The Economics of Aisle Crossing: Depolarizing the US Congress

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ABSTRACT

We exploit exogenous assignment in Senator and Representative seating locations to find novel evidence of Congressional depolarization in high-stakes legislative voting. Namely, we find that exogenously assigned seating assignments of Senators and Representatives have sizable impacts on their voting behavior and its dynamic change - moving toward more depolarizing stances when exposed to these viewpoints. We exploit the seniority rank and assignment system of US Senate Chamber seating, along with the House Lottery system for the assignment of incoming freshmen legislators' offices to identify legislators' exogenous exposures to forced peers. Using these exogenously placed politicians over the last 30 years and over 1 million votes, we find voting behavior is profoundly impacted by randomly assigned neighboring legislators. For instance, a one standard deviation increase in the percentage of randomly assigned 'forced neighbors' in the Senate that vote yes (or no) on a bill increases the probability of the exogenously placed legislator of voting in that same direction – above and beyond party, ideology, state-level and other motives - by 7 percentage points (t=6.47); representing over 10% jump from average. These effects are even larger on: close bills, bills that are less important to the given Senator's economic interests, bills from the most polarized bill topics, and as the Senator spends more time (gets more exposure) to the peer group. These results hold both within and across party-lines, with moderate members of each party exerting the largest impact toward depolarization. We dig deeply into the rich data of bill-text itself using advanced Natural Language Processing (NLP), employing SciKit-Learn to topic-model each bill in full. Using word2vec to categorize bill text most similar to the topics, we find the topics most polarizing in each Congressional Session, and which are most subject to depolarization. Further, we then scrape video footage of Senate Chamber interaction itself from C-Span. Using this footage, we code thousands of frames of interaction, finding that Senators are over 51% more likely (t=3.46) to engage in interactions and informal conversations with neighboring Senators than any other Senators in the chamber.

Keywords: Depolarization, political preference, voting behavior, big data analysis, visual interaction coding

JEL Classification: D72, D82, G28

Introduction

Polarization has seen an empirically sharp upward trend in the last 50 years. While this is true politically, and seen in both the United States and other OECD countries (Gentzkow (2016), McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal (2006)), it has also been documented amongst firm executives (check https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4909807 for others), large investors (kempf paper), and employees and workplaces more broadly (collonelli paper). The root causes of this polarization are not fully understood, but one common line proposed has emphasized rising economic policy uncertainty regarding…

In this paper we exploit exogenous variation in random assignment of Senator and Representative seating locations to find novel evidence of Aisle-Crossing, and its surprisingly large moderating effect on polarization. Namely, we find that exogenously assigned seating assignments of Senators and Representatives have sizable impacts on the manner in which they vote, and subsequently craft legislation. Seating on the Senate Chamber floor, and of House Members offices, are done through pre-defined Seniority systems. First, "freshmen" Senators get last choice of open seats, and in particular the most "junior" by their seniority rules gets forcibly assigned the last remaining open desk (removing any endogenous component of their choice). Second, the "freshmen" House class has a historically well-known "lottery" for choosing offices, with the last Representative again getting no choice by whom they sit.

We use these exogenously placed politicians over the last 30 years to show that their choices and voting behaviors are profoundly impacted by their 'randomly assigned' neighboring legislators. Moreveor, we show that exogenous seating proximate to depolarizing forces – in terms of more moderate political beliefs, or even opposing party members – significantly moves a given Senator or Representative toward that depolarized viewpoint.

A strength of our setting is that it combines random assignment (aiding in identification), with a high stakes output, in the form of crafting legislation. Moreover, as the behaviors we study are publicly observable (i.e., the voting on, and crafting of bills), verifiable, and frequently observed – this provides an ideal setting to identify these potential effects on behavior. In particular, we observe over one million individual votes by legislators, and even exploit variation in voting behavior within given pieces of legislation (as the same bill is often voted upon in numerous versions, by the same set of legislators).

To establish these findings, we use a unique setting to study the interaction of high-profile politicians in decision making. In each congress, Senators and Representatives spend much of their time surrounded by – and working with – other legislators. This is a necessary aspect of their jobs, given the ability to affect and pass legislation requires coordinated action. We then draw on the literature on distance and exposure in economics and decision-making, and their documented relationships with agents' beliefs and choices. These examples range from soldiers' exposure to varying beliefs and ideologies when randomly assigned to military regimens (Wardinger and Schulz (2023), to college roommates (Sacerdote (2001)), to neighbors (Bursztyn et al. (2024)), even to the political context for voters' cross-group exposures (Balietti et al. (2021)). Senators can substantially influence the preference of peers given their diverse technical backgrounds, expertise, and experience. With these as a backdrop, we measure the impact of peers' ideology, expertise, and voting on the voting of other legislators.

Our data set includes the entire rollcall voting records within congressional sessions and congressional members in the rulemaking process in the House and Senate – representing rich data on over one million votes. The complex aspect of inference in this context is the extent to which endogenous matching to peer-exposures within the legislative framework impact votes observed. We overcome this utilizing the incredibly rigid and precise seniority mechanisms that congress abides by for seat (and office) location in the Senate (House) for incoming congressional members.

In the context of U.S. Senate, seniority rules apply for Senators' seat allocations on the chamber floor. For new incoming freshmen, Senate seating is assigned by seniority, starting with the date a lawmaker is elected. For freshmen – all elected on the same date - the ranking is then determined by a precise hierarchy of previous government experience (former Senator > former Vice President > former > former Representative…), even then breaking all remaining ties by state population in the last US Census). We then use this regimented hierarchy and take advantage of the fact that the most junior Senator by this ranking – much like the game of musical chairs – does not get a choice of whom to sit by, but instead is forced to join a set of peers.

We use solely these exogenously placed politicians over the last 30 years to show that their choices and voting behavior are significantly impacted by their 'randomly assigned' neighboring legislators. Namely, a one standard deviation increases in the percentage of randomly assigned 'forced neighbors' that vote yes (or no) on a bill increases the probability of the exogenously placed legislator of voting in that same direction by 5 percentage points (t=7.34). From a mean of 63 percentage points on yes votes, this represents an 8% increase in directional voting. This is controlling for commonly

known correlates of voting, such as party, state, education networks, etc. Moreover, it even takes into account high-dimensional fixed effects for Congress-Session (to control for sessions at which the votes might have been especially coalescing or divisive), Vote (votes upon which the chamber as a whole is excessively positive or negative), and Senate member (to control for each member's average proclivity to vote in favor or against legislation).

In order to establish the true exogeneity of this most junior freshman seat assignment versus all other endogenously-chosen seating selections of Senators, we run a hedonic model of assortative seating choice on both sets of Senators. For Senior Senators, they assortatively match on a rich number of characteristics. In particular they are significantly more likely to sit near other Senators who are: the same age, same Seniority in Congress, same gender, same college attended, same college major, same religion, and same professional background (e.g., law, finance, or military). For the most junior freshman Senator, all of these characteristics have a statistically insignificant and close to zero impact on their seating location, providing strong evidence of the random assignment mechanism.

We then move on to explore this mechanism in more depth by examining situations in which the impact of "exogenous" peers on voting decisions is especially large or especially modest. In each of these settings, there are of course the supply of - and the demand for - the vote to consider. So, not only the incentives of other legislators to convince a given Senator of a position, but also that Senator's willingness, ability, and incentive to supply that vote. We report the equilibrium of these effects, and so the manners in which they appear to interact to result in more, or less, on average, impact on voting behavior. To begin, we examine votes that are close votes in passage (i.e., within 5 percent of passing), as the incremental value of votes are expected to be larger. Consistent with this, we find that the exogenous peers' effect is significantly larger precisely on these marginal votes. Namely, in both economic and statistical significance, the impact of exogenously assigned peers is 15-20% larger than the average effect (t=3.03).

We then turn to explore those votes on which the Senator has less of an ex-ante economic interest. In particular, for each Senator, we rank the top 3 largest industries in that Senator's state by total sales, by market capitalization, and by employment. We denote these as the relatively more important industries (from a state private-sector GDP stand-point), and industries outside of these as the relatively less important for that Senator. Exogenously seated Senators appear 20% more "convincible" (t=2.30) by peers on those bills that are in industries relatively less important in their states.

If the impact that we are identifying is through the peer effects of exogenously assigned close neighbors, we would expect this behavior to be increasing in exposure to the network. We test this and find it to be true in the voting impact data. Namely, as the Senator spends more time (gets more exposure) to the exogenous peer group, the impact on voting is significantly larger – with the impact roughly 30% larger (t=2.54) in the second year of the most junior Senator's congressional term vs. their first term. Going further, we find that the exogenously assigned peers remain important allies of the given Senator even after they move apart from each other in the Chamber. This persists for roughly 3 Congresses post their initial seating together (6 years), and then attenuates to an insignificant effect.

We explore a number of additional attributes of the bills themselves. For instance, we find that the effect is larger on the later voting rounds of a given bill (when votes are more consequential for bill-passage) relative to early rounds, and on bills from the most polarized bill topics (across all bills voted upon).

Moving on to explore the Senator's network itself in more detail, we find that certain attributes (and individuals) appear to influence voting more intensely. For instance, we find that exogenously assigned neighboring Senators from the committee that originated a given bill have more impact on the freshman Senator's vote. This is especially true for the Budget, Environment, and Defense Committees. Moreover, when a member of the most junior Senator's peer group is missing (absent) – for instance, because of sickness or death in the Senator's family, an emergency (natural disaster) in the Senator's state, etc. - we find that the influence of the remaining (smaller) group is attenuated by roughly 7-13% (t=4.79).

Relatedly, given that our exogenous identification comes from the most junior freshman Senator's forced neighbors, one might be concerned that we are simply measuring a "freshman cohort" effect. Namely, as the most junior Senator will always be a freshman, if all incoming freshmen vote in a similar (cohort) manner, our estimation might be capturing this cohort fixed effect. We find this not to be case, as even controlling finely for the votes of all other freshman Senators, the most junior Senator is still significantly impacted by their exogenously assigned peers. Even given this, if there is a particularly undesirable part of the chamber, then perhaps all freshmen are clustered in that location (as they have sequentially last choices of seats as a whole). In this case, our estimation may be uncovering the impact of freshman Senators on the most junior Senator (and this effect may not be generalizable to more senior Senators' impact). To test for this, first we document that these extreme seating outcomes are not the case. The most junior Senator is surrounded by both junior and senior Senators. Second, we test separately for the impact of both exogenously assigned "junior peers," and

"senior peers." We find that both groups independently have an impact – with senior peers being slightly larger. Thus, the patterns we find are independent of a freshman cohort effect, in that the exogenous peer effects are strong and significant even controlling for – and separating out - the general incoming cohort's voting patterns.

Turning to ideological influence, we begin by exploring whether a Senator's more extreme or moderate ideology exogenously assigned peers have a stronger association with their voting. We find that more moderate peers have larger estimated impacts on the most junior Senator's voting than the more extreme ideological peers. This split (with moderate having the larger impact) is especially true and strong for Republican Senators relative to Democrats.

Examining Aisle-Crossing itself, we then explore the extent to which Senators are willing to deviate from their party's vote on a bill given exposure to opposing viewpoints from the alternate party. To do so, we exploit the split chamber set-up and examine only those Senators sitting on the edge aisle seats (whose neighbors to one side are their own party, and other side - across the aisle – from the other party). We find that these Senators are significantly more likely to deviate from their own party when their cross-aisle peers are more in favor of a given bill. This aisle-crossing effect is non-trivial: when all cross-aisle peers are in favor of a bill, this increases the chance of deviating from the party by 5% (t=5.93).

Lastly, to bolster our identification further, we move to a different setting within Congress – namely the House of Representatives. The House provides out-of-sample evidence in a nice natural experiment setting in the sense that: i.) it is determined independently of the Senate, and, ii.) the House uses a completely different mechanism (i.e., not a ranking system), with the incoming Freshman class in the House actually taking part in a well-known random lottery (Figure 4) to decide in which order they will be allowed to choose their office locations. This allows an out-of-sample test-set of non-chosen close peers for those with poorer lottery numbers – forced to sit in the remaining empty office spaces. Specifically, representatives choose small chips out of a silk-lined box which will determine their ordering for choosing office locations.[1] An advantage of our empirical setting is that the random assignment of offices through lottery again rules out the selection of peers.

We use the House setting to explore the heterogeneous impact of peer politicians and situations where this influence may be expected to be most valuable in the rulemaking process. We again find

[1] Namely, a ceremony is held (in the Canon Building), run by the Architect of the Capitol House Superintendent's Office, and in which each new Representative draws a numbered chip out of a silk-lined box. Many Representatives do scouting of offices beforehand, as they have only 5 minutes after the lottery is completed to choose their office location. See https://rollcall.com/2018/11/29/high-stakes-lottery-will-land-new-members-in-capitol-hill-offices/.

evidence of a significant impact of exogenously assigned office neighbors on voting behavior of Representatives. Namely, we find that when a Representative is exogenously exposed to a larger fraction of the opposing party through close office neighbors, they are significantly more likely to aisle-cross and deviate from their own party's vote. In addition, this aisle-crossing effect is especially true for close votes: up to a 25% (t=10.37) increase in voting against one's party if neighboring opposing party congressional members are in favor of the bill.

The paper proceeds as follows. Section I gives background on the setting, including institutional context surrounding political polarization. Section II describes the data, including the detailed roll-call voting, seating and office location maps, and detailed biographical data on each congress person. Section III presents the identification strategy, with first-stage verification of the seniority mechanism and exogenous assignment of the most junior legislators' peers. Section IV presents the main results on these exogenously assigned peers' influence on Senator voting, while Section V explores the mechanism behind this in more detail, exploring where the effects are stronger and more muted. Section VI focuses specifically on the evidence of these exogenous peer groups in fostering aisle-crossing, and estimates of potential implications on policy. Section VII concludes.

I. Institutional Context on Polarization

A. Stylized Facts on Polarization in Congressional Voting

Figure 1 shows the polarization in the Senate votes. From Panel A, partisanship has been rising steadily from the 1990s, as has been documented throughout the literature (Shapiro, Gentzkow) through the 2010s, and we extend to present-day, observing a continuing rise in political polarization. In Panel A, we illustrate this through calculating the absolute value of the difference in percentage of votes in favor of a given bill for (Republican – Democrats) for each bill. Panel B further shows that the increase in partisanship is mainly driven by the ideological differences across the two parties. The graph in Panel B plots for each Senator their own DW-Nominate Score[2] on the x-axis, plotted against the average DW-Nominate Score of the Senators they sit beside. The two tightly packed clouds (with no overlap) are the Democratic Party (lower left) and the Republican Party (upper right).

[2] DW-Nominate is a score given to each Congressional member based upon their voting record (created by Poole and Rosenthal through a series of works beginning in the 1980s, and continuing through the present (e.g., Poole and Rosenthal (),Poole and Rosenthal (),). It's primary dimension through our period captures liberal versus conservative, with the second dimension capturing issues generating large fissures historically between the two parties (for instance, civil rights, nativism, currency, etc.).

Figure 2 illustrates the average disagreement between parties on bills, separated by committee sponsoring the bill. From Figure 2, bills originating with the: Budget; Rules and Administration; Homeland Security and Government Affairs; and Finance Committees generate the most disagreement between parties.

Appendix Table XX then explores further into the text of the bills themselves. Using Natural Language Processing (NLP) tools to examine the specific keywords/key phrases mentioned within and across legislation, we find that the topics that generate the most disagreement between parties change substantially across time. For instance, in Congress XX, the topic of YY. In contrast, ZZ years later in Congress AA, BB was the most polarizing topic amongst legislators.

TABLE With Example of 2 Congresses polarizing Topics

B. Crafting Legislation: An Example from the Debt Ceiling

We illustrate how personal interactions work in Congress, namely one impactful bill on government funding and the debt ceiling, *H.R.5305 - Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act*. The bill was introduced by House Representative Rosa L. DeLauro on 09/21/2021 and jointly by the US House Committees on Appropriations, Budget, and Ways and Means. The goal of the bill was to provide continuing FY2022 appropriations for federal agencies, supplemental appropriations, and to extend several expiring programs and authorities. The bill supported a continuing resolution and prevented a government shutdown that would otherwise have occurred had a FY2022 appropriations bill not have been enacted by FY2022 (beginning October 1, 2021).[3]

Despite the potential gains in welfare for a Senator's home constituency and other states, the vote was split largely along the party lines and the bill did not reach an agreement in the Senate on September 27, 2021 by a (Yea-Nay) Vote of 48 – 50 (Record Vote Number: 385 - CR S6693).

