PATHWAYS TO CONGRESS: PRECONGRESSIONAL CAREERS AND CONGRESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

BY

KATHERINE A. FRANCIS

DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science
in the Graduate College of the
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2014

Urbana, Illinois

Doctoral Committee:

Professor Tracy Sulkin, Chair and Director of Research
Professor William Bernhard
Professor Jeffery Mondak
Assistant Professor Gisela Sin

ABSTRACT

Members of Congress have a variety of career experiences before Congress, non-political and political. In this dissertation, I bring together interdisciplinary strands of research on careers and occupational behavior to compare how MCs from different career backgrounds act in the U.S. House of Representatives. I argue that career experiences can provide relevant skills and insights that members in their first and second terms use to adjust to being Representatives. Through a large-scale analysis of members serving in the 101st-112th Congresses (1989-2012), I find that precongressional career experiences have multiple connections to members' decisions.

Career experiences relate to the contents of members' legislative agendas, their orientation toward legislative activities and constituent outreach, and their partisan loyalty. Members with legislative and executive backgrounds are more active in the legislative process and more successful in seeing their bills become law. MCs with different career experiences also craft different legislative agendas – the number and types of bills on which they take legislative action. New MCs significantly introduce and cosponsor a greater number of bills on policy topics that relate to their past experience, for instance – medical doctors introducing health bills. There is also an impact on the specialization of MCs' legislative agendas. Those individuals who have worked in environments emphasizing specialization, such as state legislators and lawyers, focus on a fewer number of policy topics. Finally, MCs with experience in partisan bodies donate more campaign money to their copartisans. My results have implications for policy outcomes and constituent representation, addressing debates about the selection of representations and the attendant consequences such as the breadth and depth of the legislative agenda and the cohesiveness of political parties.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My career path bears little resemblance to those of MCs (for the record, I have worked as a nanny, snow cone operator, library worker, waitress, and day camp counselor). Nevertheless, like MCs, my graduate career is the result of the support of many individuals. Without those mentioned below, I am certain this product would not be possible. I would like to thank:

Tracy Sulkin, for being an excellent advisor. Her support, advice, sense of humor, and perspective taught me numerous lessons that will serve me well throughout my career journey. I consider it a privilege to have been mentored by such a remarkable and caring individual.

The rest of my committee – Bill, Jeff, and Gisela – for taking my idea seriously, encouraging me to explore new directions, and providing valuable perspective on the process.

The 'magical' cohort for many selfless hours spent reviewing my work, putting up with my indecision, and making graduate school not just passable but pleasant.

Friends: Emily, Grace, Jenny, Jessie, Katie, Kelli, Kristy, Stef, Amy, Beth, Ariana, Louise, Ron, Mary, Allen, Barb, Dutch, Kristin, David, Betsy, Nathan, Joe, and Abby.

Finally, my families. The Francis and Spiegel families – for welcoming me into your remarkable legacies, many thoughtful actions and gifts, and good advice. My biological family – words fail to express how grateful and thankful I am for you all. My siblings – for making life a game and a song. Dad and Dawn – for always being there, cheering me on, and believing in me. To Mom – my other great cheerleader and fan, for inspiring the crazy idea of a Ph.D. in the first place and encouraging me all the way through. I could not have done it without you. And, finally, to Chris – your love and support have been the other cornerstone of this work. To you, and to my parents, I dedicate this project with deep gratitude and appreciation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Tracing Career Paths to Congress

"*But the real experience that is important in this job is the experience we bring to the job, the experience of having been teachers, farmers, or businessmen[women].*"
Rep. Ronald Packard (R-IN),
Congressional Record 1995 H3924 (as quoted in Herrick and Fisher 2007)

Members of Congress (MCs) arrive on Capitol Hill having had a variety of different career experiences. Prior to Congress, they have worked as everything from medical doctors to mayors, law enforcement officials to legislators. Nick Smith and Peter Hoekstra represent two opposite extremes on the spectrum of career paths that MCs take to office.

Both are Republicans from Michigan first elected to Congress in 1992. For Rep. Smith, being elected to the House of Representatives capped decades of public service. After Rep. Smith earned a Master's degree in Economics in 1959, he spent two years working as an Intelligence Officer in the United States Air Force (1959-1961). At the end of his tour of duty, he returned home to manage his family's fifth-generation dairy farm in Addison, Michigan, a period that proved to be a fertile beginning for his political career. While living in Addison, Rep. Smith served as a Somerset Township Constable, Trustee and Supervisor for six years (1962-1968) and for two years as a representative to the Hillsdale County Board of Supervisors (1966-1968). In 1969, he was appointed the Chairman of the Michigan Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service. Three years later, he became Deputy Administrator and Director of Energy for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, a job he held for three years.

The next stage of his career began in 1975, when Rep. Smith was offered the position of Commissioner of the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration and left Washington, D.C. to return to his home state. Within four years, he returned to electoral politics, winning a seat in the state House of Representatives in 1979 and in 1981. He followed his tenure in the state House with an additional ten years of service in the Michigan Senate (1983-1992). It

was on the heels of these legislative victories (preceded by his seven other career experiences) that Rep. Smith won election to Congress in 1992 (*Almanac of American Politics*).

In comparison, Rep. Peter Hoekstra's path to Congress was less complicated. After graduating from the University of Michigan in 1977 with a Master's degree in Business Administration, Rep. Hoekstra was hired at Herman Miller, Inc., the furniture company credited with inventing the first office cubicle. Rep. Hoekstra stayed with Herman Miller for 15 years, rising through the management ranks to become vice-president of marketing. In 1992, he left the company, his sole employer during his time in the workforce, to launch a successful bid for Congress (*Almanac of American Politics*).

In short, Reps. Smith and Hoekstra entered Congress with distinctly different career experiences. Although they were elected to undertake the same job, they approached it from very different positions. This is true of new members of Congress in general. For example, the other freshmen MCs elected with Reps. Smith and Hoekstra to represent Michigan in the 103rd Congress (1992-1993) had worked as a congressional staffer (Rep. James Barcia, D-MI), an insurance agent (Rep. Joe Knollenberg, R-MI), and a state trooper (Rep. Bart Stupak, D-MI).[1]

The career diversity in the Michigan delegation is not unique. A report by Congress' nonpartisan research agency identifies a total of 34 different precongressional career experiences that members of the 112th Congress had before office (Manning 2012).[2] This diversity

[1] These differences are highlighted by the fact that the new MCs from Michigan were similar in age, race, gender, district demographics, and electoral security. All five were middle-aged white men with college or graduate degrees who were married with children and had lived in Michigan most of their lives. Additionally, they five came from majority-white, middle class districts – four of which were predominately rural, and four of the five had faced competitive elections in the fall (*Almanac of American Politics*).

[2] These include: educators and administrators from the elementary to graduate level; medical doctors and nurses; dentists and ophthalmologists; veterinarians; psychiatrists and psychologists; ministers or religious officials; mayors; lieutenant governors; county and local officials, judges

notwithstanding, some paths to office are more common than others. For example, 41% of new MCs serving in the 101st-112th Congresses had previous business experience, 36% had legal experience, 67% had legislative political experience prior to Congress, and 81% had political experience of any kind.

This dissertation explores how MCs' diverse career experiences connect to their legislative behavior in the House of Representatives. For instance, do career experiences relate to the issues that MCs fight for in the House? Do they affect how MCs engage in legislative activity and constituent outreach? Do they color how MCs interact with their party leaders and colleagues – their loyalty to their party and partisan interests?

I illuminate the legacy of precongressional career experiences across a variety of types of legislative behavior and careers by weaving together the inter-disciplinary literature on careers and occupational behavior with legislative scholars' insights into MCs. I argue that precongressional career experiences do have strong connections to MCs' behavior in their early terms. I expect that precongressional career experiences influence MCs' issue agendas, legislative and outreach activity, and partisan loyalty, as I take up in the chapters to follow.

My work highlights the influence of precongressional career experiences on representation and policy outcomes, and my findings have implications of interest to scholars, citizens, and political practitioners. In the following, I outline three broad motivations for

---

and prosecutors at the local, county, state and federal levels; state or territorial legislators; congressional staffers; law enforcement officials from local police officers to FBI agents; scientists – chemists, physicists, microbiologists, and engineers; reporters, journalists, radio broadcasters, and media producers; accountants; pilots – including the former pilot of the president's helicopter, Marine One; screenwriters; professional football players; farmers and ranchers; social workers; members of the military Reserves, as well as former restaurateurs, real estate agents, auctioneers, car dealers, construction workers, insurance agents, stockbrokers, and funeral home owners (Manning 2012).

studying the intersection of precongressional and congressional careers, detail how this approach differs from existing studies of occupational and legislative behavior, discuss the limits to this approach, and overview how I bring the two bodies of literature together to identify three key ways in which precongressional careers relate to the decisions new MCs make in office.

Why Study Precongressional Career Experiences?

Freshmen MCs arrive in Congress having had a variety of career experiences. I define MCs' career experiences as the distinct jobs and positions they have held throughout their adult life. Their careers are the combination of these experiences – as illustrated by the example of Rep. Smith above (Wilensky 1960). As I elaborate below, I argue that there are three broad reasons that connecting MCs' experiences before office and their behavior in Congress is important. First, it provides insights into congressional behavior and legislative outcomes. Second, it highlights the connection between the types of MCs elected to office and the type of representation and policy outcomes that result. Third, it speaks to long-standing debates about the selection of elected representatives, which resonate strongly in a contemporary political environment marked by antipathy to 'career' politicians (Herrick and Fischer 2007).

Understanding Congressional Behavior and Legislative Outcomes

Freshmen MCs face a steep learning curve upon election to office. As one MC, a former professor of political science, noted, "For many members, the transition from the campaign trail to congressional life is fully as jolting as any career change" (Price 2000, 63). Connecting career experiences and congressional decision-making provides fresh insights into legislative behavior during a crucial period of MCs' legislative careers. It also addresses a significant number of questions about new MCs' behavior in office. For instance, do new MCs dive into the policy process or concentrate their attention on beefing up relationships with voters in the district? How

many, and which, policies do they take action on? How loyal are they to their party on the votes they take and in their campaign donations to copartisans?

If precongressional experiences speak to MCs' decisions, then it is important to understand the influence of these experiences on representation, public policies, and party activity. As Matthews (1984) concluded, "it seems safe to assume that the skills, attitudes, and goals of legislators are the product of their total life experiences" – which includes their career experiences. As he continues, "knowledge about who legislators are and how they got to be there should contribute to a better understanding of legislative behavior and institutions" (547). This dissertation facilitates the assessment of congressional behavior and representation by clarifying when and how the personal histories of legislators are relevant to their political careers.

Unpacking Congressional Structure

A second motivation for my work is to highlight the connections between the structure of Congress and the outcomes that result. For example, the framers of the constitution divided power across levels of government (federalism) to provide a "double protection" against government abuses of individual rights (Federalist No. 51). Since MCs are free to take whatever career path to Congress that they wish, many have diverse political experiences at a variety of levels of government (federal, state, county, or local). Individual legislators and their career experiences are part of the tie that binds together the levels of government and the political outcomes that are produced.

Additionally, there are multiple career paths to Congress because the constitutional requirements for holding congressional office are sparse (Schlesinger 1966). The only constitutional qualifications are that representatives be popularly elected every two years, at least

twenty-five years of age, a United States citizen for seven years, and "an inhabitant" of the state from which they are elected (Article I, Section 2).

The authors of the constitution specifically chose not to establish more stringent professional standards for holding congressional office. As they explained, "No qualification of wealth, of birth, of religious faith, *or of civil profession* is permitted to fetter the judgment or disappoint the inclination of the people" (Federalist No. 57, emphasis added). The framers clearly envisioned a relationship between the rules about selecting representatives and the policy outcomes that would result. By prohibiting occupational requirements, they imagined that a larger spectrum of interests could gain a hearing before Congress, bolstering its representativeness and legitimacy.

This suggests a basic logic. Change the rules about serving in Congress and the type of individuals selected to serve and the outcomes that result change as well. This observation speaks directly to on-going complaints about Congress. For example, concerns about the unresponsiveness of 'career' politicians to constituent interests have fueled a movement to install limits on the length of legislative terms (Jacob 1998). The impact of these decisions, though, depends on how MCs act during their early terms in Congress (before the limits would kick in). Not all MCs would be equally affected by term limits. MCs with political experience, for one, have more to lose in terms of their political reputations and the potential damage of electoral defeat (Maestas et al. 2005).

The effects of term limits on congressional representation depend on whether or not the MCs most affected by term limits differ from their colleagues, such as in the loyalty they show their party or the policy expertise they bring to office. If they do, then the implications of term limits are more serious than if MCs from distinct career backgrounds act similarly in office. It

follows, then, understanding the behavior of MCs based on their career backgrounds facilitates the evaluation of proposed legislative reforms like term limits.

A similar argument can be made about concerns over congressional salary, benefits, and retirement packages. As was the case with legislative term limits, whether changes to congressional salaries or benefits influences representation and policy outcomes depends on how the MCs most affected by those changes act in office compared to MCs who would be less affected. For instance, perhaps MCs who can step back easily into their old careers, such as business owners, are less likely to stay in Congress if changes were made to their salaries or benefits. Likewise, MCs who can receive a more lucrative salary or benefits package in the private sector may find that option has greater appeal if the congressional alternative diminishes in value. In either scenario, congressional reforms interact with precongressional career experiences to shape reelection and tenure decisions. If precongressional career experiences relate to the decisions that MCs make in office, as I find they do, then these reforms have substantive effects. In the long run, they may change the aggregate composition of the chamber (who runs for office) and the outcomes that emerge (what laws are passed).

Selecting Representatives: Who Represents the Public?

The study of precongressional experiences has merit for a third and final reason. By clarifying the decisions that new MCs make and the implications they have, my work addresses the question of which individuals are best equipped to represent the public. This question has been articulated repeatedly throughout American history. In 1888, for instance, Woodrow Wilson concluded, “We are too apt to think both the work of legislation and the work or administration easy enough to be done readily, with or without preparation, by any man of discretion and character” (171).

This same concern continues today, especially as the Tea Party movement rearticulates the importance of precongressional career experiences. For instance, one of the Tea Party's '15 Non-Negotiable Core Beliefs' is that "political offices must be available to average citizens" (www.teaparty.org). In line with this, adherents repeatedly vocalize the claim that some types of experience (business experience, in particular) are more valuable preparation for Congress than others (notably, political experience) [Drucker 2011].

Numerous political candidates have echoed these claims. For example, the 2012 Republican presidential candidate, Mitt Romney, premised his candidacy as "America's Come Back Team" on his experience in the business world (Purdum 2012). Congressional candidates for the 114th Congress concurred, emphasizing their business experience. For example, an advertisement for Mike Collins, a Republican candidate running for the open seat in Georgia's 10th district, describes Collins in the following terms:

> *"'At 15 he overhauled his first engine, by 25 he bought his first truck. Today Mike Collins is a successful businessman with a whole fleet of trucks…Mike believes Washington needs an overhaul'"* (Cahn 2014).

Voters' behavior seems to acknowledge these different experiences, too. The proportion of freshmen MCs without any kind of prior political experience spiked in the 104th (1995-1996) and 112th Congresses (2011-2012), important elections when Republicans took over control of the chamber from Democrats. Indeed, the 112th Congress ushered in the freshmen cohort with the least political experience in decades (Steinhauer 2010).

Again, then, my work has motivations both scholarly and applied. My findings contribute to debates among scholars about preparation for congressional office and the potential implications for public policies and public representation. They also contribute to on-going

discussions about the relative merits of certain candidates, helping voters ascertain the veracity of claims made about individuals' candidacy for office.

A New Approach to the Study of Career Experiences and Legislative Behavior

I argue that studying the variety of career experiences that bring MCs to office sharpens our understanding of legislative behavior, clarifies the impact of institutional structure and proposed reforms, and helps to navigate contemporary political debates. The study of precongressional experiences is important for another reason. It brings together two diverse bodies of scholarship – the study of careers and occupational behavior, and of legislative politics and legislative behavior.

Much is known about careers and the impact of career decisions on occupational behavior. Sociologists, psychologists, economists, career counselors, and scholars of labor relations and organizational behavior all contribute to the study of "individual behavior and its immediate contexts, looking at psychological, personal, and social antecedents and consequences of work behavior" (Abbot 1993, 190). The thrust of this research varies by discipline. For instance, sociologists examine the consequences of individual characteristics like gender, race, inequality, and income, as well as characteristics of work environments – unions, social control of work, and technology. Economists focus more predominantly on structural characteristics of the workplace: labor unions, wages and management, and collective bargaining. In contrast, psychologists (theoretical – industrial/organizational psychologists, or applied – vocational psychologists), focus on the individual consequences of work, studying topics such as stress, motivation, job satisfaction, and career adaptability (Abbot 1993).

Although it is easy to imagine how similar concerns – stress, job satisfaction, career adaptability – apply to legislative behavior, political scientists' theories about legislative careers

and behavior generally are independent of these considerations.[3] 'Careers,' 'careerism,' and career-centered concerns refer not to individuals' life-long experiences in the workforce but to the shape and structure of their political experiences in public office (Polsby 1968). In this framework, the congressional career begins once MCs arrive in Washington, D.C. It encompasses the decisions MCs make, the actions they take, the length of time they serve in Congress, the positions they hold, and whatever ramifications all of these may have.

In other words, the congressional career is not typically conceptualized in light of past career decisions, whether the focus of the study is how MCs advance legislation through the House, follow the party line on important votes, or financially support the party's electoral causes (Heberlig and Larson 2012, Stratmann 2000, Wawro 2001). Scholarly studies typically give little consideration to how differences in "who legislators are and how they got to be there" influence their behavior in office (Matthews 1984, 547).

Scholars of political ambition examine how and why individuals seek political offices at specific times (to accomplish a goal, to enjoy the office itself, or to seek a higher office in the future [Schlesinger 1966]). While these considerations address who is elected to Congress, ambition scholars typically focus 1) narrowly on "the location of congressional service in typical U.S. political careers" instead of the broader picture of how these experiences fit in the framework of individuals' other career experiences, or 2) on what prompts MCs from certain occupations to seek office (Hibbing 1991, 406, see also Fox and Lawless 2005, Lawless 2012, Matthews 1984). These are important insights. They help clarify how the behavior of candidates seeking higher office changes to accommodate their office-seeking goals, e.g. how state legislators seeking House seats become more attentive to their constituents or representatives

[3] See Fisher and Herrick (2002) for an exception regarding job satisfaction and congressional retirement.

seeking Senate seats cast a wider net with their policy agendas (Hibbing 1986, Francis and Baker 1986, Maestas 2000). What these studies do not indicate, though, is how past experiences differentially translate into how individuals pursue their personal, policy, or political goals once they are elected to Congress, especially in the beginning of their time in office.

Additionally, the connections that scholars draw between career experiences and legislative behavior do not provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the connection between precongressional career experiences and legislative behavior. For instance, legislative scholars have concluded that MCs without prior political experience are less likely to follow expected norms of behavior like compromise and cooperate with other members (Frantzich 1979, Matthews 1960, Payne 1980). Looking more narrowly at specific kinds of experience, Carnes (2013), for example, demonstrates that MCs from working-class backgrounds are more likely to vote liberally on domestic economic issues due to the way that social class backgrounds influence legislators' group identifications, material interests, and policy positions. Similarly, Miller (1993, 1995) finds that lawyers in Congress have more favorable attitudes towards the courts. Legislative experience, its influence on congressional behavior, and its influence on policy outcomes have commanded attention as well, such as the ability of state legislators to secure desired committee assignments (Berkman 1993, 1994, Little and Moore 1996). While these studies are informative, they tell us little about the overall relationships between a broad range of career experiences and congressional behavior.

Integrating Congress Into the Career

Where does this leave the study of precongressional career experiences? Neither the work of occupational nor of legislative scholars paints a clear, comprehensive picture of how career experiences speak to MCs' legislative behavior across a spectrum of different activities. In other

words, it remains unclear what difference it would make if voters elected a former governor, state legislator, nurse, or CEO to Congress. As I argue in the chapters to follow, neither approach accords with the way scholars of occupational behavior conceptualize a career: a constellation of distinct jobs, each of which I call a career experience.

MCs enter office having had many different career experiences. To become an MC, an individual must put other career options on hold – both during the campaign and while in Congress. Although legislative scholars have treated the congressional career as distinct, in reality, it is not separate from the career experiences that have come before it. The congressional career is another career experience. Isolating it from MCs' career background enforces an artificial distinction in MCs' careers and precludes a comprehensive understanding of career experiences in Congress. In this dissertation, I address the question of precongressional careers in a new way by taking seriously the idea that serving in Congress is a part of an individual's larger career – one that began before Congress (and will likely continue after it). By doing so, I can weave together the insights of occupational scholars about career experiences and the insights of legislative scholars about legislative behavior to identify connections between precongressional career experiences and new MCs' decisions.

I focus on MCs in their first four year in office.[4] Not only do new MCs lack personal congressional experience during these terms, but these years influence the trajectory of MCs' careers. For instance, how easily or how well MCs transition to congressional life influences

[4] In general, MCs' first four years in office are their first and second terms. There is one exception: if MCs initially entered Congress in a special election. These MCs may serve three terms in four years: one year or less following the second election, a full two-year term, and then the first portion of another two-year term.

their willingness and ability to continue in office (Fischer and Herrick 2002, Hibbing 1982 a, 1982b, Moore and Hibbing 1998).[5]

I look at career experiences in two broad ways. First, I compare the group of MCs who enter Congress having had other political experiences (i.e. state legislators, governors, administrators, etc.) to the group of new MCs without any prior political experience – political amateurs (Canon 1990). Drawing this comparison allows me to address concerns, like those I noted above, about the impact of 'career' or experienced politicians versus amateur politicians or 'citizen legislators'. But political and nonpolitical experiences can differ significantly – from Cabinet officials to county judges or from elementary school teachers to carpenters or airline pilots, for instance. To explore this variation, I also dive more deeply into each group (politically experienced versus no prior political experience) to investigate how MCs with different types of political and nonpolitical experiences act in their early terms in Congress.

The Limits of Studying Precongressional Careers

The focus of my dissertation is the relationship between new MCs' precongressional careers and their subsequent behavior in office. One limit to this approach is the potential to draw spurious conclusions about career experiences and their legislative behavior. While new MCs enter office from different career backgrounds, many other aspects of their lives before Congress differ as well. For instance, they come from different social class backgrounds, have different habits (i.e., smokers or nonsmokers), personalities, educations, and different processes of political socialization.

[5] Both terms are important in this regard. Since new members face a steep learning curve their first term, it is reasonable to view members as still acclimating to Congress during their second term – when they have more time to evaluate what worked or did not work in their first term. By including MCs' first four years in my analysis, I paint a richer picture of how new MCs decide what to do in Congress.

All of these considerations can play directly into MCs' political behavior (Burden 2007,Canon 1990, Carnes 2013, Lawless 2012, Prewitt 1970, Schlesinger 1960). In addition, they may also speak directly to individuals' career decisions – why, for example, an individual pursued a career in dentistry versus the military, or in corporate finance versus education. Thus, the potential problem is whether my findings tap the effect of career experiences, or whether they are really capturing other important characteristics of MCs and their personal backgrounds that may play into their legislative behavior (such as their family history, political socialization, education, personality, etc.).

In short, the reasons that MCs choose different career paths (personality, socialization, background, etc.) may influence their congressional behavior – not the career experience itself. In addition, relating career experiences to MCs' legislative behavior only points out that a connection exists. It does not establish that the relationship is causal, nor does it point out why the two are related (for instance, because MCs develop patterns of work that they carry over to Congress, etc.). In an ideal (and hypothetical) world, one way to respond to these concerns would be to run a randomized experiment. If I could control for other important considerations (socialization, personality, family background, etc.) and randomly assigning MCs to different career paths, I would be able to isolate the variables of interest and glean more crisp insights into the relationship between careers and legislative behavior.

Unfortunately (or fortunately, depending on one's perspective), I do not have the ability to manipulate hypothetical congresses, so randomly assigning career experiences to MCs is out of the question. Another alternative would be to control for the selection effect influencing how individuals choose different careers, since there are many reasons that individuals could purse the same career. (For instance, someone could become a doctor because of a deep-rooted

appreciation for the human body, a harrowing medical experience, or because of family expectations and pressure.) The data I have collected do not allow me to distinguish between these reasons. Nor is it easy to control for MCs' political socialization, family history, personality, etc. In the following, I take into consideration what I can (education, for one). But, since I cannot run randomized experiments on MCs, the controls are admittedly imperfect and valid causal inference is not possible.

But this does not nullify the value of studying career experiences. Even without being able to draw causal inferences, the study of precongressional careers still answers interesting questions. For one, it sheds light on the types of qualities that candidates use to present themselves to voters and that voters may, in turn, use to evaluate candidates. For instance, a candidate whose makes campaign promises about reforming health policies but has no demonstrable experience in the health profession may be seen by voters as a bigger gamble than a candidate who has been trained in the medical field and built a decades-long career in the field.

In sum, in the following, I outline broad patterns that appear between MCs' precongressional careers and legislative behavior, acknowledging that these conclusions are the best that the data on real-life MCs allow. In the rest of this chapter, and more fully in chapter two, I draw on the literature from scholars of occupational behavior to point to areas of congressional behavior that may differ according to career experiences. To be clear, these insights are helpful for thinking about potential connections between careers and congressional behavior, but I cannot conclusively infer from the data whether these relationships are at work. Even if I cannot draw causal conclusions about it, I contend that looking at the connection between career experiences and legislative behavior has merit. By allowing me to make observations about whether MCs from different career paths act differently during their early

terms, it addresses the situation of voters and candidates and sheds light on a fundamental characteristic of Congress: MCs arrive there from many different career paths. In the chapters to follow, I explore three broad points of connection between MCs' career experiences and their legislative behavior.

Policy Preferences

I anticipate that precongressional career experiences relate to the issues that individuals are exposed to and the expertise they develop (Hall 1996, Holland 1985). When MCs arrive in office, I expect that they are especially attentive to these issues, prioritizing them at the expense of others. Take, for example, the behavior of Representative Kathy Dahlkemper (D-PA).

In her first term in office (111th Congress), Rep. Dahlkemper, a clinical dietician, introduced 6 bills on the House floor that pertained to medical or health-related topics. In contrast, in the preceding two congresses, new MCs individually introduced an average of one health-related bill per Congress. Along the same lines, the only bill that Rep. Steve Southerland introduced during his first term in Congress (112th Congress) was to ensure that "funeral and burial arrangements were not to be considered assets under the Supplemental Security Income program" (Skotzko 2011). A unique bill to be sure, it would have been an odd choice if Rep. Southerland had not been the co-owner and president of Southerland Family Funeral Homes before running for Congress.

I expect that such examples are common among legislators. If precongressional career experiences relate to the content of bills that MCs' introduce into policy debates, it has important implications. This connection affects how voters' preferences are represented in the legislative process – how MCs take the issues and ideas they hear while campaigning for office and turn them into public policies. In the aggregate, if MCs with medical experience are more active on

medical issues, as the example of Rep. Dahlkemper suggests, then a Congress composed of a greater number of medical professionals would introduce and (perhaps) pass more health-related legislation than a Congress composed of business or legal professionals. In short, the relationship between MCs' career experiences and their legislative agendas influences the aggregate congressional agenda.

I also contend that precongressional experiences intersect with MCs' individual agendas another way as well: through the number of policy topics that MCs address. Congress addresses an impressive array of public policies, everything from space exploration and underwater drilling to the protection of civil rights and intellectual copyrights. MCs are free to dive into whatever policy debates they like. They could dabble in a little bit of everything – addressing a spectrum of policy topics in their legislative introductions and cosponsorships, or what is known as generalizing. Or, they could focus their attention more narrowly or specialize on a few policy topics.

I posit that the specialization of MCs' legislative agendas also varies with their precongressional careers. I argue that MCs with legislative experience and political amateurs with legal experience enter office more familiar and practiced with the logic of specialization (i.e., focus resources on a few issues to increase credibility, expertise, and influence among colleagues and voters). Similar to the way that lawyers specialize in an area of law, I posit that MCs with legislative or legal experience do not try to 'do it all' in their early terms in office. In sum, I anticipate that precongressional careers influence both the types and numbers of topics on which MCs work.

Legislative and Outreach Activities

I also expect that precongressional career experiences connect to the decisions MCs make about how to pursue their policy goals and reach out to their constituents. The volume of legislation that MCs produce is their choice, as is the effort they put into building relationships in the district. If MCs with prior political experience are more familiar with the policy process than political amateurs, it may facilitate their legislative activity compared to amateur MCs without prior experience. As one senior MC described the learning curve for freshmen MCs in the 112th Congress,

> *"A lot of these freshmen have never served in public office, much less in the legislative arena...[they lack] the bigger picture that a lot of us who have been around a long time have already understood"* (Stanton 2012).

The same type of connection could emerge among political amateurs and also among politically experienced MCs given the type of political/nonpolitical experiences that MCs have had. For example, the legal practice revolves around the law, and uses similar professional skills (Eulau and Sprauge 1964). In light of these similarities, I anticipate that political amateurs with legal experience introduce and cosponsor more bills (and place more of their staff in their D.C. offices to work on them) compared to other amateurs. When comparing MCs with different kinds of prior political experience, I expect that MCs with legislative or executive experience are more active in the legislative process than MCs with other political experiences. Having worked in or with a legislature should provide a clear understanding of the effort involved in, and benefits accrued by, different legislative and outreach activities. Overall, I posit that precongressional career experiences influence the mix of new MCs' activities in office.

Partisan Loyalty

Finally, MCs' experiences before office may touch the relationships they form with copartisans and party leaders. Congressional career advancement depends on successfully navigating and leveraging social networks and interpersonal relationships. The examples of Reps. Jeff Denham (R-CA) and Diane Black (R-TN) are illustrative here.

Denham, a former almond rancher and later entrepreneur, won a seat in the California State Assembly in 2000. While serving in the state legislature, he roomed with Kevin McCarthy (R-CA), who was elected to the House of Representatives and went on to be the Republican Majority Whip in the House of Representatives. After Rep. Denham was also elected to Congress, the partisan relationships he formed prior to election influenced the relationship he developed with his party in Congress (and gave rise to his reputation for being a messy roommate) [Skotzko 2011]. On votes when the two parties took opposite sides, Rep. Denham voted with his party on 97% of them, crossing party lines on only 3% of party line votes. In comparison, other new MCs crossed party lines twice as often on these votes.

Similarly, Rep. Diane Black (R-TN) entered Congress in 2010 with a wealth of political experience and relationships. She had served six years in the Tennessee House of Representatives before being elected as a state Senator in 2004 and as the chairwoman of the Tennessee Senate Republican Caucus in 2006. As a freshman MC, Rep. Black was also loyal to her party; like Rep. Denham, she voted with the party on 97% of party line votes.

Like Reps. Denham and Black, then, I anticipate that MCs with political experience are more loyal than other MCs. By comparing politically experienced MCs to political amateurs as well as looking at types of nonpolitical and political experience, I am able to flesh out the

connections between precongressional careers and MCs' decisions about important votes (when the parties take opposite positions) and an important resource (donating campaign cash).

In sum, the study of precongressional careers illuminates connections between congressional behavior and legislative outcomes by shedding light on MCs' policy preferences, legislative and outreach activities, and party loyalty. All of these considerations touch on on-going debates about the selection of representatives that will be faithful to voters' interests. As one scholar of legislative behavior concluded, "it seems safe to assume that the skills, attitudes, and goals of legislators are the product of their total life experiences" – which includes their career experiences. As he continues, "Thus, knowledge about who legislators are and how they got to be there should contribute to a better understanding of legislative behavior and institutions" (Matthews 1984, 547). Through its insights into legislative behavior and outcomes, this dissertation facilitates the assessment of congressional behavior, an appraisal that is central to legislative representation.

My argument addresses the policy and institutional implications of MCs' career paths. In the words of one legislative scholar, "if we are to understand [MCs'] behavior we must know who they are; *the kinds of experiences they have had*" (Davidson 1969, 11, emphasis added).To date, it is unclear whether MCs' backgrounds – political versus nonpolitical and different varieties of each – affect how new MCs act and, therefore, whether precongressional careers shape congressional behavior in ways that influence representation. By addressing this question in my dissertation, my work 1) yields new insights into legislative behavior, 2) clarifies the impact of the structure of political institutions on political outcomes, and 3) helps us navigate debates both long-standing and contemporary.

Dissertation Outline

To see these implications, I take into account the diversity of MCs' precongressional careers, rather than focusing on only a select group of MCs or one type of career experience (Berkman 1994, Canon 1990, Carnes 2013, Little and Moore 1996). I examine a variety of decisions that new MCs make: how many bills to introduce and cosponsor, the policy scope of these bills (whether they are symbolic or broad reaching), how many and what policies to focus on (education, versus agriculture, versus health, etc.), how much money to spend on constituent outreach, how frequently to vote with the majority of their party, and how much money to donate to copartisans. Touching on their legislative, constituent, and partisan activities, my dissertation provides a broad perspective on the intersection of congressional and precongressional careers.

Chapter two looks at the intersection of career experiences and legislative behavior. Drawing from the interdisciplinary literature on careers and occupational behavior, I explain why career experiences may hone skills and provide insights that become useful decision-making resources for new MCs. My expectation is that MCs' policy interests, approaches for accomplishing policy goals, as well as patterns of interaction with their colleagues, differ with past precongressional experiences.

Having sketched out my expectations about precongressional career experiences, chapter three fills in the picture of these experiences and overviews the systematic approach I take to studying them. I focus on the 838 new MCs (in their four earliest years in office) who served during the 101st-112th Congresses (1989-2012). I outline how career experiences are categorized and provide a flavor of these experiences.

I test my expectations in chapters four, five, and six. Chapter four investigates how MCs divide their scarce time, energy, and resources on Capitol Hill. In this chapter, I focus on two key

decisions that MCs make: how active to be in the legislative process (the volume of their legislative introductions and cosponsorships, as well as the type of bills introduced), and how to reach out to constituents in their districts through district travel, constituent mailings, and staff. I explore basic differences between MCs with and without prior political experience, and then look separately at political amateurs and at politically experienced MCs.

Chapter five examines MCs' issue priorities. Drawing comparisons between the policy insights provided by different experiences, I illustrate how MCs' precongressional career experiences track with the issues they prioritize in office and, as a result, the breadth and depth of their individual policy agendas. In the aggregate, I argue that this policy specialization influences the representativeness of the institutional agenda and the way in which constituents' preferences are taken into consideration during the policy process.

Chapter six explores the relationships that MCs develop with their party leaders and colleagues. Looking at campaign contributions and roll call votes, I describe how partisan interactions vary with precongressional experiences, nonpolitical and political. I trace out these patterns over the votes that new MCs take and the amount of money (if any) they contribute to help copartisans win (re)election. Chapter seven concludes, summarizing my argument, its implications, and directions for future research.

Chapter 2: The Intersection of Precongressional Careers and Legislative Behavior

In 1958, Reid Ribble's father, an ordained minister, founded a roofing and siding company in Appleton, Wisconsin. Growing up, Ribble's career ambition was to follow his father into the ministry, not the roofing business. So, upon graduating from high school, Ribble enrolled in Grand Rapids School of Bible and Music to become a Baptist minister. But it was not to be. Partly through his studies, Ribble dropped out and joined the family business, beginning a three-decade long career in the roofing industry. By 1982, Ribble had become company president. Dissatisfied with the on-going national debt and budget crisis, he ran in the Republican primary for the 2010 congressional election. Winning the crowded primary, later that fall he defeated Democratic incumbent Steve Kagen with 55% of the vote without any prior political experience (*Almanac of American Politics*, ribble.house.gov).

Rep. Ribble repeatedly drew on his experience as a business owner throughout his first term. Less than two weeks into the start of the 112th Congress, Rep. Ribble and freshman colleague Rep. Scott Rigell (R-VA) announced the creation of the Job Creators' Caucus, an exclusive working group for former small business owners. As Rep. Ribble explained, "Decades of experience taught me what it takes to run a successful business that creates jobs. All the members of this caucus bring that same experience to the table and stand ready to apply their private sector skills into molding a more jobs-friendly government" (Ribble 2011).

Rep. Ribble would continue to cite his experience in the roofing business throughout his first term to explain his position on issues ("Energy efficiency is also an important part of the equation. My former roofing company was an innovator and a leader in this regard, using less energy and in turn lowering the demands on our resources") and to sponsor and cosponsor legislation (H.R. 2898, Regulation Moratorium and Jobs Preservation Act of 2011).

In addition, due to his business experience, in 2011 Rep. Ribble was hand-picked by the Republican party leadership to address President Obama during a budget negotiation meeting. As described by a *New York Times* journalist who followed freshman MCs in the 112th Congress,

> *"After the Republic leaders and committee chairmen each spoke, there was time for a comment from a single freshman. McCarthy [Rep. Kevin McCarthy, Republican majority whip] had seen to it that the designee be Reid Ribble of Wisconsin....[he] spoke of a regulation that had once been on the books forbidding workers from carrying plastic water bottles up to a rooftop – thus necessitating frequent (and dangerous) trips up and down the ladder to drink. McCarthy wanted Ribble to share that story of egregious overregulation with the president"* (Draper 2012, 228).

Outlining the Study of Precongressional Careers

Rep. Ribble was not shy about drawing attention to his prior experiences as a guide or explanation for the decisions he made as a freshman MC. New MCs face a steep learning curve upon entering Congress. Among other things, they need to determine what to do, how to do it, and how to work with their new colleagues. MCs have to be doing this work, in real time, as soon as (if not before) they are sworn into office. In this environment of rapid and hands-on learning, new MCs can draw on what is familiar from past experiences to help them navigate and succeed in their new job in Congress. Legislative scholar Richard Fenno once observed that: "When they are at home, members of Congress tend to do what they are experienced, comfortable, and talented at doing and tend not to do what they neither like nor do well" (1978, 127). I argue that this holds in Washington, D.C. as well.

Specifically, I expect that career experiences can strengthen MCs' legislative and political knowledge, develop policy expertise, and partisan connections. Not only are these skills and insights relevant to congressional decision-making, but they can reinforce the advice that new MCs receive from other sources or provide insights when other resources do not. As a result, I argue that new MCs from different career backgrounds make different decisions about what to do in Congress. I expect that this connection between careers and congressional behavior is particularly poignant during MCs' first four years in office, when they likely still are adjusting to their new jobs as members of the House of Representatives.

The rest of the chapter proceeds as follows. In the next section, I address why I focus on new MCs. Then I discuss the situation new MCs face, since I assume that new MCs have a number of demands and challenges they need to sort through. After describing these, I trace out the resources that MCs can have to help them figure out what being a new MC means, point out their limits, and argue that career experiences may be a helpful addition to this list.

In light of this, drawing on the idea of career assets, I identify a three-part framework for thinking about the value of past experiences in a new job: how, why, and with whom individuals work. After that, I map out how this fits onto the congressional experience. I expect to observe differences in the effort that new MCs allocate to legislative and outreach activities (the 'how' of work), the number and types of topics that new MCs take up (the 'why' of work), and MCs' party loyalty (the 'with whom' of work).

Why New MCs?

In my dissertation, I focus on new members of Congress, those in their first four years in office.[6] While there is no reason why past career experiences could not influence MCs' behavior during their later terms as well, I concentrate on what legislative practitioners and scholars note is a crucial period at the beginning of MCs' congressional career, the transition to office (Barnett 1999, Canon 1990, Hibbing 1991, Stratmann 2000). During this period, new MCs are more vulnerable to electoral defeat, less likely to receive their desired (and desirable) committee assignments, and in greater need of policy and political information (Hibbing 1991, Jacobson 1987, Stratmann 2000). Additionally, they are the least acclimated to Congress and its norms, such as not publicly criticizing colleagues, specializing on a few policy topics, cultivating friendly relationships with other members, and participating in committee work (Asher 1973, Canon 1990, Frantzich 1979, Matthews 1959, 1960).

Likewise, at the beginning of their time in Congress new MCs must become acquainted with legislative procedures. As one MC suggests, "The very nature of the legislative process does require that new members take more time to become acquainted with committee activities than those who have served for many years" (quoted in Asher 1973, 138). As another MC notes, this learning process is necessitated by the institutional structure and size of the House of Representatives: "In a body as large as the House of Representatives with 435 elected, coequal members, there has to be a structure if we're ever going to get anything done. And it takes a long time to learn that structure, to learn who has the power" (quoted in Fenno 1978, 138).

[6] MCs whom were elected to office, defeated or retired, and then elected again to the House at a later date are not included in this analysis even if their second stint in Congress began during my time period of study. Having already served in office, these MCs understand what congressional life is like. I expect that their decisions differ significantly from other MCs in ways not directly related to their other career experiences, so including them in the analysis is not helpful.

In addition, new MCs must learn how to interact with other political actors. For instance, David Price, a political scientist-turned-member of Congress, explained:

> *"Term-limit proponents often seem to think that serving effectively in Congress requires no particular experience or expertise…I have heard members of the Intelligence Committee say that it took them four years simply to know how to ask the right questions of career people who were accustomed to revealing only what they wished to, and I confess that sometimes I felt the same way on the Banking Committee"* (Price 2000, 250).

In sum, the first few years in Congress are a period of intensive and hands-on learning. As legislative scholar Richard Fenno suggests, "the controlling variable is *time*, because all careers can be thought of as developing and changing with the passage of time" (Fenno 1978, 171, emphasis original). In the words of one first-term MC: "I'm still caught up with reelection, with my survival I've been in office nearly two years and I'm still campaigning. I'm still trying to please everyone, still running. I don't feel like an incumbent and I haven't started acting like an incumbent" (Fenno 1978, 180).[7]

My focus on new MCs' first four years is also consonant with what scholars of occupational behavior address as an important period in any career – the transition to a new job. Career transitions are typically associated with lifestyle changes– income, location, acquaintances, leisure time – that can influence future occupational decisions (Pilot and

[7] Note that the MC who made this comment did so in 1978, when the average MCs' campaign contributions were $111,232 (Jacobson 1992). By 1989, this increased five-fold to over $500,000 to spend on their campaign, and it tripled to over $1.8 million dollars in the 2010 election. The increased cost of congressional campaigns means that MCs (or congressional candidates) must spend a greater portion of their time campaigning and fundraising. In short, being a new MC has most likely only gotten harder over time. If new MCs found the adjustment to Congress difficult almost three decades ago, then I expect that the new MCs in my sample did so as well.

Rosenthal 1988). Workplace success can impact the rest of an individual's career by altering her/his ability to secure other jobs and influencing the type of jobs s/he could get (Baruch 2004, DeFillippi and Arthur 1994).

As I explain in greater detail below, career transitions are an ideal opportunity for seeing whether individuals from different career backgrounds take different approaches to their new job in Congress. Because I am interested in using the observations of scholars of occupational and career behavior to provide insight into legislative politics, I focus on MCs' first four years in office. [8] Throughout the following, I use the term 'new MCs' to describe these MCs.

The Life of a New MC

One of the things that makes the study of new MCs interesting is that MCs' early terms are often described, by members themselves and by political observers, strongly: a "necessary learning curve…[a] struggle to get organized," "an unbelievably grueling march," a "whirlwind," or an information overload (Barnett 1999, 77, Livingston 2013). Part of the intensity comes from the number of demands on new MCs' time and attention. These range from keeping in touch with constituents, to setting up the offices in which MCs work, to learning how to introduce a bill. I outline these tasks below, as they are key to understanding why precongressional career experiences provide useful resources for new MCs.

[8] Extending this exploration over the entirety of MCs' congressional careers opens up additional questions for study. For example, does the effect of career experiences diminish over time? Do some career experiences exert a more lasting effect than others? At what point do prior experiences stop shaping members' behavior? These are important questions that invite follow-up analysis to the present study.

Setting Up Shop

New MCs need to hire staff and set up their congressional offices.[9] Congressional staffers perform a range of duties – answering constituent mail, helping voters with problems, scheduling events, working on legislation, and bargaining over policies with other politicians (Fox and Hammond 1977). They bear the burden of responsibility for the behind-the-scenes, detailed investigation, analysis, and negotiation that make the legislative process work (Hall 1996, Salisbury and Shepsle 1981).

Not only do MCs depend on the legislative footwork and information provided by legislative staffers, but, in some cases, staff deliberations proxy negotiations between the MCs themselves (Hall 1996). Bauer et al. observed that: "The Congressman is typically thrust unprepared into a specialized milieu and confronted with a massive volume of highly technical legislation, with most of which he can deal only superficially" and therefore must "count on the assistance of a modest staff" (Bauer et al. 1963). According to former Senator Dick Clark, "there is no question of our [MCs'] enormous dependency on [staff] influence. In all legislation, they're the ones that lay out the options" (as quoted in Fox and Hammond 1977).

At the same time, hiring can be time consuming, since there are numerous positions to hire and competition for them is intense. For example, a Republican freshmen elected in 1992 received "close to two thousand resumes" (Sherrod 1999, 12). As he described it, "A special room had been set up in the basement of the Rayburn House Office Building with mailboxes and desks for members-elect to process applications and interview potential staff. The mailboxes were stuffed with resumes" (Sherrod 1999, 12). This accords with the advice political consultant Tom Mantos gives congressional staffers: "The most likely chance to get a job might be with

[9] The average new MC in the 104th-108th Congresses (1996-2004) employed seven district staffers, eight Capitol Hill staffers, and had two district offices.

new members, so my advice is that they know where the new member temporary offices are during new member orientation, and that they drop off their resume in those temporary offices" (as quoted in Cahn 2012). While it may not be a glamorous task, staff and office decisions have real implications for the quality and quantity of MCs' activities.

Learning About the Institution and Its Members

In addition to having new employees, new MCs have 434 new colleagues to meet. While some may be familiar from past experiences, the majority are not, which is notable in a legislative body that depends on cooperation and collaboration (Aldrich 1995, Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005, Downs 1957). Whose advice to take, who to trust, who not to offend, who to support – these are questions that new MCs have to sort out again upon reaching Congress.[10]

In addition, there are new rules to learn – the political, policy, and legislative rules or norms of congressional life. Congress is a procedurally complex institution (Canon 1989, Hibbing 1988, Polsby 1968). There are rules to master about the most basic elements of MCs' responsibility as legislators, such as how to introduce a bill, offer an amendment, speak on the House floor, etc. In addition, there are structures and precedents that are followed about how leaders are recruited and selected (Polsby 1968, 153). New MCs can be at a loss to know how to work in light of this complexity.

[10] Likewise, party leaders often know little about their newest members. While the party organization may provide financial or electoral assistance to congressional candidates, party and committee leaders are unlikely to be acquainted with every new MC, her/his district concerns, personal legislative interests, and political goals (Heberlig and Larson 2012). As recounted by a freshman representative and former lawyer, the Speaker of the House had no idea he had been a trial lawyer until, to the Speaker's surprise, he offered a piece of legal analysis in a meeting (Barnett 1999).

For instance, as I noted in chapter one, freshman representative Steve Southerland (R-FL, 112th Congress), owned a funeral home before being elected to Congress and did not have any prior political experience. During his first term, he reported that "he leans heavily on his staff for learning the legislative process" (Skotzko 2011). To give another example, during the budget negotiations of the 113th Congress, Rep. Paul Ryan observed that "part of the challenge is explaining to freshmen who were just elected the logistics of what they will be dealing with in the first quarter of their first year in Congress" (Newhauser and Strong 2013). Institutional procedures can be an on-going hurdle for new MCs to overcome in their early terms.

Ascertaining Constituent Opinion and Allocating Attention

Finally, new MCs have to decide what their constituents want them to do and how they will respond. These can be time consuming and difficult tasks. For example, a diversity of opinions is represented in any single congressional district – economic, racial, ethnic, generational, political, etc. – which can translate into competing constituent opinions about the MC's ideal positions and priorities.[11] For instance, a senior citizen may consider Medicare and Social Security reform to be the most pressing public problem, while parents of young children may prefer Congress to concentrate on reforming education policies.

This disagreement can be troublesome for MCs. Because they are the district's sole representative, district heterogeneity makes it difficult for MCs to take actions that avoid the perception that they are acting against or indifferently to (at least some portion of) their

[11] For example, averaging across all congressional districts in my sample, 77% of district residents live in urban areas, 25% work blue collar jobs, 15% are veterans, 12% live below the poverty line, 70% are white, and 15% are 65 years or older (*Almanacs of American Politics 1988-2012*).

constituents.[12] Said one MC of his constituency, "It's a mixed up district. People split seventeen ways on every issue. No matter how I vote, as many people agree with me as disagree" (Fenno 1978, 154). Similarly, reported another, "It's hard for me to imagine a majority of my constituents agreeing on anything" (Fenno 1978, 161).

Over time and after repeated interactions with constituents, MCs become more familiar with district opinion and more knowledgeable about when voters will respond to their actions (Bianco 1994, Fenno 1978, Parker 1986). But since these relationships take time to develop, new MCs may be uncertain about what their constituents want and how voters will react to their decisions (Kingdon 1989, Stratmann 2000). This uncertainty compounds the difficulty of determining what policies to take up and what new MCs should be doing with their time in Congress – whether it is working on legislation, participating in policy debates, helping voters with their problems, or connecting with constituents, etc. (Arnold 1990, Bauer et al. 1963, Clapp 1963, Hall 1996, Kingdon 1989).

The Resources of New MCs and Their Limits

While helpful, these resources that new MCs have at their disposal may be limited in amount (exhaustible), limited in availability or accessibility (irrelevant), or produce additional uncertainty for new MCs. For example, congressional staffers play a key supporting role as new MCs transition into their new job.[13] Congressional staff can help MCs learn the congressional ropes (Fox and Hammond 1977, Hall 1996, Kingdom 1989, Malbin 1979, 1981, Salisbury and Shepsle 1981). Staffers of retiring or unsuccessful candidates often move to other Capitol Hill offices, and new MCs can benefit from their congressional experience.

[12] During the 101st-112th Congresses, new MCs won with an average of 64% of the two-party vote, including those who ran opposed (*Almanac of American Politics*).
[13] In the analysis to follow, I take staff resources into account by investigating how new MCs differently allocate their staff between the district and D.C. offices.

For example, when Rep. Harry Johnston (D-FL) replaced retiring Democrat Rep. Dan Mica (D-FL) in the 101st Congress, he hired several of Rep. Mica's staff, including his District Office Administrator. As reported by a newspaper in his district, this contributed to a smooth transition that "wouldn't have happened if this staff had disappeared and a new congressional staff been appointed. We will be able to start at a much more advanced point,' Ms. Stoll said. 'We'll be able to hit the ground running, and there won't be a moment lost in the transition'" (Lipman 1988). At the same time, while staff can be helpful, their time and energy is constrained. There is only a finite number of tasks they can accomplish, places they can be, questions they can answer, etc. In addition, if hired from another office or without having prior staff experience, staff may have limited familiarity with the district and/or congressional procedures.

Political Parties and Colleagues

MCs have other people they can draw on for assistance as well: political parties and copartisan colleagues. Political parties make organized efforts to assist their new members in adjusting and transitioning to their new job with party-led New Member Orientation sessions, which have been described as legislative "boot camps" or "crash course[s]" that run the gambit from "everything from ethics to setting up an office to survival techniques for families, to procedures and rules, to how to set up an office and hire staff" (Barnett 1999, 77; Price 2000, 31). According to congressional journalists, this two week period entails "packed schedules of presentations, briefings, receptions, luncheons and party meetings to attend" (Dumain 2012).[14]

[14] In recent congresses, the culminating event of New Member Orientations has been 'the room draw,' the lottery through which new members draw numbers in order to select their new office suites (Gale 2013b).

Party support for new members does not dry up after the session has begun, either. Throughout the session, parties also provide orientation and advice on key issues, votes, or topics. The whip system both collects information about MCs' preferences for party leaders and communicates the party position to rank-and-file MCs (Burden and Frisby 2004, Cox and McCubbins 1991, Hager and Talbert 2000, Ripley 1964). Additionally, parties also hold regular caucus meetings to keep informed of member preferences and to help new MCs adjust to being a member of the party 'team' (Barnett 1999). Additionally, party leaders (and their staff) sometimes offer new members advice. For example, as recounted by a freshmen member of 104th Congress: "As new members we did not know how to work the rules or system. So we met with key people on leadership staffs who could help us. We could say, 'Here is what we are after, but we don't know how to get there.' They would say, 'Here is how you can do it'" (Barnett 1999, 195-196).

Finally, part of a party's support for its new members consists of enmeshing them in the network of partisan relationships and connections that comes with being a member of the Democratic or Republican party. As a result, MCs can leverage personal connections to other colleagues. For example, when conflicted about what position to take on an important vote, new MCs can examine the positions of colleagues to see what they should do (Kingdon 1989, Stratmann 2000). Members of the state delegation may be particularly helpful here. Their voting and policy positions can help new MCs break down how a complex piece of legislation would influence the residents in their state and, by implication, their district (Fiellin 1962, 1970, Born 1976, Kingdon 1989, Truman 1956). Likewise, congressional committees provide smaller, more intimate settings for new MCs to get to know and learn from more senior colleagues (Fenno 1973, Frisch and Kelly 2006).

Although parties do provide their members with valuable assistance, particularly on key votes, they do not do so on every issue (Cox and McCubbins 2005). On some issues or at different times, party resources are not available to new MCs. Not all issues are divisive along party lines, so party leaders have reduced incentives to monitor members' actions and reward/sanction them accordingly (Lee 2009). For another, overusing the whip system could weaken its effectiveness in the long-run and at strategic, key moments. Similarly, parties purposefully try to provide their members with enough discretion so that MCs can keep the seat for the party (Nocera 2012).

