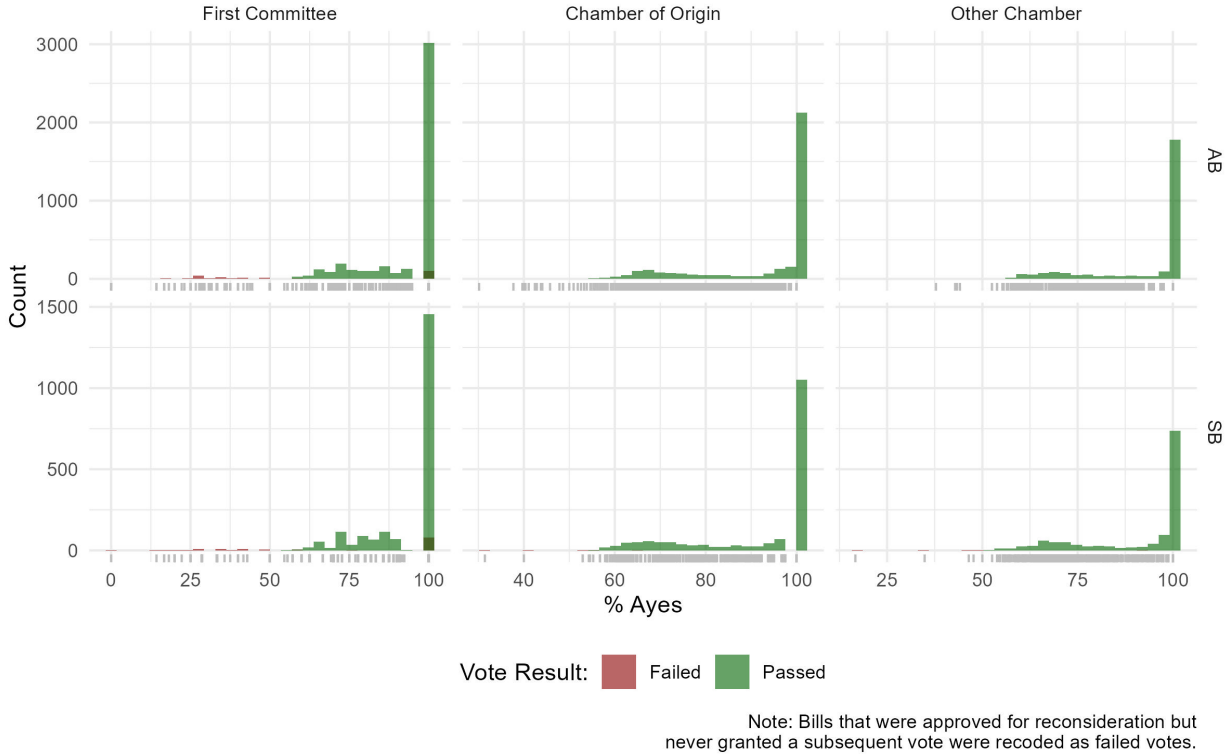
* Committee exists only in the Assembly.
+ Committee is combined with "Housing" in the Senate.
= Committee is called "Military and Veterans Affairs" in the Assembly.

In my 2-stage Heckman selection model, I employ a probit model to estimate the propensity of a bill to receive a vote in committee and an OLS regression to predict the percentage of 'ayes' a vote garners from committee members as a total of all votes cast. This process is then repeated for bills that advance to the floor of their chamber of origin before being transmitted to the other chamber. Finally, I predicted, conditional on the AB or SB receiving a floor vote in the other chamber, the percentage of 'ayes' the bill secures in that floor vote.

Utilizing the 'ayes' as a percentage of total votes cast (excluding abstentions) provides a straightforward measure to evaluate bill support in committee and on a chamber floor.[7] The distributions of 'ayes' and 'noes' within first-reference policy committees, on the floor

[7] I also re-ran these models using 'ayes' as a percentage of the total votes cast, including abstentions. The direction of the key variables does not vary much with this alternative specification, though the magnitude of the effects is smaller.

Figure 1: Distribution of Votes in First Votes Taken, 2011-2020



of the chamber of origin, and the floor of the other chamber are depicted in Figure 1 with accompanying rug plots.[8]

These vote distributions suggest that bills reaching the voting phase at a certain stage in the legislative pipeline rarely fail. This low roll rate is commonly attributed to committee and party leaders possessing a solid grasp of the bill's likely success and leveraging this private knowledge to focus on bills with potential majority support among committee or chamber members. However, these figures also reveal significant variation in bill support and opposition both in committee and on the chamber floors. Many bills pass with just over the (usually) required 50% + 1 vote to advance out of committee or off the chamber

[8]The raw 'ayes' and 'noes' per vote may be found in the appendix. For many votes taken, especially on the chamber floors, abstentions are more common than noes (as a % of votes cast) in final roll call votes (see appendix). This suggests that opponents to a bill's final passage are often discouraged from openly voicing their disapproval and instead rely on abstentions to communicate dissension. However, this is not a problem for this analysis because typically, the ultimate passage of a vote depends on the 'ayes' and 'noes' cast and does not include the number of abstentions registered as part of the denominator in determining the will of the majority.

floor, but the final passage vote out of committee or the bill's chamber of origin is far from unanimous.[9] These distributions further affirm the rationale for a 2-stage Heckman selection model, where the probability of a vote is initially calculated, followed by predicting the bill's support in that vote.[10]

There are two main independent variables in the models that relate to a bill's primary author.[11] First, a measure of the primary author's membership on the standing committee to which the bill is initially referred [0, 1]. Second, a measure of the primary author's occupational expertise related to that standing committee's policy portfolio (refer to Table 2 for precise career-committee congruence matches). Table 3 presents an overview of the number of authors in a given policy space and, among those authors, the number who are career-experts in that field but not on the relevant committee, non-expert committee members, or career-expert committee members.

Table 3: Career Expertise and Committee Membership Across Select Policy Areas

Bill Topic	# of Unique Bill Authors	# of Career-Expert Authors	# of Committee Member Authors	# of Career-Expert Committee Authors
Agriculture	87	3	19	7
Education	266	59	24	24
Health	257	16	56	11
Insurance	143	0	43	2
Local Govt.	169	36	18	11
Public Safety	263	25	33	4
Transportation	274	17	64	13
Veterans Affairs	80	5	19	10

[9] As mentioned before, bills that pass in committee and on the chamber floor receive far more abstentions than noes (as a % of votes cast) in final roll call votes. This suggests that opponents to a bill's final passage are often discouraged from openly voicing their disapproval and instead rely on abstentions to communicate dissension.

[10] I also conducted a mixed Heckman model (not depicted), where the selection equation predicts the probability of a vote occurring, and the outcome equation predicts the probability of the bill's passage. However, due to the infrequency of bill failure, the results were inconclusive.

[11] A bill may have more than one co-author from either chamber, but it will only have a single "primary author" who introduces the bill. In Chapter 2, I investigate the rate at which career-experts and committee members attract (or repel) colleagues to their bills. I found that career-experts are slightly more protective of their bills at first introduction and tend to have 1-2 fewer co-authors on bills where they are experts compared to their non-expert colleagues.

Notice that while primary bill authorship is spread among members in the sessions under study, committee membership among authors is more prevalent than relevant occupational expertise. Given the well-documented benefits of committee membership to legislative entrepreneurship and efficacy, this study is particularly interested in those rarer cases where members either (1) possess occupational knowledge of policy in a given field or (2) possess this expertise *and* are empowered by the committee system.

The model includes several control variables concerning a bill's author: the author's partisanship,[12] gender,[13] race,[14] term-limited status,[15] and whether they are a chamber or party leader.[16] Additionally, a measure for the number of co-authors a bill has at introduction is included,[17] along with whether the bill has been flagged as warranting attention from the Appropriations Committee.[18] Lastly, I include committee fixed effects and session-year fixed effects in the analyses. Additional descriptive statistics may be found in the appendix.

[12]I anticipate that Democrats, as members of the state's supermajority, will author bills that are more likely to receive a vote in committee or on the chamber floor and to see those bills garner greater support compared to those authored by the few Independents or Republicans remaining in the time under study.

[13]Volden, Wiseman, and Wittmer (2013) theorize that women may experience more legislative success than men due to their willingness to build coalitions and introduce more legislation than their male colleagues, though these results vary by majority party status and with the polarization of the chamber.

[14]I operationalize race as a binary variable of POC and White, though future work should examine differences between racial/ethnic minority groups.

[15]Existing literature on the impact of term limits on legislative effectiveness is mixed. On the one hand, term-limited lawmakers have been shown to introduce fewer bills, which I find in Chapter 1; spend less time legislating; and pass fewer bills, possibly due to their shifting focus towards life after the legislature (Cain and Kousser 2004). On the other hand, a termed-out lawmaker, particularly one with occupational expertise or accumulated committee experience, may be incentivized to prioritize bills that promote their future career goals.

[16]I expect that chamber and party leaders will have a higher likelihood of securing votes behind closed doors and on the chamber floor compared to non-officers as they possess the political influence necessary to advance their bills through the legislative process. Additionally, I expect that bills sponsored by these officers will receive greater support in these votes, as they are likely to craft legislation that aligns with the majority's priorities, given their understanding of the ideological landscape of the chamber.

[17]I hypothesize that as the number of co-authors on a bill increases, so too will the probability of a vote and the voting support given to the bill. Co-authorship does not count toward a lawmaker's bill introduction limit and is thus relatively costless to the co-author. However, it carries significance for the bill's primary author and signals broader backing, which may pressure committee or chamber leadership to prioritize the bill when setting the legislative calendar.

[18]Joint Rule 10.5 of the Legislature's joint rules mandates that bills appropriating money, resulting in significant state expenditure or revenue changes, or substantially altering existing state responsibilities are referred to the Appropriations Committees, not including budget bills. These Appropriations-flagged bills face tougher paths to a vote and 'aye' support due to their financial impact, warranting heightened scrutiny by fiscal committees in both chambers.

Committee Membership Facilitate Votes, Career-Expert Committee Members Garner More Approval

Do career-expert committee members outperform their non-expert counterparts and experts lacking committee influence? In Chapter 2, I found that both career-experts and committee members directed more bill introductions toward their committee portfolios and professional domains. However, while these traits fostered initiative, they did not always ensure a bill's success, as many bills perish, particularly in committee or on the dreaded Suspense Day.

In the subsequent analysis, I adopt a more generous approach to legislative effectiveness, assessing how career expertise and committee membership influence the likelihood of a bill receiving votes in committee, in its originating chamber, and on the floor of the other chamber. Further, I explore whether bills authored by career-experts and committee members are more likely to receive backing from their colleagues during roll call votes. I find that while committee membership is a significant factor in determining whether a bill even receives a vote, the combination of committee membership and career expertise notably enhances the level of support for the bill in votes taken.

Voting Outcomes in First Policy Committee in Chamber of Origin

First, I examine bill voting in halls of legislative proceedings that are often overlooked: specifically, the initial policy committee to which a bill is referred in its chamber of origin. The results of this exercise can be seen in Table 4 for both ABs and SBs in committees. Notably, a substantial number of bills never see a committee vote at all—roughly 22 percent of ABs and 17 percent of SBs fail to be put up for a vote in the policy committee to which they are first referred. While Figure 1 shows us that most committee votes taken result in the bill's passage from the committee setting, there is still substantial variation in the support or opposition that a bill garners behind closed doors.

When it comes to receiving a vote, a bill is more likely to be brought to a vote in its

first policy committee if the bill's author is a committee member than if the author is not affiliated with the committee to which it is initially referred. There is no additional advantage for bills authored by career-experts or by committee members who are also career-experts. Specifically in the Assembly, the marginal effect of being a committee member (as opposed to a non-member) translates to a 5.32 percentage-point increase in the probability of a vote taking place when moving from not being a committee member to being one, assuming all other variables in the model are held constant. However, this result is specific to the Assembly and does not extend to the Senate.

Further, Table 4 illustrates that career expertise alone has a negative impact on bill support (-1.268 percentage points in 'aye' votes) in the final passage vote out of the first policy committee. However, a career-expert who is also on the committee experiences a positive improvement in the bill's support in committee of +3.131 percentage points in 'aye' votes. This suggests that career-expertise is only beneficial for voting outcomes when channeled through the committee system as career-committee congruent-authored bills see an improvement of 1.863 percentage-points in 'aye' votes. Assembly committees have, on average, 11.5 seats, so this equates to a very slight difference of just 0.2 additional votes, and this phenomenon is not observed in Senate committees.[19]

Career-Expert Committee Members See Boosted Floor Support in Chamber of Origin

In Table 5, we observe once again that when a bill's author serves on the policy committee to which the bill is first referred, there is a slightly improved probability of the bill being brought up for an eventual vote. This corresponds to a marginal effect of approximately 4.598 additional percentage points ($p < 0.05$) in the likelihood of a bill receiving a vote compared to a bill written by a non-committee member. Again, we also observe that career expertise has a slightly negative influence on a bill's vote during its initial consideration on

[19] Assembly committees range in size from 6 seats (Asm. Public Safety) to a high of 19 seats (Asm. Health) in the committees under study.

Table 4: Voting Outcomes in First Policy Committee in Chamber of Origin

	ABs in Committee		*SBs in Committee*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
Career-Expert	0.023	−1.268*	−0.060	0.112
	(0.057)	(0.713)	(0.104)	(1.256)
Committee Member	0.185***	−1.110	0.113	0.562
	(0.054)	(1.422)	(0.077)	(1.411)
Career-Expert Committee Member	−0.127	3.131**	0.030	0.395
	(0.096)	(1.389)	(0.148)	(1.514)
IMR		−35.470**		−7.341
		(17.094)		(29.915)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓
Committee FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Session-Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	5,596	4,340	2,607	2,162
R^2		0.974		0.978
Log Likelihood	-2,869.689		-1,124.983	
Residual Std. Error		14.952 (df = 4322)		13.823 (df = 2146)

*Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01*

the Assembly floor.

When assessing the outcomes of these bill votes, career expertise and committee membership on their own appear to depress bill support on the Assembly floor. However, when combined, this voting disadvantage is nearly overcome, especially for committee members. On their own, committee members see a decrease of nearly 5 percentage points in vote support on the Assembly floor. Still, in combination with expertise, a career-committee congruent member sees this decrease drop to just 1.4 percentage points. In a body of 80 lawmakers, this difference equates to roughly 3 votes.

These findings suggest that while committee membership is a promising predictor of a bill receiving a vote, authors who oversee their bills' progression through the committee stage and are regarded as professional experts in the relevant field tend to attract more support for their bills. This could be attributed to various factors such as the inherent quality of the bill, proactive promotion efforts among chamber colleagues, or greater trust among lawmakers due to the author's perceived expertise in the subject matter.

Bill Authors Exhibit Limited Influence Over Voting in the Other Chamber

Lastly, as perhaps the most distant test for the theory, bills that survive their chamber of origin face a steeper uphill battle in the opposite chamber. In the sample, only 45% of ABs introduced ever see a first vote on the Senate floor, and only 48% of SBs introduced ever see a first vote in the Assembly. However, despite the fact that bills ultimately calendared for a vote in the other chamber rarely fail, there is still substantial variation in support for the bills that do pass (see Figure 1 above).

Examining Table 6, belonging to the policy committee in the bill's chamber of origin to which the bill is first referred is weakly beneficial for the bill's likelihood of receiving a vote on the floor of the other chamber.[20] The other key variables in the Assembly model, and

[20]Note: This model does not examine whether the bill receives a vote in the opposite chamber's sister committee. There are several reasons for this exclusion. Firstly, not all Assembly committees have perfect

Table 5: Voting Outcomes on the Floor of the Chamber of Origin

	ABs on Assembly Floor		*SBs on Senate Floor*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
Career-Expert	0.006	-1.925^{***}	-0.057	-0.824
	(0.052)	(0.674)	(0.093)	(1.374)
Committee Member	0.236^{***}	-4.939^{*}	0.017	-0.577
	(0.049)	(2.801)	(0.066)	(0.848)
Career-Expert Committee Member	-0.150^{*}	5.484^{***}	0.168	1.982
	(0.087)	(1.983)	(0.130)	(2.437)
IMR		-28.951		28.095
		(21.400)		(22.383)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓
Committee FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Session-Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	5,596	3,293	2,607	1,700
R^2		0.982		0.980
Log Likelihood	-3,597.675		-1,540.005	
Residual Std. Error		12.538 (df = 3275)		13.248 (df = 1684)

Note: $^{*}p<0.1$; $^{**}p<0.05$; $^{***}p<0.01$

the key variables in the Senate model, are not statistically significant. Again, a lawmaker is unlikely to have much lobbying power or sway in the other chamber. They are neither in an institutional position to shepherd the bill through the committee stage and onto the chamber floor, nor do they possess any additional voting power to encourage the chamber leadership to schedule the bill for a vote. Additionally, they lack the capacity for log-rolling to encourage a lawmaker in the other chamber to vote reciprocally. It is, perhaps, a tribute to the theory that career expertise, exercised in committee and on the floor of the chamber of origin, stops at the chamber doors. Future iterations of this work should investigate whether attracting colleagues in the other chamber who sit on the relevant policy committees or have the relevant occupational expertise (or both) benefits a bill's ultimate advancement once it leaves its chamber of origin.

Exploring Voting Outcomes in Highly-Active Policy Domains

Earlier, I delved into voting patterns across eight significant policy domains, chosen for their apparent alignment with committees' jurisdictions and lawmakers' professional backgrounds. Now, I turn to a deeper analysis of the relationship between committee membership, career expertise, and bill-voting behavior in the dataset's four most active policy realms: education, health, public safety, and transportation. Each of these committees saw over 1,000 bills referred to them by the Rules Committees of their respective chambers during the 5 sessions under study, indicating high demand for legislation in these policy spheres. While many legislators seek to affect change in these areas, the committee system empowers only a select few; even fewer have pertinent occupational backgrounds that may aid in crafting high-quality drafts and garnering support from colleagues. In these four highly-active policy

sister committees in the Senate. Additionally, when a bill is transmitted to the other chamber, the bill's primary author in the chamber of origin is encouraged to attend the bill's hearings and votes. However, they have limited institutional authority over the bill's survival in the other chamber, which is a key difference in the theory.

Table 6: Voting Outcomes on the Floor of the Other Chamber

	ABs on Senate Floor		*SBs on Assembly Floor*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
Career-Expert	−0.058	−0.493	−0.062	−0.267
	(0.052)	(1.708)	(0.091)	(2.560)
Committee Member	0.166***	1.722	−0.042	−2.066
	(0.047)	(4.284)	(0.064)	(1.746)
Career-Expert Committee Member	−0.056	−0.606	0.099	0.549
	(0.085)	(1.774)	(0.125)	(3.955)
IMR		13.390		2.517
		(40.660)		(56.623)
Committee FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Session-Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	5,596	2,539	2,607	1,605
R^2		0.982		0.978
Log Likelihood	-3,720.708		-1,712.117	
Residual Std. Error		12.587 (df = 2521)		13.644 (df = 1266)

*Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01*

domains, I anticipate that committee membership, career expertise, and their interplay will significantly influence a bill's journey through the legislative process, from committee vote to chamber floor and across the capital to the other chamber.

Career-Expertise *and* Committee Membership Greatly Improve Bill Support in the Assembly

In the most active policy spaces in the sample in the Assembly and Senate—education, health, public safety, and transportation—we observe in Table 7 that committee membership enhances the likelihood that the committee will bring the bill up for a vote (by approximately +6.294 percentage points, $p < 0.005$) compared to bills introduced by non-committee members). Furthermore, the negative impact of career expertise on bill support is again overcome by the career expert's belonging to a relevant committee to which their bill is referred. For instance, an educator who has been excluded from Assembly Education will see a 2 percentage-point decrease in support for her bill compared to an educator sitting on Assembly Education, whose bill sees a 2 percentage-point increase in support. These trends are not replicated in the Senate but mirror the magnitude of the results observed when the model is applied to all 8 substantive policy committees.

The results of the models focusing on the most active policy areas reaffirm that committee membership plays a pivotal role in advancing bills to the chamber floor (see Table 8), with a notable increase in the likelihood of a vote by approximately +9.074 percentage points ($p < 0.05$). However, the most compelling and robust findings emerge from Assembly Bills (ABs) reaching the floor for a vote. Among the 4,500 ABs introduced across five legislative sessions in highly contested policy domains, 57 percent proceed to a vote in the Assembly.

In Assembly floor votes, ABs authored by career experts excluded from a relevant policy committee attract approximately 4 percentage-points less support, or an average of 3 fewer votes, compared to bills authored by non-expert non-committee members. The penalty is even steeper for bills authored by committee members, who see a 16 percentage-point

Table 7: Voting on Bills in First Policy Committee in Highly-Active Policy Spaces

	ABs in Committee		*SBs in Committee*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
Career-Expert	0.059	−1.934**	−0.061	−0.261
	(0.064)	(0.966)	(0.105)	(1.303)
Committee Member	0.174***	−1.346	0.084	0.578
	(0.061)	(1.678)	(0.082)	(1.242)
Career-Expert Committee Member	−0.128	3.741**	0.093	1.011
	(0.107)	(1.662)	(0.154)	(1.866)
IMR		−37.193*		4.770
		(21.622)		(31.987)
Committee FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Session-Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	4,558	3,551	2,397	1,987
R^2		0.973		0.977
Log Likelihood	-2,324.873		-1,028.148	
Residual Std. Error		15.457 (df = 3537)		14.183 (df = 1974)

*Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01*

decrease in support on the chamber floor, equivalent to as many as 13 fewer 'aye' votes than bills introduced by non-committee members. However, in combination, this effect is mitigated: Career-committee congruent members only see a penalty of approximately 6 percentage points in vote support, earning back approximately 5 votes on average in a vote consisting of a full 80 voting members.