With little time to reach a deal, legislators were forced to enact a solution or face the risk of default, with independent analysts warning that the U.S. Treasury Department was likely to exhaust its borrowing authority fully sometime between Oct. 15 and Nov. 4.

[3] The proposed bill also included the extension of many expiring programs and authorities, including: the National Flood Insurance Program, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity, the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, the temporary scheduling order issued by the Drug Enforcement Administration to place fentanyl-related substances in Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act, and the authority for the Department of Agriculture to waive certain requirements for the school meal programs.

In the 48-50 vote, all Republican Senators opposed advancing the legislation. In particular, the Democratic voting bloc needed to curry sufficient votes from the Republican to reach 60 votes needed to push the bill ahead in the 100-seat Senate. On September 30, the Senate passed a bipartisan bill, *Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act*, in a (Yea-Nay) Vote of 65 - 35 (Record Vote Number: 397) to avoid default. The Democratic Senators, surprisingly, won the support of 15 Republicans to join every Democrat in attendance (along with 2 independents). It was the product of negotiations between Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky. (consequently two neighboring Senators, as seen in Figure 3), balancing demands from both parties to lift the debt ceiling.

Specifically, from the voting record, the 15 Republican senators who joined Democrats in the vote were: Roy Blunt of Missouri, Richard Burr of North Carolina, Shelley Capito of West Virginia, Bill Cassidy of Louisiana, Susan Collins of Maine, John Cornyn of Texas, Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, John Kennedy of Louisiana, Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, Mitt Romney of Utah, Mike Rounds of South Dakota, Richard Shelby of Alabama, Thom Tillis of North Carolina, Todd Young of Indiana, and McConnell.

We show in the paper that this aisle-crossing behavior of switching votes to the alternate party's viewpoint is a systematic and robust effect of neighbors (even exogenously assigned neighbors) on legislator voting behavior throughout our sample period and through the present-day.

II. Data

A. Senate Seating, House Offices, and Voting Records

a. Voting Records from the House and Senate

Our primary data comes from the Library of Congress raw bill data. First, we collect the universe of the full text of bills being voted upon in the Senate and House from the 101st to 117th Congresses. Each Congress spans two years, comprised of two one-year-long Sessions. Our sample represents over 30 years of legislation data from 1990 to 2022. We hand-collect detailed information from the full text of all bills, including the bill number, bill title, summary of the bill, bill detailed description, voting date, bill sponsors (cosponsors if any), committees in the Senate and House, and voting outcome. To illustrate, Panel A of Figure A1 shows the bill information associated with (House Resolution) H.R. 5305 - *Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act*.

We then use a number of measures to both assign congressional members to expertise areas, along with assigning bills to the topic areas to which each respective bill applies. First, we construct a

measure of Congressional member expertise area based upon committee experience. For our tests, this measure captures the variation in committee service by a given congressional member over time and the issue area over which the member is most likely to be influential. Second, we measure committee expertise by assigning each bill and its corresponding committee origin to a congressional member's committee service based on Charles Stewart's congressional data.

Second, we turn to the text of the bill itself. As mentioned above, we use NLP, and in particular a machine learning method to read each bill abstract, and identify and classify into bi-grams (2 word long phrases), counting the number times each of these key topical bi-gram phrases appear. For example, "middle class" is the most common bi-gram in Democrat-favored bills in congress 114, appearing 32 times in Democrat-sponsored bills.

A second key source of data is the comprehensive roll call voting records of all Senators and House Representatives from the 101st to 117th Congresses. We collect these floor votes through the Legislative Information System, under the direction of the Secretary of the Senate and the House. For the Senate and House, we collect detailed roll call voting record for every congressional member on each bill ("Yea", "Nay", or abstaining) for the forty-year period. In the analysis, the unit of observation is the congressional member-vote level. From the previous example on *Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act* on September 30 as shown in Panel B of Figure A1 (Record Vote Number: 397), the negotiations led to a "Yea" vote from Minority Leader Mitch McConnell. We match the voting data with the bill-level data based on the corresponding bill number by cross checking the matching accuracy using the bill title, bill description, and the time of vote.

To further explore Senator beliefs and preferences, we extract the discussions by Senators on each bill and the persuasive arguments they bring prior to voting from the compressive Congressional Record. In particular, we link all voting records, bill numbers and titles to the corresponding speeches and discussions by Senators. For example, in the *Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act*, Senator McConnell made the following remarks as shown in Figure A2:

"*Mr. MCCONNELL*: Madam President, today the Senate will consider and pass a government funding bill and do our part to avoid a shutdown. The continuing resolution contains a number of key items that Republicans called for… But, overall, this is encouraging progress. The Democratic majority has begun to realize that the way forward on basic governing duties matches the roadmap that Republicans have been laying out for months. On government funding, what Republicans laid out all along was a clean continuing resolution without the poison pill of a debt limit increase. That is exactly what we will pass today."

b. Detailed Senate Chamber and Capitol House Blueprint Maps

We use novel data to identify the location and distance across congressmen for both the House and Senate. We include a detailed description of the Senate Seating Distance calculations, metrics, and raw files used in Appendix XX. For each Senate Congress-Session, we extract the historic Chamber Maps from the Senate website to identify the seat location of every Senator in each of the 101-117th Congresses.[4] Seat maps are displayed in images and videos, and thus we use Optical Character Recognition (OCR) on files to parse and assign chamber seats into numerical seat locations. We further use these seat locations to construct our measures of Senate seat-based networks. Moreover, as exact distances are not listed in any of the blueprints, we use Computer-Aided Design (CAD) mechanisms from architecture on both still images and videos of the Senate Chamber. Using various angles from each, we are able to estimate the precise distances between desks, along with precise widths of each aisle in the chamber. For instance, from the mid-point of one desk to the mid-point of the exact adjacent desk is 45 inches (1.1 meters). The full calculations are shown in Table 2 of Appendix XX.

Moving to the House, we hand-collect the office buildings and room numbers from the complete biographical record of all representatives from the 105th to the 117th Congresses.[5] House Representatives are located in a number of buildings on Capital Hill: Cannon House Office Building (CHOB), Longworth House Office Building (LHOB), and Rayburn House Office Building (RHOB). To construct a precise measure of physical distance between house representatives, we assign each office number to detailed floor maps from the archival Congressional Record on the Architect of Congress.[6] Figure A3 shows the archival floor maps for the Cannon building as an example.

B. Precise Seating Assignments & Close Peer Distance Measures

To define peer groups in the Senate, we first identify the physical distance for each pairwise combination of Senators within each Congress-Session using precise Senate seating data. Panel A of Figure 3 illustrates the Senate chamber distance measure for the 117th Congress, Session 1. The numbers indicate the physical distance between Senator Tommy Tuberville (R-AL), the most junior

[4] Detailed Senate Chamber desk location is shown in https://www.senate.gov/art-artifacts/decorative-art/furniture/senate-chamber-desks/chambermap.htm.
[5] Detailed information on House office room assignment: https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/cdir
[6] Given the Congressional office floor maps are no longer available, we match the office number to its closest location using the historical archives given room numbers change less frequently.

freshman (Seat 78), to all other senators. Distance is measured as the minimum number of seats to go through from Seat A to Seat B. It equals one if two senators are adjacent to each other without any other Senator in between. For example, Seat 2 (Senator Blunt), Seat 60 (Senator Wicker), Seat 6 (Senator Rounds), and Seat 22 (Senator Young) are the closest to Seat 78 (Senator Tuberville). The distance equals three between Seat 78 and Seat 88 (Senator Brown), Seat 44 (Senator Wyden), Seat 20 (Senator Murray), Seat 10 (Senator Schumer), Seat 9 (Senator McConnell), Seat 65 (Senator Thune), Seat 27 (Senator Collins), Seat 74 (Senator Crapo), and Seat 95 (Senator Rubio). This figure also highlights that certain Senators have close-distance peers among both parties. For instance, from Panel B, Senator McConnell's close peer across the aisle/party is Senator Schumer (Seat 10), while Senator McConnell's other close peer (within party) is Senator Shelby (Seat 40).

C. Summary Statistics

Table 1 shows a number of descriptive statistics of Senator peer group characteristics. We present the example of Close3 networks, which comprise all Senators that within a distance of three seats from each given Senator. From Panel A, 47.1% of a Senator's close peers are from the same generation (Greatest Generation, Silent Generation, Baby Boom Generation, etc.). Moreover, 16.4% have the same college major, and nearly 60% sit on at least one of the same Congressional Committees as the focal Senator. Comparing the Senator-pairing characteristics from the 101st – 110th and 111st – 117th, large changes that are seen include: a drop in average Military Experience (from 4.4% of peers to less than 1%); an increase in gender diversity, with Same Gender dropping from 82.2% of peers, to 67.7%; and an increasing college major diversity, with Same Major dropping from 26.1% of peers to just 9.8%.

Panel B then explores these same close distance peer network characteristics separately for Republicans and Democrats. While most characteristics are quite similar across parties, a few of the characteristics diverge. For instance, there is more gender diversity in the Democratic Senatorial Caucus relative to the Republican Caucus: with 66.3% of close peers of the same gender for Democratics, and 82.9% for Republicans. Further, while Democratics have more experience in law on average (13.1% vs. 6.2%), Republicans have more experience in the Financial Sector (10.4% vs. 6.4%).

III. Identification Strategy

Identifying peer effects is empirically challenging, given confounding inference impacts such as endogenous selection, reflection effects, and correlated unobservable variables identified by the

literature (Manski (1993)). This extends to the realm of congressional voting, as well. An ideal setting requires the random assignment of a congressional member's peer exposure, and the evaluation of behavior conditional on this randomly assigned exposure.

In this section, we discuss the unique features of Senatorial Chamber seating assignment and the House Office allocation mechanism that allow parts of this population to experience random assignment in peer groups. This allows for our identification strategy exploiting this exogenous assignment of peers in order to explore their impact on congressional members' behavior.

A. Senate Seat Assignment

Our first method of random assignment relies on the exogenous assignment rule codified into Senatorial seating assignment for incoming freshmen Senators. Specifically, while Chamber seat assignments are broadly allocated through a system of seniority, newly elected Senators all ostensibly have the same seniority (being just voted together into Congress). To address this, for freshmen, the Senate codified an explicit set of ranking priority as follows: the highest ranking goes — in descending order — to: i.) previous Senatorial experience; ii.) former Vice President of the United States; iii.) former member of the United States House of Representatives; iv.) former Cabinet Secretary; v.) former Governor; and vi.) if tied on all of the above, population of the state in the most recent United States Census that has taken place.[7]

The chamber seating rule provides a natural source of quasi-random assignment of freshman Senator. In particular, the most junior freshman senator has no discretion regarding which seat they are assigned, given that they are forced to sit in whatever seat is left over after all other Senators have chosen their seats. Matching detailed Senate Chamber seating data with the Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, and the Congressional Directory, detailing past work experience we identify the *most junior* freshman Senator in each entering class. Using just this most junior Senator in

[7] Examples of this, from the 117th Congress in 2021:
"*Former Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper will also get a seniority boost among his (freshman) colleagues. Prestige in other arenas doesn't rank, which will leave a political newcomer like Tommy Tuberville, despite his fame in Alabama as the former head coach of the Auburn University football team, near the back of the pack. For new senators without those roles on their resume, seniority is determined by state population, from largest to smallest.*" (https://rollcall.com/2020/12/03/no-cheers-or-jeers-at-the-mostly-virtual-house-office-lottery/). And an example in which two Senators tied on all six criteria, and so it came down to a seventh tie-breaking criterion. In particular, Senators Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock, both from Georgia, were both elected into the 117th Congress with no former experience, and tying on state Census population. The tie was broken by which Senator was filling the longer term, which resulted in Senator Ossoff being the senior Senator from Georgia (with Ossoff filling a full six year term, and Warnock filling the final two years of retiring Senator Isakson's term - https://www.11alive.com/article/news/politics/why-jon-ossoff-georgia-senior-senator/85-03912222-b439-429f-8685-1557cb05c049).

each Congress-Session, we explore the impact of their exogenous assigned peer set on decision-making and behavior. Together, our specification identifies 35 most junior freshman Senators entering the Senate from the 101st to the 117th Congress-Sessions. The reason this is greater than 17, is that there are number of instances of retirements, deaths, and other special appointments. Figure XX details these Senators, the timeline of their appointments, and the states they represent.

B. Exogeneity of Most Junior Freshman's Seating Assignment

A critical feature of identification and analysis is the random assignment of the most junior Freshman Senator's seat. In order to establish this more formally, we run a seat-determination for all members of the Senate. We report the results of this estimation in Table 2. Column 1 of Table 2 is run for all Senior members of Congress (i.e., Senators who are not members of the incoming Freshman cohort). From Column 1, we observe strong evidence of assortative matching across these Senators who have some level of selection in their seat choices. For instance, these Senators are significantly more likely to choose to sit by Senators who are: the same age, the same seniority cohort, same gender, state, religion, and even college major. In contrast, Column 3 shows…

Figure 3 shows substantial variation in chamber seat assignment in each Congress-session senator pair. We further provide evidence that the freshman senator's seating assignment is uncorrelated with senator characteristics that affect voting decisions. Table 2 shows the balance of senator characteristics on senate seat assignment. Specifically, we analyze the probability that an individual senator and another senator from his peer group share certain common characteristics, such as party, state, seniority, and experience in committees. Columns 1-3 provide evidence that is consistent with assortative seating among senior senators in the chamber, where they endogenously select groups with similar ideology, experience and committees. In contrast, none of these characteristics can predict the freshman senators' seating choices as shown in columns 4-6. This evidence provides further validation to the exogenous seating location of freshman senators in the chamber.

C. House Office Lottery Assignment

Every two years, the office lottery that closes out new member orientation becomes a delicate game of chance that will determine who gets choice workspace—and who must toil in the

congressional badlands. For incoming congress members, where a computerized algorithm chose the order in which names would be selected for the lottery drawing as shown in Figure A4. Members-elect tuned in on Microsoft Teams while the media and others watched on a livestream. Returning members have already laid claim to choice real estate made available by resignations, retirements and lost elections, which leaves space for the new class to fill.

New Members-elect crowd into a committee room in the Rayburn House Office Building, and they draw numbered disks in an office lottery. The number determines the order in which they choose rooms from those available after more senior Members have chosen their quarters. This tradition of office lottery took place since the House Office Building opened in 1908. Some of the characteristics that New Members demand for an office are space and proximity to the Capitol—the biggest considerations—however were in short supply. As a tradition, each incoming representative lined up alphabetically to draw a number to determine the order in which they would select offices. A better number meant better options, picturesque view, a spacious lobby to woo colleagues, or the quickest commute to votes and access to House buildings.

Our identification exploits the House office lotteries which provides randomness in the formation of a senator's peer group that is uncorrelated with confounding characteristics. Specifically, the office lottery creates the exogenous variation in the senator's office assignment across buildings, Cannon House Office Building (CHOB), Longworth House Office Building (LHOB), and Rayburn House Office Building (RHOB). Furthermore, the office lottery also creates exogenous variation *within* a building across different floors and the exact office locations in the formation of peer groups. Anecdotal evidence from the Congress also documents the office assignment matters for who they interact primarily with other senators and affect the word-of-mouth communication.

IV. Main Results: The Impact of Peer Influence on Voting Behavior

A. Baseline Results in the Senate

The literature on networks focuses on whether an individual's behavior is influenced by its social network, such as alumni network (Cohen 2014) in financial decisions. However, there is limited research on peer influence in a high-stake setting – in the Congress, where high-profile politicians can substantially affect voting decision of peers and the passage of legislation. Thus, we examine whether the voting behavior of US politicians, and ow this behavior is affected by the votes of peer senators. The voting behavior can have a significant impact on the redistribution polices (e.g., appropriation bills) and the eligibility of firms and individuals for various government programs and transfers.