While parties may provide voting cues, electoral assistance, and brand-name recognition among voters in the district, they do not impose restrictions on how members spend their time or what issues to take up. New MCs retain a significant degree of discretion about how they spend their time, focus their energy, and craft their legislative agendas (Hibbing 1991, Hall 1996). There is no quota of activities, such as bill introductions or trips home, that party members must meet. On these questions, party assistance is likely to be less specific or not as relevant. The same is true of their colleagues. Like parties, other colleagues are less likely to provide advice about how new MCs should spend their time or what issues they should take action on.

Outside Resources

Other resources offer aid and assistance to MCs, too. For instance, there are external orientation sessions that MCs can attend like the "Bipartisan Program for Newly Elected Members of Congress" run by the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University or those run by think tanks (e.g., Brookings Institute, American Enterprise Institute) and the Congressional Research Service – Congress' nonpartisan research agency. Other nonpartisan groups, like the Congressional Management Foundation, send MCs guides and policy memos

about how to establish and manage a congressional office. Rep. David Price noted the value of all this assistance as lying "not only in furnishing a common background on various issues but also in providing an introduction to the workings of Congress" (Price 2000, 32).

Similar benefits can be accrued from interest groups. Through direct lobbying, they provide new MCs political and policy information (Esterling 2004, Wright 1996). Since new MCs lack the same information sources and insights of more senior MCs, this information can be a valuable asset for evaluating the political/electoral ramifications of taking (or failing to take) a certain position (Ainsworth and Sened 1993, Austen-Smith 1993, Hamm 1983, Heitshusen 2000, Lohmann 1998, Smith 1984). Likewise, interest groups may also provide legislative 'subsidies' – political 'intelligence' (head counts, strategies, etc.) and legislative insights (e.g. procedural recommendations, material for speeches) – that help like-minded MCs support the group's position (Hall and Deardorff 2006, Hansen 1991). Grassroots mobilization also sends MCs signals about the direction and salience of constituent opinion (Berry 1999, Goldstein 1999, Hansen 1991, Kollman 1998). As explained by the president of Americans for Tax Reform, interest groups like his own "will be inviting all of them [members-elect] to come…talk about what's of interest to them and how we can work together" (Ackley 2012). This assistance can help new MCs in ascertaining what to do and how to do it.[15]

At the same time, MCs may have latent questions about the objectivity and trustworthiness of interest group information and assistance. For instance, if interest groups target 'fence-sitter' MCs undecided on an issue, MCs could be receiving information that contradicts personal or district preferences (Austen-Smith and Wright 1994, Baumgartner and

[15] Beyond the legislative arena, interest groups can help new MCs determine when additional oversight of federal bureaucracies is needed (Hall and Miler 2008). Interest groups' amici curiae legal briefs also shine light on the likely opinion of different constituents on current court cases (Caldeira and Wright 1990, Hall and Miler 2008, Spriggs and Wahlbeck 1997).

Leech 1996, Hojnacki and Kimball 1998, Kollman 1997).[16] In the same vein, interest groups may misrepresent the implications of a policy change or strategically reveal information to induce their desired outcome (Austen-Smith 1993, Rasmussen 1993). Finally, the information they provide may be incomplete. Interest groups typically specialize on one or only a few policy topics, whereas a much broader range of public policies are important to constituents (Hall and Deardorff 2006). Interest groups may focus on one policy topic at the expense or exclusion of other salient considerations.

Turning to the Familiar: The Relevance and Value of Precongressional Career Experiences

In sum, during their early terms new MCs face various tasks and decisions while receiving help from a variety of sources. At the same time, these resources are limited. All told, there are gaps where new MCs are left 'on their own' to navigate their new work environment and its concomitant tasks. It is because new MCs have discretion over their congressional decisions that new MCs from different career backgrounds can take different courses of action in office.

When new MCs enter office, they are new to Congress, but they are not blank slates. A variety of personal experiences inform MCs' decisions (Burden 2007, Carnes 2013, Frisch and Kelly 2006, Hall 1996, Kingdon 1989). Legislative scholars have explored how several aspects of MCs' decision-making (voting, legislative participation, and committee assignments) are influenced by their personal experiences and preferences (Frisch and Kelly 2006, Hall 1996, Kingdon 1989). MCs who smoke, for example, are more likely to cosponsor and speak on behalf of tobacco de-regulation bills (Burden 2007). Likewise, MCs with daughters are more likely to

[16] Whether interest groups lobby 'counteractively', targeting MCs opposed to their group's position, or lobby their 'friends' (supporters of the group's position) has been a subject of debate. See, for example, Austen-Smith and Wright 1994, 1996 and Baumgartner and Leech 1996a, 1996b.

vote liberally on women's reproductive rights issues, their ideology and party affiliation aside (Washington 2008).

Personal preferences can help MCs decide how to participate and what positions to take, especially when constituent interests are non-existent or when interests within the district conflict. In these scenarios, MCs may "look within" to their own personal values, beliefs, or preferences (Mansbridge 2003, 520, see also Parker 1992). In this way, MCs take actions that constituents prefer because of internally held beliefs not just the fear of electoral defeat. For example, former House member (and current Senator) Kirsten Gilibrand (D-NY) related her legislative efforts to protect enlisted members of the military from abuse to her experience as a mother: "Some of these male senators can't imagine themselves being victimized or brutalized. But I can imagine this happening to me. I can imagine it happening to my sons. And it drives me crazy" (Osnos 2013, 44).

These examples suggest that personal experiences outside of Congress shape MCs' decision-making while they are in Congress (Burden 2007, Frisch and Kelly 2006, Hall 1996, Kingdon 1989, Washington 2008). I argue that this includes their career experiences. I define a career as the sum of all the different work experiences an adult has in the workforce, be it working in industry, teaching preschoolers, or holding congressional office (Wilensky 1960).

A career consists of the entirety of individuals' "varied experience in education, training, [and] work in several organizations" including even "changes in occupational field" (Baruch 2004, 65). Scholars compare a career to a pearl necklace. Similar to how a pearl necklace is made by stringing individual pearls end-to-end, a career is formed from the sequence of individual jobs held back-to-back.

Career Based Skills and Insights

I expect that individuals from different career backgrounds make different decisions about legislating, connecting with constituents, and interacting with their party in their early terms in office. Career experiences may provide practical skills and insights that are applicable on Capitol Hill.[17] An individual's occupational background shapes the "skills and knowledge, understanding and experience" s/he acquires in the workplace (Brown et al. 2012, 755, see also Leong and Walsh 2012). If these skills are 'portable' – meaning they can be applied to a new work environment – then they can helpful for obtaining other jobs or being 'employable' (Arthur 1994, Fugate et al. 2004, Porfeli and Savickas 2012).

Individuals now frequently change both jobs and employers during the trajectory of their career.[18] As a result, they need to know how to "set realistic goals [for seeking employment] and outline steps to achieve them" (Rosenthal and Pilot 1998). This includes everything from knowing how to find necessary job information to how to match personal interests with potential work opportunities (Ebberwein et al. 2004, Krumboltz et al. 2013, Rosenthal and Pilot 1988).

Successful employees use their past experiences as a resource and guide in a new environment (Arthur 1994). To orient themselves in a new workplace, they do what is familiar to

[17] This is true even if MCs selected precongressional careers for reasons that, by themselves, may influence their subsequent legislative behavior. Again, I cannot test the causal relationship between career experiences and congressional behavior, but I can point to broad patterns and differences in the behavior of MCs from different career backgrounds. The skills and insights they acquire from those backgrounds may play into these differences.

[18] What careers look like has changed over time. The 'traditional' career, predominant after World War II, largely played out within a single corporation. Career advancement meant promotion to positions of greater responsibility within the same company (Adamson et al. 1998, Wilensky 1960). In general, this is no longer believed to be the case. Faced with "fast developments in multiple areas – economy, technology, and society in general," individuals more commonly pursue different positions in different companies over the course of their career rather than promotion up a single corporate ladder (Baruch 2004, 58, see also Briscoe and Finkelstein 2009, Chudzikowski 2012, DeFillippi and Arthur 1994, Hall 1976).

them, or things that they already know how to do. By doing so, they transfer and apply skills and insights acquired in one work environment to another. For instance, an accountant-turned-entrepreneur could apply her accounting expertise to a new pottery business. A medical doctor elected to Congress could turn to his experience establishing a clientele base and securing patients' trust to strengthen his relationship with his constituents. For example, Rep. Joe Heck (D-NV), a former doctor, chose to emphasize his medical experience in campaign advertisements, explaining,

> *"I think there is a natural trust between patients and their doctors, and there should be a trust between constituents and their representatives, and I think talking about my experience as a doctor helps solidify that position"* (Steinhauer 2012).

Three Broad Categories of Career Skills and Insights

In a new work environment, the expectation is that employees turn to what is familiar from past experiences. In fact, scholars of organizational and occupational behavior argue that employees' success depends on how well they do so. In particular, successful employees use past experiences to help them know *why* they are doing what they do, *how* to do it, and with *whom* to do it with (Arthur and DeFillippi 1995, 7).

The 'why' of work is the knowledge and importance of the values and interests of the organization, "the sense of purpose, motivation, and identification" central to the work (Baruch 2004, 61). For new MCs, this entails becoming familiar with their employers (constituents), be it by holding events where constituents can visit them, hosting town halls sessions to hear constituent feedback, attending and speaking at district events, soliciting constituent feedback,

etc. As one new MC colorfully put it, rather than have political consultants tell him about constituent opinion, he goes to where his constituents are:

> *"When I go home on the weekends, and put on my flip-flops and my shorts and my John Deere hat, I go to Walmart. I don't need to hear from a political prognosticator on what I need to do or how I need to do it."* (Skotzko 2011).

Second, by looking to their past experience, employees can learn how to adapt previously-acquired skills to their new job. This relates to the 'how' of work that I noted above and can occur formally through structured programs or informally through "self-study and experiential learning through apprenticeship programs and on-the-job activities" (Arthur et al. 1995). As the vocational counseling literature emphasizes, either route is useful: "the most effective way to learn a new skill is to try doing it" (Krumboltz et al. 2013, 16).

Third, employees also tap into their earlier career experience to learn how to interact with new coworkers in an unfamiliar social environment and its associated "attachments, relationships, reputation, sources of information, and mutual obligations" (Baruch 2004, 61). Navigating a new social environment and hierarchy encompasses everything from learning who does what, to which coworkers will be receptive to questions, to how to develop relationships for networking. MCs recognize the importance of this type of knowledge. For instance, as a MC recounted, success is "a matter of learning how to get things done, knowing the people, and working without raising hackles" (Fenno 1978, 179).

In sum, in every work experience, employees pick up insight into the reason for their work, how to do the work, and how to interact with others. Employees can use the lessons and skills learned in previous work experiences to help them adjust to a new job. In consequence, occupational behavior is "likely to be strongly influenced by a person's prior history of skill

accumulation and task-relevant experience" (DeFillippi and Arthur 1994, 314). As a result, the values and interests that employees internalize from their employers, the skills and abilities that they learn on the job, and their collegial interactions vary from job to job. Developed at the "intersection of person-in-environment", these skills and insights are shaped by the specific occupational environment in which employees work (Porfeli et al. 2012, 749). Employees take on their next jobs in distinct ways as a result.

Outlining Expectations About Precongressional and Congressional Careers

According to this logic, if MCs have different precongressional career experiences, then they should approach their congressional jobs in ways that reflect their prior work experiences. The 'why'-'how'-'whom' categorization is useful because it points to three aspects of congressional behavior where I expect to see connections between MCs' behavior and their past experiences. As I touched on in chapter one and as I elaborate below, these include the issues and topics MCs advocate, their legislative and outreach activities, and their interactions with copartisans.

The 'Why' of Work: Issue Prioritization

Consider, for instance, the challenge that new MCs face in understanding the interests and values of their new employers, voters. Issue attention, or deciding "what to do with [their] time," is one of the "principal dilemmas" that new MCs must address (Hall 1996, 9, see also Bauer et al. 1963, 405). Notes one MC, the "sheer busyness" of the Washington schedule "surpasses what almost all members have experienced in their previous careers and requires specific survival techniques. Most important, you must set priorities" (Price 2000, 62). The president of the nonprofit Congressional Management Foundation concurs. His best advice for new MCs is to set priorities: "We say that if you don't focus, you'll become one of two types of

members of Congress. If you're in a safe district, you'll be ineffective. For an unsafe district, you'll be a former member of Congress" (Gale 2013a).

Furthermore, new MCs must prioritize their voters' diverse and potentially competing interests, as I noted earlier. I expect that prior occupations are relevant here. If work experiences affect the issues to which MCs are exposed, they can help MCs develop familiarity, expertise, and interest with specific issues, thereby reducing the information costs associated with legislative advocacy and facilitating legislative activity and specialization [i.e., focusing on one issue over, and to the exclusion, of other issues] (Berkman 1993, Carnes 2013, Frisch and Kelly 2006).[19] These experiences help to clarify for new MCs *why* these policies are important – the substantive and real consequences for constituents.

For example, according to a journalist's account of the 112th Congress, Rep. Emmanuel Cleaver (D-MO) drew on his previous work experiences to urge President Obama to oppose Republican budget cuts that would eliminate block grant funding for local governments. As Rep. Cleaver explained to the president:

> *"'Look, I was mayor of Kansas City. The community development block grant program? Huge for me. That's how I got infrastructure projects funded – how I did all sorts of things. If you cut that, Mr. President, the effects will be real'"* (Draper 2012, 255).

I gauge connections between precongressional careers and legislative behavior by looking at 1) the topics of the bills new MCs introduce and cosponsor, and 2) the number of different topics on which they take action. My expectation is MCs from different career backgrounds are active on different issues. Take, for example, medical experience. I anticipate

[19] Individuals select jobs partly based on the job's congruence with their personal interest in topics or work environments (Holland 1985).

that, compared to other new MCs, those with medical experience are familiar with complicated health issues, have developed preferences on them, and know more about these issues than their non-medical colleagues. As a result, I expect that they introduce and cosponsor more medical-related bills than other MCs.

I contend that the same career-agenda connection is true of other occupations as well. MCs from business backgrounds, for example, have insights into budget, jobs, or corporate issues (be it from the career itself or the reasons they chose the career in the first place). Likewise, MCs with political experience attend more closely to issues related to government operations owing to their prior experience with these issues. So, too, with MCs from law-enforcement backgrounds: their personal experience focused on crime or law-enforcement related legislation, and their interest in these issues may have motivated their career choice to begin with. Compared to other MCs without these same experiences, I anticipate that MCs introduce and cosponsor more legislation on policies related to their past career experiences.

The Sanchez sisters, Linda and Loretta, provide one interesting example. Reps. Linda and Loretta Sanchez are notable in that they are the first sisters ever to serve in Congress (lindasanchez.house.gov). As sisters, in almost every way, their backgrounds are the same. Two of seven siblings, they are both Californian Democrats who were raised in southern California by Mexican immigrants, self-described "product[s] of public schools and Head Start" (lorettasanchez.house.gov). Yet, despite their similarities, they took different career paths to Congress. Rep. Loretta Sanchez, the older of the two sisters by nine years, received a M.B.A. from American University in Washington, D.C. in 1984. After graduation, she worked as a financial analyst for twelve years and was employed by Booz Allen Hamilton, a defense contractor.

Her younger sister, Rep. Linda Sanchez, attended the University of California, Berkley, and the University of California, Los Angeles for law school, graduating the year before Loretta was elected to Congress (1995). According to her House website, after working in private practice, she went:

> *"to work for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 441 and the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA)…served as the Executive Secretary-Treasurer for the Orange County Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO. Congresswoman Sanchez is still an active and card-carrying member of the IBEW Local 441"* (lindasanchez.house.gov).

First elected to Congress in 2002 (108th Congress), she represents the 39th congressional district (and, later, the 38th due to redistricting), which neighbors her sister's district in Los Angeles.

What is interesting in the case of Reps. Linda and Loretta Sanchez is that their behavior as new MCs maps onto their career paths, all other background similarities aside. For example, compare the bills each introduced in their early terms in office. Rep. Loretta Sanchez, the older sister and financial analyst who worked for Booz Allen Hamilton, introduced bills related to military policies and personnel, such as H.R. 1350 "Freedom of Choice for Women in the Uniformed Services Act", H.R. 4388 "Military Retention Benefits Training Act", and resolutions honoring the heroisms and sacrifice of troops during the Vietnam conflict. In contrast, her sister, Rep. Linda Sanchez – the "card-carrying member" of the local union – took legislative action to recognize and honor "America's labor movement" as well as support "the designation of a

National Labor History Month" (thomas.loc.gov).[20] As was true for these two representatives, I anticipate that new MCs' legislative agendas should reflect their career paths to office.

I also expect to observe differences in the number of topics that new MCs take on as a result of their past experiences. Not all career experiences cover the same breadth of concerns, but – even more importantly – some career experiences are more specialized, confined to a smaller number of topics, than others. I anticipate that legislative and legal experiences are influential here. MCs from these backgrounds have had first-hand exposure to the logic of specialization (by taking up too many topics, MCs might reduce their effectiveness at advocating for any particular one), and they have worked in environments where specialization is important and perhaps necessary. Consequently, I hypothesize that former state legislators and congressional staffers introduce and cosponsor bills on a smaller number of policy topics than other experienced MCs.

I also anticipate that the logic of specialization runs parallel to the logic of legal specialization. Lawyers generally specialize or work in specific areas of the law, or predominately practice one kind of law – family law versus tax law, for example (Miller 1995). In fact, they may choose a legal career because they are interested in a particular area of legal practice. Once elected to Congress, I expect that amateurs who have had legal experience specialize their legislative agendas on a smaller number of policy topics.

These concerns, about the types and number of topics that MCs take up have real implications. For example, the policies that become law are a function of the types of bills that members introduce. If career connections emerge, then it suggests that changing the composition

[20] Along the same lines, but outside of my scope of study, Rep. Loretta Sanchez founded the Women in the Military Caucus, whereas Rep. Linda Sanchez co-founded the Labor and Working Families Caucus.

of who serves in Congress could have an effect on the mix of policies that are discussed and, eventually, passed into law. Similarly, connections between new MCs' past career experiences and congressional policy agendas should strengthen the quality of policy discussions that occur on Capitol Hill as new MCs bring first-hand and career relevant insights to bear on these decisions. In sum, I expect that MCs from different precongressional careers engage with distinct mixes of public policies in office. As a result, precongressional career experiences should speak to the aggregate, institutional agenda as well.

The 'How' of Work: What to Do

Like issue prioritization, equally important for policy outcomes is how MCs choose to allocate their time and effort among their various options, ranging from legislative activities in Washington, D.C., to relationship-building activities in the district. Due to limits on MCs' time and finances, MCs make strategic decisions about how to allocate their resources between these Hill and district-oriented activities.[21] "The problem of how best to distribute" their effort is another key concern that new MCs must address (Clapp 1963, 57, see also Hall 1996). As Fenno (1978) summarized, "The job of a Congressman requires that some things be done in Washington and others be done in the district. At the least, legislation is passed in one place and elections occur in the other. The allocative problem, therefore, comes with the job" (33).

To examine these decisions, I look at two key ways that MCs can invest their time and resources. First, I examine their legislative activity on Capitol Hill – the volume of bills they introduce and cosponsor bills, the types of bills they work on (whether they make little to large

[21] Clearly, legislative activity and voting are activities that MCs do with the district in mind. Nevertheless, I distinguish between activities that occur in, or are oriented toward, the district versus D.C. because MCs are resource-constrained. The Representational Allowances that MCs are given by the House to set up their offices and hire staff force strategic decisions about how to allocate resources between district and Hill-oriented activities.

changes in public policy), and the likelihood that these bills become law. Second, I probe how new MCs spend their office budget. I examine the percent of their money they spend on traveling to the district, hiring district staffers, or sending mailings to their constituents. In doing so, I am able to tap whether MCs from some backgrounds make greater efforts to contribute to policy outcomes or connect with their voters than other MCs.

Like issue prioritization, I expect that MCs from various work experiences approach these decisions differently. One obvious distinction is between political and nonpolitical career experiences (Abramowitz 1991, Canon 1990, Jacobson 1987, Lazarus 2008).[22] Political experience should familiarize MCs with how the public articulates political concerns and how elected officials should behave. From prior interactions with the public, political experience can help MCs determine how to balance legislative activity with constituency service (Fenno 1978). Having cultivated relevant political and policy knowledge before office, I contend that politically experienced MCs allocate their energy and effort differently than political amateurs. I posit that politically experienced MCs enter office more familiar with public policies and procedures. As a result, I hypothesize that they introduce and cosponsor a greater volume of bills than political amateurs. If MCs with political experience undertake a greater volume of legislative activity, I anticipate that they place more of their staff in their D.C. offices as a result.

But I also expect that the *type* of political and nonpolitical experiences should help distinguish MCs' behavior. To explore this, I split my sample into two groups (MCs with any prior political experience and political amateurs) and then focus on different experiences within each group of MCs. Among MCs with prior political experience, legislative political experience

[22] One useful framework is to think in broad terms of the types of careers that would equip MCs with relevant skills and explore more nuanced categories therein (Davidson 1969).

provides unique insights into legislative processes and constituent interests (Berkman 1993).[23] MCs have first-hand practice developing skills and resources used on behalf of (often the same) voters within the legislative process (Carson et al. 2011, Maestas 2000, 2003, Robeck 1982). When translated to Congress, these assets can facilitate how MCs participate in the policy process and build relationships in the district. For example, freshmen MCs with state legislative experience in the 112th Congress preferred 'across-the-board' spending cuts to a 'targeted approach,' perceiving it to be "easier to explain back home than to justify each and every reduction" (Draper 2012, 77).

I anticipate that MCs with executive political experience, such as gubernatorial or federal executive experience, are also attune to public opinion, managing staff, courting public attention (Hamman 2004). But these skills are cultivated within a very different work environment, where "command and control techniques [are] acceptable" and "everything revolved, or seemed to revolve, around" the chief executive (Barnett 1999, 136, Matthews 1960, 1075). This difference is important. MCs with executive experience may be more comfortable being on the cutting edge of an initiative, 'out in front' (similar to sponsoring legislation) rather than collaborating or supporting other members' work (similar to cosponsoring legislation). I expect this to relate to the mix of legislative activities they pursue. I hypothesize that MCs with state legislative or executive political experience introduce a greater number of bills than MCs with other political experiences.

Likewise, I expect that MCs with legislative and executive political experience, versus other types of political backgrounds, introduce bills making more weighty changes to the law.

[23] As supporters of the constitution contended, the election of legislatively-experienced MCs to Congress facilitates the conveyance of "considerable knowledge" and "local information", to "the great advantage" of Congress (*Federalist Papers* No. 56).

These bills are more contentious and require a more thorough understanding of the policy process, the state of current policy debates, and how to advocate for a position in the face of disagreement – which both legislative and executive experience should provide (and which may lead individuals to pursuing these careers in the first place). Because they suggest substantive policy changes, these bills also are more likely to face resistance in passing both chambers of Congress. As a result, I hypothesize that MCs with legislative and/or executive experience introduce fewer bills that become public laws compared to MCs from other types of political backgrounds.

I also expect to find variation in behavior across different nonpolitical experiences among political amateurs. Legal and legislative careers bear a strong resemblance to one another in terms of the tasks undertaken (writing and interpretation of legislation, representation of others' interests, etc.) and the ways they are undertaken (negotiation, bargaining, debate, etc.) [Cohen 1969, Eulau and Sprague 1964, Gold 1961, Green et al. 1973, Miller 1995, Podmore 1977, Schlesinger 1957]. Because of this similarity, I hypothesize that amateurs with legal experience introduce and cosponsor a greater volume of bills when compared to all other amateurs. I also focus on business experience, to see whether current claims about MCs from business background are borne out in the analysis.

Like issue prioritization, then, there should be career-based differences in MCs' legislative and outreach decisions. MCs who dedicate more resources to constituent outreach make it easier for individuals in their district to contact, keep tabs on, and query their representative. If MCs from particular backgrounds are more or less active in the policy process, then their influence on policy outcomes also could vary. As a result, there is district-by-district

variation in the role that constituent preferences have in the policy process due to the career paths that brought their representatives to Congress.

The 'With Whom' of Work: Party Loyalty

Finally, I anticipate that MCs from diverse precongressional career experiences interact differently with their party and partisan leaders. In Congress, the work environment is structured around political parties (Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005, Rohde 1991). There, partisan interactions take many shapes – from MCs' conversations, votes, and donations to copartisans, among others. I focus on voting loyalty on the votes where parties take opposite sides and campaign contributions to copartisans. As before, I look at broad differences in the behavior of new MCs with and without political experience, and then separately examine new MCs with political experience (highlighting different kinds of political experience) and political amateurs (examining various nonpolitical experiences).

I anticipate that party loyalty differs among experienced versus amateur MCs in regards to campaign contributions, but not votes. On votes where the two parties take competing positions, I expect that political amateurs reference the party position as a useful voting cue, thereby increasing their party loyalty (Stratmann 2000). While politically experienced MCs may use the party line as a voting cue as well, I argue that experienced MCs are also loyal voters because of the partisan nature of their past experiences. (MCs may pursue these careers because they are partisan or learn the value of party loyalty from them.)

I expect that this same insight translates into increased campaign donations to copartisans. In general, party leaders give their new members a 'pass' on donating money to copartisan candidates (Heberlig and Larson 2012). Compared to MCs with prior political experience, amateurs generally have greater electoral vulnerability. This, in combination with the

party's blessing to concentrate on their own races, could incline political amateurs to spend their campaign cash on their own race. While experienced MCs may like to do the same, I expect that they do not. MCs develop political relationships through their prior political experience. I hypothesize that experienced MCs donate more money to their colleagues and friends as a consequence of these relationships: they have a wider circle of contacts to support.

There is an additional way, though, that political experience may relate to partisan loyalty. In addition to developing political relationships, political experience may emphasize the importance and norms of party loyalty, the importance of parties in negotiating political compromises, and the role that parties play in the electorate (Aldrich 1995, Frantzich 1979, Heberlig 2003). I anticipate that these lessons are particularly relevant (or motivational) for MCs who have worked in a legislative setting (state legislatures and/or Congress) and/or for a political party. As a result, I hypothesize that MCs with state legislative, congressional, and/or party experience vote more frequently with their party and donate more money than other experienced MCs.

In light of the congruence between the legal and legislative fields, amateur lawyers are familiar with the bargaining, negotiation, and compromise that characterize policymaking (Eulau and Sprague 1964, Podmore 1977). While these skills could be applied to bipartisan ends, I expect that amateur lawyers use them to partisan ends nonetheless. Their professional skills make them attractive congressional candidates and frequent targets of party recruitment efforts (Lawless 2012). I anticipate that these partisan attachments encourage MCs' voting loyalty compared to other amateurs.

Conclusion

I argue that MCs from different precongressional experiences make different decisions in their early terms in office in regards a wide range of precongressional experiences and congressional behavior: campaign contributions, roll call votes, building relationships in the district, and working on legislation. These aspects of legislative behavior touch on key determinants of constituent representation. Career experiences do not pre-determine legislative behavior, nor are they the only guides that new MCs have at their disposal for navigating their transition to office. Nevertheless, I argue that MCs from different precongressional careers act differently, in part because career experiences can develop relevant insights and skills for future careers.

The connections that I expect between careers and congressional behavior are important for both substantive outcomes and democratic accountability. As Prewitt (1970, 14) writes, "In a representative democracy, it is thought to be more important to control who is to gain office than to try and control the behavior of the incumbent." By providing insight into the behavior of candidates from different occupational backgrounds, the study of precongressional career experience pushes towards additional insights for legislative scholars and individual voters. It illuminates the decision-making process and behavior of MCs with distinct backgrounds, helping to clarify how they make choices and take actions with the choices and constraints they face.

Having traced out why and how precongressional careers should relate, it remains to be seen if they actually do. Chapters four, five, and six take up this task. Chapter four looks at MCs' allocation of effort and energy, chapter five at their legislative agendas, and chapter six at their partisan relationships and behavior. Before I turn there, I take a closer look at precongressional

careers themselves. In chapter three, I trace out the different paths that MCs take to Capitol Hill and explain my approach to studying them.

Chapter 3: Exploring Precongressional Careers

I argue that MCs from diverse career backgrounds encounter different skills and insights in their previous experiences and make different decisions about what to do in their early terms. In this chapter, I take a closer look at what MCs have done before Congress. I start by overviewing the concept of career experiences and then discuss how I code MCs' career paths. I outline broad trends in occupational backgrounds, discuss common combinations of experiences, and tease out how these paths layer onto other salient influences on congressional behavior, such as party affiliation, gender, race, and district characteristics.

My goal in overviewing MCs' career experiences is to establish a foundation for the analytical chapters to follow. All MCs came to Congress from somewhere – not just the districts they represent but also the jobs they left to work in Congress. As I seek to make clear in this chapter, the variation in these experiences provides fertile ground for expanding our understanding of the men and women who become MCs.

Who Are These New MCs?

I study the precongressional career experiences of all 838 MCs in their first four years during the 101st-112th Congresses (1989-2012). As shown in Table 3.1 and Figure 3.1, the number of new MCs in each Congress is not constant, from a low of 42 MCs (in the 102nd Congress, 109th Congress, and 112th Congress) to a high of 115 MCs (during the 103rd Congress). This fluctuation maps onto changes in the macropolitical environment. For instance, in the 104th Congress (1995-1996), the Republican Party secured the majority of House seats for the first time in over four decades. Interestingly, that majority was premised both on the large number of freshmen MCs who entered the House in the 104th Congress, "a boisterous, ideological group of first-term members who seemed to welcome their label as 'revolutionaries'"

(Barnett 1999, xiii), and *also* the large number of sophomore MCs who returned in the 104th Congress. The groundwork for the watershed moment in the 104th Congress was laid in the 103rd Congress. There is a similar surge of freshmen members in the 112th Congress (2010-2011), when the Republicans, again, took away the House majority from the Democrats.[24]

New MCs vary on multiple dimensions beyond career experiences, as shown in Table 3.2. This variation allows me to draw conclusions about career experiences across a variety of other personal and political considerations. For example, men outnumber women: there were 705 new male MCs to 133 female MCs in their first and/or second terms. Likewise, there were only a handful of minority MCs: 100 in total. Overall, new MCs were well-educated. About 65% of them (539) had graduate degrees; only 67 (8%) had less than a college education.

As expected, new MCs come from all over the United States, but not from all fifty states, actually. The outlier is Alaska, thanks to Rep. Don Young (R - AK). After graduating from college, Rep. Young moved to Alaska from California, where he worked in construction, commercial fishing, prospecting, and education before being elected mayor of Fort Yukon and serving in the Alaska state legislature (young.house.gov). In 1973, he was elected as the at-large representative for the state of Alaska. He has been reelected to every Congress since then – making him the most senior member of the Republican Party in the House. Since Alaska has only one House seat, there are no new MCs from Alaska in my data set during this period.[25] But,

[24] While I do not study the factors that make the election of new MCs more or less likely, I note these trends to highlight the importance of new MCs for congressional outcomes. By their very election, new MCs have an impact on policy outcomes by helping to secure the majority for their party. For example, as an aide to Speaker Newt Gingrich in the 104th Congress explained, "It is true that we used the freshmen very effectively against some of our members...We would say to chairman X…'The freshman and sophomore classes are 53 percent of the vote. If you can find a bigger bloc of votes, you can do what you want'" (Barnett 1999, 205).

[25] The number of new MCs from each state depends on the size of the state population.

by examining a large number of MCs across a broad period of time, I examine MCs that come from diverse geographical backgrounds.

Most of the 838 new MCs elected to Congress from 1989-2012 serve more than one term (see Table 3.1).[26] Of those who did not, four retired, eight died or resigned midterm, ten ran for higher office, and ninety-one lost their reelection race. [27] For example, at the urging of senior Republican leaders, first term Rep. Wes Cooley (R-OR) stepped out of a reelection race following concerns about misrepresentations of his past (Toner 1996). In contrast, Rep. Denise Majette (D-GA) only served one term, but in hopes of securing an open Senate seat. (She was unsuccessful) [*Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*]. Rep. Ann Buerkle (R-NY) – a former nurse, city councilwoman, and assistant attorney general – was not reelected. In 2010, with Tea Party support, she edged out the sitting incumbent, Democrat Rep. Dan Maffei, by 638 votes (Broughton 2011).[28] She faced off against Rep. Dan Maffei again in 2012, but this time in a redrawn district that was more heavily Democratic. Maffei won, 49-43% (Center 2013). Finally, other MCs serve partial terms, either due to winning a special election (in the case of 93

[26] If I count the number of MCs by the number of terms they serve, I have 1,458 MC-Congress pairs Because MCs' precongressional career experiences remain constant across their time in Congress, the following discussion about career experiences is framed in terms of the 838 unique, new MCs. In the statistical analyses in the next three chapters, I account for the correlation between MCs across different terms by clustering the standard errors on the individual MCs.

[27] The largest number of MCs that did not return for a second term occurs in the 104th (1995-1996), 105th (1997-1998) and 112th Congresses (2011-2012): 22, 20, and 29 MCs, respectively. The majority of MCs who did not return to the 104th Congress were Democrat and were Republicans in the 105th Congress. In the 112th Congress, it was mostly Democrat MCs who failed to return for a second term.

[28] Owing to the district's Democratic leaning, Rep. Ann Buerkle recounts that, at the beginning of her campaign, she spent "'time at the back of small town parades, knowing full well that few people took her campaign seriously'" (Broughton 2011). A visit to the district from the House Minority leader, Rep. John Boehner (R-OH), which she managed to squeeze in on her daughter's wedding day – "'I was sort of overdressed…I was in my mother-of-the-bride garb'" – boosted her credibility with voters (Broughton 2011).

new MCs) or leaving office early – either because they died, were charged with crimes, or appointed to another office.[29]

MCs' electoral margins are generally tightest in their earliest races. In their initial election to Congress, successful candidates won 59% of the two-party vote, excluding the 15 MCs who ran unopposed. In contrast, after one term in office, 79 MCs ran unopposed and the other successful incumbents received 64% of the two-party vote, a 5% average increase from their initial successful congressional election.

What Is a Career Experience?

For the congressional candidates who are elected to office, I define a precongressional career experience as a job held prior to entering Congress. Following the occupational behavior literature, I look at all of the jobs held by MCs during their time *in the adult workforce*. In most instances, this translates into the period of employment starting after college. Alternatively, it starts with jobs held after high school for the 67 MCs that did not attend or complete college.

Jobs can be categorized based on the level of skill or training needed to complete the job or the salary provided. [30] A professional job, such as a medical doctor or lawyer, requires specific training and certification by an independent body (such as a medical board or state bar

[29] Rep. Mark Amodei (R-NV) is an example of a MC who served a partial term due to a special election, replacing Rep. Dean Heller (R-NV) [*New York Times* 2011]. Two first-term MCs died in office – Larkin Smith (R-MS), in a plane crash, and Walter Capps (D-CA), of a heart attack at the age of 63. Three MCs – Reps. Frank Balance (NC), Eric Massa (NY), and William Janklow (SD) – left following ethical violations or criminal charges. More virtuously, Rep. Dan Coats (R-IN) was appointed to the Senate in 1989 after the sitting senator, Dan Quayle, was elected vice-president (*Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*).

[30] Nonpolitical experiences can be categorized based on whether the job has certain features (professional jobs are characterized by an abstract or cognitive based of knowledge, specialized training, autonomy, prestige, a professional 'code of ethics,' and collegial collaboration), completes certain tasks (managerial administrative, clerical, executive tasks for white collar jobs versus manual or physical labor for working-class or blue collar jobs), or has certain duties or responsibilities (Carnes 2013, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics).

association, for example), and is paid a high salary (Adler et al. 2008). White collar jobs, like those in the business or financial sector, require a certain degree of private training and provide "moderate to high levels of material security," whereas many blue collar jobs are manual, unskilled positions that pay less well (Carnes 2013, 31). I make no distinction based on the tasks accomplished or the salary earned.

I also include partisan political experience in my coding of precongressional career experiences, even though some partisan positions are volunteer (like being county party chair). While unpaid, I include these positions because they have important political responsibilities (like recruiting candidates, mobilizing voters, and fundraising, in the case of party chairs) from which individuals may acquire important skills, insights, or relationships.[31]

At the very least, they can teach potential candidates what *not* to do if they want to be successful in politics. For example, in the summer of 2013, Montgomery County Republican party chairman Jim Allen received national attention for making offensive comments about the candidacy of Erika Harold. Harold fell under Allen's ire for challenging the sitting incumbent Rep. Rodney Davis (R-IL) in Illinois' 13th congressional district, where she grew up and attended the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign before being crowned Miss America in 2003. Following the publication of the email, the Illinois Republican party chair and the Republican National Committee chair asked Allen to resign; he complied after issuing an official apology to Harold (*Chicago Tribune*, Reilly 2013).

Finally, I look at volunteer partisan positions because of prior expectations about political experience and legislative behavior. For instance, congressional candidates with political

[31] These positions follow the basic logic of the definition of a job outlined above – completing work in exchange for payment, such as the exercise of political power, the accumulation of political capital, or developing political relationships.

experience are more strategic in their electoral calculations and more successful on Election Day (Jacobson 1987, Abramowitz 1991, Lazarus 2008). These insights can be gleaned from unpaid political experiences as well as paid positions (like governors, state legislators, mayors, or cabinet officials). In any case, I do not believe this exception will bias the results. Of the new MCs with prior political experience, 681 of the 682 held at least one paid political position in addition to any volunteer political experience. (The exception, Rep. Mike McIntyre was a private practice attorney in North Carolina and delegate to the Democratic National Convention.)

Coding Career Experiences

In order to code precongressional career experiences, I need a standard that is uniform across MCs, constant across time periods, and publicly available. MCs' official biographies distributed by their House offices are a promising start. For one, no one should know their personal experiences better than the MC her/himself. For example, consider Rep. Aaron Schock (R-IL) – currently the youngest member of Congress (and the one who appeared shirtless on the cover of *Men's Health* in May 2011). His official House website explains that, prior to being elected to Congress at the age of 28, he had served in the state legislature, started his own small business, and worked as the Director of Development for Petersen Companies of Peoria, Illinois. The website also notes that Rep. Schock got his start in politics when he was elected to the local school board at the age of 19 and became school board president at the age of 23 (Perrine 2011, schock.house.gov).

Another advantage of MCs' House biographies is that, since they are public, it is unlikely that MCs would outright misrepresent their experiences (or get away with it for long).[32] But these official biographies have disadvantages. There is no guarantee that they are a

[32] While campaigning for an open Senate seat in 2011, Senator Kirk (R-IL) was alleged to have exaggerated his military record, an error the press quickly noted (Montopoli 2010).

comprehensive record of MCs' career experiences. For instance, a MC could highlight previous jobs that he or she believed would resonate with constituents, emphasizing some while ignoring others.[33] In addition, since these biographies are written by MCs' staffers, there is variance in what is included across MCs.

Because I examine a large number of congresses across a number of years (1989-2012), this becomes a significant problem if I cannot identify whose biographies are incomplete. To illustrate, consider Rep. Jackie Speier (D-CA). From her House biography, it is clear that she has significant public service – serving the residents of the San Francisco Peninsula while on the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors and later in the California State Assembly and State Senate (speier.house.gov). The biography also states that, while a staffer for Rep. Leo Ryan (D-CA), she was "shot five times while trying to rescue constituents from the People's Temple compound in Jonestown, Guyana" and that she was the "first Californian state legislator to give birth while in office" (speier.house.gov). However, it does not mentioned that, from 1996-1998, she also worked as the Director of Governmental Affairs for Community Gatepath, a nonprofit organization that advocates and provides services for the disabled in San Mateo County, or that she was the Director of Government Affairs for the company Electronic Arts, and a private practice attorney from 2007-2008 (Community Gatepath).

To address these data concerns, I use MCs' biographies in the *Almanac of American Politics*, a biennial reference book of every MC and congressional district published by the *National Journal*. The *Almanac*'s biographies are advantageous for several reasons. First, the *Almanac* covers every Congress since 1972, spanning multiple decades and changes in partisan control in Congress. Second, these biographies are written by an independent research team and

[33] I am not implying that MCs purposefully mislead their constituents, only that the *Almanac* provides a more comprehensive data source for my purposes.

should be free from idiosyncratic MC-to-MC bias or temporal shifts in how MCs describe or distribute their biographies (addressing questions about the availability of biographies for MCs serving in office prior to recorded internet archives). Finally, the *Almanac* focuses only on MCs' adult career experiences, which matches my definition of career experiences. I begin with the 101st Congress (1989-1991) to alleviate concerns about the reliability, completeness, and availability of other data such as district demographics and campaign finance contributions.

To code MCs' career experiences, I read the biography for each of the 838 new MCs that served during the 101st-112th Congresses (1989-2012). A sample biographical entry looks like the following, for Rep. Joe Wilson (R-SC) – the representative infamous for shouting "You lie!" during President Barack Obama's first State of the Union Address in January 2009:

> ***Military Career:*** *Army Reserves, 1972-1975; South Carolina National Guard, 1975-2003;* ***Elected Office:*** *South Carolina Senate, 1985-2001;* ***Professional Career:*** *Practicing attorney, 1972-2001.*

I group career experiences into broad categories, following the example of Fox and Lawless (2005), the Congressional Research Service (Manning 2012), and Carnes (2013). These categories include: agriculture, business, city official, congressional staff, county official, consulting, education, entertainment, federal official, judge, lobbyist, manual work, media, medical, military/law enforcement, nonprofit, party official, private attorney, public attorney, religious, school board, social worker, state employee, state legislator, sports, union official, White House staff, and miscellaneous (airline pilots, substance abuse counselor, childcare specialist, gun control activist, etc.).

Rep. Wilson (R-SC), for example, is coded as having three precongressional career experiences: military, state legislative, and private attorney. Because there is broad variation

within each of these categories, I recorded as much information on each position as possible, allowing me to distinguish – for instance – between local, state, and national party officials or private practice attorneys and attorney generals. The full codebook can be found in Appendix A at the end of this dissertation.

Do Order and Length of Experience Matter?

I code every single career experience for every single new MC. I do not distinguish new MCs' career experiences based on the order in which they accumulate – first, middle, last, etc. In other words, I examine the overall collection of experiences, not their sequence or the length of time spent in each career experience. I do not capture these considerations for several reasons.

First, new MCs point to all of their experiences to identify with constituents. Most new MCs have had political experience, but most of their constituents have not. Given this, capitalizing on the full range of their experiences (political and nonpolitical) helps MCs to strengthen the perceived connections between them and their constituents. For example, Rep. Kristi Noem (R-SD) served for four years in the South Dakota House of Representatives before being elected to the House. Yet she omits this experience entirely in her official biography, where is described as a "wife, mother, experienced rancher, farmer, and former small business owner" (noem.house.gov).[34] Studying the entirety of MCs' career experiences captures the reality of MCs' situation as new MCs and how they communicate with their constituents.

Second, MCs may draw from all of their career experiences. While the last experience may be of foremost prominence in their memory, this does not entail that they forget everything that came before. In fact, the decisions they made in that penultimate experience were shaped by

[34]The rest of the statement focused on the lessons learned from her experiences managing the family farm and owning a small business. Her state legislative experience is noted in the expanded House biography, but only consists of 65 of the 460 word statement (or 3 of 24 sentences).

the experiences that came before it (DeFillippi and Arthur 1994). Including all of MCs' career experiences aligns with interdisciplinary discussions of careers, career experiences, and their effect on occupational behavior (Arthur 1994, Porfeli and Savickas 2012). Finally, factoring in the order or length of the experience is difficult and beyond the scope of the current project. However, the decision to study every career experiences points to question for future study, which would help clarify whether tenure in a job or its proximity to working in Congress relate to MCs' early congressional behavior.

What Have MCs Done Before Office?

Looking at what new MCs have done before office is where the study of precongressional careers gets particularly interesting because the short answer is: a little bit of everything. The variation in these experiences is striking. Some MCs have been political, and even presidential, appointees. For instance, prior to serving in Congress, Rep. Bobby Jindal (R-LA), a graduate of Brown and Oxford Universities, was appointed Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals. In 1998, he was appointed the Executive Director of the National Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicaid and, afterwards, the President of the University of Louisiana System. In 2001, President George W. Bush appointed Jindal to be the Assistant Secretary for the Department of Health and Human Services. After an unsuccessful run for Louisiana governor, Rep. Jindal was successfully elected to the 109th Congress in 2004. (He retired after the 110th Congress and won the Louisiana gubernatorial race in 2007) [http://gov.louisiana.gov].

Other new MCs have held prestigious or powerful political positions. For instance, three former governors were elected to Congress – Reps. William Janklow (R-SD), Michael Castle (R-

DE), and Joseph Brennan (D-ME). Rep. Diane Watson (D-CA) served as the ambassador to Micronesia. Rep. David Funderbank (R-NC) was the ambassador to Romania.

Other new MCs have worked outside of politics in education, medicine, agriculture, entertainment, and media. Rep. Christopher Cox (R-CA), for example, was a lecturer at Harvard Business School, and Rep. Louis Capps (D-CA) worked at Santa Barbara City College teaching early childhood education. In the entertainment business, Rep. David Phelps (R-IL) toured as a gospel singer/songwriter, and Rep. Sonny Bono (R-CA) was one half of the famous Sonny and Cher duo. Not all new MCs' nonpolitical experiences have won that that much fame, though. Rep. David Curson (D-MI) worked in a Ford factory after serving in the military, and Rep. Bob Brady (D-PA) started working as a carpenter after high school graduation.

In addition, a significant number of MCs have worked for, started, or owned a business – ranging from pizza parlors and other restaurants, to insurance agencies, construction companies, a winery, an engineering firm, and real estate companies. Some of the more uncommon experiences are among the most interesting. Reps. Jim Gibbons (NV), Clyde Holloway (LA), and Chip Cravaack (MN) were commercial airline pilots. After Rep. Jim Ryun (R-KS) won a silver medal in track during the 1968 Olympics, he started his own running camp and toured as a motivational speaker. (He decided to run for Congress after learning during the 1996 Olympic Torch relay that his district would be an open seat in the next election [Fraioli 2014].) And Rep. Jeb Bradley (R-NH) was once a street magician in Switzerland before moving back to the East Coast and opening a health food store.

This variety is reassuring, in one sense. There are no explicit occupational requirements for serving in Congress. Likewise, true to the intentions of the framers of the constitution, at first glance, there appear to be no *implicit* occupational requirements either. MCs can, and do, get

elected to Congress from all walks of life, which helps bolster the representativeness of the institution intended to represent the public.

Popular Career Paths

At the same time, not all career paths are equally popular routes to Capitol Hill. Table 3.3 ranks my 28 broad categories of career experience from most to least common.[35] State legislative experience tops the list, followed by several nonpolitical experiences: business, legal experience, military/law enforcement experience, and education. Other common political experiences include: city officials – everything from mayors to city administrators, state officials – such as agency or gubernatorial staff, and congressional staff.

It is not surprising to find business experience at the top of the list. It has attracted recent attention on the campaign trail, in part, because it provides useful skills and insights for a legislative career. These skills range from the general – a sense of vision, a commitment to goal-driven action, and the ability to find or create new solutions – to the specific: negotiating, building coalitions, and articulating arguments to diverse audiences (Carnes 2013, Lawless 2012). Candidates are not shy about drawing attention to these benefits. During the 2010 and 2012 elections, political observers noted that, "it may be that candidates with no experience in elective office but a strong string of successes in the business world will be the right fit for the electorate this fall" (Cillizza 2010, see also Miller 2010). The Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney argued, "For 25 years, I spent my life in business. I only spent four years as a

[35] The total number of MCs listed in the table exceeds the total number of new MCs (838), because new MCs are counted once for each of their precongressional career experiences. For example, MCs with three prior experiences, such as a teacher/state legislator/congressional staffer (like Reps. Peter Roskam R-IL, Ray LaHood R-IL, and Laura Richardson D-CA), are counted three times in Table 3.3: once in the row for education, once in the row for state legislator, and once in the row for congressional staff.

governor, and I joke that I didn't inhale. I'm still a business guy, all right? I know how to lead us out of this stagnant Obama economy and into a job-creating recovery" (Purdum 2012).

Congressional candidates made similar claims. For example, Darcy Burner – a Democratic congressional candidate and former Microsoft program manager – focused her campaign on a simple message: "I'm a mother and businesswoman who wants to take the country in a different direction" (as quoted in Lawless 2012, 133). Joe Carvin, a Republican candidate who ran against incumbent Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY) in the 112th Congress, "touted his business experience" as a hedge-fund founder and manager, claiming that "it would help him get legislation that would support jobs" (Buss 2012).

Business experience is coded for employment in for-profit ventures in the private sector, be it corporations, banks, insurance, real estate, etc. Business experience was coded irrespective to the positions that MCs held within the company, but many MCs with business experience held management or leadership positions. (For example, 98 MCs had been the president, vice-president, or executive director of a company.) These companies range in size from Fortune 500 companies to large and small businesses. For example, Rep. Suzan Delbene (D-WA) was the former corporate vice president of Microsoft's mobile communications business and Rep. Shelley Berkley (D-NV) was the vice-president of the Sands hotel and casino in Las Vegas, Nevada (*Almanac of American Politics 2000*, delbene.house.gov). In contrast, Rep. Sue Kelly (R-NY) was the owner of Sue's Florist before winning election in the 104th Congress (*Almanac of American Politics 1996*).

It is also not particularly surprising to find legal experience near the top of the list. There is a historic precedent for lawyers being elected to Congress. From the first Congress, the legal profession has been a dominant path to Congress (Derge 1959, Davidson 1969, Miller 1993).

Likewise, as I flesh out in later chapters, there are substantive reasons for expecting that legal experience may yield unique insights into legislative politics.

Educational experience is equally diverse: 37 administrators, 77 college or university professors, and 61 other teachers were newly elected to Congress during these years. Interestingly, the number of educators elected to Congress has declined over time, from a peak of roughly 20% of new MCs in the 103rd and 104th Congresses (1993-1994, 1995-1996) to a low of 10% of MCs in the 112th Congress (2012-2012). These changes are most likely associated with the increasing prominence of business experience as a precongressional career. In 1989, for example, 40% of new MCs had business backgrounds. By 2011, 53% of new MCs had business experience. These electoral trends suggest that occupational backgrounds, and the claims that candidates make about them ("I think a business perspective is a bit of what California needs right now"), have particular salience in moments of electoral change (Cillizza 2010).[36] For that sentiment to be realized, though, MCs from various backgrounds need to act differently in office.

Political versus Nonpolitical Career Experiences

There are various ways to study career experiences to assess claims like these. I could look at each career experience individually, or group them into broader categories (i.e., manual versus skilled labor, white collar versus blue collar jobs, etc.). I do two things. First, I compare all MCs with any prior political experience to MCs who enter as political novices (no previous political experience of any kind). Second, I look separately at MCs with, and without, political experience.

I consider the broad distinction between politically experienced and amateur MCs because scholarly expectations about political experience compete with on-going advocacy for

[36] As claimed by congressional candidate Meg Whitman, the former eBay CEO, in a 2010 campaign ad (Cillizza 2010).

citizen legislators. Legislative scholars have argued that political experience increases electoral success. MCs with prior experience have better name recognition among voters (Abramowitz 1991). They can use their previous offices to build up their electoral constituency, as do representatives running for the Senate and state legislators running for the House (Hibbing 1986, Maestas 2005). Candidates with political experience may also be familiar to party leaders and campaign donors, having their own donor rolls or previously interacted with key leaders in the state (Heberlig and Larson 2012).

In addition, politically experienced congressional candidates are more strategic in the decisions they make about when to run for higher office (Lazarus 2008). Having previously won elections, they are better at assessing when conditions are favorable to success. They are also more stalwart and savvy campaigners and fundraisers, so they have larger 'war chests' with which to fund their election activities (Goodliffe 2001). Finally, experienced candidates are more risk averse than political amateurs (Jacobson 1987). Because MCs cannot hold another political office while serving in Congress, running for office means giving up the known security of their current position for the unknown risks of a lengthy, expensive, and public campaign – with potentially negative reputational consequences if they lose. If precongressional political experience shapes the probability that individuals get elected to Congress, it is not unreasonable to think that the insights and skills acquired in those past experiences carry over past Election Day, too.

The flip side of this argument is that political experience is an undesirable quality in representatives. This argument emerged in response to the public's plummeting perception of, and trust in, legislative representatives. The fear was that legislators' quest for reelection led them to "ignore their duties as representatives of the people" (Constitution of the State of

Arkansas). Reformers' proposed solution was to elect citizen legislators, those with no prior political experience or no desire for a continued congressional career (Herrick and Fisher 2007).[37] The logic behind this solution was that citizen legislators, who would come into office directly from their experiences as private citizens, would be more responsive to constituent interests and thus more immune to other influences (Armor 1994). In addition, lacking personal political experience, political amateurs would be forced to draw directly on their private experiences when making decisions in office. As a result, they could better understand constituent preferences and craft legislation for the 'average' American.

In short, reformers' hope was that installing term limits would interrupt the link between legislative behavior and reelection in order to give renewed meaning to the idea of representation *by* the people *for* the people. As summarized by Rep. Allen West (R-FL), a political amateur elected to the 112th Congress, political amateurs (or citizen legislators) embodied "what the founders intended: They wanted people of various walks of life to serve and then come back home and live under the laws they created" (Steinhauer 2010).

At the state level, the move to implement term limits levelled off in the late 1990s, when Massachusetts became the first state to repeal its state legislative term limits (National Council for State Legislatures 2013).[38] Nonetheless, being a 'citizen legislators' is still trumpeted as an ideal qualification for MCs. According to a spokesperson for the National Republican Congressional Committee, the election of political amateurs is evidence that "Americans had

[37] The term limit movement had the greatest support at the state level. At one point, twenty-one states implemented limits on their state legislatures (Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming). In 1995, the Supreme Court struck down an amendment to the Arkansas state constitution that would have limited the number of terms of MCs in the case *U.S. Term Limits, Inc. v. Thornton*.