Perhaps unexpectedly, Senate Bills authored by senators whose occupational background aligns with the bill's content and who sit on the policy committee related to said content are more likely to proceed to a vote in the Senate compared to bills authored solely by committee members, career-experts, or senators not falling into either category. This translates to a marginal effect of approximately +8.569 percentage points ($p < 0.1$) greater likelihood of receiving a Senate floor vote. However, the key model variables do not significantly influence the overall outcome of the Senate floor vote.

Author Influence is Limited on the Floor of the Other Chamber

Finally, when predicting the likelihood of a bill receiving a vote in the other chamber or the vote share in that chamber (see Table 9), the only meaningful key variable is whether the author was a committee member on the first committee to which the bill was referred in its chamber of origin. Perhaps this speaks to the importance of an author being in a unique institutional position to encourage members of the other chamber to take up the bill, but the boost in probability is again modest +5.523 percentage points ($p < 0.05$), as before, and should not be over-emphasized.

Discussion

In this study, I investigated the impact of committee membership and career expertise on the legislative success of bills in California's two chambers, particularly focusing on a bill's likelihood of receiving a vote and the level of support it garners. The findings offer significant insights into the dynamics of legislative behavior and the influence of primary author char-

Table 8: Voting on Bills in First Floor Visit in Chamber of Origin in Highly-Active Policy Spaces

	ABs on Assembly Floor		*SBs on Senate Floor*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
Career-Expert	0.035	-3.942^{***}	-0.068	0.568
	(0.058)	(1.014)	(0.094)	(1.799)
Committee Member	0.239^{***}	-15.971^{***}	-0.035	-0.657
	(0.055)	(4.258)	(0.070)	(1.127)
Career-Expert Committee Member	-0.168^{*}	13.834^{***}	0.242^{*}	-2.000
	(0.096)	(3.183)	(0.134)	(4.811)
IMR		-103.833^{***}		-15.655
		(31.656)		(37.462)
Committee FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Session-Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	4,558	2,618	2,397	1,542
R^2		0.982		0.978
Log Likelihood	-2,952.860		-1,420.332	
Residual Std. Error		12.668 (df = 2604)		13.568 (df = 1529)

Note: $^{*}p<0.1$; $^{**}p<0.05$; $^{***}p<0.01$

Table 9: Voting on Bills in First Floor Visit in Other Chamber in Highly-Active Policy Spaces

	ABs on Senate Floor		*SBs on Assembly Floor*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
Career-Expert	−0.044	2.399	−0.075	−0.300
	(0.057)	(2.134)	(0.092)	(3.101)
Committee Member	0.146***	−9.633	−0.080	−2.728
	(0.053)	(6.480)	(0.068)	(3.218)
Career-Expert Committee Member	0.003	0.849	0.147	0.878
	(0.094)	(1.423)	(0.129)	(5.871)
IMR		−94.740		−2.601
		(68.243)		(60.064)
Committee FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Session-Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	4,558	1,982	2,397	1,164
R^2		0.982		0.977
Log Likelihood	-3,017.676		-1,571.178	
Residual Std. Error		12.646 (df = 1968)		13.938 (df = 1151)

*Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01*

acteristics on bill progression and support. However, the core results are primarily drawn from the more populous Assembly, where there are more committees, greater diversity in occupational expertise, greater competition for finite plenary time, and lawmakers face a higher ceiling on the number of bills (50) they can introduce in a given session.

One of the primary findings, consistent with the literature (e.g., Francis and Bramlett 2017), is that committee membership substantially increases the probability of a bill being brought to a vote in the first policy committee to which it is referred. Additionally, committee membership boosts the likelihood of the bill receiving a vote on the floor of its chamber of origin. This underscores the critical role that committee membership plays in navigating the legislative process, allowing bill authors to leverage their institutional positions to ensure their proposals receive due consideration and decrease the likelihood they are dead on arrival.

Contrary to my expectations, the authorship of a bill by a career-expert outside of the committee context seems to have little influence on the likelihood of the bill being brought to a vote in committee or on the floor of its originating chamber. Initially, I hypothesized that bills authored by career-experts might be of higher quality compared to those penned by non-experts, all else being equal, and consequently, be more likely to be taken seriously in both committee deliberations and by the chamber at large. However, this does not appear to be the case. Instead, a bill authored by an assemblymember with occupational expertise related to the bill's subject matter alone appears to slightly depress the percentage of 'aye' votes the bill receives, both in committee and on the floor of its chamber of origin. Potential explanations for this phenomenon could include perceived bias associated with the primary author or heightened scrutiny received by these bills at both stages of the legislative process. Colleagues may scrutinize such bills more closely, suspecting that the author's private professional knowledge might result in a biased or self-serving legislative proposal. Likewise, career-expert authors who are left off a pertinent committee may face skepticism regarding their expertise or impartiality, leading to increased scrutiny from other lawmakers during committee deliberations and floor votes.

However, when career expertise is combined with committee membership (i.e., when career-committee congruence is achieved), the negative impact observed from career expertise alone is dampened. While committee membership alone drives a bill's likelihood of being brought to a vote, a bill author's career-committee congruence predicts greater support in both committee votes and floor votes in the bill's chamber of origin. This alignment of a member's professional background with their empowerment via the committee system appears to modestly benefit the lawmaker's proposal; a career-committee congruent member will see an additional 0.2 committee 'aye' votes and 3 'aye' floor votes on their bill than an expert not on the committee. This benefit is likely attributed to the unique position these lawmakers hold within the legislative process. By leveraging their expertise effectively *within* the committee system, they can influence the framing of discussions, shape policy deliberations, and provide insights that resonate with their colleagues, thereby garnering greater support for their proposals over others in the same policy space.

The most compelling findings emerge from the analysis of the four most active policy areas in the dataset-education, health, transportation, and public safety-which each saw 1,000 or more bills first referred to them over five legislative sessions. In these policy domains, the dynamics of author characteristics and bill support are particularly pronounced: Committee members without career expertise experience significantly less support for their bills than non-members. This indicates that an author's committee membership alone, without the backing of relevant expertise, results in a bill's due consideration by a committee or on the chamber floor but is insufficient for garnering additional support in roll call voting.

Meanwhile, career experts who have been excluded from relevant committees can also expect less support for their bills on the Assembly floor compared to non-experts. Yet, committee membership serves as a legitimizing force for these professionals; committee members who are also career experts can expect to earn as much as 10 percentage-points more support than career experts who are not on the same committee, or nearly 8 more votes on the Assembly floor in an 80-member roll call vote. This finding highlights the value of career-

committee congruence; whereas a career-expert lawmaker might be met with skepticism by her colleagues, a career-committee congruent lawmaker's dual roles seem to enhance her credibility and influence.

Lastly, career expertise and committee membership seem to have muted effects on Senate Bills. In a chamber designed to be more deliberative,[21] bills may undergo more substantive changes in committees and through amendments on the chamber floor. Senators may also have more time to dedicate to bill writing and debate, allowing them to make independent voting decisions without relying as heavily on occupational and committee cues as assemblymembers do. Further, SBs tend to be referred to a greater number of unique committees on average than ABs (3.1 unique committees vs. 2.9 unique committees) and visit these committees more frequently; SBs make an average of three more committee visits than ABs. This increased committee involvement creates more opportunities for bills to be altered, limiting the influence of a career-expert or committee member author if there are many opportunities for an SB to be modified beyond the author's immediate sphere of influence.

Conclusion

For this research, I have limited my focus to committees where occupational expertise is more obvious and distinct, such as former teachers serving on education policy committees. However, I have set aside some of the less well-defined but more prevalent occupational backgrounds, like careers in business and, most commonly, law. These prominent professions can be useful for authorship in a number of different policy areas and strengthen a lawmaker's bid to join any number of standing committees. However, at present, most lawmakers just identify themselves as businessmen or lawyers in their member biographies in the *Joint Legislative Handbooks*. A more nuanced measure of occupational expertise—e.g., types of

[21] For example, Senate Rule 35 establishes that there are no predetermined limits on the number of speakers per measure or the allotted time per speaker during floor debates, whereas Assembly Rule 108 generally limits debate time to 10 minutes per member per bill unless granted additional time by the Speaker or an Assembly motion.

businesses owned or law specialties practiced——would greatly strengthen this analysis.

Additionally, thus far, I have treated occupational expertise as a singularly productive characteristic and have not considered that sometimes a career-expert may wish to stymie policymaking in their area of expertise (see, for example, Hansen, Carnes, and Gray 2019 on the tendency of former insurance professionals to nix new policies proposing to regulate the insurance industry). It is possible that some career-experts empowered on career-congruent committees will be reticent to set the agenda and will instead flex their negative agenda-setting powers, offering amendments to smother a bill rather than dedicating their efforts to putting forth their own viable proposals. Future research should aim to identify the strategies lawmakers use to kill bills that are not their own, be it vocal opposition in committee hearings, drumming up interest group opposition, or proposing to gut a bill's core contribution.

Future iterations of this work should also consider adopting a stronger causal identification strategy. For example, a design akin to that employed by Powell and Grimmer (2016) in studying congressional committee turnover, could provide a more robust understanding of the impact of career expertise mediated through the committee system by investigating the legislative productivity of occupational experts transitioning on and off career-congruent committees throughout their tenure in the legislature. Unfortunately, capturing such dynamics is more challenging in California, where term limits have further entrenched committee property rights, meaning lawmakers are often only displaced from committees when they are termed out or switch chambers (see Chapter 1). However, this approach may be more feasible in other state legislatures without term limits or in state chambers where majority party control is more contested, leading to greater turnover and changes in committee structures and membership by party leaders. A second reason to extend this analysis beyond California is to capture the diversity of professional backgrounds from which Democratic and Republican lawmakers emerge. Incorporating different states would offer an opportunity to explore if, and how, the two parties leverage their members' career expertise differently, especially

in chambers where inter-party competition is more intense.

Still, what this exercise has demonstrated is that, in a professionalized legislature such as California's State Assembly, the interplay between career expertise and committee membership can significantly shape the trajectory of legislative proposals. While committee membership alone may not guarantee success, it can enhance a lawmaker's prospects of having the bill considered seriously and brought up for a vote in a policy committee and on the chamber floor. When combined, a career-congruent committee member may craft a more promising bill that garners increased support in committee and on the chamber floor. Particularly in highly active policy domains like education, health, transportation, and public safety, bills authored by career-congruent committee members may secure as many as 8 additional votes of support compared to those penned by other expert colleagues who have not been granted access to these choice committee seats. However, these findings are specific to the Assembly, suggesting a need to test for alternative decision-making tactics that senators employ when assessing a bill's merit. Moving forward, research efforts should aim to refine our understanding of how individual characteristics intersect with institutional structures to influence legislative entrepreneurship and efficacy.

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Appendix A for *Are You Qualified for This Position?: The Influence of Career Congruence on Legislative Committee Assignments*

Contents

1 Descriptive Statistics

1.1 Committee Membership Overview

The median senator holds 5 committee assignments, and the median assemblymember holds 4 committee assignments. Chamber and party leaders and more senior legislators tend to hold fewer committee assignments in both chambers, as do members of the majority party. Among Democrats, there is a penalty (fewer committee appointments) to being a more conservative Democrat, but the same penalty is not assessed on liberal Republicans.

1.2 State Legislator Demographics

Table 1: Demographic Makeup of the CA State Legislature, 1993-2019

	Assembly	*Senate*
Total Unique Legislators	455	190
Total Legislator-Years	1,140	571
% Men	72.98	74.39
% White	62.54	68.83
% Democrat	62.72	62.87

Figure 1: Careers in the CA State Senate, 1993-2019

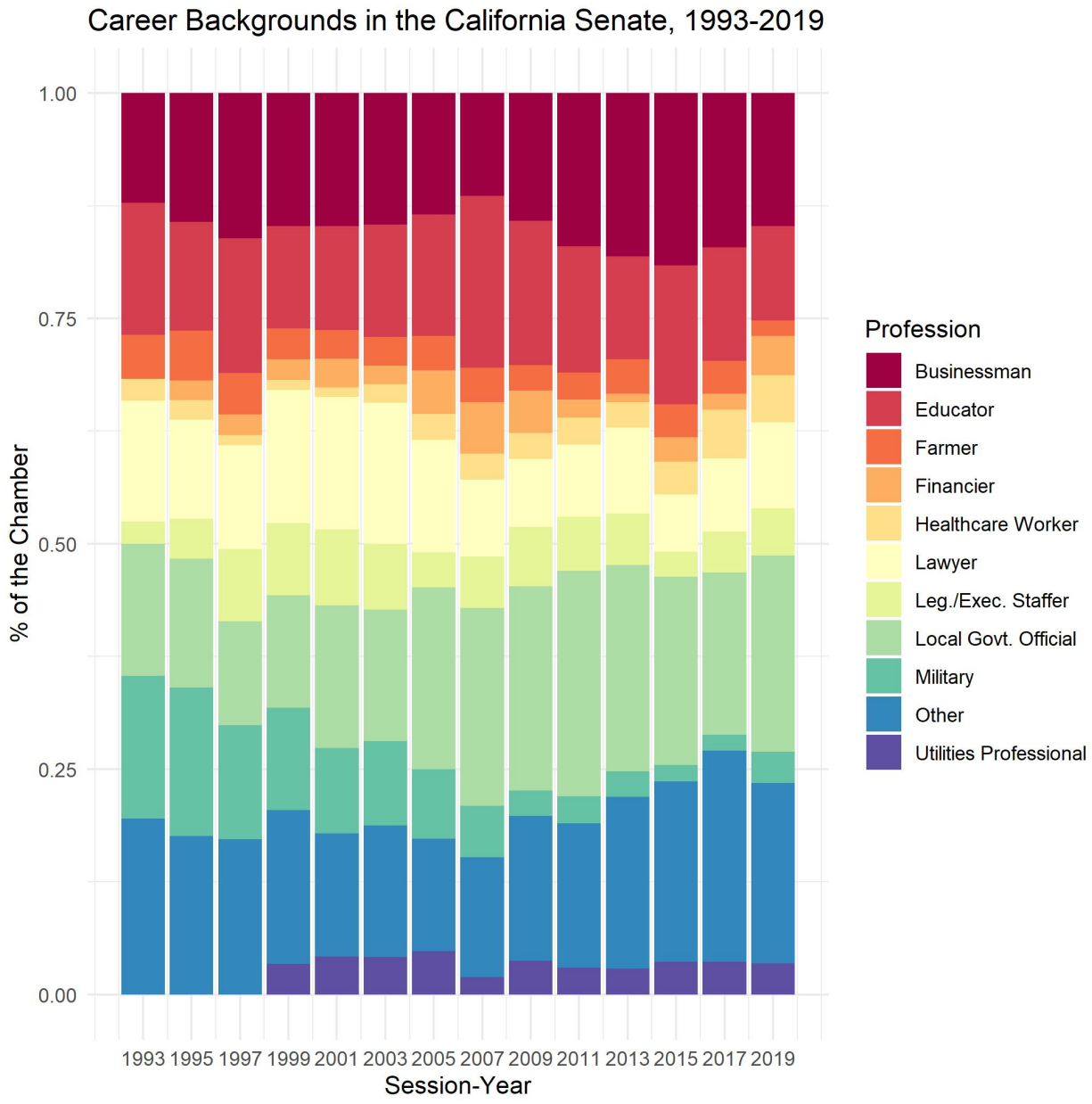
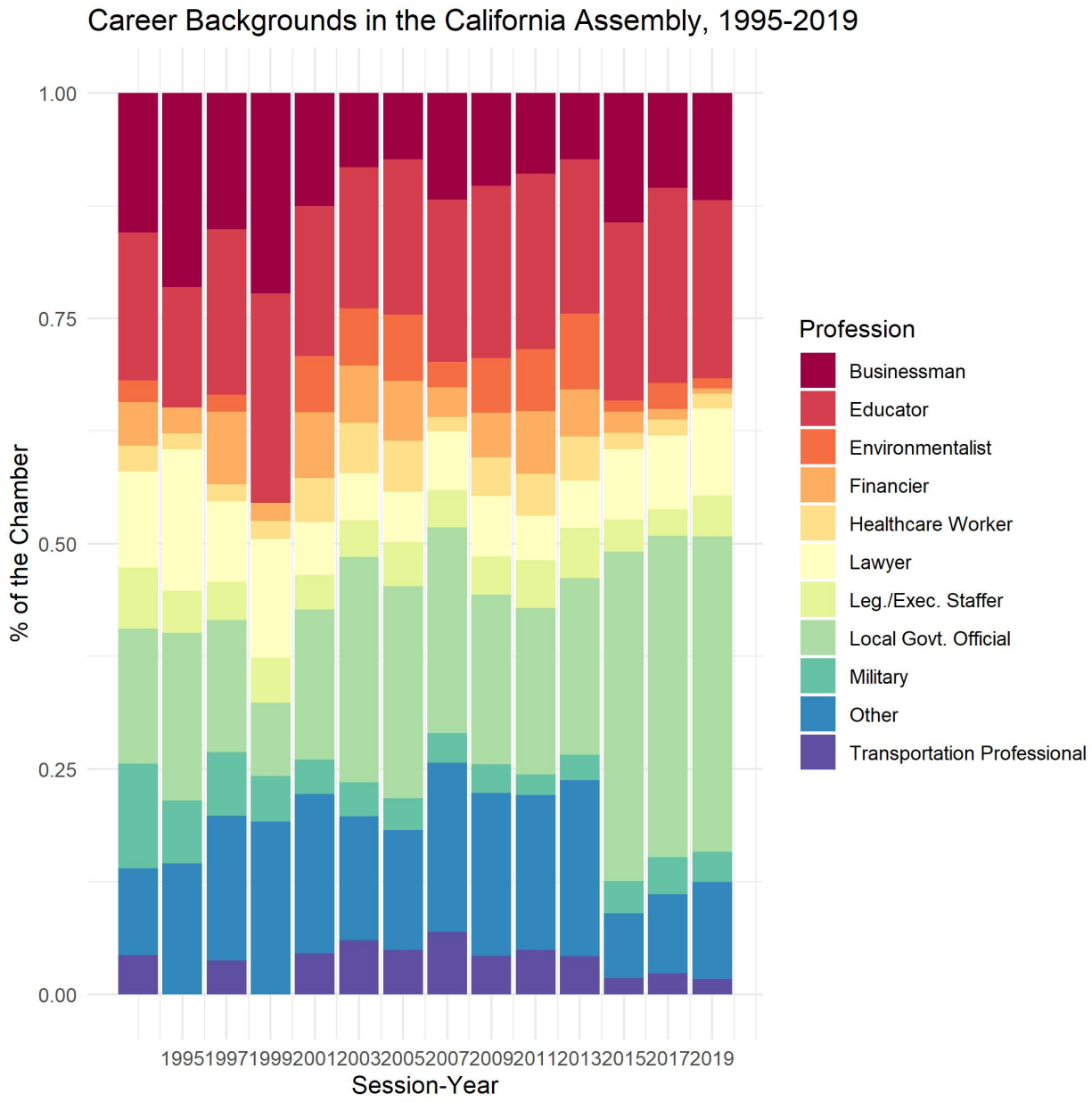


Figure 2: Careers in the CA State Assembly, 1995-2019



1.3 State Legislative Districts

Data needed to measure *Constituency Congruence* are from the 5-Year American Community Survey. California's state legislative districts are redrawn once every 10 years, and the Statewide Database provides geocodes that connect the 2000 and 2010 census blocks to the 2001 and 2011 state legislative districts. However, geocoding connecting the 1990 census

tracts to the 1991 state legislative districts was not available at the time of data collection. Instead, the Statewide Database provides a conversion between the 2000 census blocks and the 1991 state legislative districts. By relying on this conversion, I retroactively apply data from the 2000 census to the 1991 state legislative districts. This imputation strategy is by no means ideal, but a comparison between the 2000 and 2010 census tract employment data suggests that the industrial composition of each state legislative district does not vary substantially from redistricting cycle to redistricting cycle.