Despite its importance, this hypothesis about peer influence through word-of-mouth communications received little direct empirical evidence in the congressional setting. Specifically, how the interactions with peer senators can affect a senator's voting behavior has not been fully explored.

Our key tests focus on the congressional setting – whether a senator votes for or against a bill is affected by its peer votes. Our empirical strategy is to estimate the role of senate peers in the transmission of information pertinent to each piece of legislation. In particular, we study whether senators are more likely to be influenced by peers with more social interactions – who work in the same congress and those are close in distance in senate seating.

B. Specification at the Congress-Senator-Votes

In our empirical specification, we estimate the voting behavior using granular voting and biographical data over the 101st-117th Congresses. We focus on the impact of peers in close distance on the voting behavior of each senator by estimating the following model:

$$I(VoteYes)_{itb} = \beta_1 Close\ Yes_{itb} + \delta X_{itb} + \theta_i + \theta_t + \theta_b + \theta_{itb} + \epsilon_{itb} \quad (1)$$

The unit of observation in our analysis is the senator-congress-session-bill level. *i* indexes senator, *t* indexes the Congress-Session in which a senator serves, and *b* indexes the specific bill that is considered for voting. The main dependent variable is an indicator of whether the given senator himself votes yes or no on the bill. The primary measure, $Close\ Yes_{itb}$, is the percentage of senators in a given *i* 's peer group that vote yes on a bill *b* in Congress-Session *t*. For instance, Close5 Yes proxies for the fraction of senators within the close five seats vote yes for a given bill. To provide estimates across different measures of distance, we also construct Close3 Yes and Closest Yes accordingly. Close3 Yes indicates the fraction of senators that are within three closest seats to a given senator that vote in favor of a bill. Closest Yes measures of percentage of senators are in the closest (e.g. the neighbor) to a senator and vote yes for a bill.[8] These measures are constructed at each senator-vote observation and reflect only the voting behavior of *other* senators who are physically close in distance, after removing the impact of each senator's *own* votes. X_{itb} is a vector of time-varying individual characteristics (senator's party affiliation, state) to separate peer effects from other

[8] Close3 Yes indicates the fraction of senators that are within three closest seats to a given senator that vote in favor of a bill. Closest Yes measures of percentage of senators are in the closest (e.g. the neighbor) to a senator and vote yes for a bill.

determinants as shown in the literature. All standard errors are clustered at the senator level as senators may vote similarly on related bills or issues.

Our specification is unique in that we can observe the universe of voting decisions made by senators on each bill, holding constant senator individual characteristics. This setting differs from the literature on peer effects on corporate decisions with limited observations of all decisions made by managers in each scenario. In sum, the granularity of our data offers a unique setting to exploit the voting behavior across various bill related issues for each pair of senators and their peers.

To address concerns regarding senator-level unobserved characteristics, such as time-invariant attributes of senators, we include senator-fixed effects θ_i. The fixed effect for a given senator captures his average propensity to vote for a given bill, which can vary across senators. Further, our specification includes congress-session fixed effects to control for unobserved, time-varying effects across congress-sessions as different congresses often focus on different legislations (e.g., healthcare. fiscal policy, trade). The congress-session fixed effects also capture different legislations under consideration when the president is from the Republican or Democrat. In some specifications, we include high-dimensional fixed effects at the Congress-session-vote level to capture the voting decision for the same bill.

In the baseline analysis, we first estimate the peer effect β_1 for all senators, congress-sessions and bills. Our sample includes over 1 million observations across 300 senators in 35 congress-sessions over 10,960 bills. To further control the influence from the party in determining a senator's voting, Same Party Votes, is the fraction of the senator's party voting in favor of a bill. Intuitively, considering a Republican senator, this variable captures the percentage of all other Republicans' preference for this bill, such as party agenda or the persistence of party leader on certain issues. In addition, we control the effect of home constituents' preferences on bills using Same State Votes, the fraction of senators from the same state vote yes on a given bill.

Table 3 presents the estimates of the effect of peer influence on a senator's own voting behavior. The unit of observation is a senator's own vote on a Congress-session and roll call. The variable of interest in Columns 1-3 is $Close5\,Yes$, which captures the percentage of senators that are within five seats in distance as shown in Figure 3. In this regression, to control granular high dimensional fixed effects, we run different model specifications as robustness tests. Specifically, we include senator-fixed effects in Column 1 and add Congress-session fixed effects in Column 2. Column 3 then estimates the same regression specification, but with high dimensional fixed-effects to control differences in the timing of bills introduced within a Congress-session. All specifications include the fraction of peer

senators from the same party and from the same state to remove the impact associated with party- and state-level factors.

In Columns 1-3, positive coefficient estimates on $Close5\,Yes$ indicates that a senator's own vote is significantly related to the voting preference of other senators in close distance, after controlling for the general party and state effect. In Column 3, the coefficient of 0.05 implies a 1.7 percentage point in a senator's own likelihood to vote in favor of a bill for a one standard deviation increase in the fraction of the senator's peers vote yes for the bill. In Column 6, the economic magnitude increases for peer senators that are seated closer in distance, $Close3\,Yes$, namely within the close three seats apart. This implies that the probability that a given senators vote for yes increases by 3.5 percentage points for a one standard deviation increase om the fraction of the senator's peers vote in favor of the bill.

We further take advantage of our detailed seating data and examine the robustness of our results to specific seating assignment. In Table A2, our specification controls for seat-fixed effects using the seat number in each Congress-session. The use of within seat variation mitigates the concern that influential senators select specific seats to convince other senators in voting decisions (e.g., candy desks). The results remain largely the same in terms of economic magnitudes and statistical significance. Overall, our supporting evidence confirms the previous findings that peer senators are an important determinant of an individual senator's voting decision.

C. Exogenous Variation using Freshman Senators

The granular fixed effects at the senator, Congress-session, and bill level helps to alleviate the time-varying unobservable factor that affect a given senator's voting decisions, such as general political preference towards certain issues. However, the results can be driven by endogenous matching of peers especially among senior senators given they have priority in seat selection as shown in Table 2. To address this concern, we use the exogenous formation of peer groups from Freshman Senators as the identification. The advantage of our identification comes form the fact that freshman senators take last seat available in different Congress-Sessions, which is unknown in advance. In particular, the assignment of seat number to the freshman senator is uncorrelated with the individual characteristics of other senators as shown in columns 4-6 of Table 2. Thus, the peer groups are exogenously formed with respect to the political preference of the last-seated senator. To illustrate an example, the

freshman senator Tommy Tuberville (R-AL) took the last available Seat 78 in Congress 117 session 1, the closeness to other senators is exogenously assigned as shown in Figure 3.

Table 4 shows the impact of peers on voting behavior using the most junior freshman senator. The coefficient estimates are consistent with the results from the full sample in Table 3. The economic magnitude on peer impact is even larger than those shown in Table 3. Specifically, the estimate on $Close3\ Yes$ in Column 6 is 0.194, which implies a 7-percentage point increase in a senator's likelihood to vote in favor of a bill for a one standard deviation increase in the fraction of the senator's peers vote yes for the bill. The increase in point estimates can be interpreted as the impact of senior senators on freshman senators, through word-of-mouth communications. This is plausible when the freshman senator can be persuaded by the peer senators by learning about the benefits associated with a given bill, thereby increasing the likelihood that the freshman senator votes yes.

Moreover, we discuss whether seat specific characteristics drive our results. For instance, some seats were persistently occupied by senators with certain political preference in the past, which influenced a senator's voting decision who is currently sitting in that slot. Our anecdotal evidence indicates this is unlikely to be an explanation given the idiosyncratic nature of seating assignment to the freshman senator. In contrast, most freshman senators sit in the less desirable seats (e.g., those are distant from the center and front), which is less subject to influential seats from the past. Still, we try to separate senator effect from seat-specific effect using the detailed senator and seat assignment across all Congress-sessions. For example, as Senator Tuberville (R-AL) moved to a different seat in Congress 117 session 2, and Senator Ernst sit in the same seat as Tuberville's in Congress 117 session 2.

D. The Salience of Exposure to Peer Influence

Our analysis has demonstrated that the interactions between senators and their peers are associated with an increase in the propensity to vote similarly on the same bills. To provide additional evidence that our finding is driven by word-of-mouth effects, we test the hypothesis that the peer effect is likely to be stronger if senators interact more with their peers. In this section, we study that an individual senator's voting decision is also related to the intensity of interactions with peer groups. Thus, a positive coefficient on the interaction of peer group voting and interactions would provide further evidence that the peer effect is driven by word-of-mouth communications.

a. Senator Absentees

We use several measures to identify changes in intensity of interactions. First, we test whether peer influence is mitigated if peer senators are absent from the voting and legislative activities, which is associated with less social interactions. For example, Senator Rounds missed 58.7% of votes from July to December 2021 according to the congressional voting records. It was reported from his Twitter that Senator Rounds was absent for roll call votes due to the illness and passing of his wife. We use unexpected incidents to capture the lack of interactions between an individual senator and his peer senators. In each congress session, we define a senator as *5% Absent* and *10% Absent* if he missed 5% and 10% of bills in roll call voting respectively.[9] Across all peer senators, *Close5 Yes*5% Absent* measures the fraction of senators within the distance of five seats that are absent in 5% of all bills in a Congress session. By averaging across senators within close distance for a given Congress session, the percentage of absent provides a time-varying measure of interactions among peer groups. We choose 5% and 10% as thresholds to measure temporary absentees, where a 5% of absence indicates senator misses about 18 bills in a Congress-session (e.g., on a given voting day the average number of bills to vote for is 8, which is equivalent to missing 2 voting days). Our results remain if we use longer absentee due to personal sickness reasons from social media reports.

In Panel A of Table 5, we present the results of regression specification with the absentee senators. The estimate on interaction with absence is negative suggests that limited word-of-mouth communications reduces influence from peers. An increase in the fraction of peer senator absentee leads to less agreement on voting decisions, which reflects the divergence in voting decisions. These results are consistent with the "word-of-mouth" communication effect and senators are responsive to peer senators only if they are present. Using the unexpected leave of senators, we provide validation to our baseline results obtained cannot be contaminated by an individual senator and peer senators sharing other common characteristics or common shocks.

b. Negative Votes

How senators respond to negative message conveyed by peers, and do positive and negative votes have symmetric impact on voting decisions? In particular, we examine whether an individual senator votes no if the peer senator votes no on a given bill. Specifically, we construct the measure *Close5 No*, which equals the percentage of peer groups that vote no in a bill. Panel B of Table 5 shows how voting decisions vary with negative votes from peers. The negative estimates in all columns indicate that a

[9] The senate imposed very restrict requirement for mandatory voting, where an absentee is associated with reputation cost to the senator and his constituents.

one standard deviation increase in the percentage of the peer senators voting no implies a 5.7 percentage decline in an individual senator's likelihood to vote in favor of the bill. Interestingly, the economic magnitude is slightly smaller than our baseline analysis using the fraction of peers voting yes (7 percentage point). Therefore, both positive and negative votes from peer groups transmit information in the legislative process by influencing voting decisions.

E. Results using Exogenous Variation from the House Office Lotteries (Voting in the House)

To further identify the causal effect of peers on voting decisions, we use randomly assigned peer groups over Congress and session for the House of representatives. Starting from the first the House Office Building opening in 1908, representatives were assigned to their offices through a lottery system. Within each Congress session, the random assignment creates variations in the assignment of peer among representatives. First, the exogenous assignment of a senator's office across buildings, Cannon House Office Building (CHOB), Longworth House Office Building (LHOB), and Rayburn House Office Building (RHOB). Second, we also use the exogenous variation *within* a building across different floors and office locations in the formation of peer groups.

Similar to the senate chamber seating, we construct three measures of peer groups based on sharp interactions across office rooms within the same building and same floor. Different from the literature on the peer effects using overlapping city or firm locations, the granular measure of peer groups in randomized office assignment reduces the concerns of confounding effects from common geographic location of buildings. To control the potential differences in building structure in affecting voting decisions, we focus on within-building and within-floor variation in peer groups provided by random assignment to identify peer effects. The variables of interest are *Close5 Yes*, *Close3 Yes*, and *Closest Yes*. *Close5 Yes* captures the percentage of representatives voting in favor and those are within five offices in distance. As shown in Figure A3 for example, given the architecture of these buildings and detailed floor map, the House of representatives are assigned to offices in the same building and the floor with close distance.

We also check the balance of representative characteristics in office assignment. Specifically, the percentage of opposing parties that sit in an office close (e.g., on the same side) is 40%. The variation of members across party line provides an ideal setting to test the influence of in-group and out-group peers. Table 6 shows peer influence in voting decisions using house office lotteries. In all specifications, we control the percentage of representatives that vote yes in a given bill, as well as the fraction of the representatives from the same state and party who votes in favor of the bill. Our results indicate a

positive effect in voting decisions between peer groups and an individual representative in the House. The coefficient of 0.012 shown in Column 3 indicates that a 1-standard-deviation increase in the percentage of an individual's peer group vote in favor of a bill is associated with a 0.4 percentage point in a given representative's probability to vote yes. From the economic perspective, the unconditional probability of voting yes in a given bill is 0.63 in our sample of House votes. Thus a 1-standard-deviation increase in the percentage of an individual's peer group vote in favor increases the probability of voting yes by 1% if the mean. Using even sharper measures of close peers in offices (e.g., *Close3 Yes* and *Closest Yes*), the positive effect of peer influence remains, which supports the impact of peer group on congressmen's voting behavior. The magnitude associated with peer influence is not monotonically increasing as *Close5 Yes* leads to a larger impact, which can be driven by the feedback effect from closest peers to more distant peers as the network literature suggests.

V. Mechanisms of Influence:

Who Influences Whom?

Given the main findings on peer influence, an important question is who influences who in congress. To pass any legislation, would senators actively exert pressure on fellow senators? Alternatively, social interactions may induce other senators to "keep up with the Joneses" by simply following the voting decision of peer senators. The literature on peer effects mainly focuses on whether there exists such an impact in various settings in financial decision making. However, there is limited evidence on how peer groups can be influenced in the political context given the potential economic gains from the passage of important legislation (e.g., budget).

a. Who are More Convincing?

In this section, we further document the mechanism through which peer groups influence voting decisions, which subsequently have an impact on the Senate and House legislations. An advantage of our empirical strategy is that we conduct the analysis at the senator-pair level for each bill to examine the context that peers can exert influence. Specifically, we study voting decisions by focusing on: (i) when peer senators are more influencing, and (ii) when an individual senator is more likely to be influenced. Returning to the example on debt ceiling legislation: when can senator Schumer successfully convince senator McConnell by currying the votes needed to pass the bill? These questions are important to understand the mechanism through which peer influence works in the congress.

Specifically, we identify the exact bill, and the exact pair of senators, within close distance, that will be impacted differentially from other senators in the same congress session. We test the hypothesis whether the voting of powerful senators can have a significant impact on less powerful senators and increase the support for the bill. To test this idea, we classify influential senators as those who serve in various Senate committees according to the political science literature. Using the data on congressional committees from Stewart and Woon (2009), we identify whether a given senator sits on the top 3 and top 5 most influential committee from Edwards and Stewart (2006). The top 5 most influential committee in the Senate includes: Finance, Veterans Affairs, Appropriations, Rules, and Armed Serves.[10]

In Table 7, we compare the impact of peer group that is consisted of powerful senators on a senator's own vote. The estimate on powerful members in close distance is positive and statistically significant. This implies that a one-standard deviation increase in the votes of powerful members within peer group increases the likelihood of voting in favor of a bill by 2 percentage point. This finding suggests that powerful senators can be influencing marshal support for a bill, which has important implications on the passage of legislations.

b. Who are More Convincible?

We further study the characteristics of the senator himself and examine when peer senators are more likely to follow his voting decisions. In Table 8, the measures *Powerful 3 Committee* and *Powerful 5 Committee* capture whether a given senator himself serves in the top 3 and top 5 senate committees. In all specifications, we interact the powerful committee measures with close distance peers to explore how the voting decision changes if a senator himself has expertise. Thus, the direction of influence can change – these are the exact times that powerful members would expect to exert the most pressure on fellow peer senators from other committees. Using the exogenous variation in chamber seating for freshman senators, we can identify the exact time, and the senators with certain expertise, within a close distance, that would be affected differentially from distant senators.