[38] Washington followed suit in 1998, Idaho and Oregon in 2002, Utah in 2003, and Wyoming in 2004 (National Council for State Legislatures 2013).

clearly had it with sending the same politicians to Washington and getting the same old results…Their lack of political experience was and is their best asset" (Steinhauer 2010).

This claim has only seemingly grown in popularity with the rise of the Tea Party movement. For example, after announcing his intention to seek an open Senate seat, Rep. Paul Broun (R-GA) was praised by the Madison Project, a political organization that seeks to help elect Tea Party candidates, as

> *"a doctor, solider, citizen legislator, and proven constitutional warrior. He has been inviolable...[not succumbing] to the establishment meat grinder in D.C. Broun is the consummate constitutional champion who puts people and principles before politics. That is why his leadership is needed in the United States Senate, which is full of governing-class elites from both parties"* (Cahn 2014).

Likewise, the push to disassociate oneself from a 'career politicians' led former presidential aide Matt Miller (D-CA) to announce his candidacy in similar terms:

> *"I'm a proud Democrat; but too often, politicians in both parties care more about winning elections than solving problems. We have to tackle huge challenges…Getting serious about these challenges means embracing bold ideas – the kind of fresh thinking we aren't likely to get from career politicians. I'm running for Congress because it's time to expect more"* (Cahn 2014).

Defining Political Experience

To explore these contrasting claims, I code a MC as having political experience if s/he held positions that dealt specifically with political issues, including: city/county/state/federal officials, state legislators, governors, attorneys or judges, congressional or White House staff, and party officials (local, state, or national). In my sample, MCs acquired political experience at

all levels of government (local, state, federal) and in all branches of government (executive, legislative, and judicial). These positions were elected (like governors or state legislators), appointed (like cabinet officials), and meritocratic (like state bureaucrats and legislative staff). I include all of these experiences, and any combination thereof, under the broad umbrella of political experience. 682 of the 838 new MCs I examine had at least one prior political experience.[39] I use the term political amateurs to describe the 156 MCs without any precongressional political experience.[40]

Because MCs can acquire legal experience in both the private and public sectors, there is enormous variation in what constitutes 'legal experience'. For example, Rep. Roger Wicker (R-MS) was a U.S. air force judge advocate, whereas Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX) served as a municipal court judge, and 2012 Republican presidential contender Rep. Rick Santorum (R-PA) worked for a private law firm. I distinguish between political and nonpolitical judicial experience. MCs with political judicial experience have worked in public office or for the public sector as judges (city, county, state, federal) or attorneys (again, city, county, state, and federal). Legal experience in the private sector, such as corporate, tax, patent, or private practice lawyers, is coded as nonpolitical experience.

Far and away, legislative experience is the most common political experience. Half of new MCs (416 of 838) come from the state legislature, giving renewed emphasis to the idea of

[39] Those with only political experience are 'career politicians' in the truest sense. Of the 682 politically experienced MCs, 73 (11%) held only political positions prior to Congress. Infamous Rep. Anthony Weiner (D-NY) is one example. Before serving in Congress, Rep. Weiner worked as a staffer for Rep. Charles Schumer (D-NY) and was elected a member of the New York City Council.

[40] To-date, the *Almanac* remains the most comprehensive and consistent source of data on career experiences. When in doubt, I double checked the *Almanac*'s biographical information against the *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress,* Congress' online repository of official member biographies.

state legislatures as legislative apprenticeships or training grounds for higher office (Berkmann 1993, 1994). The majority of this experience (288 of 416 former state legislators, 70%) occurred in legislatures that were less professionalized, i.e. bearing less resemblance to Congress in terms of session length, salary, and staff support (Squire 2007). A professionalized legislature is the most similar to Congress: members serve full time, meet regularly for extended sessions, are paid a competitive salary, and have legislative staff.[41] I code the professionalism of the state legislature using Squire's (2007) index of professionalization.[42]

In general, state lawmakers served an average of nine years in the state capitol. Rep. David Scott (D-GA) had the longest tenure, twenty-eight years. In contrast, Rep. Laura Richardson (D-CA) served less than a full year in the California House of Representatives before winning a special election to fill the seat held by the late Rep. Juanita Millender-McDonald (D-CA). Like Rep. Richardson, most former state legislators (316 of 416, 76%) used their legislative seats as a platform for a congressional bid. Many, like Illinois state senator Debbie Halvorson, drew directly on their state legislative experience to emphasize their qualification for the House. In a tight race for an open seat against a political amateur, Rep. Halvorson, "highlighted her years in the Senate, where she sponsored legislation aimed at cutting prescription drug costs for seniors and advocated for affordable health care for small-business owners" (*Roll Call* 2008). State legislators who took time off before Congress only did so for an average of less than one

[41] 128 former state legislators worked in the professionalized legislatures of California, Colorado, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

[42] This index is created by comparing congressional and state indicators of legislative salary, session (average days in session), and staffing (staff to member ratio); a score of 1 denotes perfect resemblance, and a score of 0 denotes no resemblance at all. Legislative professionalism scores are available for 1979, 1986, 1990, and 2003. For each former state legislator, I average the professionalism of the legislature over the years they were in office (if those years crossed the periods from 1979-1985, 1986-1989, 1990-2002, 2003-present).

year, although there was a twenty-five year gap for Rep. William Jenkins (R-TN) – during which he worked as a policy advisor to the governor, board member of the Tennessee Valley Authority, and state circuit court judge.

Other types of legislative experience are common, too. For instance, 96 former congressional staffers won election to their own seat in Congress. Congressional candidates contend that staff experience gives them an electoral advantage. For instance, Rep. Bill Huizenga (R-MI) worked as Rep. Peter Hoekstra's (R-MI) district policy director from 1996-2002 before deciding to run for office himself. He started in the Michigan legislature and, in 2010, won the seat held by his former boss. As he explained:

> *"My job was literally to be his [Rep. Hoekstra's] eyes and ears. And it was a huge advantage in the campaign because we were going into some of these small towns, and my opponents had never been there before, but I had. ... I knew asparagus was important, I knew particular manufacturing issues were important. ... I knew them"* (Dumain and Estepa 2011).

In addition, 27 MCs worked as state legislative staffers, 68 MCs had been county legislators, and 118 had been city legislators.

Both executive and judicial experiences are common as well: 57 former mayors, 23 MCs with county executive or administrative experience, 3 former governors, 23 lieutenant governors or gubernatorial staff, 86 state bureaucrats, and 33 federal and cabinet level officials were elected to Congress from 1989-2012. The exact experiences included in these categories are quite varied

– from working for the U.S. Civil Rights Commission and Small Business Administration to the Departments of State, Agriculture, Health and Human Services, and Interior, to name a few.[43]

Also during this time period, 28 former judges (from the city, county, state, and federal courts), and 139 public attorneys – 41 of whom worked at the federal level – were elected. Finally, 91 MCs enter Congress with prior partisan experience in addition to legislative, executive, and judicial experience. In general, this experience was with state or county party organizations, although some MCs worked for national party organizations. For instance, Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK) was the executive director of the National Republican Congressional Committee from 1991-1995 prior to his election to the 108th Congress in 2002. Likewise, future Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) served as the Finance Chair for the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee from 1985-1986.

Number and Combinations of Career Experiences

Looking at the frequency of career experiences in the aggregate tells nothing about how they play out on the individual level, my primary unit of analysis. Just like the types of career experiences, I find far-reaching differences in the number and combinations of MCs' experiences. Rep. Nick Smith (R-MI), introduced at the opening of chapter one, is the paradigm of career diversity, having nine career experiences before Congress.[44] But not all MCs have such

[43] Positions within these offices varied, too. For instance, Rep. Harold Ford Jr. (D-TN) worked as a special assistant at the Department of Commerce whereas Rep. Joe Sestak (R-PA), a three star Admiral, was the Director of Defense Policy for the National Security Council (joesestak.com).

[44] Rep. Lynn Schenk (D-CA) also had numerous experiences. After completing graduate work at the London School of Economics, but before winning election to the 103rd Congress, Rep. Schenk worked as a Californian deputy attorney general, an attorney for the San Diego Gas and Electric Company, a special assistant to vice presidents Nelson Rockefeller and Walter Mondale, a deputy secretary and secretary of the California State Department of Business, Transportation and Housing, a private attorney, the state co-chair for Michael Dukakis' presidential campaign, and – finally – the commissioner and vice chair of the San Diego unified port district (*Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*).

prolific precongressional careers. For instance, after earning a Ph.D. in political science from the University of California, Davis, Rep. Dave Loebsack (D-IA) moved back to his home state, Iowa, to teach at Cornell College (in Mount Vernon, Iowa). He taught there until winning election to Congress in 2007 (loebsack.house.gov/biography).

On average, new MCs from 1989-2012 had three career experiences before office; the distribution of number of career experiences is found in Table 3.4. 68 MCs had one only career before Congress (19 business men/women, 12 lawyers, 11 state legislators, 5 educators, 5 doctors, 4 military/law enforcement officers, 4 media, 2 congressional staffers, and a handful of others – like former NFL quarterback Rep. Heath Shuler, D-NC). Only 13% of all new MCs have had 5 or more career experiences.

In Table 3.5, I show which nonpolitical experiences are the most common for MCs with prior political experience. Business and legal experience top the list, followed by service in the military and education. I compare combinations of experiences across different levels (local, state, federal) and branches of government (legislative, executive, and judicial – I also include partisan, for the sake of reference) in Table 3.6.[45] Five MCs had legislative, executive, judicial, *and* partisan experience.[46]

[45] To be clear, I do not distinguish along these lines in the chapters to follow, but note them here to outline the general patterns that emerge from MCs' precongressional career experiences.
[46] One of these was Rep. Pat Danner (D-MO). After graduating from Northeast Missouri State University in 1972, she was the vice chair of Ninth Congressional District Democratic Committee of northeast Missouri and the chair of Macon County Democratic Committee for two years. From 1973-1976, she was the district assistant to Rep. Jerry Litton, and was appointed by President Jimmy Carter to be to the Ozarks Regional Commission federal co-chair. She held this position for 4 years before being elected a state senator in 1983, after which she won election to Congress (*Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, "FG 187 Ozarks Regional Commission").

Other Characteristics of New MCs and Their Relation to Career Experiences

Of course, MCs vary; simply looking at a picture of each incoming cohort drives home that point. Studies of legislative behavior and outcomes take these factors into consideration, examining characteristics like education, social class, race, age, gender, and party affiliation on how MCs vote, and what policy positions they take (Matthews 1960, Frantzich 1979, Burden 2007, Carnes 2013). Table 3.7 compares MCs with different career experiences based on: party affiliation, gender, race, percent of the two-party vote share, ideological distance from party mean, number of career experiences, and district characteristics.

As expected, the MCs who take different career paths vary on other dimensions. Interestingly, this variation appears to be associated with career decisions. For example, a greater percent of doctors and farmers are Republican than Democrat. But there is an approximately equal number of MCs with state legislative, gubernatorial, and legal experience by party affiliation. To take another example, there were only two women with military or law enforcement backgrounds elected to Congress during these years: Rep. Sandy Adams (R-FL) – an investigator in the Orange County Sherriff's Office, and Rep. Heather Wilson (NM) – an Air Force veteran who attended the United States Air Force Academy. But 17% of doctors were female, as were 19% of state legislators and 19% of MCs who had worked with/for state governors.

There are patterns in the types of districts that elect MCs with different career experiences as well. For instance, MCs with business backgrounds represent districts that have fewer residents living at or below the poverty level. Not surprisingly, the districts represented by MCs with agricultural experience also stand out. They are more rural, for one. On average, across all congressional districts, about 22% of district residents live in rural areas. This

increases to 36% for the districts that elect agriculturally experienced MCs. These districts are also whiter (80% of residents are white versus the national district average of 69%).

Conclusion

In light of the responsiveness of MCs to constituent concerns and interests, the demographic backgrounds of MCs' districts should shape their congressional decision-making. As the next three chapters demonstrate, though, the effect of career experiences on legislative behavior is robust to these (and a variety of other) considerations. In fact, in regression analyses that take into account the considerations listed in Table 3.7, I find that career experiences are strongly related to new MCs' congressional behavior – the mix of legislative and outreach activities they undertake, the topics they take up in office, and how they interact with copartisans on the House floor.

The framers of the constitution specifically avoided occupational requirements for serving in office.[47] As a result, MCs hold a variety of different jobs before office, from carpenters, to teachers, doctors, and state politicians. In the following chapters, I demonstrate that these experiences do connect to the decisions that new MCs make in office, influencing the effort that MCs put into legislation, the types of bills on which they work, or their loyalty to their party.

[47] This does not mean that they were ambivalent about who would serve in office, though. As Carnes (2013) notes, in the *Federalist Papers* No. 35, Alexander Hamilton proposed that a government staffed by men of business and professional careers was "natural." Hamilton believed the working class preferred to be represented by such professionals (Carnes 2013, 138).

Tables and Figure

Table 3.1 Number of New MCs in Congress, 1989-2012

Congress	Years	# First Term MCs	# Second Term MCs	Total # New MCs	House Majority	Senate Majority	President
101	1989-1990	48	47	95	Democrat	Democrat	Republican
102	1991-1992	49	42	91	Democrat	Democrat	Republican
103	1993-1994	115	44	159	Democrat	Democrat	Democrat
104	1995-1996	93	93	186	Republican	Republican	Democrat
105	1997-1998	80	73	153	Republican	Republican	Democrat
106	1999-2000	48	71	119	Republican	Republican	Democrat
107	2001-2002	48	47	95	Republican	Republican	Republican
108	2003-2004	58	45	103	Republican	Republican	Republican
109	2005-2006	42	49	91	Republican	Republican	Republican
110	2007-2008	64	39	103	Democrat	Democrat	Republican
111	2009-2010	71	51	122	Democrat	Democrat	Democrat
112	2011-2012	99	42	141	Republican	Democrat	Democrat

Source: *Almanac of American Politics*

Table 3.2 Gender, Racial, and Educational Differences Among New MCs, 101st-112th Congresses (1989-2012)

	# New MCs	% of Total MCs
Men	705	84%
Women	133	16%
Minorities	100	12%
Less than College Degree	67	8%
College Degree Only	232	28%
Post-College Degrees	539	64%

Source: *Almanac of American Politics*

Table 3.3 The Variety of New MCs' Precongressional Career Experiences

Career Experience	# MCs	Career Experience	# MCs
State legislator	416	Consultant	37
Business	366	Media	35
City official	307	School board	34
Legal	272	Federal official	33
Military/law enforcement	203	Judge	28
Education	154	White House staff	24
State employee	132	Lobbyist	18
Congressional staff	96	Sports	10
Party official	91	Manual work	9
County official	88	Miscellaneous	8
Public attorney	83	Entertainment	7
Nonprofit	71	Religious official	7
Medical	46	Social worker	7
Agriculture	39	Union official	7

Note: A MC may be counted multiple times in the table if s/he had multiple career experiences. On average, new MCs in the 101st-112th Congresses had 3 precongressional career experiences. 68 MCs had only 1 precongressional career experiences, and Rep. Nick Smith (R-MI) had the most with 9 precongressional career experiences. Only 114 new MCs had 5 or more career experiences. See Table 3.4. for the distribution of MCs by number of precongressional career experiences.
Source: *Almanac of American Politics*

Table 3.4 Distribution of Career Experiences for New MCs, 101st-112th Congresses

# Career Experiences	# MCs	% all MCs
1	68	8%
2	227	27%
3	246	29%
4	182	22%
5	66	8%
6	34	4%
7	11	1%
8	2	0.2%
9	1	0.1%

Source: *Almanac of American Politics*

Table 3.5 Combinations of Political and Nonpolitical Experience

	Any Political Experience and:
Business	272
Legal	239
Military/Law Enforcement	154
Education	123
Nonprofit	55
Medical	28
Agriculture	35

Note: The total does not sum to the total number of MCs with any political experience (682) because new MCs may have multiple types of nonpolitical precongressional career experiences.
Source: *Almanac of American Politics*

Table 3.6 Variation in Political Career Experiences By Level and Branch of Government

Experience at Levels of Government	# MCs
State experience only	221
Local and state experience	174
Local experience only	84
State and federal experience	62
Local, state, federal experience	60
Federal experience only	56
Local and federal experience	25
Experience in Branches of Government	**# MCs**
Legislative only	266
Legislative and executive	185
Executive only	53
Legislative and partisan	32
Judicial only	29
Legislative and judicial	27
Legislative, executive, and partisan	25
Legislative, executive, and judicial	16
Executive and judicial	15
Partisan only	13
Executive and partisan	8
Legislative, executive, partisan, and judicial	5
Executive, partisan, and judicial	4
Partisan and judicial	3
Partisan, judicial, and legislative	1

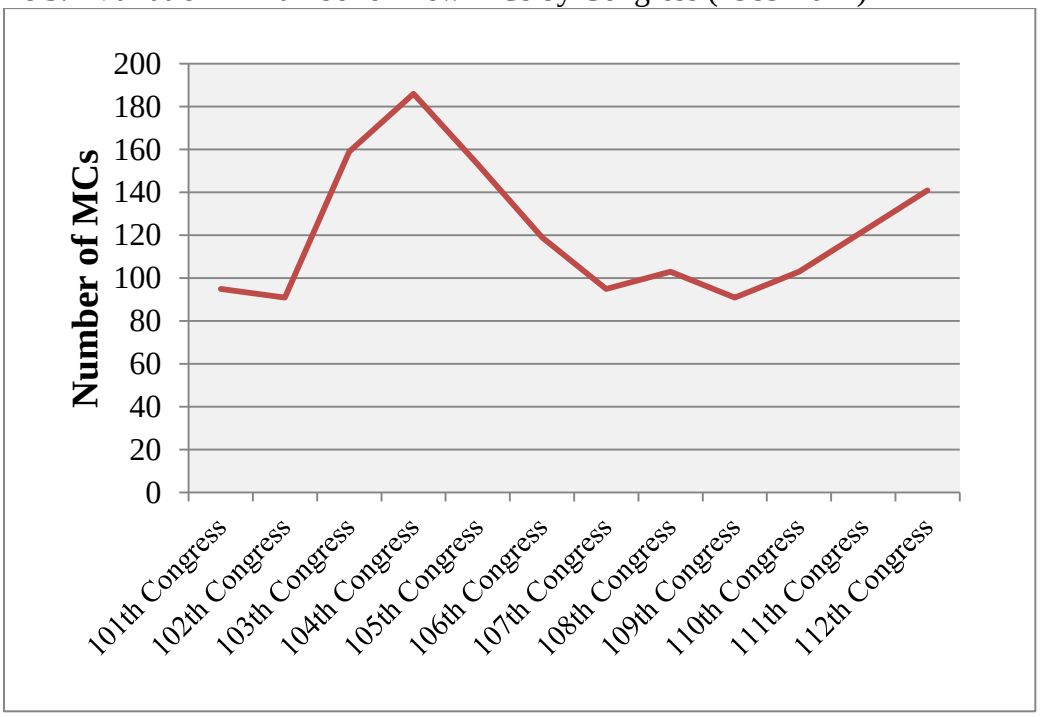
Note: *Local experience* includes local administrative officials, city legislators, majors and other city officials, county officials, city and county judges and attorneys, local party officials, and school board officials. *State experience* includes state legislators, judges, attorneys, party officials, and other state officials (department, legislative, and gubernatorial staff). *Federal experience* includes FBI and CIA agents, executive agency officials, federal judges and attorneys, national party delegates, campaign party officials, national party officials, congressional staff, and White House staff. *Legislative experience* includes city and county legislators, state legislative staff, state legislators, and congressional staff. *Executive experience* includes local administrative officials, mayors, and other city officials, county executive and administrative staff, school board members, gubernatorial and state agency staff, executive agency officials, FBI and CIA agents, and White House staff. *Judicial experience* includes city, county, state, and federal judges and attorneys. *Partisan experience* includes local, county, state, national, and campaign staff or officials, as well as delegates to the national party conventions.
Source: *Almanac of American Politics*

Table 3.7 Comparison of Individual and District Characteristics by Precongressional Experience

	State Legislators	Cong. Staff	Gubernatorial	Legal	Business	Medicine
% Democrat	47%	51%	50%	51%	34%	30%
% Republican	53%	49%	50%	49%	66%	70%
% Female	19%	18%	19%	10%	14%	17%
% White	87%	90%	88%	88%	93%	93%
Vote Share	65%	65%	61%	65%	62%	62%
Ideo. Distance	0.06	0.02	0.02	0.04	0.19	0.2
# Experiences	3.4	3.8	3.8	3.2	3.4	3.1
% Poverty	12.30%	12.90%	14%	12.20%	12.00%	13.30%
% White	69.40%	66.80%	68.40%	68.80%	72.30%	73.20%
% Rural	21.80%	12.60%	29.60%	22.10%	24.80%	30.60%
% Veterans	14.90%	15.10%	15.40%	14.60%	14.80%	14.80%

Note: MCs may be included in the calculations for multiple columns, if they had multiple precongressional career experiences.
Source: *Almanac of American Politics*

Figure 3.1 Variation in Number of New MCs by Congress (1989-2012)



Source: *Almanac of American Politics*

Chapter 4: Deciding What to Do As A New Member of Congress

Blake Farenthold's (R-TX) election to Congress in 2010 was surprising in many respects. When Farenthold entered the race the day before the deadline, he text messaged his wife Debbie that he had flown to Austin, Texas, 'to file'. Not understanding what he was filing, she "went into a panic," and wanted to know why he had to fly to Austin to file for divorce (Steinhauer 2010). Farenthold's last-minute candidacy surprised political observers as well. He was a staunch conservative with disparate career experiences – founder of a computer and web-design consulting company, partner at a law firm, cohost of a radio talk show program – but had never held political office. In contrast, the sitting incumbent, Rep. Solomon Ortiz (D-TX), won his first political race in 1965 (when Farenthold was four years old) and had represented the heavily Hispanic district since it was created in 1982. Despite Rep. Ortiz's seniority and Farenthold's inexperience, Farenthold won the election. When he heard that he had won, Farenthold told a local news station, "Early on in the race, I had a nightmare that I won…it's like, 'Now what do I do?'" (McCormack 2011).

That sentiment did not go away once Rep. Farenthold arrived on Capitol Hill. As described by a journalist observing the freshmen class in the 112th Congress, a month passed before Rep. Farenthold had set up his House website, frustrated by having to choose from the officially-approved options when his "former company could've done the job for half that" (Draper 2012, 93). It was several months into his first session before he hired a legislative director – "it sounded to him like a middle management job" –or a communications director – "he'd been an attorney and a radio talk show host, after all. No one had to coach him on how to communicate" (Draper 2012, 92). At the same time, he prioritized traveling to the district where

he had significant ties, publicizing his intention "to be in South Texas as much as possible" and returning on a weekly basis (Farenthold 2011).

Career Experiences and Variation in Legislative Behavior

Rep. Farenthold faced many choices about how to devote his time, energy, and resources in office, as is true of any new MC. One thing that makes Rep. Farenthold a notable example is that his actions strongly suggest that these choices were informed by his previous experiences. In this chapter, I contend that this is a broader phenomenon; MCs from different career backgrounds pursue different mixes of legislative and outreach activities in their early terms. By legislative activities, I mean the actions that center on passing bills into law, like crafting legislative proposals or supporting (cosponsoring) other MCs' bills (Frantzich 1979, Hall 1996, Matthews 1960, Payne 1980, Wawro 2000). I also include MCs' legislative effectiveness (the proportion of bills introduced by an MC that become law each Congress) and the types of bills they introduce (symbolic versus otherwise) to probe the substantive implications of these legislative decisions. By outreach decisions, I am referring to decisions outside of the legislative realm that help MCs build relationships with voters, such as spending time in the district, dedicating staff-power to district offices, or paying for publicity campaigns.[48]

New MCs differ greatly in their choices about how to allocate their time and effort. Table 4.1 shows this variation. Some MCs never introduce or cosponsor a single bill during either their first or second term, while others introduce over 60 bills and cosponsor over 800 bills.[49]

[48] Of course, legislative decisions are a form of 'constituent outreach' as well, and all of these activities are intended to help MCs secure reelection (Mayhew 1974). I refer to them separately for the sake of clarity.

[49] Rep. Joe Sestak (D-PA) introduced 62 bills in the 111th Congress. Reps. Suzan DelBene (D-WA), Dan Coats (R-IN), and Mel Reynolds (D- IL) each had a term where they did not cosponsor a single bill. In contrast, Rep. William Jefferson (D-LA) cosponsored 838 bills during the 102nd Congress.

Likewise, during the 104th-108th Congresses, new MCs spent anywhere from $1,700- $279,000 on district travel and $0-$330,000 on constituent mailings, and vary the staff support for their district versus D.C. offices (Parker and Goodman 2009, Young 2006).

Outlining Expectations about Career-Activity Connections

As I explained in chapter two, I expect that these decisions may be informed by MCs' previous career experiences. For example, new MCs may choose to engage in activities that are familiar from their jobs before Congress, leading them to divvy up their effort and attention in distinct ways.[50] I make three basic comparisons about MCs' legislative and constituent outreach activities.

First, I compare MCs with political experience to those without it. I hypothesize that experienced MCs undertake more legislative activities and do so more successfully because they have sharper political and policy insights. Second, I unpack these comparisons further by taking a closer look at political amateurs. I explore how nonpolitical experiences shape congressional behavior by concentrating on two common experiences: legal and business experience. I anticipate that amateurs legal experience have increased legislative activity, given similarities between legal practice and training and legislating which may familiarize and prepare political amateurs for legislative activity. I also discuss why or why not political amateurs from diverse backgrounds, such as business, would reach out to constituents differently.

Third, I examine politically experienced MCs and how prior political experiences equip them for congressional office. I hypothesize that both executive and legislative experience

[50] As I noted in the first chapter, I cannot test whether this relationship is causal. It may be that individuals with certain skills or interests choose careers that reinforce these traits, thus leading to distinct patterns of behavior. Either way, careers are good markers for how new MCs act in their early terms. In addition, these cues are often used by candidates to describe their purported activities and they are easily accessible to voters. Both of these considerations increase the importance of understanding differences in behavior by MCs from different career paths.

familiarize new MCs with policy topics and processes, so that they are more legislatively active compared to other MCs with political experience. I anticipate that MCs from legislative and/or executive backgrounds also work on legislation that proposes larger changes to the law as the result of their first-hand experience with salient public policies. Because these bills are more likely to face resistance in being enacted, I expect that MCs with legislative and/or executive experience are less likely to see their bills become law relative to other experienced politicians.

Why These Activities?

I examine the mix and the volume of legislative and outreach activities because they have implications for congressional outputs and representation and because they generally are left to MCs' individual discretion. These activities are substantively meaningful. By taking up legislative work, MCs demonstrate responsiveness to district interests, denote empathy with constituents, and indicate follow-through on campaign promises (Arnold 1990, Mayhew 1974). In the aggregate, these decisions alter public policy. Similarly, by putting their energy and effort into constituent outreach activities, MCs increase the ability of citizens to access the political system and the ability of the MCs her/himself to identify constituent concerns (Bianco 1994, Fenno 1978).[51] These activities lie at the heart of representation, particularly as it is viewed from MCs' perspective.[52]

By concentrating on these legislative and outreach activities, I capture prominent ways that MCs act on behalf of, and build rapport with, constituents. If MCs approach these decisions

[51] These decisions have taken on symbolic significance. In recent Congresses, MCs have reduced their total expenditures in protest of government spending and in acknowledgement of the fiscally conservative sentiment that propelled them to office (Draper 2012, Dumain 2012).

[52] This is what political scientist Richard Fenno describes as: "The view over the congressman's shoulder: nearly everything he does to win and hold support – allocating, reaching, presenting, responding, communicating, explaining, assuring – involves representation. It is a view of representation as a process. It is a view of representation as politics, with all of the uncertainties of politics" (Fenno 1978, 240).

differently because of their precongressional experiences, then the extent to which voters' policy concerns are incorporated into the policy process varies systematically across congressional districts. The same is true of how easily constituents can access and monitor their representatives: it depends on how often MCs return to the district and communicate with constituents. If this differs based on their past experiences, then *who* voters elect to represent them shapes *how* they are represented in Congress. My insights into these decisions allow scholars and citizens to better assess arguments made about the role of experience in Congress.

MCs are not told by party leaders or other colleagues exactly how often they must travel to their district or how many bills they need to sponsor or cosponsor. This element of discretion is important for understanding why I concentrate on legislative and outreach activities like those found in Table 4.1 to the exclusion of others like committee requests, assignments, and transfers, working behind the scenes to build legislative coalitions, attaining leadership positions, etc. (Clapp 1963).[53] These other considerations result from the judgments, decisions, and perceptions of other political actors. For example, while new MCs request assignment to certain committees, the assignments they receive are ultimately the result of party leaders' decisions.[54] Hence, I focus on the tangible and independent decisions that new MCs make to provide a firm understanding of how these experiences shape the decision-making of individual MCs.

[53] Later, I look at the type of bills that MCs introduce (based on the extent of changes to existing law) and whether their introduced bills become law. These other activities are certainly important, and have been the subject of prior attention (for instance, see Fenno 1973, Frisch and Kelly 2006, Smith and Deering 1984, Wawro 2000).

[54] I do not look at MCs' committee assignments because these may not be sincere. An MC's true committee assignment preferences may differ from her/his expressed preferences if s/he believes that s/he has little to no chance getting assigned to her/his top committee of choice. In this scenario, an MC may request a second or third place preference instead, which could weaken the connection between career experiences and MC decision-making.

Although my primary focus is on MCs' individual decision-making, I also examine legislative effectiveness, the proportion of MCs' bills that become public law each Congress. Although a variety of other factors and considerations outside of MCs' control affect the fate of their legislation, understanding how precongressional career experiences play a role helps to interpret the relationship of these experiences to policy outcomes. [55] In sum, I balance my focus on the individual legislative and constituent outreach activities that reside squarely under MCs' control with a broader consideration of the long-term and aggregate effect these decisions have on policy outcomes.

Political versus Nonpolitical Experiences

To explore connections between precongressional careers and congressional behavior, I begin with a broad and basic comparison: MCs with political experience prior to Congress versus political amateurs. A variety of arguments, positive and negative, describe the purported effect of political experience, from an advantage at the polls, to a head-start in fundraising, to the policy positions adopted by MCs (Robeck 1982, Canon 1990, Abramowitz 1991, Lazarus 2008, Bielat 2012). Nevertheless, it has been less clear how and why political experience contributes to the ways that new MCs allocate scarce resources like time, energy, and finances.

Increased Volume of Legislative Activity for Politically Experienced MCs Versus Amateurs

There are reasons to expect that political career experiences shape the volume of MCs' legislative activity. Congressional districts overlap other political constituencies: federal, state,

[55] Legislative effectiveness is influenced by the macro-political environment (e.g., policy windows and the public mood), the internal politics of each chamber (e.g., the decision-making and politics of congressional committees, the strategies and priorities of party leaders), as well as inter- and intrabranch relations – the decisions of the other chamber and president (Anderson et al. 2003, Box-Steffensmeier and Grant 1999, Frantzich 1979, Hall 1992, Jeydel and Taylor 2003, Sinclair 1996, Volden and Wiseman forthcoming, Wawro 2000).

and local; legislative, executive, and judicial (Schlesinger 1966). As a result, individuals with political experience are likely to become familiar with how the public articulates political concerns and wants political officials to respond (Fenno 1978). They also gain familiarity with policy issues and institutions, learning how political institutions work and how to operate within them (Matthews 1960, Frantzich 1979). Insights into policy issues, political institutions, and constituent preferences help MCs overcome the learning curve involved with legislative activity. I expect that this leads to a greater willingness to participate in the legislative process or 'shoulder' their share of the congressional workload (Matthews 1960, Payne 1980). Three hypotheses result.

First, I hypothesize that MCs with prior political experience introduce a greater volume of legislation than amateurs. Experienced MCs can learn policy ideas from previous political initiatives. Likewise, their experience provides insights into, and familiarity with, what the public expects of MCs. As a result, I anticipate that experienced MCs introduce a greater volume of bills than political amateurs.

Second, if MCs with prior political experience have a greater familiarity with public concerns and the political processes, then they may start their time in Congress more adept at crafting legislation that eventually becomes law. These MCs may be more likely to introduce bills that tap salient public preferences or be more knowledgeable about how to navigate their bills through the legislative process. I anticipate that MCs with political experience introduce a higher proportion of bills that are passed into public laws than political amateurs (Anderson et al. 2003, Frantzich 1979, Jeydel and Taylor 2003, Volden and Wiseman forthcoming).

Third, I expect that MCs with political experience cosponsor a greater number of bills than political amateurs. Seasoned politicians know what it is like to allocate limited resources

(like time or effort) to tend to a much less limited demand for government action. As a result, MCs with political experience grasp how cosponsorship publicly acknowledges constituent concerns while conserving scarce resources. Also, I anticipate that politically experienced MCs are familiar with the benefits of collaboration and coalition building – characteristic of cosponsorship – having collaborated with others in the past.

Comparing Legislative Activity of MCs with and without Prior Political Experience

In Figures 4.1 and 4.2, I split new MCs into two groups by prior political experience and compare the number of bills per Congress that they introduce and cosponsor, as well as the proportion of bills that become public law (her/his 'hit rate', shown in Figure 4.2).[56] For instance, if a MC introduced 10 bills in one Congress, her 'hit rate' would be .50 if 5 bills eventually became law, 0.00 if no bills became law, and 1.00 if all 10 bills were passed into law.

Looking at the panel on the left, the basic pattern fits with my expectation that experienced MCs introduce more bills than amateurs, but there is no significant difference in the volume of introductions. As I hypothesized, experienced MCs cosponsor more bills than MCs without political experience ($t=-3.76$, $p=.00$). In Figure 4.2, only the smallest (and nonsignificant) differences emerge regarding the proportion of bills that become public laws (.09 for amateurs versus .10 for experienced MCs). In general, new MCs with prior experience are not more successful than political amateurs at introducing bills that become law.

[56] Volden and Wiseman (2009, forthcoming) use a more encompassing measure of legislative effectiveness that takes into consideration differences in both the types of bills MCs introduce (i.e. the extent of changes made to existing law) and how far they progress in the legislative process (i.e., referred to committee, receives action in committee, receives action beyond the committee stage, etc.). This measure exceeds the degree of specificity I need. I rely on the more general measure of legislative effectiveness: proportion of introduced bills that become public law.

Constituent Outreach: Differences in Staff Allocations

In addition to legislating, new MCs also have incentives to build up their electoral support in the district (Fenno 1978). This is true of both politically experienced and previously inexperienced MCs, whether they do so by traveling to the district, placing more staff in district offices, or beefing up their mailing to constituents. All new MCs value the electoral connection. As a result, I expect the strongest difference to emerge on district staffing. The reason relates to the casework activities that district staffers undertake – helping constituents solve problems they encounter with bureaucracies or other government bodies (such as processing an application or getting a social security payment). [Cain et al. 1987, Fiorina 1977, Serra and Cover 1982].

Successfully resolving casework problems requires knowledge of the political system and skill in navigating local, state, and federal bureaucracies. I anticipate that politically experienced MCs have more practice with these tasks than political amateurs. For example, in his first term, Rep. Blake Farenthold (R-TX) – the lawyer/talk show host discussed at the introduction to this chapter – tried to assist a business in his district that was seeking to expand production to China. Although he described himself as eager "to get to work for the people of the 27th District," Rep. Farenthold also was candid about "how difficult it is to get things done in Washington" (Gomez 2011, Miller 2010). "Unable to make progress" with helping the business, Rep. Farenthold openly admitted that he had entered office "with the youthful vigor that I could single-handily change the world. But you fast come to the realization that you are 1/435th of one-half of one-third of the government" (Gomez 2011).

Compared to MCs with political experience before Congress, amateurs like Rep. Farenthold face barriers to addressing casework problems. Lacking the same knowledge and contacts of experienced MCs, they need more help in navigating the bureaucracies or agencies

with which constituents are having problems. This implicates the number of staffers that amateurs send to their district offices.[57] In addition, in light of amateurs' greater unfamiliarity with the policy process and barriers to casework, amateurs may have a greater desire to invest resources and effort in constituent casework. Again, this may lead them to increase their district staff. Finally, if experienced MCs are more comfortable with constituency service and more active in the legislative process (as I anticipate), then they may not place as many staffers in their district offices. For these reasons, I hypothesize that amateurs, on average, devote a greater number of staff to their district offices than experienced MCs (since casework problems primarily are handled by district staff) [Cain et al. 1987, Young 2006]. Beyond this, I do not expect that amateur and experienced MCs differ greatly in their outreach patterns, since all MCs have electoral incentives to develop strong ties to their districts as I noted above.

Measuring Legislative Activity and Constituent Outreach

To see if these patterns appear, I compare the constituent outreach activities of MCs with and without prior political experience in Figure 4.3. Amateurs do allocate more of their staff to their district offices than experienced MCs, but the difference is not significant – nor is it for mailings and district travel – shown in the bottom panel.

I extend my preliminary analyses about MCs' legislative and outreach decisions by estimating a series of regression models that take into consideration other influences on MCs' decisions. My sample is all MCs in their first four years during the 101st-110th Congresses (1989-2008). Each data observation is a MC-Congress pair. Because introductions and cosponsorships

[57] There is also reason to think that the number of district vs. D.C. staff is as the product of the type of staffers that new MCs can hire – how politically, and congressionally, experienced they are. If experienced MCs can hire a greater number of experienced staff, particularly those with political experience in the district, then experienced MCs may not need to send as many staff to their district offices. Since my data do not allow me to test this hypothesis, future work would help clarify the interplay of experience and staffing.

are count variables, I estimate negative binomial regression models; the rest of the models are ordinary least square regressions.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables are legislative participation and constituent outreach decisions: number of bills introduced, number of bills cosponsored, hit rate, percent of staff working in the district, and percent of representational allowance spent on mailings and on district travel. I measure MCs' legislative activities in multiple ways; each measure captures the decisions that an individual MC makes in one congressional term (both sessions, two years). The first two variables capture the volume of MCs' legislative activities: how many bills they introduce and cosponsor per term (*Introductions, Cosponsorships*).[58] The third variable, *Hit Rate*, is the proportion of MCs' bills that becomes law each Congress (number of public laws / total number of bills introduced).

There are multiple ways that MCs reach out to their constituents. I focus on how they use their Representational Allowances to this end, the sum of money the Treasury Department allocates them to set up, staff, rent, and purchase office supplies. These allowances are limited; MCs personally must reimburse the Treasury if they overspend their allowance (Parker and Goodman 2009, Young 2006). This requires that MCs make strategic decisions about how to allocate these funds. I concentrate on the percent of funds MCs spend on district travel, the percent spent on constituent mailings, and the percent of staff working in the district (*% On Travel*, *% On Mailing*, and *% District Staff*, respectively). Although MCs also spend their Representational Allowances on renting office space, I do not examine real estate expenditures

[58] I examine House bills and House Joint Resolutions, the only legislation that has the full force of law. Sponsorship and cosponsorship data was accessed from the Library of Congress' THOMAS database.

because these costs are largely out of MCs' control.[59] I examine percent spending because Representational Allowances are not equal for every MC; they vary according to district population, the cost of district office space, and the distance between the district and the Capitol. Data on Representational Allowances is available for the 104th-108th Congresses only, so my analyses of these variables focus on these years.[60]

Independent and Control Variables

The key independent variable, *Political Experience*, is a 0/1 variable that indicates whether MCs had any political experience before Congress.[61] Being a member of the minority party in power ('0' for *Majority Party*), being a first term MC (*First Term*), having faced a competitive election (and perhaps likely to face another in the future) [*Vote Share*, and *Vote Share*^{2} to account for any nonlinearity in the effect of electoral margins], or being a racial minority typically all depress legislative participation (Clapp 1963, Mayhew 1974, Hibbing 1991, Wilson and Young 1997, Carnes 2013). For instance, prior research indicates that junior members tend to cosponsor fewer bills than senior MCs; likewise, ideologically extreme members tend to cosponsor fewer bills than more moderate MCs (Canon 1990, Krehbiel 1995, Wilson and Young 1997). *Ideological Distance From Party Median* is the distance between MCs' ideological positions and the median member of their party. I measure this by taking the absolute value of the difference between each MCs' first dimension CS-NOMINATE score and

[59] Not completely, though: I find that MCs with real estate experience prior to Congress spend significantly less, $115,600 on average, on office expenses than other MCs (*t=1.85, p=.03*).
[60] Data on Representational Allowances was provided by Craig Goodman and David Parker.
[61] As discussed in chapter three, MCs with political experience held positions that dealt specifically with political issues, including: city/county/state/federal officials, legislators, executives, attorneys or judges; congressional staff; and White House or party officials (local, state, or national). Career data are taken from the *Almanac of American Politics*.

the median first dimension CS-NOMINATE score for the entire party in that Congress.[62] Higher values note a greater ideological divergence from the median party member.

Other scholars have found differences based on gender. Women (particularly those in the minority party) participate more frequently than men in collaborative activities like coalition building and cosponsorship (Volden et al. 2013). Features of the MCs' district speak to congressional behavior as well. Following Fenno (1978) and Fiorina (1978) and those after them (see also Levendusky and Pope 2010, Lewis and Gerber 2004), I also control for MCs highest level of education with *Education Level* (1=less than high school, 2=high school degree, 3=some college, 4=college degree, 5=post-graduate degree). MCs may allocate their time and effort different depending on the diversity of interests, or heterogeneity, of their districts.

Drawing on Sullivan's (1973) measure of district diversity, *District Heterogeneity* is a composite measure that combines multiple district characteristics (measures tapping education, income, occupation, housing, ethnicity, and religion) into a single variable. The variable indicates the percent of characteristics on which two randomly selected district residents would vary; higher values indicate more diverse constituencies.[63] MCs from larger state delegations (*Delegation Size*) know (and share an affinity with) a larger number of colleagues, which potentially increases cosponsorship (Born 1976, Fiellin 1962, 1970, Kingdon 1989). Likewise,

[62] The median ideological position for the party is calculated by using the CS-NOMINATE scores for all members of the party regardless of seniority.

[63] In my period of analysis, the most diverse district (with a score of.5) is Montana's at-large congressional district, represented by former teacher and Democrat Pat Williams and, after him, Rick Hill, a former Republican state politician and local party official. The most homogenous district is the Florida 8th, which runs along the Atlantic coast and encompasses the Kennedy Space Center, and was represented by Rep. Bill Young (R-FL) – a veteran and former insurance salesman.

the distance between Washington, D.C. and the district (*Miles*) can alter the willingness or ability (in terms of cost and effort) of MCs to visit their constituents (Fenno 1978, Young 2006).[64]

Regression Results: Politically Experienced MCs versus Amateurs

Results are presented in Table 4.2, where the excluded category is political amateurs. They support my general expectations. As I expected, experienced MCs cosponsor more bills than amateurs when factoring in differences in their vote shares, majority versus minority party membership, districts, and ideological extremity. Likewise, amateurs do send more staffers to their district offices, as I anticipated, whereas there are no significant differences between experienced and amateur MCs for the other outreach decisions that I examine.

MCs with political experience show a tendency to be more active in the legislative arena, introducing a greater number of bills than amateurs, but the result is not significant. Nor do significant differences emerge for legislative effectiveness. The low hit rate values seen in Figure 4.2 suggest that freshmen MCs in general are unlikely to introduce legislation that becomes law (Frantzich 1979, Volden and Wiseman forthcoming). This pattern of results raises two implications. First, it may be that rather than introducing more legislation than political amateurs, MCs with political experience introduce the 'right' of amount of legislation – neither too little nor too much that they could not actually fight for the bills. Second, the hit rate results are a reminder that, for an individual MC – particularly a new one – getting a bill s/he introduced passed into law is difficult, all other things considered.

I also find an effect for MCs' first term and membership in the majority party. First term MCs introduce fewer bills than second term MCs. New MCs in the majority party also introduce a greater number of bills and, with this, allocate fewer staffers to their district offices,

[64] I include this variable only for analyses of Representational Allowances.

concentrating them on Capitol Hill – perhaps to staff their legislative activities. Majority party MCs also spend slightly more on district travel and enjoy greater legislative success than MCs in the minority. Comparing a MCs' ideology to her/his party, ideologically extreme MCs are less likely to see their bills become law.

Interestingly, MCs who represent more heterogeneous district have a higher hit rate than MCs from more homogenous districts. As I take up in chapter five, this pattern may be due to the specialization of MCs' legislative agendas. MCs from heterogeneous districts may choose their legislative topics more carefully in order to avoid offending parts of their district. MCs from heterogeneous district also spend a significantly greater percent of their office allowances on district travel. Cultivating a hands-on homestyle may help these MCs build name recognition and constituent trust in more diverse districts (Fenno 1978). In addition, the diversity of the constituency may reduce the effectiveness of district mailings. MCs may want to emphasize different activities to different audiences within the district, which makes blanket mailings less useful. This would help to account for why MCs from more heterogeneous districts spend less on constituent mail.

Political Amateurs: Legal and Business Experience

These analyses demonstrate some basic differences in the activities of new MCs with different precongressional career experiences. In the rest of the chapter, I explore the same by looking separately at different types of political and nonpolitical backgrounds. In this section, I focus on political amateurs. Amateurs' career experiences include the ordinary and the unique – from lawyers and doctors to musicians and magicians. While there may be substantive lessons to be learned about Congress as a street magician (cynical readers may think of sleight of hand and other such tricks), not all of these experiences yield the same familiarity with the tasks and

information necessary to succeed on Capitol Hill. I concentrate on legal and business experience, common nonpolitical experiences.

Political Amateurs with Legal Experience

Legal careers have elements that strongly resemble legislative careers. Like legislative careers, legal careers focus and revolve around questions of law, legal writing, the representation of different interests, advocacy, and argumentation (Cohen 1969, Gold 1961, Green et al. 1973, Miller 1995, Podmore 1977, Schlesinger 1957). Lawyers perform numerous tasks that resemble what MCs do: advocating for clients in an adversarial setting, mediating between different interests, and serving as a 'go-between' or point of connection (Eulau and Sprague 1964).

In addition, lawyers also are called on for advice about the creation or implementation of legislative statutes. As a result, and compared to other nonpolitical experiences, legal experience cultivates familiarity with the tasks and demands of legislation and legislating. This fosters insights into the legislative process and the congressional arena, both of which are strongly influenced by legal vocabulary and processes (Miller 1993).[65] Compared to other political amateurs, amateurs from legal backgrounds enter Congress more familiar, and better equipped,

[65] Lawyers perceive these connections as well. They are more likely than non-lawyers to view themselves as qualified to seek political office and to agree that their "professional experience [is] relevant to politics" (Lawless 2012, 119, see also Eulau and Sprague 1964, 129). As noted by one congressional staffer, "bill drafting is easier for lawyer members; they understand the importance of proper drafting" (Miller 1993). Alternatively, it is possible that individuals interested in a legislative career in the long-run go to law school because they perceive it to be relevant to a legislative career. This underlying ambition for legislative office may impact the number of bills they introduce in the House – particularly if legal experience facilitates their ability to do so. Either way, I expect amateurs with legal experience to differ from other amateurs.

to adjust to their new tasks and dive in.[66] I hypothesize that political amateurs with legal experience introduce a greater number of bills than other amateurs.

Political Amateurs with Business Experience

Like legal experience, business experience has attracted attention because it is considered to provide unique skills and insights for a legislative career. Prewitt notes that one in four city council members ranked "occupational skills" as "being the most help" to them with their legislative work, drawing connections between the skills developed through business experiences and politics (Prewitt 1970, 156-157). These skills range from the general (a sense of vision, a commitment to goal-driven action, and the ability to find or create new solutions) to the specific: negotiating, building coalitions, and articulating arguments to diverse audiences (Carnes 2013, Lawless 2012, 120).

But applying these skills in Congress may be difficult for amateurs with business experience. Business and political experiences have different approaches (Tead 1937). While negotiating business deals or navigating collegial interactions within a business setting involves bargaining and compromise, unilateral decision-making is also more common (Prewitt 1970, Romano 2010). By comparison, legislating is the art of negotiation and compromise, more like "pushing a rope" than "cracking a whip" (Buss 2006). In light of these considerations, I expect that amateur MCs with business experience are less likely to allocate their time and attention to legislative activities like bill sponsorship and cosponsorship in their early terms in office. I hypothesize that amateurs with business backgrounds introduce and cosponsor fewer bills than other political amateurs. In general, given the difficulties in getting a bill passed into law, I do

[66] A congressional staff lawyer concluded, "by training, lawyers understand the importance of neutral principles, of fair processes, and of rational arguments, and when working for Congress they inject these values" (Yoo 1998, 19).

not expect that there are differences in the success of amateurs from different career paths in getting their bills passed into law.

Comparing Amateurs' Legislative Activities

In Figures 4.4 and 4.5, I compare new MCs with legal, business, or other nonpolitical experience. As seen in Figure 4.4, lawyers do introduce more bills than other amateurs. They introduce an average of 10 bills per term, compared to the 7-8 bills introduced by MCs business experience or other nonpolitical experiences, but the difference is not significant. Since new MCs in general (regardless of prior experiences) average 9 introductions per Congress, a 2-3 bill difference in legislative activity is notable though. Interestingly, it is amateurs without either business or legal experience who cosponsor the most bills, contrary to what I expected. In line with my expectations, Figure 4.5 shows only small (and nonsignificant) differences in amateurs' hit rates.

Amateurs' Constituent Outreach Activities

Legislating is only half of the story of interest in this chapter. I am also interested in whether amateurs from different nonpolitical career backgrounds differ in their constituent outreach as well. At its heart, constituent outreach is strategic self-promotion. It requires deliberative communication, strong networking skills, and the ability to develop listeners' trust (Arnold 1990, Fenno 1978, Mayhew 1974). Practically, it also requires the ability to manage and direct staff, delegate tasks, and oversee multiple projects. These skills and tasks resonate with those emphasized in many different nonpolitical experiences. One career of which this may be true is business experience. Business experience is a common path to Congress for amateurs, and many amateurs have business management experience – which aligns with the management,

administration, and oversight tasks entailed in overseeing congressional offices and staff (Salisbury and Shepsle 1980).

This raises competing hypotheses. On the one hand, MCs with business experience may outpace their amateur counterparts when it comes to constituent outreach activities given these professional skills and abilities. On the other hand, management and public relations skills are not uncommon and could be developed in many different careers (Eulau and Sprague 1964). Were this true, political amateurs would act relatively similarly in regards to how they allocate funds for constituent outreach. They could be uniformly concerned about reelection, and make similar choices all around. In addition, lacking prior political experience makes amateurs especially receptive to 'insider' advice about these spending decisions. For example, the Congressional Management Foundation advises new MCs to hire only core staff during their early terms in order to get a sense of their staffing needs (Young 2006). If new MCs followed this advice, it would reduce the variation observed in how new MCs allocate their staff resources.

Figure 4.6 helps judge between these competing considerations. There are small differences in the percent of staff that new amateurs allocate to their district offices, and little variation in the percent they spend on district travel. Larger but significant differences emerge for constituent mailings. Surprisingly, again, it is amateurs without either legal or business experience that pull ahead ($t=-1.8$, $p=.04$).

Multivariate Analyses: Amateurs' Legislative and Outreach Activities

To examine the relationship between career experiences and amateur's activities when controlling for other considerations, I estimate new negative binomial and ordinary least squares

regression models. My sample is the 116 new amateurs in the 101st-110th Congresses (1989-2008); MCs with prior political experience are examined in the next section.

The dependent variables the same as above (number of bills introduced, cosponsored, hit rate, percent of staff working in district, spending on district travel, and spending on mailings). I use two dichotomous independent variables for nonpolitical precongressional careers: *Legal* and *Business*. The *Legal* variable captures only nonpolitical legal experiences since I analyze political amateurs. *Business* takes the value of '1' if MCs have worked in a private or corporate business setting.[67]

The regression results are presented in Table 4.3. The baseline category is political amateurs without legal or business experience. This group includes veterans and MCs with experience in academia (college professors or administrators), farming, manual work, medicine, media, social work, sports, and nonprofit work.

As I expected, MCs from business backgrounds introduce and cosponsor less legislation than amateurs from a mix of different backgrounds, but do not differ in regards to their outreach decisions. Note that, for introductions, the pattern is in the expected direction, but the results fall just outside standard levels of statistical significance (*p=.105*). Advocates of 'citizen legislators' or electoral change propose business experience as a salutary antidote to the weaknesses of 'career politicians' and 'inside the Beltway' politics. But I find that amateurs from business

[67] For example, 43 had founded a company before running for Congress, and an additional 31 had held upper level management positions like CEO, vice president, or general manager. Although it would be interesting to parse the differences between MCs with different levels of responsibility in their business careers, I do not. The small number of MCs without management positions and the limited availability of the data on representational allowances (104th-108th Congresses only), combined, drastically reduce the sample size. Therefore, *Business* encompasses all amateurs with any prior business experience, regardless of type of experience or position.

backgrounds do not overwhelm the legislative process with new legislation that has 'fresh' insights. Rather, they take a more selective approach to their legislative activities.

Lawyers do not introduce more bills than other amateurs, in contrast to what I had expected. Nor do significant differences appear in the legislative effectiveness of amateur MCs. In regards to legislative effectiveness, other MCs do not appear to respond differently to amateurs from one background versus another. However, first term amateur MCs are more successful than second term MCs. Perhaps they enter Congress with a strong claim to a policy mandate that other congressional actors feel incumbent to heed (Barnett 1999). Overall, though, new amateurs uniformly face high barriers in seeing their bills become law.

First term MCs introduce also fewer bills than second term MCs. District heterogeneity has a strong relationship with MCs' outreach decisions, particularly district staffing. If a new amateur represented the most diverse constituency possible, s/he would increase the percent of staff working in the district by over 50%. District staffers are the front-lines when it comes to handling constituent concerns and problems, and a more diverse district likely poses a wider array of these.