Additionally, in order to merge the datasets on member demographics and committee assignments with the dataset on district employment, I had to account for the variation in the implementation of the new maps. In California, assemblymembers are all elected every two years. Once the redistricting is complete, all assemblymembers are subject to the new Assembly district boundaries at the same time. The Senate is more complicated, however, as senators are elected in staggered intervals depending on whether the district is an even or odd number. To account for this staggered implementation, American Community Survey data is linked to the state legislative districts in the following manner:

Table 2: Data Link Between the American Community Survey and State Legislative Districts, 1993-2019

Sessions	5-Year American Community Survey	Legislative Districts
1993-1994	1990 Decennial Census	All Assembly and Senate districts
1995-1996	1990 Decennial Census	All Assembly and Senate districts
1997-1998	1990 Decennial Census	All Assembly and Senate districts
1999-2000	1990 Decennial Census	All Assembly and Senate districts
2001-2002	1990 Decennial Census	All Assembly and Senate districts
2003-2004	2000 Decennial Census	All Assembly districts
2003-2004	2000 Decennial Census	Odd-numbered Senate districts
2003-2004	1990 Decennial Census	Even-numbered Senate districts
2005-2006	2000 Decennial Census	All Assembly districts
2005-2006	2000 Decennial Census	Odd-numbered Senate districts
2005-2006	1990 Decennial Census	Even-numbered Senate districts
2007-2008	2006-2010 American Community Survey	All Assembly and Senate districts
2009-2010	2006-2010 American Community Survey	All Assembly and Senate districts
2011-2012	2006-2010 American Community Survey	All Assembly and Senate districts
2013-2014	2010-2014 American Community Survey	All Assembly districts
2013-2014	2010-2014 American Community Survey	Odd-numbered Senate districts
2013-2014	2006-2010 American Community Survey	Even-numbered Senate districts

Table 3: Summary Statistics for Industry Employment by Senate District, 1993-2019

Statistic (% Employment in District)	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Pctl(25)	Pctl(75)	Max
Session-Year	575	—	—	1993	1999	2013	2019
Senate District	575	—	—	1	11	31	40
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	575	2.232	4.110	0.150	0.325	2.350	25.100
Armed Forces	575	0.493	0.989	0.000	0.045	0.479	6.141
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	575	9.011	1.789	5.065	7.726	10.101	15.600
Construction	575	6.442	1.468	2.500	5.320	7.466	10.200
Educational and Health Services	575	19.556	2.663	12.322	17.700	21.300	25.400
Finance and Insurance	575	6.581	1.889	2.300	5.400	7.700	11.000
Information	575	3.334	1.929	0.800	2.100	4.172	13.000
Manufacturing	575	11.545	4.686	5.100	8.259	14.089	27.757
Other Services (except Public Administration)	575	5.249	0.886	3.769	4.729	5.400	8.480
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	575	11.948	3.550	5.642	9.300	14.200	23.100
Public Administration	575	4.545	1.995	1.741	3.121	5.400	11.766
Retail Trade	575	11.014	1.069	7.700	10.300	11.739	13.400
Transportation and Warehousing	575	4.903	1.578	1.958	3.622	5.700	11.000
Unemployed	575	4.707	1.381	2.101	3.719	5.400	9.261
Veterans/Affairs	575	8.335	3.497	1.800	5.700	10.578	16.488
Wholesale Trade	575	3.638	1.096	1.800	2.800	4.300	7.350

Table 4: Summary Statistics for Industry Employment by Assembly District, 1995-2019

Statistic (% Employment in District)	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Pctl(25)	Pctl(75)	Max
Session-Year	1,062	—	—	1995	2001	2013	2019
Assembly District	1,061	—	—	1	21	60	80
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1,061	2.289	4.282	0.083	0.300	1.890	27.900
Armed Forces	1,061	0.507	1.225	0.000	0.024	0.200	7.900
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1,061	9.126	2.185	4.575	7.500	10.400	15.800
Construction	1,061	6.427	1.715	2.013	5.200	7.548	11.900
Educational and Health Services	1,061	19.610	3.091	10.316	17.500	21.700	27.900
Finance and Insurance	1,061	6.510	2.085	2.100	5.000	8.000	13.300
Information	1,061	3.295	2.244	0.600	1.900	4.065	16.400
Manufacturing	1,061	11.425	5.238	3.600	7.504	13.798	31.269
Other Services (except Public Administration)	1,061	5.267	0.973	3.000	4.700	5.597	9.200
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,061	11.982	3.925	5.100	8.939	14.400	26.100
Public Administration	1,061	4.538	2.116	1.500	3.100	5.600	14.500
Retail Trade	1,061	11.003	1.270	6.600	10.260	11.800	14.200
Transportation and Warehousing	1,061	4.924	1.738	1.800	3.700	5.800	12.600
Unemployed	1,061	4.675	1.450	1.943	3.600	5.600	10.171
Veterans/Affairs	1,061	8.152	3.692	1.500	5.100	10.497	18.099
Wholesale Trade	1,061	3.607	1.210	1.600	2.700	4.208	8.577

1.4 State Legislator Ideology

Data on state legislators' ideal points come from Ben Christopher at CalMatters (Christoper 2020). This analysis was conducted using the W-NOMINATE scaling application created by Poole et al. (2008). The data reveal that state legislators are well-sorted into political parties, with the bulk of liberals identifying as Democrats and most conservatives belonging to the Republican Party. Note, too, that there is greater ideological diversity among Republicans than Democrats. The California State Legislature has been dominated by the Democratic Party since the early 1990s, pulling the chamber median left of the chamber average. This leftward movement of the median may also be due, in part, to the increasing conservatism but dwindling size of the Californian Republican caucus.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics for State Legislator Ideology, 1993-2019

Statistic	N Legislator-Years	Mean	Min.	1st Qu.	Median	3rd Qu.	Max.
All Senators							
—W-NOMINATE	571	-0.25	-1.00	-0.88	-0.70	0.63	1.00
—Distance from Chamber Median	571	0.60	0.00	0.08	0.23	1.30	1.86
—Distance from Respective Party Medians	571	0.14	0.00	0.03	0.08	0.18	1.17
Senate Republicans							
—W-NOMINATE	212	0.68	-0.65	0.56	0.77	0.90	1.00
—Distance from Party Median	212	0.19	0.00	0.05	0.12	0.23	1.17
Senate Democrats							
—W-NOMINATE	359	-0.80	-1.00	-0.91	-0.85	-0.73	0.23
—Distance from Party Median	359	0.10	0.00	0.02	0.06	0.15	0.83
All Assemblymembers							
—W-NOMINATE	1,140	-0.24	-1.00	-0.83	-0.70	0.62	1.00
—Distance from Chamber Median	1,140	0.59	0.00	0.08	0.19	1.27	1.87
—Distance from Respective Party Median	1,140	0.11	0.00	0.03	0.07	0.15	0.78
Assembly Republicans							
—W-NOMINATE	425	0.69	-0.11	0.56	0.71	0.84	1.00
—Distance from Party Median	425	0.15	0.00	0.05	0.12	0.21	0.78
Assembly Democrats							
—W-NOMINATE	715	-0.79	-1.00	-0.88	-0.81	-0.73	-0.21
—Distance from Party Median	715	0.08	0.00	0.02	0.05	0.11	0.61

Figure 3: Ideological Distribution of the CA State Senate by Year (1993-2019)

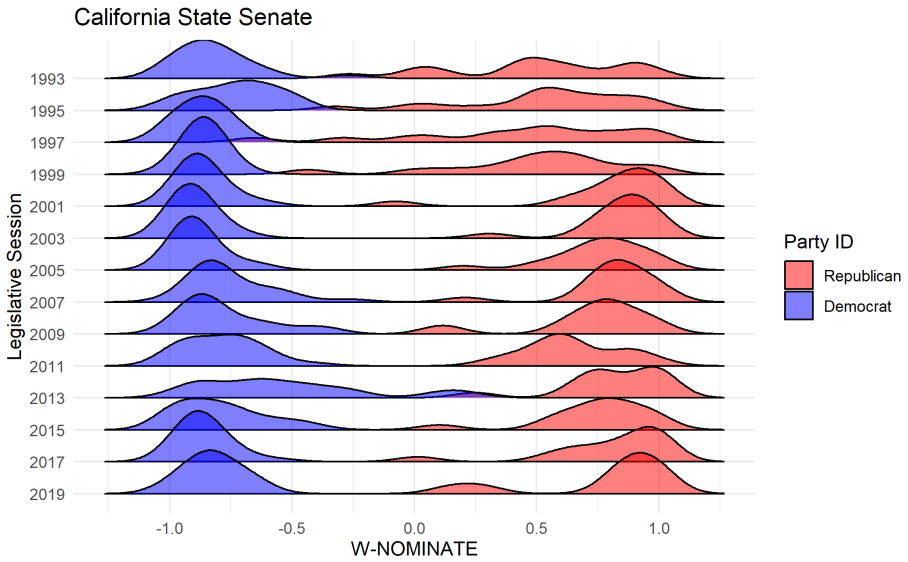
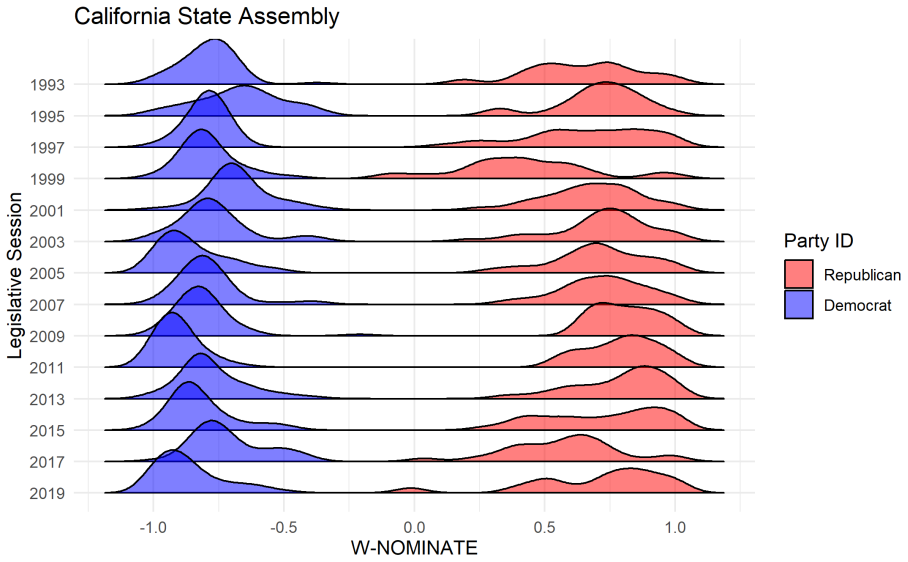


Figure 4: Ideological Distribution of the CA State Assembly by Year (1993-2019)



1.5 Summary Statistics

Table 6: Summary Statistics for the CA State Senate, 1993-2019

Statistic	N Legislator-Committee-Years	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Pctl(25)	Pctl(75)	Max
Session-Year	14,820	2006	7.998	1993	1999	2013	2019
Party ID (3-cat.)	14,820	0.630	0.483	0	0	1	1
Career Congruence (2-cat.)	14,795	0.247	0.432	0	0	0	1
Chamber Constituency Congruence (2-cat.)	14,820	0.492	0.500	0	0	1	1
Party Constituency Congruence (2-cat.)	14,820	0.477	0.499	0	0	1	1
Ideo. Distance from Chamber Median	14,482	0.601	0.641	0.000	0.078	1.284	1.863
Ideo. Distance from Party Median	14,482	0.136	0.167	0.000	0.027	0.177	1.172
Prior Committee Member (2-cat.)	14,763	0.189	0.391	0	0	0	1
Committee Vacancies	13,680	2.192	2.335	0.000	1.000	3.000	28.000
Woman (2-cat.)	14,794	0.257	0.437	0	0	1	1
Chamber or Party Officer (2-cat.)	14,768	0.158	0.365	0	0	0	1
Electoral Win Margin	14,586	31.743	22.833	0.200	16.021	41.106	100.000
Term-Limited from the Chamber (2-cat.)	14,820	0.382	0.486	0	0	1	1
Prior Senate Years	14,820	2.951	4.805	0	0	4	29
Prior Assembly Years	14,820	5.370	4.520	0	3	6	30

Table 7: Summary Statistics for the CA State Assembly, 1995-2019

Statistic	N Legislator-Committee-Years	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Pctl(25)	Pctl(75)	Max
Session-Year	38,124	2007	7.468	1995	2001	2013	2019
Party ID (3-cat.)	38,124	0.630	0.483	0	0	1	1
Career Congruence (2-cat.)	35,920	0.260	0.439	0	0	1	1
Chamber Constituency Congruence (2-cat.)	38,124	0.487	0.500	0	0	1	1
Party Constituency Congruence (2-cat.)	38,124	0.483	0.500	0	0	1	1
Ideo. Distance from Chamber Median	37,512	0.590	0.625	0.000	0.085	1.268	1.875
Ideo. Distance from Party Median	37,512	0.107	0.109	0.000	0.026	0.153	0.777
Prior Committee Member (2-cat.)	35,935	0.095	0.293	0	0	0	1
Committee Vacancies	34,947	3.629	3.561	0.000	1.000	5.000	21.000
Woman (2-cat.)	38,124	0.268	0.443	0	0	1	1
Chamber or Party Officer (2-cat.)	38,088	0.109	0.311	0	0	0	1
Electoral Win Margin	37,728	33.925	22.461	0.092	18.388	43.490	100.000
Term-Limited from the Chamber (2-cat.)	38,124	0.225	0.417	0	0	0	1
Prior Senate Years	38,124	0.124	0.971	0	0	0	9
Prior Assembly Years	38,124	2.280	3.076	0	0	4	30

2 Standing Committee Descriptions

Years Active in Senate	Years Active in Assembly	Committee	Description
—	1999-2019	Aging and Long-term Care*	Primary jurisdiction includes area agencies on aging, California Department of Aging, long-term supports and services, Older Americans Act, Older Californians Act, senior citizen advocacy activities, the California Senior Legislature, services for seniors in residential and day settings and the California Commission on Aging.
1993-2019	1995-2019	Agriculture	Bills relating to agriculture.
1993-2019	1995-2019	Appropriations	[A]ll bills with a fiscal impact... This can include bills that appropriate money, result in substantial expenditure of state money, or result in a substantial loss of revenue to the state.
—	2003-2019	Arts, Entertainment, Sports, Tourism, and Internet Media*	Primary jurisdictions are programs and policies affecting the recording, motion picture and other entertainment industries, tourism and arts programs and museums, professional and amateur sports including the State Athletic Commission and the regulation of athlete agents, and Internet media.
1993-2019	1995-2019	Banking and Financial Institutions[a]	Bills related to financial institutions, secured and unsecured lending and servicing, and corporations.
1993-2019	1995-2019	Budget and Fiscal Review[b]	Bills that directly affect the State Budget, including deficiencies and reappropriations.
1993-2019	2001-2019	Business, Professions, and Economic Development[c]	Bills relating to business and professional practices, licensing, and regulations. Bills relating to economic development, commerce, and international trade.
—	2017-2019	Communications and Conveyance*	Broadband; Cable, Digital Infrastructure and Video; Competition Act; Charter party carriers; Commercial air operators (Hot air balloons); Common carriers; Limousines; Moving companies; Passenger stage corporations; Supplier diversity related to CPUC; regulated telecommunications; Telecommunications; Transportation Network Companies.

Years Active in Senate	Years Active in Assembly	Committee	Description
—	1995-1999, 2007-2019	Consumer Protection*	[T]he Committee has jurisdiction over matters related to privacy, the protection of personal information (including digital information), the security of data, and information technology, as well as false advertising, charitable solicitations, weights and measures, and consumer protection generally.
—	1997-2019	Economic Development/Jobs, Economic Development, and the Economy*	Business advocacy within California and the United States... Economic disaster relief... Information technology... State and local economic development...
1993-2019	1995-2019	Education	Bills relating to education, higher education, and certificated educational personnel.
1993-2019	1995-2019	Elections and Constitutional Amendments[d]	Bills relating to elections and constitutional amendments, ballot measures, the Political Reform Act of 1974, and elected officials.
1993-2019	1995-2019	Energy, Utilities, and Communications[e]	Bills relating to utilities, energy companies, alternative energy development and conservation, and communications development and technology.
1997-2019	1995-2019	Environmental Quality[f]	Bills relating to environmental quality, environmental health, air quality, water quality, waste management, recycling, toxics, and hazardous materials and waste.
1995-2019	—	Governance and Finance	Bills relating to local government procedure, administration, and organization. Bills relating to land use. Bills relating to state and local revenues, bonds, and taxation.
—	2009-2019	Government Efficiency/Accountability and Administrative Review*	Primary jurisdictions are identifying efficiencies in the management of state government, reviewing and studying the implementation, operation, and effectiveness of state programs and agencies.
1993-2019	1995-2019	Governmental Organization	Bills relating to state government organization, horseracing public gaming, the National Guard, alcoholic beverages, and management of public safety emergencies and disaster response, and legislation permitting the use of state-controlled lands.

Years Active in Senate	Years Active in Assembly	Committee	Description
1993-2003, 2005-2019	1995-2019	Health	Bills relating to public health, alcohol and drug abuse, mental health, health insurance and managed care, and related institutions.
—	1995-2019	Higher Education*	Primary jurisdictions are university, state university, and community college systems, postsecondary education, and student financial aid.
1993, 1995-2003, 2019	1995-2019	Housing* [g]	Bills relating to housing, including those that affect state housing funding programs for low- and moderate-income families, homelessness, housing elements and land use approvals for housing developments, housing successor agencies and the housing obligations of local financing districts, manufactured housing, building codes and standards, and common interest developments.
2005-2019	1995-2019	Human Services	Bills relating to welfare, social services and support, and related institutions.
1993-2019	1995-2019	Insurance	Bills relating to insurance, indemnity, surety, and warranty agreements.
1993-2019	1995-2019	Judiciary	Bills amending the Civil Code, Code of Civil Procedure, Evidence Code, Family Code, and Probate Code. Bills relating to courts, judges, and court personnel. Bills relating to liens, claims, and unclaimed property. Bills relating to privacy and consumer protection.
2001-2019	1995-2019	Labor, Public Employment, and Retirement[h]	Bills relating to labor, industrial safety, unemployment, workers' compensation and insurance, and noncertificated public school employees.

Years Active in Senate	Years Active in Assembly	Committee	Description
1993-2009	1995-2019	Local Government*	Primary jurisdictions are General Plan, land use, housing element, local agency formation commissions (LAFCO), city and county organization and powers, special district governance and finance, special taxes, Subdivision Map Act, Ralph M. Brown Act, Public Records Act, redevelopment (as it relates to governance and financing), infrastructure financing districts, local government finance, charter cities and counties, eminent domain, joint powers authorities, Williamson Act, design-build (for local governments), military base reuse, public private partnerships (for local governments), state mandates, county clerks/ recorders, and civil grand juries.
1993-2019	1995-2019	Natural Resources and Water[i]	Bills relating to conservation and management of public resources, fish and wildlife, regulation of oil, mining, geothermal development, acid deposition, wetlands and lakes, global atmospheric effects, ocean and bay pollution, forestry practices, recreation, parks and historical resources.
2001	—	Privacy[j]	
1997-2019	1995-2019	Public Safety	Bills amending the Evidence Code, relating to criminal procedure; the Penal Code; and statutes of a penal nature. Bills relating to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the Board of State and Community Corrections.
—	2005	Rail Safety	
1993-2009	1995-2019	Revenue and Taxation*	Primary jurisdiction is the Revenue and Taxation Code.
1993-2019	1995-2019	Rules	Proposed amendments to the rules and other matters relating to the business of the Legislature.

Years Active in Senate	Years Active in Assembly	Committee	Description
1993-2019	1995-2019	Transportation[k]	Bills relating to the operation, safety, equipment, transfer of ownership, licensing, and registration of vehicles, aircraft, and vessels. Bills relating to the Department of Transportation and the Department of Motor Vehicles. Bills relating to highways, public transportation systems, and airports. Bills relating to housing and community redevelopment.
1993-2019	1999, 2003-2019	Veterans Affairs[l]	Bills relating to veterans, military affairs, and armories. Bills amending the Military and Veterans Code.
1993-2003, 2009-2017	1995-2003, 2009-2019	Water, Parks, and Wildlife* [–]	Primary jurisdictions are water resources, flood management, fish and game, parks and recreation, and wildlife.

* Committee only exists in the Assembly.
[e] Utilities and Energy in the Assembly.
[f] Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials in the Assembly.
– Committee was sometimes absorbed by others in the Senate.
[g] Housing and Community Development in the Assembly.
[a] Banking and Finance in the Assembly.
[h] Labor and Employment in the Assembly.
[b] Budget in the Assembly.
[i] Natural Resources in the Assembly.
[c] Business and Professions in the Assembly.
[j] Privacy and Consumer Protection in the Assembly.
[d] Elections in the Assembly.
[k] Committee is combined with Housing in the Senate.
[l] Military and Veterans Affairs in the Assembly.

3 Standing Committee Membership Sizes and Vacancies

Committee	Senate Average No. of Members	Senate Average No. of Vacancies	Assembly Average No. of Members	Assembly Average No. of Vacancies
Aging and Long-term Care*	—	—	5.31	1.77
Agriculture	7.64	1.64	10.38	4.00
Appropriations	11.21	2.00	18.77	6.54
Arts, Entertainment, Sports, Tourism, and Internet Media*	—	—	6.23	2.69
Banking and Financial Institutions[a]	9.21	2.29	11.69	4.31
Budget and Fiscal Review[b]	16.21	4.93	27.08	8.92
Business, Professions, and Economic Development[c]	8.29	2.14	9.85	4.00
Communications and Conveyance*	—	—	1.92	1.00
Consumer Protection*	—	—	8.00	3.85
Economic Development/Jobs, Economic Development, and the Economy*	—	—	7.00	2.92
Education	10.14	2.21	11.46	3.38
Elections and Constitutional Amendments[d]	5.14	2.07	7.62	3.46
Energy, Utilities, and Communications[e]	10.14	2.21	14.15	5.46
Environmental Quality[f]	7.29	1.43	8.15	2.23
Governance and Finance	6.57	3.57	—	—
Governmental Organization	11.93	3.21	18.31	7.38
Health	9.79	2.21	17.77	5.92
Higher Education*	—	—	11.00	3.56
Housing* [g]	9.38	2.21	8.46	3.15
Human Services	7.57	1.79	7.08	2.23
Insurance	10.00	2.71	13.77	5.08
Judiciary	7.29	1.86	11.31	3.62
Labor, Public Employment, and Retirement[h]	6.15/5.14	1.57/1.29	7.46	2.38

Committee	Senate Average No. of Members	Senate Average No. of Vacancies	Assembly Average No. of Members	Assembly Average No. of Vacancies
Local Government*	—	—	9.31	2.54
Natural Resources and Water[i]	9.14	2.07	10.15	3.08
Privacy[j]	5.00	—	—	—
Public Safety	6.46	2.07	7.54	2.23
Rail Safety	—	—	8.00	—
Revenue and Taxation*	—	—	8.77	2.54
Rules	5.00	1.43	10.15	2.69
Transportation[k]	11.07	2.00	16.00	5.54
Veterans Affairs[l]	6.00	1.36	7.38	3.23
Water, Parks, and Wildlife* –	10.18	2.36	14.31	4.54

* Committee only exists in the Assembly.
– Committee was sometimes absorbed by others in the Senate.
[a] Banking and Finance in the Assembly.
[b] Budget in the Assembly.
[c] Business and Professions in the Assembly.
[d] Elections in the Assembly.
[e] Utilities and Energy in the Assembly.
[f] Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials in the Assembly.
[g] Housing and Community Development in the Assembly.
[h] Labor and Employment in the Assembly.
[i] Natural Resources in the Assembly.
[j] Privacy and Consumer Protection in the Assembly.
[k] Committee is combined with Housing in the Senate.
[l] Military and Veterans Affairs in the Assembly.