In Table 8, we obtain sharp contrasting findings when an individual senator serves on powerful committees compared to when the peer senators serve on powerful committees as shown in Table 7. The estimate on interaction terms is negative, which indicates that senators with expertise are less willing to follow the votes by peer groups. For instance, the estimate from Column 2 implies that for

[10] Our results are very similar if we use top 10 congressional committee, or comparing top 3 versus non-top 3, top 5 versus non-top 5 committee members.

a senator serves on the top 3 powerful committee, a one standard deviation increases in the percentage of the peer groups voting in favor of the bill leads to about 9 percentage point reduction in the senator's likelihood of vote yes. It is precisely the time the powerful senator himself has an interest in currying votes in his favor and exerting influence on peer groups for a given bill. These findings also show when the individual influence channel is a work – at times when the demand for influence is high by serving on powerful committees. Further, the less pronounced effect associated peer influence is consistent with the political power determines the direction of influence through the network.

In contrast, for individual senators without committee experience, they are more likely to follow the peer group's voting behavior. Together, these results illustrate the conditions under which peer groups can exert influence through social interactions. More importantly, these tests suggest that the impact of peer influence on voting behavior depends largely on the relative powerful position of senators and the information they can acquire from others.

c. Mechanism through Economic Incentives: Constituent Relevant Votes

Marginal Votes

To understand when senators can be influenced by peer exposure, Table A4 shows the results among marginal votes. We find that the effect is stronger for bills are close to the margin of majority pass (e.g., 3 or 5 extra votes needed).

VI. Depolarization through Peer Influence

A. The Impact on In-group Peers

Political misalignment presents even within the same party, and Figure 1 shows the rising polarization within the Republican and Democratic party. We next analyze the effect of rising exposure from in-group peers on the voting choices of senators. Voting decisions reveal support for legislation that arises from their appeal to the same party senators especially in the introduction phase. A higher likelihood of voting yes indicates, in part, a stronger ideological match between the senator and the peers within the group. We further estimate the variation in exposure to more moderate versus extreme peers in the chamber.

Using DW nominate scores to capture the heterogeneity in ideology between senators and their peers, we quantify the impact through closeness to moderate and extreme peers respectively. We estimate *Closest Moderate Vote Yes*, the percentage of closest senators within the same party, those with more moderate view that votes yes to capture the variation in ideology within the same party. For the purpose of construction, we define a senator as moderate if the absolute value of his ideology score is

in the bottom three quartiles, while an extreme is defined as those in the top quartile of the ideology distribution. The moderate senator sample has a mean ideology score that matches closely with the commonly used definition of moderates in existing studies.

We focus first on the whole sample of Republicans and Democrats in columns 1 and 2, which shows the impact of peer exposure on the voting decisions across senators from the same party with more aligned ideological affiliation. In both columns, which includes the same controls as our baseline study, senators experience larger increases in voting yes, if they sit closer to relatively moderate peers who vote yes. This impact is significant at the 1 percent level with full controls in column 1. If we compare peer senators at the seventy-fifth versus twenty-fifth percentiles of physical distance, the senators more exposed to moderate views experience a larger increase in the probability of voting yes in legislations. These results suggest that greater exposure to moderate views increases the votes aligned with the moderates. Column 2 shows that closeness to peers with more extreme views that vote yes increases the probability of voting yes. However, by comparing the economic magnitude of the coefficient estimate, there is more alignment in voting decisions from the moderate ideologies within the same party.

Columns 3 and 4 show the changes in magnitude for the Republicans and Democrats respectively. Thus, the more extremes in the Republican party have a higher DW dominate score (more conservative). The coefficient estimates in column 3 indicate that when comparing close-versus-distant peers, the senators sit with more-moderates would have larger increase in the likelihood of voting yes by right-leaning senators. For the Democrats, we observe a slightly smaller coefficient estimate with respect to moderates and extremes. By comparing column 3 and 5, the different in economic magnitude between Republicans and Democrats is statistically significant, indicating that the Republicans are expected to experience a larger increase in the alignment of views with moderates among right-leaning senators.

B. Depolarization across the Party (The Impact of Out-group Peers)

In Table 10, we explore how peer senators affect the voting decision of senators from different parties associated with distinct ideological composition. To capture the variation in exogenous seating assignment across the party, we focus on the House office assignment as new-coming congressmen draw a lottery which determines the actual location of offices and neighbors as discussed in the institutional settings. Consider the dependent variable in columns 1-5, which measures the percentage of absolute deviation from the senator's own party, equals the congressman's own vote minus his

party's vote on the same bill. In columns 6-10, the indicator Deviation from own party equals one if the congressman's vote minus majority of party vote exceeds 50% for each bill.

In particular, we focus on the impact of the out-group peers within closer distance (e.g., the same floor) on the voting decision of senators. Peers from the out-group are considered to have more distinct ideology and partisan polarization as documented in the literature, and therefore we study whether a senator can possibly deviate from his own party ideology. In most specifications, the coefficient estimate is positive and statistically significant at the 1% level. This suggests that when the fraction of peers from the opposite party increases, senators are more likely to deviate from their own party and deviate by a significant amount. We further estimate the effect for the marginal bills in columns 2 and 4, which indicates that senators are more likely to deviate from their own party if the bills are just close to the margins. In contrast, for non-marginal votes, the magnitude is small relative to the estimates for marginal bills. These results provide some evidence that interactions with people from the opposite party leads to de-polarization, specifically by increasing the votes among more-marginal bills relative to the non-marginal bills, which is consistent with the alignment of distinct ideologies.

C. *Do More Polarized Bills Influenced More?*

Panel A of Table 11 explores how exogenously assigned peer senators voting relates to the given Senator's voting across Bill Topics of the most Polarized Bill Topics on average. The interaction with peer senators increases the alignment among polarized issues.

D. *Heterogeneity Across Committees with Polarized Views*

Panel B of Table 11 studies whether voting decisions is more aligned when peer senators are equipped with specific expertise. If persuasion in the Senate is driven by information acquisition by learning about specific bills and benefits associated with legislations, information channel is relevant among more polarized topics. *Close5 Yes Budget*, for instance, is the voting of all of those members of the Close5 network that vote "yes" on the given bill and sit on the Budget Committee.
Voting of Members on the Budget, Defense, and Environment Committees appear especially strongly influential through interactions.

E. *The Dynamics of Influence*

Table A5 shows the dynamic impact associated with peer senators. The effect becomes stronger during the later period of the Congress-sessions as the interactions take time to affect voting decisions.

F. The Success of Bills into Rulemaking

We further quantify the contribution of peer exposure on the success of passing legislations. To examine the role of persuasion across versions of the same bill, we compare the bills at the initial phase of introduction and in later rounds. Our results indicate that peer exposure increases the alignment in voting decisions for both early-stage bills and later-stage bills. The impact is stronger especially in the later stage as the bills are amended to accommodate the polarized views to reach a majority in the Congress. Panel B shows the effect among marginal bills—a one standard deviation increases in the fraction of senators voting yes leads to an extra 13 votes in supporting the bill in the later phase of legislations.

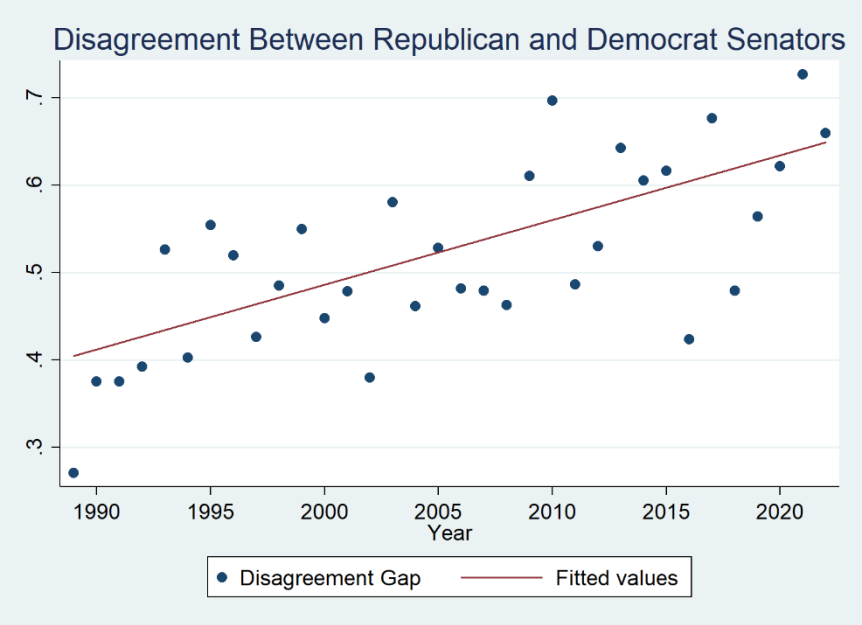
VIII. Conclusion

We exploit exogenous variation in Senator and Representative seating locations to present novel evidence of forced-peers leading to a reduction in polarization. Namely, for incoming freshman legislators, using the rigid seniority rule-based system of seat choice on the Senate chamber floor, and freshman lottery of House Members offices, we identify a set of legislators without choice over nearby neighboring legislators surrounding them. We show that these legislators are nonetheless significantly impacted by their exogenously assigned peers.

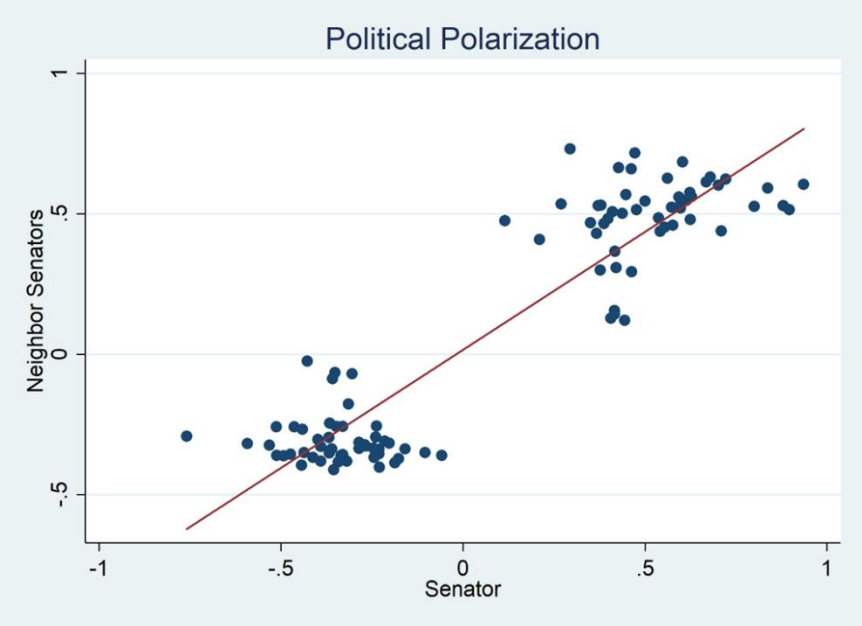
Using the last 30 years of seating choice data and the complete roll-call of over 1 million votes of legislators, we find, for instance, that a one standard deviation increase in the percentage of randomly assigned 'forced neighbors' that vote yes (or no) on a bill increases the probability of the exogenously placed legislator of voting in that same direction by 7 percentage points (t=6.47). From a mean of 63 percentage points on yes votes, this represents over a 10% increase in directional voting.

We find that the effect of exogenously assigned peers is especially large in a number of contexts. For instance, on close bills (with a roughly 15-20% larger effect size); on bills that are less important to the given Senator's economic interests; on bills from the most polarized bill topics (across all bills voted upon); on the later round votes of a given bill (when votes are more consequential for bill passage). and as the Senator spends more time (gets more exposure) to the peer group. Furthermore, the effect is larger when the exogenously assigned close peer is a member of the committee that originated the bill being voted upon.

Going further, we observe depolarizing directly within, and even across parties, as Congressional members appear most influenced by the moderate members within their exogenously assigned close neighbors, and are significantly more likely to switch votes (and cross party lines) when they are more exposed to members of the opposite party. Stepping back, the fact that plausibly exogenous exposure through forced "random" assignment and exposure to colleagues has such a large impact on consequential voting-behavior implies that there remain potentially plausible, low-cost, tools at hand to counterweight the polarization observed.



Panel A



Panel B

Figure 1: The US Congress became more polarized over time

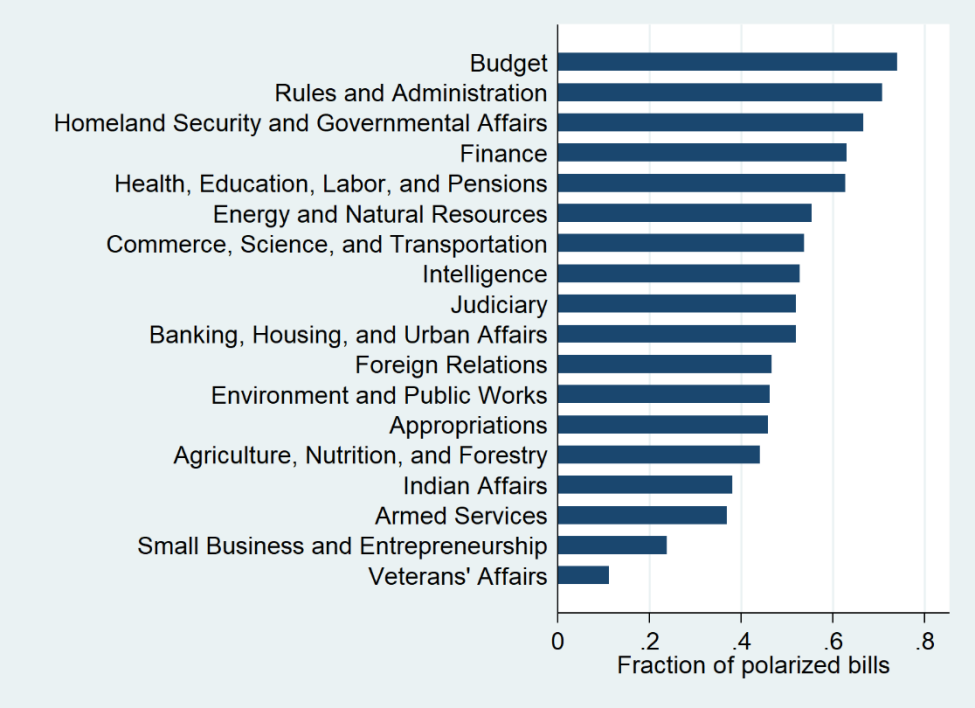
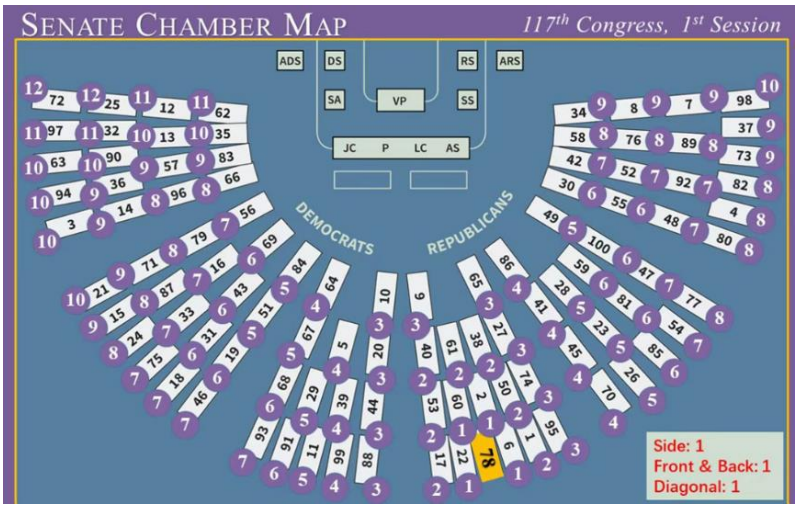
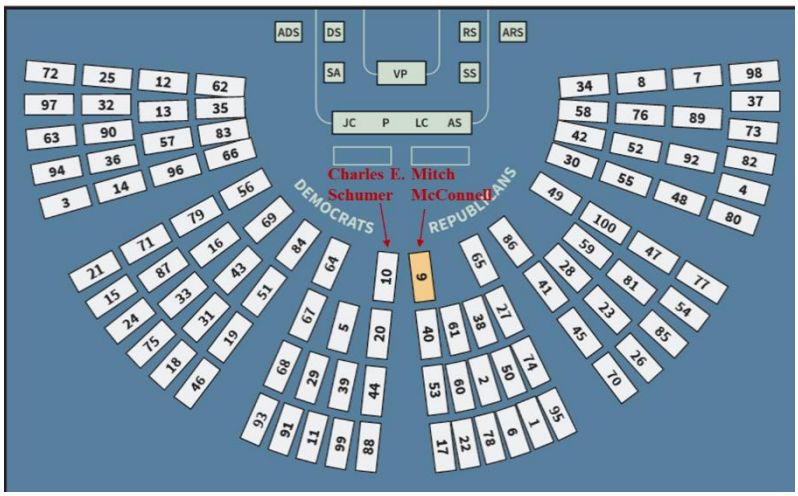


Figure 2: The Fraction of Polarized Bills. These graphs plot the fraction of polarized bills by congressional committees, which is calculated as the difference in "Yea" votes between the Democrats and the Republicans for bills sponsored by each of the committee.