The Legacy of Political Experience: MCs with Prior Political Experience

So far, I have outlined broad differences in the activities of new MCs from different career backgrounds. I expect similar differences to emerge when I compare different kinds of political experience, which the majority of new MCs have. To examine these connections, in this section I concentrate only on MCs who have had political experience prior to Congress and compare new MCs with different types of political experience.

Legislative Activity and Legislative Experience

Both congressional staff and state legislative experience resemble Congress in the tasks that are undertaken and the way they undertaken, as acknowledged by individuals from these backgrounds. For example, Esther Kia'aina, a former congressional staffer and congressional candidate, explained that, "I have a good appreciation for what is necessary on Day 1, and not only organizing an office and assembling a good staff…I know how to hit the ground running" (Dumain and Epstein 2011). Congressional and state legislative experience should sharpen MCs' insights into constituent interests (often the same constituents) and provide other resources – policy and constituent knowledge, political contacts, and campaign donations – that facilitate participation in the policy process.[68] I expect three general patterns to result.

First, I hypothesize that MCs with state and congressional legislative experience introduce a greater number of bills than MCs with other political experiences.[69] Former state legislators and staffers should have a grasp on major issues under debate and a handle on the process and procedures for introducing bills. [70] Expectations are less clear for cosponsorship. On one hand, MCs from state and congressional legislative backgrounds may understand the importance of supporting colleagues' initiatives and how cosponsorship is an opportunity for MCs to identify themselves with constituent interests. In addition, congressional and state

[68] Alternatively, MCs may choose these backgrounds because they are interested in participating in the policy process. While I cannot answer the causal question, it is not damning to the study of precongressional career experiences. These skills or insights they acquire in those careers may sharpen their ability to participate in legislative activities.

[69] I do not include MCs with local legislative experience in this hypothesis because local legislatures differ in structure and process from Congress. As a result, they provide less crisp insights into congressional behavior.

[70] Likewise, as a former state legislator argued, "The way I came to Congress was the ultimate way to be sworn in. Those who serve in the state legislature are better prepared, they have better command of issues, they know about things: the debate, the compromise, the policy disputes – they are all dealt with in the statehouse" (Berkman 1993, 86).

legislative experiences are common pathways to Congress, which increases the number of MCs they know and strengthens personal ties that may increase cosponsorship decisions.[71] But, on the other hand, these same assumptions may be true of political experience in general, which would lead to no significant differences in cosponsorship behavior.

Second, I anticipate that MCs with state or congressional legislative experience introduce more bills that make substantial changes to the law. Bills may vary on many dimensions – two of which are of particular interest: the topic addressed in the bill and the scope of change entailed by the bill (Volden and Wiseman 2009).[72] Symbolic bills make little to no change to existing law. Rather, they help MCs identify with and represent their constituents by taking typically uncontroversial, low impact actions like changing the name of a federal building, designating public holidays, or commemorating historic events. On the other end of the spectrum, significant bills make the weightiest and most controversial changes to existing law, creating or revising statutes and policies (like the 2010 Affordable Care Act which overhauled the U.S. healthcare system).

While all legislation is important from the perspective of representation, significant bills make a greater contribution to policy outcomes. As a result, crafting and introducing substantive legislation requires sharper legislative skills and more nuanced constituent insights. In their early terms, MCs with prior legislative experience should be more familiar with the sorts of changes these laws entail and also possess insights into where such changes are necessary. Compared to other MCs with political backgrounds, I anticipate that legislatively experienced MCs introduce

[71] 434 of 838 (52%) new MCs have these backgrounds.
[72] Differences in the scope of legislation (symbolic vs. significant) are taken from Volden and Wiseman (forthcoming) and are available only for introductions, not cosponsorship.

more significant and substantively significant bills (those making non-symbolic changes and those making the most weighty or far-reaching changes).

Third, I expect that MCs with state and congressional legislative experience have lower hit rates than other experienced MCs. This hypothesis stems from my expectation about the type of bills that MCs with legislative experience introduce. The weightier the changes to the law, the more resistance the bill is likely to receive. If MCs with legislative experience introduce more contentious bills, I anticipate that they lower hit rates.

Precongressional Executive Experience

State and federal executive positions engage with a range of important policy topics.[73] These are work environments where "command and control techniques [are] acceptable" and "everything revolved, or seemed to revolve, around" the chief executive, these experiences pair policy expertise with an emphasis leadership and independent action (Barnett 1999, 136, Matthews 1960, 1075). These individuals have practice being out in front, proposing and debating policy ideas.

As a result, I expect that MCs with executive experience put their policy and political skills to work on legislative introductions, which are prominent ways to make policy changes and command public attention. In light of the number of important policy debates with which interact, I hypothesize that executive experience increases the volume of bills that MCs introduce and the number of bills introduced that make weighty changes to the law (when compared to MCs with non-legislative political experience). Like MCs with legislative experience, if MCs with past executive experience introduce more controversial bills, they may be less likely to see their bills become law (i.e. have lower hit rates) than MCs from local or judicial backgrounds.

[73] Executive experience refers to employment in the state governor's office or in the federal executive branch, such as Cabinet secretaries or under-secretaries.

Comparing Legislative Activities Among MCs with Prior Political Experience

Figure 4.7 examines these claims, summarizing the activities of MCs from different backgrounds. MCs with executive and congressional experience do introduce a greater volume of bills than other experienced MCs. Interestingly, state legislators lag behind former staffers in terms of the total volume of introductions, 9 introductions to the 11 bills introduced by former staffers. There is little variation in cosponsorship behavior by political experience.

Compared to all other experienced MCs (including those with legislative experience), new MCs with executive experience introduce a greater number of bills make significant changes to law, as show in Figure 4.8 ($t=-2.0$, $p=.02$). In Figure 4.9, I show that the hit rates of MCs with state and congressional legislative experience are lower than other experienced MCs, but the difference is small and not significant.

Constituent Outreach Decisions

The decisions that MCs make about how much effort to devote to legislative activity affect how much attention and resources they can devote to other tasks. For instance, if MCs with legislative and/or executive experience concentrate their attention on legislative activities, then they may spend more time on Capitol Hill where those activities occur. Two competing sets of hypotheses arise from this consideration.

On one hand, MCs with legislative and/or executive experience may allocate a smaller portion of their budget to district travel than other experienced MCs. In conjunction, they may send more staff to their D.C. office to assist their legislative endeavors. On the other hand, politically experienced MCs in general may value constituent outreach, and their past experiences may all encourage building district relationships. If this were true, then I would not expect to see distinct patterns emerge in the outreach decisions of experienced new MCs. This

latter train of thought is evidenced in Figure 4.10. Looking at new politically experienced MCs' constituent outreach, broad differences do not emerge in the ways that new MCs allocate their Representational Allowances.

Analyzing the Legislative and Outreach Activities of MCs with Prior Political Experience

As before, I use regression analyses to investigate my expectations for the politically experienced new MCs in 101st-110th Congresses (1989-2010). The dependent variables and basic regression framework (negative binomial and ordinary least squares, standard errors clustered on individual MCs) are unchanged. To explore differences in the types of bills that MCs introduce, I introduce three additional variables: *Symbolic Bills*, *Significant Bills*, and *Substantively Significant Bills*. These measures indicate the number of each type of bill that MCs introduce, per Congress, based on the scope of policy change.

The coding scheme and data about the scope of policy change were provided by Volden and Wiseman and are available for the 101st-110th Congresses only. Significant bills make some change to existing law or create a substantively important new statute. To understand what counts under this criteria, consider two alternatives. First, symbolic bills make little change to existing law. Rather, as their name implies, these bills enable MCs to take more ceremonial actions on constituents' behalf. A bill is categorized as symbolic if it includes in its titles any of the following phrases: commemoration/commemorate, for the (private) relief of, medal, mint coins, posthumous, public holiday, to designate/redesignate, to encourage, to express the sense of Congress, to provide for correction of/remove any doubt, to name/rename/retention of name.

Second, substantively significant bills are the rare bills that make exceedingly large or landmark changes to law (like the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, which overhauled national healthcare standards and regulations). Due to the scope of legal changes entailed, 'substantively significant bills' are the select handful of bills that congressional observers (such

as the *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*) single out from the thousands introduced each Congress as the most important bills that term. (I examine 'substantively significant bills' in a later section.)

This leaves 'significant bills'. Significant bills meet both of the following criteria: 1) include none of the key phrases denoted above that characterize legislation as 'symbolic,' 2) are not found in the *Congressional Quarterly Almanac's* annual summary of the most important legislation from the term. I control for the total number of bills a MC introduces per term in order to distinguish increased activity on certain kinds of bills from an overall greater volume of legislative activity (*Total Introductions*).

I use dichotomous variables to indicate former state legislators or congressional staffers: *State Legislator* and *Congressional Staff*. I create an interaction variable *Legislator*Staff* to capture the effect of combined state legislative and congressional staff experience, as was true of 32 new MCs in this time period. *Executive* (0/1) is for MCs who were employed in federal or state executive offices.[74] The baseline category in the analysis is the MCs without these legislative or executive experiences. This includes city and local officials (such as mayors, county administrators, and school board officials), state bureaucrats, judicial officials (judges and attorneys across all levels of government), and political party officials/volunteers.

The results in Table 4.4 clarify the patterns identified above. For example, I hypothesize that MCs with executive experience introduce a greater volume of bills, which is borne out in the regression analysis. Also, as I anticipated, MCs with executive experience introduce more substantively significant bills than other MCs with local or judicial political experiences. Having

[74] This does not include MCs with local executive or administrative experience. I exclude these MCs because the diversity of tasks and institutional structures in these positions makes it difficult to generalize well about their aggregate effects.

been at the forefront of implementing public policies, MCs with experience in federal or state executive office take action on more far-reaching and weighty policy goals.

What does this mean, practically, for congressional outputs? Imagine a scenario in which ever new MC during the 101st-110th Congresses with prior political experience had worked in an executive office. In that alternative world there would have been approximately 72 more of these substantially significant bills introduced.[75] As there were only 208 such bills introduced in this entire time period (by all new MCs), this is a significant increase. While this says nothing about the chance of these bills being passed into law, this increase would provide contributions to policy debates that *could* become law.

In contrast, and contrary to my expectations, MCs with state or congressional legislative experience do not introduce a greater overall number of bills, as seen the first two rows of the first column. Nor do they cosponsor a greater number of their colleagues' bills. But they do introduce a greater number of significant bills (those making actual changes to the law, but not sweeping or landmark alterations). Former state legislators, congressional staffers, as well as the MCs who have had both experiences all introduce a greater number of bills making actual policy changes.

This has notable aggregate implications. Imagine, like above, that I took the 173 experienced MCs without either state legislative or congressional experience and could 'give' the state legislative experience. In that alternative world, there would have been 123 more significant

[75] I multiple the increase in introductions of these bills by the average number of substantially significant bills introduced per Congress, and then multiple that product by the number of new MCs without executive experience (but other political experience) in the 101st-110th Congresses.

bills introduced, or 205 significant bills if it 'gave' other experienced MCs congressional staff experience instead.[76]

Finally, like MCs from executive backgrounds, MCs with both state and congressional legislative experience introduce more substantially significant legislation than other experienced MCs. MCs with both congressional and state legislative experience are also slightly more likely to get their bills enacted to law. New MCs with legislative experience start their time in office by offering more substantial policy contributions – to the tune of 60 more of these bills had all politically experienced new MCs had these specific political experiences.

Whereas strong and significant differences emerge regarding experienced MCs' legislative decisions, there are few significant differences in regards to constituent outreach. The only exception is constituent mailings; former state legislators spend a fraction more of their Representational Allowance on mailings than other experienced MCs. As has been true throughout this chapter, MCs' first term and majority party membership continue to contribute to their behavior. Like other scholars have found, I see an effect of gender on cosponsorship behavior among experienced MCs, suggesting that this finding is also driven by the contexts – political versus nonpolitical – of female legislators' previous experiences (Volden et al. forthcoming).

Conclusion

MCs from different career backgrounds make different decisions about engaging in legislative and outreach activities. As I contend, it may be that career experiences before Congress shape how individual MCs adjust to their new institutional work environment, providing guidance and support during a crucial transition period to congressional office. For

[76] I calculated these numbers, and that in the paragraph below, in the same way as above.

instance, I find differences in the volume and type of bills that MCs introduce. MCs with previous experiences that provide sharp policy, process, or constituent insights like legal or executive experience introduce more legislation. MCs with prior legislative experience introduce legislation that makes more far-reaching changes to the law. In contrast, amateur MCs with business experience introduce and cosponsor less than their colleagues, suggesting that the transition into the policy process is longer or more arduous. Differences like these bear directly on the type of representation that constituents receive from their representative, their ability to access and monitor their representative, and the likelihood that these decisions substantially alter public law. Three key points bear mention in closing.

First, I demonstrate how MCs with political versus nonpolitical experiences take up different mixes of legislative and outreach activities. Politically experienced MCs engage more often in interpersonal and coalition-building activities like cosponsorship than do political amateurs. These are activities that revolve around Washington D.C. and its legislative process. In addition, politically experienced MCs send fewer of their staff to their district offices. Broad distinctions in precongressional experiences provide a window into how candidates from different backgrounds may approach the decisions they face in office.

Second, congressional context matters, as do district considerations. Membership in the minority party and congressional tenure (first versus second term) add to the difficulty of participating in the policy process. District heterogeneity also plays an important role in shaping the amount and allocation of MCs' resources towards building up district relationships.

Third, I demonstrate that the *type* of political and nonpolitical experiences matters, for both politically experienced and inexperienced MCs. For example, amateurs with business experience are less active in the policy process. This adds weight to the supposition that

experience outside the political realm matters within it. Moreover, it hints that candidates' claims about their nonpolitical experiences are not empty gestures or political posturing. Rather, they point to skills and insights MCs have acquired that help them navigate the transition to public office.

Likewise, the type of political experience shapes the decisions that new MCs make and how other actors seem to respond to them. For instance, MCs with state or congressional legislative experience introduce a greater number of bills proposing substantive policy changes, and MCs with both experiences are more likely to see these bills become law. Unique career paths bring MCs to office. As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, when new MCs enter Congress, they are faced with many decisions about how to represent their constituents in office and reach out to them in the district. Precongressional career experiences may provide key assets to help new MCs decide what, exactly, to do as new members of Congress.

Tables and Figures

Table 4.1 Summary of Legislative and Outreach Activities, All First and Second Term MCs 101st-110th Congresses (1989-2008)

	Total	**Minimum**	**Maximum**	**Mean**
Bill Introductions	10,293	0	44	9
Bill Cosponsorships	272,113	0	838	228
District Staff %	--	14%	78%	47%
District Travel	$24,453,155	$1,552	$253,987	$78,881
Mass Mailings	$34,550,384	$4,725	$330,376	$111,453

Note: Cell entries are calculated as means per MC-per Congress. MCs that served more than one term are included twice in the analysis. Data on staff, district travel, and mass mailings are available for the 104th-108th Congresses only.
Sources: Library of Congress THOMAS, Parker and Goodman (2009)

Table 4.2 Differences in Legislative and Outreach Decisions, Experienced and Amateur MCs

	Introductions	**Cosponsorships**	**Hit Rate**
Political Experience	.07 (.07)	.10 (.04)***	.01 (.02)
First Term	-.32 (.04)***	-.04 (.02)	.00 (.01)
Majority Party	.19 (.05)***	-.05 (.03)	.08 (.01)***
Woman	.07 (.07)	.08 (.04)**	-.01 (.01)
White	.21 (.09)**	-.12 (.06)**	-.00 (.02)
Ideo. Distance Pty Median	-.14 (.31)	.46 (.20)**	-.17 (.06)***
Vote Share	-.03 (.02)	-.01 (.01)	.00 (.00)
Vote Share^2	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Partial Term	-.65 (.11)	-.76 (.08)***	.05 (.03)*
Education Level	.07 (.04)**	-.01 (.02)	-.01 (.01)
Delegation Size	-.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
District Heterogeneity	-1.01 (.63)	-2.62 (.37)***	.42 (.12)***
Constant	3.07 (.73)***	6.70 (.43)***	-.11 (.14)
N	1,193 (677 unique clusters)		1,162 (672 unique clusters)
	% District Staff	**% On Travel**	**% On Mail**
Political Experience	-1.69 (.85)**	-.04 (.23)	.01 (.50)
First Term	-.62 (.69)	.07 (.11)	.42 (.30)
Majority Party	-3.11 (.82)***	.47 (.17)***	-.35 (.42)
Woman	-1.18 (1.20)	.04 (.22)	.22 (.46)
White	-.22 (1.58)	.11 (.25)	1.31 (.61)**
Ideo. Distance Pty Median	-2.39 (4.77)	-.97 (.97)	-1.71 (2.49)
Vote Share	.20 (.25)	-.02 (.04)	-.42 (.12)***
Vote Share^2	-.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)***
Partial Term	1.34 (.2.26)	-.39 (.36)	.10 (1.34)
Education Level	-.95 (.55)*	-.20 (.12)*	.12 (.28)
Delegation Size	-.02 (.03)	-.04 (.01)***	.05 (.01)***
Miles	-.00 (.00)*	.00 (.00)***	-.00 (.00)
District Heterogeneity	-.63 (10.62)	14.30 (2.09)***	-11.90 (5.14)**
Constant	48.77 (10.68)***	-1.13 (1.92)	26.60 (5.22)***
N	642 (405 unique clusters)	642 (408 unique clusters)	642 (408 unique clusters)

Note: All standard errors are clustered on the individual MC; the models for Introductions and Cosponsorships are negative binomial regression models. All other model results are ordinary least squares. MCs who did not introduce a single bill in one Congress are not included in the *Hit Rate* analysis. The unit of analysis is an individual MC in a single Congress, and the sample is all new MCs. Political amateurs are the excluded category. The dependent variables are: the number of bills introduced and cosponsored per MC in a single Congress, an MC's proportion of the bills that become public law per Congress, the percent of staff that work in district offices, and the percent of MCs' Representational Allowance spent per Congress on travel to the district and on mailings. Data on Representational Allowances is available for the 104th-108th Congresses only. Hit Rate R^2 = .07, % District Staff R^2 = .05, % On Travel R^2 = .32, % On Mail R^2 = .14 *** $p \leq .01$, ** $p \leq .05$, * $p < .10$

Table 4.3 Regression Analysis, Political Amateurs' Legislative and Outreach Activities

	Introductions	**Cosponsorships**	**Hit Rate**
Legal	-.01 (.18)	-.22 (.10)**	.05 (.04)
Business	-.20 (.12)	-.16 (.09)**	.01 (.04)
First Term	-.18 (.09)**	-.02 (.05)	.06 (.03)**
Majority Party	.16 (.12)	-.10 (.07)	.04 (.03)
Woman	.36 (.17)**	.18 (.09)**	-.01 (.03)
White	.69 (22)**	.21 (.14)	.06 (.04)
Ideo. Distance Pty Median	1.23 (.69)*	.92 (.45)**	-.28 (.19)
Vote Share	.00 (.00)	.01 (.02)	.01 (.01)
Vote Share^2	.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)
Partial Term	-.79 (.26)***	-.95 (.16)***	.09 (.09)
Education Level	.10 (.09)	.02 (.05)	-.03 (.02)
Delegation Size	-.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)
District Heterogeneity	.39 (1.77)	-1.88 (.93)	.40 (.41)
Constant	1.56 (1.45)	5.57 (.97)***	-.38 (.45)
	198 (116 unique clusters)		194 (115 unique clusters)
	% District Staff	**% On Travel**	**% On Mail**
Legal	.82 (1.55)	.14 (.52)	-1.37 (1.34)
Business	.56 (.1.58)	-.19 (.58)	-.93 (1.47)
First Term	-.91 (1.89)	.10 (.30)	1.00 (.69)
Majority Party	-1.00 (1.87)	1.41 (.60)**	-1.03 (1.58)
Woman	.70 (1.81)	.17 (.78)	-1.47 (1.41)
White	-3.91 (2.79)	1.41 (.68)**	1.52 (1.95)
Ideo. Distance Pty Median	-17.88 (8.86)**	-3.34 (1.77)*	-9.25 (6.00)
Vote Share	-.74 (.64)	-.11 (.13)	-.20 (.31)
Vote Share^2	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Partial Term	-3.66 (1.66)**	-.76 (.51)	-.84 (2.83)
Education Level	1.62 (1.15)	.09 (.25)	-.18 (.76)
Delegation Size	-.03 (.05)	-.01 (.02)	.02 (.04)
Miles	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)***	-.00 (.00)
District Heterogeneity	59.48 (20.53)***	6.21 (4.77)	-27.31 (13.44)**
Constant	47.70 (24.44)*	1.38 (5.37)	28.95 (15.02)*
		112 (70 unique clusters)	

Note: Standard errors are clustered on the individual MCs; the Introductions and Cosponsorships models are negative binomial regression models. All other model results are ordinary least squares. MCs who did not introduce a single bill in one Congress are not included in the *Hit Rate* analysis. The unit of analysis is an individual MC in one Congress; the sample is political amateurs and the excluded category is amateurs without business or legal experience. The dependent variables are: the number of bills introduced and cosponsored per MC in a single Congress, an MC's proportion of the bills that become public law per Congress, the percent of staff that work in district offices, and the percent of MCs' Representational Allowance spent per Congress on travel to the district and on mailings. Data on Representational Allowances is available for the 104th-108th Congresses only. Hit Rate R^2 = .10, % District Staff R^2 = .15, % On Travel R^2 = .35, % On Mail R^2 = .21 *** $p \leq .01$ ** $p \leq .05$ * $p < .10$

Table 4.4 Regression Results, Legislative and Outreach Activities, Politically Experienced MCs

	Introductions	**Cosponsorships**	**Hit Rate**
State Legislator	-.03 (.07)	-.03 (.04)	-.02 (.01)
Congressional Staff	.03 (.10)	-.01 (.07)	-.06 (.01)***
*Legislator*Staff*	-.02 (.15)	.10 (.11)	.11 (.03)***
Executive	.18 (.10)*	-.08 (.06)	-.00 (.02)
First Term	-.35 (.04)***	-.04 (.02)	-.01 (.01)
Majority Party	.22 (.05)***	.04 (.03)	.08 (.01)***
Woman	-.01 (.06)	.07 (.05)	-.00 (.02)
White	.16 (.10)*	-.14 (.06)**	-.01 (.02)
Ideo. Distance Pty Median	-.42 (.34)	.41 (.22)*	-.15 (.06)**
Vote Share	-.02 (.02)	-.00 (.01)	-.00 (.00)
Vote Share^2	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Partial Term	-.67 (.11)***	-.01 (.02)	.05 (.04)
Education Level	.04 (.04)	-.74 (.10)***	-.01 (.01)
Delegation Size	-.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
District Heterogeneity	-1.35 (.67)**	-2.88 (.41)***	.44 (.13)***
Constant	3.46 (.81)***	6.91 (.49)***	-.05 (.15)
N	994 (561 unique clusters)		967 (557 unique clusters)

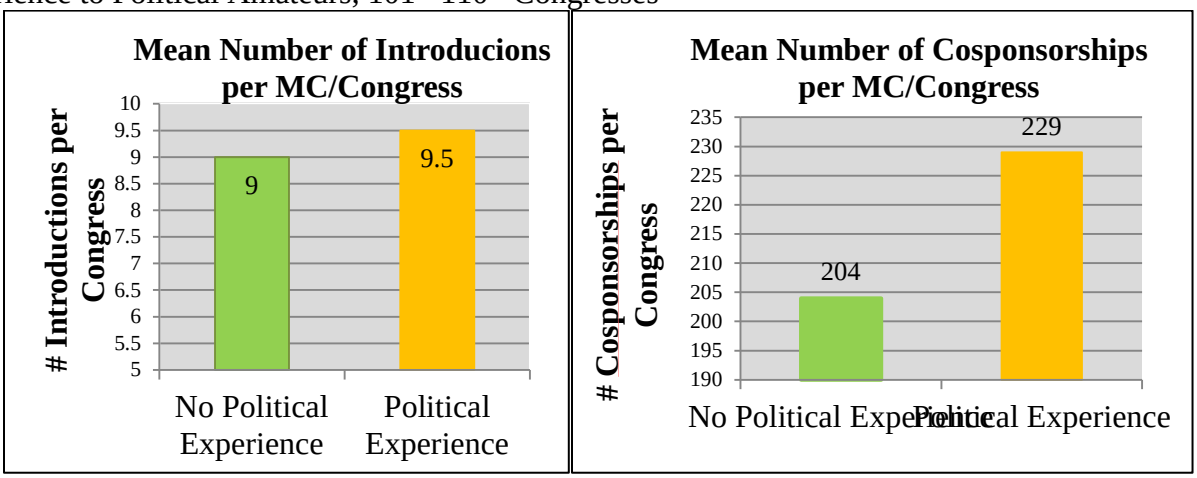
	Symbolic Bills	**Significant Bills**	**Substantively Significant Bills**
State Legislator	-.15 (.13)	.09 (.03)***	-.22 (.20)
Congressional Staff	-.26 (.24)	.14 (.04)***	-.73 (.42)
*Legislator*Staff*	.51 (.32)	-.12 (.06)*	1.07 (.60)*
Executive	-.02 (.21)	.05 (.04)	.56 (.32)*
First Term	-.03 (.10)	-.07 (.03)***	-.35 (.19)*
Majority Party	-.04 (.11)	.11 (.04)***	1.77 (.26)
Woman	-.24 (.16)	.08 (.03)***	1.18 (.43)***
White	-.37 (.16)**	.11 (.04)***	1.18 (.43)***
Ideo. Distance Pty Median	-.53 (.69)	-.12 (.14)	.03 (1.05)
Vote Share	-.03 (.04)	-.01 (.01)	.00 (.06)
Vote Share^2	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)
Partial Term	-.12 (.24)	-.27 (.08)***	-1.24 (.69)*
Education Level	.13 (.09)	-.00 (.02)	.07 (.14)
Delegation Size	.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.01)
District Heterogeneity	.66 (1.48)	.07 (.28)	-3.72 (2.10)*
Total Introductions	.05 (.00)***	.08 (.00)***	.04 (.01)***
Constant	-.70 (1.52)	1.51 (.46)***	-2.93 (2.58)
N	988 (558 unique clusters)		

Table 4.4 (cont.)

	% District Staff	% On Travel	% On Mail
State Legislator	-.27 (1.00)	-.17 (.19)	.78 (.43)*
Congressional Staff	.86 (1.62)	-.03 (.28)	.37 (.75)
*Legislator*Staff*	-.11 (2.46)	.03 (.51)	-1.01 (1.17)
Executive	.32 (1.83)	-.05 (.27)	.05 (.73)
First Term	-.69 (.75)	.02 (.11)	.29 (.33)
Majority Party	-3.41 (.93)***	.36 (.19)*	-.21 (.45)
Woman	-1.61 (1.34)	.06 (.23)	.56 (.50)
White	.09 (1.68)	.01 (.26)	1.34 (.65)*
Ideo. Distance Pty Median	1.64 (5.51)	-.34 (1.18)	.07 (2.80)
Vote Share	.35 (.28)	-.02 (.05)	-.46 (.13)***
Vote Share^2	-.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)***
Partial Term	2.17 (2.76)	-.25 (.40)	.34 (1.45)
Education	-1.46 (.67)**	-.29 (.14)**	.20 (.32)
Delegation Size	-.04 (.04)	-.04 (.01)***	.06 (.02)***
Miles	-.00 (.00)*	.00 (.00)***	-.00 (.00)
District Heterogeneity	-11.81 (12.32)	15.33 (2.36)***	-7.51 (5.78)
Constant	48.51 (12.42)***	-.85 (2.06)	25.11 (5.66)***
N	530 (336 unique clusters)		

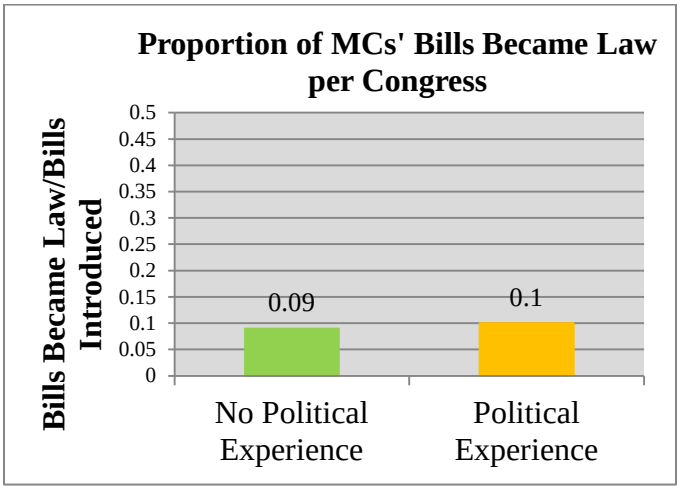
Note: Standard errors are clustered on the individual MCs; the Introductions, Cosponsorships, Symbolic Bills, Significant Bills, and Substantively Significant Bills models are negative binomial regression models. All other model results are ordinary least squares. MCs who did not introduce a single bill in one Congress are not included in the *Hit Rate* analysis. The unit of analysis is an individual MC in a single Congress, and the sample is politically experienced MCs only. The excluded category is politically experienced MCs without either state legislative, congressional staff, or executive experience. The dependent variables are: the number of bills introduced and cosponsored per MC in a single Congress, an MC's proportion of the bills that become public law per Congress, the number of symbolic, significant, and substantively significant bills introduce per MC-Congress, the percent of staff that work in district offices, and the percent of MCs' Representational Allowance spent per Congress on travel to the district and on mailings. Data on Representational Allowances is available for the 104th-108th Congresses only. Hit Rate R^2 = .09, % District Staff R^2 = .07, % On Travel R^2 = .33, % On Mail R^2 = .15
*** $p \leq .01$ ** $p \leq .05$ * $p < .10$

Figure 4.1 Comparing the Volume of Legislative Activities of MCs With Prior Political Experience to Political Amateurs, 101st-110th Congresses



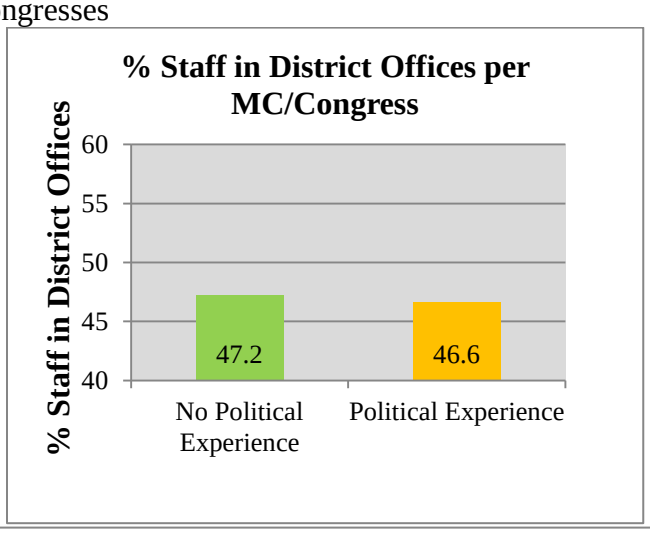
Note: The unit of analysis a single MC per Congress. To calculate the figures, I used the mean of MCs' introductions and cosponsorships per MC-per Congress. MCs that served more than one term are included twice in the analysis. There were 116 political amateurs and 561 MCs with political experience in the 101st-110th Congresses (1989-2008).
Source: Library of Congress THOMAS

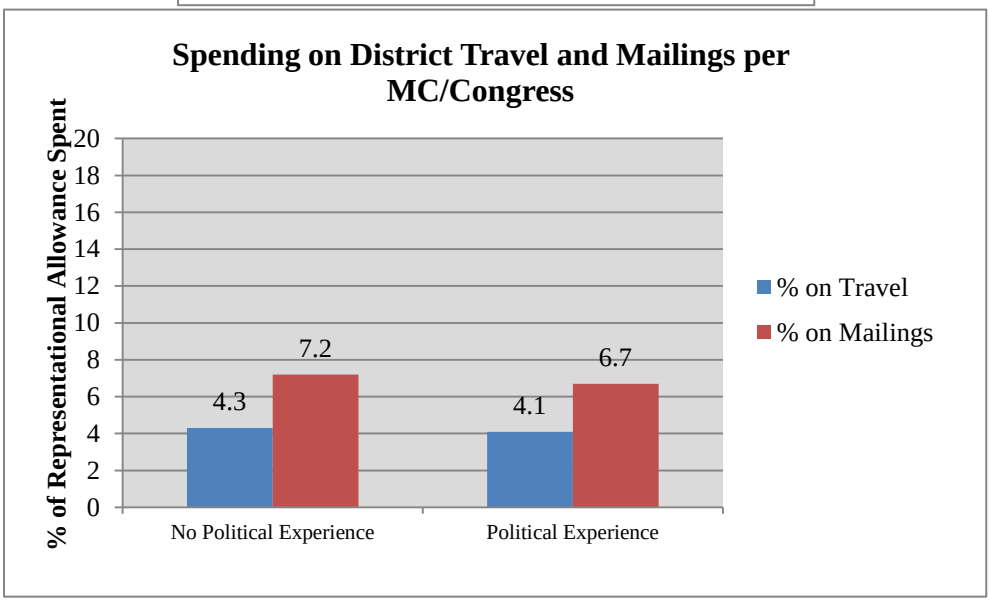
Figure 4.2 Little Difference in Hit Rate of MCs' With, and Without, Prior Political Experience, 101st-110th Congresses



Note: The unit of analysis a single MC per Congress. To calculate the figures, I used the mean of MCs' hit rate (# bills became public law/# bills introduced) per MC-per Congress. MCs that served more than one term are included twice in the analysis. There are 116 political amateurs and 561 MCs with political experience in the 101st-110th Congresses (1989-2008).
Source: Library of Congress THOMAS

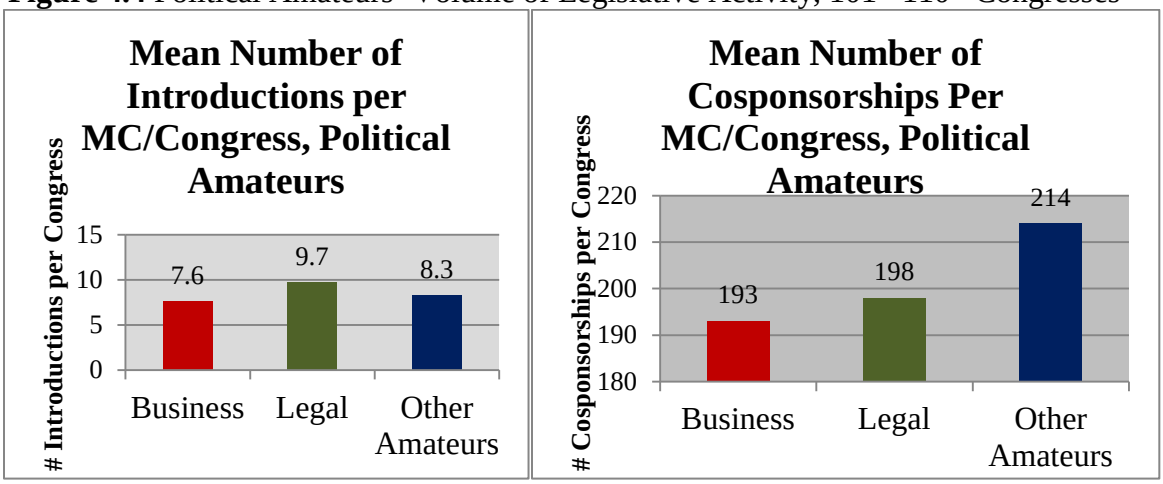
Figure 4.3 Comparisons of MCs' Constituent Outreach through District Staffing, Travel, and Mailings, 104-108th Congresses





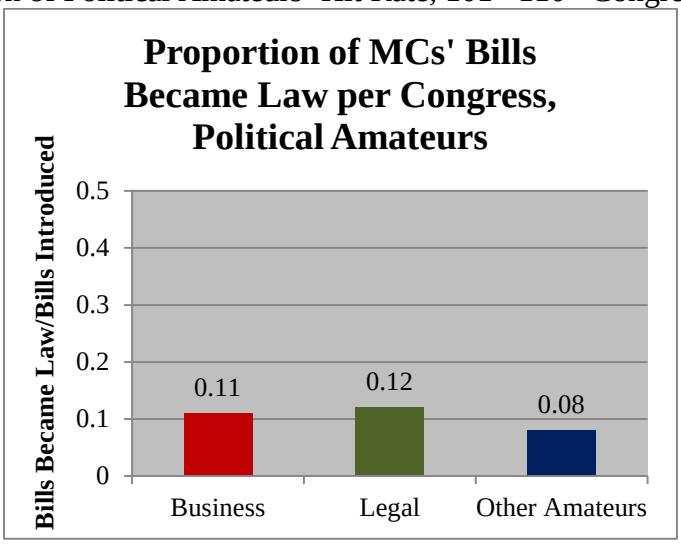
Note: The unit of analysis a single MC per Congress. To calculate the figures, I used the mean of MCs' staffing, district travel spending, and mailing spending per MC-per Congress. MCs that served more than one term are included twice in the analysis. Data on staff, district travel, and mass mailings are available for the 104th-108th Congresses only. In these Congresses, there are 258 MCs with political experience and 57 political amateurs.
Source: Parker and Goodman (2009)

Figure 4.4 Political Amateurs' Volume of Legislative Activity, 101st-110th Congresses



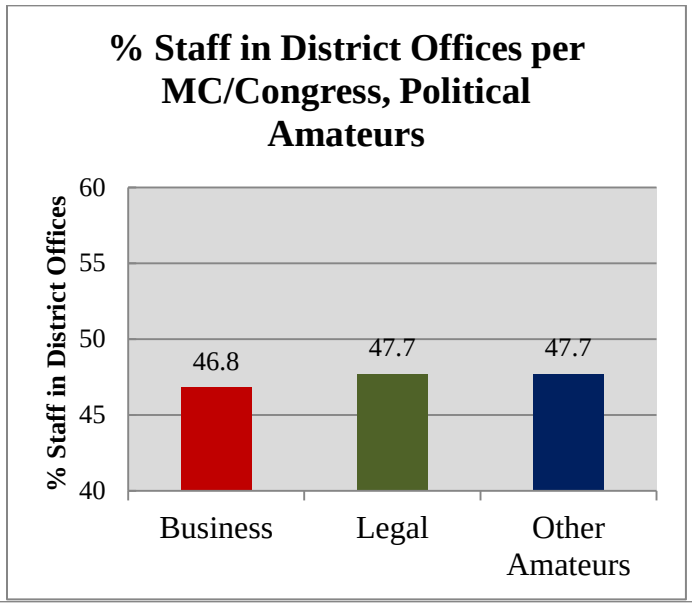
Note: The unit of analysis a single MC per Congress. To calculate the figures, I used the mean of MCs' introductions and cosponsorships per MC-per Congress for political amateurs only. MCs with prior political experience are not included in the figure. MCs that served more than one term are included twice in the analysis. In the 101st-110th Congresses, there are 70 political amateurs with business experience, 21 amateurs have legal experience, and 29 amateurs have other experiences (not business or legal).
Source: Library of Congress THOMAS

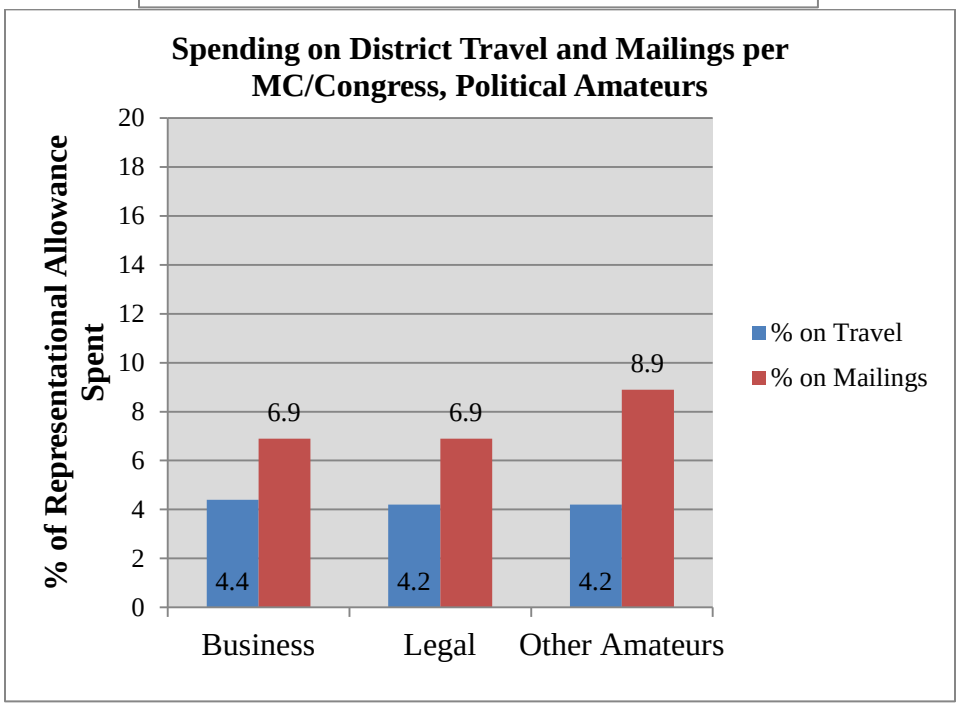
Figure 4.5 Comparison of Political Amateurs' Hit Rate, 101st-110th Congresses



Note: The unit of analysis a single MC per Congress. To calculate the figures, I used the mean of MCs' hit rate (# bills became public law/# bills introduced) per MC-per Congress for political amateurs only. MCs with prior political experience are not included in the figure. MCs that served more than one term are included twice in the analysis. In the 101st-110th Congresses, there are 70 political amateurs with business experience, 21 amateurs have legal experience, and 29 amateurs have other experiences (not business or legal).
Source: Library of Congress THOMAS

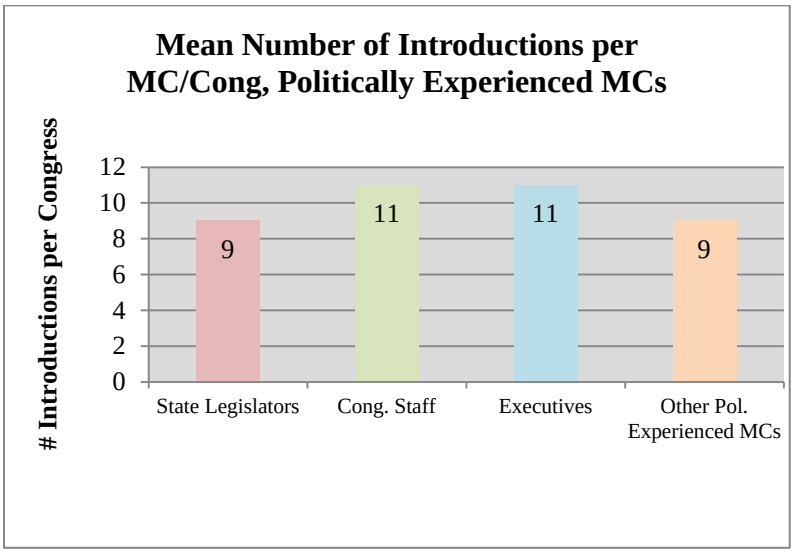
Figure 4.6 Comparing Political Amateurs' Staffing, District Travel, and Mailing Decisions, 104-108th Congresses

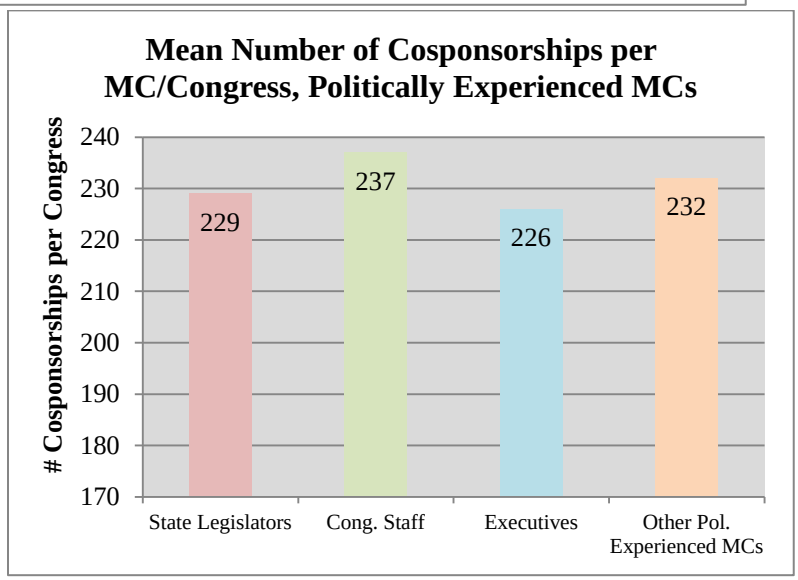




Note: The unit of analysis a single MC per Congress. To calculate the figures, I used the mean of MCs' staffing, district travel spending, and mailing spending per MC-per Congress for political amateurs only. MCs with prior political experience are not included in the figure. MCs that served more than one term are included twice in the analysis. Data on staff, district travel, and mass mailings are available for the 104th-108th Congresses only. In the 104-108th Congresses, there are 31 political amateurs with business experience, 12 amateurs with legal experience, and 16 amateurs with other nonpolitical experiences (nonbusiness, nonlegal).
Source: Parker and Goodman (2009)

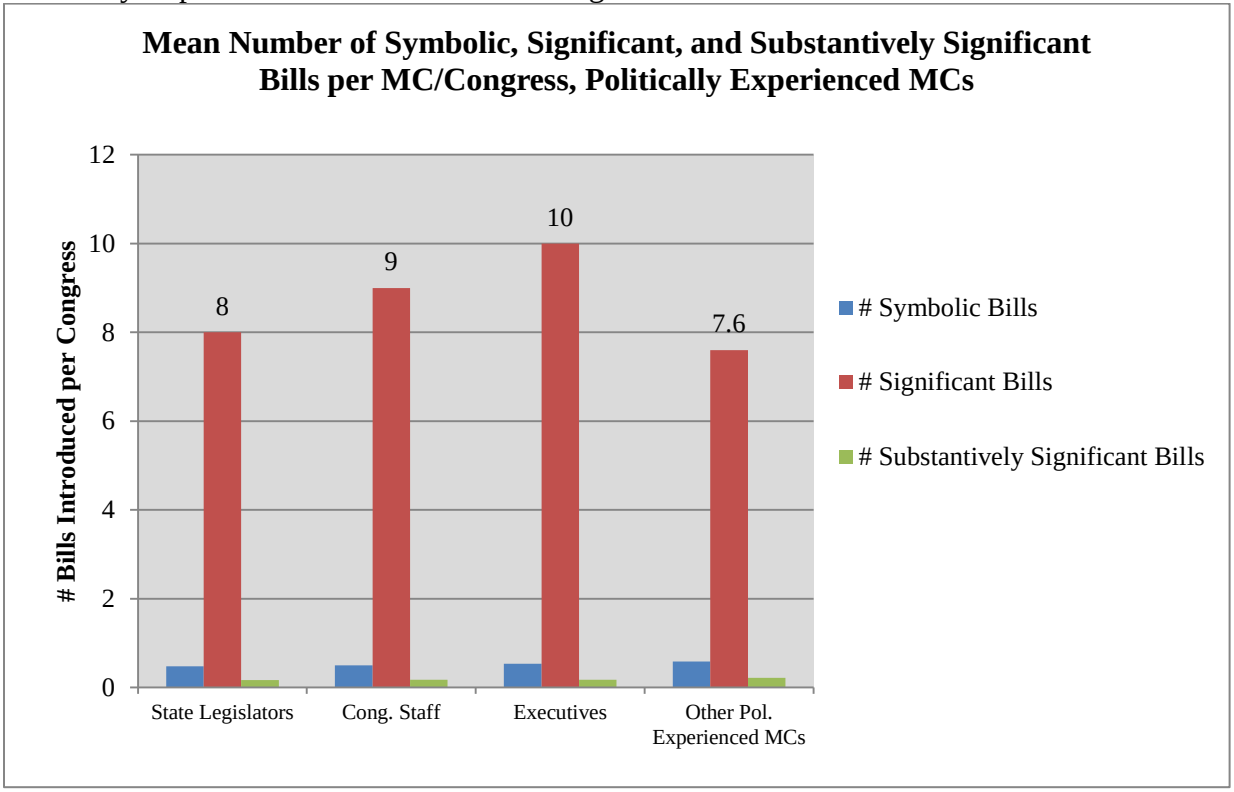
Figure 4.7 Comparison of Volume of Legislative Activity Among Politically Experienced MCs, 101st-110th Congresses





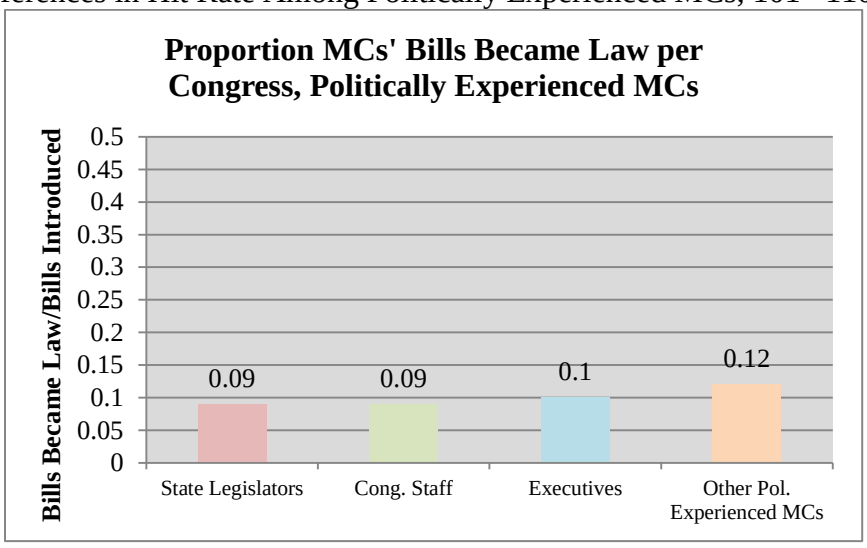
Note: The unit of analysis a single MC per Congress. To calculate the figures, I used the mean of MCs' introductions and cosponsorships per MC-per Congress for MCs with prior political experience only. Political amateurs are not included in the figure. MCs that served more than one term are included twice in the analysis. In the 101st-110th Congresses, there are 345 state legislators, 76 congressional staff, 46 MCs with executive experience, and 156 MCs with judicial and/or local political experience.
Source: Library of Congress THOMAS

Figure 4.8 Comparing Number of Bills Introduced per MC/Congress by Scope of Change, Politically Experienced MCs 101st-110th Congresses



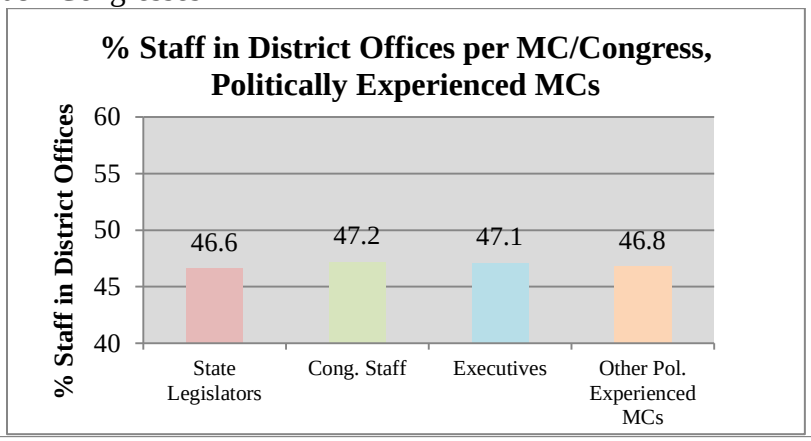
Note: The unit of analysis a single MC per Congress. To calculate the figure, I used the mean number of significant and symbolic bills that each MC introduced per Congress for MCs with prior political experience only. Political amateurs are not included in the figure. MCs that served more than one term are included twice in the analysis. In the 101st-110th Congresses, there are 345 state legislators, 76 congressional staff, 46 MCs with executive experience, and 156 MCs with judicial and/or local political experience.
Source: Library of Congress THOMAS

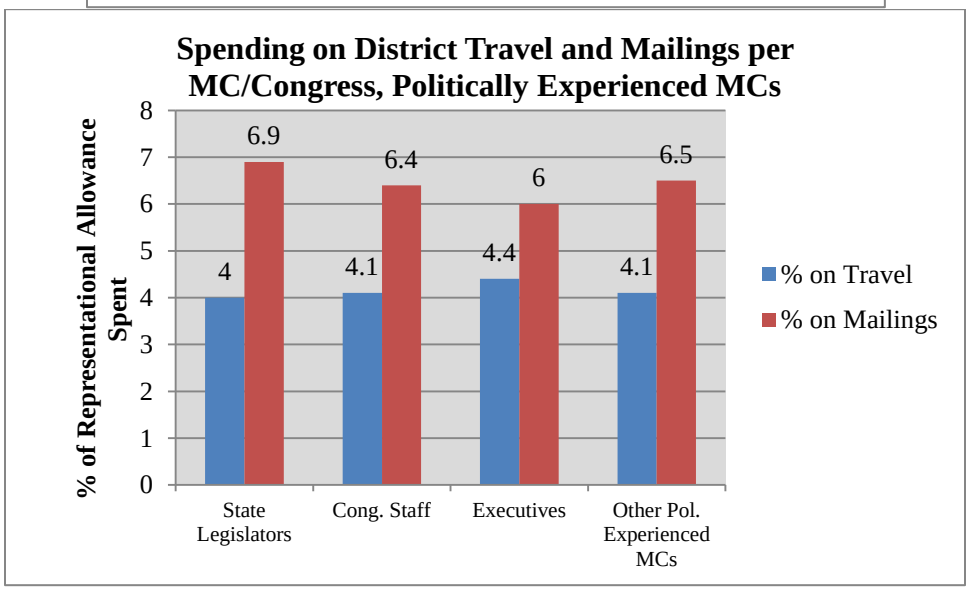
Figure 4.9 Differences in Hit Rate Among Politically Experienced MCs, 101st-110th Congresses



Note: The unit of analysis a single MC per Congress. To calculate the figures, I used the mean of MCs' hit rate (# bills became public law/# bills introduced) per MC-per Congress for politically experienced MCs only. Political amateurs are not included in the figure. MCs that served more than one term are included twice in the analysis. In the 101st-110th Congresses, there are 345 state legislators, 76 congressional staff, 46 MCs with executive experience, and 156 MCs with judicial and/or local political experience.
Source: Library of Congress THOMAS

Figure 4.10 Comparing Politically Experienced MCs' Staffing, District Travel, and Mailing Decisions, 104-108th Congresses





Note: The unit of analysis a single MC per Congress. To calculate the figures, I used the mean of MCs' staffing, district travel spending, and mailing spending per MC-per Congress for political amateurs only. MCs with prior political experience are not included in the figure. MCs that served more than one term are included twice in the analysis. Data on staff, district travel, and mass mailings are available for the 104th-108th Congresses only. In the 104th-108th Congresses, there are 160 state legislators, 34 congressional staff, 20 MCs with executive experience, and 70 MCs with other political experiences.
Source: Parker and Goodman (2009)

Chapter 5: Policy Agendas and Previous Experiences

In 1975, Tom Coburn – a manufacturing manager for an optics company in Virginia – received news no one wants to hear: he had cancer. While potentially life-threatening, Coburn's bout with malignant melanoma turned out to be career-altering instead. Making a full recovery, he and his family (his wife Carolyn was his high school sweetheart and a former Miss Oklahoma) returned to Oklahoma so that he could attend the University of Oklahoma medical school. After graduation in 1983, he opened his own medical practice, Maternal and Family Practice Associates, in his home town, Muskogee (*Almanac of American Politics 1996*, 1092).