4 Results: Senate Models (1993-2019)

Table 10: Senate Committee Membership for All Senators, 1993-2019

	DV: Committee Membership (2-cat.)				
	All Committees	Administrative	High Policy	Public Goods	Distributive
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Career Congruence	0.406***	0.080	0.511***	0.619***	0.599**
	(0.063)	(0.125)	(0.126)	(0.116)	(0.225)
Chamber Constituency Congruence (Above Median)	−0.001	−0.108	0.064	0.036	0.053
	(0.069)	(0.123)	(0.145)	(0.115)	(0.145)
Ideo. Distance from Chamber Median	−0.203***	−0.039	−0.382**	−0.089	−0.374*
	(0.050)	(0.106)	(0.119)	(0.095)	(0.156)
Prior Committee Member	2.751***	2.720***	2.504***	2.804***	2.938***
	(0.096)	(0.159)	(0.160)	(0.136)	(0.223)
No. of Committee Vacancies	0.146***	0.114***	0.192***	0.203***	0.112***
	(0.011)	(0.028)	(0.019)	(0.030)	(0.032)
Woman	0.020	−0.142	−0.005	0.148	−0.064
	(0.063)	(0.135)	(0.143)	(0.105)	(0.188)
White	0.133	0.030	0.204	−0.155	0.709**
	(0.068)	(0.154)	(0.151)	(0.124)	(0.245)
Chamber or Party Officer	−0.404***	−0.338	0.004	−0.450**	−0.908***
	(0.086)	(0.192)	(0.204)	(0.162)	(0.250)
Electoral Win Margin (%)	−0.002	0.003	−0.002	0.0003	−0.009
	(0.001)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.005)

Term-Limited from Chamber	-0.959^{***}	-0.886^{***}	-1.014^{***}	-0.822^{***}	-1.246^{***}
	(0.081)	(0.165)	(0.176)	(0.151)	(0.262)
Prior Senate Years	-0.081^{***}	-0.008	-0.060^{*}	-0.101^{***}	-0.162^{**}
	(0.013)	(0.024)	(0.023)	(0.024)	(0.051)
Term-Limited x Prior Sen. Years	0.079^{***}	0.035	0.084^{**}	0.073^{*}	0.134^{**}
	(0.012)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.030)	(0.041)
Constant	-1.716^{***}	-2.257^{***}	-1.972^{***}	-1.722^{***}	-1.316^{**}
	(0.151)	(0.400)	(0.366)	(0.328)	(0.502)
Session-Year FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	12,493	2,608	2,640	4,749	2,496
Log Likelihood	-5,114.620	-1,064.647	-1,107.234	-1,855.516	-1,008.779
AIC	10,281.240	2,181.294	2,266.468	3,763.033	2,069.558

$^{*}p < .05$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{***}p < .001$

Table 11: Senate Committee Membership for All Democrats, 1993-2019

	DV: Committee Membership (2-cat.)				
	All Committees	Administrative	High Policy	Public Goods	Distributive
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Career Congruence (2-cat.)	0.439***	0.243	0.501**	0.607***	0.439
	(0.080)	(0.164)	(0.161)	(0.153)	(0.324)
Party Constituency Congruence (Above Median)	−0.083	0.084	−0.230	−0.170	0.165
	(0.083)	(0.141)	(0.171)	(0.146)	(0.160)
Ideo. Distance from Party Median	−1.373**	−1.366	−1.205	−1.954**	−0.830
	(0.445)	(0.735)	(0.765)	(0.657)	(0.948)
Prior Committee Member (2-cat.)	2.860***	2.610***	2.770***	2.988***	2.954***
	(0.120)	(0.208)	(0.219)	(0.155)	(0.270)
No. of Committee Vacancies	0.151***	0.127***	0.195***	0.221***	0.120**
	(0.014)	(0.036)	(0.023)	(0.034)	(0.040)
Woman (2-cat.)	0.074	−0.069	0.007	0.204	0.011
	(0.067)	(0.149)	(0.156)	(0.119)	(0.217)
White (2-cat.)	0.172*	0.004	0.171	−0.051	0.842***
	(0.068)	(0.171)	(0.152)	(0.129)	(0.248)
Chamber or Party Officer (2-cat.)	−0.461***	0.031	0.006	−0.693**	−1.285***
	(0.109)	(0.254)	(0.267)	(0.241)	(0.332)
Electoral Win Margin (%)	−0.001	0.005	−0.005	0.002	−0.011*
	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.005)
Term-Limited from Chamber (2-cat.)	−0.937***	−0.853***	−1.027***	−0.782***	−1.271***
	(0.101)	(0.202)	(0.228)	(0.191)	(0.311)

Prior Senate Years	-0.066^{***}	-0.025	-0.037	-0.096^{***}	-0.107^{*}
	(0.015)	(0.031)	(0.029)	(0.024)	(0.042)
Term-Limited (2-cat.) x Prior Sen. Years	0.054^{***}	0.049	0.033	0.058^{*}	0.082^{*}
	(0.016)	(0.034)	(0.038)	(0.029)	(0.039)
Constant	-1.732^{***}	-1.986^{***}	-2.038^{***}	-1.664^{***}	-1.619^{**}
	(0.221)	(0.530)	(0.525)	(0.360)	(0.552)
Session-Year FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	7,950	1,661	1,680	3,024	1,585
Log Likelihood	-3,281.274	-684.290	-710.072	-1,180.445	-634.697
AIC	6,614.547	1,420.581	1,472.144	2,412.890	1,321.394

$^{*}p < .05$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{***}p < .001$

Table 12: Senate Committee Membership for All Republicans, 1993-2019

	DV: Committee Membership (2-cat.)				
	All Committees	Administrative	High Policy	Public Goods	Distributive
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Career Congruence (2-cat.)	0.376***	−0.187	0.485*	0.608**	0.896**
	(0.109)	(0.200)	(0.227)	(0.186)	(0.307)
Party Constituency Congruence (Above Median)	0.009	−0.403*	−0.236	0.269	0.004
	(0.107)	(0.190)	(0.245)	(0.150)	(0.266)
Ideo. Distance from Party Median	−0.052	−0.115	−0.243	0.421	−0.859
	(0.215)	(0.392)	(0.493)	(0.430)	(1.109)
Prior Committee Member (2-cat.)	2.626***	3.034***	2.118***	2.559***	3.047***
	(0.158)	(0.273)	(0.249)	(0.254)	(0.430)
No. of Committee Vacancies	0.138***	0.097*	0.190***	0.177**	0.098
	(0.017)	(0.048)	(0.036)	(0.059)	(0.060)
Woman (2-cat.)	−0.224	−0.219	0.137	−0.116	−0.789
	(0.152)	(0.370)	(0.465)	(0.219)	(0.493)
White (2-cat.)	−0.191	0.150	0.900	−0.344	−0.937
	(0.159)	(0.426)	(0.558)	(0.381)	(0.814)
Chamber or Party Officer (2-cat.)	−0.355*	−1.035***	−0.014	−0.170	−0.429
	(0.138)	(0.265)	(0.302)	(0.224)	(0.346)
Electoral Win Margin (%)	−0.004	0.002	−0.004	−0.005	−0.006
	(0.002)	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.010)
Term-Limited from Chamber (2-cat.)	−1.033***	−1.133***	−1.277***	−0.826**	−1.348*
	(0.164)	(0.325)	(0.342)	(0.285)	(0.645)

Prior Senate Years	-0.091^{***}	0.042	-0.073^{*}	-0.104^{*}	-0.231^{**}
	(0.014)	(0.041)	(0.037)	(0.047)	(0.077)
Term-Limited (2-cat.) x Prior Sen. Years	0.104^{***}	-0.019	0.177^{***}	0.072	0.218^{**}
	(0.023)	(0.059)	(0.037)	(0.068)	(0.070)
Constant	-1.537^{***}	-2.735^{***}	-2.659^{***}	-1.643^{*}	0.126
	(0.282)	(0.658)	(0.676)	(0.714)	(1.088)
Session-Year FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	4,543	947	960	1,725	911
Log Likelihood	-1,808.660	-362.486	-385.562	-653.854	-355.361
AIC	3,669.321	776.973	823.124	1,359.707	762.722

$^{*}p < .05$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{***}p < .001$

5 Results: Assembly Models (1995-2019)

Table 13: Assembly Committee Membership for All Assemblymembers, 1995-2019

	DV: Committee Membership (2-cat.)				
	All Committees	Administrative	High Policy	Public Goods	Distributive
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Career Congruence (2-cat.)	0.361***	0.384***	0.347***	0.301***	0.620***
	(0.044)	(0.087)	(0.073)	(0.090)	(0.121)
Chamber Constituency Congruence (Above Median)	0.076*	−0.066	0.101	0.071	0.188*
	(0.038)	(0.087)	(0.075)	(0.071)	(0.083)
Ideo. Distance from Chamber Median	−0.176***	−0.117	−0.167*	−0.204**	−0.199**
	(0.029)	(0.081)	(0.072)	(0.064)	(0.073)
Prior Committee Member (2-cat.)	2.613***	3.076***	2.282***	2.574***	2.719***
	(0.070)	(0.142)	(0.104)	(0.106)	(0.122)
No. of Committee Vacancies	0.099***	0.086***	0.101***	0.112***	0.097***
	(0.006)	(0.013)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.015)
Woman (2-cat.)	0.004	−0.068	−0.054	0.045	0.104
	(0.031)	(0.100)	(0.086)	(0.072)	(0.091)
White (2-cat.)	0.003	−0.028	−0.002	−0.032	0.089
	(0.032)	(0.098)	(0.090)	(0.082)	(0.093)
Chamber or Party Officer (2-cat.)	−0.344***	−0.175	−0.146	−0.449***	−0.641***
	(0.092)	(0.168)	(0.184)	(0.127)	(0.188)
Electoral Win Margin (%)	−0.001	0.003	−0.001	−0.003*	−0.004

	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Term-Limited from Chamber (2-cat.)	−0.908***	−1.146***	−0.629***	−0.906***	−1.058***
	(0.094)	(0.206)	(0.152)	(0.150)	(0.185)
Prior Assembly Years	−0.285***	−0.299***	−0.226***	−0.294***	−0.342***
	(0.015)	(0.044)	(0.035)	(0.031)	(0.043)
Term-Limited (2-cat.) x Prior Asm. Years	0.269***	0.284***	0.197***	0.266***	0.353***
	(0.023)	(0.054)	(0.044)	(0.040)	(0.051)
Constant	−2.279***	−2.134***	−2.563***	−2.157***	−2.192***
	(0.091)	(0.241)	(0.238)	(0.172)	(0.222)
Session-Year FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	28,948	5,687	7,656	9,455	6,150
Log Likelihood	-10,166.470	-1,994.121	-2,842.855	-3,101.270	-2,176.991
AIC	20,382.930	4,038.242	5,735.710	6,252.539	4,403.983

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Table 14: Assembly Committee Membership for All Assembly Democrats, 1995-2019

	DV: Committee Membership (2-cat.)				
	All Committees	Administrative	High Policy	Public Goods	Distributive
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Career Congruence (2-cat.)	0.294***	0.297**	0.261**	0.288*	0.395*
	(0.058)	(0.111)	(0.093)	(0.114)	(0.183)
Party Constituency Congruence (Above Median)	0.116*	0.002	0.136	0.135	0.195
	(0.049)	(0.108)	(0.102)	(0.093)	(0.107)
Ideo. Distance from Party Median	−0.218	−0.595	−0.329	0.161	−0.418
	(0.210)	(0.634)	(0.547)	(0.479)	(0.656)
Prior Committee Member (2-cat.)	2.777***	2.949***	2.433***	2.837***	3.013***
	(0.090)	(0.171)	(0.135)	(0.130)	(0.163)
No. of Committee Vacancies	0.102***	0.090***	0.106***	0.116***	0.100***
	(0.008)	(0.017)	(0.014)	(0.015)	(0.020)
Woman (2-cat.)	−0.021	−0.142	−0.056	−0.048	0.167
	(0.039)	(0.113)	(0.096)	(0.088)	(0.115)
White (2-cat.)	−0.022	−0.026	0.028	−0.104	0.040
	(0.038)	(0.115)	(0.104)	(0.093)	(0.109)
Chamber or Party Officer (2-cat.)	−0.335**	−0.164	0.004	−0.526***	−0.808**
	(0.107)	(0.202)	(0.212)	(0.147)	(0.260)
Electoral Win Margin (%)	−0.002*	0.002	−0.001	−0.006**	−0.004
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Term-Limited from Chamber (2-cat.)	−0.944***	−1.163***	−0.637***	−1.023***	−1.007***
	(0.110)	(0.239)	(0.191)	(0.181)	(0.238)

Prior Assembly Years	-0.290^{***}	-0.330^{***}	-0.224^{***}	-0.321^{***}	-0.302^{***}
	(0.019)	(0.055)	(0.041)	(0.039)	(0.052)
Term-Limited (2-cat.) x Prior Asm. Years	0.274^{***}	0.323^{***}	0.181^{***}	0.305^{***}	0.309^{***}
	(0.027)	(0.065)	(0.052)	(0.048)	(0.062)
Constant	-2.535^{***}	-2.267^{***}	-2.877^{***}	-2.355^{***}	-2.633^{***}
	(0.143)	(0.339)	(0.367)	(0.268)	(0.340)
Session-Year FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	18,314	3,605	4,853	5,981	3,875
Log Likelihood	-6,447.767	-1,313.851	-1,800.586	-1,962.316	-1,334.743
AIC	12,945.530	2,677.703	3,651.172	3,974.633	2,719.486

$^{*}p < .05$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{***}p < .001$

Table 15: Assembly Committee Membership for All Assembly Republicans, 1995-2019

	DV: Committee Membership (2-cat.)				
	All Committees	Administrative	High Policy	Public Goods	Distributive
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Career Congruence (2-cat.)	0.465***	0.510***	0.529***	0.283	0.916***
	(0.069)	(0.148)	(0.122)	(0.153)	(0.151)
Party Constituency Congruence (Above Median)	0.093	0.067	0.005	0.039	0.238
	(0.063)	(0.140)	(0.131)	(0.115)	(0.128)
Ideo. Distance from Party Median	−0.057	−0.101	−0.545	0.313	0.186
	(0.161)	(0.660)	(0.469)	(0.442)	(0.516)
Prior Committee Member (2-cat.)	2.328***	3.499***	2.035***	2.108***	2.266***
	(0.109)	(0.257)	(0.167)	(0.180)	(0.181)
No. of Committee Vacancies	0.094***	0.078***	0.095***	0.107***	0.094***
	(0.008)	(0.021)	(0.016)	(0.017)	(0.025)
Woman (2-cat.)	0.066	0.047	−0.086	0.240*	0.038
	(0.052)	(0.209)	(0.201)	(0.118)	(0.166)
White (2-cat.)	0.032	−0.188	−0.173	0.078	0.369
	(0.057)	(0.228)	(0.150)	(0.233)	(0.197)
Chamber or Party Officer (2-cat.)	−0.423*	−0.276	−0.532	−0.322	−0.464
	(0.181)	(0.324)	(0.343)	(0.239)	(0.272)
Electoral Win Margin (%)	−0.001	0.004	−0.004	0.003	−0.006
	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.004)
Term-Limited from Chamber (2-cat.)	−0.896***	−0.786	−0.845**	−0.432	−1.363***
	(0.231)	(0.641)	(0.317)	(0.303)	(0.383)

Prior Assembly Years	-0.274^{***}	-0.215^{**}	-0.205^{**}	-0.242^{***}	-0.451^{***}
	(0.025)	(0.075)	(0.069)	(0.051)	(0.078)
Term-Limited (2-cat.) x Prior Asm. Years	0.276^{***}	0.113	0.259^{**}	0.136	0.512^{***}
	(0.056)	(0.152)	(0.093)	(0.080)	(0.103)
Constant	-2.290^{***}	-2.060^{***}	-2.212^{***}	-2.442^{***}	-2.286^{***}
	(0.132)	(0.409)	(0.364)	(0.334)	(0.351)
Session-Year FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	10,634	2,082	2,803	3,474	2,275
Log Likelihood	-3,688.090	-666.686	-1,027.860	-1,121.599	-818.553
AIC	7,426.181	1,383.372	2,105.720	2,293.198	1,687.105

$^{*}p < .05$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{***}p < .001$

6 Results: Control Effects

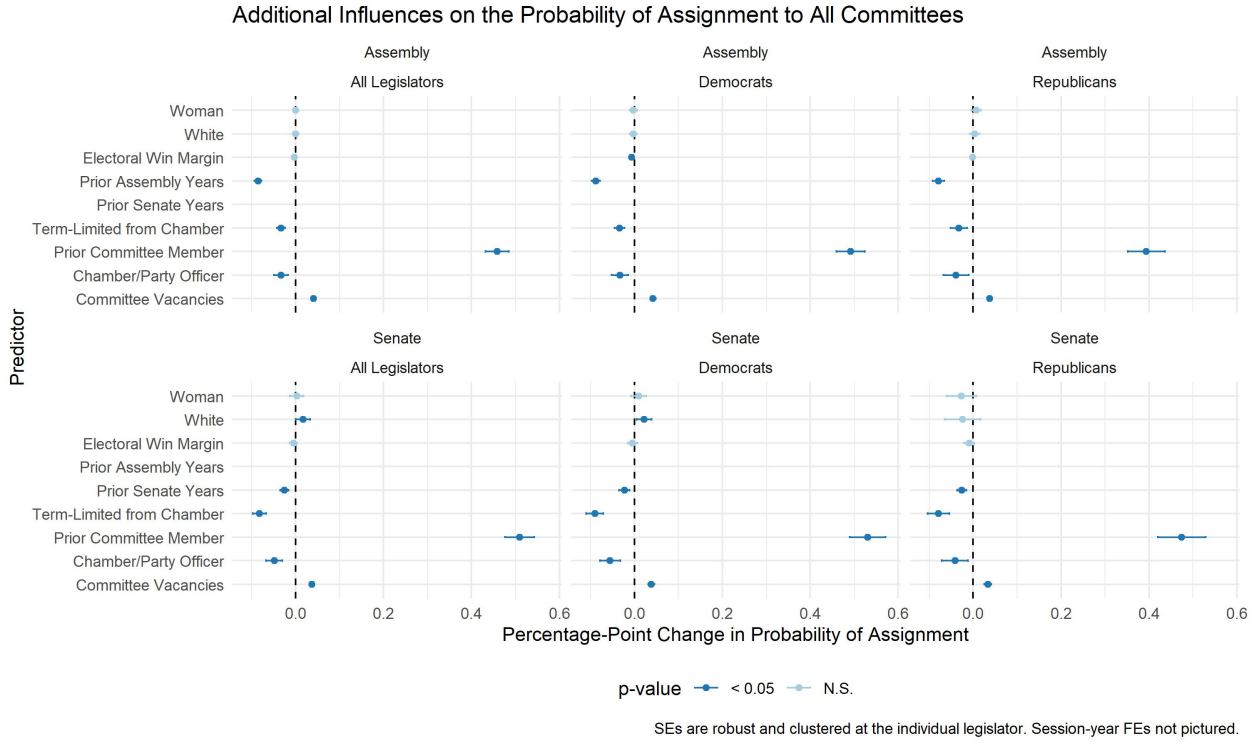
Most of the control variables included in the models behave as expected. Of note is the significant predictive power of committee property rights (*Prior Committee Member* below). When a member has served on a committee in a previous session, he is far more likely to return to that committee in a future session. The advantage of prior committee membership provides approximately a 40 percentage-point boost in the probability of assignment. More senior members of the Assembly and Senate, including those who are term-limited from their chamber or the legislature entirely, as well as chamber and party leaders are less likely to serve on committees compared to junior members and back-benchers. Note that officers and more senior legislators in both chambers generally hold fewer total committee seats, too.

Other significant effects include race (White versus POC), electoral safety, and committee vacancies. White senators tend to hold more committee seats than non-White members, but this may be due, in part, to the more junior status of these members of color. In the Assembly where there are more members of color, the impact of race is neutralized and rendered insignificant. Electoral marginality appears to benefit Assembly Democrats slightly, lending some credence to the electoral-constituency model of appointments (Shugart et al. 2021). Lastly, the number of vacancies on a given committee is a significant positive predictor of committee assignments. Given the strength of committee property rights, in order to be appointed to a committee, a seat must first be up for the taking.

7 Models Excluding Prior Committee Members

Committee property rights are a chamber norm where legislators will tend to hold onto their committee assignments for the full extent of their legislative career and will rarely be removed except upon the loss of an election, retirement, or by request (Katz and Sala 1996). Each of the three main theories of committee assignments acknowledges committee property rights: The norm can reflect the chamber's goal of developing area-experts (informational), the

Figure 5: Most control predictors behave as expected.