Panel A



Panel B

Figure 3: An Example Seat Distance Construction from Seat 78 in Congress 117 session 1: Senator Tommy Tuberville (R-AL)

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics

This table presents the summary statistics of senator pairs. The sample includes Library of Congress raw bill data. First, we collect the complete bills being voted in the Senate and House from the 101st to 117th Congresses. Each Congress spans two years, which is consisted of two one-year-long Sessions. Our sample represents over 40 years of legislation data from 1990 to 2022. We hand-collect detailed information from the full text of all bills, including the bill number, bill title, summary of the bill, bill detailed description, voting date, bill sponsors (cosponsors if any), committees in the Senate and House, and voting outcome. Panel A presents the senator-pair characteristics for the 101st – 110th and 111st – 117th Congresses.

Panel A: The dynamics of senator characteristics

	101st - 117th		101st - 110th		111st - 117th	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Close3	0.158	0.365	0.158	0.364	0.158	0.365
Same Generation	0.471	0.499	0.471	0.499	0.470	0.499
Difference in Rank	34.200	23.830	33.880	23.610	34.410	23.980
Same Gender	0.736	0.441	0.823	0.382	0.677	0.468
Same Party	0.485	0.500	0.492	0.500	0.481	0.500
Same State	0.010	0.100	0.010	0.100	0.010	0.100
Same Major	0.164	0.370	0.261	0.439	0.098	0.297
Same Religion	0.052	0.222	0.066	0.249	0.042	0.201
Same Committee	0.582	0.493	0.544	0.498	0.608	0.488
Same School	0.023	0.151	0.027	0.110	0.021	0.143
Law Experience	0.094	0.292	0.101	0.301	0.090	0.286
Political Experience	0.446	0.497	0.426	0.495	0.450	0.498
Military Experience	0.008	0.089	0.016	0.205	0.003	0.053
Finance Experience	0.082	0.274	0.084	0.277	0.080	0.272
Academic Experience	0.010	0.102	0.012	0.170	0.009	0.095
Public Services Experience	0.001	0.037	0.002	0.215	0.001	0.026
Both in Powerful 10 Committee	0.383	0.486	0.351	0.048	0.405	0.491
Both in Powerful 5 Committee	0.231	0.422	0.207	0.124	0.248	0.432
Both in Powerful 3 Committee	0.156	0.363	0.138	0.162	0.168	0.374
Finance Comm	0.053	0.225	0.042	0.477	0.061	0.239
Veterans' Affairs Comm	0.020	0.139	0.017	0.405	0.022	0.146
Appropriations Comm	0.085	0.278	0.081	0.345	0.087	0.282
Rules and Administration Comm	0.031	0.173	0.029	0.201	0.032	0.176
Armed Services Comm	0.058	0.234	0.049	0.129	0.064	0.244
Foreign Relations Comm	0.037	0.188	0.036	0.273	0.037	0.190
Intelligence Comm	0.024	0.153	0.022	0.168	0.025	0.157
Judiciary Comm	0.034	0.181	0.030	0.216	0.036	0.187
Budget Comm	0.048	0.214	0.049	0.186	0.048	0.213
Commerce, Science, and Transportation Comm	0.056	0.229	0.044	0.148	0.063	0.244

Panel B: by party

	101st - 117th Republican Senator		101st - 117th Democratic Senator	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Close3	0.308	0.462	0.284	0.451
Same Generation	0.471	0.499	0.477	0.499
Difference in Rank	33.560	23.540	35.030	24.550
Same Gender	0.829	0.377	0.663	0.473
Same State	0.015	0.120	0.014	0.117
Same Major	0.170	0.376	0.161	0.367
Same Religion	0.061	0.240	0.059	0.236
Same Committee	0.564	0.496	0.563	0.496
Same School	0.018	0.133	0.034	0.181
Law Experience	0.062	0.240	0.131	0.338
Political Experience	0.446	0.497	0.441	0.497
Military Experience	0.012	0.109	0.004	0.064
Finance Experience	0.104	0.305	0.064	0.245
Academic Experience	0.004	0.063	0.016	0.126
Public Services Experience	0.001	0.030	0.002	0.043
Both in Powerful 10 Committee	0.376	0.484	0.367	0.482
Both in Powerful 5 Committee	0.226	0.418	0.222	0.416
Both in Powerful 3 Committee	0.152	0.359	0.154	0.361
Finance Comm	0.054	0.225	0.052	0.222
Veterans' Affairs Comm	0.018	0.133	0.017	0.128
Appropriations Comm	0.083	0.275	0.087	0.282
Rules and Administration Comm	0.030	0.171	0.028	0.166
Armed Services Comm	0.057	0.233	0.051	0.220
Foreign Relations Comm	0.037	0.188	0.036	0.186
Intelligence Comm	0.024	0.152	0.021	0.143
Judiciary Comm	0.032	0.177	0.035	0.184
Budget Comm	0.047	0.212	0.041	0.198
Commerce, Science, and Transportation Comm	0.056	0.229	0.055	0.227

Table 2
Determinants of Seat Choice: Freshman vs. All Senators

	close3	close3	close3	close3	close3
	Senior	Freshman	Exogenous Freshman (Abnormal Leaves and Joins)	Most Junior Freshman	Most Junior Freshman from Non-election Years
Same Generation	0.012***	0.006	0.008	-0.004	0.007
	(0.001)	(0.003)	(0.009)	(0.015)	(0.031)
Difference in Rank	-0.004***	-0.004***	-0.002***	-0.002***	0.001
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.001)
Same Gender	0.008***	-0.010*	0.003	-0.043*	-0.017
	(0.001)	(0.004)	(0.010)	(0.017)	(0.036)
Same Party	0.274***	0.232***	0.217***	0.223***	0.268***
	(0.001)	(0.003)	(0.008)	(0.013)	(0.028)
Same State	0.030***	-0.014	0.149***	0.140*	0.234
	(0.005)	(0.015)	(0.038)	(0.063)	(0.141)
Same Major	0.024***	0.015*	0.016	0.012	-0.014
	(0.002)	(0.007)	(0.018)	(0.028)	(0.050)
Same Religion	0.018***	-0.018*	-0.045*	-0.028	-0.009
	(0.002)	(0.008)	(0.022)	(0.035)	(0.072)
Same Committee	0.004***	-0.002	0.012	0.009	0.102*
	(0.001)	(0.003)	(0.009)	(0.014)	(0.040)
Same School	0.012***	0.018	0.046	0.066	0.234
	(0.003)	(0.011)	(0.032)	(0.042)	(0.156)
Same Law Background	0.006**	0.035***	0.013	-0.036	0.007
	(0.002)	(0.006)	(0.015)	(0.023)	(0.038)
Political Experience	0.004***	-0.017***	-0.008	0.007	-0.013
	(0.001)	(0.004)	(0.009)	(0.017)	(0.032)
Military Experience	0.023***	-0.012	-0.129	-0.108	-0.095
	(0.005)	(0.030)	(0.160)	(0.116)	(0.171)

Finance Experience	0.008***	-0.005	-0.014	0.028	0.036
	(0.002)	(0.007)	(0.017)	(0.027)	(0.054)
Academic Experience	0.016**	0.054**	0.250***		
	(0.006)	(0.021)	(0.055)		
Public Service Experience	-0.020	0.085	0.249	0.269	-0.235
	(0.013)	(0.064)	(0.158)	(0.152)	(0.240)
N	497591	36810	6727	2276	593
R-squared	0.208	0.241	0.143	0.175	0.182

Table 3
Peer Influence and the Voting Behavior (All Senators)

This table presents regression analysis of peer politicians on Senate voting behavior from the 101 to 117th congress.

	Vote (Yea/Nay)								
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Close5 Yes	0.0490***	0.0490***	0.0502***						
	(0.0023)	(0.0023)	(0.0023)						
Close3 Yes				0.0980***	0.0981***	0.0989***			
				(0.0025)	(0.0025)	(0.0025)			
Closest Yes							0.1020***	0.1020***	0.1022***
							(0.0019)	(0.0019)	(0.0019)
Same State Votes	0.1227***	0.1228***	0.1230***	0.1227***	0.1227***	0.1229***	0.1234***	0.1234***	0.1236***
	(0.0007)	(0.0007)	(0.0007)	(0.0007)	(0.0007)	(0.0007)	(0.0007)	(0.0007)	(0.0007)
Same Party Votes	0.8667***	0.8667***	0.8663***	0.8187***	0.8188***	0.8186***	0.8097***	0.8097***	0.8100***
	(0.0021)	(0.0021)	(0.0021)	(0.0024)	(0.0024)	(0.0024)	(0.0020)	(0.0020)	(0.0020)
Senator FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Congress-session FE	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Vote FE	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Observations	1,084,691	1,084,691	1,084,691	1,084,691	1,084,691	1,084,691	1,084,691	1,084,691	1,084,691
R-squared	0.6268	0.6268	0.6268	0.6271	0.6271	0.6271	0.6276	0.6276	0.6277

Table 4
Exogenous Variation Using the Most Freshman Senator Assignment

Panel A: All groups inclusive of all Senators

	Vote (Yea/Nay)								
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Close5 Yes	0.1436***	0.1436***	0.1353***						
	(0.0317)	(0.0317)	(0.0326)						
Close3 Yes				0.1986***	0.1985***	0.1941***			
				(0.0290)	(0.0290)	(0.0300)			
Closest Yes							0.1243***	0.1244***	0.1189***
							(0.0157)	(0.0157)	(0.0162)
Same State Votes	0.1456***	0.1456***	0.1493***	0.1467***	0.1467***	0.1505***	0.1434***	0.1434***	0.1471***
	(0.0064)	(0.0064)	(0.0066)	(0.0063)	(0.0063)	(0.0065)	(0.0064)	(0.0064)	(0.0066)
Same Party Votes	0.8124***	0.8124***	0.8193***	0.7553***	0.7553***	0.7587***	0.8254***	0.8253***	0.8297***
	(0.0314)	(0.0314)	(0.0323)	(0.0296)	(0.0296)	(0.0305)	(0.0177)	(0.0177)	(0.0183)
Senator FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Congress-session FE	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Vote FE	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Observations	10,897	10,897	10,812	10,897	10,897	10,812	10,897	10,897	10,812
R-squared	0.6883	0.6883	0.6994	0.6890	0.6890	0.7001	0.6895	0.6895	0.7005

Panel B: Defining each group mutually exclusive of the smaller group(s) it contains (i.e., Close5 only contains Senators 4- and 5-seats away from the focal Senator and excludes all Senators Close3 and Closest, the two smaller groupings it contains).

	Vote (Yea/Nay)								
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Close5 Yes	-0.0272	-0.0272	-0.0297						
	(0.0192)	(0.0192)	(0.0198)						
Close3 Yes				0.0999***	0.0999***	0.1008***			
				(0.0250)	(0.0250)	(0.0258)			
Closest Yes							0.1243***	0.1244***	0.1189***
							(0.0157)	(0.0157)	(0.0162)
Same State Votes	0.1491***	0.1491***	0.1527***	0.1484***	0.1484***	0.1520***	0.1434***	0.1434***	0.1471***
	(0.0064)	(0.0064)	(0.0066)	(0.0064)	(0.0064)	(0.0065)	(0.0064)	(0.0064)	(0.0066)
Same Party Votes	0.9752***	0.9751***	0.9762***	0.8526***	0.8526***	0.8506***	0.8254***	0.8253***	0.8297***
	(0.0196)	(0.0196)	(0.0202)	(0.0257)	(0.0257)	(0.0265)	(0.0177)	(0.0177)	(0.0183)
Senator FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Congress FE	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Session FE	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Vote FE	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Observations	10,897	10,897	10,812	10,897	10,897	10,812	10,897	10,897	10,812
R-squared	0.6877	0.6877	0.6989	0.6881	0.6881	0.6993	0.6895	0.6895	0.7005

Table 5
The Salience of Peer Influence

Panel A: The Influence of Absent Votes

	Vote (Yea/Nay)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Close5 Yes	0.1399***	0.1377***		
	(0.0032)	(0.0032)		
Absent Peers 5%	0.0135***		0.0105***	
	(0.0014)		(0.0014)	
Close5 Yes * Absent Peers 5%	-0.0213***			
	(0.0019)			
Absent10 Peer		0.0097***		0.0082***
		(0.0022)		(0.0022)
Close5 Yes * Absent Peers 10%		-0.0174***		
		(0.0031)		
Close3 Yes			0.1985***	0.1968***
			(0.0030)	(0.0029)
Close3 Yes * Absent Peers 5%			-0.0168***	
			(0.0019)	
Close3 Yes * Absent Peers 10%				-0.0150***
				(0.0030)
Same State Votes	0.1497***	0.1496***	0.1508***	0.1507***
	(0.0006)	(0.0006)	(0.0006)	(0.0006)
Same Party Votes	0.8178***	0.8179***	0.7568***	0.7569***
	(0.0032)	(0.0032)	(0.0030)	(0.0030)
Senator FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Congress-session FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vote FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	1,065,645	1,065,645	1,065,645	1,065,645
R-squared	0.7022	0.7022	0.7029	0.7029

Panel B: Disagreement When Peers Vote "Nay"

	Vote (Yea/Nay)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Close5 No	-0.1428***	-0.1394***		
	(0.0251)	(0.0262)		
Close3 No			-0.1702***	-0.1684***
			(0.0242)	(0.0252)
Same State Votes	0.1472***	0.1507***	0.1488***	0.1524***
	(0.0064)	(0.0066)	(0.0064)	(0.0065)
Same Party Votes	0.8150***	0.8168***	0.7851***	0.7853***
	(0.0250)	(0.0260)	(0.0248)	(0.0258)
Senator FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Congress-session FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vote FE	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	10,858	10,772	10,858	10,772
R-squared	0.6894	0.7005	0.6899	0.7010

Table 6
Exogenous Variation Using the House Lottery Assignment

	Vote (Yea/Nay)								
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Close5 Yes	0.0134***	0.0136***	0.0123***						
	(0.0015)	(0.0015)	(0.0015)						
Close3 Yes				0.0075***	0.0075***	0.0067***			
				(0.0012)	(0.0012)	(0.0012)			
Closest Yes							0.0038***	0.0037***	0.0033***
							(0.0009)	(0.0009)	(0.0009)
Same State Votes	0.1558***	0.1557***	0.1561***	0.1554***	0.1554***	0.1557***	0.1596***	0.1596***	0.1602***
	(0.0013)	(0.0013)	(0.0013)	(0.0013)	(0.0013)	(0.0013)	(0.0015)	(0.0015)	(0.0015)
Same Party Votes	0.9623***	0.9622***	0.9631***	0.9626***	0.9625***	0.9634***	0.9592***	0.9592***	0.9600***
	(0.0009)	(0.0009)	(0.0009)	(0.0009)	(0.0009)	(0.0009)	(0.0010)	(0.0010)	(0.0010)
Same Building Votes	-0.0874***	-0.0874***	-0.0875***	-0.0813***	-0.0812***	-0.0818***	-0.0780***	-0.0782***	-0.0795***
	(0.0023)	(0.0023)	(0.0023)	(0.0021)	(0.0021)	(0.0021)	(0.0021)	(0.0021)	(0.0021)
Senator FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Congress-session FE	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Vote FE	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Observations	937,065	937,065	937,065	929,619	929,619	929,619	749,426	749,426	749,426
R-squared	0.7267	0.7267	0.7275	0.7267	0.7267	0.7275	0.7265	0.7266	0.7275