When Coburn and his family relocated to Muskogee, it was a bastion of Democratic power in an otherwise conservative state. Democrats had represented Oklahoma's second district in the House of Representatives since 1923. Having grown tired of being represented by a Democrat, in 1994 Coburn, a conservative Republican, decided to run himself for an open seat. That November 1994, he defeated a retired high school principal, 52% - 48%, becoming the first Republican elected from the district in 71 years.

Rep. Coburn quickly earned a reputation on Capitol Hill. He often took on Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich for what Rep. Coburn saw as egregious departures from the Republicans' electoral platform, the Contract with America. Rep. Coburn also developed a reputation as a policy expert on health issues. For instance, his first term, he introduced six bills, all of which focused on health or medical issues. These include: the Medicare Patient Choice and Access Act of 1995, the Health Care Anti-Fraud Act of 1995, the Senior Citizens' Access to Health Care Act of 1995, the Radiopharmaceutical Review Improvement Act of 1996, and the HIV Prevention Act of 1996, and .H.R. 3079 – "To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to assure access to services under the Medicare health maintenance organization program." Likewise, in his

second term, Rep. Coburn again introduced six bills on medical and health issues. In comparison, other new Republican MCs in the 104th and 105th Congresses (Rep. Coburn's first and second terms) introduced less than one health related bill per Congress. In short, Rep. Coburn's policy agenda drew from his precongressional career experience.

Studying the Intersection of Policy Agendas and Career Experiences

In this chapter, I explore the connection between career experiences and policy agendas for all the new MCs in their first four years in the House of Representatives during the 101st-110th Congresses (1989-2008).[77] More specifically, I focus on how precongressional career experiences connect to their legislative agendas, by which I mean the contents of the bills they introduce and cosponsor as well as the number of policy topics on which they work.

Studying new MCs' legislative agendas is a natural extension of the discussion in chapter four. There, I explored two types of decisions that new MCs make: how active to be in the legislative process in D.C. and how to reach out to constituents in the district. Both are important, I argued, because they shape the type of representation provided for constituents and the ability of constituents to monitor and hold their representatives accountable. However, in chapter four, I looked only at the *volume* of MCs' legislative activities and the scope of changes entailed by their bills. I said nothing about the actual issue content of these legislative actions, e.g. whether new MCs act on the environment, the economy, education, or energy policies, etc. I take up these questions here.[78]

[77] Data on policy agendas is not available for the 111th and 112th Congresses.
[78] Of course, there are other ways MCs could take action on an issue: introduce amendments, speak about a topic on the House floor, advocate for a bill in committee, hold hearings in the district, etc. I focus on bill introductions and cosponsorships because they lie at the heart of the legislative process and have direct impact on public law.

Categorizing Policy Topics and Precongressional Careers

Legislative scholars have proposed different categorization schemes to describe the topics of congressional legislation. Here, I rely on Sulkin's (2011) codes, categorizing legislative bills and cosponsorships into 19 major policy topics, as derived from the Congressional Bills Project (Alder and Wilkerson 2013). Table 5.1 shows how the total number of bills introduced and cosponsored by MCs in my sample for each topic.

Just like policy topics, precongressional careers can be categorized in different ways, too (Schlesinger 1966, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). In the previous chapter, I explore the impact of political experience and then broke out different types of political and nonpolitical experiences. I follow that basic pattern in the first half of the chapter. I compare MCs with and without political experience. Then, I separately look at experienced MCs – examining different political experience, and afterwards take up political amateurs – comparing various nonpolitical experiences.

In the second part of this chapter, I do something different. I do not separate MCs into two groups based on whether they have had political experience. Instead, I look at a broader range of career experiences and their relationship to the contents of MCs' legislative agendas. Since there are many different combinations of policy issues and career experience, I examine experiences that are common paths to office, both political and nonpolitical. As a result, I focus on agricultural, business, education, gubernatorial, law enforcement, legal, legislative, medical, and military experience. This approach resonates with the advice of legislative scholar Roger Davidson (1969), who advocated thinking of precongressional experiences through the lens of whether the experience equips MCs with relevant skills. In addition, it aligns with the approach taken by Fox and Lawless (2005) and Carnes (2013), who focus on the most common

precongressional career experiences in their explorations of nascent political ambition and of social class backgrounds.

Figure 5.1 shows the number of individuals with each kind of experience who served during the 101st-110th Congresses. (Since individuals can have multiple experiences, they may be counted multiple times.) As Figure 5.1 suggests, my approach covers a wide swath of new MCs, allowing me to paint a comprehensive picture of how precongressional careers and legislative agendas connect across a variety of topics and occupations.[79]

The Importance of Policy Agendas

Understanding the connections between careers and legislative agendas is important for several reasons. For one, it clarifies how career experiences relate to policy outcomes. The election of new MCs influences what bills are considered for a vote in the first place and how seriously they are considered (Browne 1985, Kessler and Krehbiel 1996, Koger 2003, Krutz 200, Wilson and Young 1997). Consequently, the decisions that new MCs make about issue prioritization contribute directly to the recognition and definition of public problems (Kingdon 1984, Polsby 1984).

The allocation of attention is a central component of democratic representation and is central to the production of legislative results (Baumgartner and Jones 1993, Cobb and Elder 1972, Cohen et al. 1972, Jones and Baumgartner 2005). For example, if MCs like Rep. Coburn with previous medical experience focus on medical or health issues to the exclusion of other topics, then a Congress composed of more medically experienced MCs would produce more health related legislation. In effect, electing MCs with different career experiences would alter

[79] Because I narrow my discussion of precongressional career experiences in this way, I do not hypothesize about all 19 of the possible policy topic categorizations. Rather, I concentrate on those that are relevant to the career experiences I highlight.

the topics under discussion in Congress and, perhaps, in the long-run, congressional policy outcomes.

If career experiences and MCs' legislative agendas are connected, then career experiences can also enhance congressional policy discussions. For example, when a former doctor introduces a medical bill, it provides other MCs with an indication of what doctors may think about an issue. These insights can help congressional actors evaluate the implications and consequences of public policies. By adding to the information MCs have when making policy decisions, the connection between precongressional careers and legislative agendas should enhance the quality of congressional policy debates.[80]

In sum, exploring new MCs' policy preferences is important for assessing how they contribute to the congressional agenda and its results. The depth and breadth of the policy agenda are key ways that constituent concerns and preferences are included in the policy process, and so studying these decisions is of interest to wider audiences as well. I examine these considerations below by focusing on two questions: how many topics new MCs take on in office (the specialization of MCs' legislative agendas) and which topics they take up (the policy content of MCs' legislative agendas).

Connecting Precongressional Careers and Legislative Agendas: Overview and Roadmap

As I discuss in chapter two, there are multiple policy debates that MCs could join, but they do not have unlimited time, energy, staff power, and constituent support to do so. Because

[80] When making committee assignments, party leaders use these past experiences to judge the issues that new MCs could conceivably care about in the future (Frisch and Kelly 2006). I do not examine committee assignments, though. Rather, I focus on the purposeful, or 'proactive,' decisions made by individual MCs, whereas committee assignments are largely out of their control (Hall 1996). Granted, MCs do request to serve on certain committees, but these requests can be strategic – such that they have reduced value for understanding the proactive decisions that new MCs make (Fenno 1973).

of these resource constraints, I expect that MCs build their legislative agendas selectively around issues of interest to themselves (and their constituents). Scholars of occupational behavior note that career decisions often track with issues people care about (Holland 1985). If these careers deepen that interest and build policy expertise, it may also increase their credibility and lower barriers to legislative action, making it easier for new MCs to make unique contributions to public policy (Frisch and Kelly 2006, Hall 1996).

As a result, I expect to find strong and systematic connections between the content of new MCs' legislative agendas and their precongressional career experiences. The number of topics on which MCs work is the question of specialization – the decision whether to focus and develop expertise on a few versus many policy topics (Hall 1996, Krehbiel 1991, Matthews 1960).[81] MCs that focus on one or only a few issues 'specialize,' whereas generalizing may help MCs represent districts with diverse constituents. Why would MCs specialize, then?

MCs' resource constraints are one reason. MCs have limited time, energy, and effort and work in a complex institution that considers a diversity of topics. In this environment, specialization helps to enhance MCs' effectiveness in successfully advocating for policy change, developing their policy reputation among colleagues, and strengthening their name-recognition among voters (Asher 1973, Fenno 1973, Kingdon 1984, Matthews 1960, Schiller 1995, Wawro 2000). This division of labor can increase MCs' power within the chamber and enhance the efficiency of congressional policymaking.

Thus, it is unsurprising that policy specialization is employed in practice. For example, new MCs in the 101st-110th Congresses (1989-2008) introduced bills on 4-5 of the 19 possible

[81] Specialization is different than the volume of legislation that MCs introduce. A specialized MC may introduce a large volume of legislation, but only on a few topics – typically assumed to be those that are related to their committee assignments (Asher 1973, Fenno 1973).

topics.[82] Nevertheless, specialization is not practiced to the same extent by all MCs (Hall 1996). More senior MCs specialize more narrowly than junior MCs (Asher 1973, Hibbing 1991, Matthews 1960). There is also an indication that precongressional careers play a role in these decisions. Matthews (1960) found that Senators with political experience specialize their agendas more than other newly elected Senators. However, the analysis was never extended to the House of Representatives.

I expect that there are career based differences in specialization among new MCs in the House. Since specialization is a legislative norm, I hypothesize that MCs with previous legislative experience introduce bills across a smaller number of policy topics. I expect that political amateurs from legal backgrounds may specialize as well, in light of the specialization in legal experience. Legal specialization cultivates policy topics on specific issues (Miller 1995). In addition, it familiarizes MCs with the advantages of not taking on too much. As a result, MCs from these backgrounds may be able to more quickly gain policy expertise and solidify their reputation among colleagues and voters.

In addition, in this chapter I look at the policy content of the bills that new MCs introduce and cosponsor. I expect that there are strong connections between precongressional careers and the types of issues that new MCs take up. For instance, these experiences develop policy ideas that MCs can apply in Congress, which may facilitate their participation in these policy discussions. Along these lines, I hypothesize that new MCs introduce and cosponsor more bills on policy issues with clear ties to their career backgrounds than other MCs without these experiences. For example, I expect that MCs with medical experience like Rep. Coburn introduce more medical bills than a former farmer. As I noted above, to see these connections, I

[82] New MCs, on average, cosponsor at least one bill on 17 of the 19 possible policy topics.

do not separate out MCs with versus without any prior political experience. Rather, I look at eleven common precongressional experiences, demonstrating the variety of connections that occur between MCs' precongressional careers and congressional behavior.

Policy Specialization: Focused Agendas

MCs can introduce or cosponsor bills on every different policy under consideration by Congress, or they could focus on a selection of them. Rep. Coburn (R-OK), the doctor turned MC introduced at the beginning of this chapter, provides the consummate example of policy specialization. During his first term in the 104th Congress, all of the bills he introduced related directly to health issues. Conversely, new MCs may introduce bills across a range of policy issues. Former attorney and state court judge Rep. Jimmy Duncan (R-TN), for example, introduced bills on seven different topics his first term (101st Congress) and on thirteen policy topics his second term (102nd Congress).

I argue that MCs from different career backgrounds take different approaches to the specialization of their legislative agendas. If new MCs are going to take legislative action on an issue, then they have to be familiar with the topic and policies in question. As I noted in chapters one and two, individuals interested in certain issues may pick career options that address these topics, be it for reasons of personal history, personality, family tradition, etc. In addition, career experiences can provide additional policy insight into these issues; they build an issue-specific body of knowledge from which new MCs can draw when making legislative decisions (Hall 1996). As such, career experience can provide additional expertise to individuals interested in fighting for particular issues. This is advantageous for members newly elected to a complex legislative institution that covers an enormous breadth of policy concerns. They have a head start in wading through the issues and arguments that flavor policy debates.

Beyond establishing policy knowledge, career experiences can also teach MCs the value of specialization. Focusing on a few topics allows new MCs to conserve scarce resources. In turn, they can deploy their resources strategically to buttress their attempts to cultivate policy expertise and a clear reputation among voters and colleagues (Matthews 1960, Asher 1973). I expect that MCs whose career experiences illuminate the value, and encourage the practice, of specialization introduce bills on fewer topics in Congress as a result. I have three hypotheses about which MCs construct more specialized legislative agendas. The first considers the comparison of political experience to political amateurs, the second focuses on only MCs with prior political experience, and the third looks at political amateurs.

First, I do not expect that differences emerge in the specialization of MCs' legislative agendas based on political experience, broadly defined. Specialization is a norm of legislative (congressional) behavior (Matthews 1960, Frantzich 1979, Payne 1980). As a result, there is less reason to expect that all politically experienced MCs act the same. Instead, I expect that MCs from different political and nonpolitical backgrounds construct more/less specialized legislative agendas.

Second, I anticipate that MCs with legislative political experience specialize more narrowly than other politically experienced MCs. Since specialization is a legislative (congressional) norm, legislative experience should drive home the lesson that successful legislators build policy reputations around a manageable number of issues. This may be a particularly salient lesson for any individuals whose interest in a select number of policy issues motivated their run for legislative office. As a result, I hypothesize that former state legislators and congressional staff introduce bills on a smaller number of topics than other politically experienced MCs.

But I expect that legislative experience is not related to the number of topics on which MCs with legislative experience cosponsor. Because cosponsoring requires less effort than sponsorship, cosponsoring one bill does not subtract from the ability to cosponsor another bill. Since specialization is driven by the resource constraints of legislators (and, by extension, legislatures), I posit that specialization is characteristic of MCs' sponsorship versus cosponsorship behavior.

Third, looking at MCs without prior political experience, amateurs with legal experience may differ from other political amateurs, although there are competing expectations that arise. In chapter four, I discussed similarities between legal experience and congressional experience that enhance legislative productivity – bargaining, advocacy, and legal analysis (Eulau and Sprague 1964). Underlying all of these similarities is a basic familiarity with the creation and interpretation of legislative statutes. This may work in two ways. On one hand, like legislators, lawyers typically specialize on one area of law (Miller 1995). Similar to legislative experience, legal experience may help MCs discern the value of focusing on a few policy topics and set them up to do so by developing policy expertise on specific topics. On the other hand, lawyers who are familiar with the policy process and creating legislative statutes may be able to put their legal and legislative knowledge to use on a broad range of topics. I address these expectations below.

Comparing Patterns of Specialization

Figure 5.2 provides an initial assessment of these hypotheses for new MCs during the 101st-110th Congresses.[83] Because I formulate hypotheses about three groups of MCs (all MCs, MCs with precongressional political experience, and political amateurs), the three panels of the figure shows three sets of comparisons. The first panel compares all MCs based on whether or

[83] Because I want to capture behavior over MCs first four years, I include each term that MCs served separately when computing these averages (means per MC-Congress).

not they have had prior political experience. The middle panel highlights differences between MCs with prior political experience. Finally, the bottom panel looks at political amateurs.

There are two columns in each panel of the figure, one for the number of policy topics on which MCs introduce bills and cosponsor bills, per MC-per Congress. On average, MCs introduce at least one bill in 17 of 19 policy topics and cosponsor an average of 25 times the number of bills that they sponsor (9 bill introductions versus 225 cosponsorships). In other words, using one cosponsorship per policy topic is an uninformative standard. As an alternative, I look at whether or not MCs cosponsor more than the average (mean) number of bills cosponsored by all new MCs in that policy topic.[84]

As is evident in the first panel of the figure, there is essentially no difference in the agenda size of MCs with versus without political experience for bill sponsorship. I find a sharper and significant distinction in cosponsorship behavior. MCs with political experience build broader cosponsorship agendas than amateurs (t=*-3.5*, p=*.00*), perhaps in reflection of the range of policy experiences they encounter in their earlier political offices. On average, they cosponsor an above average number of bills on an additional policy topic.

In the second panel, I focus on only the sample of MCs who had prior political experience. Like I expected, MCs with legislative political experience construct more specialized legislative agendas, although the difference is small. Their cosponsorship activities do not differ, though, in line with my expectations. In the final set of figures, I show the comparisons for

[84] To calculate this, I determined the average number of cosponsorships for each policy topic (per MC per Congress). Then, I counted the number of policy topics for which each MC cosponsored more than the topic-specific average. This calculation reflects activity levels per Congress. I calculate it separately for each Congress in which MCs served (e.g., their first and second terms).

political amateurs. Contrary to what I expected, lawyers do not show markedly different patterns of behavior on introductions.

Examining Policy Specialization By Career Experience: Regression Analyses

To ascertain whether these differences remain in light of other salient considerations, I estimate three sets of ordinary least squares regression analyses. (Results are presented in separate tables.) I start with a simple regression framework, comparing MCs based on broad political experience (*Political Experience*), with the excluded category as political amateurs.[85] These analyses examine all MCs in their first four years during the 101st-110th Congresses (1989-2010). I next examine different types of political and nonpolitical experiences, to test my second and third hypotheses. To do so, I look at MCs with political experience separately from political amateurs (and vice versa). In the second set of regression analyses, I look only at political amateurs in the 101st-110th Congresses. *Legal Experience* (0/1 for nonpolitical legal experience) is the key variable of interest in the political amateur model. The baseline category is all other amateurs.

In the third set of analyses, presented in Table 5.5, my sample is all new MCs from the 101st-110th Congress who had political experience before Congress. There are two key independent variables in model for MCs with prior political experience, taken from chapter four: *State Legislator* and *Congressional Staff*. Experienced MCs without state or federal legislative experience are the omitted category.

Dependent and Control Variables

My dependent variables are the number of policy topics on which MCs introduce at least one bill and the number of issues on which they cosponsor more than the mean number of bills in

[85] This variable is the same as that described in chapters three and four.

that topic. As I noted above, I use the mean number of cosponsorships per policy topic because cosponsorship is a common activity. Using this as my standard of comparison captures the number of policies to which MCs devote greater attention.

In each regression model, I control for other considerations that may influence MCs' behavior. First, I include a variable, *Career Experiences*, that counts the number of precongressional career experiences (political and nonpolitical) that MCs have had. If career experiences provide policy insight, MCs with a greater number of career experiences may introduce and cosponsor bills on a greater number of policy topics (Holland 1996). Controlling for the number of career experiences helps to isolate the effect of specific types of experiences.

In addition, status as a freshmen, minority party member, and electorally vulnerable member may all depress legislative activity across the board. MCs may lack either the knowledge or ability to participate as freshmen or minority party members. I use 0/1 variables that tap whether new MCs are: in their first term (*First Term*), majority party members (*In Majority*), white/minority (*White*), a woman (*Woman*), and whether they served a partial term (*Partial Term*). I also include variables that tap MCs' ideological distance from the median member of their party (*Ideo. Distance Party Median*, as discussed in chapter four) and electoral vulnerability (*Vote Share*, percent of two-party vote in the previous election, and *Vote Share*^{2}, to account for any non-linearity in the effect of vote share). Finally, I also include a categorical variable *Education Level*, with higher values indicating more advanced degrees, to control for any relationship between education and MCs' issue activity.[86]

[86] MCs' education was coded from the *Almanac of American Politics*, where 1=less than high school degree, 2=high school degree, 3=some college, 4=college degree, 5=post-graduate degree. See chapter three for more details.

Because MCs who introduce or cosponsor a greater number of bills are more likely to do so in any policy area, I also control for the total number of MCs' bills and cosponsorships per Congress (across all policy categories) [*Total Introductions*, *Total Cosponsorships*]. Since MCs are elected to represent constituent interests, the range of these district interests may impact the breadth of MCs' legislative agendas. I control for the heterogeneity of the district with *District Heterogeneity*, a composite measure that taps racial, educational, income, occupational, and religious differences in the district.

Regression Results for Policy Specialization

As shown in Table 5.2, the political/no political experience distinction does not capture significant differences in the specialization of new MCs' legislative agendas. Political experience in general does not distinguish MCs' legislative specialization from that of political amateurs, as I had anticipated. Rather, differences relate to the specific types of political and nonpolitical experience that MCs have had before Congress, as can be seen in Tables 5.3 and 5.4

Table 5.3 examines political amateurs only, with all other amateurs from non-legal backgrounds as the excluded category. I find that lawyers without prior political experience introduce bills on a smaller number of policy topics than other amateurs. Perhaps because of their interest in specific topics that led them to a legal career or the emphasis of the legal career on specialization, political amateurs from legal backgrounds specialize their legislative agendas more narrowly than other new MCs without prior political experience. This means that, had every amateur entering Congress during the 101st-110th Congress had legal experience, fewer policy debates would have the input of political amateurs.

Table 5.4 shows the results for MCs with prior political experience. MCs with legislative experience do not build more specialized legislative agendas compared to other experienced

MCs. Congressional staff experience washes out as well.[87] Taking a closer look at both congressional staffers and state legislators helps explain the non-significant results for MCs with legislative experience. Of the 96 former staffers elected to Congress, 15% of them were elected to Congress immediately after working as congressional staff. The norm and value of specialization is particularly fresh for these staffers, and their sponsorships agendas are more focused. They sponsor bills on about one fewer topics compared to those of other staffers.

Do these other staffers forget the value of specialization? Perhaps, although the results from chapter four suggest a different explanation. Staff experience in Congress, regardless of when it occurs, provides MCs familiarity with the policy process and policy debates. For example, compared to other MCs, former staffers introduce a greater number of bills making significant changes to the law. What I expect is occurring, then, is that congressional staffers who do other things before running for Congress combine their familiarity with the policy process with the policy insights gleaned from their other experiences. Upon reaching Congress, they take action on a wider range of policy topics.

In the case of state legislators, patterns of specialization may differ based on the professionalization of the state legislature. Institutional factors can encourage legislative specialization (Matthews 1960, Schiller 1995). For example, Senators – who have longer terms and fewer colleagues – do not face the same pressure to specialize as House members, whose terms are shorter and who have more than four times the number of colleagues (Matthews 1960, Schiller 1995).

Since professionalized legislatures bear the greatest resemblance to Congress, state legislators from them may specialize more narrowly than other state legislators (and other

[87] This holds true in another specification of the regression model (not shown here) where I include a variable for *Legal Experience*.

experienced MCs). However, and counterintuitively, I expect the opposite. One of the incentives for specialization is the resource constraints that legislators face. Comparatively, these are greater for legislators in less professionalized legislatures. Individuals in less professionalized legislatures have fewer staff and serve in shorter sessions, both of which make it more difficult to develop policy knowledge on a broad range of policy topics. As a result, they may bring a more circumscribed bundle of policy insights to Congress. In light of this, I hypothesize that legislators from less professionalized state legislatures introduce bills on fewer policy topics than other politically experienced MCs.

Examining State Legislators By Legislative Professionalism

To assess this expectation, I re-estimate the regression model for my sample of politically experienced MCs. I replace *State Legislator* with two dichotomous variables for state legislative experience that tap the professionalization of the state legislature in which members served: *Professionalized Legislature* and *Less Professionalized Legislature*.[88] I use Squire's index of professionalization to determine the professionalization of the state legislature. All other variables remain the same in the re-estimated model; results are presented in Table 5.5.

State legislators do act differently when taking into consideration the professionalization of the state legislature. Legislators from less professionalized legislatures introduce bills in fewer policy topics than legislators from professionalized legislatures, all other things considered. In contrast, individuals who served in professionalized state legislatures construct broader cosponsorship agendas. For example, almost half (45%) of state legislators from professionalized

[88] No MCs served in both a professionalized and less professionalized legislature. 111 MCs worked in professionalized legislatures, and 234 new MCs served in less professionalized legislatures.

legislatures introduce bills on nine or more policy topics, compared to less than one-third (26%) of state legislators from less professionalized legislatures.

Initially, these results seem counterintuitive to the logic of professionalization. As I noted above, though, they highlight the connection between the structure of legislative institutions and member behavior. In addition, specialization is motivated by legislators' resource constraints. The structure of state legislatures impacts the resources that state legislators have at their disposal, which creates different incentives for their behavior. I find that these differences remain during former state legislators' early congressional terms in a surprising but statistically significant way.

How do these differences matter? Imagine each of the 19 policy topics considered in Congress as a separate table where conversations go on about related issues. Introducing a bill on a policy topic is like pulling up a figurative 'chair' to the table and joining the conversation. So, for example, if a new MC introduced bills on 4 policy topics, she figuratively pulled up chairs to 4 policy tables. New MCs get to decide how many policy conversations they join, which I tap by looking at the size of their legislative agendas. Legislators from more and less professionalized legislatures differ in the number of policy conversations they join (via the number of policy topics on which they introduce bills). MCs from professionalized legislatures pull up 'chairs' to 1-2 more policy tables than other former state legislators.

To see the aggregate difference this makes, imagine a world in which the 111 state legislators from professionalized legislatures had served instead in less professionalized legislatures. In this alternative world, there would be approximately 60 fewer figurative chairs pulled up to policy tables in the 101st-110th Congress. Alternatively, if all of the 234 MCs from less professionalized legislatures had served in professionalized legislatures, then over these

years there would be approximately 129 more chairs pulled up to policy debates.[89] Unfortunately, my data do not speak to what new MCs do at these policy tables, i.e. the substance of the bills they introduce in different policy areas.[90] This makes drawing firm conclusions about these differences is difficult. But, if we assume that participation influences legislative outcomes, then my (counterintuitive) findings point to directions for future research that elaborate on this connection.

All Other Things Considered

Of course, other things factor into MCs' decision making. The greater the number of bills MCs introduce or cosponsor, the greater the number of topics they have the potential to address. Likewise, MCs who serve partial terms focus their introductions and cosponsorships on fewer topics. Serving a shorter term than the rest of their colleagues, these MCs may narrow their focus to accelerate the development of their policy reputation and record.

Two other patterns stand out. First, correlates of cosponsorship and sponsorship differ. For example, first term MCs introduce bills in fewer topics than second term MCs, but there are not significant differences in their cosponsorship behavior. Likewise, electoral margins are

[89] As a baseline for comparison, I multiple the number of new MCs from professionalized state legislatures during the 101st-1110th Congresses by the average number of policy topics on which they introduce bills (111 MCs * 4.95 policy topics = 549.45). This is the figurative number of chairs pulled up to policy tables by MCs with professionalized state legislative experience. Then I multiple the number of new MCs during the 101st-110th Congresses from less professionalized state legislatures by the average number of policy topics on which they introduce bills (234 MCs * 4.4 policy topics = 1,029.6). To see the difference in participation in my hypothetical scenarios, I multiple the number MCs from professionalized legislatures (111) by the number of topics introduced by MCs from less professionalized legislatures (4.4) and subtract this number (488.4) from the baseline (549.5) for a difference of 61. Similarly, I multiple the number of MCs from less professionalized legislatures (234) by the number of topics introduced by MCs from professionalized legislatures (4.95) and subtract this number (1,158.3) from the baseline (1,029.6) for a difference of 128.7.

[90] In the last half of this chapter, I find that MCs introduce and cosponsor a greater number of bills on topics related to their past career experiences.

related to MCs' sponsorship agendas, but not their cosponsorship activity. Second, the behavior of MCs with and without political experience has different correlates as well. For example, there is a gender difference that emerges among politically experienced MCs. Female politicians with political experience prior to Congress introduce bills on a wider range of topics than female political amateurs. For women interested in serving in Congress, political experience paves the way for contributing to a wider scope of policy debates.

Congruence Between Legislative Agendas and Precongressional Careers

Overall, I find that there are discernible differences in the specialization of MCs' legislative agendas that track their precongressional career experiences. Do the policy topics on which MCs specialize build from the career experiences that bring MCs to office? If so, this could look like the example of Rep. Coburn – a former medical doctor focusing on medical issues.

In general, I expect that these connections occur. If policy specialization within Congress is intended to develop policy expertise, then career experiences effectively do the same before Congress. Given that individuals choose careers based in part on the job's congruence with their personal interest in topics, tasks, or work environments, I expect that precongressional career experience helps to distinguish the issues about which MCs are concerned (Holland 1985). Thus, there is reason to think that MCs may continue advocating for these issues once elected to Congress. For example, as one MC explained, "My commitment to educational equity and excellence is what keeps me coming back to Congress. As a former educator, I can't quit until I'm able to deliver that for each and every child" (Congressional Management Foundation 2013).

I expect that MCs with related experience introduce a greater volume of legislation on corresponding policy topics than MCs without that same experience. I expect the same

relationship to appear for MCs' cosponsorship activities as well. As I noted at the beginning of this chapter, connections between career experiences and the contents of MCs' legislative agendas should emerge over a broad range of career experiences. In light of this, I do not separate out MCs by prior political experience, as I did in the previous section. Instead, I identify career experiences that provide direct or unique insights into public policy issues across the 19 different policy categories for my entire sample of MCs.

My hypothesis is that MCs with related career experience introduce and cosponsor more bills on career-relevant policies (such as education experience and education policy, agricultural experience and agriculture policy, military experience and defense issues, and law enforcement and crime policy) than MCs without that same career experience. I also hypothesize that MCs with business backgrounds are more active than other MCs on the budget, corporate regulation, jobs, and tax policies, having worked in or owned businesses have been directly impacted by these policies. For instance, Robert Draper – a *New York Times* journalist, recounts about House Majority Whip Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) that:

> *"Just after graduating from high school, young McCarthy had walked into a store, purchased a lottery ticket for the very first time, and won five thousand dollars. With the proceeds he opened a sandwich shop, Kevin O's, where his high school sweetheart and eventual wife, Judy, also worked. Tired of wading through onerous regulations on his small business, he sold out after about a year*" (Draper 2011, 79).

I anticipate that MCs from legal backgrounds are more active than nonlawyers on budget, corporation regulations, taxes, and crime policy (Miller 1995).[91] Former state legislators and

[91] Here, as opposed to chapter four, I include both political and private legal practice.

gubernatorial staff have been government employees in the past, and so I expect them to have insights into related issues like intergovernmental relations, bureaucratic oversight, and questions about employee benefits and the civil service. I hypothesize that former state legislators and MCs with gubernatorial experience (working as or for a state governor) are more active on government operations topics relating to how the government is run. State governors are also responsible for introducing budgets to the state legislature and for recruiting economic development to their state (Kousser and Phillips 2012, Smith and Grenblatt 2014). Therefore, I hypothesize that MCs with gubernatorial experience introduce/cosponsor more bills on issues about which governors have authority: the budget and jobs. Table 5.6 summarizes the connections I expect to observe between precongressional career experiences and congressional policy topics.

Shaping MCs' Legislative Agendas: Regression Analyses

To test my hypotheses, I estimate a series of regression models, looking at all of MCs in their first four years during the 101st-110th Congresses (1989-2008).[92] I use the entire sample of MCs for each regression analysis. My dependent variables are counts of bill sponsorships and cosponsorships for each MC per policy topic, in each Congress. I estimate a regression model for both sponsorship and cosponsorship activity for each of the eleven policy topics I examine.

Policy topics are taken from Sulkin (2011) and the Congressional Bills Project (Adler and Wilkerson 2013). Each bill is coded into one of the following mutually exclusive and exhaustive policy categories: agriculture, budget, campaigns, children and children's issues, civil rights, consumer affairs, corporate regulation, crime, defense, education, environment, government operations, health, jobs and infrastructure, moral issues, Medicare, Social Security, taxes, and

[92] I examine these years because they are the Congresses for which data on policy topics are available.

welfare. I concentrate on the eleven policy topics that I anticipate relate to different career experiences: agriculture, budget, corporate regulation, crime, defense, education, government operations, health, jobs and infrastructure, Medicare, and taxes. Since the dependent variables are count variables, I estimate negative binomial regression models.

Independent and Control Variables

The key independent variables are 0/1 indicators for precongressional experience: *Agricultural*, *Business*, *Education*, *Gubernatorial*, *Law Enforcement*, *Legal*, *Legislative*, *Medical*, and *Military*.[93] I include the independent variables in the regression for the related policy topic.

Business and (state) legislative experience are coded the same as in chapter four. *Agriculture* indicates whether new MCs worked in farming or ranching endeavors, as did 5% of new MCs. For example, Rep. Kristi Noem (R-SD) helped run her family's ranch after her father's untimely death in a farm accident,[94] and Rep. Bob Beauprez (R-CO) co-managed his family's dairy farm. *Education* includes elementary through graduate administrators and instructors. Of the 134 new MCs that had prior education experience (20% of all MCs), 34 were administrators, 65 were college professors, and 56 taught at the elementary through secondary level.[95] *Gubernatorial* includes former governors, lieutenant governors, or top gubernatorial staff – such as chiefs of staff. MCs with *Law Enforcement* experience worked for local/state police or sheriff's forces. For example, Rep. Larkin Smith (R-MS) served in two county police forces, worked as the police chief in another, and then became the Harrison County Sheriff, from which

[93] See chapters three and for how these career experiences are coded.
[94] Rep. Noem drew on this experience while running for Congress, airing a campaign aid in which the narrator described her as "one of us" and she was seen "galloping away on a horse" (Steinhauer 2012).
[95] These values do not sum to 134 because some new MCs had multiple education experiences, i.e. they were an elementary school teacher and before becoming a principal.

position he was elected to Congress. *Legal experience* captures both public and/or private legal practice. *Medical* experience (4% of new MCs) includes doctors, dentists, and nurses.[96] And, finally, *Military* experience is coded for MCs in any branch of the armed forces, reserves, National Guard, or coast guard.

I include the same set of control variables from the first half of this chapter: *First Term*, *Ideology*, *Majority Party*, *Partial Term*, *Total Introductions/Cosponsorships*, *Vote Share*, *Vote Share*^{2}, *Education Level*, *White*, and *Woman*.[97] MCs' legislative agendas should also reflect the interests of the districts that they represent. For example, MCs from more rural districts may introduce and cosponsor a greater number of agriculture bills. To control for the effect of district composition, I include indicators of district characteristics to correspond with the policy topic in question, as shown in Table 5.7.

These variables represent the percent of residents in the district that live in poverty, live in a rural area, or are military veterans *(% Poverty*, *% Rural*, *% Veterans*, respectively). In addition, *Military Base* is a dichotomous variable indicating whether the district has a military base, and *Median Income* captures the annual median income of district residents. I control for district characteristics in each regression model only as they relate to my expectations in Table 5.7. For example, since MCs from districts with higher percentages of residents living in rural areas may be more active on agriculture issues, I include *% Rural* only in the regression models about agriculture policy. (These variables are available starting with the 103rd Congress.)

---

[96] This variable also includes veterinarians due to the similarity in medical training and practice (the difference in species aside!)

[97] The only other minor difference is the variable for ideological extremity. Since MCs have sole discretion over the contents of their legislative agenda, the distance from the 'average' member of the party may be less influential than the overall extremity of their ideological positions. Thus, in these regressions the variable *Ideological Extremity* is the absolute value of MCs' DW CS-Nominate score. Higher values equal more extreme ideological positions.

The Connection Between Career Experiences and the Content of MCs' Legislative Agendas

Results are summarized in Table 5.8; full models can be found in Appendix B. Positive and statistically significant coefficients in these cells indicate that MCs with the relevant experience are more active on career-relevant polices. The results support my argument that career experiences are related to the policy agendas of new MCs. Starting with bill introductions, I find a positive and statistically significant relationship between the contents of MCs' policy agendas and their career experiences for seven of eleven policy topics: agriculture, corporate regulation, crime, government operations, health, Medicare, and taxes.

I find a similarly strong and significant pattern for cosponsorship on four of the eleven policy topics: agriculture, crime, health, and Medicare. MCs with the related career experienced cosponsor a greater number of bills on these topics than other MCs. As I noted earlier in this chapter, cosponsorship is not the same as sponsorship. MCs take different tacks when it comes to specializing – being much more focused in their introductions than cosponsorships. A similar observation can be made here. In general, as would be expected, cosponsorship allows MCs the opportunity to identify with their constituents. Because it is a low-cost activity, it is perhaps surprising that career-agenda connections emerge for MCs' cosponsorship activities. But they do. Across a spectrum of experiences, new MCs construct policy agendas that connect back to their prior career experiences.

In general, district characteristics also largely play out as I had anticipated. For example, the greater the number of residents living in rural areas, the more agricultural bills that MCs sponsor and cosponsor. The null results for military presence are surprising. Defense bills represent issues of interest to constituents, especially those that are supportive of the military. Because of this, defense introductions are one of the two most common type of bills that MCs

introduce (the other being government operations bills). I posit that two distinct dynamics are likely occurring. First, MCs representing a military base or large veteran population introduce defense-related bills as a way to respond to, and represent, constituent preferences in the policy process. At the same time, other MCs (especially those without personal military experience) also introduce defense bills in an attempt to beef up their military credentials with constituents – particularly those that are pro-military.[98]

The total number of introductions/cosponsorships is the only control variable that has a consistent relationship to legislative agendas in terms of magnitude, significance, and direction (positive and strongly significant). MCs serving a partial term introduce and cosponsor fewer bills, but not on every policy topic. This pattern emerges for the other control variables as well. The direction and magnitude with which other characteristics relate to legislative activity depends on the policy topic. MCs decide how to construct their policy agendas on a topic-by-topic basis that fits their individual experience.

This observation has implications for the influence of constituent preferences on congressional policy debates (via representatives' actions). Positive and significant coefficients for MC characteristics imply that different policy topics are more accessible points of entry into the legislative process for certain MCs (e.g., freshmen, minority party members, minorities, women, etc.). Negative and significant coefficients indicate the opposite. There are topics that certain new MCs are less likely to take up, either because of the complexity of issues discussed or their resonance with electoral concerns.

[98] For example, the maximum number of bills introduced by not veteran MC with a district base is 13, versus 5 for military-experienced MCs with a base in their district.

The Substantive Effect of Career Experiences

The regression coefficients in Table 5.8 cannot be directly interpreted because the analyses are estimated with a maximum-likelihood procedure.[99] Figure 5.3 shows the substantive impact of career experiences on MCs' legislative agendas by graphing the average percent change in the number of sponsorships (top panel) and cosponsorships (bottom panel) as a function of having the relevant career experience.[100] In the top panel (sponsorship), it is obvious that career experiences have a strong relationship with legislative activity.

What does this mean in actual numbers of introductions? One way to think about it is to imagine what would happen if every new MC that entered Congress during the 101st-110th Congresses came from particular career backgrounds. For example, if, hypothetically, every new MC during those years came from a business background, there would have been 50 more tax bills and 43 more corporate regulation bills introduced. Additionally, if every new cohort was full of former farmers, they would have introduced 130 more agriculture bills. Likewise, if every new member of Congress from 1989-2008 came from a law enforcement background, there would have been almost 700 more crime bills introduced in the same period. Or, if every new member of Congress had medical experience during the 101st-110th Congresses, then over those years there would have been approximately 350 more Medicare bills and 750 more health bills introduced.[101] MCs from distinct career backgrounds act in unique ways that have important ramifications for public policies and, through them, constituent representation.

---

[99] The regression coefficients indicate the log of the expected count of the dependent variable as a function of the independent variables (Hilbe 2007).

[100] I estimate the incident rate ratio for each of the independent variables, and then transformed it into a percent change.

[101] I calculate the percent difference of relevant career experience in number of introductions and multiply this by the number of new MCs in the 101st-110th Congresses without this career background.

The relationship between career experiences and cosponsorship is more muted, which is not overly surprising. These results suggest that MCs use cosponsorship as a way to devote attention to an issue that is important to constituents when MCs cannot take action on every topic and lack relevant, first-hand expertise on the issue. Yet career experiences still emerge as strongly related to new MCs' legislative activities. Agriculture, law enforcement, and medical experience have the strongest effect. In terms of numbers of bills cosponsored, MCs with the relevant career experience cosponsor 3 more Medicare bills, 4 more agriculture bills, 6 more crime bills, and 6 more health bill per MC-per Congress.

Although these may seem like small differences, they add up to an important aggregate difference. If every new MC in the 101st-110th Congresses had medical experience, for example, there would have been over 1,800 more cosponsors on Medicare bills and over 3,700 more cosponsors on health bills. Similarly, in a world in which every new MC had prior agricultural experience, agriculture bills in the 101st-110th Congresses would have had 2,600 more cosponsors. If every new MC in those years had law enforcement experience, it would have added up to over 4,000 more cosponsors for crime policies.[102] New MCs' legislative agendas reflect the career paths that brought them to office, in ways that can impact the contents of the congressional agenda and the support for various public policies.

[102] I calculate the percent difference of relevant career experience in number of cosponsorships and multiply this by the number of new MCs in the 101st-110th Congresses without this career background.

Conclusion

Like Rep. Coburn introduced at the beginning of this chapter, MCs build their policy agendas around issues that relate back to previous work experiences.[103] Granted, voters could select MCs for this very reason. Voters may want a representative from a business background, say, or a medical background, a person that can truly 'understand' and actively advocate for voters' preferences. The evidence I have presented in this chapter suggests that this reasoning is sound.

When considering which experiences inform policy activity, I find that MCs are more active on topics related to their past experiences than MCs without these occupational backgrounds. MCs both introduce and cosponsor a greater number of bills that correspond to topics addressed in their previous experiences. I find that these connections emerge across a broad range of experiences, both political and nonpolitical – agricultural, business, legal, law enforcement, state legislative, gubernatorial, and medical.

Along the same lines, MCs differ in the extent to which they specialize their policy focus and concentrate on a few related topics versus addressing a broader scope of legislative initiatives. MCs who have had previous experience in a setting that values this type of focus craft more specialized policy agendas in Congress, e.g. introduce bills on a smaller number of policy topics. For example, when I look at political amateurs, I demonstrate that MCs with legal backgrounds construct the most specialized agendas. Somewhat unexpectedly, and contrary to common expectations about legislative professionalization, I find that MCs from less professionalized state legislatures have more specialized agendas, not MCs from professionalized state legislatures. I argue that this reflects the importance of resource constraints

[103] Thankfully, though, not every new MC shared Rep. Coburn's opinions on the merit of political science research.

as a motivator for policy specialization and how less professionalized legislators face a greater number of them.

These results suggest that career diversity is an important way that a diversity of issues and constituent interests get articulated on Capitol Hill. When MCs are more active on policies that relate to their past experiences, their legislative proposals benefit from the lessons and insights gleaned from their personal experiences. In turn, the concerns and opinions of constituents from different career experiences receive a voice in policy circles. The diversity of career paths taken to Capitol Hill has implications for the number of proposals that are considered across different policy topics.

In conclusion, in this chapter and the previous one, I paint a picture of the many ways in which MCs' legislative decisions relate back to the career decisions they made before Congress. Whether it is the volume and type of policy tools they use, or the content and focus of their policy agendas, MCs differ in the way they contribute to policy outcomes. The final question I consider is whether they also relate to the ways that MCs navigate the partisan environment of the U.S. House of Representatives. Chapter six explains how, and why, this occurs.

Tables and Figures

Table 5.1 Legislative Activity of New MCs Across Policy Topics, 101st-110th Congresses (1989-2008)

	# Bills Introduced	# Instances Bill Cosponsored
Corporate Regulation	103	3,261
Social Security	125	4,922
Budget	197	6,744
Consumer Affairs	217	4,798
Medicare	243	10,054
Campaign	340	4,877
Agriculture	359	6,866
Taxes	500	13,730
Education	644	13,235
Crime	661	17,911
Health	862	30,481
Jobs	1,481	35,691
Defense	1,574	43,141
Government Operations	2,119	28,543

Note: The first column sums the total number of bills per policy topic introduced by all first and second term MCs from the 101st-110th Congresses. The second column sums the number of times MCs cosponsored a bill on that policy topic.
Source: Congressional Bills Project, Library of Congress THOMAS, Sulkin (2011)

Table 5.2 Differences in Legislative Specialization of MCs with versus without Political Experience, All New MCs

	Agenda Size, Introductions	**Agenda Size, Cosponsorships**
Any Political Experience	.03 (.14)	-.02 (.15)
Number of Career Experiences	.03 (.04)	.02 (.05)
First Term	-.36 (.09)***	-.04 (.12)
Ideo. Distance Pty Median	.21 (.55)	-.25 (.75)
Majority Party	-.02 (.09)	-.23 (.12)**
Partial Term	-.60 (.15)***	-.52 (.21)***
Total Intros./Cosponsorships	.29 (.01)***	.04 (.00)***
Vote Share	-.08 (.03)***	.01 (.04)
Vote Share^2	.00 (.00)**	-.00 (.00)
White	.33 (.18)*	.30 (.22)
Woman	.33 (.18)*	.24 (.18)
Education Level	.12 (.07)*	.12 (.08)
District Heterogeneity	-3.05 (1.13)***	1.39 (1.61)
Constant	5.91 (1.41)***	-2.47 (1.73)
N	1,193 (677 unique clusters)	1,193 (677 unique clusters)
R^2	.66	.84

Note: The dependent variable in the first column is the number of policy topics on which MCs introduced at least one bill (per Congress). The dependent variable in the second column is the number of policy topics on which MCs cosponsored more than the mean number of bills cosponsored in that policy topic (per Congress). The unit of analysis is a MC in a single Congress, and the sample is all new MCs (in the first and/or second term) during the 101st-110th Congresses. The excluded category is political amateurs. Regressions were estimated with ordinary least squares, and standard errors were clustered on individual MCs. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, *p<.1

Table 5.3 Influence of Legal Experience on Political Amateurs' Legislative Specialization

	Agenda Size, Introductions	**Agenda Size, Cosponsorships**
Legal Experience	-1.02 (.34)***	-.37 (.27)
Number of Career Experiences	-.18 (.14)	-.05 (.10)
First Term	-.44 (.23)*	-.17 (.27)
Ideo. Distance Pty Median	.25 (1.49)	1.05 (1.17)
Majority Party	-.01 (.21)	.30 (.21)
Partial Term	-.64 (.45)	-.16 (.42)
Total Intros./Cosponsorships	.28 (.04)***	.04 (.00)***
Vote Share	-.05 (.08)	-.16 (.09)*
Vote Share^2	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)*
White	.20 (.36)	-.51 (.46)
Woman	.43 (.34)	-.27 (.28)
Education Level	.20 (.18)	.00 (.14)
District Heterogeneity	-6.89 (2.99)**	4.10 (3.27)
Constant	6.92 (3.37)**	2.52 (3.02)
N	198 (116 unique clusters)	198 (116 unique clusters)
R^2	.65	.88

Note: The dependent variable in the first column is the number of policy topics on which MCs introduced at least one bill (per Congress). The dependent variable in the second column is the number of policy topics on which MCs cosponsored more than the mean number of bills cosponsored in that policy topic (per Congress). The unit of analysis is political amateurs in a single Congress, and the sample is all political amateurs in their first and/or second term during the 101st-110th Congress. The excluded category is political amateurs without legal experience. Regressions were estimated with ordinary least squares, and standard errors were clustered on the individual MCs. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, *p<.1

Table 5.4 Influence of Legal and Legislative Experience on Experienced MCs' Legislative Specialization

	Agenda Size, Introductions	**Agenda Size, Cosponsorships**
State Legislator	.06 (.05)	.06 (.15)
Congressional Staff Experience	-.15 (.11)	-.08 (.22)
Number of Career Experiences	-.17 (.15)	.03 (.05)
First Term	-.34 (.10)***	-.03 (.13)
Ideo. Distance Pty Median	.29 (.59)	-.63(.89)
Majority Party	-.01 (.10)	-.29 (.14)**
Partial Term	-.58 (.16)***	-.52 (.23)**
Total Intros./Cosponsorships	.39 (.01)***	.03 (.00)***
Vote Share	-.08 (.04)**	.03 (.05)
Vote Share^2	.00 (.00)**	-.00 (.00)
White	.34 (.19)*	.34 (.24)
Woman	.40 (.13)***	.32 (.20)*
Education Level	.14 (.07)*	.15 (.09)
District Heterogeneity	-2.43 (1.21)**	.94 (1.78)
Constant	5.45 (1.57)***	-3.20 (2.00)
N	995 (562 unique clusters)	995 (562 unique clusters)
R^2	.67	.83

Note: The dependent variable in the first column is the number of policy topics on which MCs introduced at least one bill (per Congress). The dependent variable in the second column is the number of policy topics on which MCs cosponsored more than the mean number of bills cosponsored in that policy topic (per Congress). The unit of analysis is politically experienced MCs in a single Congress, and the sample is all new MCs with prior political experience in their first and/or second term during the 101st-110th Congresses. The excluded category is MCs with non-legislative political experience. Regressions were estimated with ordinary least squares, and standard errors were clustered on the individual MCs. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, *p<.1

Table 5.5 Professionalization of Legislative Experience and Legislative Specialization

	Agenda Size, Introductions	**Agenda Size, Cosponsorships**
Less Professionalized State Legislature	-.30 (.11)***	-.10 (.16)
Professionalized State Legislature	.16 (.15)	.41 (.21)**
Congressional Staff Experience	-.16 (.15)	-.08 (.22)
Number of Career Experiences	.04 (.04)	.02 (.05)
First Term	-.34 (.10)***	-.03 (.13)
Ideo. Distance Pty Median	.33 (.59)	-.61 (.90)
Majority Party	.01 (.10)	-.27 (.14)**
Partial Term	-.61 (.16)***	-.57 (.24)**
Total Intros./Cosponsorships	.29 (.01)***	.03 (.00)***
Vote Share	-.09 (.04)***	.02 (.05)
Vote Share^2	.00 (.00)**	-.00 (.00)
White	.36 (.19)*	.36 (.23)
Woman	.43 (.13)***	.35 (.20)*
Education Level	.06 (.09)	.09 (.10)
District Heterogeneity	-1.69 (1.23)	1.67 (1.77)
Constant	5.75 (1.60)***	-2.97 (1.97)
N	995 (562 unique clusters)	995 (562 unique clusters)
R^2	.67	.83

Note: The dependent variable in the first column is the number of policy topics on which MCs introduced at least one bill (per Congress). The dependent variable in the second column is the number of policy topics on which MCs cosponsored more than the mean number of bills cosponsored in that policy topic (per Congress). The unit of analysis is politically experienced MCs in a single Congress, and the sample is all new MCs with prior political experience in their first and/or second term during the 101st-110th Congresses. The excluded category is MCs with non-legislative political experience. Regressions were estimated with ordinary least squares, and standard errors were clustered on the individual MCs. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, *p<.1

Table 5.6 Expected Relationships Between Policy Topics and Career Experience

Career Experience	Related Policy Topic(s)
Agriculture	Agriculture
Business	Budget, Corporate Regulation, Jobs, Taxes
Legal	Budget, Corporate Regulation, Crime, Taxes
Law Enforcement	Crime
Military	Defense
Education	Education
State Legislators	Government Operations
Governors	Budget, Government Operations, Jobs
Medical	Health, Medicare

Source: Congressional Bills Project, Sulkin (2011)

Table 5.7 Expected Relationships: Policy Topics and District Characteristics

Policy Topic	Key District Characteristics
Agriculture	% Rural
Corporate Regulation	% White Collar
Crime	% Poverty, % Minority
Defense	Military base in district, % Veterans
Jobs	% Living in poverty
Medicare	% Living in poverty
Taxes	% Living in poverty

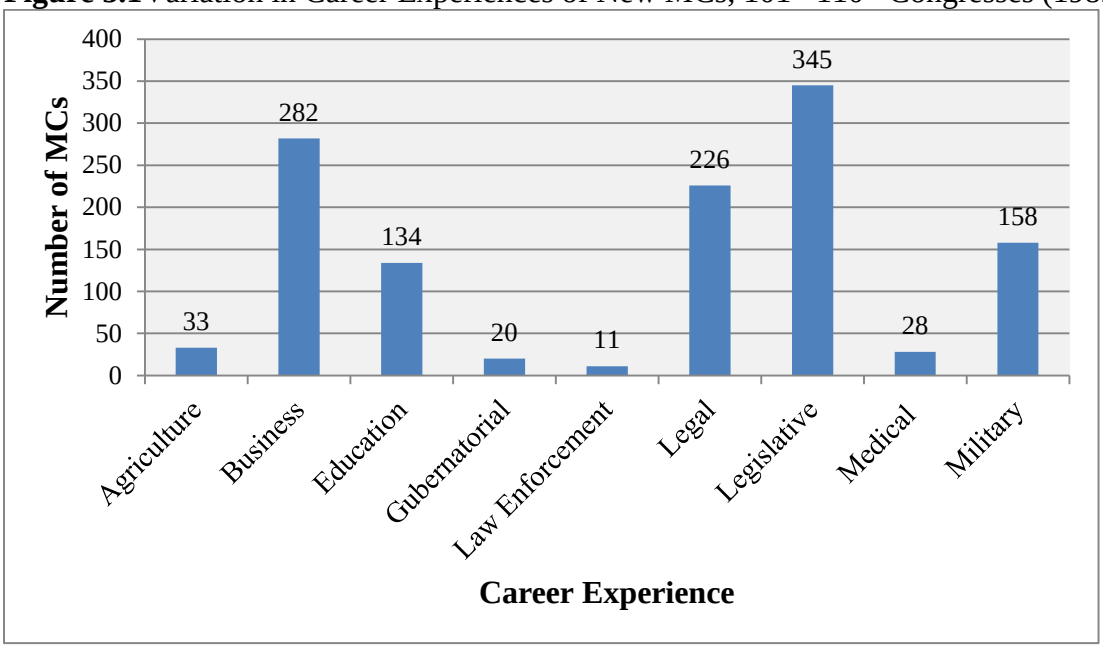
Note: District characteristics are measured as the mean per district and are not available for the 101st and 102nd Congresses.
Source: *Almanac of American Politics*, Sulkin (2011)

Table 5.8 Relevant Career Experience Increases Legislative Activity of New MCs, Summary of Regression Results

INTRODUCTIONS	**Agriculture**	**Budget**	**Corp. Reg.**
Agricultural	.53 (.25)**		
Business		.27 (.24)	.79 (.32)***
Governor		-.04 (.57)	
Legal		.25 (.27)	.70 (.32)**
INTRODUCTIONS	**Crime**	**Defense**	**Education**
Education			.23 (.15)
Law Enforcement	1.06 (.40)***		
Legal	.24 (.15)		
Military		.02 (.12)	
INTRODUCTIONS	**Gov Operations**	**Health**	**Jobs**
Business			.02 (.09)
Governor	.44 (.17)***		-.12 (.23)
Legislative	.13 (.07)*		
Medical		1.10 (.18)***	
INTRODUCTIONS	**Medicare**	**Taxes**	
Business		.28 (.15)*	
Legal		-.14 (.16)	
Medical	1.29 (.28)***		
COSPONSORSHIPS	**Agriculture**	**Budget**	**Corp. Reg.**
Agricultural	.54 (.08)***		
Business		.06 (.09)	.09 (.06)
Governor		-.25 (.19)	
Legal		.06 (.10)	.09 (.06)
COSPONSORSHIPS	**Crime**	**Defense**	**Education**
Education			-.02 (.05)
Law Enforcement	.25 (.14)**		
Legal	.12 (.04)***		
Military		.04 (.04)	
COSPONSORSHIPS	**Gov Operations**	**Health**	**Jobs**
Business			.02 (.03)
Governor	.36 (.09)		.08 (.05)
Legal	-.02 (.03)		
Medical		.21 (.05)***	
COSPONSORSHIPS	**Medicare**	**Taxes**	
Business		.03 (.04)	
Legal		-.04 (.04)	
Medical	.31 (.09)***		

Note: Negative binomial regressions with standard errors clustered on the individual MCs. Full models can be found in Appendix B. The dependent variables are the number of bills that individual MCs introduce/cosponsor per policy topic per Congress. The excluded category is all other MCs without the hypothesized relevant experience. ***p < .01, **p < .05, *p < .10

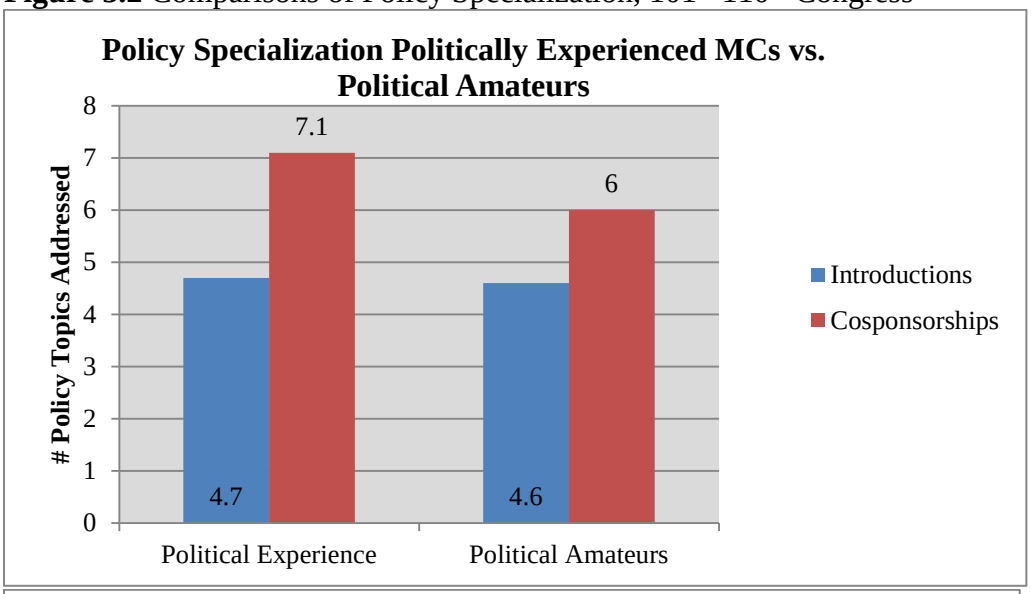
Figure 5.1 Variation in Career Experiences of New MCs, 101st-110th Congresses (1989-2008)



Note: The figure depicts the number of individual MCs who had different career experiences; MCs are not counted twice in a category if they serve more than one term. I counted each of MCs' precongressional career experiences, so they may be included in the sum for more than one column.