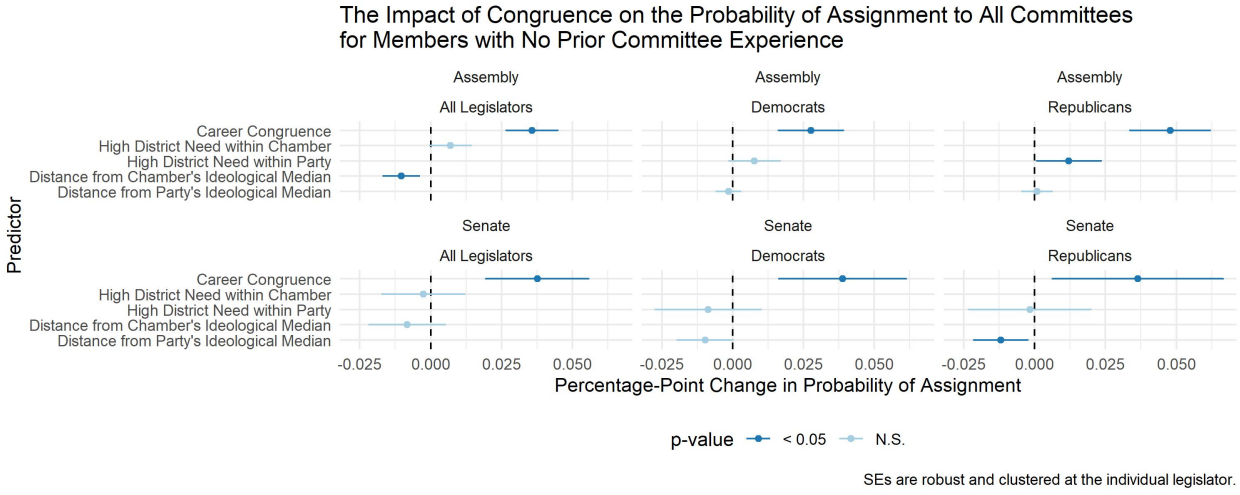


constancy of district need (distributional), or the endurance of party loyalty (party-cartel). In a member-focused approach, committee property rights should be especially strong as members hold jealously their hard-won committee assignments.

Realistically, given the strength of committee member property rights, a seat must open up before a non-member can take it, especially for highly sought-after administrative and public goods committees. To test the impact of career-, constituency-, and ideological-congruence in the absence of strong committee property rights, I run the models on legislators *without* prior committee experience on a committee (e.g., if I am predicting membership to the Revenue and Taxation Committee, I remove from the sample any legislators who've previously served on Rev. and Tax.) Prior committee membership is such an advantage in the appointments process, so this approach allows me to look at what criteria benefits other legislators without committee experience in an earlier session.

Results in Figure 4 show that, among those representatives with no prior experience on a given committee, career congruence continues to be the strongest positive predictor of

Figure 6: Career congruence continues to be a positive predictor of committee assignment when we exclude from the model those legislators with no prior experience on a committee.



appointment. For both senators and assemblymembers, career congruence confers more than a 3.5 percentage-point advantage to the beholder over their career-incongruent colleagues, on average. Ideological congruence with one's chamber or party plays a modest role in committee appointments, limited to all legislators in the Assembly and Senate Republicans. Constituency congruence plays a negligible part in appointments and is only a benefit to Assembly Republicans.

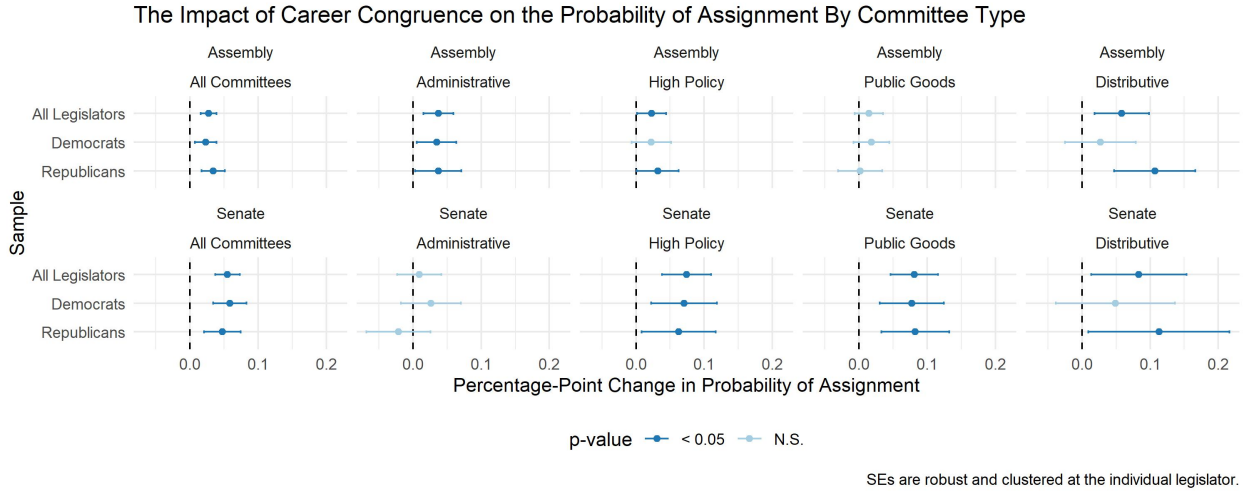
Though the role of career congruence should not surprise us, given its strength independent of prior committee membership in the main models, these results add to the notion that Republican lawmakers are given their pick of committee seats regardless of whether they've served on the committee in the past. Republicans with no prior committee experience benefit most from career congruence but also benefit from having an outstanding district need. Unexpectedly, Republicans in the Senate appear to benefit from party centrism, too. A more extreme Republican (in either a liberal or conservative direction) is 1.2 percentage-points less likely to land on a committee than his more centrist counterpart. This finding is quite modest, however; the median Republican is only 1.07 times more likely to serve on a given committee than a more extreme co-partisan. Still, this result does hint at a small ideological penalty for straying too far from the party line among Republicans, which is not mirrored

among less experienced Democrats.

8 Models With Lagged W-NOMINATE

Here, I run the model using 1-year lagged W-NOMINATE scores instead of current-session ideology for individual legislators. The following figures offer the AMEs of the key congruence variables as predictors of assignment. Compared to the model results in the main paper, Figure 5 shows that career congruence continues to be a strong and positive predictor of committee assignment in both the Assembly and the Senate (except for Senate administrative committees). However, unlike the main models, career congruence is rendered statistically insignificant when it comes to assignment to Assembly public goods committees.

Figure 7: Career congruence continues to be a strong, positive predictor for assignments.



The impact of constituency congruence (Figure 6) is rendered null across the board, and the impact of ideology (Figure 7) remains largely unchanged with extremists failing to land on public-facing committees in the Assembly and the Senate. Unlike the main results, however, there does appear to be some ideological screening of the Democratic caucus in the Senate administrative committees among. Taken as a whole, these results continue to support the notion that career expertise is a strong advantage for legislators hoping to join a committee, followed by ideological centrism with little to no value of constituency need.

Figure 8: Constituency congruence is statistically insignificant across the board.

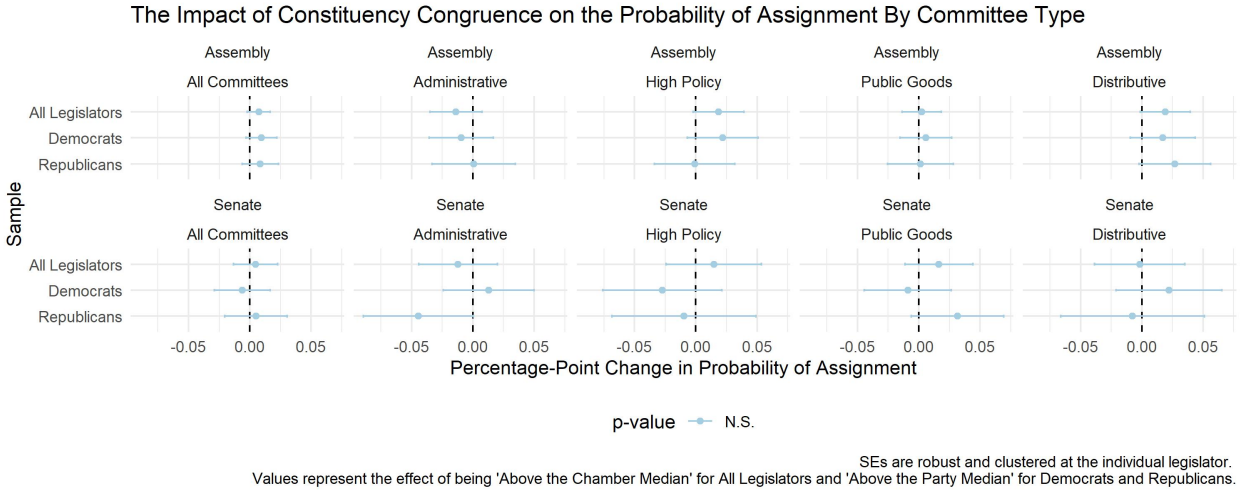
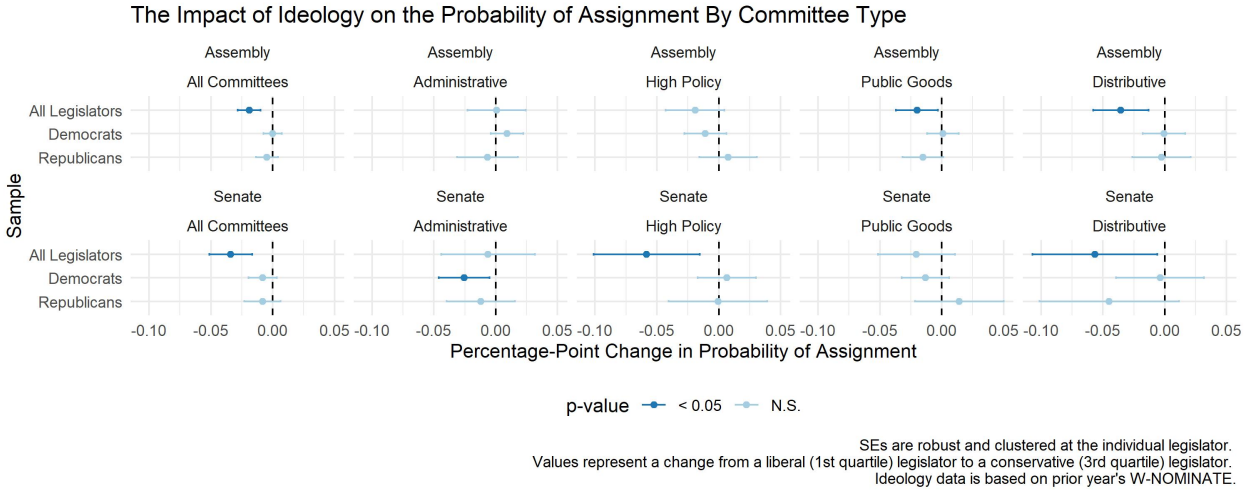


Figure 9: Ideological congruence continues to predict membership to mostly public-facing committees.



9 Models in Two Eras of Term Limits

In this section, I run the model across the two eras of term-limits. Those legislators elected prior to 2012, and thus subject to Proposition 140, and those elected after 2012 and thus subject to Proposition 28. Proposition 140 limited senators to two 4-year terms (8 years total) and assemblymembers to three 2-year terms (6 years total). Once a legislator reached her chamber-limit, she could no longer run for re-election to that chamber but could run for election in the opposite chamber. Even under Proposition 140, transition from the Assembly

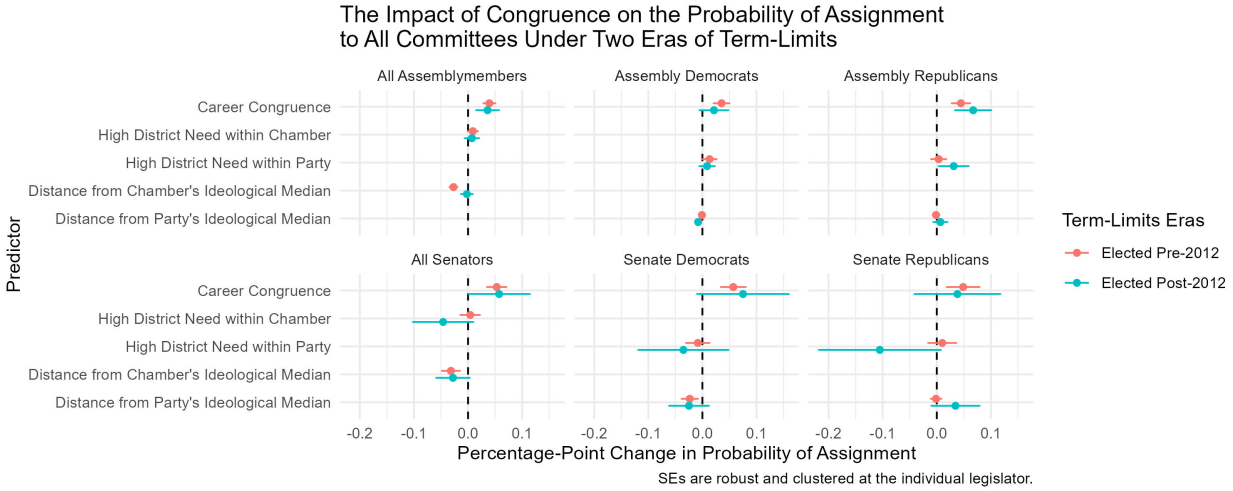
to the Senate was far more common than transition from the upper chamber to the lower chamber (Caress and Kunioka 2012). Under the current law, Proposition 28, legislators are limited to 12 years total to be served in any configuration in either chamber. Once term-limited, the legislator is banned from holding state legislative office for life. None of the legislators subject to Proposition 28 have termed-out yet.

I expect that the increase in time that a legislator is allowed to serve (+4 years in the Senate or +6 years in the Assembly) will reduce the value of career congruence while increasing the importance of constituency and ideological congruence. When legislators are given the opportunity to develop expertise in a policy area *while in office*, as opposed to before entering state politics, then the motivation a legislator feels to immediately join a career-congruent committee may be reduced (though not eliminated). This change in approach should weaken the influence of career congruence. Likewise, the longer time-horizon afforded under the new term-limits restrictions should increase the appeal of catering to one's constituents to stay in office (and thus increase the effect of constituency congruence) while also putting greater emphasis on legislating for the future as opposed to the present (and thus putting more emphasis on ideological centrism). Ideological centrism should also be more appealing to the principals making the assignments under the longer term-limits scheme as the increase in membership stability (due to slower legislative turnover) means that leaders themselves stick around for longer. With greater institutional memory should come greater ideological accountability.

Figure 8 shows slight differences in the average marginal effects of the main congruence findings pre- and post-2012, though the direction of the effects remains the same as the findings in the main text. For all assemblymembers and senators, career congruence continues to be a positive predictor of committee assignment while ideological distance from the chamber is a significant negative influence. District need continues to be the congruence measure with the least predictive power.

While the importance of career congruence diminish slightly from pre- to post-2012, this

Figure 10:



difference is not statistically significant (note the overlapping standard errors) and should be taken with a grain of salt. Ideological distance from the chamber median actually appears to decline in importance too, but only in the Assembly. This finding is unexpected. Meanwhile, the influence that distance from the party's median has on the probability of assignment is difficult to discern. Among Democrats, there is a slight increase in the penalty that party extremists suffer from straying too far from the party line, suggesting that the longer time-horizon afforded by Prop. 28 does increase the ideological discipline in committee assignments; however, the standard errors caution against us reading too much into this finding. Among Republicans, however, there is a slight uptick in the value of extremism in the post-2012 period. Constituent need continue to play a negligible role, regardless of party or chamber, in both periods under term-limits.

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Appendix B for *The Impact of Career-Committee Congruence on Legislative Entrepreneurship*

Contents

1 Distribution of Bills Introduced by Topic

Table 1: Topics of Introduced ABs and SBs, 2011-2020

Bill Topic	Assembly	Senate	Total
Accountability	188	0	188
Aging	57	0	57
Agriculture	123	56	179
Appropriations	17	25	42
Banking & Finance	179	649	828
Budget	839	24	863
Business, Development, & Labor	1,223	532	1,755
Communications	45	0	45
Consumer Protection	155	0	155
Education	1537	661	2,198
Elections	378	158	536
Energy	308	268	576
Entertainment	72	0	72
Environment, Natural Resources, & Water	1,345	598	1,943
Governmental Organization	387	294	681
Health	998	540	1,538
Human Services	546	202	748
Insurance	258	97	355
Judiciary	839	454	1,293
Local Government	582	0	582
Public Employment	285	191	476
Public Safety	1262	707	1,969
Transportation & Housing	1,208	503	1,711
Veterans Affairs	97	58	155
Not Identified*	1,419	903	2,322

* *Note: Bills with unidentified topics are those that were never referred to a standing policy committee after being received by the respective chamber's Rules Committee.*

2 Distribution of Number of Bills Introduced Per Topic Per Member

Table 2: Distribution Bill Introductions Per Topic Per Member Per Session, 2011-2020

	# of Bills Introduced Per Topic Per Member Per Year						
Bill Topic	0	1	2	3	4	5	6 $\leq$
Agriculture	482	90	26	8	3	1	0
Education	140	138	88	77	51	43	49
Health	134	155	82	93	55	36	45
Insurance	418	110	49	11	12	3	7
Local Govt	125	113	89	41	17	10	4
Public Safety	87	105	98	94	60	43	84
Transportation & Housing	121	165	115	69	55	36	30
Veterans Affairs	496	82	19	4	4	2	3
Total	**2,009**	**948**	**566**	**397**	**257**	**174**	**222**

3 Distribution of Co-Authorship by Topic

Table 3: Distribution of Co-Authors on ABs and SBs, 2011-2020

	Number of Co-Authors Per Bill Upon Introduction						
Bill Topic	0	1	2	3	4	5	6 $\leq$
Agriculture	155	10	5	2	1	2	2
Education	1,353	124	42	21	13	14	32
Health	1,241	151	49	21	24	10	27
Insurance	310	21	3	4	6	2	10
Local Government	496	52	8	7	2	3	10
Public Safety	1,621	174	48	30	26	16	40
Transportation & Housing	1,110	107	34	18	22	5	28
Veterans Affairs	120	15	7	3	3	0	6
Total	**6,406**	**654**	**196**	**106**	**97**	**52**	**155**

4 Distribution of Added Co-Authors by Topic

Table 4: Distribution of Co-Authors Added *Post-Introduction* on ABs and SBs, 2011-2020

	Number of Co-Authors Added Per Bill							
Bill Topic	$\leq$ -1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6 $\leq$
Agriculture	0	125	23	7	3	8	2	10
Education	13	1,165	172	76	41	30	27	88
Health	13	1,070	182	67	41	35	31	101
Insurance	2	294	26	9	3	6	3	12
Local Government	3	447	61	17	12	9	7	24
Public Safety	10	1,455	167	101	55	35	35	102
Transportation & Housing	10	1,006	130	63	23	29	16	56
Veterans Affairs	0	101	17	10	4	2	8	12

5 Committee Jurisdictions

Table 5: Standing Committee Jurisdictions in the CA Senate and CA Assembly

Sen. Years	Asm. Years	Committee	Description
1993-2019	1995-2019	Agriculture	Bills relating to agriculture.
1993-2019	1995-2019	Education	Bills relating to education, higher education, and certificated educational personnel.
1993-2003, 2005-2019	1995-2019	Health	Bills relating to public health, alcohol and drug abuse, mental health, health insurance and managed care, and related institutions.
1993-2019	1995-2019	Insurance	Bills relating to insurance, indemnity, surety, and warranty agreements.
1993-2009	1995-2019	Local Government*	Primary jurisdictions are General Plan, land use, housing element, local agency formation commissions (LAFCO), city and county organization and powers, special district governance and finance, special taxes, Subdivision Map Act, Ralph M. Brown Act, Public Records Act, redevelopment (as it relates to governance and financing), infrastructure financing districts, local government finance, charter cities and counties, eminent domain, joint powers authorities, Williamson Act, design-build (for local governments), military base reuse, public private partnerships (for local governments), state mandates, county clerks/ recorders, and civil grand juries.
1997-2019	1995-2019	Public Safety	Bills amending the Evidence Code, relating to criminal procedure; the Penal Code; and statutes of a penal nature. Bills relating to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the Board of State and Community Corrections.
1993-2019	1995-2019	Transportation+	Bills relating to the operation, safety, equipment, transfer of ownership, licensing, and registration of vehicles, aircraft, and vessels. Bills relating to the Department of Transportation and the Department of Motor Vehicles. Bills relating to highways, public transportation systems, and airports. Bills relating to housing and community redevelopment.
1993-2019	1999, 2003-2019	Veterans Affairs=	Bills relating to veterans, military affairs, and armories. Bills amending the Military and Veterans Code.

* Committee only exists in the Assembly.

+ Committee is combined with Housing in the Senate.

= Military and Veterans Affairs in the Assembly.

6 Descriptive Overview of Legislator-Committee Pairs, 2011-2020

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics for Legislator-Committee Pairs

Variable	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Median	Min	Max
Key Predictors						
Career-Congruent	4,896	1.16	0.37	1.00	1.00	2.00
Committee Member	4,896	1.15	0.36	1.00	1.00	2.00
Outcomes of Interest						
N Bill Intros by Comm.	4,689	1.69	2.56	1.00	0.00	29.00*
Pct. Bill Referrals by Comm.	4,689	4.43	6.45	2.38	0.00	69.05
N Bills Survived by Comm.	2,649	1.16	1.53	1.00	0.00	19.00*
Pct. Bills Survived by Comm.	2,649	39.68	38.56	33.33	0.00	100.00
Legislator Characteristics						
Republican	4,896	1.63	0.93	1.00	1.00	3.00
Woman	4,888	1.27	0.44	1.00	1.00	2.00
POC	4,840	1.43	0.50	1.00	1.00	2.00
Officer	4,872	1.11	0.32	1.00	1.00	2.00
Assembly Seniority	4,888	2.65	2.14	2.00	0.00	6.00
Senate Seniority	4,888	0.63	1.74	0.00	0.00	17.00$^{=}$
Term-Limited	4,888	1.20	0.40	1.00	1.00	2.00
Electoral Safety	4,872	30.62	21.60	27.40	0.20	100.00
Prior Committee Member	4,896	1.13	0.33	1.00	1.00	2.00
Avg. # of Contributors^{+}	2,695	0.71	2.40	0.00	0.00	59.00
Legislature Characteristics						
Session-Year (2011-2019)	4,896	2.99	1.41	3.00	1.00	5.00
Senate	4,896	1.34	0.47	1.00	1.00	2.00
Committee Size	4,681	10.12	3.48	9.00	5.00	19.00

* Senator Ed Hernandez (D) and the Senate Health Committee.