Table 7: All Senator compared to Freshman Summary Characteristics

	101st - 117th Senior Senator	101st - 117th Senior Senator	101st - 117th Freshman Senator	101st - 117th Freshman Senator	101st - 117th Most Freshman Senator	101st - 117th Most Freshman Senator	101st - 117th Exogenous Senator (abnormal leave)	101st - 117th Exogenous Senator (abnormal leave)
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Close3	0.160	0.367	0.127	0.333	0.117	0.322	0.131	0.338
Same Generation	0.473	0.499	0.445	0.497	0.431	0.495	0.384	0.486
Difference in Rank	33.320	23.200	46.030	28.620	51.460	29.020	50.740	29.360
Same Gender	0.739	0.439	0.689	0.463	0.772	0.420	0.726	0.446
Same Party	0.485	0.500	0.493	0.500	0.493	0.500	0.516	0.500
Same State	0.010	0.100	0.010	0.100	0.010	0.100	0.010	0.100
Same Major	0.170	0.375	0.089	0.284	0.080	0.272	0.079	0.270
Same Religion	0.053	0.224	0.036	0.186	0.037	0.189	0.034	0.181
Same Committee	0.584	0.493	0.552	0.497	0.508	0.500	0.443	0.497
Same School	0.024	0.152	0.021	0.142	0.027	0.162	0.015	0.123
Law Experience	0.094	0.292	0.094	0.291	0.088	0.283	0.098	0.297
Political Experience	0.450	0.498	0.395	0.489	0.314	0.464	0.323	0.468
Military Experience	0.008	0.092	0.003	0.053	0.003	0.057	0.001	0.024
Finance Experience	0.082	0.275	0.073	0.261	0.062	0.241	0.074	0.261
Academic Experience	0.011	0.103	0.008	0.087	0.000	0.000	0.005	0.072
Public Service Experience	0.001	0.037	0.001	0.024	0.001	0.038	0.001	0.024
Both in Powerful 10 Committee	0.390	0.488	0.287	0.453	0.269	0.444	0.227	0.419
Both in Powerful 5 Committee	0.240	0.427	0.119	0.324	0.126	0.331	0.076	0.266
Both in Powerful 3 Committee	0.164	0.371	0.041	0.197	0.031	0.173	0.024	0.152
Finance Comm	0.057	0.232	0.001	0.023	0.007	0.085	0.003	0.054
Veterans' Affairs Comm	0.020	0.139	0.022	0.147	0.025	0.156	0.012	0.110
Appropriations Comm	0.090	0.285	0.018	0.133	0.000	0.000	0.009	0.094

Rules and Administration Comm	0.032	0.175	0.020	0.139	0.013	0.113	0.023	0.151
Armed Services Comm	0.057	0.232	0.066	0.248	0.088	0.283	0.037	0.188
Foreign Relations Comm	0.036	0.187	0.042	0.200	0.007	0.083	0.044	0.205
Intelligence Comm	0.025	0.156	0.013	0.113	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Judiciary Comm	0.034	0.182	0.029	0.167	0.000	0.000	0.044	0.205
Budget Comm	0.048	0.215	0.043	0.202	0.031	0.172	0.016	0.125
Commerce, Science, and Transportation Comm	0.054	0.227	0.071	0.257	0.128	0.334	0.061	0.240

Table 8: Freshman Cohort Effects

	Vote (Yea/Nay)								
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Close5 Yes	0.1170***	0.1167***	0.1104***						
	(0.0313)	(0.0313)	(0.0323)						
Close5 Freshman Yes				0.0921***	0.0921***	0.0863***			
				(0.0324)	(0.0324)	(0.0332)			
Close5 NonFreshman Yes							0.0772***	0.0769***	0.0707**
							(0.0282)	(0.0282)	(0.0290)
Same State Votes	0.1602***	0.1603***	0.1633***	0.1675***	0.1675***	0.1704***	0.1610***	0.1610***	0.1641***
	(0.0065)	(0.0065)	(0.0067)	(0.0065)	(0.0065)	(0.0068)	(0.0065)	(0.0065)	(0.0066)
Same Party Votes	0.6608***	0.6606***	0.6666***	0.7810***	0.7805***	0.7828***	0.6847***	0.6846***	0.6914***
	(0.0347)	(0.0347)	(0.0358)	(0.0209)	(0.0209)	(0.0217)	(0.0357)	(0.0357)	(0.0368)
Freshman Same Party	0.1587***	0.1591***	0.1586***	0.0646*	0.0650*	0.0690*	0.1730***	0.1733***	0.1719***
	(0.0186)	(0.0186)	(0.0193)	(0.0368)	(0.0368)	(0.0378)	(0.0186)	(0.0186)	(0.0192)
Senator FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Congress FE	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Session FE	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Vote FE	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Observations	10,347	10,347	10,262	9,574	9,574	9,489	10,347	10,347	10,262
R-squared	0.7051	0.7051	0.7168	0.7252	0.7252	0.7372	0.7049	0.7049	0.7166

Table 9: Most Convincing and Convincible Senators

Panel A: Which Senators are Most Convincing?

	Vote (Yea/Nay)							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Close5 Yes Top 3 Peers	0.0968***	0.0867***						
	(0.0226)	(0.0234)						
Close5 Yes Top 5 Peers			0.0803***	0.0686**				
			(0.0295)	(0.0304)				
Close3 Yes Top 3 Peers					0.0504***	0.0489***		
					(0.0129)	(0.0135)		
Close3 Yes Top 5 Peers							0.0719***	0.0652***
							(0.0226)	(0.0234)
Same State Votes	0.1719***	0.1737***	0.1731***	0.1748***	0.1765***	0.1780***	0.1749***	0.1765***
	(0.0071)	(0.0073)	(0.0071)	(0.0073)	(0.0071)	(0.0073)	(0.0071)	(0.0073)
Same Party Votes	0.8422***	0.8516***	0.8549***	0.8662***	0.8841***	0.8855***	0.8612***	0.8679***
	(0.0224)	(0.0233)	(0.0291)	(0.0301)	(0.0149)	(0.0155)	(0.0235)	(0.0243)
Senator FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Congress FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Session FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vote FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	8,343	8,190	8,343	8,190	8,343	8,190	8,343	8,190
R-squared	0.6936	0.7080	0.6932	0.7077	0.6935	0.7080	0.6933	0.7078

Panel B: Which Senators are Most Convincible?

	Vote (Yea/Nay)							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Close5 Yes	0.1409***	0.1344***	0.1714***	0.1650***				
	(0.0321)	(0.0332)	(0.0332)	(0.0344)				
Powerful 3 Committee	0.1046***	0.1046***			0.0953***	0.0968***		
	(0.0154)	(0.0161)			(0.0152)	(0.0158)		
Close5 Yes * Powerful 3 Committee	-0.0925***	-0.0877***						
	(0.0168)	(0.0174)						
Powerful 5 Committee			0.0522***	0.0527***			0.0442***	0.0457***
			(0.0161)	(0.0166)			(0.0159)	(0.0164)
Close5 Yes * Powerful 5 Committee			-0.0410***	-0.0428***				
			(0.0150)	(0.0156)				
Close3 Yes					0.1856***	0.1822***	0.1975***	0.1937***
					(0.0295)	(0.0305)	(0.0303)	(0.0314)
Close3 Yes * Powerful 3 Committee					-0.0787***	-0.0754***		
					(0.0164)	(0.0169)		
Close3 Yes * Powerful 5 Committee							-0.0267*	-0.0295*
							(0.0147)	(0.0153)
Same State Votes	0.1374***	0.1414***	0.1373***	0.1412***	0.1392***	0.1431***	0.1385***	0.1424***
	(0.0066)	(0.0068)	(0.0066)	(0.0068)	(0.0065)	(0.0067)	(0.0066)	(0.0068)
Same Party Votes	0.8511***	0.8550***	0.8189***	0.8252***	0.8005***	0.8021***	0.7819***	0.7863***
	(0.0318)	(0.0328)	(0.0322)	(0.0332)	(0.0299)	(0.0309)	(0.0302)	(0.0313)
Congress FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Session FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vote FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	10,362	10,277	10,362	10,277	10,362	10,277	10,362	10,277
R-squared	0.6921	0.7037	0.6911	0.7028	0.6924	0.7041	0.6915	0.7032

Table 10
Polarized Topics and Committees

Panel A: Polarized Topics by Bill Content

	Budget	Crime	Environment	Foreign	Health	Immigration	Labor	Minorities	Religion	Tax
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Close5 Yes	0.1061**	0.0718	0.2494***	0.2240***	0.2511***	0.2638**	0.2571***	1.3707**	1.1362***	0.1960***
	(0.0540)	(0.1327)	(0.0663)	(0.0676)	(0.0537)	(0.1168)	(0.0680)	(0.5159)	(0.2948)	(0.0613)
Same State Votes	0.1225***	0.1950***	0.1501***	0.1797***	0.1330***	0.1769***	0.1333***	0.0334	0.1282***	0.1465***
	(0.0101)	(0.0200)	(0.0117)	(0.0113)	(0.0091)	(0.0197)	(0.0113)	(0.1012)	(0.0443)	(0.0106)
Same Party Votes	0.8800***	0.8593***	0.7466***	0.7147***	0.7404***	0.7031***	0.7313***	-0.2101	-0.1643	0.7731***
	(0.0535)	(0.1314)	(0.0653)	(0.0671)	(0.0535)	(0.1165)	(0.0667)	(0.5227)	(0.3006)	(0.0603)
Senator FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Congress FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Session FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vote FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	4,445	1,452	3,539	4,003	5,236	1,517	3,686	134	312	3,779
R-squared	0.7085	0.7331	0.6910	0.6790	0.7182	0.7608	0.7276	0.8658	0.8688	0.7395

Panel B: Expertise by Committees

	Vote (Yea/Nay)								
	Budget	Crime	Environment	Foreign	Health	Immigration	Labor	Tax	Defense
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Close5 Yes Budget	0.1698***								
	(0.0472)								
Close5 Yes Crime		-0.0354							
		(0.0621)							
Close5 Yes Environment			0.2562***						
			(0.0484)						
Close5 Yes Foreign				-0.0663					
				(0.0589)					
Close5 Yes Health					0.0176				
					(0.0425)				
Close5 Yes Immigration						-0.1440			
						(0.0885)			
Close5 Yes Labor							0.0301		
							(0.0476)		
Close5 Yes Tax								0.0158	
								(0.0395)	
Close5 Yes Defense									0.1223***
									(0.0467)
Senator FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Congress FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Session FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vote FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	3,714	1,231	3,000	3,390	4,346	1,359	3,106	3,393	2,920
R-squared	0.7450	0.7632	0.7157	0.7157	0.7513	0.7811	0.7534	0.7552	0.7516

Table 11
Respond to In-group Peers: Moderate vs. Extreme in Senate

	All (extreme=top quartile=4; moderate=1,2,3)		Republicans		Democrats	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Closest Moderate Vote Yes	0.1130***		0.1601***		0.0408*	
	(0.0159)		(0.0223)		(0.0239)	
Closest Extreme Vote Yes		0.0912***		0.0875***		0.0681*
		(0.0140)		(0.0160)		(0.0376)
Same State Votes	0.1477***	0.2456***	0.1721***	0.2298***	0.1229***	0.3550***
	(0.0066)	(0.0121)	(0.0102)	(0.0137)	(0.0091)	(0.0353)
Same Party Votes	0.8342***	0.7186***	0.7529***	0.7440***	0.9323***	0.5901***
	(0.0181)	(0.0197)	(0.0257)	(0.0229)	(0.0268)	(0.0473)
Congress FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Congress-session FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vote FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	10,699	5,163	5,904	4,054	4,734	1,064
R-squared	0.6999	0.7581	0.7069	0.7549	0.7200	0.8371

Table 12
Respond to Out-group Peers Cross-party in House

	%Abs. Deviation from own party (congressmen vote-avg. party vote on bills)					Abs. Deviation from own party indicator (congressmen vote-majority of party vote (50%) on bills)				
	Full sample	Margin 3% votes	Non-margin 3% votes	Margin 5% votes	Non-margin 5% votes	Full sample	Margin 3% votes	Non-margin 3% votes	Margin 5% votes	Non-margin 5% votes
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Fraction of same floor out-group	0.0314***	0.0423***	0.0267***	0.0432***	0.0174***	0.0236***	0.0359***	0.0171***	0.0363***	0.0082
	(0.0023)	(0.0033)	(0.0031)	(0.0028)	(0.0036)	(0.0031)	(0.0040)	(0.0043)	(0.0035)	(0.0050)
Same State Votes	-0.0365***	0.0061***	-0.0020	0.0007	0.0267***	-0.0550***	-0.0196***	-0.0280***	-0.0265***	0.0009
	(0.0014)	(0.0023)	(0.0018)	(0.0020)	(0.0021)	(0.0018)	(0.0028)	(0.0025)	(0.0025)	(0.0029)
Congress FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Congress-session FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vote FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	280,974	100,523	180,451	129,547	151,427	280,974	100,523	180,451	129,547	151,427
R-squared	0.0416	0.0655	0.0601	0.0702	0.0636	0.0202	0.0410	0.0268	0.0413	0.0308

Table 13
The Success of Bill Passage (Persuasion Rates)

Panel A: The Likelihood Bill Passage

	Bill Pass (Yes/No)							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Vote sample	All		Initial Rounds	Later Rounds	All		Initial Rounds	Later Rounds
Close5 Yes	0.1500***	0.1506***	0.0856	0.2125***				
	(0.0498)	(0.0498)	(0.0845)	(0.0624)				
Close3 Yes					0.1766***	0.1778***	0.1704**	0.1948***
					(0.0456)	(0.0456)	(0.0761)	(0.0571)
Same State Votes	0.2563***	0.2562***	0.2560***	0.2526***	0.2578***	0.2577***	0.2568***	0.2549***
	(0.0100)	(0.0100)	(0.0159)	(0.0129)	(0.0100)	(0.0100)	(0.0158)	(0.0128)
Same Party Votes	0.0924*	0.0920*	0.1111	0.0532	0.0629	0.0620	0.0257	0.0657
	(0.0493)	(0.0493)	(0.0838)	(0.0617)	(0.0465)	(0.0465)	(0.0777)	(0.0581)
Senator FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Congress-session FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	10,930	10,930	4,474	6,455	10,930	10,930	4,474	6,455
R-squared	0.1910	0.1911	0.2049	0.1878	0.1914	0.1915	0.2056	0.1878

Panel B: The Bill Passage

	Changes in the Number of Marginal Votes							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Vote sample	All		Initial Rounds	Later Rounds	All		Initial Rounds	Later Rounds
Close5 Yes	35.0600***	35.0330***	27.8124***	36.8590***				
	(2.1418)	(2.1420)	(3.4597)	(2.7531)				
Close3 Yes					24.1098***	24.0700***	19.7272***	24.5618***
					(1.9739)	(1.9744)	(3.1317)	(2.5371)
Same State Votes	11.2227***	11.2253***	10.3139***	11.6105***	11.7012***	11.7035***	10.6933***	12.1229***
	(0.4313)	(0.4313)	(0.6512)	(0.5686)	(0.4320)	(0.4320)	(0.6508)	(0.5700)
Same Party Votes	-6.9511***	-6.9357***	-3.2325	-6.6769**	2.9851	3.0143	4.0933	4.4973*
	(2.1228)	(2.1228)	(3.4321)	(2.7231)	(2.0116)	(2.0119)	(3.1973)	(2.5808)
Senator FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Congress-session FE	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	10,892	10,892	4,462	6,429	10,892	10,892	4,462	6,429
R-squared	0.3585	0.3585	0.3302	0.3837	0.3515	0.3516	0.3264	0.3756