Source: *Almanac of American Politics*

Figure 5.2 Comparisons of Policy Specialization, 101st-110th Congress



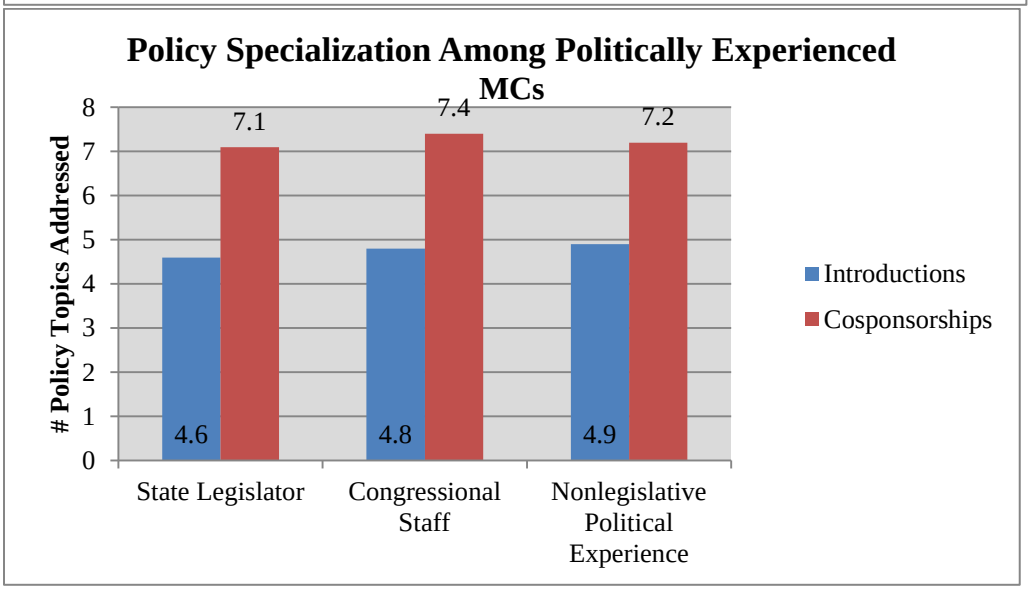
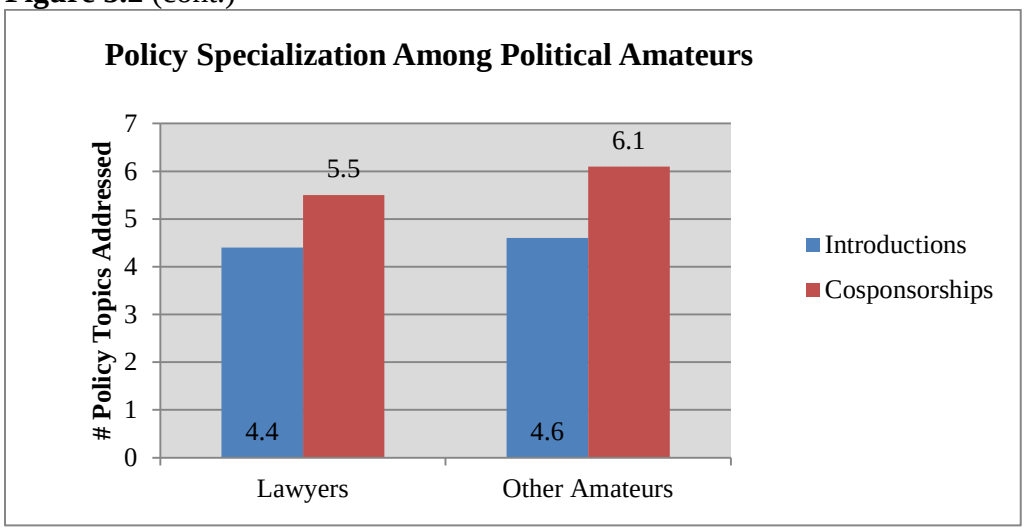
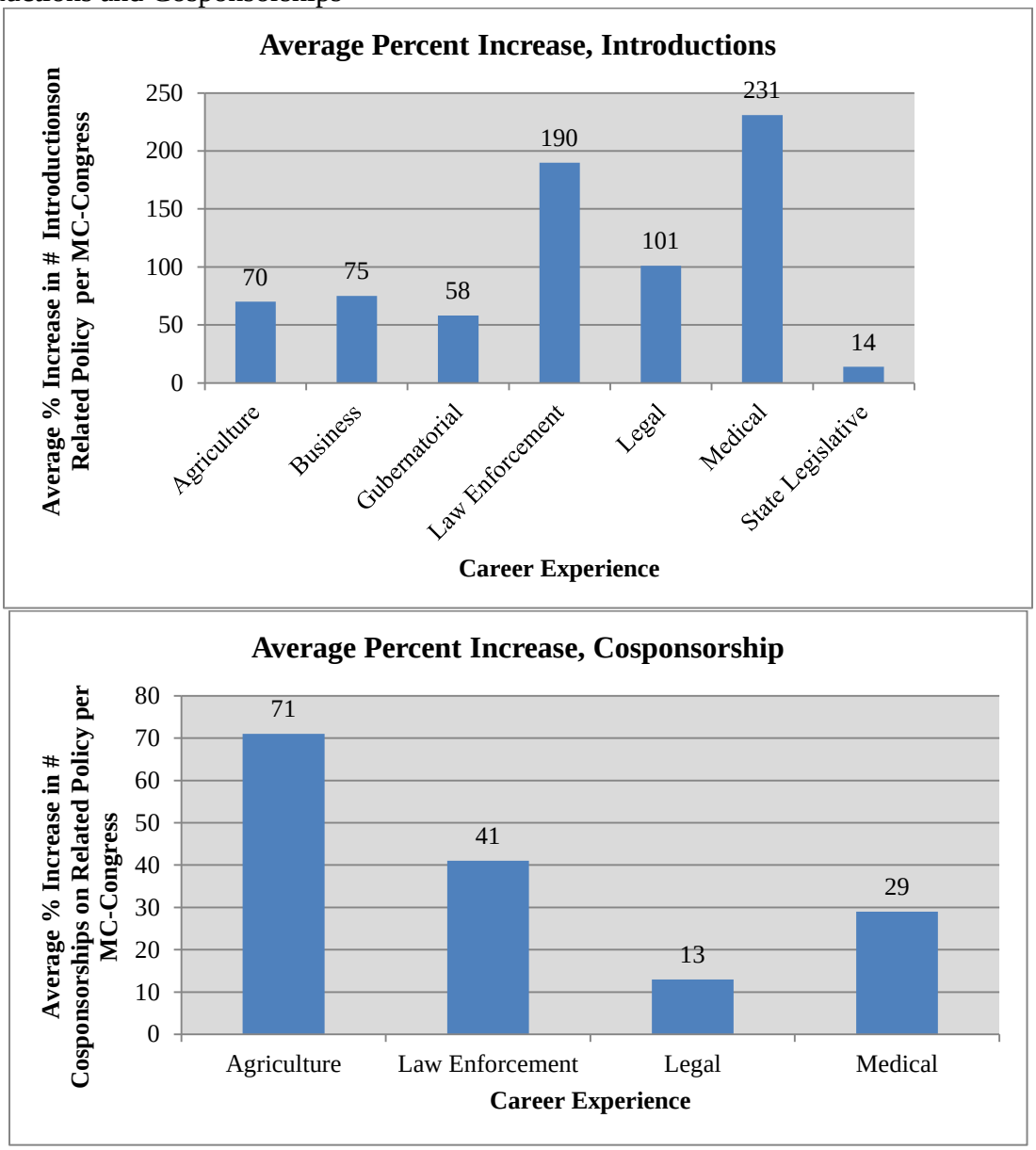


Figure 5.2 (cont.)



Note: The figures show the mean number of policy topics on which individual MCs introduced at least 1 bill per term. Since cosponsorship is more ubiquitous than sponsorship, I use a different standard for calculating the cosponsorship figures. I determine the average number of bills cosponsored in each policy topic, and count the number of policy topics on which individual MCs cosponsor an above average number of bills. MCs that serve more than one term are included twice in the analysis. In the 101st-110th Congresses, there are 561 MCs who had prior political experience and 116 political amateurs. Of the 561 MCs with prior political experience, there are 345 state legislators, 76 congressional staff, 46 MCs with executive experience, and 156 MCs with judicial and/or local political experience. Of the 116 political amateurs, 21 have legal experience.
Source: Congressional Bills Project, Library of Congress THOMAS, Sulkin (2011)

Figure 5.3 Average Substantive Effect of Career Experience, Percent Increase in Number of Introductions and Cosponsorships



Note: Each panel depicts the percent increase in legislative activity with the hypothesized relevant career experience. I calculate this by converting the incidence rate ratio of each negative binomial regression coefficient to a percent increase/decrease. In the panel for introductions, I graph the average percent increase of activity on corporate regulation and tax policies for MCs with business experience (120% increase for corporate regulation and 31% increase for tax policy). Similarly, for both introductions and cosponsorships, I graph the average percent increase of activity on health and Medicare policies for MCs with medical experience. (For introductions, this is a 199% increase on health policies and a 264% increase on Medicare policies. For cosponsorships, this is a 23% increase on health policy and a 34% increase on Medicare policy.)

Chapter 6: Career Paths to Party Loyalty

At first glance, the backgrounds of Reps. Chris Cannon (R-UT) and Anna Eshoo (D-CA) have some significant differences. Rep. Eshoo, a Democrat, was born in Connecticut to parents of Assyrian and Armenian descent; her father was a watchmaker and jeweler. She was raised in the Catholic church and moved west to attend community college, where she earned an English degree. After graduation, she worked in the communications field for two corporations. When the seat for 14th district of California in the House of Representatives opened up in the 1992 election (the incumbent ran, unsuccessfully, for the Senate), Eshoo entered the Democratic primary, beat six other candidates, and won the general election by 18 percentage points (*Almanac of American Politics 1994,* 122).

In comparison, Rep. Cannon, a Republican, was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, to a well-known political family. His great-grandfather was a non-voting member of the House of Representatives from 1873 to 1881, before Utah was a state. Future generations of the Cannon family had sustained the prominence of the Cannon name in Utah politics. A practicing Mormon, Cannon attended Brigham Young University, graduating with a B.S in 1974 and with a J.D. in 1980. After graduation, he worked in private practice before being hired as a solicitor for the Interior General. In 1996, he ran for the seat in the House of Representatives held by Rep. Bill Orton (D-UT), a three term incumbent up for reelection. The partisan breakdown of the district was not in Rep. Orton's favor, and Cannon won the November election by four percentage points (*Almanac of American Politics 2000,* 1611).

Despite these differences, as new members of Congress, Reps. Cannon and Eshoo's behavior was similar in one important regard. On contentious issues, when the Democratic and Republican parties took opposite sides on a policy, Reps. Cannon and Eshoo sided with their

parties almost 100% of the time. They were both incredibly loyal partisans; Reps. Cannon and Eshoo voted with the other party on only 1% of party line votes.[104]

In the case of both Reps. Cannon and Eshoo, I argue that this pattern of party loyalty is rooted in what is the most prominent similarity in their precongressional careers: political experience. Before being elected to Congress, Rep. Cannon served as the Utah Republican Party Finance Chairman. Rep. Eshoo had even more extensive political experience. She had been a county chairwoman, a Democratic national committeewoman, a member of the California Democratic state central executive committee, and a member of the Democratic National Commission on Presidential Nominations (*Almanac of American Politics 1994*, 122; *Almanac of American Politics 2000,* 1611). For Reps. Cannon and Eshoo, their partisan behavior followed closely on the heels of their precongressional experiences.[105] While loyal partisans may be attracted to the idea of a congressional career, in this chapter I explore how career experiences encourage partisan loyalty.

Exploring Precongressional Careers and Partisan Loyalty

In chapters four and five, I examined the individual decisions that MCs make about their representational activities and the topics they take up in office. There, I discuss MCs as

[104] Party line votes are roll call votes where the majority (at least 50%) of one party voted opposite of the majority (at least 50%) of the other party. On average, new MCs in the 101st-112th Congresses voted with the majority of the other party on 11% of these votes. Nine new MCs sided with the other party on 50% or more of party line votes.

[105] Reps. Cannon and Eshoo's loyalty did not go unnoticed. In the case of Rep. Eshoo, for example, it earned her a reputation as a "loyalist unlikely to break with the party leadership," paving her way into former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi's confidence (O'Keefe and Sullivan 2013). In February 2014, Speaker Pelosi "stunned colleagues" by endorsing Rep. Eshoo's bid to be the chair of the Energy and Commerce Committee in public and in so doing bypassing a Democrat with more seniority on the committee (Rep. Frank Pallone Jr., D-NJ) also interested in the position (Dumain 2014).

essentially on their own to decide what to do and how to best represent their constituents. But, as one Washington D.C. observer noted, new MCs do not always 'go it alone':

> *"When a brand-new member of Congress comes to Washington, he is fresh from the heady experience of winning public acclaim for his politics and victory for himself. Then suddenly, the newcomer is a naked freshman in a world of veterans, a stranger in the political home he has won for himself. Instinct tells him immediately that no individual politician can operate as an atom. He must make his way to clusters of comrades"* (Smith 2002, 709).

From the perspective of new MCs, supporting the party, or party loyalty, is intuitive. Because parties are coalitions of like-minded legislators, party loyalty entails supporting policies and initiatives with which MCs likely agree. Doing so can result in collective benefits like passing legislation (Aldrich 1995, Downs 1957, Fenno 1978, Mayhew 1974, Rohde and Shepsle 1987, Riker 1980). Partisan loyalty has individual benefits, too. Since the success of party initiatives depends on members' support, parties work to ensure party loyalty. They punish deviators and reward loyal members using tools like: scheduling bills for votes, assignments MCs to committees, and giving them campaign contributions or leadership positions (Cantor and Herrnson 1997, Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005, Hasecke and Mycoff 2007, Heberlig et al. 2006, Heberlig and Larson 2012, Hedlund et al. 2009, Rohde 1990). [106] These incentives and sanctions provide additional impetus for new MCs to demonstrate party loyalty in their early

[106] For example, through the strategic use of institutional structure, rules, and scheduling, parties solve collective action and social choice problems that would prevent members from passing legislation (Aldrich 1995, Clausen and Wilcox 1987, Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005, Giligan and Krehbiel 1995, Rohde 1990). Parties also assist members by providing a voting cue for citizens, mobilizing the electorate, and donating money to incumbents and challengers (Aldrich 1995, Heberlig and Larson 2012, Maestas et al. 2005).

terms. They also increase the importance of party loyalty to new MCs by influencing MCs' ability to achieve their policy and political goals.

Party loyalty also has broader importance, too. From the perspective of the parties, loyalty can affect the success of partisan initiatives. As a senior MC described his interactions with the freshmen MCs in the 104th Congress,

> *"In the first six months freshmen would say, 'Well, Mr.Chairman, I didn't come here for the status quo, I came here to make changes; let the politics take care of themselves.' I would respond, 'Okay, but…[y]our voting affects our ability to set the agenda. So, wake up and be a team player, at least to some extent"* (as quoted in Barnett 1999, 242).

While party loyalty can aid the party in passing its agenda, at the same time it can also lead to partisan gridlock if experienced partisans compromise or cross party lines less frequently, which has implications for policy outcomes. Gridlock, particularly if driven by partisan loyalty, can reduce the number of bipartisan initiatives that become law. Since these voting decisions directly impact which policy proposals become law, they have a strong influence on constituent representation – particularly for moderate voters.

Exploring Party Loyalty

There are many different ways that new MCs can be loyal to their parties: on the votes they take, the proposals they advocate, the deals they drive, the explanations they give to constituents, and the money they give to party causes. I examine two aspects of party loyalty. I look at new MCs' voting records and campaign contributions – how frequently they vote with or against their party and its leaders, and how much money they donate to copartisans.

In the first half of the chapter, I examine MCs' voting records. I focus on "party votes" where the majority (at least 50%) of Democrats votes against the majority (at least 50%) of Republicans. I also look at whether new MCs vote with or against their party leaders (Speaker, Majority Whip, Minority Leader, Minority Whip) when the top two leaders in each party take opposite policy positions. Crossing party lines goes against the party's attempt to pursue its legislative agenda.

In addition to new MCs' voting records, I examine the amount of money that new MCs donate to copartisans to help them get (re)elected. Congressional candidates raise a substantial sum of money. Figure 6.1 shows the average amount of money spent by new MCs in the 101st-112th Congresses. The sum has rapidly increased over time, from approximately $550,000 in the 101st Congress (1989-1990) to almost three times that amount ($1,600,000) in the 112th Congress (2011-2012). Due to recent changes to campaign finance laws, copartisans have become an important source of campaign funding (Heberlig and Larson 2012).

I study campaign donations because, like MCs' voting records, they too have an impact on constituent representation. This campaign cash can make the difference between winning and losing an additional seat in the House and, in the aggregate, the chamber majority. This has reverberating policy implications. Berkman, (1994), for example, argues that "long-term change in the composition of the House membership is significant because new policy agendas, partisan alignments, and attitudes toward legislative norms work their way into the House through membership replacement" (1025). Studying precongressional careers deepens the understanding of how constituent representation is influenced by MCs' decision-making.

What Effect Do Precongressional Careers Have on Party Loyalty?

Following the pattern of chapter four, I trace the intersection of precongressional careers and partisan behavior in two steps. First, I look at all new MCs and compare politically experienced MCs to political amateurs. Second, I separately look at MCs with and without political experience.

I expect three broad differences in the party loyalty of new MCs given their career experiences. First, I hypothesize that politically experienced MCs donate more money than amateurs to copartisans, controlling for the amount they have available to give. I expect that experienced MCs donate more money to copartisans than political amateurs because they have personal relationships with many of them. Second, comparing MCs with political experience, I hypothesize that former congressional staffers, party officials, and state legislators are all more loyal partisans than other politically experienced MCs (such as former judges, city administrators, or state bureaucrats). They have first-hand familiarity with the roles and inducements of the political parties in a legislative setting. Likewise, their political or nonpolitical experiences highlight the value and importance of party loyalty (and they may have chosen these careers for that reason). Third, and finally, I focus on political amateurs. I hypothesize that amateurs from legal backgrounds are more loyal partisans than other political amateurs, given that the professional skills and contacts developed through their legal experience may encourage party loyalty.[107]

[107] For all three broad expectations, then, I anticipate that career experiences may reinforce any preexisting or other inclinations (i.e., personality, socialization, etc.) to party loyalty that may lead certain individuals to these precongressional career experiences. Because I cannot run a randomized experiment on real MCs' career backgrounds, I am unable to draw conclusions about whether the relationship between career experiences and legislative behavior is casual. Nevertheless, my data do allow me to ascertain whether there are significant patterns in the behavior of MCs from certain career experiences. Since this replicates the situation (and

To test these hypotheses, I concentrate on the loyalty of MCs in their first four years in the House of Representatives during the 101st-110th Congresses (1989-2008).[108] The time period I study features majority control by both parties, ensuring that results are not due to one party's control of the chamber. The rest of the chapter proceeds as follows. I begin by differentiating broadly between MCs with, versus without, prior political experience. I outline the differences I anticipate to observe and use regression analyses to analyze MCs' voting records and campaign contributions. Then I separate MCs into two groups (experienced MCs and amateurs) to highlight variation across types of career experiences.

Voting Cues and Partisan Connections: Amateurs and Experienced MCs

New MCs cast thousands of votes per Congress, varying in topic, scope, and significance. In chapter five I demonstrated how MCs typically specialize on a small number of the topics addressed in these votes. Yet even when new MCs choose to focus their legislative attention on a handful of topics, they do not ignore all the others. They have to vote on them when they reach the House floor, providing a record of how loyally they support their party. Perhaps counterintuitively, I expect that political amateurs and politically experienced are both loyal partisans.

Amateurs' lack of prior political experience may encourage their partisan loyalty when MCs are uncertain how to vote – when there is a conflict in this 'field of forces' that shape MCs' voting decisions (Kingdon 1989). In these situations, I posit that the party position is an especially helpful guide for political amateurs (Stratmann 2000). Amateurs step into an occupation that can significantly differ from what they have done in the past. But new MCs can

---

information) of voters and political observers, my findings still have valuable and substantive import and shed light on the implications of precongressional careers in Congress.

[108] I do not have voting data on all the MCs elected in special elections.

use the party position to distinguish actions that may or may not sit well with constituents. Likewise, party whip activity may help clarify why voting with the party is important and what impact it may have on MCs' voters. Amateurs' lack of prior experience may lead them to rely more frequently on the party position for deciding how to vote – increasing their voting loyalty.

Politically experienced MCs may use the party line as a voting cue as well. I expect they have less need to do so, though, if they can rely on their prior experiences to facilitate their decision-making process. But I do not anticipate they are less loyal voters as a result. The reason is that political experience may emphasize the value of party loyalty (Thurber 1976). In addition, MCs who have associated with the party in the past may be particularly strong partisans. Experienced MCs may vote the party line regularly, then. As a result, I do not expect to observe significant differences in voting loyalty based on prior political experience.

MCs can also demonstrate their party loyalty by donating money to party causes. In general, new MCs receive a 'pass' from their party leaders on contributing to copartisans. From the party's perspective, the priority of new MCs should be to win their own election (Heberlig and Larson 2012). Nevertheless, I anticipate that a difference emerges between experienced and amateur MCs. I expect that politically experienced MCs enter Congress with attachments to other MCs (Berkman 1994). Political experience also illuminates the way that parties operate as collective units in pursuit of shared goals, and familiarizes individuals with the value of party cooperation (Aldrich 1995, Downs 1957). I expect that this knowledge and relationships act as a motivation to support partisan causes or colleagues, in addition to any predisposition towards party support that motivated their desire to run for partisan office. It should be comparatively more difficult or unpleasant for them to turn down donations solicited by individuals that new MCs know personally. As a result, I hypothesize that MCs with political experience donate more

money to copartisan colleagues than political amateurs, controlling for electoral vulnerability and the total amount of money they have available to donate.

Assessing How Amateurs and Experienced MCs' Loyalty Stack Up

To examine these connections, Figure 6.2 compares the voting and donation records of MCs with versus without political experience. The first panel shows how frequently MCs vote with their party when at least 50% of Democrats voted against at least 50% of Republicans and how often MCs vote with their party leaders when opposite sides were taken by the top party leaders (Speaker, Majority Whip, Minority Leader, Minority Whip). Higher percentages indicate more loyal members (Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005).[109] The second panel reflects the average amount of money MCs donate to copartisans (colleagues/candidates) per Congress. Higher values equal more generous or supportive partisans.

On average, the voting patterns of MCs with versus without political experience are similar. Amateurs slightly edge out experienced MCs on both counts – voting with the majority of the party and party leaders. But the difference is neither substantively nor statistically significant. However, members with prior political experience are more generous donors. They give approximately $13,500 dollars more to copartisans than amateurs (*t=-4.2, p=.00*).[110]

Table 6.1 illustrates this difference by comparing the ten most generous donors based on political experience. Businessman Rep. Geoff Davis (R-KY) topped the list for political amateurs, donating $217,804 during his second term (110th Congress). Rep. James McDermott

[109] These variables were originally scaled so that higher values equal less party loyalty. I rescaled them here for clarity of presentation. MCs' voting loyalty from the 101st-112th Congresses is included in the figure, although the regression analysis only looks at the 101st-110th Congresses due to the availability of other data.

[110] In the regression analysis to follow, I control for MCs' electoral security and the amount of money they have available to donate (among other things), as both may affect how much MCs contribute to copartisans.

(D-WA), former psychiatrist and state legislator, gave the most of any experienced MC – $644,960 in the 102nd Congress. Rep. Davis' generosity puts him in the 29th spot on the list of political experienced MCs. As I expected, MCs with political experience demonstrate different partisan behavior in terms of campaign contributions.

Regression Analyses for Political Experience, Votes, and Donations

To test this expectation when taking other considerations into account, I conduct a series of regression analyses on the campaign contributions and voting records of the 677 new MCs in their first four years during the 101st-110th Congresses (1989-2008). The independent variable of interest is *Political Experience*, a 0/1 variable (as described in chapters three and four), so the excluded category is political amateurs.

Dependent Variables

My dependent variables are measures of MCs' voting records and campaign contributions. I measure MCs' voting loyalty in two ways: *Party Voting Loyalty* and *Leader Voting Loyalty*. These variables capture, respectively, how frequently each MC voted with his/her party when at least 50% of both parties vote against each other, or when the top party leaders (Speaker, Majority Whip, Minority Leader, Minority Whip) vote against one another. To provide an example, consider a MC whose *Party Loyalty* value was 60%. The MC votes with the majority of her party 60% of the time and against it the other 40% of the time. These measures were constructed from MCs' roll call voting records compiled by Poole and Rosenthal and cover the 101st-112th Congresses (Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005).[111] On average, new MCs vote

[111] Data is not available for all MCs elected in special elections.

with the majority of their party and their leaders about 90% of the time, although both range between 30% and 100%.[112]

My measure of campaign contributions is taken from Heberlig and Larson (2012). *Total Contributions* captures the dollar amount an MC contributes per Congress to other congressional candidates. By using contributions to copartisans, I tap MCs' willingness to help their party even when it entails parting with a scarce resource (campaign cash) that could be used for their own reelection. As was true of MCs' voting patterns, new MCs support their parties to different extents. For instance, copartisan donations average $42,480 dollars per Congress, but a handful of new MCs donate nothing to copartisans and 37 MCs donated over $200,000 per Congress (with a maximum of over $600,000, see Table 6.1).

Control Variables

I expect that voting and contribution decisions are also influenced by the macro-political environment, MCs' electoral situation, and personal characteristics. The variable *Campaign Cash* captures the aggregate sum of money (both cash on hand at the beginning of the Congress and campaign receipts received during the campaign) that MCs could potentially donate.[113] MCs with greater campaign 'war chests' may be more generous partisan donors (Heberlig 2004, Heberlig and Larson 2009, 2012).

---

[112] MCs with low loyalty scores faced particularly competitive elections, either because they ran in districts that were narrowly split between supporters of the two parties or because they faced a quality challenger. There were 10 MCs with loyalty scores under 50%. The MCs with the least loyal voting record, Rep. Constance Morella (R-MD), won election to the 101st Congress in a district where the 1988 Democratic presidential nominee Michael Dukakis won 53% of the vote. Rep. Morella (R-MD) voted with his party 28% of the time and with his party leaders 30% of the time. To take another example, Rep. Bobby Bright (D-AL) won election to the 111th Congress in 2008 by less than 2,000 votes and supported his party and party leaders on only 44% of party-line votes.

[113] I include this variable as a control only in the campaign contribution models.

Parties exert more pressure on their members to toe the party line and contribute to party causes as competition for the House majority increases (Heberlig and Larson 2012). Feeling this pressure, MCs may support their party more frequently as the margin of seats between the two parties declines. *Party Margin* is a count of the difference in the number of seats held by the majority versus minority party in each Congress. Similarly, partisans may feel greater pressure to contribute to party causes to secure a majority in periods of divided government. *Divided Government* (0/1 variable) takes the value '1' when the president and the majority of (at least) one chamber of Congress are from different parties.

The incentives to be loyal partisans are greater for members of the majority versus minority party (*Majority Party*, 0/1), owing to the increased institutional capacity of the majority party to reward loyal members (Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005). In addition, these pressures have increased over time. Heberlig and Larson (2012) argue that the campaign finance landscape has been altered by increased competition for majority control in the House and campaign finance reforms passed since the 1980s. In particular, the Bipartisan Campaign Finance Reform Act of 2002 banned the use of 'soft money', unregulated funds spent by parties on 'party building activities'. As this had been a primary source of party funding, parties turned to their own members to help make up the difference.[114] This implies that MCs who entered Congress in later years should donate more money to their parties, all other things considered. In order to distinguish the effects of MCs' career experiences from systematic changes over time, I include

[114] For party leaders, asking members to donate makes sense: it encourage members to 'buy into' party goals, and it gives party leaders access to members' donor networks. For members, donating to the party has value as well. It functions like a type of 'fire insurance'; if members face a tough reelection, generous donors are more likely to receive party assistance (Heberlig and Larson 2012).

the variable *Congress* to capture when MCs served. I anticipate that MCs entering Congress in later years will donate more money than MCs who served in earlier years.

Tenure in office may increase the number of colleagues to whom MCs want to donate. I capture MCs' seniority with the 0/1 dichotomous variable *First Term*. My expectations are less clear regarding whether a difference emerges between the voting records of first and second term MCs. Electorally secure MCs may be more generous donors since they do not face as competitive, that is – expensive, elections. For roll call votes, the higher the percentage of the two-party vote the MC receives, the greater the support in the district for the MCs' positions and, likely, their party. If the alignment between district and partisan interests is stronger, then the MC may vote more frequently along party lines. I measure electoral security/vulnerability with *Vote Share* (the percent of the two-party vote obtained by the MC in the previous election) and *Vote Share*^{2} to account for any nonlinearity in the effect of electoral security. Finally, partisan support may be greater for MCs from larger state delegations. These MCs have a greater number of same-state colleagues from whom they can take voting cues or whom they may feel compelled to donate (Kingdon 1989, Squire and Wright 1990).[115] *Delegation Size* measures the size of the state delegation in the House (in number of MCs).

Finally, I include a handful of other variables. *Ideological Distance From Party Median* is the distance between MCs' ideological position and the median member of their party, as described in chapter four. Higher values indicate a greater ideological divergence from the median party member. I expect that as ideological similarity with the party increases, MCs more frequently vote with the party line and give more money to its candidates. I expect the opposite from the number of votes that MCs miss each Congress *(% Missed Votes*). MCs who miss more

[115] An additional explanation is that MCs from populous states compete in more expensive media markets, and rely on the generosity of copartisans to help fund their campaign activities.

votes may be campaigning in the district, particularly if they are in competitive reelection races. Alternatively, they may be purposefully trying to avoid going on the record on an issue that is contentious with constituents. In either case, I expect that MCs who miss a greater percentage of votes will vote less frequently with the majority of their party and party leaders.

In the pattern of chapters four and five, I include 0/1 variables for MCs' race (*White*), gender (*Woman*), and highest level of education (*Education Level*), although I do not have strong prior expectations about what direction the results may take. District heterogeneity may have an influence on MCs' voting loyalty as well, and so I include *District Heterogeneity* as well (which is available for the 101st-110th Congresses). As discussed in chapter four, the measure taps the degree of difference in the education, income, occupation, housing, ethnicity, and religion of district residents; higher values indicate more diverse districts.

Votes and Dollars: Regression Results for Amateurs versus Experienced MCs

The results in Table 6.2 show that differences in party loyalty among experienced and amateurs MCs emerge for campaign donations but not roll call votes. As I expected, politically experienced MCs are more generous donors when compared to political amateurs.[116] On average, they give approximately $13,500 more to copartisans than do political amateurs.[117]

[116] To ensure that this result is not driven by extremely generous MCs with political experience, I reran the analysis without them (not shown here). The regression coefficient decreased in magnitude, from $13,515 to $9,636, but a significant difference remains ($p < .02$). Alternatively, I also re-estimate the models and take the log of MCs' individual contributions. There is no significant difference in regression results compared to when I exclude the outliers, so for ease of interpretation I present the models with the outliers excluded.

[117] Of the 10 most generous politically experienced donors, 8 held leadership positions in their party: Budget Committee chair – Rep. James McDermott (R-WA), Republican Steering Committee – Rep. John Linder (R-GA), House Majority Leader – Rep. Eric Cantor (R-VA), vice-president of the Republican Conference and Republican Policy Committee – Rep. Susan Molinari (R-NY), Speaker of the House – Reps. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and John Boehner (R-OH) National Republican Congressional Committee chair – Rep. Tom Reynolds (R-NY), and Assistant Majority Whip – Rep. Bobby Jindal (R-LA).

The election of experienced candidates bears dividends for the success of partisan agendas in Congress. Electing experienced MCs can advance the party's efforts to retain or secure seats and enact partisan initiatives. Indeed, party leaders act as if these differences are real: they purposefully target and recruit politically experienced candidates to run for Congress (Maestas et al. 2005). The connection between career experiences and donations has tangible implications for each party. How much more money would each party have received had their amateurs entered Congress with political experience? It turns out to be a significant sum: $1,283,925 for Democratic party and $2,202,945 for the Republican party.[118] This is money that might make a key difference in a closely contested race.[119]

Personal characteristics of MCs and their electoral situation also have an impact on MCs' partisan loyalty. For example, first term MCs are more loyal voters but less generous donors, perhaps because they concentrate on securing their own reelection (Heberlig and Larson 2012). MCs who are more electorally secure also vote more frequently with their party and donate more money to copartisans. Likewise, ideology influences MCs' partisan behavior. More extreme MCs support their party less frequently. At first, this seems counterintuitive, as it would suggest that extremely conservative Republicans break with their party to vote with Democrats. Recall, though, that the variable taps ideological distance from the median ideological position of the entire party. MCs could vary on either side of it. They could move, figuratively, toward the

[118] I calculated these sums by multiplying the number of terms served by amateur Democrats (95) and Republicans (163) by $13,515 – the difference in contributions based on political experience.

[119] That this money comes from new MCs is also important for encouraging on-going party support. As Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK), the former chair of the National Republican Congressional Committee, explained, "I think [freshmen are] absolutely critical. They're a third of our class. Quite a few of them got help from the NRCC to get here…A number of these freshmen have never had to do anything like this before, so getting them involved is really critical" (Center 2011).

ideological poles, making them more extreme (conservative or liberal) than everyone else in Congress. Alternatively, they could move away from the party median towards the other party – Democrats becoming more conservative and Republicans more liberal.

Extreme liberals and extreme conservatives are more loyal than MCs who land in the middle of the ideological spectrum. To illustrate this, I split each party's new MCs into quartiles based on the ideological positions of the party and compare the voting patterns of ideologically extreme partisans (the quartile farthest away from the other party) to moderates (the quartile closest to the other party). On average, Democratic ideologues vote with the majority of their party 94% of the time and their leaders 93% whereas Democratic moderates vote with their party and its leaders 81% of the time (on each count). The patterns are similar for Republicans: ideologues vote with the party an average of 95% percent of the time and their leaders 94%, compared to 88% of the time (on each count) for moderates. In effect, moderates have more policy options than their ideological counterparts. They find it more palatable, at least some of the time, to cross party lines than more extreme members of their party.

Ideologically extreme MCs also give more to copartisan candidates than other MCs of their party. The difference is again driven by the more moderate members of each party. For example, Democratic ideologues donated an average of $43,862 per Congress versus the $27,180 by their other copartisans. Likewise, Republican ideologues donated an average of $54,935 per Congress compared to the $45,073 in donations of their more moderate copartisans. I expect that the difference driven in part by electoral vulnerability. Overall, ideologically extreme members have higher electoral returns than members who sit closer to the other party – perhaps because they represent districts that are less competitive for the other party. This is most notable for Democrats. For instance, leaving aside MCs who ran unopposed, Democratic ideologues

received 67% of the two-party vote, versus 58% for more moderate members of the party. The difference is much smaller for Republicans, 60.4% to 60%. In lieu of donating to others, moderate members of each party may spend more of their campaign cash on their own, more tightly contested, races. Even taking these dynamics into account, though, precongressional careers still are associated with MCs' behavior.

The differences I find between experienced MCs and amateurs address concerns about professional versus citizen legislators. Whereas advocates of citizen legislators hope that political inexperience would increase their fidelity to the district, I do not find that political amateurs vote significantly different than experienced MCs. This does not necessarily entail that they are being unresponsive to their voters' interests. It could, and should, be that the party line accurately captures the opinions its voters. But, if advocates for citizen legislators had intended the election of political amateurs to ensure a single-minded focus on district interests independent of the party line, then it has not worked out as anticipated.

Learning Loyalty Before Congress: Staff, State Legislators, and Party Officials

My argument so far is premised on the assumption that new MCs enter office inclined to be loyal to their party, for a variety of different reasons. Distinguishing between MCs with and without prior political experience drew out these differences in regards to campaign contributions, but not for voting loyalty. I expect that MCs vote differently depending on the type of political experience they have had (and nonpolitical experience, too, as I discuss in the next section).

MCs can vote the party line for many reasons. But MCs may not always agree with the party, as Kingdon (1989) noted. Whether or not MCs go with the party in these instances depends, in part, on the value they place on partisan unity and intraparty compromise. Previous

experience with party organizations or legislatures may reinforce the value of party unity in the legislative arena (Snowiss 1966). This experience should highlight the value of copartisans sticking together on divisive issue and should illustrate that intraparty compromise is central to partisan success, particularly for a group of MCs who career decisions (i.e. run for partisan office) suggests they care about partisan outcomes. I focus the remainder of this section on three political experiences that stand out as particularly informative in this regard: congressional staff experience, state legislative experience, and party experience. I take up the question of different nonpolitical experiences in the section to follow.

In general, I anticipate that MCs with congressional, legislative, and/or with party organization experience vote more frequently with their party and donate more money to partisan causes compared to other politically experienced MCs like former judges, state bureaucrats or local government officials. Certainly, congressional staff, state legislative, and party organization experience are each unique. However, I argue that they share a fundamental similarity: they enable MCs to better appreciate the value of party loyalty in a legislative context.

Staff, Legislative, and Party Experience

Working in the partisan atmosphere of Congress, for one, clearly illuminates the importance and value of party loyalty.[120] Staffers work for members who are partisans and who are exposed to partisan pressure regarding votes and contributions (Herrnson 1994). Congressional staff have repeated opportunities to develop relationships with other staffers, MCs, and party leaders. MCs with congressional staff experience have lived out the reality that is partisan politics on the Hill, and are more loyal partisans as a result.

[120] Former staffers were more active participants in the legislative process (they introduce a greater number of bills) and introduce more bills that make significant legal or policy changes.

Like Congress, state legislatures are partisan institutions (Rosenthal 1995). [121] This similarity helps new MCs adjust to the legislative environment in Congress and its norms, like the importance of teamwork – an essential element of party loyalty (Berkman 1993, 1994).[122] State legislative experience also builds partisan relationships. State legislators outpace any other occupational background in Congress, making it likely that MCs have served, or are acquainted, with colleagues from previous political experiences (Berkman 1994, 1033). Finally, state legislators are often politically ambitious (Maestas 2003, Rosenthal 1998, Squire 1988a, 1988b). Given this, state legislators have an incentive to demonstrate party loyalty at lower levels of office, patterns that may carry over into Congress (Aldrich 1995, Rosenthal 1995). MCs with legislative experience should understand and value party loyalty.

Like staffers and state legislators, party officials also know the value of party loyalty. They have witnessed how party support and experience can make the crucial difference in a political campaign. They have learned to build partisan relationships to further party goals, such as recruiting volunteers to work on a campaign or colleagues to support an initiative (Price 200). Similarly, party experience reinforces the lesson that electoral success often is reliant on the generosity of copartisans, be it party organizations or individuals. Party organizations play a significant role in helping copartisans coordinate campaign strategies, solicit donations, and build donor networks, all skills that can inform and shape similar decisions in Congress.

---

[121] Although elections for it are technically nonpartisan, the Nebraska legislature organizes along party lines in the chamber (Little and Ogle 2006).

[122] Thomsen (forthcoming 2014) suggests that state legislators who run for Congress differ ideologically from those who remain in the state legislature. Those that run for higher office are less 'in step' with the mean ideological position of their state legislative party and more closely aligned with the ideological positions of their congressional party. While differences in ideological positions are controlled for the analyses that follow, the idea of 'party fit' strengthens the intuition that former state legislators demonstrate increased loyalty to their parties in office. In Congress, they finally 'fit in' and, having anticipated and strategically maneuvered their way to Congress, may demonstrate it through enhanced party loyalty.

Congressional, state legislative, and party organization backgrounds familiarize MCs with an environment where partisan support can make the crucial difference in legislative outcomes. Individuals also may be attracted to these careers because of this element of partisan support. Either way, once elected to Congress, I hypothesize that MCs with congressional, legislative, and/or party organization experience vote more frequently with their party and donate more money to their party compared to other politically experienced MCs.

Comparing Voting Patterns Among MCs with Prior Political Experience

As can be seen in Figure 6.3, MCs with congressional, state legislative, or party experience do vote more frequently with their party and party leaders on divisive votes than MCs with other political experiences – executive, judicial, and local (party voting loyalty $t=-2.6$, $p=.00$; leader loyalty $t=-2.2$, $p=.02$). The substantively small size of the difference is indicative of the fact that new MCs, in general, support their party. But, in initial confirmation of my expectations, MCs with any of these three experiences do so more often.

For example, before Congress, Rep. David Skaggs was an aide to Rep. Timothy Wirth (D-CO) from 1974-1977, and a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1984, 1988, 1992, and 1996 while also serving as a member of Colorado's House of Representatives from 1980-1986 (*Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*). In other words, he was one of the six new MCs with all three of the loyalty experiences I outline – congressional, state legislative, and partisan. His voting loyalty was particularly high: he voted with the majority of his party 94% of the time in the 101st Congress and with his party leaders on 91% of votes that split the two parties. However, there is no statistically significant difference in the amount of money that MCs with congressional, state legislative, or party experience contribute to their copartisans.

Regression Analyses for MCs with Prior Political Experience

To test these hypotheses, I use the same regression framework from the first half of the chapter. Here, my sample of legislators is new MCs with political experience who served during the 101st-110th Congresses (1989-2008). The excluded category is MCs without state legislative, congressional staff, and/or party experience – or those with judicial, executive, and/or local political experience. Political amateurs are discussed in the next section and are not included in this analysis.

Again, the key dependent variables are: *Party Voting Loyalty*, *Leader Voting Loyalty*, and *Campaign Contributions*. Aside from the variables for career experiences, all other independent variables remain the same. Since my expectation is that congressional staff, state legislative, and party experience all push MCs' party loyalty in the same direction, I include a 0/1 variable to capture whether MCs have had any of these experiences. *Loyalty Experience* takes the value of '1' when a MC previously worked in Congress, a state legislature, and/or a party organization. Of the 561 new MCs with political experience, 426 (76%) of them had at least one of these experiences. There were 342 former state legislators that served in the 101st-110th Congresses, 47 former congressional staffers, and 40 party officials. There were also an additional 35 new MCs who had been state legislators and party officials, 33 more new MCs who had been legislators and congressional staffers, 10 other MCs who had been staffers and party officials, and, finally, 6 MCs who had state legislative, staff, and party experience.[123]

[123] 77 staffers worked in 1 congressional office, 18 staffers worked in 2 offices, and 3 staffers worked in 3 offices. Party experience includes work for a party organization at a local, state, or national level. This covers both paid employment and volunteer positions, such as county party chair. The 6 MCs that had state legislative, staff, and party experience were: Reps. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), Pat Danner (D-MO), Mike Kopetski (D-OR), David Rivera (R-FL), David Skaggs (D-CO), and Jerry Weller (R-IL).

Regression Results: Loyalty on Roll Call Votes

Regression results are presented in Table 6.3. Again, a significant difference emerges between MCs congressional, state legislative, and/or party experience and other experienced MCs on party roll call votes but not their campaign donations. Even when factoring the variety of other considerations that influence MCs' voting loyalty, MCs with congressional, state legislative, and/or party experience vote more often with the majority of their party and leaders than other experienced MCs. This is true even when controlling for being a member of the majority party, large state delegation, first term MC, electorally secure, nonwhite or female MC.

Although the substantive increase in voting loyalty is not overwhelmingly large, it underscores an important reality from the perspective of the party. Party leaders or partisans often seek to put together a coalition in support of a legislative initiative, and MCs with congressional, state legislative, and/or party experience more frequently fall in line. This is particularly important when the margin of seats between the two parties declines, as it did from a high of 107 seats in the 102nd Congress to a razor thin, 10-seat margin in the 107th Congress. With chamber control so tightly contested, every vote in favor of the party line counts; MCs with congressional, state legislative, and/or party experience deliver more of those votes, regardless of other considerations. In the aggregate, a party whose MCs have prior experience with the value of party loyalty should face less intraparty disagreement on issues that split the two parties. MCs' political experiences have a robust effect on their party loyalty in roll call voting.

Interestingly, I find no significant difference in how much money MCs with different types of political experience donate to their copartisans. It may be, however, that MCs with congressional, state legislative, and/or party experience actually are more generous donors than other experienced MCs, but that they give to different causes. Compared to other MCs, state

legislators send more campaign cash back to the state and local party organizations that supported their candidacy (Heberlig and Larson 2012). Consequently, certain politically experienced MCs could be loyal financers of party causes, but the target of these donations extends beyond the data I have available to test them. Exploring patterns of campaign contributions across levels of government in light of different career experience would extend our understanding of career experiences and how party loyalty works in a federal system where MCs have multiple potential options for supporting their party. If this is true of political experiences, is it true of different nonpolitical experiences as well? I take up this question in the section below by turning to the other group of MCs serving in Congress: political amateurs.

Having What It Takes To Be Loyal: Political Amateurs

Political amateurs, by definition, lack prior political experience, but the rest of their occupational backgrounds vary – sometimes dramatically, as I covered in chapter three. I expect that amateurs from different nonpolitical career backgrounds also interact differently with copartisans and party leaders. Specifically, I posit that, amateurs from legal backgrounds are loyal partisans, in light of the legal profession's professional skills and close proximity to politics (Eulau and Sprague 1964, Miller 1995).

Loyal Lawyers: Professional Skills and Political Contact

Lawyers have been dominant in legislative politics throughout U.S. history. For example, from 1789-1800, 45% of MCs in the House of Representatives had legal backgrounds. By 1841, it increased to an all-time high of 67% where it remained until 1860, gradually dropping to its current level of 32% from 1989-2012 (Miller 1995). The ubiquity of lawyers in legislative

politics reflects the long-standing sentiment about their general 'fit' for political office.[124] I expect that amateur lawyers are more loyal toward their party than other political amateurs for two key reasons: the professional skills they develop and the proximity of their career to politics.

Regarding the first, the ubiquity of lawyers in politics is thought to stem from professional similarities in the skills required of lawyers and legislators (Cohen 1969, Derge 1959, Gold 1961, Green et al. 1973, Miller 1995, Podmore 1977, Schlesinger 1957). [125] The skill set that lawyers acquire from their professional experience also includes how to compromise between competing interests and demands (Eulau and Sprague 1964, Miller 1995). Negotiation, advocacy, and compromise are all central to legislating. As a result, a legislator's "attempts to satisfy as many of these demands as possible, and to as complete a degree as possible, may require the same skills which the lawyer exercises in the practice of his profession" (Derge 1959, 433; see also Gold 1961).

This may help amateur lawyers appreciate the value of partisan loyalty. Supporting the party on a vote can entail adjudicating between competing interests. By cooperating in the present in support of the party's goals, it may be easier for MCs to obtain their own goals in the

[124] For instance, in his 1835 treatise on American democracy, French philosopher and historian Alexis de Tocqueville argued that "the government of democracy is favourable to the political power of lawyers…as they are the only men of information and sagacity, beyond the sphere of the people, who can be the object of popular choice" (1835, volume 1, 275).

[125] Previous scholars have failed to find many differences in legislative behavior of lawyers versus non-lawyers (Derge 1959, 1962, Eulau and Sprague 1964, Gold 1961, Green et al. 1973). At the same time, these conclusions were drawn from an analysis of either a limited number of state legislatures (Derge 1959, Engstrom and O'Connor 1980, Rutherford 1938) or Congresses (Brady et al. 1973, Dyer 1976, Green et al. 1973, Miller 1995). Also, previous work examines very different questions, primarily whether or not lawyers vote together as a group, voted more favorably towards the courts (the 'reverence theory'), and took more or less conservative social and economic positions. None of them examine whether and why lawyers demonstrate greater/less partisan support once elected to office. Finally, previous work does not consider whether lawyers held political offices. Thus, my dissertation presents a very different picture of how precongressional careers intersect with congressional behavior.

future. Having had extensive practice employing their skills in negotiation and compromise in a decision-making environment similar to Congress, lawyers enter Congress well-versed in this logic (Miller 1995).