$^{=}$ Senator Jim Nielsen (R) served 12 years before the enactment of term limits in 1990.

$^{+}$ Per bill per committee per legislator per session.

7 Predicting % of Bill Introduction and Survivals

In a series of OLS models, I regress the number (and %) of bill introductions and survivals per author-topic pair on committee assignment and career congruence, with robust standard errors clustered on the individual lawmaker. Adjusted control variables include measures such as electoral safety[1], seniority in the current chamber[2], term-limited status[3], and the interaction between chamber seniority and term-limited status to adjust for the fluctuating importance of seniority under different eras of term limits. Additionally, I include a measure of the average number of co-authors per session that a primary author attracts per bill in a given policy area. The main results are presented in Figure 1 as average marginal effects (AMEs).[4]

Legislators with additional occupational expertise in specific policy areas distinguish themselves as productive and influential lawmakers. Assemblymembers and senators with expertise in a committee's policy jurisdiction introduce more bills related to that committee's work compared to their non-expert counterparts. On average, Assembly experts introduce 2 more bills per session than non-expert non-committee members who introduce just 1 bill per year. Similarly, Senate experts introduce 2 more bills than their non-expert non-committee colleagues, although this coefficient doesn't reach statistical significance. Career-experts tend to concentrate 4 percentage points more of their introductions on committee work compared to non-committee members, who distribute their efforts across various committees. However,

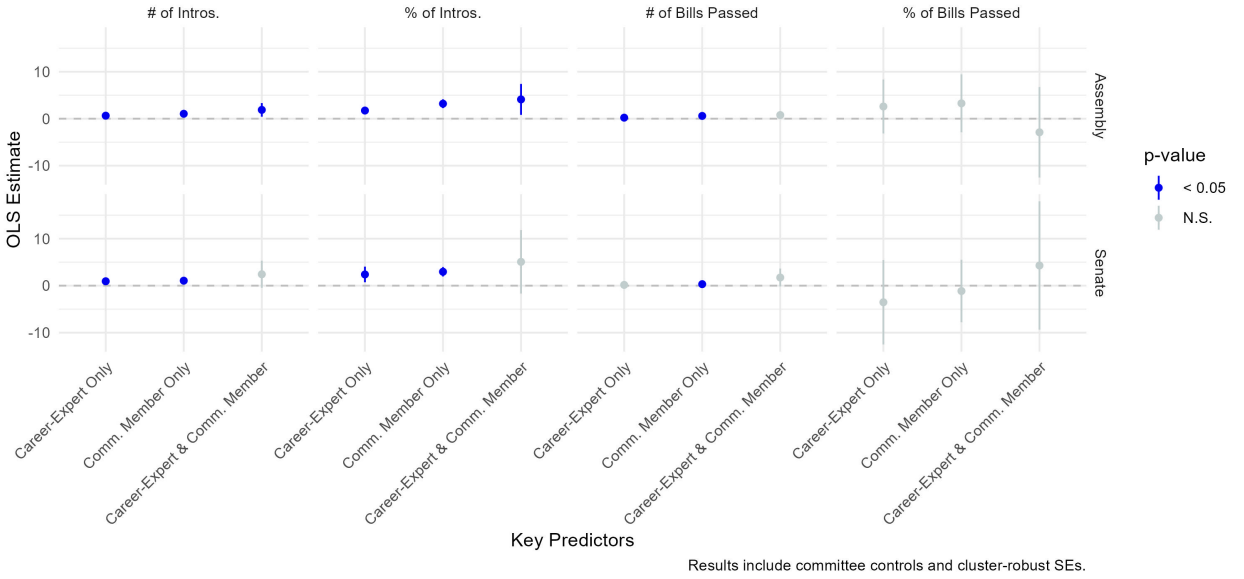
[1] Electoral safety is calculated as the percentage-point difference between the percentage of votes won by the state legislator and that of their nearest challenger in the most recent general election, regardless of party.

[2] Seniority is measured as the number of years a state representative has served in their current chamber at the start of a new legislative session.

[3] Term-limited status indicates whether the state representative is eligible for reelection to their current chamber.

[4] AMEs measure the change in the probability of an outcome associated with a unit change in a predictor variable, averaged across every observed value of the other predictors. AMEs can be interpreted as the average percentage-point difference in the probability of the outcome between a group of legislators who have a particular characteristic (e.g., career expertise in combination with committee membership) and a group of legislators who do not have that characteristic. This approach is preferred because "AMEs provide a natural summary measure that respects both the distribution of the original data and does not rely on summarizing a substantively unobserved or unobservable X value" (Leeper 2021).

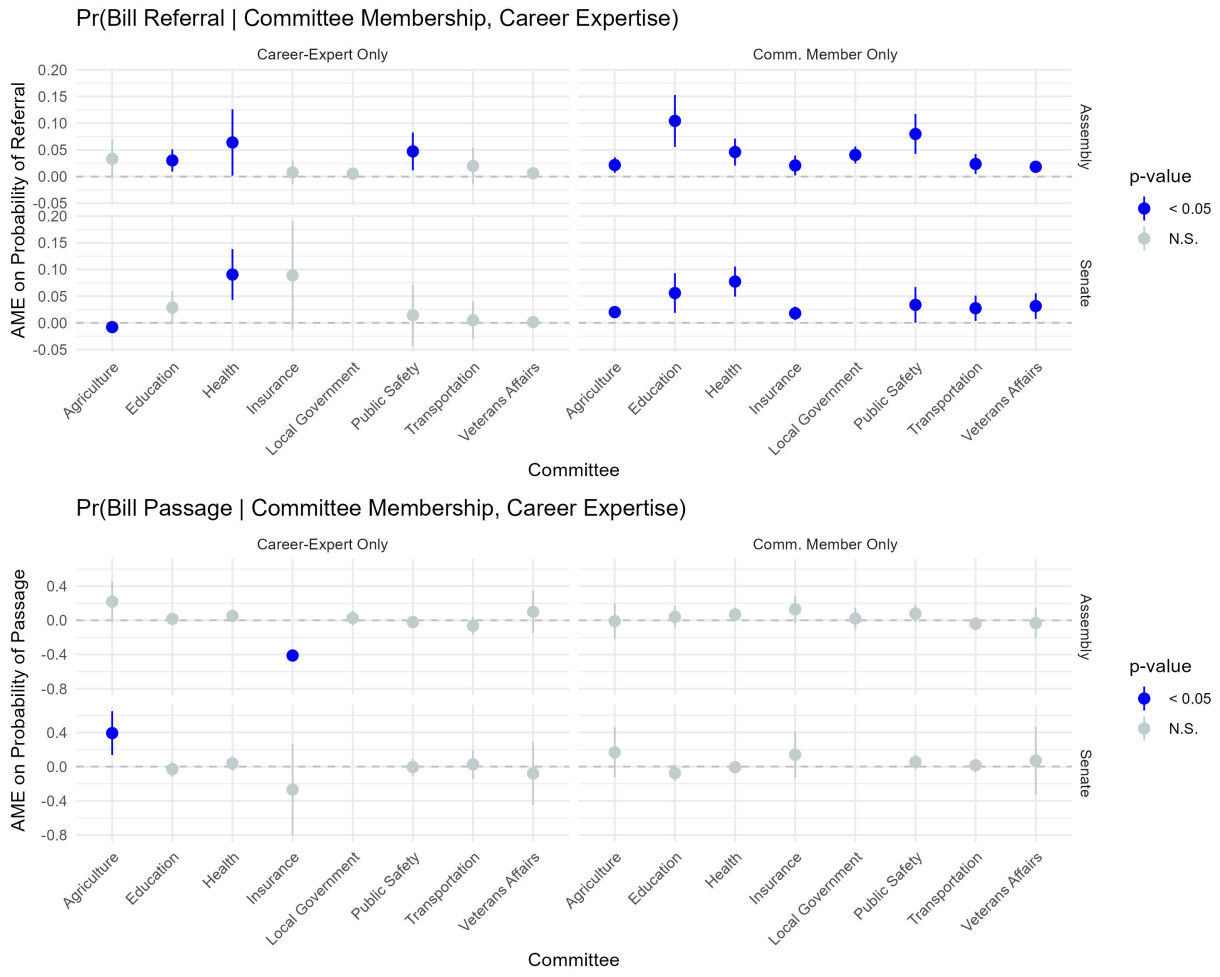
Figure 1: Predicting Bill Introductions & Survival in the CA State Legislature, 2011-2019



an expert assemblymember on a relevant committee introduces 3 bills to their committee, whereas a non-expert introduces 2, and an expert not on the committee introduces just 1.

Surprisingly, the combined effect of career-committee congruence on bill survival is insignificant. Running models separately for each policy committee (not pictured), I find certain career-experts who are also committee members introduce a significant number of bills aligned with their committee's jurisdiction. For instance, a medical professional in the Senate who is not on the Health Committee introduces no health-related bills on average, while a Health Committee member introduces one more annually than a non-member. However, a medical professional on the Senate Health Committee introduces over 15 health-related bills per year, showcasing their substantial focus on health policy. Although these findings are limited to specific committees, such as Senate Health, Assembly Transportation, and Assembly Veterans Affairs, they reflect a broader trend: career-expert committee members prioritize committee-related work to a greater extent.

Figure 2: The Main Effect of Committee Membership and Career Expertise, 2011-2019



7.1 A Bill-by-Bill Analysis

In Figure 2, I use logistic regressions to predict the likelihood of a bill being first referred based on its author's career-committee congruence and its ultimate passage into law. These models include identical controls as the OLS models mentioned earlier, with robust standard errors clustered on the individual bill. When estimating the probability of a bill passing into law, I consider the raw count of contributors the bill attracts, excluding the primary author.

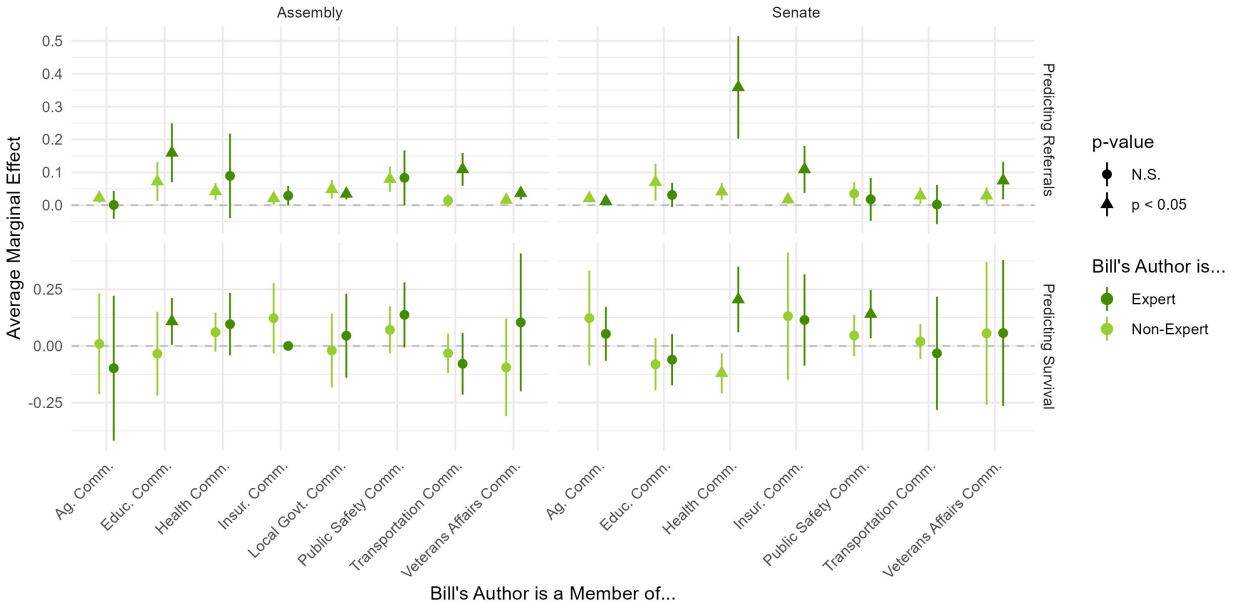
My findings indicate that committee membership alone significantly influences a bill's referral probability, with an average increase of 4 percentage points for bills authored by committee members compared to those by non-members. However, the impact of career-

committee congruence on referral probability varies widely across committees, ranging from a 2 percentage-point increase for referral to Senate Insurance to a 10 percentage-point increase for Assembly Education. These results reinforce the notion that committee members' bills are more likely to be referred to the committees they sit on. However, once referred, bills authored by committee members do not show higher likelihood of becoming law compared to those authored by non-members and referred to the same committee.

In terms of expertise alone, a bill's author's career expertise provides a modest 5 percentage-point boost for referral to a committee related to their expertise. Yet, this effect also varies significantly by committee, with the largest effect observed among bills authored by medical professionals in both the Senate (9 percentage points) and the Assembly (8 percentage points). However, relying solely on career expertise is a weak predictor of a bill's passage into law. It offers benefits for Senate bills related to agriculture but proves detrimental for Assembly bills related to insurance.

The main effects of committee membership and career expertise in isolation do not fully capture the value of combining these two attributes. In Figure 3, I illustrate the average marginal effect of committee membership conditional on career expertise. When two committee members introduce bills, those authored by career experts are more likely to be referred to the committee compared to bills by non-experts, across three Assembly and three Senate committees. Furthermore, bills authored by expert committee members are more likely to survive in Assembly Education (+16 percentage points), Senate Health (+36 percentage points), and Senate Public Safety (+2 percentage points) compared to bills by non-experts on these committees. Similarly, the overall impact of career expertise alone on bill referrals and survival masks the conditional effect based on committee membership (Figure 4). Bills authored by career experts on congruent committees are much more likely to be referred to six of the 15 standing committees in the data compared to those not on relevant committees, emphasizing how committee membership enhances the focus of career experts on committee-specific work. Moreover, bills authored by career experts on congruent commit-

Figure 3: The Average Marginal Effect of Committee Membership Conditioned by Career Expertise, 2011-2019

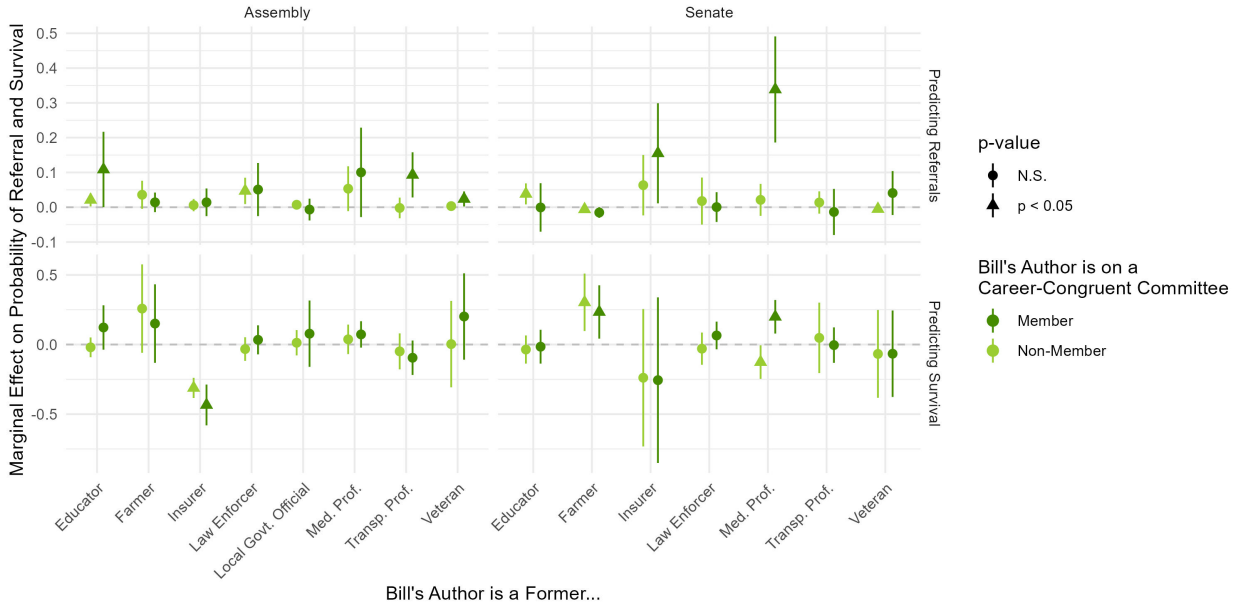


tees are more likely to pass into law than bills by non-committee experts for bills referred to Assembly Education (+11 percentage points), Senate Health (+21 percentage points), and Senate Public Safety (+14 percentage points). In essence, career experts on congruent committees prioritize committee work more than non-members, increasing the survival chances of their bills.

8 Poisson Model Results

Table 7 provides the results of Poisson models predicting the number of bill introductions per policy domain. These results suggest that committee membership, career expertise, and their interaction have effects in the same direction as identified in the main text, though the magnitude of the results is stronger: Committee membership has positive and significant coefficients across all three models, indicating that being a committee member is associated with a higher number of bills introduced per policy domain. Career expertise also shows positive and significant coefficients in all models, suggesting that lawmakers with career

Figure 4: The Average Marginal Effect of Career Expertise Conditioned on Current Committee Membership, 2011-2019



expertise introduce more bills. Lastly, the interaction term Career-Expert x Committee Member is positively associated with the number of bills introduced, but the significance levels vary: it is highly significant in the Assembly and combined models and significant at a lower level in the Senate model.

However, dispersion tests suggest that there is overdispersion in the dependent variable (i.e., the variance in the number of bills introduced per policy domain per lawmaker is higher than what is predicted by the Poisson distribution). Thus, a Poisson model is not the most appropriate event count model for this dataset.

Table 7: Bill Introductions in the Senate and Assembly (Poisson Regressions)

	DV: Num. Bills Introduced Per Domain		
	Assembly	Senate	All
Committee Member	0.641***	0.509***	0.596***
	(0.045)	(0.054)	(0.035)
Career-Expert	0.398***	0.491***	0.410***
	(0.046)	(0.073)	(0.039)

Table 7: Bill Introductions in the Senate and Assembly (Poisson Regressions) (continued)

	DV: # Bills Introduced Per Domain Per Lawmaker		
	Assembly	Senate	All
Career-Expert Committee Member	0.204**	0.229*	0.234***
	(0.071)	(0.099)	(0.057)
Prior Comm. Member	0.384***	0.346***	0.359***
	(0.047)	(0.051)	(0.034)
Republican	−0.486***	−0.363***	−0.421***
	(0.054)	(0.072)	(0.042)
Distance from Party Med.	0.189	−0.506**	0.000
	(0.188)	(0.186)	(0.124)
Republican x Dist. from Party Med.	0.348	0.529	0.307
	(0.280)	(0.300)	(0.195)
White	0.037	−0.042	−0.0003
	(0.031)	(0.046)	(0.025)
Officer	0.014	−0.164*	−0.063
	(0.052)	(0.064)	(0.040)
Non-freshman Lawmaker	0.025	0.025	0.040
	(0.035)	(0.043)	(0.027)
Woman	−0.079*	−0.082	−0.086**
	(0.032)	(0.045)	(0.026)
Committee Size	−0.032**	0.003	−0.013*
	(0.012)	(0.022)	(0.006)
Senate			0.007
			(0.031)
Constant	−1.104***	−1.234***	−1.260***
	(0.161)	(0.189)	(0.102)
Committee FEs	✓	✓	✓
Session-Year FEs	✓	✓	✓
Observations	3,111	1,342	4,453

Table 7: Bill Introductions in the Senate and Assembly (Poisson Regressions) (continued)

	DV: # Bills Introduced Per Domain Per Lawmaker		
	Assembly	Senate	All
Log Likelihood	-4,922.084	-2,173.717	-7,146.591
Akaike Inf. Crit.	9,892.168	4,393.434	14,343.180
Note:	*$^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$*		

9 Negative Binomial Model Results

The results of the negative binomial model are given in Table 8. These coefficients suggest that committee membership and career-expertise alone are strongly associated with an increase in the number of bills introduced per lawmaker in a given policy domain across both the Assembly and the Senate. The interaction, however, is only a significant positive predictor when the chambers are combined. In comparison to one another, the relative incidence rate ratios (IRRs) comparing event counts between the groups of lawmakers show that committee members generally have the highest rate of bill introductions compared to both career experts (IRR = 1.32 times more bills across both chambers) and career-expert committee members (IRR = 1.59 times more bills across both chambers). Career experts also introduce more bills than career-expert committee members, though the difference is smaller (IRR = 1.20 times more bills across both chambers). Thus, these models demonstrate the strong influence of committee membership on legislative entrepreneurship, with career expertise also playing a significant but comparatively smaller role.

That said, a Vuong test comparing the negative binomial model run on both chambers and the zero-inflated negative binomial model run on both chambers (and featured in Table 9) yields a z-statistic of -4.896 ($p = 0.000$), indicating that the zero-inflated negative binomial model is preferred, likely due to the presence of excess zeros in the data (i.e., many lawmakers

introduce zero bills in a given policy domain).