Appendix

Table A1: Most Polarized Phrases in Bills

Congress 104 (1995-1997)						Congress 105 (1997-1999)					
Republican	**#R**	**#D**	**Democrat**	**#R**	**#D**	**Republican**	**#R**	**#D**	**Democrat**	**#R**	**#D**
balanced budget	414	252	balanced budget	130	490	commerce bill	80	4	universal service	0	136
federal mandates	132	44	budget resolution	262	496	white house	78	30	nato expansion	84	184
unfunded mandates	132	54	work first	44	278	hourly employees	52	4	tobacco companies	6	100
federal government	232	166	public hearings	40	238	black market	48	4	democratic alternative	12	90
unfunded federal	68	16	tax cut	88	258	tax increase	40	0	american people	24	98
wilderness act	52	0	child care	148	318	price cigarettes	56	20	service fund	0	72
tax burden	52	0	balance budget	104	258	cdbg funds	36	2	judiciary committee	50	114
water right	48	4	social security	80	232	emergency cdbg	32	0	appropriations bill	62	124
trust lands	44	0	republican plan	8	156	take money	36	4	public health	2	64
small businesses	46	4	deficit reduction	34	178	money away	28	0	telephone service	4	64
Congress 106 (1999-2001)						Congress 107 (2001-2003)					
Republican	**#R**	**#D**	**Democrat**	**#R**	**#D**	**Republican**	**#R**	**#D**	**Democrat**	**#R**	**#D**
security surplus	292	162	insurance company	8	172	small business	208	28	farm bill	624	1100
president's budget	150	40	managed care	48	188	finance committee	180	46	food stamp	4	264
point order	102	14	specialty care	52	180	small businesses	124	48	conference report	166	338
kennedy bill	84	0	tax cut	40	148	health insurance	104	40	family farmers	46	204
earnings limit	104	26	primary care	80	176	nuclear fuel	88	28	freedom farm	40	188
drug benefit	108	32	family farmers	36	116	tax relief	96	40	food stamps	12	156
gop budget	72	0	patients bill	64	140	livestock industry	56	4	law enforcement	14	122
senate budget	116	48	insurance companies	20	96	nuclear energy	66	14	state local	10	108
clinton budget	68	0	tax credit	8	80	state court	68	16	legal immigrants	4	100
financial statements	68	0	bill rights	80	148	tax increase	48	0	dairy farmers	18	112
Congress 108 (2003-2005)						Congress 109 (2005-2007)					
Republican	**#R**	**#D**	**Democrat**	**#R**	**#D**	**Republican**	**#R**	**#D**	**Democrat**	**#R**	**#D**

intelligence community	176	88	homeland security	38	172	change outlays	214	0	minimum wage	122	584
medical liability	90	4	tax code	24	132	produce change	184	0	estate tax	16	456
coast guard	116	34	jobs overseas	0	104	outlays sec	174	0	health care	44	220
intelligence committee	74	20	american workers	8	88	medical liability	131	4	bill rights	24	176
national intelligence	372	320	human rights	6	86	point order	142	28	habeas corpus	4	104
yield back	50	8	american jobs	4	74	attorneys general	146	76	wage rate	0	80
finance committee	52	12	tax breaks	4	72	tax relief	82	18	port security	8	76
counterterrorism center	40	0	job creation	24	90	state attorneys	72	8	immigration reform	4	68
north korean	40	0	port security	8	68	judge pryor's	77	20	come home	0	60
governmental affairs	60	22	tax cuts	4	62	class actions	60	4	amending constitution	12	72

Congress 110 (2007-2009)						Congress 111 (2009-2011)					
Republican	**#R**	**#D**	**Democrat**	**#R**	**#D**	**Republican**	**#R**	**#D**	**Democrat**	**#R**	**#D**
census bureau	292	0	farm bill	26	286	american people	216	86	health insurance	132	414
clean portfolio	96	4	health care	126	376	stimulate economy	48	4	health care	658	902
tax credit	96	12	conference report	104	294	fix housing	44	0	insurance companies	28	180
handheld computers	68	0	american people	159	296	create jobs	98	56	care system	38	116
tax code	60	4	budget resolution	76	206	spending bill	46	4	national banks	0	60
emergency spending	40	0	alternative minimum	56	180	housing market	44	4	insurance company	26	84
cost overruns	40	0	tax cuts	96	212	spend money	48	12	rules regulations	0	48
chattanooga epb	40	0	president's budget	24	138	next generation	40	4	national security	24	68
emergency funding	36	0	minimum tax	54	166	stimulus bill	50	16	care costs	35	78
wind energy	80	44	senate bill	4	104	small business	54	22	status quo	14	56

Congress 112 (2011-2013)						Congress 113 (2013-2015)					
Republican	**#R**	**#D**	**Democrat**	**#R**	**#D**	**Republican**	**#R**	**#D**	**Democrat**	**#R**	**#D**
vat rebate	48	0	clean air	0	96	health care	268	170	people disabilities	0	48
taiwan relations	40	0	debt ceiling	16	108	health insurance	154	70	adult education	0	32
ash industry	40	0	district court	0	84	american people	136	52	tar sands	0	26
relations act	36	0	west virginia	8	86	majority leader	98	14	senate republicans	0	24
illinois kirk	28	0	farm bill	6	82	budget agreement	60	4	law school	0	22

madam yeas	20	0	judiciary committee	41	110	tax increase	52	0	district court	0	22
white house	20	0	senate republicans	0	68	care law	76	28	judiciary committee	0	22
ash exports	20	0	payroll tax	22	82	small businesses	70	24	public works	0	22
federal government	20	4	conference report	0	56	environmental impact	52	8	federal judiciary	0	20
obama administration	16	0	air act	0	56	military retirees	48	4	young people	4	24

Congress 114 (2015-2017)						Congress 115 (2017-2019)					
Republican	**#R**	**#D**	**Democrat**	**#R**	**#D**	**Republican**	**#R**	**#D**	**Democrat**	**#R**	**#D**
regular order	64	12	middle class	0	32	tax relief	40	0	affordable care	58	206
coal ash	52	0	health care	6	32	small businesses	50	14	care act	52	176
oil sands	56	4	care act	2	24	secretary state	34	0	health insurance	54	178
greenhouse gas	48	0	roads bridges	4	26	farm bureau	32	0	yield floor	11	76
climate change	52	8	announce california	0	22	law enforcement	44	14	insurance companies	24	74
offer amendments	52	8	affordable care	4	24	national security	34	10	people disabilities	2	48
revenue sharing	44	0	want say	0	18	mike pompeo	22	0	health care	122	164
home care	44	0	environment public	0	16	yucca mountain	22	0	mental health	4	42
energy security	36	0	public works	0	16	appropriations bills	20	0	postal service	0	38
american energy	36	0	works committee	0	16	standard deduction	20	0	health coverage	4	36

Congress 116 (2019-2021)						Congress 117 Session 1 (2021-2022)					
Republican	**#R**	**#D**	**Democrat**	**#R**	**#D**	**Republican**	**#R**	**#D**	**Democrat**	**#R**	**#D**
land trust	134	0	trump tax	0	18	keystone pipeline	4	0	special drawing	0	16
great american	92	2	treasury department	2	18	hoosier seniors	4	0	drawing rights	0	16
american outdoors	90	2	yemeni people	0	12	eliminate cap	2	0	patrick henry	0	14
outdoors act	82	0	supreme court	6	16	cap replace	2	0	helsinki final	0	10
outdoor recreation	64	4	republicans democrats	0	10	replace spending	2	0	stamp act	0	8
public lands	60	4	state charities	0	10	spending community	2	0	haven't added	0	8
national park	54	6	charitable contribution	0	10	care amount	2	0	people district	0	8
land water	78	38	workers consumers	0	8	amount need	2	0	final act	0	8
conservation fund	68	30	million yemenis	0	8	need removes	2	0	jefferson memorial	0	6
water conservation	74	38	suffering yemeni	0	8	removes arbitrary	2	0	taxation without	0	6

Table A2: Robustness Test using Seat Fixed Effects

	Vote (Yea/Nay)								
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Close5 Yes	0.1436***	0.1360***	0.1360***						
	(0.0327)	(0.0326)	(0.0326)						
Close3 Yes				0.1930***	0.1940***	0.1940***			
				(0.0300)	(0.0300)	(0.0300)			
Closest Yes							0.1171***	0.1184***	0.1184***
							(0.0162)	(0.0162)	(0.0162)
Same State Votes	0.1483***	0.1492***	0.1492***	0.1497***	0.1504***	0.1504***	0.1465***	0.1471***	0.1471***
	(0.0066)	(0.0066)	(0.0066)	(0.0065)	(0.0065)	(0.0065)	(0.0066)	(0.0066)	(0.0066)
Same Party Votes	0.8109***	0.8191***	0.8191***	0.7594***	0.7593***	0.7593***	0.8311***	0.8306***	0.8306***
	(0.0324)	(0.0323)	(0.0323)	(0.0305)	(0.0305)	(0.0305)	(0.0183)	(0.0183)	(0.0183)
Senator FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Congress-session FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vote FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Section FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Seat FE	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Congress-session-Seat FE	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Observations	10,812	10,812	10,812	10,812	10,812	10,812	10,812	10,812	10,812
R-squared	0.6997	0.6994	0.6994	0.7004	0.7001	0.7001	0.7007	0.7005	0.7005

Table A3: Exogenous Variation Using the House Lottery Assignment (the Least Desirable Locations)

	Vote (Yea/Nay)								
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Close5 Yes	0.0134***	0.0136***	0.0123***						
	(0.0015)	(0.0015)	(0.0015)						
Close3 Yes				0.0075***	0.0075***	0.0067***			
				(0.0012)	(0.0012)	(0.0012)			
Closest Yes							0.0038***	0.0037***	0.0033***
							(0.0009)	(0.0009)	(0.0009)
Same State Votes	0.1558***	0.1557***	0.1561***	0.1554***	0.1554***	0.1557***	0.1596***	0.1596***	0.1602***
	(0.0013)	(0.0013)	(0.0013)	(0.0013)	(0.0013)	(0.0013)	(0.0015)	(0.0015)	(0.0015)
Same Party Votes	0.9623***	0.9622***	0.9631***	0.9626***	0.9625***	0.9634***	0.9592***	0.9592***	0.9600***
	(0.0009)	(0.0009)	(0.0009)	(0.0009)	(0.0009)	(0.0009)	(0.0010)	(0.0010)	(0.0010)
Same Building Votes	-0.0874***	-0.0874***	-0.0875***	-0.0813***	-0.0812***	-0.0818***	-0.0780***	-0.0782***	-0.0795***
	(0.0023)	(0.0023)	(0.0023)	(0.0021)	(0.0021)	(0.0021)	(0.0021)	(0.0021)	(0.0021)
Senator FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Congress-session FE	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Vote FE	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Observations	937,065	937,065	937,065	929,619	929,619	929,619	749,426	749,426	749,426
R-squared	0.7267	0.7267	0.7275	0.7267	0.7267	0.7275	0.7265	0.7266	0.7275

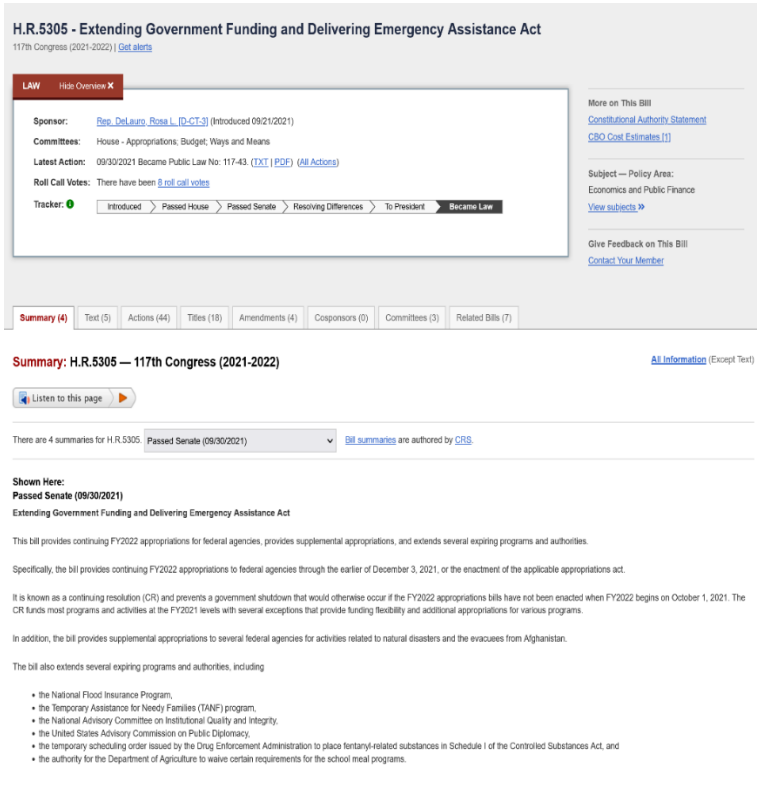
Table A4: Marginal Votes

	Vote (Yea/Nay)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Close3 Yes	0.2020***	0.1965***	0.1991***	0.1935***
	(0.0290)	(0.0300)	(0.0291)	(0.0300)
Margin3	0.0212*	0.0134		
	(0.0118)	(0.0124)		
Close3 Yes*Margin3	0.0244	0.0338*		
	(0.0172)	(0.0181)		
Margin5			-0.0011	-0.0076
			(0.0106)	(0.0111)
Close3 Yes*Margin5			0.0403***	0.0481***
			(0.0152)	(0.0159)
Same State Votes	0.1477***	0.1517***	0.1484***	0.1525***
	(0.0064)	(0.0065)	(0.0064)	(0.0066)
Same Party Votes	0.7507***	0.7528***	0.7458***	0.7476***
	(0.0296)	(0.0306)	(0.0297)	(0.0307)
Congress FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Session FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vote FE	No	Yes	No	Yes
Senator FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	10,897	10,812	10,897	10,812
R-squared	0.6897	0.7007	0.6896	0.7007

Table A5: The Dynamics of Voting Decisions

	Vote (Yea/Nay)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Close5 Yes	0.1538***		
	(0.0325)		
Early votes	0.0034	0.0067	0.0161
	(0.0108)	(0.0106)	(0.0099)
Close5 Yes*Early votes	-0.0137		
	(0.0142)		
Close3 Yes		0.2070***	
		(0.0297)	
Close3 Yes*Early votes		-0.0189	
		(0.0139)	
Closest Yes			0.1393***
			(0.0169)
Closest Yes*Early votes			-0.0318**
			(0.0125)
Same State Votes	0.1452***	0.1464***	0.1428***
	(0.0064)	(0.0064)	(0.0064)
Same Party Votes	0.8097***	0.7570***	0.8274***
	(0.0315)	(0.0296)	(0.0177)
Senator FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Congress FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Session FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	10,897	10,897	10,897
R-squared	0.6884	0.6892	0.6898

Figure A1: An Example of Voting on H.R. 5305
Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act



H.R.5305 - Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act

117th Congress (2021-2022) | Get alerts

LAW Hide Overview

Sponsor: Rep. DeLauro, Rosa L. [D-CT-3] (Introduced 09/21/2021)

Committees: House - Appropriations; Budget; Ways and Means

Latest Action: 09/30/2021 Became Public Law No: 117-43. (TXT | PDF) (All Actions)

Roll Call Votes: There have been 8 roll call votes

Tracker: Introduced > Passed House > Passed Senate > Resolving Differences > To President > Became Law

More on This Bill
Constitutional Authority Statement
CBO Cost Estimates [1]

Subject — Policy Area:
Economics and Public Finance
View subjects

Give Feedback on This Bill
Contact Your Member

Summary (4) | Text (5) | Actions (44) | Titles (18) | Amendments (4) | Cosponsors (0) | Committees (3) | Related Bills (7)

Summary: H.R.5305 — 117th Congress (2021-2022)

All Information (Except Text)

Listen to this page

There are 4 summaries for H.R.5305. Passed Senate (09/30/2021) Bill summaries are authored by CRS.