But, at the same time, if lawyers enter Congress with well-developed skills at striking compromises and bargains, are they more bipartisan in their voting records as a result? It could be that they take their professional skills and experiences and apply use them to support bipartisan compromises. I do not expect that it is the case, on account of the other consideration related to precongressional legal experiences: party recruitment. Lawyers' professional skills and experiences may encourage partisanship versus bipartisan because of their effect on partisan recruitment. Party leaders selectively recruit individuals they view as competitive candidates (Herrnson 1988). While competitiveness is assessed on multiple dimensions, the underlying question is whether the individual has 'what it takes' to be a successful candidate and member of Congress: "political savvy, skill at debating, deep involvement in politics as a way of life, and demonstrated respect for the give-and-take of democracy" (Fowler and McClure 1989, 123).

These professional skills factor into potential candidates' decisions about whether to enter a particular race: "eligible candidates' assessments of their qualifications cannot be separated from the skills they acquired and hone professionally" (Lawless 2012, 119). They may play a role in the calculus of party leaders as well (Maestas et al. 2005). MCs whose election is indebted to these attempts may feel stronger partisan attachments or a greater need to reciprocate by being loyal partisans (Snowiss 1969, Thurber 1976).

If party recruitment tracks (at least partly) with the skills acquired in nonpolitical careers, then political amateurs from legal background who have received electoral support from the party may have stronger partisan attachments than other amateur MCs (Thurber 1976). This may

lead to an appreciation for the party position. As a result, I hypothesize that amateur lawyers vote more frequently with the majority of their party and party leaders than other new MCs without prior political experience.

Political Amateurs' Campaign Contributions

At the same time, I do not expect that political amateurs' campaign donations vary with different nonpolitical career paths. Amateurs – of all career backgrounds – face more competitive reelection campaigns than politically experienced MCs. For instance, MCs with both political and legal backgrounds received 65% of the two-party vote share, versus 60% for lawyers without prior political experience. Political amateurs from diverse career backgrounds all face the same incentive to concentrate their spending on their own reelection race. As a result, even controlling for differences in electoral vulnerability, I hypothesize that amateur lawyers will not significantly donate more money to copartisans than other amateurs.

A preliminary comparison of amateurs' voting records and contributions supports my expectations. As shown in Figure 6.4, amateurs with legal experience vote more often with their party (*t=-1.69, p=.05*) and party leaders (*t=-1.73, p=.04*) than other amateurs.[126] As I anticipated, there are no significant differences for campaign contributions.

Stacking Up Amateurs' Experiences: Regression Results

To test these hypotheses, I estimate regression analyses for the 116 political amateurs elected during the 101st-110th Congresses (1989-2012). (MCs with political experience are not included in the analysis.) The dependent variables are the same as elsewhere in this chapter: *Party Voting Loyalty, Leader Loyalty,* and *Campaign Contributions*. I include an independent variable for *Legal* (0/1 variable). The baseline category is political amateurs without legal

[126] These t-test differences of means compare amateurs with legal experience to all other amateurs. Politically experienced MCs are not included in the analysis.

experience, including MCs with business, military, and other experiences – such as educators, MCs with medical experience, farmers, and assorted other experiences. All other control variables remain the same from earlier in the chapter.

The regression results listed in Table 6.4 support my expectations. Compared to amateurs from other backgrounds, MCs with legal experience do vote more frequently than other amateurs in support of the party majority and party leaders.[127] Nor is there is any significant different in the amount of money amateurs donate based on their career backgrounds.

There is a seniority difference, though. Second term amateurs donate significantly more than their first term counterparts. If party leaders provide first term members a 'pass' on party contributions, in general, first term political amateurs take it. This is true regardless of amateurs' vote share, and suggests their need for guidance on key votes.

Three other observations should be made. There is no significant change in amateurs' behavior over time (as captured by the *Congress* variable). Nor, second, are there significant differences between majority and minority party members. Amateur lawyers are more loyal voters than other inexperienced MCs regardless of when they serve and whether they serve in the majority. [128] Third, district characteristics do significantly impact amateurs' contributions. As the

[127] To see if business experience have a unique effect on party loyalty via voting or contributions (in line with chapter four), I re-estimated the analysis in two ways (not shown here). First, I included two independent variables – for legal and for business experience – leaving the baseline category MCs with other political experiences. Again, amateurs with legal experience are more loyal to their party (*.03, p=.02*) and their leaders (*.03, p=.02*). Second, I re-estimated the models to include business experience as the sole independent variable. In none of the regression models is the business variable significant.

[128] To check whether politically experienced MCs with legal experience behave differently than other politically experienced MCs, I estimate the regression models for experienced MCs discussed above and included a variable for prior legal experience (not shown here). Experienced MCs with legal experience do not vote more frequently with their party/leaders than other MCs, nor does the coefficient for loyalty experience change. However, experienced MCs with legal

heterogeneity in their districts increase, they donate significantly greater sums of money to copartisans, although it is not clear why this is. Nevertheless, career experiences play an important role in encouraging partisan behavior, all other things considered. MCs from legal backgrounds incline them to back the party more frequently than other political amateurs.

Conclusion

In sum, a strong tie runs between multiple kinds of precongressional experiences and MCs' partisan interactions in the House of Representatives. As was true of members' other activities, the lessons and skills acquired before Congress may have an enduring effect on how members approach the decisions and tasks they face as members of the House of Representatives *and* of the Democratic or Republican party. Looking at the votes that members take and the money they contribute to copartisan campaigns, partisanship has real implications, positive and negative. Partisan loyalty influences the likelihood of agenda items from the party platform becoming laws (or their ability to frustrate the majority party's attempts to do so). For party leaders or partisans in general, the backgrounds from which MCs arrive on Capitol Hill can increase the likelihood that party-supported causes receive support on the House floor.

I illustrated two broad ways this works out in this chapter. First, politically experienced MCs donate more money to their parties, which I hypothesized is the consequence of precongressional political relationships. Second, MCs with certain types of political (congressional, state legislative, and party) and nonpolitical (legal) vote more frequently with their party and its leaders. I argue that these experiences more strongly impress on members the value of party loyalty.

---

experience donate $10,513 less to copartisans ($p < .10$), although I had no prior expectation that this would be the case.

These results have mixed implications from the perspective of constituent representation. Rather than finding that one type of career experience emerges as the 'catch-all' for partisan unity, a variety of political and nonpolitical experiences encourage the cohesiveness of political parties. A party composed of members from many different occupational backgrounds is not necessarily hampered in its attempts to advocate for shared goals. This increased unity can secure the representation of interests important to voters, especially as parties draw on the collective policy and legislative expertise of its members that I examined in chapters four and five. This would be good news for party leaders, MCs, or voters who support or endorse the party position, but less hopeful for those who favor bipartisan or more moderate outcomes.

My findings about campaign donations have implications, too. Electing MCs with political experience, particularly in the party organizations, increases the amount of money that parties have available to recruit, retain, and reelect copartisans. This has obvious connections to the party composition of Congress – the share of the chamber claimed by each party. In addition, the selection of representatives shapes congressional outputs, be it through votes, the amount of legislation that is taken up and the ways that members connect with their voters (chapter four), or the topics that are introduced and acted on in policy-making circles (chapter five).

On the other hand, though, these results are troubling. Increased partisan unity could increase partisan gridlock if it decreases the number of members crossing party lines to pass bipartisan legislation. In eras of narrow party margins and divided government, partisan unity may make bipartisan legislation less likely, with immediate implications for the future of bipartisan issues valued by moderate voters.

Congressional outcomes are affected MCs' decisions. Knowing something about these representatives, like the types of jobs they had before office, clarifies the connection between

legislators, their behavior in office, and legislative representation. What I have argued throughout this dissertation is that the backgrounds of representatives differ in an important regard, one that it is intuitive, but heretofore has not command broad attention: occupation.

Tables and Figures

Table 6.1 Top Campaign Donors by Political Experience, 101st-110th Congresses

Political Amateurs		
Name	**Congress**	**Campaign Contributions**
Geoff Davis (R-KY)	110	$217,804
Tom Coburn (R-OK)	104	$217,000
Saxby Chambliss (R-GA)	105	$196,200
Mike Ferguson (R-NJ)	108	$170,810
Randy Cunningham (R-CA)	103	$161,200
Richard Burr (R-NC)	104	$158,900
Henry Bonilla (R-TX)	104	$158,900
Joe Knollenberg (R-MI)	104	$154,560
Richard Burr (R-NC)	105	$151,276
Charles Boustany, Jr. (R-LA)	110	$150,649
Politically Experienced MCs		
Name	**Congress**	**Campaign Contributions**
James McDermott (D-WA)	102	$644,960
John Linder (R-GA)	104	$599,200
Eric Cantor (R-VA)	108	$594,156
Susan Molinari (R-NY)	103	$569,768
Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)	101	$535,680
John Boehner (R-OH)	103	$505,300
Thomas Reynolds (R-NY)	107	$480,688
Gerald Weller (R-IL)	104	$425,600
Bobby Jindal (R-LA)	109	$374,943
Mike Rogers (R-M)	108	$358,411

Note: The top panel lists the 10 political amateurs who donated the greatest sums of money to copartisans in a single Congress during the 101st-110th Congresses. The bottom panel lists the 10 most generous copartisan contributors for MCs with any prior political experience during the 101st-110th Congresses.
Source: Heberlig and Larson (2012)

Table 6.2 The Value of Political Experience: Increased Donations From MCs with Precongressional Political Experience

	Party Voting Loyalty	**Leader Voting Loyalty**	**Campaign Contributions**
Political Experience	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)	13,515 (4,360)***
Congress	.01 (.00)***	.01 (.00)***	570 (1,132)
Divided Govt.	-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)***	5,550 (5,144)
Majority Party	.04 (.01)***	.03 (.01)***	7,661 (4,286)*
Party Margin	-.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	115 (106)
Delegation Size	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	389 (143)***
First Term	.03 (.00)***	.02 (.00)***	-19,066 (4,266)***
Vote Share	.01 (.00)***	.01 (.00)***	7,360 (1,585)***
Vote Share^2	-.00 (.00)***	-.00 (.00)***	-45 (10)***
Campaign Cash			.00 (.00)***
Ideo. Distance Party Median	-.30 (.06)***	-.27 (.06)***	-33,484 (27,895)
% Missed Votes	-.00 (.00)***	-.00 (.00)***	-576 (461)
White	-.03 (.01)***	-.03 (.01)**	17,133 (6,597)***
Woman	.02 (.01)***	.01 (.01)**	-2,476 (5,635)
Education Level	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)	303 (3,068)
District Heterogeneity	-.09 (.09)	-.13 (.09)	-9,098 (61,083)
Constant	.15 (.17)	-.07 (.16)	-328,280 (133,633)**
R^2	.23	.21	.09
N	1,094 (625 unique clusters)	1,094 (625 unique clusters)	1,068 (616 unique clusters)

Note: The models are ordinary least squares and the standard errors are clustered on the individual member. The unit of analysis is an individual MC in a single Congress. The excluded category is political amateurs. The dependent variable in the first column is the percent of times that MCs vote with their party, on votes where at least half of one party votes against at least half of another. The dependent variable in the second column is the percent of times were MCs vote with their leaders, on votes where the Majority Leader and Speaker vote opposite of the Minority Leader and Minority Whip. The dependent variable in the third column is the amount of money that an MC donates to copartisan candidates in a single Congress. Regression analyses the 101st-110th Congresses. *** p < .01, ** p < .05, * p < .10

Table 6.3 Regression Results for Political Experiences and Party Loyalty: Increased Loyalty on Party Line Votes Among Politically Experienced MCs

	Party Voting Loyalty	**Leader Voting Loyalty**	**Campaign Contributions**
Loyalty Experience	.02 (.01)**	.03 (.01)**	4,436 (5,671)
Congress	.01 (.00)***	.01 (.00)***	979 (1,331)
Divided Govt.	-.00 (.01)	-.01 (.01)*	5,431 (4,908)
Majority Party	.04 (.01)***	.03 (.01)***	7,863 (4,908)
Party Margin	-.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	148 (123)
Delegation Size	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	378 (171)**
First Term	.03 (.00)***	.02 (.00)***	-20,145 (4,937)***
Vote Share	.01 (.00)***	.01 (.00)***	7,934 (1,827)***
Vote Share^2	-.00 (.00)***	-.00 (.00)***	-49 (12)***
Campaign Cash			.01 (.00)*
Ideo. Distance Party Median	-.34 (.07)***	-.31 (.07)***	-31,258 (32,630)
% Missed Votes	-.00 (.00)***	-.00 (.00)**	-712 (497)
White	-.03 (.01)***	-.03 (.01)***	20,599 (7,068)***
Woman	.02 (.01)***	.02 (.01)**	-1,776 (6,437)
Education Level	-.00 (.00)	-.01 (.00)	99 (3,627)
District Heterogeneity	-.11 (.10)	-.14 (.10)	-51,107 (8,478)
Constant	-.04 (19)	-.24 (.18)	-369,127 (157,389)**
R^2	.26	.25	.09
N	910 (516 unique clusters)	910 (516 unique clusters)	890 (509 unique clusters)

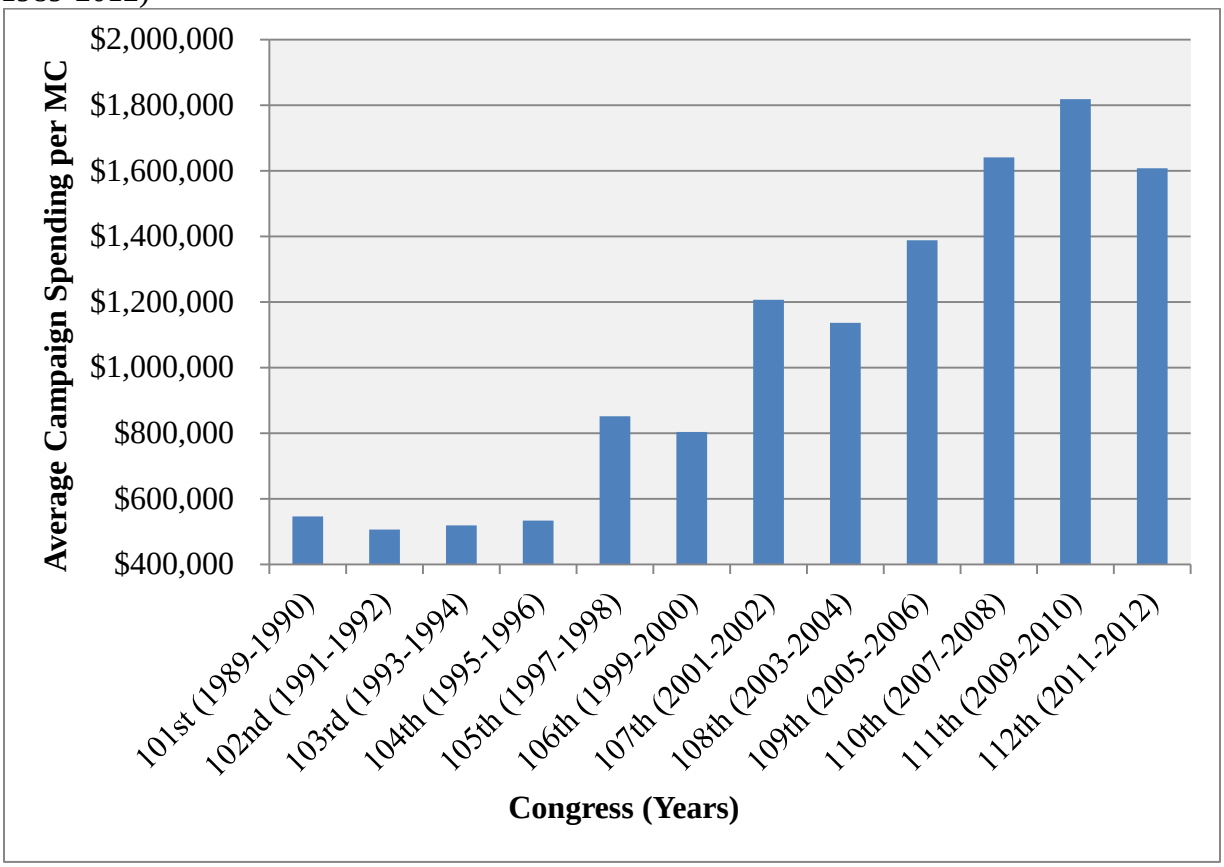
Note: The models are ordinary least squares and the standard errors are clustered on the individual member. The unit of analysis is an individual MC in a single Congress, and the sample is all MCs with prior political experience. Loyalty experience refers to MCs with state legislative, congressional staff, and/or political party experience. The excluded category is MCs with judicial, executive, or local political experience. The dependent variable in the first column is the percent of times that MCs vote with their party, on votes where at least half of one party votes against another. The dependent variable in the second column is the percent of times were MCs vote with their leaders, on votes where the Majority Leader and Speaker vote opposite of the Minority Leader and Minority Whip. The dependent variable in the third column is the amount of money that an MC donates to copartisan candidates in a single Congress. Regression analyses cover the 101st-110th Congresses. *** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .10$

Table 6.4 Regression Results, Political Amateurs and Party Loyalty: Lawyers Are More Loyal On the House Floor

	Party Voting Loyalty	**Leader Voting Loyalty**	**Campaign Contributions**
Legal	.02 (.01)*	.02 (.01)*	-1,067 (6,681)
Congress	-.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	-511 (1,836)
Divided Govt.	-.03 (.01)*	-.03 (.01)**	1,609 (8,252)
Majority Party	.02 (.02)	.02 (.01)	123 (7,653)
Party Margin	-.00 (.00)**	-.00 (.00)*	-82 (136)
Delegation Size	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	367 (220)*
First Term	.02 (.01)**	.01 (.01)	-14,331 (6,704)**
Vote Share	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	4,768 (2,444)*
Vote Share^2	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)	-35 (16)**
Campaign Cash			.01 (.01)
Ideo. Distance Party Median	-.14 (.10)	-.12 (.09)	-40,808 (40,032)
% Missed Votes	-.00 (.00)**	-.00 (.00)	1,471 (1,376)
White	-.06 (.02)***	-.06 (.02)***	-25,233 (12,830)*
Woman	-.02 (.02)	-.02 (.02)	-15,768 (6,115)**
Education Level	.01 (.01)	.00 (.01)	3,209 (4,663)
District Heterogeneity	.27 (.17)	.21 (.17)	323,243 (125,681)**
Constant	.80 (.35)**	.57 (.34)*	-196,981 (315,306)
R^2	.28	.24	.22
N	184 (110 unique clusters)	184 (110 unique clusters)	178 (108 unique clusters)

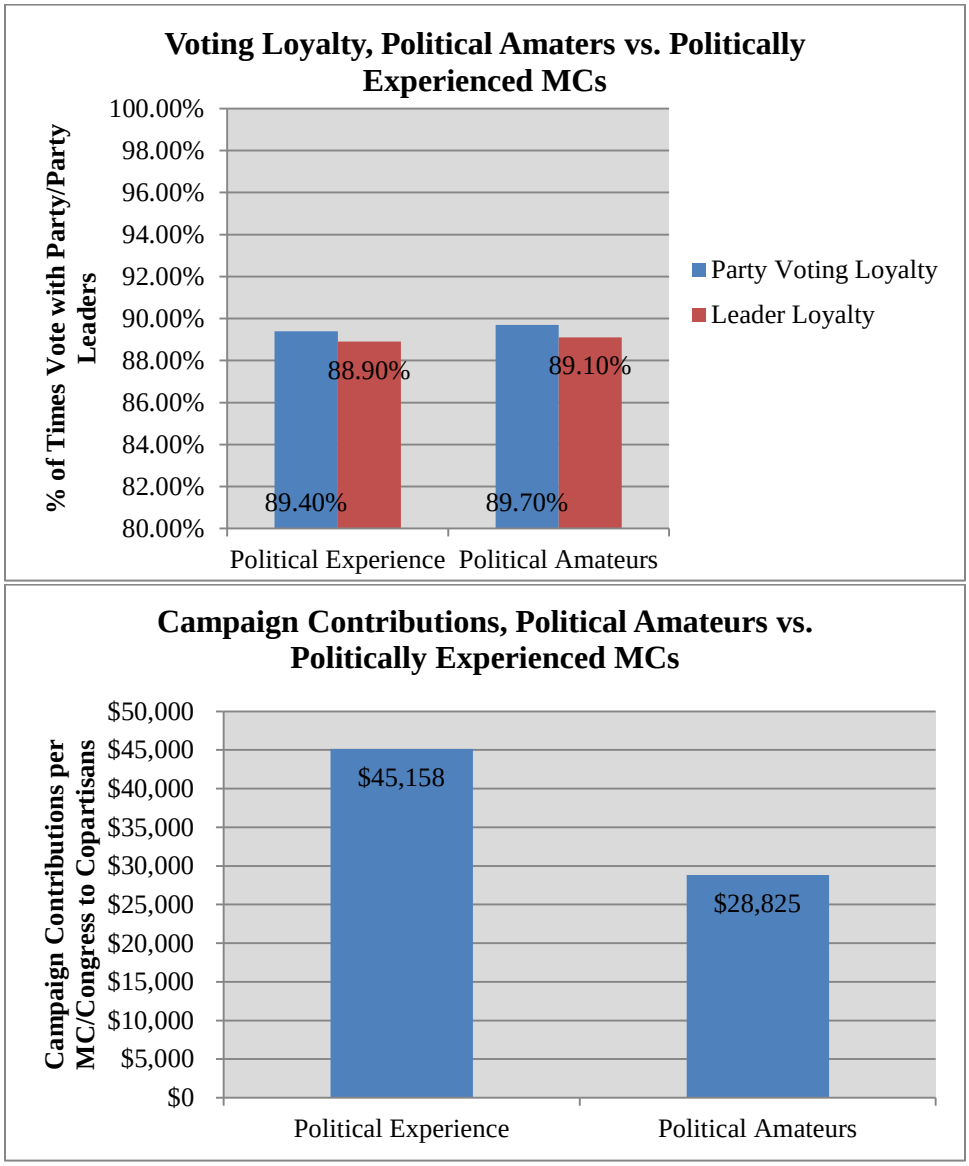
Note: The models are ordinary least squares and the standard errors are clustered on the individual member. The unit of analysis is an individual MC in a single Congress. The excluded category is political amateurs without legal experience. The dependent variable in the first column is the percent of times that MCs vote with their party, on votes where at least half of one party votes against another. The dependent variable in the second column is the percent of times were MCs vote with their leaders, on votes where the Majority Leader and Speaker vote opposite of the Minority Leader and Minority Whip. The dependent variable in the third column is the amount of money that an MC donates to copartisan candidates in a single Congress. Regression analyses cover the 101st-110th Congresses. *** p < .01, ** p < .05, * p < .10

Figure 6.1 Average Campaign Spending by New MCs Increases Over 101st-112th Congresses (1989-2012)



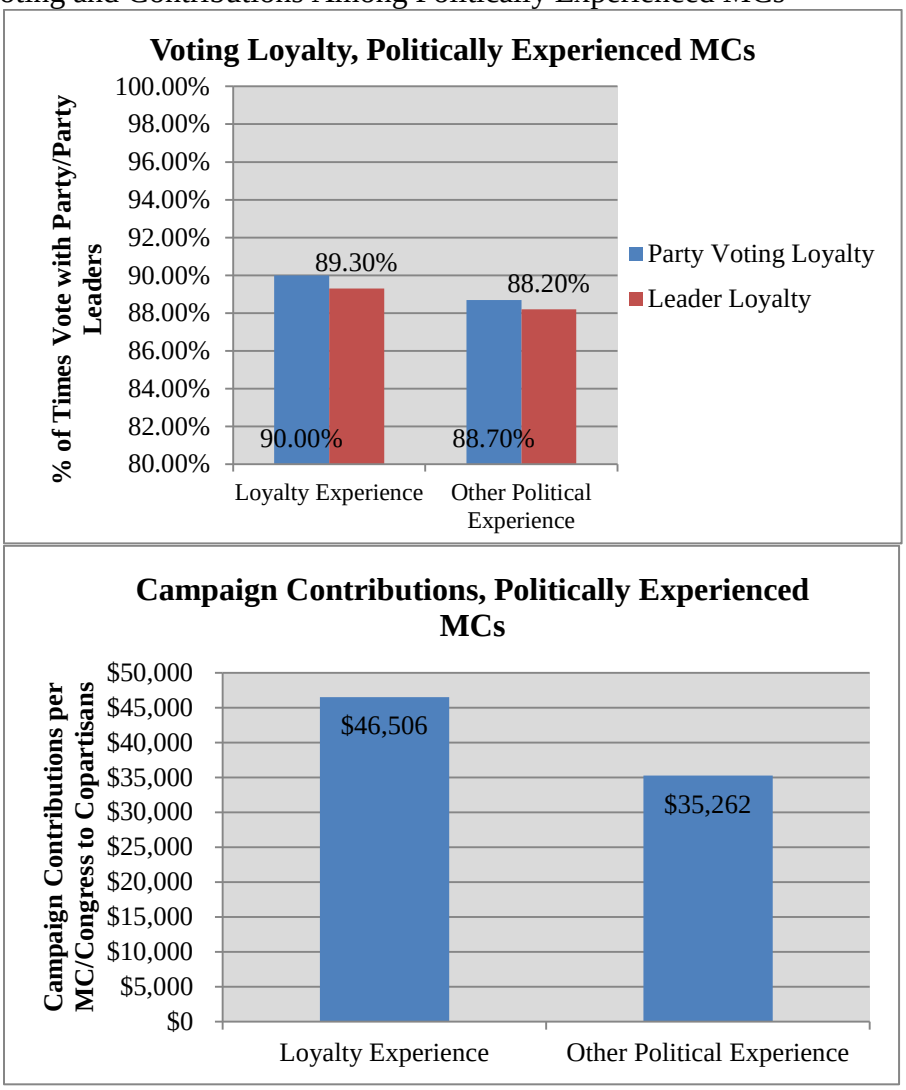
Note: The figure depicts the average amount of money spent by successful congressional candidates in their first and/or second terms during the 101st-112th Congresses.
Source: Heberlig and Larson (2012)

Figure 6.2 Amateurs and Experienced MCs' Voting Loyalty and Campaign Contributions: Experienced MCs Donate More



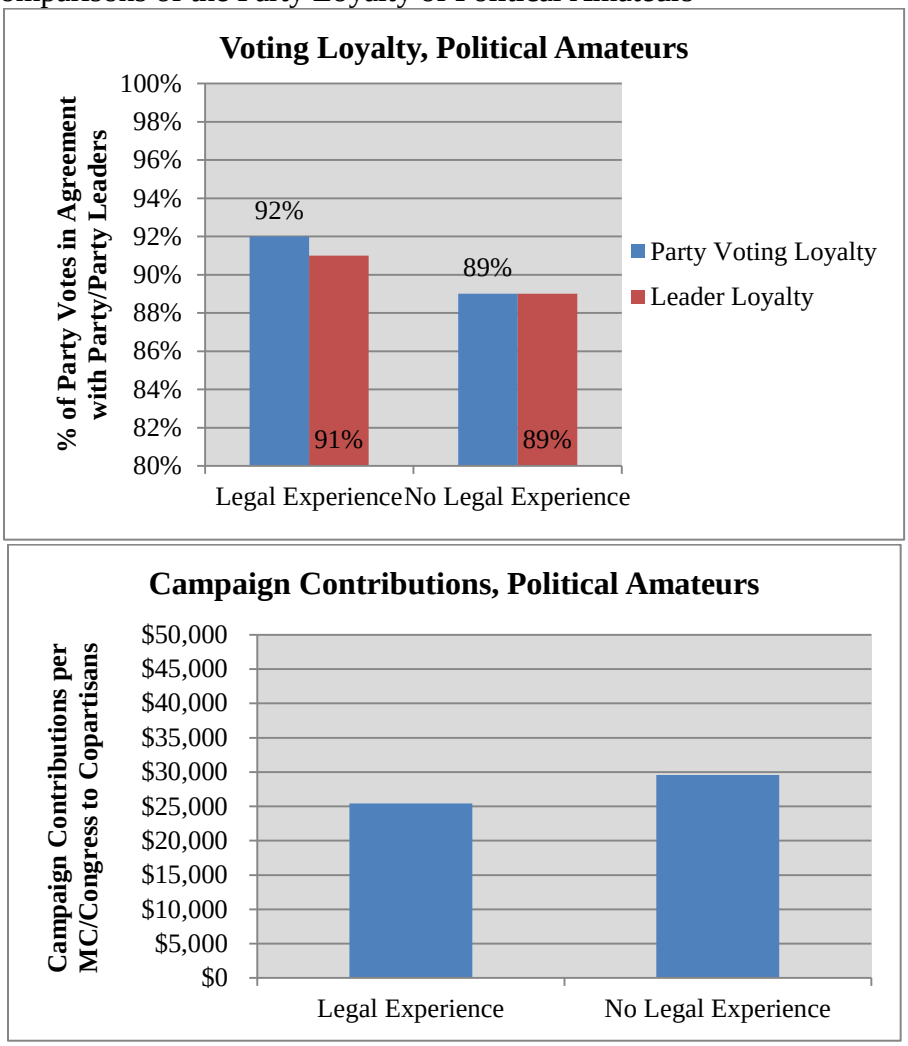
Note: In each panel, the unit of analysis is an individual MC per Congress. Party voting loyalty is calculated as the percent of votes that MCs vote with their party when at least half of the Republican party votes against at least half of the Democratic party. Leader loyalty is calculated as the percent of votes that MCs vote with their leaders when the Speaker and Majority Leader vote against the Minority Leader and the Minority Whip. The figure for voting data includes the 111th and 112th Congresses (although the regression analysis cannot due to the availability of other data). Campaign contributions is the mean of the amount of donations that new MCs give, per Congress, to copartisan candidates. During the 101st – 110th Congresses, there are 561 MCs with political experience and 116 political amateurs.
Source: Poole and Rosenthal (2012), Heberlig and Larson (2012)

Figure 6.3 Voting and Contributions Among Politically Experienced MCs



Note: In each panel, the unit of analysis is an individual MC per Congress. The sample is all MCs with prior political experience before running for Congress. Loyalty experiences refers to MCs with state legislative, congressional staff, and/or political party experience. Party voting loyalty is calculated as the percent of votes that MCs vote with their party when half of the Republican party votes against half of the Democratic party. Leader loyalty is calculated as the percent of votes that MCs vote with their leaders when the Speaker and Majority Leader vote against the Minority Leader and the Minority Whip. The figure for voting data includes the 111th and 112th Congresses (although the regression analysis cannot due to the availability of other data). Campaign contributions is the mean of the amount of donations that new MCs give, per Congress, to copartisan candidates. There are 426 MCs with loyalty experience and 135 MCs without it in the 101st-110th Congresses.
Source: Poole and Rosenthal (2012), Heberlig and Larson (2012)

Figure 6.4 Comparisons of the Party Loyalty of Political Amateurs



Note: In each panel, the unit of analysis is an individual MC per Congress. The sample is political amateurs only. Party voting loyalty is calculated as the percent of votes that MCs vote with their party when half of the Republican party votes against half of the Democratic party. Leader loyalty is calculated as the percent of votes that MCs vote with their leaders when the Speaker and Majority Leader vote against the Minority Leader and the Minority Whip. The figure for voting data includes the 111th and 112th Congresses (although the regression analysis cannot due to the availability of other data). Campaign contributions is the mean of the amount of donations that new MCs give, per Congress, to copartisan candidates. 21 amateurs have legal experience and 95 amateurs with other experiences during the 101st-110th Congresses.
Source: Poole and Rosenthal (2012), Heberlig and Larson (2012)

Chapter 7: The Legacy of Precongressional Careers

Of the many paths to office taken by new MCs, Ronald Packard (R-CA) has a particularly interesting one. Its basic outlines are similar to those of other MCs: college, graduate school, private employment, political positions, Congress. In Rep. Packard's case, he grew up in Meridian, Idaho, attended Brigham Young University in Utah for two years before transferring to, and graduating from, Portland State University in 1953. He stayed in Portland after graduation to attend the University of Oregon Dental School, earning his D.M.D. in 1957. Then, he worked as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy Dental Corps for two years before moving to Carlsbad, California, where he went into civilian dental practice.

Packard's first foray into politics was at the local level. In 1976, he was elected to the Carlsbad City Council and, two years later, he was elected mayor of Carlsbad. After four years as mayor, he set his sights on an open seat for California's 43rd congressional district but narrowly lost the 1982 Republican primary in a crowded field of contestants. Here is where his story differs from other MCs, since successful candidates typically win both their primary and general elections. After the primary, the Republican nominee Johnnie Crean, came under character attack, and – sensing the electorate receptive to his candidacy – Packard re-entered the race as a write-in candidate. Against the odds (he won with 37% of the vote), he became the third member of the House of Representatives ever to win a seat in this manner (*Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*).

His unusual path to office notwithstanding, Rep. Packard (R-CA) drew on his precongressional career experience while in office. For example, on the House floor, he reiterated how, "as a former dentist, I always stressed the importance of prevention as the best way to fight disease" to explain his opinion about a fiscal policy passed by the House

(*Congressional Record* 1995, 3525). In drawing connections to his precongressional career experiences, my dissertation suggests that Rep. Packard was likely doing what other new MCs do: use the insights and skills gained from the precongressional career experiences to help them determine what to do in their early terms in Congress.

What makes the example of Rep. Packard so noteworthy was not his floor statements (which just could be rhetoric), but how vocally he championed the importance of precongressional career experiences. In fact, it was Rep. Packard's quote that opened the introduction to chapter one:

> *"But the real experience that is important in this job is the experience we bring to the job, the experience of having been teachers, farmers, or businessmen[women]"*(*Congressional Record* 1995 H3924, as quoted in Herrick and Fisher 2007).

In this dissertation, I have outlined evidence that suggests that this intuition is sound: new MCs from different career backgrounds make different decisions in Congress. In this chapter, I summarize these findings, point out their importance for viewing congressional behavior from a wider lens, and discuss their implications for current debates among scholars, practitioners, and the public about term limits, electoral selection, and other legislative reforms.

The Congressional Legacy of Precongressional Careers

Being elected to Congress is a career altering experience for everyone. Even those who have worked for Congress are faced with a variety of new tasks, considerations, and decisions to make, as well as a large number of people with whom and on whose behalf they work. In the whirlwind of the transition to Congress, which I outlined in chapter two, new MCs draw on numerous resources to help them navigate their new work environment. Their personal

preferences, staff, parties, colleagues, and outside groups are (typically) happy to help answer questions, give advice, or provide information. At the same time, problems present themselves for new MCs, since these resources can be exhausted and they are not always applicable. New MCs retain significant discretion over their mix of legislative and outreach activities, contents of their legislative agendas, and voting and contribution decisions.

In light of this discretion, I argue that new MCs can draw on what is familiar – skills and insights from past career experiences – when making decisions in their early terms in office. Career experiences are influential because, over time, individuals learn the importance of different tasks, how to do them, and how to interact with coworkers while accomplishing them. Granted, individuals with a long-standing interest in certain issues (say, medicine or fighting crime) may go into careers (such as being a doctor or serving in the military) that address those issues.

Because of this, and because I cannot randomly assign new MCs to different career paths, I cannot definitively make a causal claim that it is the skills and insights, and not some other mix of interests or preferences, that influence new MCs' behavior in Congress. At the same time, this should not be damning to the study of career experiences. For whatever reason individuals choose different careers, they may still learn skills and insights from them. In addition, at the bottom line, the question of interest – particularly to voters – is whether MCs from different career paths make different decisions, the particular reason aside. My dissertation speaks clear to this question. I find that MCs from different career backgrounds make different decisions about their legislative and outreach activities (chapter four), their policy agendas (chapter five), and their partisan loyalty (chapter six).

Connecting Careers and Legislative Activities

I find that these connections played out in a variety of different ways. In chapter four, I illustrate differences in the volume and type of legislative activities that new MCs undertake, with more muted differences in the ways they reach out to constituents. There, I distinguish politically experienced MCs from political amateurs and find that new MCs with political experience introduce more bills and keep more of their staff in the Washington, D.C. office, perhaps in light of their concentrated legislative activity.

But it is not just the presence or absence of political experience that matters. I find additional differences in MCs' choices given different types of political and nonpolitical experiences. I expect that MCs with legal experience are active participants in the legislative process due to the similarities between legal practice and the legislative process (Eulau and Sprague 1964, Miller 1995). However, I do not find that political amateurs with legal experience have an increased volume of legislative activity. This suggests that the transition to Congress is an arduous one, even for those new MCs who come from backgrounds that are typically assumed to overlap with the legislative process.

How to work in Congress is not a decision that all amateurs approach the same way, though. MCs with business experience, a background of particular interest to recent advocates of 'citizen' legislators and the Tea Party movement, are actually less active, overall, in their early terms. They introduce and cosponsor fewer bills than other amateurs, even taking into considerations differences in the districts they represent, their electoral margins, or their ideological positions vis-à-vis their party. No differences emerge across types of political

amateurs in regards to legislative success – all are equally likely (or unlikely) to see their measures pass into law.

I also find differences in the behavior of MCs with prior political experience. For instance, former state legislatures as well as MCs who have been former congressional staffers both introduce a greater number of non-symbolic bills than other MCs with political experience. MCs with both experiences (state legislative and congressional staff) introduce more bills that make wide-reaching changes and see more of their bills become law than other experienced MCs. In contrast to what I expected, MCs with legislative experience do not introduce/cosponsor a greater number of bills, but MCs with executive experience do. In addition, MCs with executive experience in key positions like federal agencies, the president's cabinet, or state governors have higher hit rates. In chapter four, I discuss how – over time – these differences would have made a real impact on the number of bills introduced and debated in Congress.

Connecting Careers and Legislative Agendas

Of course, policy outcomes and constituent representation are shaped not only by the number or types of bills that MCs consider, but also by their contents. In chapter five, I find strong and significant connections between the number of topics that MCs take on (the specialization of their legislative agendas) and their past experiences. For example, political amateurs with legal backgrounds specialize their legislative agendas to a greater extent than any other group of amateurs. They introduce bills on a smaller number of topics, which I argue may reflect the value of specialization emphasized in legal practice.

Likewise, I find that state legislators differ depending on institutional features of the state legislature. Less professionalized state legislators construct more specialized agendas than professionalized state legislators. This is counterintuitive to expectations about

professionalization. It may occur, I argue, because the pressures of a shortened session and fewer staff encourage less professionalized legislators to concentrate their attention on a handful of topics. In contrast, in professionalized state legislatures, legislators have longer sessions during which they can rely on staff to help them get up to speed on a larger number of issues. I find these patterns mirrored in former state legislators' early terms in office. In fact, professionalized state legislators are more active cosponsors on a greater number of topics than any other group of experienced MCs.

The connection between career experiences and legislative agendas does not stop at policy specialization, though. In chapter five, I also demonstrate how, again, new MCs from various career experiences affect MCs' are more or less active on related policy topics. For instance, I find that MCs from agricultural backgrounds introduce almost 60% more agriculture bills than other MCs. The comparison is even greater for MCs with medical experience: they introduce over 230% the number of health bills than other MCs. These policy-career connections illustrate the logic voiced by Rep. Ron Packard (D-CA) above: career experiences (like being a dentist) can shape MCs' policy focus. I find these connections emerge across a broad spectrum of career experiences and policy topics.

This has both substantive and theoretical import. When hammering out the constitutional framework of their newly formed government, the framers of the constitution thought that it would be beneficial if politicians at the local level were elected to Congress. They argued that electing representatives with "local knowledge" of the people would bolster the representativeness of the institution. My results suggest that the same is true of career experiences. Career-policy connections form an important bridge between the people and their representatives. If the men and women who work in Congress who have been carpenters and

caregivers, teachers and talk show hosts (as well as lawyers, doctors, pilots, pastors, social workers, entertainers, business owners, etc.) make different decisions and take up different policies, then the deliberations and considerations that occur in Congress are enriched by "local knowledge" of what it is like to make a living in different workplaces and jobs. That MCs do not get elected to Congress and forget what comes before may sound obvious, but its implications are compelling. Electing MCs from a diversity of career experiences reinforces and expands the representativeness of legislative institutions.

Connecting Careers and Party Loyalty

In chapter six, I take the theme of career-congressional connections and apply it to the realm of partisan interactions: how loyally new MCs interact with copartisans and party leaders. Just like the decisions I explore in chapters four and five, party loyalty is, at heart, the product of MCs' individual discretion and decision-making. But party loyalty also differs in light of the institutional and partisan incentives MCs have for supporting the party's interests (Heberlig and Larson 2012). These sanctions/incentives may imply that all new MCs have reason to act similarly: they vote with their party on party-line votes and donate campaign funds to support copartisans in almost equal degree. But this is not what I find. Rather, MCs with political experience are more generous campaign donors. The difference between experienced MCs and amateurs has a significant impact on their partisan giving, which accrues to millions of dollars of difference in donations for each party.

Looking only at MCs with political experience prior to Congress, I find that MCs with experience in state legislatures, Congress, or working for political parties – political settings that value and reward partisan loyalty – support their party more often than other experienced MCs. Partisan political experience produces partisan-seasoned legislators who are willing to stand by

the party cause. For party leaders or legislative entrepreneurs looking to construct a winning coalition, MCs with state, congressional, or partisan experience are promising targets. But if it is party loyalty that these experiences encourage, then this may spell increased difficulty for creating coalitions that cross party lines or advocate for bipartisan measures.

Expanded the Understanding of Career: Connecting Congress to a Larger Career Trajectory

I make multifaceted connections between MCs' careers before Congress and the congressional career. I find legacies of MCs' precongressional career experiences across several significant dimensions of legislative behavior – MCs' legislative activities, policy agendas, and partisan interactions. As I noted in chapter one, legislative scholars have offered numerous insights into what shapes members' behavior and decision-making, but have tended to focus on explanations endogenous to the institution: constituents' opinions and preferences, reelection, personal preferences about good public policy, party pressures, etc. To date, it has been unclear whether and how the career paths that bring MCs to Congress continue to play out once the session has started.

I draw from the observations of occupational and vocational scholars to illustrate one likely connection between precongressional and congressional careers. I use the framework of career assets to underscore the idea that prior career experiences can provide employees skills and insights that they take and apply during periods of career transition. This framework points to connections between what MCs did before and in Congress. In addition, drawing these connections allows me to highlight influences of legislative behavior that both voters and legislative scholars care about. The claim that a former governor may act differently in office compared to a former elementary school teacher has intuitive appeal to both voters and scholars. For example, during congressional campaigns, candidates use their career backgrounds as signals

about who they are and, by extension, what they may do in office. This background information helps voters because it resonates with the way people interact, where one of the first questions asked to a new acquaintance is 'what do you do?' Legislative scholars care about these differences, too. They differentiate 'quality' candidates from 'hopeless' ones based on their past experiences (Canon 1990, Jacobson 1987). Yet these claims are empty if they are never tested – if there is no comprehensive understanding of how individuals from different backgrounds act once elected to office. I put these intuitions to systematic tests and find that, in general, they are sound. MCs from different precongressional careers do make different decisions in Congress.

This has additional implications for conclusions about policy outcomes and representation. For both voters and legislative scholars, knowing and assessing the career backgrounds of candidate may help make sense of what happens in elections. I find that part of the translation of electoral selection into representational outcomes is worked out through the skills and insights that individuals acquire from past experiences. In moments of decision, MCs make decisions that track with what is familiar from past experience.

Integrating the congressional career into the overall trajectory of individual's career experiences not only broadens our perspective on legislative behavior but it also points to another conclusion. Serving in Congress is a job. As I have demonstrated, viewing congressional service from this perspective expands the explanatory ideas and frameworks, like career assets, available for understanding legislative behavior.

It also adds additional weight to concerns about that are often raised about Congress. Questions about recruitment, job satisfaction, career advancement, and retirement are of interest to both scholars of legislative and occupational behavior (for instance, see Abbot 1993, Fox and Lawless 2005, Lawless 2012). Integrating the congressional career into MCs' lifelong career

choices emphasizes how these concerns are interrelated. For instance, the decision to run for Congress is, at the same time, the decision to leave another job. Ambition, expressed or nascent, and career choices are all wrapped up in one for individuals considering a congressional bid.

The Importance of Studying Precongressional Careers

One of the benefits of studying precongressional careers, then, is the way it adds to our understanding of legislative behavior by pointing out connections to the rest of MCs' experiences. An additional benefit is the ability to contribute to on-going debates about congressional reform. I note three in closing: the 'citizen' legislator versus 'professional' debate, related interest in term limits, and the ramifications of electoral behavior.

The Professionals versus Citizens: Why Experience Is Not All Bad

In chapters one and three, I noted renewed interest over the last two decades in the idea of moving away from 'professional' politicians and back to 'citizen' legislators. The basic logic of this suggestion was that electing private individuals who serve a handful of terms and then retire from legislative politics would help prevent them from becoming unresponsive to citizens' preferences (and corrupted by the daily grind of congressional politics). In theory, this sounds like an appealing solution to concerns about incumbents' reelection rates (uniformly high) and the influence of 'special interests' on national politics. As Rep. Ernest Istook (R-OK) explained on the House floor,

> *"This country was founded by those who set aside, for so long as was necessary, their individual businesses and pursuits, but never intending to become a professional political class. They brought with them the variety of strengths, backgrounds, and insights which can only be gained from interaction with fellow*

> *citizens on a normal, everyday basis"* (*Congressional Record* 1995, 3917, as quoted in Herrick and Fischer 2007, 1).

Thus, the argument runs, if citizen legislators were present and active in the legislative process, the voices of their 'fellow citizens' would be voiced more loudly and more clearly.

Congress has a steep learning curve that all new MCs face. I find that the experiences that new MCs have before office may equip them with skills and insights that relate to how quickly they solider through it. For example, new MCs with legislative experience enter Congress and are able to introduce more substantively significant bills, have more of their bills become law, gain policy expertise on a smaller number of issues, and give greater support to their party on the House floor and on the campaign trail. New MCs from a variety of career paths build successful and productive congressional careers. But all things are not equal at the beginning of those careers. New MCs do not start the congressional career from the same place, and these differences – for good or bad – show up in their subsequent behavior.

These patterns of behavior can have implications for how well or how much new MCs rise in the leadership ranks of their committees and party, an avenue for future research. If new MCs with political experience hit the ground running at faster pace than other MCs, then electing citizen legislators comes with more trade-offs than proponents have heretofore acknowledged. This is not to say that citizen legislators cannot provide quality representation. Nor do career experiences determine legislative behavior. But congressional politics is a professional game. Hence, professionals may enter office with the experiences (skills, training, and insights) that help them more quickly adapt to it.

Advocates of citizen legislators often propose business experience as an ideal qualification for office. But I this is not exactly what I find. Amateur MCs with business

experience are active on business-related issues: they introduce and cosponsor more bills on corporation regulation and taxes than other MCs. At the same time, they are less active in the legislative process overall, and they do not significantly differ from other amateurs in the specialization of their legislative agendas, their outreach spending, or their campaign donations. MCs with business backgrounds leverage those backgrounds in policy debates, but if they are going to 'clean up Washington' there either needs to be more of them elected or they need to do more. If voters desire quick policy change, then 'professional' politicians may be a more appealing alternative.

Term Limits: Why Not to Kick Them All Out

Related to the comparison of citizen versus professional legislators is the push for installing legislative term limits in Congress. Terms limits could accomplish many of the same ends as electing citizen legislators, and the two are sometimes bundled together as well (i.e., citizen legislators limited to a certain number of terms). Ideally, it is thought, a representative who knew that her/his time in office was limited would be lifted beyond the realm of reelection to propose and enact bipartisan compromises (Jacob 1998).

This proposal revolves around the question of how legislative tenure influences legislative behavior. My findings help to answer that question by providing insight into the behavior of new MCs based on their prior career experiences. This is important because a potential implication of term limits is that it would dissuade certain MCs from running for Congress based on their previous experiences.

Consider a professionalized state legislator considering a congressional bid after congressional term limits have been established. The state legislator has served several years in the state legislature; she is well-known in state politics, considered an expert on policy issues,

and has notable legislative experience. All of these make her a competitive congressional candidate. At the same time, congressional races are costly and competitive. To run, she most likely has to retire from the legislature, and losing the race could harm her chances of holding another political office in the state in the future. In addition, having served in professionalized state legislature, she knows that being a MC is demanding, time consuming, and entails increased time away from family and friends. Thus, she may reason, *Why give up a rewarding and influential office for the chance of holding another (Congress) that is more complicated and demanding and will expire at the end of so many years?*

If played out over time and multiple individuals, term limits would change the composition of the legislature in ways that align with MCs' career experiences. It may be that those who are self-employed and can easily jump back into their old jobs find the mix of costs versus benefits less disadvantageous than experienced MCs. That, in it of itself, is important from the perspective of representation. It is additionally consequential if new MCs from different career backgrounds act differently in their early terms in office, before the term limits would kick in. If so, then term limits would limit not just the number of terms individual MCs serve, but the number of MCs who were able to navigate and adapt themselves quickly in short period of time.

My results suggest that this would be the case, since I find that new MCs from different career paths do act differently in their early terms. Fewer MCs with political experience prior to Congress would, in the aggregate, mean less money for copartisan campaigns, fewer bills introduced that made sweeping or significant changes to law, and fewer laws passed. Again, while no certain group of MCs corners the market on good representation, in their early terms they make different decisions that affect the amount and type of legislative work and bills that get done.

Why Electoral Choice Matters

Finally, my dissertation lends insight into the implication of voters' choices on Election Day. As I discussed earlier, when campaigning for Congress, it is not uncommon for candidates to draw attention to their past experiences and use them to highlight their policy priorities, preferences, and opinions. I find that this is not empty political posturing on the part of strategically minded, election driven individuals. Rather, candidates' career experiences are a good indication of the types of policy topics they will take up in office. This, as I have noted before, has benefits from the perspective of constituent representation. Particularly in primary campaigns (when voter turnout and information is reduced), career experiences provide a useful heuristic for divining what candidates might do in office. To reiterate, career experiences are not determinative of MCs' behavior: just because a MC had been an elementary school teacher does not mean that he will be active on education topics. But, in general, these connections emerge.

One concerning implication of my research is that amateur MCs with legal experience and politically experienced MCs who have worked in state legislatures, Congress, and party organizations are more loyal voting members. Like I discussed in chapter six, this is positive for voters (and party leaders) whose opinions align with the party position. For everyone else, though, there is a downside.

Loyal voters cross party lines less frequently. But bipartisan legislation depends on exactly this type of compromise. When the two parties face off, then, it would be more difficult to pass moderate bills in a Congress composed of more loyal MCs. In this way, future work could look at how career paths potentially track with increases in congressional polarization over time. Granted, supporting party initiatives is also key for accomplishing outcomes of interest to

the party's electoral base. So party loyalty is not all bad. But, unmitigated and in excess, it reduces the opportunity for policy compromise on issues important to both sides.

Conclusion and Further Research

Many of these considerations merit, and point to, avenues for additional exploration. Most notably, I examine only MCs in their first and second terms in Congress. I look at the gambit of career experiences across a large number of MCs and long period of time, a first in the legislative politics literature. From others, though, it is clear that congressional behavior does change over time (Hibbing 1991, Stratmann 2000). Since I only look at MCs' first four years, when they are in the thick of fighting through the congressional learning curve, I am unable to see how the influence of career experiences changes over time. As MCs gain seniority, do they stick with the habits they set in their early terms? Do they move on to other topics, or do they continue to build policy expertise on issues of long-standing importance to them? Finally, if the impact of career experiences begins to diminish over time, does the rate of decay differ by career experience? Exploring these questions would flesh the understanding of career-congressional connections that I have introduced here.

Another avenue for exploration that stems from my analytical framework is comparing the sequence of MCs' career experiences. I expect that MCs can glean insights and skills from the totality of their past experiences and not, say, just the one immediately prior to Congress. At the same time, careers do come in a sequence, and comparing MCs' career experiences by their place in this sequence would help clarify how the jobs MCs leave to work in Congress interface with the work they do there.

Turning to my results, there are three potential places for further research. The first is the behavior of MCs with business experience. As I have noted throughout, business experience is a

popular path to Congress and one that comes with big claims about its impact. I find that amateur MCs with business experience are less legislatively active, but I find no difference in the pattern of their outreach activities. They do not spend more money traveling to the district, sending flyers to constituents, etc., when all other things are taken into consideration. Nor do they donate more money to their copartisans. What are they doing with their time, energy, and resources, then? I do find that they are more active on tax and corporation regulation policies, so looking into their committee activities, floor statements, and press releases could help elucidate any additional differences in their behavior as well as how their behavior changes over time.

Second, I examine the volume of MCs' legislative activities in chapter four and their contents in chapter five. Future work could put the two together – looking at the types of bills that new MCs introduce in career-related policy topics and whether MCs are more successful in getting bills relevant to their experience passed into law. When combined with my insights into legislative specialization, this would paint a more detailed picture of how new MCs approach a significant aspect of their new job – legislating.

Third and finally, in chapter six I look at MCs' voting loyalty on bills where the majority of both parties take opposite sides. This provides a clear window into the behavior of new MCs on issues of contemporary and partisan importance. Future work could take up other types of partisan interactions. In my dissertation, I focus on the purposeful actions and decisions of new MCs. But other MCs' reactions to new MCs matter as well. They influence the committees to which MCs get assigned, the scheduling of their bills, and their ability to climb the House and party leadership ranks. Perhaps other MCs respond differently to a new MC who has, say, a legislative versus business background. Incorporating both MCs' individual decisions and the

reactions of other political actors to them would provide a well-rounded picture of career experiences on Capitol Hill.