Table 8: Bill Introductions in the Senate and Assembly (Negative Binomial Regressions)

	DV: Num. Bills Introduced Per Domain		
	Assembly	Senate	Both
Committee Member	0.718***	0.598***	0.676***
	(0.067)	(0.080)	(0.051)
Career-Expert	0.387***	0.460***	0.400***
	(0.066)	(0.110)	(0.057)
Career-Expert Committee Member	0.185	0.228	0.215*
	(0.120)	(0.164)	(0.096)
Prior Committee Member	0.389***	0.346***	0.364***
	(0.071)	(0.078)	(0.053)
Committee Size	−0.036*	0.007	−0.003
	(0.018)	(0.031)	(0.009)
Republican	−0.449***	−0.363***	−0.409***
	(0.074)	(0.099)	(0.058)
Distance from Party Median	0.219	−0.199	0.124
	(0.268)	(0.264)	(0.179)
Republican x Dist. from Party Med.	0.221	0.368	0.219
	(0.394)	(0.413)	(0.276)
Officer	0.006	−0.135	−0.040
	(0.072)	(0.090)	(0.056)
Non-freshman Lawmaker	0.023	−0.034	0.013
	(0.048)	(0.062)	(0.038)
Woman	−0.094*	−0.061	−0.086*
	(0.046)	(0.066)	(0.038)
White	−0.008	−0.010	−0.018
	(0.045)	(0.069)	(0.037)
Senate			0.023
			(0.047)

Constant	-1.061^{***}	-1.315^{***}	-1.362^{***}
	(0.213)	(0.236)	(0.130)
Session-Year FEs	✓	✓	✓
Bill Topic FEs	✓	✓	✓
Observations	3,111	1,342	4,453
Log Likelihood	-4,615.120	-2,030.016	-6,665.964
θ	2.292^{***} (0.159)	2.609^{***} (0.270)	2.311^{***} (0.131)
Akaike Inf. Crit.	9,278.240	4,106.032	13,381.930

Note: $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$

10 Zero-Inflation Negative Binomial Full Model Results

The full results for the ZINB, including the controls, are given by Table 9. The main interpretations of the coefficients can be found in the main text. Below, I offer interpretations for each of the control variables in the models.

Partisanship and Distance from the Party Median: With Democratic lawmakers as the reference category, the distance from the party median among Democrats does not notably influence the probability of having zero bill introductions, but Democrats who deviate further from the party median tend to introduce more bills both in the Assembly and overall. Specifically, with each standard deviation increase in the distance from the party median across both chambers, a lawmaker introduces approximately 6.3% more bills. Conversely, Republican legislators in both chambers typically introduce 25.4% fewer bills per policy domain compared to their Democratic counterparts. This trend may be attributed to the enduring minority status of Republicans and their broader distribution across committees (see Chapter 1), leading to limitations in both staff resources and time availability for bill introductions. On average, Republicans introduce 32.22 bills per session per lawmaker, while Democratic lawmakers introduce 40.41 bills per session. The constraint of time, exacerbated

by their distribution across numerous committees, likely contributes to the diminished legislative entrepreneurship observed among Republican assembly members and senators. The interaction between being a Republican and the distance from the party median does not significantly impact bill introductions across any model.

Gender and Race: In both the Assembly and the Senate, being a woman (compared to being a man) decreases the likelihood of introducing zero bills in a given policy domain. That is, women lawmakers are less likely to introduce no bills in a policy domain compared to their male counterparts. Among women lawmakers who do introduce bills to a given policy domain, they author 14% fewer such bills than men, all else being equal. Considering that women, on average, author slightly fewer bills per session (36.15) than their male counterparts (38.53), these coefficients suggest a broader or more diverse range of topics covered by women's bills than men's. Comparing White lawmakers to state legislators of color as the reference group, the analysis reveals that in both chambers, White lawmakers are equally likely as lawmakers of color to introduce more or fewer bills in a given policy domain, all else being equal.

Seniority: Regarding the variables capturing a lawmaker's seniority or institutional status within their chamber or party—-officer status, non-freshman status, and prior committee membership—-I observe that Senate officers author substantially fewer bills per policy domain than non-authors (a reduction of 79.7%). This discrepancy may suggest that senior senators focus less on introducing new legislation and more on filtering proposals from other lawmakers. However, future research could investigate whether these officers, when they do introduce Senate bills, tend to offer more successful ones.

Non-freshman status does not appear to affect the quantity of bills introduced per domain, which contrasts with my expectations. I had expected freshman lawmakers to be less legislatively productive initially. However, this finding may reflect the common practice of introducing placeholder bills, with the intention of refining them later. Chapter 3 delves deeper into the actual viability of bills introduced by non-freshmen. Lastly, being a prior

committee member significantly increases the number of bills introduced in a lawmaker's policy domain, with prior committee members introducing 50% more bills than those without committee experience. This aligns with the expectation that legislators with committee experience leverage that experience to propose more bills within their specific policy domains than others.

Other Institutional Features: Contrary to my expectations, committee size does not significantly influence the number of bills introduced by a lawmaker in a given policy domain. I hypothesized that lawmakers might strategically avoid introducing bills in policy domains with overly large committee memberships. However, this hypothesis was not supported by the data from either chamber. Additionally, the variable representing the Senate in the pooled chamber model indicates that assemblymembers are equally inclined as senators to introduce bills in a given policy domain. I suspect this is because the Senate and the Assembly feature similar constraints in the timing of and limitations on bill introductions, redoubling the importance of committee membership and career-expertise as tools to work against these common constraints.

Table 9: Predicting Bill Introductions by Chamber, 2011-2020

	DV: Number of Bills Introduced Per Policy Domain Per Lawmaker					
	Assembly		Senate		Both	
	Zero-Inf.	*Neg. Bin.*	*Zero-Inf.*	*Neg. Bin.*	*Zero-Inf.*	*Neg. Bin.*
Committee Member	-1.042*	0.535***	-1.129	0.411***	-1.239***	0.467***
	(0.530)	(0.078)	(0.663)	(0.092)	(0.371)	(0.059)
Career-Expert	-0.429	0.354**	-0.895	0.438**	-1.868	0.331***
	(1.199)	(0.110)	(1.485)	(0.152)	(1.923)	(0.084)
Career-Expert Committee Member	0.344	0.403*	0.191	0.806***	1.647	0.570***
	(1.505)	(0.169)	(1.948)	(0.227)	(2.026)	(0.132)
Republican	0.206	-0.272**	0.409	-0.206*	0.212	-0.293***
	(0.599)	(0.010)	(0.713)	(0.118)	(0.421)	(0.075)
Dist. from Party Median	1.512	0.915**	0.067	0.142	0.786	0.479*
	(1.842)	(0.337)	(2.202)	(0.315)	(1.253)	(0.243)
Republican x Party Distance	-0.919	-0.346	2.592	0.238	1.647	0.035
	(2.706)	(0.496)	(3.366)	(0.518)	(2.026)	(0.366)
Woman	-0.412	-0.144*	-0.264	-0.027	-0.478	-0.130**
	(0.371)	(0.061)	(0.542)	(0.78)	(0.317)	(0.048)
White	0.406	0.015	0.440	0.069	0.255	0.026
	(0.348)	(0.059)	(0.625)	(0.080)	(0.262)	(0.046)
Officer	0.374	-0.008	-0.577	-0.227*	-0.065	-0.089

	(0.512)	(0.092)	(0.676)	(0.105)	(0.393)	(0.070)
Non-Freshman	0.406	0.073	0.031	-0.046	0.354	0.031
	(0.371)	(0.063)	(0.419)	(0.073)	(0.265)	(0.047)
Prior Comm. Member	-0.991*	0.392***	1.002	0.397***	-0.024	0.407***
	(0.562)	(0.083)	(0.587)	(0.091)	(0.334)	(0.061)
Comm. Size	0.719*	-0.034	-0.018	-0.000	-0.106	-0.013
	(0.361)	(0.027)	(0.148)	(0.041)	(0.145)	(0.011)
Senate					0.449	0.015
					(0.440)	(0.062)
Log (theta)		1.144***		1.213***		1.144***
		(0.110)		(0.146)		(0.088)
Constant	-15.810*	1.116*	-4.725*	0.638	-3.035	0.716***
	(6.434)	(0.444)	(2.030)	(0.373)	(1.842)	(0.191)
Committee FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Session FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	1,944		994		2,903	
Theta	3.14		3.672		3.139	
N-Iterations	86		64		122	
Log-likelihood	-2,937 (df = 43)		-1529 (df = 31)		-4,430 (df = 45)	

*Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001*

10.1 Results Limited to Highly-Active Policy Domains

Table 10 presents the results of the zero-inflated negative binomial regression models applied to authors introducing (or not) bills related to education, health, public safety, and transportation. These policy areas were selected because each of them saw over 1,000 bills introduced during the study decade, providing insight into whether career-committee congruent members exhibit heightened entrepreneurial activity in these highly sought-after policy domains. In brief, these findings closely align with those detailed in the main text: across both legislative chambers, committee membership, career expertise, and their interaction emerge as statistically significant predictors of bill authorship within specific policy domains. Notably, career-expert committee members introduce 65% more bills compared to individuals lacking expertise or committee affiliations. Moreover, when examining the relative incidence rate ratios, career-expert committee members produce 1.2 times as many bills as career-experts not serving on the same committee but exhibit no significant deviation in bill output compared to co-committee members. However, the standard errors associated with these relative IRRs caution against over-interpreting these results.

10.2 Relative IRRs Predicting Co-Authorship Between Groups

References

Leeper, Thomas J (2021). *Interpreting Regression Results using Average Marginal Effects with R's margins*.

Table 10: Predicting the Number of Bill Introductions to Highly-Active Policy Domains by Chamber, 2011-2020

	Assembly		Senate		Both	
	Zero-Inf.	*Neg. Bin.*	*Zero-Inf.*	*Neg. Bin.*	*Zero-Inf.*	*Neg. Bin.*
Committee Member	-14.625	0.488***	0.773	0.353***	-27.889	0.412***
	(333.178)	(0.082)	(1.190)	(0.090)	–	(0.061)
Career-Expert	5.160	0.407***	-1.190	0.421**	-0.420	0.351***
	(3.388)	(0.103)	(1.783)	(0.148)	(5.4298)	(0.084)
Career-Expert *x* Committee Member	9.234	0.256	-12.763	0.834***	49.264	0.499***
	(333.187)	(0.169)	(2,610.074)	(0.236)	–	(0.139)
Log (theta)		1.113***		1.305***		1.072***
		(0.099)		(0.148)		(0.076)
Constant	-37.469	1.688***	-4.769	0.624	-310.054	0.808***
	(32.569)	(0.361)	(10.731)	(0.407)	365.166	(0.174)
Chamber FEs					✓	✓
Controls^{-}	See note^{+}		See note$^{=}$		See note^{+}	
Committee FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Session FEs	–	–	–	–	–	–
Observations	1,166	1,166	597	597	1,763	1,763
Theta	3.0435		3.688		2.9205	
N-Iterations	115		93		127	
Log-likelihood	-2,309 (df = 29)		-1,229 (df = 27)		-3,561 (df = 31)	

Note: $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$

$^{+}$ Convergence issues led to the omission of author race.

$^{=}$ Convergence issues led to the omission of author race and gender.

$^{-}$ Controls include prior committee membership, committee size, partisanship *x* distance from party median, officer status, freshman status, and gender.

Table 11: Comparison of Relative Incidence Rate Ratios of Number of Co-authors, 2011-2020

	Relative IRR		
Author Attribute vs. Reference Group	Assembly	Senate	Both
Committee Member vs. Career-Expert	0.909	0.682	0.902
	(0.166)	(0.215)	(0.220)
Career-Committee Member vs. Committee Member	0.708	0.399	0.678
	(0.419)	(0.525)	(0.300)
Career-Committee Member vs. Career-Expert	0.643	0.272	0.611
	(0.431)	(0.613)	(0.315)

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Appendix C for *Career Expertise and Committee Dynamics: Evaluating Bill Viability and Legislative Approval in the California State Legislature*

Contents

1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Min.	Med.	Mean	Max.
Bill Characteristics					
Session-Year	8309	2011	2015	2015	2019
Author House (1 - Asm., 2 - Sen.)	8309	1.0	1.0	1.32	2.0
Measure Type (1 - AB, 2 - SB)	8309	1.0	1.0	1.32	2.0
# of Co-Authors Per Bill	8309	0.0	0.0	0.43	40.0
# of Subject Changes Over Bill Lifespan	8309	1.0	1.0	1.53	6.0
Levenshtein Distance for Subject Changes	8309	0.0	0.0	13.65	170.0
# of Committees Referred	8309	1.0	3.0	2.94	8.0
First Policy Committee Votes					
# of Votes Taken in First Policy Committee Per Bill	6592	1.0	1.0	1.07	5.0
# of All Committee Votes Taken Per Bill	8309	0.0	3.0	2.69	10.0
% of Ayes (No Abstentions)	6592	0.0	100.0	92.29	100.0
% of Ayes (Including Abstentions)	6592	0.0	100.0	87.6	100.0
First Assembly Floor Votes					
# of Bills Receiving Asm. Floor Vote	8309	0.0	1.0	0.56	1.0
# of Asm. Floor Votes Taken Per Bill	8309	0.0	1.0	0.82	5.0
% of Ayes (No Abstentions)	4636	16.7	100.0	92.08	100.0
% of Ayes (Including Abstentions)	4636	12.5	93.8	87.04	100.0
Last Assembly Floor Votes					
% of Ayes (No Abstentions)	4636	16.7	100.0	92.14	100.0
% of Ayes (Including Abstentions)	4636	12.5	95.0	88.32	100.0
First Senate Floor Votes					
# of Bills Receiving Sen. Floor Vote	8309	0.0	1.0	0.52	1.0
# of Sen. Floor Votes Taken Per Bill	8309	0.0	1.0	0.66	4.0
% of Ayes (No Abstentions)	4285	31.43	100.0	92.13	100.0
% of Ayes (Including Abstentions)	4285	27.5	92.32	86.43	100.0
Last Senate Floor Votes					
% of Ayes (No Abstentions)	4285	30.0	100.0	92.18	100.0
% of Ayes (Including Abstentions)	4285	22.50	92.50	86.49	100.0
Author Characteristics					
Party	8309	*D*	*D*	*D*	*R*

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics (continued)

Variable	N	Min.	Med.	Mean	Max.
DW-NOMINATE	8203	−1.0	−0.79	−0.46	1.0
Woman	8286	0.0	0.0	0.27	1.0
Race (1 - POC, 2 - White)	8174	POC	White	White	White
Officer	8248	No	No	No	Yes
Term-Limited	8279	No	No	No	Yes
Career-Expert	8272	0.0	0.0	0.239	1.0
Committee Member	8229	0.0	0.0	0.306	1.0
# of Bills Introduced Per Session-Year	8309	5.0	41.0	40.758	142.0
Committee Membership					
Asm. Agriculture	5624	0.0	0.0	0.114	1.0
Sen. Agriculture	2594	0.0	0.0	0.142	1.0
Asm. Education	5624	0.0	0.0	0.116	1.0
Sen. Education	2594	0.0	0.0	0.238	1.0
Sen. & Asm. Health	8236	0.0	0.0	0.239	1.0
Sen. & Asm. Insurance	8236	0.0	0.0	0.202	1.0
Asm. Local Government	5624	0.0	0.0	0.120	1.0
Asm. Public Safety	5609	0.0	0.0	0.094	1.0
Sen. Public Safety	2612	0.0	0.0	0.188	1.0
Sen. & Asm. Transportation	8236	0.0	0.0	0.245	1.0
Asm. Veterans Affairs	5624	0.0	0.0	0.125	1.0
Sen. Veterans Affairs	2594	0.0	0.0	0.155	1.0

1.1 Committee Sizes (# of Seats)

Table 2: Committee Size, 2011-2020

Committee	Min. Seats	Max. Seats
Asm. Agriculture Committee	7	11
Asm. Education Committee	7	12
Asm. Health Committee	15	19
Asm. Insurance Committee	13	14
Asm. Local Government Committee	8	9
Asm. Public Safety Committee	6	8
Asm. Transportation Committee	13	16
Asm. Veterans Affairs Committee	9	10
Sen. Agriculture Committee	5	7
Sen. Education Committee	7	10
Sen. Health Committee	8	9
Sen. Insurance Committee	9	13
Sen. Public Safety Committee	7	7
Sen. Transportation Committee	9	13
Sen. Veterans Affairs Committee	5	8

1.2 Distribution of Abstentions vs. Noes Cast Per Vote

Figure 1 illustrates that, among bills that fail the final vote in the first policy committee to which they are referred, they typically fail due to explicit 'no' votes. However, among bills that pass the final vote in the first policy committee to which they are referred, there is substantial variation in the number of abstentions recorded in those votes. Specifically, abstentions appear more common in situations where a lawmaker might be inclined to vote against the bill but instead, for whatever reason, chooses to abstain.

1.3 Margin of the Vote in Successful vs. Failed Final Passage Votes

The distribution of 'ayes' and 'noes' in committee, on the floor of the chamber of origin, and on the floor of the other chamber is provided by Figures 2, 3, and 4.

Figure 1: Distribution of Noes and Abstentions in First Policy Committee Votes, 2011-2020

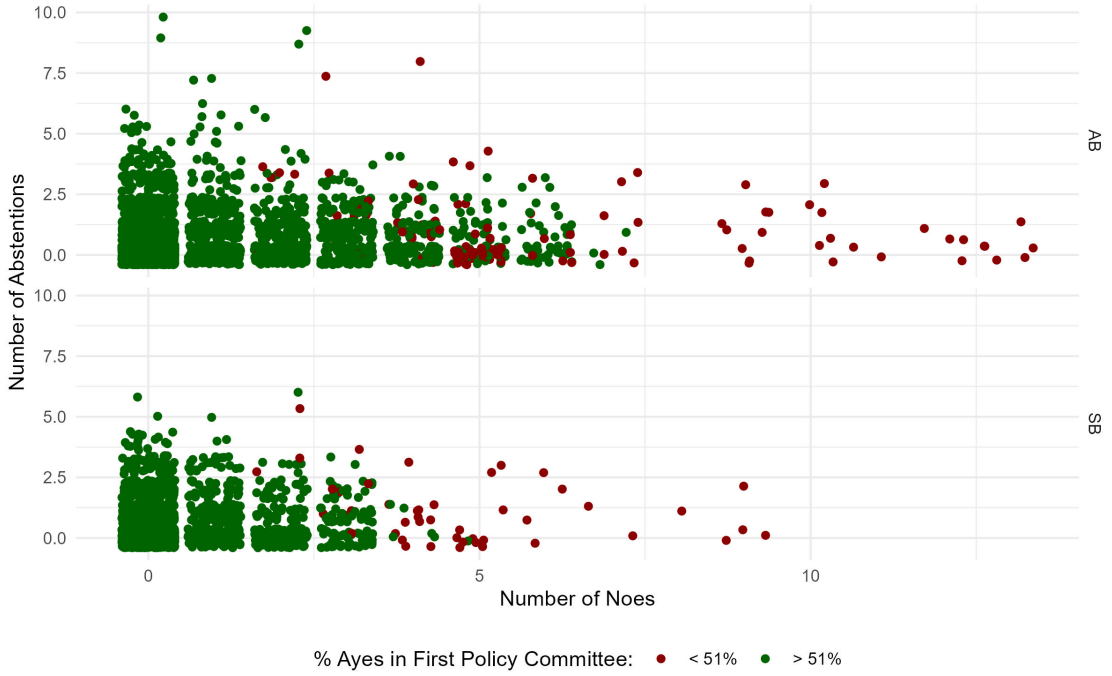


Figure 2: Distribution of First Policy Committee Votes, 2011-2020

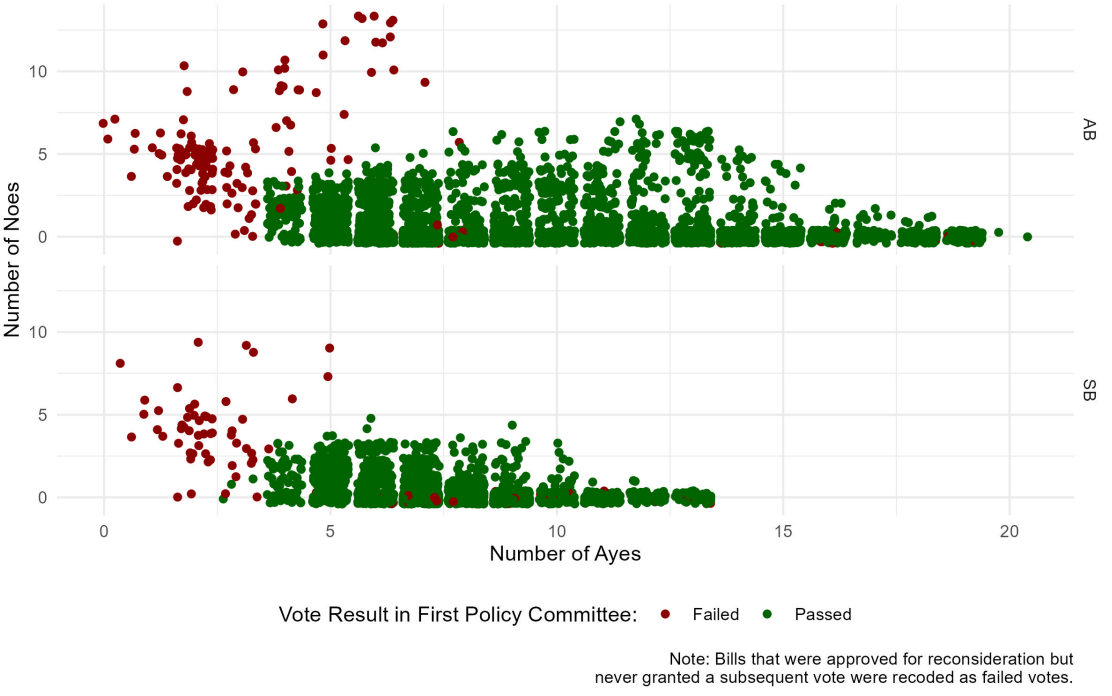


Table 3 provides the margins for error of passed and failed votes at each stage of voting (as applicable). 'Net Ayes' represents the average margin of 'ayes' minus 'noes' for passed