In this dissertation, I have laid out a framework for why I expect career-congressional connections to exist. Examining a large number of MCs with a variety of different career experiences, I find that my expectations are supported. MCs from different precongressional careers make different decisions as new legislators. It may be, by providing policy insights and political and legislative skills, career experiences help new MCs navigate broad decisions that touch on what they should do, why, and how. I find related differences for how much and how new MCs engage the legislative process, reach out to constituents, build their legislative agendas, and support their parties.

Appendix A: Coding of Career Experiences

Business	
Accounting	Insurance
Corporation	Real Estate
Engineer	Restaurant
Finance/Banking	
Position held: President, Vice President, Assistant/Senior Vice President, Board Chair, Manager/Director, Founder, Owner	
Consultants	
Lobbyists	
Local Public Officials	
City/Town/Township Legislators	Mayor/Chief Local Executive
Local Bureaucrats	
Congressional Staff	
Chief of Staff/Legislative Director	Legal Staff
Committee Staff	Personal Staff
House/District Staff	
County Public Officials	
Administrative/Bureaucratic County Officials	Legislative County Officials
Executive County Officials	
Education	
College/University Professors	Other Educational Administrators
Higher Education Administrators	Preschool-High School Teachers
Entertainment	
Entertainer	Producer
Musician	Singer/Songwriter
Farmers/Ranchers	
Agribusiness	Farmer
Cattleman/Rancher	
FBI/CIA Agents	
State Legislators	
Professionalized State Legislatures	Less Professionalized State Legislatures
Federal Executive Officials	
Administrators/Directors	Assistant/Deputy Secretaries
Aides/Special Assistants	Cabinet Secretaries

Appendix A (cont.)

Ambassador	Liaisons
Analyst/Examiners/Investigators	
Judges	
City	State
County	Federal
Lawyers	
Public Practice	Private Practice
City/County/State/Federal Prosecutors, Defenders, Attorneys, Attorney Generals	
Manual Work	
Cement Plant Worker	Heavy Equipment Operator
Carpenter	Iron Worker
Factory Worker	Mill Worker
Entertainment/Media	
Actors/Actresses	Commentators/Hosts/Broadcasters/Reporters
Authors/Journalists/Columnists	
Military	
Army	Coast Guard
Marines	National Guard
Navy	Reserves
Law Enforcement	
Investigators	Police Officers/Sheriffs
Nonprofit Organizations	
Institutions/Foundations	Other
Political Party Official	
Local/County Party Official	Political Campaign Staff
National Party Official	State Party Official
Party Convention Delegate	
Religious Officials	
Missionaries	Pastors/Reverends
School Board Officials	
Local	State
State Public Officials	
Governors/Lt. Governors/Gubernatorial Staff	State Legislative Staff
State Agency Staff/Bureaucrats	
Social Workers	
Sports/Athletes	
Union Officials	

Appendix A (cont.)

White House Staff	
Assistant Press Secretary	National Security Council
Assistant Counsel to President	Staffer
Chief of Staff	U.S. Attorney
General Counsel	White House Fellow

Appendix B: Legislative Activity of New MCs by Policy Topic

INTRODUCTIONS	**Agriculture**	**Budget**	**Corp. Reg.**
Agricultural	.53 (.25)**		
Business		.27 (.24)	.79 (.32)***
Governor		-.04 (.57)	
Law Enforcement			
Legal		.25 (.27)	.70 (.32)**
First Term	-.33 (.13)***	-.26 (.19)	-.28 (.27)
Ideological Extremity	-.17 (.30)	1.31 (.33)***	.76 (.49)
Majority Party	.24 (.17)	-.42 (.19)**	.42 (.35)
Partial Term	-.38 (.51)	-.21 (.47)	.01 (.57)
Total Introductions	.07 (.01)***	.07 (.01)***	.07 (.02)***
Vote Share	-.03 (.06)	-.03 (.06)	.08 (.11)
Vote Share^2	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)
White	-.13 (.37)	1.25 (.58)**	-.7 (.57)
Woman	.06 (.26)	.14 (.34)	.55 (.31)*
Education Level	.23 (.14)*	.16 (.18)	-.02 (.22)
% Rural	.03 (.00)***		
% White Collar			.05 (.02)**
Constant	-2.55 (2.51)	-3.41 (2.52)	-8.28 (4.07)**
N	1,008 (578 clusters)	1,194 (677 clusters)	1,008 (578 clusters)
INTRODUCTIONS	**Crime**	**Defense**	**Education**
Education			.23 (.15)
Law Enforcement	1.06 (.40)***		
Legal	.24 (.15)		
Military		.02 (.12)	
First Term	.17 (.10)*	-.05 (.08)	.07 (.09)
Ideological Extremity	.19 (.21)	-.23 (.17)	-.70 (.19)***
Majority Party	-.24 (.14)*	.10 (.10)	.01 (.12)
Partial Term	-.74 (.30)***	.11 (.19)	-.43 (.26)*
Total Introductions	.09 (.01)***	.10 (.01)***	.07 (.01)***
Vote Share	.05 (.04)	-.05 (.03)	-.07 (.04)*
Vote Share^2	-.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)*
White	.52 (.26)**	.04 (.18)	-.31 (.19)
Woman	.26 (.16)*	.02 (12)	.02 (.16)
Education Level	.14 (.11)	-.04 (.07)	-.01 (10)
% Veterans		-.00 (.02)	
Military Base		.08 (.09)	
Constant	-2.56 (1.58)	1.06 (1.31)	1.37 (1.47)
N	1,008 (578 clusters)	1,007 (577 clusters)	1,194 (677 clusters)

Appendix B (cont.)

INTRODUCTIONS	**Gov Operations**	**Health**	**Jobs**
Business			.02 (.09)
Governor	.44 (.17)***		-.12 (.23)
Legislative	.13 (.07)*		
Medical		1.10 (.18)***	
First Term	.17 (.06)***	-.21 (.08)***	-.22 (.07)***
Ideological Extremity	.31 (.11)***	-.81 (.16)***	-.00 (.14)
Majority Party	.06 (.07)	-.04 (.10)	.14 (.09)
Partial Term	-.05 (.14)	-.76 (.31)***	-.11 (.22)
Total Introductions	.10 (.01)***	.08 (.01)***	.08 (.01)***
Vote Share	.03 (.02)	.05 (.03)	.00 (.02)
Vote Share^2	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)
White	-.14 (.13)	.37 (.20)*	.14 (.18)
Woman	-.35 (.10)***	.48 (.13)***	-.02 (.12)
% Poverty			.00 (.01)
Constant	-1.91 (.93)**	-4.35 (1.33)***	-.64 (.99)
N	1,008 (578 clusters)	1,008 (578 clusters)	1,008 (578 clusters)

INTRODUCTIONS	**Medicare**	**Taxes**
Business		.28 (.15)*
Legal		-.14 (.16)
Medical	1.29 (.28)***	
First Term	-.34 (.15)**	-.09 (.12)
Ideological Extremity	-.52 (.30)*	-.08 (.21)
Majority Party	.14 (.19)	-.01 (.14)
Partial Term	-1.00 (.44)**	.02 (.28)
Total Introductions	.05 (.01)***	.08 (.01)***
Vote Share	-.14 (.06)**	-.02 (.04)
Vote Share^2	.00 (.00)**	.00 (.00)
White	1.65 (.44)***	.31 (.27)
Woman	.48 (.23)**	-.59 (.20)***
Education Level	-.04 (.17)	.19 (.10)*
% Poverty	.02 (.02)	-.04 (.02)***
Constant	1.26 (2.31)	-1.65 (1.66)
N	1,008 (578 clusters)	1,008 (578 clusters)

Appendix B (cont.)

COSPONSORSHIPS	**Agriculture**	**Budget**	**Corp. Reg.**
Agricultural	.54 (.08)***		
Business		.06 (.09)	.09 (.06)
Governor		-.25 (.19)	
Legal		.06 (.10)	.09 (.06)
First Term	-.02 (.04)	.00 (.06)	-.04 (.05)
Ideological Extremity	-.13 (.09)	2.06 (.12)***	.50 (.09)***
Majority Party	.08 (.05)*	-.65 (.08)***	.14 (.06)**
Partial Term	-.49 (.14)***	-.20 (.20)	-.19 (.14)
Total Cosponsorships	.00 (.00)***	.00 (.00)***	.00 (.00)
Vote Share	-.02 (.02)	-.02 (.02)	.02 (.02)
Vote Share^2	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	-.00 (.00)
White	.12 (.08)	.63 9.12)***	-.10 (.09)
Woman	.00 (.00)	-.32 (.09)***	-.06 (.07)
Education Level	-.01 (.04)	.07 (.06)	.03 (.04)
% Rural	.01 (.00)***		
% White Collar			.00 (.00)
Constant	1.27 (.66)**	.57 (.89)	-.74 (.72)
N	1,008 (578 clusters)	1,194 (677 clusters)	1,008 (578 clusters)
COSPONSORSHIPS	**Crime**	**Defense**	**Education**
Education			-.02 (.05)
Law Enforcement	.25 (.14)**		
Legal	.12 (.04)***		
Military		.04 (.04)	
First Term	.08 (.03)**	-.02 (.02)	.07 (.03)**
Ideological Extremity	.26 (.06)***	.01 (.05)	-.26 (.07)***
Majority Party	.02 (.04)	-.05 (.03)*	.01 (.04)
Partial Term	-.39 (.09)***	-.02 (.08)	-.27 (.09)***
Total Cosponsorships	.00 (.00)***	.01 (.00)***	.00 (.00)***
Vote Share	.00 (.01)	-.04 (.01)***	.00 (.01)
Vote Share^2	-.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)***	-.00 (.00)
White	.10 (.07)	.04 (.05)	-.14 (.07)**
Woman	.04 (.04)	-.02 (.04)	-.02 (.05)
Education Level	-.05 (.02)*	.01 (.02)	.05 (.02)*
% Poverty	-.01 (.00)		
% White	-.00 (.00)**		
% Veterans		.02 (.00)***	
Military Base		.04 (.03)	
Constant	1. (.50)***	3.21 (.38)***	.90 (.49)*
N	1,000 (578 clusters)	1,000 (578 clusters)	1,194 (677 clusters)

Appendix B (cont.)

COSPONSORSHIPS	**Gov Operations**	**Health**	**Jobs**
Business			.02 (.03)
Governor	.36 (.09)		.08 (.05)
Legal	-.02 (.03)		
Medical		.21 (.05)***	
First Term	.03 9.03)	-.02 (.02)	-.05 (.02)**
Ideological Extremity	.01 (.05)	-.60 (.04)***	-.03 (.04)
Majority Party	.06 (.03)*	-.05 (.02)**	.10 (.02)***
Partial Term	-.27 (.08)***	-.31 (.08)***	-.41 (.07)***
Total Cosponsorships	.00 (.00)***	.00 (.00)***	.00 (.00)***
Vote Share	-.00 (.01)	-.00 (.01)	-.01 (.01)
Vote Share^2	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
White	-.05 (.05)	.07 (.04)*	-.03 (.04)
Woman	-.09 (.04)**	.10 (.03)***	-.08 (.03)**
Education Level	.02 (.02)	.01 (.02)	.00 (.01)
% Poverty	.		.00 (.00)
Constant	2.28 (.38)***	2.17 (.31)***	2.93 (.33)***
N	1,194 (677 clusters)	1,008 (578 clusters)	1,008 (578 clusters)

COSPONSORSHIPS	**Medicare**	**Taxes**
Business		.03 (.04)
Legal		-.04 (.04)
Medical	.31 (.09)***	
First Term	-.19 (.04)***	-.07 (.03)**
Ideological Extremity	-.35 (.10)***	1.12 (.06)***
Majority Party	-.25 (.06)***	.07 (.04)**
Partial Term	.05 (.12)	-.14 (.08)*
Total Cosponsorships	.00 (.00)***	.00 (.00)***
Vote Share	-.04 (.01)***	-.01 (.01)
Vote Share^2	.00 (.00)***	.00 (.00)
White	.35 (.08)***	.03 (.06)
Woman	-.02 (.06)	-.03 (.04)
Education Level	-.00 (.03)	.06(.02)**
% Poverty	.00 (.00)	-.01 (.00)**
Constant	2.28 (.59)***	
N	1,008 (578 clusters)	1,008 (578 clusters)

Note: Models are estimated with negative binomial regressions with standard errors clustered on individual MCs. The dependent variables are the number of bills that individual MCs introduce or cosponsor per policy topic per Congress. The unit of analysis is an individual MC in a single Congress. The sample is all new MCs in the 101st-110th Congresses for models that do not include district characteristic variables. For models with variables for district characteristics, the sample is all new MCs in the 103rd-110th Congresses (as these are available starting in the 103rd Congress). For each policy topic, the excluded category is all MCs without the hypothesized relevant career experience. ***p < .01, **p < .05, *p < .10

References

Abbot, Andrew. 1993. "The Sociology of Work and Occupations." *Annual Review of Sociology* 19:187-209.

"About Us." *Tea Party*. << http://www.teaparty.org/about-us/>>.

Abramowitz, Alan. 1991. "Incumbency, Campaign Spending, and the Decline of Competition in U.S. House Elections." *Journal of Politics* 53(1): 34-56.

Ackley, Kate. 13 November 2012. "Lobbyists Woo New Lawmakers in D.C. Dating Dance." *Roll Call.* <<http://www.rollcall.com/news/lobbyists_woo_new_lawmakers_in_dc_mating_dance-219129-1.html>>.

Adler, E. Scott, and John Wilkerson. *Congressional Bills Project*: 1989-2012, NSF 00880066 and 00880061. << http://congressionalbills.org/>>.

Adler, Paul, Seok-Woo Kwon, and Charles Hecksher. 2008. "Professional Work: The Emergence of Collaborative Community." *Organization Science* 19(2): 359-376.

Ainsworth, Scott, and Itai Sened. 1993. "The Role of Lobbyists: Entrepreneurs with Two Audiences." *American Journal of Political Science* 37(3): 834-866.

Aldrich, John. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origins and Transformation of Political Parties in America*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Almanac of American Politics 1988. Barone, Michael, Grant Ujifusa, and Douglas Matthews editors. Washington, D.C.: National Journal.

Almanac of American Politics 1990. Barone, Michael ,and Grant Ujifusa, editors. Washington, D.C.: National Journal.

Almanac of American Politics 1992. Barone, Michael, and Grant Ujifusa, editors. Washington, D.C.: National Journal.

Almanac of American Politics 1994. Barone, Michael, and Grant Ujifusa, editors. Washington, D.C.: National Journal.

Almanac of American Politics 1996. Barone, Michael, and Grant Ujifusa, editors. Washington, D.C.: National Journal.

Almanac of American Politics 1998. Barone, Michael, and Grant Ujifusa, editors. Washington, D.C.: National Journal.

Almanac of American Politics 2000. Barone, Michael, and Grant Ujifusa, editors. Washington, D.C.:

National Journal.

Almanac of American Politics 2002. Barone, Michael, editor. Washington, D.C.: National Journal.

Almanac of American Politics 2004. Barone, Michael, and Richard Cohen, editors. Washington, D.C.: National Journal.

Almanac of American Politics 2006. Barone, Michael, and Richard Cohen, editors. Washington, D.C.: National Journal.

Almanac of American Politics 2008. Barone, Michael, and Richard Cohen, editors. Washington, D.C.: National Journal.

Almanac of American Politics 2010. Barone, Michael, Richard Cohen, and Jackie Koszczuk, editors. Washington, D.C.: National Journal.

Almanac of American Politics 2012. Barone, Michael, Grant Ujifusa, and Chuck McCutcheon, editors. Washington, D.C.: National Journal.

Anderson, William, Janet Box-Steffensmeier, and Valeria Sinclair-Chapman. 2003. "The Keys to Legislative Success in the U.S. House of Representatives." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 28(3): 357-386.

Ansolabehere, Stephen, James Snyder, and Charles Stewart. 2001. "The Effects of Party and Preference on Congressional Roll Call Voting." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 26(4): 533-572.

Armor, John. 1994. *Why Term Limits? Because They Have It Coming!* Ottawa, IL: Jameson Books, Inc.

Arnold, R. Douglas. 1990. *The Logic of Congressional Action*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Arthur, Michael. 1994. "The Boundaryless Career: A New Perspective for Organizational Inquiry." *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 15(4): 295-306.

Arthur, Michael, Priscilla Claman, and Robert DeFillippi. 1995. "Intelligent Enterprise, Intelligent Careers." *Academy of Management Executive* 9(4): 7-22.

Asher, Herbert. 1979. "The Learning of Legislative Norms." *American Political Science Review* 67(2): 499-513.

Austen-Smith, David. 1993. "Information and Influence: Lobbying for Agendas and Votes." *American Journal of Political Science* 37(3): 799-833.

Austen-Smith, David, and John Wright. 1994. "Counteractive Lobbying." *American Journal of Political Science* 38(1): 25-44.

Austen-Smith, David, and John Wright. 1996. "Theory and Evidence for Counteractive Lobbying." *American Journal of Political Science* 40(2): 565-569.

Bauer, Raymond, Ithiel de Sola Pool, and Lewis Anthony Dexter. 1963. *American Business and Public Policy*. New York, NY: Atherton Press.

Baumgartner, Frank, and Beth Leech. 1996. "The Multiple Ambiguities of 'Counteractive Lobbying.'" *American Journal of Political Science* 40(2): 521-542.

Baumgartner, Frank, and Bryan Jones. 1993. *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Barnett, Timothy. 1999. *Legislative Learning: The 104th Republican Freshmen in the House*. New York, NY: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Baruch, Yehuda. 2004. "Transforming Careers: From Linear to Multidirectional Career Paths: Organizational and Individual Perspectives." *Career Development International* 9(1): 58-73.

Berkman, Michael. 1993. "Former State Legislators in the U.S. House of Representatives: Policy and Institutional Mastery." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 18(1):77-104.

Berkman, Michael. 1994. "State Legislators in Congress: Strategic Politicians, Professional Legislatures, and the Party Nexus." *American Journal of Political Science* 38(4): 1025-1055.

Berry, Jeffrey. 1999. *The New Liberalism: The Rising Power of Citizen Groups*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

Bianco, William. 1994. *Trust: Representatives and Constituents*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Born, Richard. 1976. "Cue-Taking with State Party Delegations in the U.S. House of Representatives." *Journal of Politics* 38(1): 71-94.

Box-Steffensmeier, Janet, and Tobin Grant. 1999. "All in A Day's Work: The Financial Rewards of Legislative Effectiveness." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 24(4): 511-523.

Brady, David, John Schmidhauser, and Larry Berg. 1973. "House Lawyers and Support for the Supreme Court." *Journal of Politics* 35(3): 723-729.

Brown, Alan, Jenny Bimrose, Sally-Anne Barnes, and Deirde Hughes. 2012. "The Role of Career Adaptabilities for Mid-Career Changers." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 80: 754-761.

Brown, Sherrod. 1999. *Congress From the Inside: Observations from the Majority and the Minority*. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press.

Browne, William. 1985. "Multiple Sponsorship and Bill Success in U.S. State Legislatures." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 10(4): 483-488.

Broughton, Kristin. 6 December 2011. "Tea Party Sent Buerkle Into Establishment Favor." *Roll Call.* << http://www.rollcall.com/issues/57_69/Tea-Party-Sent-Buerkle-Into-Establishment-Favor-

210792-1.html?pg=1>>.

Burden, Barry. 2007. *Personal Roots of Representation*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Burden, Barry, and Tammy Frisby. 2011. "Preferences, Partisanship, and Whip Activity in the U.S. House of Representatives." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 29(4): 569-590.

Buss, Dale. 15 November 2012. "CEO Experience Didn't Help on Election Day." *Chief Executive.net.* <<http://chiefexecutive.net/ceo-experience-didnt-help-on-election-day>>.

Cahn, Emily. 15 November 2012. "For Displaced Staffers, Post-Election Job Search All Starts With Networking." *Roll Call.* <<http://www.rollcall.com/news/for_displaced_staffers_post_election_job_search_all_starts_with_networking-219227-1.html>>.

Cahn, Emily 11 February 2014. "Paul Broun Picks Up Endorsement in Georgia Senate Race." *Roll Call.* << http://atr.rollcall.com/paul-broun-picks-up-endorsement-in-georgia-senate-race/>>.

Cahn, Emily. 23 April 2014. "Ex-Congressman's Son Touts Trucking Business in TV Spot." *Roll Call.* << http://atr.rollcall.com/mike-collins-mac-collins-congress-georgia-10th-district-trucking-business-tv/?dcz=>>.

Cain, Bruce, John Ferejohn, and Morris Fiorina. 1987. *The Personal Vote: Constituency Service and Electoral Independence.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Caldeira, Gregory, and John Wright. 1990. "Amici Curiae Before the Supreme Court: Who Participates, When, and How Much?" *Journal of Politics* 52(3): 782-806.

Canon, David. 1989. "The Institutionalization of Leadership in the United States Congress." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 14(3): 415-443.

Canon, David. 1900. *Actors, Athletes, and Astronauts: Political Amateurs in the United States Congress*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Cantor, David, and Paul Herrnson. 1997. "Party Campaign Activity and Party Unity in the U.S. House of Representatives." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 22(3): 393-415.

Carnes, Nicholas. 2013. *White-Collar Government: the Hidden Role of Class in Economic Policy Making*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Carson, Jamie, Michael Crespin, Carrie Eaves, and Emily Wanless. 2011. "Constituency Congruence and Candidate Competition in U.S. House Elections." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 36(3): 461-482.

Center, Shira. 11 May 2011. "NRCC Makes Cash Push: Pay Your Dues – Now." *Roll Call*. << http://www.rollcall.com/issues/56_120/NRCC-Makes-Dues-Push-Freshmen2054771.html>>.

Center, Shira. 25 September 2013. “Ex-Congresswoman Won’t Seek Rematch In New York.” *Roll Call.* << http://atr.rollcall.com/ex-congresswoman-wont-seek-rematch-in-new-york-ny24/>>.

The Chicago Tribune. 21 June 2013. “Editorial: Good Riddance To Hate-Spewing County Boss.” << http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2013-06-21/opinion/ct-edit-harold-20130621_1_illinois-gop-good-riddance-spokesman-andrew-flach>>.

Clapp, Charles. 1963. *The Congressman: His Work As He See It*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc.

Cillizza, Chris. 29 March 2010. “Business Backgrounds Are Working For First-Time Candidates.” *The Washington Post.* << http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/28/AR2010032802181.html>>.

“Coats, Daniel.” *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress.* << http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=c000542>>.

Cobb, Roger, and Charles Elder .1972. *Participation in American Politics: The Dynamics of Agenda-Building.* Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.

Cohen, Michael. 1969. “Lawyers and Political Careers.” *Law & Society Review* 3(4): 563-574.

Cohen, Michael, James March, and Johan Olson. 1972. “A Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice.” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 17(1): 1-25.

Community Gatepath. “Who We Are.” << http://www.gatepath.org/whoweare/>>.

Congressional Management Foundation. 2013. *Life In Congress: The Member Perspective*. << http://www.congressfoundation.org/storage/documents/CMF_Pubs/life-in-congress-the-member-perspective.pdf>>.

Constitution of the State of Arkansas of 1874. Arkansas State Legislature. << http://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/assembly/Summary/ArkansasConstitution1874.pdf>>.

Cox, Gary, and Matthew McCubbins. 1991. “On the Decline of Party Voting in Congress.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 16(4): 547-570.

Cox, Gary, and Matthew McCubbins. 1993. *Legislative Leviathan: Party Government In the House*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

Cox, Gary, and Matthew McCubbins. 2005. *Setting the Agenda: Responsible Party Government in the U.S. House of Representatives*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

“Danner, Patsy.” *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress.*

<< http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=D000046>>.

Davidson, Roger. 1969. *The Role of the Congressman*. New York, NY: Pegasus Publishers.

De Tocqueville, Alexis. 1835. *Democracy In America*. Henry Reeve, translator. An Electronic Classics Series Publication.
<< http://www2.hn.psu.edu/faculty/jmanis/toqueville/dem-in-america1.pdf>>.

DeFillippi, Robert, and Michael Arthur. 1994. "The Boundaryless Career: A Competency-Based Career Perspective." *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 15(4): 307-324.

DelBene, Suzan. "Full Biography." Official Website of U.S. Representative Suzan DelBene.
<< http://delbene.house.gov/about/full-biography>>.

Derge, David. 1959. "The Lawyer as Decision-Maker in the American State Legislature." *Journal of Politics* 21(3): 408-433.

Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Press.

Draper, Robert. 2012. *Do Not Ask What Good We Do: Inside the U.S. House of Representatives*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Drucker, David. 11 December 2011."National Eye on GOP Leadership Race." *Roll Call*.
<<http://www.rollcall.com/issues/57_73/National-Eye-on-GOP-Leadership-Race-210983-1.html>>.

Dumain, Emma. 15 February 2012. "GOP Freshmen Find Cash Is Tough To Give Back." *Roll Call.*
<< http://www.rollcall.com/issues/57_96/GOP-Freshmen-Find-Cash-Is-Tough-to-Give-Back-212427-1.html>>.

Dumain, Emma. 15 November 2012. "Freshman Feel-Good Week: Let's Do It Again?" *Roll Call.*
<<http://www.rollcall.com/news/freshman_feel_good_week_lets_do_it_again-219238-1.html>>.

Dumain, Emma, and Jessica Estepa. 15 September 2011. "Becoming the Boss: Staffers Have the Upper Hand." *Roll Call.*
<<http://www.rollcall.com/issues/57_29/Becoming-the-Boss-Staffers-Have-Upper-Hand-208724-1.html >>.

Dumain, Emma. 28 February 2014. "Pelosi Ignites Caucus By Choosing Sides In Ranking Member Battle." *Roll Call.*
<<http://blogs.rollcall.com/218/pelosi-picks-eshoo-over-pallone-energy-commerce/?dcz=>>.

Dyer, James. 1976. "Do Lawyers Vote Differently?" *Journal of Politics* 38(2): 452-456.

Ebberwein, Christopher, Thomas Krieshok, Jon Ulven, and Ellie Prosser. 2004. "Voices In Transition: Lesson on Career Adaptability." *The Career Development Quarterly* 52: 292-308.

Engstrom, Richard and Patrick O'Connor. 1980. "Lawyer-Legislators and Support for State Legislative Reform." *Journal of Politics* 42(1): 267-276.

Esterling, Kevin. 2004. *The Political Economy of Expertise: Information and Efficiency in American National Politics*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Eulau, Heinz, and John Sprague. 1964. *Lawyers in Politics: A Study in Professional Convergence*. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc.

Evans, Diana. 1996. "Before the Roll Call: Interest Group Lobbying and Public Policy Outcomes in House Committees." *Political Research Quarterly* 49(2): 287-304.

Farenthold, Blake. 22 March 2011. "Media Advisory: Rep. Farenthold Announces District Work Week Events." Office of U.S. Representative Blake Farenthold. << http://farentholdforms.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=321093>>.

Federalist No. 51. Author Unknown. 8 February 1788. "The Structure of Government Must Furnish the Proper Checks and Balances Between the Different Departments." From the *New York Packet*. << http://thomas.loc.gov/home/histdox/fed_51.html>>.

Federalist No. 56. Author Unknown. 19 February 1788. "The Same Subject Continued: the Total Number of the House of Representatives." From the *New York Packet*. << http://thomas.loc.gov/home/histdox/fed_56.html>>.

Federalist No. 57. Author Unknown. 19 February 1788. "The Alleged Tendency of the New Plan to Elevate the Few at the Expense of the Many Considered in Connection with Representation." From the *New York Packet*. << http://thomas.loc.gov/home/histdox/fed_57.html>>.

Fenno, Jr., Richard. 1973. *Congressman In Committees*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company.

Fenno, Jr., Richard. 1978. *Home Style: Members in Their Districts*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company.

"FG 187 (Ozarks Regional Commission)." *Nixon Presidential Library and Museum.* << http://www.nixonlibrary.gov/forresearchers/find/textual/central/subject/FG187.php>>.

Fiellin, Alan. 1962. "The Functions of Informal Groups in Legislative Institutions." *Journal of Politics* 24(1): 72-91.

Fiellin, Alan. 1970. "The Group Life of a State Delegation in the House of Representatives." *Western Political Quarterly* 23(2): 305-320.

Fiorina, Morris. 1977. *Congress: Keystone of the Washington Establishment*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Fisher, Samuel, and Rebekah Herrick. 2002. "Whistle While You Work: Job Satisfaction and Retirement from the U.S. House." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 27(3): 445-457.

Fowler, Linda, and Robert McClure. 1989. *Political Ambition: Who Decides To Run for Congress*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Fox, Jr., Harrison, and Susan Webb Hammond. 1977. *Congressional Staffs: The Invisible Force in American Lawmaking*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Fraioli, Mario. 2014. "The Best Ever: Exclusive Interview With Jim Ryun." *Competitor.com.* << http://running.competitor.com/2010/11/interviews/the-best-ever-exclusive-interview-with-jim-ryun_17818>>.

Francis, Wayne, and John Baker. 1986. "Why Do U.S. State Legislators Vacate Their Seats?" *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 11(1): 119-126.

Frantzich, Stephen. 1979. "Who Makes Our Laws? The Legislative Effectiveness of Members of the U.S. Congress." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 4(3): 409-428.

Frisch, Scott, and Sean Kelly. 2006. *Committee Assignment Politics in the U.S. House of Representatives*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.

Fugate, Mel, Angelo Kinicki, and Blake Ashforth. 2004. "Employability: A Psycho-Construct, Its Dimensions, and Applications." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 65: 14-38.

Gale, Rebecca. 3 January 2013. "Do's and Dont's for New Members of Congress." *Roll Call.* <<http://www.rollcall.com/news/dos_and_donts_for_new_members_in_the_113th_congress-220526-1.html?pg=2>>.

Gale, Rebecca. 3 January 2013. "Orientation and Office Space Set the Tone for the First Term of a Member." *Roll Call.* <<http://www.rollcall.com/news/orientation_and_office_space_set_the_tone_for_the_first_term_of_a_member-220524-1.html>>.

Gold, David. 1961. "Lawyers in Politics: An Empirical Exploration of Biographical Data of State Legislators." *Pacific Sociological Review* 4(2): 84-86.

Goldstein, Kenneth. 1999. *Interest Groups, Lobbying, and Participation in America*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Gomez, Alan. 18 March 2011. "Some Tea Party Freshmen Still Adjusting to D.C. Politics." *USA Today.* <<http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/washington/2011-05-18-tea-party-freshmen-transition-DC_n.htm>>.

Gonzales, Nathan. 18 September 2013. "Democrats Ready To Land Recruit In Elusive California

District." *Roll Call.*
<< http://blogs.rollcall.com/rothenblog/democrats-ready-to-land-recruit-in-elusive-california-district/>>.

Goodliffe, Jay. 2001. "The Effect of War Chests on Challenger Entry in U.S. House Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 45(4): 830-844.

Green, Justin, John Schmidhauser, Larry Berg, and David Brady. 1973. "Lawyers in Congress: A New Look at Some Old Assumptions." *Western Political Science Quarterly* 26(3): 440-452.

Hager, Gregory, and Jeffrey Talbert. 2000. "Look For the Party Label: Party Influences on Voting in the U.S. House." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 25(1): 75-99.

Hall, Richard. 1992. "Measuring Legislative Influence." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 17(2): 205-231.

Hall, Richard. 1996. *Participation in Congress*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Hall, Richard, and Alan Deardorff. 2006. "Lobbying as Legislative Subsidy." A*merican Political Science Review* 100(1): 69-84.

Hall, Richard, and Kristina Miler. 2008. "Interest Group Subsidies to Legislative Overseers." *Journal of Politics* 70(4): 1-16.

Hamm, Keith. 1983. "Patterns of Influence Among Committees, Agencies, and Interest Groups." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 8(3): 379-426.

Hamman, John. 2004. "Career Experience and Performing Effectively As Governor." *American Review of Public Administration* 34(2): 151-163.

Hansen, John. 1991. *Gaining Access*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Hasecke, Edward, and Jason Mycoff. 2007. "Party Loyalty and Legislative Success: Are Loyal Majority Party Members More Successful in the U.S. House of Representatives?" *Political Research Quarterly* 60(4): 607-617.

Hawkings, David. 3 March 2011. "House Freshmen Share Their Goals, Ambitions for 112th Congress." *Roll Call*.
<< http://www.rollcall.com/features/Freshman-Priorities_Policy-Briefing/policy_briefings/-203839-1.html>>.

Heberlig, Eric, Marc Hetherington, and Bruce Larson. 2006. "The Price of Leadership: Campaign Money and the Polarization of Congressional Parties." *Journal of Politics* 68(4): 992-1005.

Heberlig, Eric and Bruce Larson. 2012. *Congressional Parties, Institutional Ambition, and the Financing of Majority Control*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Hedlund, Ronald, Kevin Coombs, Nancy Martano, and Keith Hamm. 2009. "Partisan Stacking on

Legislative Committees." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 34(2): 175-191.

Heitshusen, Valerie. 2000. "Interest Group Lobbying and U.S. House Decentralization: Linking Informational Focus to Committee Hearing Appearances." *Political Research Quarterly* 53(1): 151-176.

Herrick, Rebekah, and Samuel Fischer III. 2007. *Representing America: The Citizen and the Professional Legislator in the House of Representatives*. New York, NY: Lexington Books.

Herrnson, Paul. 1988. *Party Campaigning in the 1980s*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hibbing, John. 1982. "Voluntary Retirements from the House in the Twentieth Century. " *Journal of Politics* 44(4): 1020-1034.

Hibbing, John. 1986. "Ambition in the House: Behavioral Consequences of Higher Office Goals Among U.S. Representatives." *American Journal of Political Science* 30(3): 651-665.

Hibbing, John. 1991. *Congressional Careers: Contours of Life in the U.S. House of Representatives*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Hilbe, Joseph. 2007. *Negative Binomial Regression*, second edition. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Hojnacki, Marie, and David Kimball. 1998. "Organized Interests and the Decision of Whom to Lobby In Congress." *American Political Science Review* 92(4): 775-790.

Holland, 1985. *Manual for the Vocational Preference Inventory*. Psychological Assessment Resources. Odessa, FL.

Jacob, Paul. 12 January 1998. "The Case for Citizen Legislators." *The Washington Times*. Opinion Editorial page A-15.

Jacobson, Gary. 1987. *The Politics of Congressional Elections*, third edition. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers.

Jaffe, Alexandra. 27 January 2014. "Crowded Field Forming To Succeed Radel." *The Hill*. << http://thehill.com/blogs/ballot-box/196503-crowded-field-already-forming-to-succeed radel>>.

Jeydel, Alana, and Andrew Taylor. 2003. "Are Women Legislators Less Effective? Evidence from the U.S. House in the 103rd -105th Congress." *Political Research Quarterly* 56(1): 19-27.

Jones, Bryan, and Frank Baumgartner. 2005. *The Politics of Attention: How Governments Prioritize Problems.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Kessler, Daniel, and Keith Krehbiel. 1996. "Dynamics of Cosponsorship." *American Political Science Review* 90 (3): 555–66.

Kingdon, John. 1984. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policy*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Kingdon, John. 1989. *Congressmen's Voting Decisions*, third edition. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Koger, Gregory. 2003. "Position Taking and Cosponsorship in the U.S. House." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 28(2): 225-246.

Kollman, Ken. 1997. "Inviting Friends to Lobby: Interest Groups, Ideological Bias, and Congressional Committees." *American Journal of Political Science* 41(2): 519-544.

Kollman, Ken. 1998. *Outside Lobbying: Public Opinion and Interest Group Strategies*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Kousser, Thad, and Justin Phillips. 2012. *The Power of American Governors*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Krehbiel, Keith. 1991. *Information and Legislative Organization*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Krehbiel, Keith. 1993. "Where's the Party?" *British Journal of Political Science* 23(2): 235-266.

Krehbiel, Keith. 1995. "Cosponsors and Wafflers From A to Z." *American Journal of Political Science* 39(4): 906-923.

Krumboltz, John, Pamela Foley, and Elizabeth Cotter. 2013. "Applying the Happenstance Learning Theory to Involuntary Career Transitions." *The Career Development Quarterly* 61: 15-26.

Krutz, Glen. 2005. "Issues and Institutions: 'Winnowing' In the U.S. Congress." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 49(2): 313-326.

Lawless, Jennifer, and Richard Fox. 2005. "To Run or Not to Run for Office: Explaining Nascent Political Ambition." *American Journal of Political Science* 49(3): 659-767.

Lawless, Jennifer. 2012. *Becoming a Candidate: Political Ambition and the Desire to Run for Office*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Lazarus, Jeffrey. 2008. "Why Do Experienced Challengers Do Better Than Amateurs?" *Political Behavior* 30: 185-198.

Lebo, Matthew, Adam McGlynn, and Gregory Koger. 2007. "Strategic Party Government: Party Influence in Congress, 1789-2000." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(3): 464-481.

Lee, Frances. 2009. *Beyond Ideology: Politics, Principles, and Partisanship in the U.S. Senate*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Leong, Frederick, and W. Bruce Walsh. 2012. "Guest Editors' Introduction to the Special Issue."

Journal of Vocational Behavior 80: 659-660.

Levendusky, Matthew, and Jeremy Pope. 2010. "Measuring Aggregate-Level Ideological Heterogeneity." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 35(2): 259-282.

Lewis, Jeffrey, and Elisabeth Gerber. 2004. "Beyond the Median: Voter Preferences, District Heterogeneity, and Representation." *Journal of Political Economy* 112: 1364-1383.

Lipman, Larry. 25 December 1988. "Johnson Hires Mica Staff, Can Hit Ground Running." *Palm Beach Post*.

Little, Thomas, and David Ogle. 2006. *The Legislative Branch of State Government: People, Process, and Politics*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.

Little, Thomas, and Michael Moore. 1996. "Been There, Done That, But Did It Matter? Former State Legislators In Congress." *Congress and the Presidency* 23(2): 103-112.

Livingston, Abby. 14 January 2013. "Swearing-In Is Akin to Draft Day For Rivals." *Roll Call.* <<http://www.rollcall.com/news/swearing_in_is_akin_to_draft_day_for_rivals-220721-1.html>>.

Loebsack, Dave. "Biography." Official Website of U.S. Representative Dave Loebsack. << http://loebsack.house.gov/biography/>>.

Lohmann, Susanne. 1998. "An Information Rationale for the Power of Special Interests." *American Political Science Review* 92(4): 809-827.

Maestas, Cherie. 2000. "Professional Legislatures and Ambitious Politicians: Policy Responsiveness of Individuals and Institutions." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 25(4): 663-690.

Maestas, Cherie. 2003. "The Incentive to Listen: Progressive Ambition, Resources, and Opinion Monitoring Among State Legislators." *Journal of Politics* 65(2): 439-456.

Maestas, Cherie, L. Sandy Maisel, and Walter Stone. 2005. "National Party Efforts To Recruit State Legislators to Run for the U.S. House." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 30(2): 277-300.

"Majette, Denise." *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress.* << http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=M001145>>.

Manning, Jennifer. 2012. "Membership of the 112th Congress: A Profile." *Congress Research Service Report for Congress* 7-5700. << https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41647.pdf>>.

Mansbridge, Jane. 2003. "Rethinking Representation." *American Political Science Review* 97(4): 515-528.

Matthews, Donald. 1959. "The Folkways of the United States Senate: Conformity to Group Norms and

Legislative Effectiveness." *American Political Science Review* 53(4): 1064-1089.

Matthews, Donald. 1960. *U.S. Senators and Their World*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Matthews, Donald. 1984. "Legislative Recruitment and Legislative Careers." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 9(4): 547-585.

Mayhew, David. 1974. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

McCormack, John. 3 January 2011. "Mr. Farenthold Goes to Washington." *The Weekly Standard* 16(16).
<< http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/mr-farenthold-goes-washington_524861.html>>.

McSherry, Allison. 20 November 2008. "Freshman Wastes No Time Getting Into Trouble." *Roll Call.* <<http://www.rollcall.com/issues/54_59/-30343-1.html>>.

Miller, Mark. 1993. "Lawyers in Congress: What Difference Does It Make?" *Congress and the Presid*ency 20(1): 1-24.

Miller, Mark. 1995. *The High Priests of American Politics: The Role of Lawyers in American Political Institutions*. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press.

Miller, Tricia. 22 November 2010. "Ortiz Concedes to GOP Challenger." *Roll Call.* <<http://www.rollcall.com/news/-200857-1.html>>.

Miles, Kathleen. 4 February 2013. "Rick Perry Slam California's Business Climate In Ads Aired Across State." *Huffington Post.*
<< http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/02/04/rick-perry-california-business-ads_n_2618171.html>>.

Montopoli, Brian. 1 June 2010. "Will Mark Kirk's Military Claim Hurt Senate Bid?" *CBS News*.
<< http://www.cbsnews.com/news/will-mark-kirks-military-claim-hurt-senate-bid/>>.

Moore, Michael, and John Hibbing. 1998. "Situational Dissatisfaction in Congress: Explaining Voluntary Departures." *Journal of Politics* 60(4): 1088-1107.

National Council of State Legislatures. 2013. "The Term Limited States."
<<http://www.ncsl.org/research/about-state-legislatures/chart-of-term-limits-states.aspx>>.

Newhauser, Daniel, and Jonathan Strong. 17 January 2013. "House GOP is Regrouping, but Not Retreating From Hard-Line Strategies." *Roll Call.*
<<http://www.rollcall.com/news/house_gop_is_regrouping_but_not_retreating_from_hard_line_strategies-220869-1.html>>.

The New York Times. 21 April 2011. "Senator Ensign to Resign Amid Inquiry."

<< http://thecaucus.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/04/21/senator-ensign-to-resign-amid-inquiry/?_php=true&_type=blogs&_php=true&_type=blogs&hp&_r=1>>.

Nocera, Kate. 22 May 2012. “Why Democrat Kathy Hochul Is Bucking Her Party.” *Politico*. << http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0512/76650.html>>.

Noem, Kristi. “Biography.” Official Website of U.S. Representative Kristi Noem. << http://noem.house.gov/index.cfm/biography>>.

Office of the Governor Bobby Jindal, State of Lousiana. “The Governor.” <<http://gov.louisiana.gov/index.cfm?md=pagebuilder&tmp=home&navID=38&cpID=1&catID=0>>.

O’Keefe, Ed, and Sean Sullivan. 15 November 2013. “‘Keep Your Heath Plan Act’ Spells Trouble for Dozens of Democrats.” *The Washington Post*. << http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-fix/wp/2013/11/15/keep-your-health-plan-act-spells-trouble-for-dozens-of-democrats/>>.

Osnos, Evan. 16 December 2013. “Strong Vanilla.” *The New Yorker* 89(41):40-47.

“Packard, Ronald.” *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress.* << http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=P000005>>.

Packard, Ronald. 1995. “Fiscal Responsibility.” *Congressional Record* Volume 141, Part 3: 3525.

Palmer, Anna, and Jessica Brady. 7 April 2011. “Stuck In CR Debates As Budget Looms.” *Roll Call*. <<http://www.rollcall.com/issues/56_107/-204697-1.html>>.

Parker, David, and Craig Goodman. 2009. “Making a Good Impression: Resource Allocation, Homestyle, and Washington Work.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 34(4): 493-521.

Parker, Glenn. 1986. *Homeward Bound: Explaining Changes in Congressional Behavior*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Payne, James. 1980. “Show Horses and Work Horses In the U.S. House of Representatives.” *Polity* 12: 428-456.

Perrine, Stephen. 6 May 2011. “The Ripped Representative.” *Men’s Health*. << http://www.menshealth.com/fitness/aaron-schock-fitness#>>.

Podmore, David. 1977. “Lawyers and Politics.” *British Journal of Law and Society* 4(2): 155-185.

Polsby, Nelson. 1968. “The Institutionalization of the U.S. House of Representatives.” *American Political Science Review* 62(1): 144-168.

Polsby, Nelson. 1984. *Political Innovation in America: The Politics of Policy Initiation*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Porfeli, Erik, and Mark Savickas. 2012a. “Career Adapt-Abilities Scale: Construction, Reliability, and Measurement Equivalence Across 13 Countries.” *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 80: 661-673.

Porfeli, Erik, and Mark Savickas. 2012b. “Career Adapt-Abilities Scale-USA Form: Psychometric Properties and Relation to Vocational Identity.” *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 80: 748-753.

Price, David. 2000. *The Congressional Experience: A View From The Hill*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Prewitt, Kenneth. 1970. *The Recruitment of Political Leaders: A Study of Citizen-Politicians*. New York, NY: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc.

Purdum, Todd. 2012. “The Hiring of the President.” *Vanity Fair*. << http://www.vanityfair.com/politics/2012/09/mitt-romney-business-credentials-problem>>.

Rasmussen, Eric. 1993. “Lobbying When the Decisionmaker Can Acquire Independent Information.” *Public Choice* 77: 899-913.

Reilly, Mollie. 19 June 2013. “Erika Harold, GOP Candidate Targeted In Racially Charged Attack By Jim Allen, Illinois GOP Official.” *Huffington Post.* << http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/06/19/erika-harold-jim-allen_n_3468653.html>>.

Ribble, Reid. “Representative Reid Ribble’s Biography.” Official Website of U.S. Representative Reid Ribble. <<http://ribble.house.gov/about-me/full-biography>>.

Ripley, Randall. 1964. “The Party Whip Organization in the United States House of Representatives.” *American Political Science Review* 58(3):561-576.

Rohde, David, and Kenneth Shepsle. 1973. “Democratic Committee Assignments in the House of Representatives: Strategic Aspects of a Social Choice Process.” *American Political Science Review* 67(3): 889-905.

Roll Call. 7 November 2008. “The New Members of the House.” << http://www.rollcall.com/features/Meet-the-New-Members_2008/meet_newmembers/-29965-1.html>>.

Romano, Andrew. 13 March 2010. “The Keys to Success for CEO Politicians.” *Newsweek.* <<http://www.newsweek.com/keys-success-ceo-politicians-75023>>.

Rosenthal, Cindy. 1995. “New Party or Campaign Bank Account? Explaining the Rise of State Legislative Campaign Committees.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 20(2): 249-268.

Rosenthal, Neal, and Michael Pilot. 1988. “Information Needs for Initial and Ongoing Work Transition.” *Journal of Career Development* 15(1): 20-29.

Rutherford, M. Louise. 1938. “Lawyers As Legislators.” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 195: 53-61.

Salisbury, Robert, and Kenneth Shepsle. 1981. “U.S. Congressman as Enterprise.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 6(4): 559-576.

Sánchez, Linda. “Full Biography.” Official Website of U.S. Representative Linda Sánchez. << http://lindasanchez.house.gov/index.php/about-linda/full-biography>>.

Sánchez, Loretta. “Biography.” Official Website of U.S. Representative Loretta Sánchez. << http://lorettasanchez.house.gov/about-me/full-biography>>.

Schlesinger, Joseph. 1957. “Lawyers and American Politics: A Clarified View.” *Midwest Journal of Political Science* 1(1): 26-39.

Schlesinger, Joseph. 1966. *Ambition and Politics: Political Careers in the United States*. Chicago, IL: Rand McNally and Company.

“Schenk, Lynn.” *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress.* << http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=S000119>>.

Schiller, Wendy. 1995. “Senators As Political Entrepreneurs: Using Bill Sponsorship to Shape Legislative Agendas.” *American Journal of Political Science* 39(1): 186-203.

Schock, Aaron. “Biography.” Official Website of U.S. Representative Aaron Schock. << http://schock.house.gov/biography/>>.

Serra, George, and Albert Cover. 1992. “The Electoral Consequences of Perquisite Use: The Casework Case.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 17(2): 233-246.

Sestak, Joe. “Admiral Joe Sestak.” Campaign Website for Joe Sestak. << http://joesestak.com/admiral-joe-sestak>>.

Shepsle, Kenneth. 1978. *The Giant Jigsaw Puzzle: Democratic Committee Assignments in the Modern House*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

“Skaggs, David. E.” *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress.* <<http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=S000462>>.

Skotzko, Stacey. 19 December 2011. “Calif. Rep. Denham Thinks Large and Small; Freshman Focusing on Increasing Efficiency of Federal Properties.” *Roll Call*. <<http://www.rollcall.com/issues/57_76/Calif-Rep-Denham-Thinks-Large-and-Small-211138-1.html>>.

Sinclair, Barbara. 1996. “An Effective Congress and Effective Members: What Does It Take?” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 29(3): 435-439.

Smith, Hendrick. 2002. “Life Inside the Beltway.” In *Katharaine Graham’s Washington*. New York, NY: Alfred A.Knopf, 709-716.

Smith, Kevin, and Alan Greenblatt. 2014. *Governing State and Localities*, fourth edition. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Smith, Richard. 1984. “Advocacy, Interpretation, and Influence in the U.S. Congress.” *American Political Science Review* 78(1): 44-63.

Smith, Steven, and Christopher Deering. 1984. *Committees in Congress*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Snowiss, Leo. 1966. “Congressional Recruitment and Representation.” *American Political Science Review* 60(3): 627-639.

Song, Kyung. 1 April 2011. “Freshmen Rep. Herrera Beutler Tries To Set Her Own Course.” *The Seattle Times.* << http://seattletimes.com/html/localnews/2014663775_congresswoman02m.html>>.

Speier, Jackie. “About Jackie.” Official Website of U.S. Representative Jackie Speier. << http://speier.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=13&Itemid=2>>.

Spriggs, James, and Paul Wahlbeck. 1997. “Amicus Curiae and the Role of Information in the Supreme Court.” *Political Research Quarterly* 50(2): 365-386.

Squire, Peverill. 1988a. “Career Opportunities and Membership Stability in Legislatures.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 13(1): 65-82.

Squire, Peverill. 1988b. “Member Career Opportunities and the Internal Organization of Legislatures.” *Journal of Politics* 50(3): 726-744.

Squire, Peverill. 2007. “Measuring Legislative Professionalism: The Squire Index Revisited.” *State Politics and Policy Quarterly* 7: 211-227.

Squire, Peverill, and Keith Hamm. 2005. *101 Chambers: Congress, State Legislatures, and the Future of Legislative Studies*. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press.

Squire, Peverill, and John Wright. 1990. “Fundraising by Nonincumbent Candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 15(1): 89-98.

Steinhauer, Jennifer. 11 November 2010. “To Congress With the Mantra: ‘Why Not Me?’” *The New York Times*. <<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/12/us/politics/12freshman.html?_r=0>>.

Steinhauer, Jennifer. 23 September 2012. “Running as Outsiders, With a Catch: They’re In.” *The New York Times*. <<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/24/us/politics/congressional-candidates-sell-everything-but-ties-to-congress.html?_r=0>>.

Stratmann, Thomas. 2000. “Congressional Voting Over Legislative Careers: Shifting Positions and Changing Constraints.”*American Journal of Political Science* 94(3): 665-676.

Stratmann, Thomas. 2009. “How Prices Matter In Politics: The Returns to Campaign Advertising.” *Public Choice* 140(3/4): 357-377.

Sullivan, John. 1973. “Political Correlates of Social, Economic, and Religious Diversity in the American States.” *Journal of Politics* 35(1): 70-84.

Sullivan, Sean. 27 January 2014. “Embattled Rep. Trey Radel (R-Fla.) Resigns From Congress.” *Washington Post.* << http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post-politics/wp/2014/01/27/embattled-rep-trey-radel-r-fla-to-resign/>>.

Tead, Ordway. 1937. “Amateurs Versus Experts In Administration.” *American Academy of Political and Social Science* 189: 42-47.

Thomsen, Danielle. 2014. “Ideological Moderates Won’t Run for Office: How Party Fit Matters for Partisan Polarization in Congress.” Forthcoming, *Journal of Politics.*

Thurber, James A. 1976. “The Impact of Party Recruitment Activity upon Legislative Role Orientations: A Path Analysis.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 1(4):533-550.

Truman, David. 1956. “The State Delegations and the Structure of Party Voting in the United States House of Representatives.” *American Political Science Review* 50(4): 1023-1045.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Standards. January 2013. “2010 Standard Labor Occupational Classification.”

U.S. Constitution, art. I, sec. 2.

Volden, Craig, and Alan Wiseman. 2009. “Legislative Effectiveness In Congress.” Working paper.

Volden, Craig, and Alan Wiseman. Forthcoming. *The Lawmakers: Legislative Effectiveness in the United States Congress.* Cambridge University Press.

Volden, Craig, Alan Wiseman, and Dana Wittmer. 2013. “Are Women More Effective Lawmakers Than Men?” *American Journal of Political Science* 57(2): 326-341.

Washington, Ebonya. 2008. “Female Socialization: How Daughters Affect Their Legislator Fathers’ Voting on Women’s Issues.” *American Economic Review* 98: 311– 332.

Wawro, Gregory. 2000. *Legislative Entrepreneurship in the U.S. House of Representatives*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Wilensky, Harold. 1960. “Work, Careers, and Social Integration.” *International Social Science Journal* 12(4): 543-575.

Wilson, Rick and Cheryl Young. 1997. “Cosponsorship in the U.S. Congress.” *Legislative*

Studies Quarterly 22(1): 25-43.

Wilson, Woodrow. 1888. *Congressional Government: A Study in American Politics*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin and Company.

Wright, John. 1996. *Interest Groups and Congress: Lobbying, Contributions, and Influence*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Yoo, John. 1998. "Lawyers in Congress." *Law and Contemporary Problems* 61(2): 1-19.

Young, Don. "Biography." Official Website of U.S. Representative Don Young. << http://donyoung.house.gov/biography/>>.

Young, Gary. 2006. "Choosing How to Represent: House Members and the Distribution of Their Representational Allowances." Working paper. <<http://home.gwu.edu/~youngg/research/Homestyle%20Choices%20v3.02.pdf>>.