Figure 3: Distribution of Floor Votes in Chamber of Origin, 2011-2020

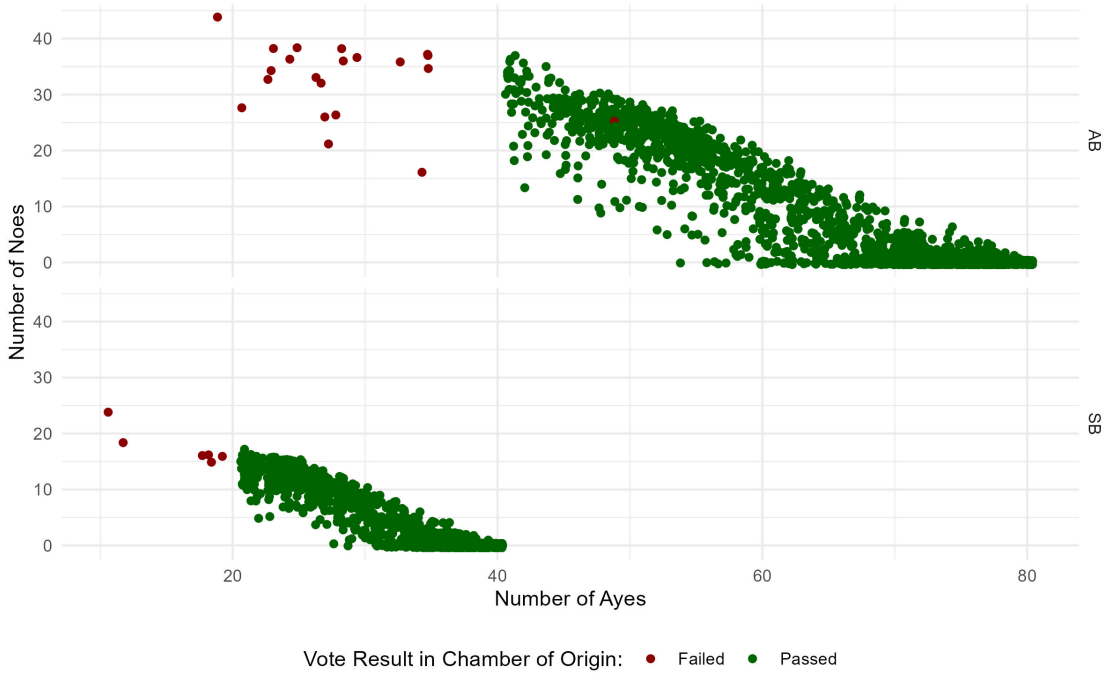
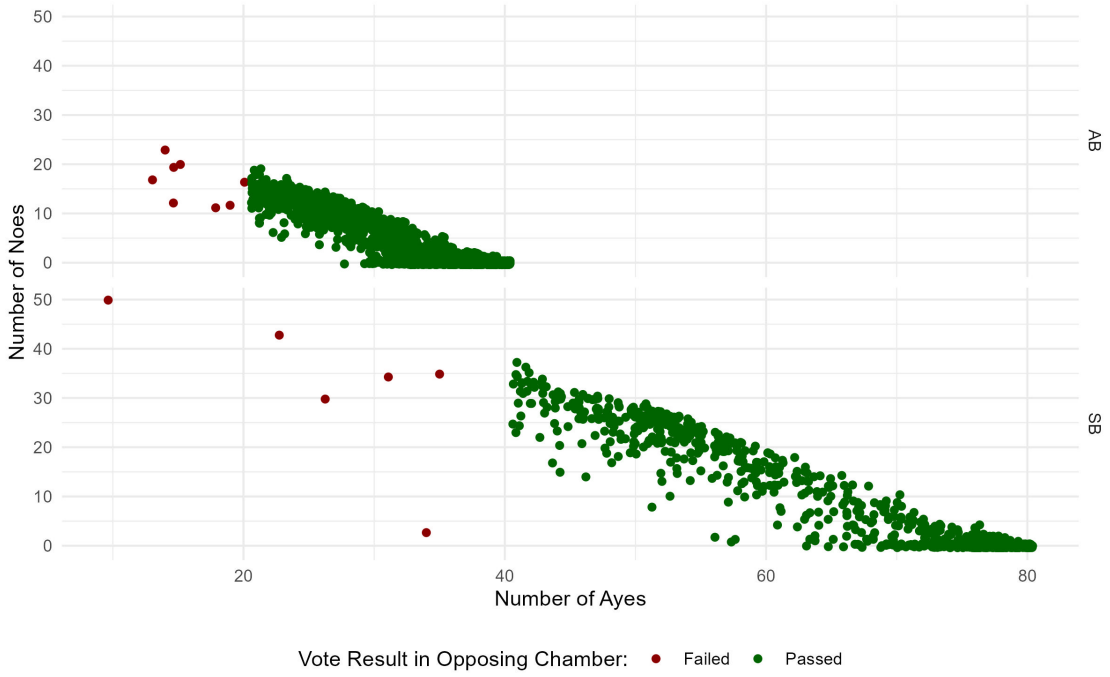


Figure 4: Distribution of Floor Votes in Opposite Chamber, 2011-2020



bills. 'Net Noes' is the average margin of 'noes' minus 'ayes' for failed bills. These numbers do not account for abstentions as abstentions do not count towards a bill's outcome. In brief,

the margin for failed votes ('net noes') is much lower than the margin of error for passing votes in the committees in both chambers and on the floors of the respective chambers. Bills that fail do so at a much smaller margin than bills that pass, and Senate bills on the Assembly floor fail with a greater number of 'noes' than Assembly bills on the Senate floor, accounting for the chambers' respective size.

Table 3: Average Pass/Fail Margins in Votes Taken on ABs and SBs, 2011-2020

Measure Type	Vote Location	Vote Result	Net Ayes	Net Noes
AB	Committee	Pass	9.185	
AB	Committee	Fail		6.269
AB	Assembly Floor	Pass	64.100	
AB	Assembly Floor	Fail		9.000
AB	Senate Floor	Pass	31.990	
AB	Senate Floor	Fail		5.375
SB	Committee	Pass	6.968	
SB	Committee	Fail		5.827
SB	Senate Floor	Pass	30.720	
SB	Senate Floor	Fail		5.857
SB	Assembly Floor	Pass	62.740	
SB	Assembly Floor	Fail		16.330

2 2-Stage Heckman Selection Results Predicting Vote Occurrence and Outcomes

Tables 4, 5, and 6 present the coefficients for the full 2-step Heckman selection models predicting vote occurrences and outcomes for ABs and SBs in the first policy committee to which they are referred. Here, the analysis focuses on the control variables in the model.

Bill Attributes: Initially, the number of coauthors a bill has upon introduction increases the likelihood of a vote occurring in the Assembly committee to which it is first referred, but it does not impact the rate of support in votes taken. For Assembly bills, the Appropriations flag is statistically significant, suggesting that an AB flagged for review by the Appropriations

Committee is less likely to be put to a vote than one without this consequential financial marker.

Other Author Attributes: Partisanship, specifically being an Independent, significantly increases the percentage of 'ayes' a vote receives in Assembly committees and on the Assembly floor. This may indicate the ability of the few independents in the California Assembly to navigate the partisan politics of the state, especially if they caucus with Democrats. Bills authored by Republicans, however, are less likely to receive a vote in committee or on the chamber floors. Unexpectedly, when a bill introduced by a Republican secures a vote, it garners considerable support in that vote in Assembly committees, though this may reflect how infrequently Republican-authored bills make it to the voting stage in committee or on a chamber floor.

Gender and Race: Results for gender are mixed, but there is a slight tendency for bills authored by women to receive more votes in Assembly committees and on the Assembly floor than those written by men. This might reflect the viability of women's proposals, as they may not author as many bills, but those they do invest in may be of higher quality (see Chapter 2's discussion). In these models, race is not a statistically significant predictor of bill voting patterns.

Legislative Tenure: Among the variables related to legislator tenure, being term-limited appears to have a positive effect on the probability of a bill being put to a vote in committee or on the chamber floor but a negative impact on the actual outcome of the bill's vote totals. This may reflect the deference given to or priority placed upon the bills introduced by senior members of the legislature who are on their way out; these authors may introduce bills that are taken seriously by colleagues but may not reflect the agendas of more junior members. Oddly, being an officer in the Assembly has a negative impact on the probability of a bill being brought to a vote in committee or on the Assembly floor, but once it has been brought to a vote, a bill's officer status has a positive impact on its 'aye' vote share.

2.1 Full Results Predicting Passage in First Policy Committee

Table 4: Voting Outcomes in First Policy Committee in Chamber of Origin

	ABs in Committee		*SBs in Committee*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
Career-Expert	0.023	−1.268*	−0.060	0.112
	(0.057)	(0.713)	(0.104)	(1.256)
Committee Member	0.185***	−1.110	0.113	0.562
	(0.054)	(1.422)	(0.077)	(1.411)
Career-Expert Committee Member	−0.127	3.131**	0.030	0.395
	(0.096)	(1.389)	(0.148)	(1.514)
# Bill Co-Authors	0.028*	−0.312	0.006	−0.215
	(0.011)	(0.226)	(0.015)	(0.161)
Independent	−0.607*	14.365**		
	(0.355)	(7.271)		
Republican	−0.470***	4.365	−0.679***	2.372
	(0.044)	(3.703)	(0.071)	(8.525)
Woman	−0.141**	2.528*	−0.005	−0.950
	(0.044)	(1.155)	(0.069)	(0.704)
White	0.040	−0.443	−0.080	1.952

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	ABs in Committee		*SBs in Committee*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
	(0.042)	(0.565)	(0.071)	(1.078)
Term-Limited	0.364***	−7.606***	−0.068	0.125
	(0.062)	(2.538)	(0.064)	(0.968)
Officer	−0.243***	4.180**	0.082	−0.632
	(0.065)	(2.015)	(0.097)	(1.316)
Appropriations Flag	0.060	0.252	0.173	−0.060
	(0.107)	(1.318)	(0.159)	(2.330)
IMR		−35.470**		−7.341
		(17.094)		(29.915)
Constant	0.709***	112.066***	1.030***	99.637***
	(0.130)	(7.143)	(0.200)	(8.641)
Committee FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Session-Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	5,596	4,340	2,607	2,162
R^2		0.974		0.978
Log Likelihood	-2,869.689		-1,124.983	
Residual Std. Error		14.952 (df = 4322)		13.823 (df = 2146)
F Statistic		9,162.207*** (df = 18; 4322)		6,064.931*** (df = 16; 2146)
χ^2	220.113*** (df = 16)		132.756*** (df = 14)	
*Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001*				

2.2 Full Results Predicting Passage on Floor of Chamber of Origin

Table 5: Voting Outcomes in First Visit to the Floor of the Chamber of Origin

	ABs on Assembly Floor		*SBs on Senate Floor*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
Career-Expert	0.006	−1.925***	−0.057	−0.824
	(0.052)	(0.674)	(0.093)	(1.374)
Committee Member	0.236***	−4.939*	0.017	−0.577
	(0.049)	(2.801)	(0.066)	(0.848)
Career-Expert *x* Committee Member	−0.150*	5.484***	0.168	1.982
	(0.087)	(1.983)	(0.130)	(2.437)
# Bill Co-Authors	0.014	−0.205	0.019	0.162
	(0.010)	(0.204)	(0.013)	(0.259)
Independent	−0.723**	20.347*		
	(0.355)	(11.053)		
Republican	−0.734***	20.972**	−0.954***	−7.581
	(0.042)	(9.718)	(0.062)	(12.656)
Woman	−0.041	1.978***	−0.077	−0.909
	(0.040)	(0.705)	(0.058)	(1.145)
White	0.011	0.860	−0.078	1.457

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	ABs on Assembly Floor		*SBs on Senate Floor*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
	(0.038)	(0.484)	(0.061)	(1.119)
Term-Limited	0.138***	−5.341***	0.110**	0.141
	(0.053)	(1.745)	(0.055)	(1.385)
Officer	−0.136**	3.660**	0.188**	1.753
	(0.061)	(1.840)	(0.081)	(2.305)
Appropriations Flag	−0.335***	7.655	−0.227	−0.112
	(0.095)	(4.300)	(0.130)	(3.048)
IMR1		−28.951		28.095
		(21.400)		(22.383)
Constant	0.420***	112.160***	1.000***	86.740***
	(0.120)	(11.952)	(0.192)	(6.251)
Bill Topic FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Session-Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	5,596	3,293	2,607	1,700
R^2		0.982		0.980
Log Likelihood	-3,597.675		-1,540.005	
Residual Std. Error		12.538 (df = 3275)		13.248 (df = 1684)
F Statistic		9,976.087*** (df = 18; 3275)		5,048.848*** (df = 16; 1684)
χ^2	386.285*** (df = 16)		288.980*** (df = 14)	
*Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001*				

2.3 Full Results Predicting Passage on Floor of Opposing Chamber

Table 6: Voting Outcomes in First Visit to the Floor of the Opposing Chamber

	ABs on Senate Floor		*SBs on Assembly Floor*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
Career-Expert	−0.058	−0.493	−0.062	−0.267
	(0.052)	(1.708)	(0.091)	(2.560)
Committee Member	0.166***	1.722	−0.042	−2.066
	(0.047)	(4.284)	(0.064)	(1.746)
Career-Expert Committee Member	−0.056	−0.606	0.099	0.549
	(0.085)	(1.774)	(0.125)	(3.955)
# Bill Co-Authors	−0.001	−0.006	0.017	0.121
	(0.009)	(0.149)	(0.012)	(0.600)
Independent	−0.565	2.378		
	(0.368)	(16.626)		
Republican	−0.602***	2.053	−0.786***	7.648
	(0.043)	(16.731)	(0.063)	(30.229)
Woman	0.006	0.667	−0.059	0.673
	(0.040)	(0.593)	(0.056)	(2.280)
White	0.041	0.907	(0.099)	(10.256)

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	ABs on Senate Floor		*SBs on Assembly Floor*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
	(0.037)	(1.087)	(0.058)	(3.232)
Term-Limited	0.131**	−1.536	0.071	−0.691
	(0.052)	(3.441)	(0.052)	(2.593)
Officer	−0.065	−0.999	0.092	−1.486
	(0.061)	(1.953)	(0.077)	(3.423)
Appropriations Flag	−0.410***	−0.238	−0.209	5.895
	(0.099)	(10.256)	(0.128)	(7.167)
IMR1		13.390		2.517
		(40.660)		(56.623)
Constant	0.229*	86.136***	0.374**	91.797***
	(0.118)	(26.846)	(0.175)	(32.254)
Bill Topic FEs	✓	✓		
Session-Year FEs	✓	✓		
Observations	5,596	2,539	2,483	1,605
R^2		0.982		0.978
Log Likelihood	-3,720.708		-1,712.117	
Residual Std. Error		12.587 (df = 2521)		13.644 (df = 1266)
F Statistic		7,661.450*** (df = 18; 2521)		4,287.624*** (df = 18; 1587)
χ^2	268.269*** (df = 16)	283.787*** (df = 16)		
*Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001*				

3 Voting on Bills in Highly-Active Policy Areas

3.1 Predicting Passage in First Policy Committee

Table 7: Voting in First Policy Committee for Bills in Highly-Active Policy Spaces)

	ABs in Committee		*SBs in Committee*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
Career-Expert	0.059	−1.934**	−0.061	−0.261
	(0.064)	(0.966)	(0.105)	(1.303)
Committee Member	0.174***	−1.346	0.084	0.578
	(0.061)	(1.678)	(0.082)	(1.242)
Career-Expert Committee Member	−0.128	3.741**	0.093	1.011
	(0.107)	(1.662)	(0.154)	(1.866)
# of Bill Co-Authors	0.023*	−0.241	0.009	−0.143
	(0.012)	(0.250)	(0.015)	(0.180)
Independent	−0.781*	22.283**		
	(0.424)	(10.816)		
Republican	−0.434***	2.815	−0.740***	−2.578
	(0.049)	(4.310)	(0.068)	(10.077)
Woman	−0.125***	2.465*	0.001	−0.265

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	ABs in Committee		*SBs in Committee*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
	(0.048)	(1.285)	(0.070)	(0.710)
White	0.060	−0.994	−0.024	1.966*
	(0.047)	(0.774)	(0.075)	(0.798)
Term-Limited	0.350***	−8.179***	−0.079	−0.474
	(0.069)	(3.067)	(0.065)	(1.121)
Officer	−0.251***	4.889*	0.068	0.724
	(0.073)	(2.599)	(0.094)	(1.240)
Appropriations Flag	−0.030	2.254	0.171	1.060
	(0.120)	(1.510)	(0.177)	(2.513)
IMR1		−37.193*		4.770
		(21.622)		(31.987)
Constant	0.787***	107.308***	1.059***	93.089***
	(0.047)	(8.159)	(0.085)	(8.679)
Bill Topic FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Session-Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	4,558	3,551	2,397	1,987
R^2		0.973		0.977
Log Likelihood	-2,324.873		-1,028.148	
Residual Std. Error		15.457 (df = 3537)		14.183 (df = 1974)

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	ABs in Committee		*SBs in Committee*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
F Statistic		8,954.292*** (df = 14; 3537)		6,454.248*** (df = 13; 1974)
χ^2	164.258*** (df = 12)		137.164*** (df = 11)	
*Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001*				

3.2 Predicting Passage on Floor of Chamber of Origin

Table 8: Voting in First Visit to Floor of Chamber of Origin for Bills in Highly-Active Policy Spaces)

	ABs on Assembly Floor		*SBs on Senate Floor*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
Career-Expert	0.035	−3.942***	−0.068	0.568
	(0.058)	(1.014)	(0.094)	(1.799)
Committee Member	0.239***	−15.971***	−0.035	−0.657
	(0.055)	(4.258)	(0.070)	(1.127)
Career-Expert Committee Member	−0.168*	13.834***	0.242*	−2.000
	(0.096)	(3.183)	(0.134)	(4.811)

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	ABs on Assembly Floor		*SBs on Senate Floor*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
# of Bill Co-Authors	0.009	−0.592**	0.020	−0.269
	(0.010)	(0.226)	(0.014)	(0.380)
Independent	−0.833	63.310***		
	(0.436)	(17.678)		
Republican	−0.761***	57.590***	−0.978***	15.833
	(0.051)	(14.633)	(0.069)	(21.740)
Woman	−0.022	2.282***	−0.054	−0.783
	(0.044)	(0.674)	(0.063)	(1.304)
White	0.028	−0.916	−0.032	3.031**
	(0.042)	(0.716)	(0.064)	(0.942)
Term-limited Status	0.133*	−11.151***	0.096	−1.360
	(0.059)	(2.363)	(0.058)	(1.901)
Officer	−0.141*	10.646***	0.175	−3.695
	(0.069)	(2.666)	(0.089)	(3.420)
Approrpiations Flag	−0.284**	18.864***	−0.291*	5.135
	(0.109)	(5.427)	(0.142)	(6.055)
IMR1		−104.171***		−12.538
		(0.510)		(36.558)
Constant	0.266***	158.808***	0.476***	97.307***

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	ABs on Assembly Floor		*SBs on Senate Floor*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
	(0.045)	(19.510)	(0.080)	(19.197)
Bill Topic FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Session-Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	4,558	2,618	2,397	1,542
R^2		0.982		0.978
Adjusted R^2		0.982		0.979
Log Likelihood	-2,952.860		-1,420.332	
Residual Std. Error		12.668 (df = 2604)		13.568 (df = 1529)
F Statistic		9,976.087*** (df = 18; 3275)		5,048.848*** (df = 16; 1684)
χ^2	386.285*** (df = 16)	288.980*** (df = 14)		
*Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001*				

3.3 Predicting Passage on Floor of Opposing Chamber

Table 9: Voting in First Visit to Floor of Opposing Chamber for Bills in Highly-Active Policy Spaces)

	ABs on Senate Floor		*SBs on Senate Floor*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
Career-Expert	−0.044	2.399	−0.075	−0.300
	(0.057)	(2.134)	(0.092)	(3.101)
Committee Member	0.146***	−9.633	−0.080	−2.728
	(0.053)	(6.480)	(0.068)	(3.218)
Career-Expert Committee Member	0.003	0.849	0.147	0.878
	(0.094)	(1.423)	(0.129)	(5.871)
# of Bill Co-Authors	−0.003	0.220	0.018	0.056
	(0.011)	(0.204)	(0.013)	(0.651)
Independent	−0.749	58.801		
	(0.466)	(37.457)		
Republican	−0.632***	49.430	−0.808***	10.967
	(0.049)	(30.075)	(0.066)	(33.170)
Woman	0.028	−1.472	−0.036	1.017
	(0.044)	(1.398)	(0.059)	(1.653)
White	0.048	−1.885	−0.095	6.914

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	ABs on Senate Floor		*SBs on Assembly Floor*	
	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)	Vote Occurs (Y/N)	Ayes (%)
	Probit	*OLS*	*Probit*	*OLS*
	(0.042)	(2.064)	(0.061)	(3.694)
Term-Limited Status	0.139**	−11.222*	0.038	−0.879
	(0.057)	(6.138)	(0.054)	(1.636)
Officer	−0.074	5.441	0.123	−1.754
	(0.069)	(3.522)	(0.080)	(4.777)
Appropriations Flag	−0.391***	21.341	−0.207	11.694
	(0.114)	(17.501)	(0.142)	(8.469)
IMR		−94.740		−2.601
		(68.243)		(60.064)
Constant	−0.132***	176.562***	−0.014	93.347*
	(0.043)	(60.386)	(0.071)	(48.689)
Bill Topic FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Session-Year FEs	✓	✓		
Observations	4,558	1,982	2,397	1,164
R^2		0.982		0.977
Log Likelihood	-3,017.676		-1,571.178	
Residual Std. Error		12.646 (df = 1968)		13.938 (df = 1151)
F Statistic		7,609.540*** (df = 14; 1968)		3,759.993*** (df = 13; 1151)
χ^2	205.747*** (df = 12)		178.605*** (df = 11)	

*Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001*