Shown Here:
Passed Senate (09/30/2021)
Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act

This bill provides continuing FY2022 appropriations for federal agencies, provides supplemental appropriations, and extends several expiring programs and authorities.

Specifically, the bill provides continuing FY2022 appropriations to federal agencies through the earlier of December 3, 2021, or the enactment of the applicable appropriations act.

It is known as a continuing resolution (CR) and prevents a government shutdown that would otherwise occur if the FY2022 appropriations bills have not been enacted when FY2022 begins on October 1, 2021. The CR funds most programs and activities at the FY2021 levels with several exceptions that provide funding flexibility and additional appropriations for various programs.

In addition, the bill provides supplemental appropriations to several federal agencies for activities related to natural disasters and the evacuees from Afghanistan.

The bill also extends several expiring programs and authorities, including

- the National Flood Insurance Program,
- the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program,
- the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity,
- the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy,
- the temporary scheduling order issued by the Drug Enforcement Administration to place fentanyl-related substances in Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act, and
- the authority for the Department of Agriculture to waive certain requirements for the school meal programs.

Panel A: Bill Information for H.R. 5303

Grouped By Vote Position

YEAs ---65

Baldwin (D-WI)	Hassan (D-NH)	Reed (D-RI)
Bennet (D-CO)	Heinrich (D-NM)	Romney (R-UT)
Blumenthal (D-CT)	Hickenlooper (D-CO)	Rosen (D-NV)
Blunt (R-MO)	Hirono (D-HI)	Rounds (R-SD)
Booker (D-NJ)	Kaine (D-VA)	Sanders (I-VT)
Brown (D-OH)	Kelly (D-AZ)	Schatz (D-HI)
Burr (R-NC)	Kennedy (R-LA)	Schumer (D-NY)
Cantwell (D-WA)	King (I-ME)	Shaheen (D-NH)
Capito (R-WV)	Klobuchar (D-MN)	Shelby (R-AL)
Cardin (D-MD)	Leahy (D-VT)	Sinema (D-AZ)
Carper (D-DE)	Lujan (D-NM)	Smith (D-MN)
Casey (D-PA)	Manchin (D-WV)	Stabenow (D-MI)
Cassidy (R-LA)	Markey (D-MA)	Tester (D-MT)
Collins (R-ME)	McConnell (R-KY)	Tillis (R-NC)
Coons (D-DE)	Menendez (D-NJ)	Van Hollen (D-MD)
Cornyn (R-TX)	Merkley (D-OR)	Warner (D-VA)
Cortez Masto (D-NV)	Murkowski (R-AK)	Warnock (D-GA)
Duckworth (D-IL)	Murphy (D-CT)	Warren (D-MA)
Durbin (D-IL)	Murray (D-WA)	Whitehouse (D-RI)
Feinstein (D-CA)	Ossoff (D-GA)	Wyden (D-OR)
Gillibrand (D-NY)	Padilla (D-CA)	Young (R-IN)
Graham (R-SC)	Peters (D-MI)	

NAYs ---35

Barrasso (R-WY)	Hagerty (R-TN)	Portman (R-OH)
Blackburn (R-TN)	Hawley (R-MO)	Risch (R-ID)
Boozman (R-AR)	Hoeven (R-ND)	Rubio (R-FL)
Braun (R-IN)	Hyde-Smith (R-MS)	Sasse (R-NE)
Cotton (R-AR)	Inhofe (R-OK)	Scott (R-FL)
Cramer (R-ND)	Johnson (R-WI)	Scott (R-SC)
Crapo (R-ID)	Lankford (R-OK)	Sullivan (R-AK)
Cruz (R-TX)	Lee (R-UT)	Thune (R-SD)
Daines (R-MT)	Lummis (R-WY)	Toomey (R-PA)
Ernst (R-IA)	Marshall (R-KS)	Tuberville (R-AL)
Fischer (R-NE)	Moran (R-KS)	Wicker (R-MS)
Grassley (R-IA)	Paul (R-KY)	

Panel B: Voting Record associated with H.R. 5303

Figure A2: Congressional Record on Vote Discussions

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 117th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 167 WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2021 *No. 171*

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable GARY C. PETERS, a Senator from the State of Michigan.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, who directs the movements of the stars, we look to You for help to sustain us during life's challenging season. Lord, we rejoice because repeatedly in our history You have saved us from trouble. You have sent angels to guard and defend us. We continue to remember the many times You have blessed us beyond what we deserve.

Today, guide our lawmakers. Fill them with reverential awe as they remember that those who trust You will lack no good thing. Though they may face many troubles, You will continue to rescue them. Thank You for never forsaking us.

We pray in Your loving Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 30, 2021.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable GARY C. PETERS, a Senator from the State of Michigan, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. PETERS thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

EXTENDING GOVERNMENT FUNDING AND DELIVERING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE ACT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H.R. 5305, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5305) making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, and for providing emergency assistance, and for other purposes.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The Republican leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, today the Senate will consider and pass a government funding bill and do our part to avoid a shutdown.

The continuing resolution contains a number of key items that Republicans called for. That includes supplemental funds to help resettle vetted Afghan refugees and hurricane recovery aid for Louisiana.

It is seriously disappointing that the Democratic side would not let us include funding for Israel's Iron Dome in the base text. It honestly baffles me that defensive aid to our ally Israel has become a thorny subject for the political left.

But, overall, this is encouraging progress. The Democratic majority has begun to realize that the way forward on basic governing duties matches the roadmap that Republicans have been laying out for months. On government funding, what Republicans laid out all along was a clean continuing resolution without the poison pill of a debt limit increase. That is exactly what we will pass today. Earlier this week, the Democratic leader tried to muscle through something different through a partisan jam, but it failed. Now the government will be funded as we laid out. That is step 1.

Next will come step 2: the debt ceiling. And we have clearly laid out the way forward there as well. As I have explained since last July—last July—Democrats need to begin the fast-track process for handling this issue through reconciliation. Clumsy attempts at partisan jams by the majority will not change that reality. It didn't work on government funding, and it won't work on the debt limit. They will just be wasting valuable time.

I think this reality is hopefully starting to dawn on our colleagues. Multiple leading House Democrats acknowledged just this week that their unified Democratic government is fully capable—fully capable—of fast-tracking a debt limit increase on their own. Nonpartisan experts have confirmed that they have plenty of time to get this done before late October.

At the same time that the Senate Democratic leader says, incorrectly, that he doesn't have enough time, he has spent weeks of the Senate's time processing midlevel nominations. Today, the majority is spending multiple hours to confirm a Bureau of

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Land Management nominee who literally collaborated with ecoterrorists, fiddling away day after day after day while they pretend they lack the time to do their most basic job.

Senate Republicans have been totally transparent. We have given Democrats a step-by-step guide to governing in this environment and months of advance notice to get it done. The conclusion to draw from this week is very clear: Clumsy efforts at partisan jams do not work. What works is when the majority accepts the reality of the situation.

We are able to fund the government today because the majority accepted reality. The same thing will need to happen on the debt limit next week.

TRIBUTE TO SUE THARP

Now, Madam President, on an entirely different matter, few public servants know Western Kentucky and its people as well as my good friend Sue Tharp. Sue has served as my team's Paducah-based field assistant since 1985. She is retiring this month after nearly four decades of uninterrupted service to the Commonwealth.

Sue holds the record for being the longest continually serving employee from my entire career in public service. She has been with me since day one of my Senate service.

So, today, I would like to honor this one-of-a-kind Kentuckian whose steady leadership in Western Kentucky has been integral to my office's mission to serve the Bluegrass and the people who call it home.

Now, when you ask Sue's colleagues to describe their coworker, you hear one word again and again and again: dedicated. In 36 years, Sue has scarcely missed a day in the office. She tackles each constituent problem with her quick wit and her smile. Her knowledge of Western Kentucky is encyclopedic. And Sue has played a key part in training almost every other field staffer on our team, sharing hard-won wisdom with the next generation of public servants.

So when I think of Sue's service to Kentucky, two images come to mind. The first is Sue winning over even the most impassioned callers to my office, whether the call started out friendly or not. Sue will listen carefully, record their concerns, and do all she can to help. But then she also invariably will end up discussing other favorite topics, such as quilting. Sue is an avid volunteer at the National Quilt Museum in Paducah. So when the conversation wraps up, Sue will be smiling, and you know the person who just hung up on the other end is smiling too.

The second image comes from an event called Fancy Farm, which is an annual picnic in Graves County. It is the crown jewel of Western Kentucky's heritage. Sue is one of the event's most enthusiastic attendees. She often travels down early to peruse the area's many antique stores. She loves attending the church barbecue, taking in the speeches, and cheering with the crowd. Any politician who steps up to that podium is guaranteed to notice Sue amidst the throng.

Sue's day job has been public service for more than three decades, but even that hasn't soaked up all of her love and service for her community. She is also an enthusiastic volunteer, a frequent participant in Paducah's ambassador program, and one of the city's all-around biggest boosters.

If you sample a Paducah boat tour or roll into town for a ribbon-cutting, it might well be Sue Tharp welcoming you to town, decked out in the ambassador's characteristic red jacket. Visit the Quilt Museum, and it will be Sue handing you a brochure. Vacation in one of Western Kentucky's beautiful parks, and Sue Tharp will be waving to you from the door of her RV.

Sue's dedication to Western Kentucky and its people is boundless. For all these years, she understood that while my staff report to me, all of us report to the people of Kentucky. In fact, at one point I believe Sue even lived directly across the street from our Paducah office.

So while Sue is departing our team, I am positive she isn't finished serving Kentucky. This is just the next chapter. More time to volunteer, more time to be generous to her friends and her neighbors, and more time with her husband Dan and son Benjamin.

So, Sue, I couldn't be more grateful. Thank you for your decades of hard work and for your lasting impact on the Commonwealth.

TRIBUTE TO JANE LEE

Madam President, on one final matter, the pressing matters I discussed at the beginning of my remarks suggest I could not find a more appropriate time to honor the sterling staff expert who has advised me on budget issues and appropriations for over 5 years. But, in another sense, it pains me to say there couldn't be a worse time because the occasion for this tribute is that Jane Lee is soon taking leave of the Senate and taking the next step in her career.

Jane arrived in my office with a big job to do but the perfect skill set to do it. She studied at a couple of schools called Stanford and Columbia. She had worked in the private sector, risen through the ranks at OMB during the Bush 43 administration, worked for a House Budget chairman named Paul Ryan, and held leading rolls with Senate Appropriations and Republican Whip JOHN CORNYN.

Jane's resume was impeccable, her references unimpeachable. She was already a force of nature on Capitol Hill, so my expectations, as you can imagine, were high from the start. But for about 5½ years, day in and day out, through a never-ending catalog of serious challenges, Jane kept raising the bar higher and higher.

Jane's colleagues throughout the Senate admire her determination and her dogged focus. She is methodical and meticulous. She grasps both the big political picture and the finest policy details much more capably than most people could hope to grasp either.

When you handle budget talks and funding negotiations for a leadership office, you are kind of a hybrid player-coach to offices and committees all across the Senate. Jane is a skilled leader. She can get a diverse team driving toward a goal with warmth and good humor but also tenacity and total professionalism.

For countless major bipartisan and bicameral compromise bills over the past 5 years, Jane has been one of very last staff experts on either side holding the pen. She is a principled fighter, but once negotiations concluded, everyone on both sides trusted Jane to be an honorable and honest broker. That speaks volumes.

Earlier this week, one of Jane's colleagues remarked simply, ''I don't think I've ever worked with someone like Jane.'' This turns out to be the universal consensus of everyone. Her knowledge and her instincts spill outside her portfolio and make everyone look better. The high standards to which she holds herself are infectious.

She marshals the knowledge and the relationships that come with many years of government service but also inexhaustible earnestness, energy, and enthusiasm for the fray.

So Jane is exactly the kind of person you would hope to find in the government, just the kind of worker a Senate office is lucky to find, and just the sort of public servant the country deserves.

I don't think anyone would be terribly surprised if, one day, the Senate finds itself refamiliarizing ourselves with Jane's qualifications in a formal capacity.

I have to note that Jane would hasten to redirect all this praise toward her parents Michael and Jean, as well as her grandmother Hee Soon. She is a proud daughter of first-generation Americans and small business entrepreneurs whose love of country and commitment to hard work have shaped their daughter's life at every step.

At clutch moments, these qualities have benefited not just me, not just our conference, but our entire country. Today, one such time especially stands out in my memory.

It was a year and a half ago when COVID thrust our country into a health crisis and an economic crisis at the very same time. During the bipartisan scramble that built a historic CARES Act, Jane, our Swiss Army knife, wound up as my liaison to the Small Business Committee. She poured herself into helping Senators set up, preserve, and protect the landmark Paycheck Protection Program that saved a huge, huge number of jobs and countless small businesses exactly like the ones she grew up watching her parents manage.

But while Jane's commitment to her work has been peerless, her commitment to her family is greater still. Her beloved husband Tom and her son Mitchell and her parents and grandmother need to see more of her than

her bottomless Senate portfolio has often permitted. So while the whole institution will sorely miss her, we also join her in celebrating the new adventures to come.

To our incredibly competent budget expert, our cherished colleague, and one of the Senate's most talented jazz and rock-and-roll singers, we say not just "farewell" and "good luck" but "bravo" on a simply outstanding performance.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

H.R. 5305

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I begin this morning with some good news: Today, the Senate will pass a continuing resolution that will eliminate the possibility of a government shutdown tonight. The CR we are voting on will keep the government funded until December 3, provide funding to help process and resettle Afghan refugees, and finally deliver on critical disaster aid for Americans battered by the storms and wildfires this summer.

As part of today's agreement, we will hold a vote series starting at 10:30 this morning on three amendments offered by Senators COTTON, MARSHALL, and BRAUN. We will hold a vote on final passage soon thereafter, and I am confident the House will approve this measure later this afternoon and send it to the President's desk before funding runs out.

This is a good outcome, one I am happy we are getting done. With so many things to take care of here in Washington, the last thing the American people need is for the government to grind to a halt. But, of course, we have more work to do. Just as our Republican colleagues realize that a government shutdown would be catastrophic, they should realize that a default on the national debt would be even worse. I will have more to say on this later.

NOMINATIONS

Madam President, now on nominations, despite a week marked by Republican obstruction, the Senate is making great progress on our responsibility to confirm President Biden's nominees to his administration.

Last week, a handful of Members made a scene here on the Senate floor in a doomed effort to stymie a number of nominees critical to our national defense. I am glad to say that, over the course of the week, we have successfully confirmed these individuals despite these theatrics from that handful of Republicans Senators.

This Chamber will not allow anyone to hijack the confirmation process to score political points and to prevent these nominations from being approved. It will not happen. We will move forward. It will take a little more time, but we will get it done.

Today, the Senate will keep going. After passing the CR, we will turn to the nomination of Rohit Chopra to serve as the Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Mr. Chopra is the right man to lead this Agency tasked with protecting Americans from predatory financial institutions. He is a veteran of the CFPB from the Obama years, where he specialized in protecting students from unscrupulous practices of student loan providers.

Under President Trump, who didn't give a hoot about the average person, the CFPB spent more time protecting the likes of payday lenders and for-profit colleges than American consumers. With Mr. Chopra's confirmation, the CFPB will return to fighting on the side of the American worker instead of big financial institutions. I look forward to his confirmation today.

After that, we will turn to the nomination of Tracy Stone-Manning to lead the Bureau of Land Management. Few Agencies are as important for protecting and promoting America's public lands. In the years to come, the BLM will play an even greater strategic role in our government's effort to fight climate change.

Ms. Stone-Manning is a familiar face here in the Senate. She served as a staffer for Senator TESTER before moving to Montana to work for then-Governor Bullock. As head of Montana's environmental agency, she earned the reputation not only as a skilled policymaker but also as an honest broker, one who commanded the respect of conservationists and ranchers alike.

Of course, you would never guess that by listening to some of the histrionics coming from the other side. Unable to disqualify Ms. Stone-Manning on the merits, which is so obvious to just about anyone who studies it, some of our Republican colleagues have used her nomination to launch cheap, out-of-context attacks. Thankfully, no one is taking these attacks seriously.

Because of her exceptional qualifications, Tracy Stone-Manning has broad support of the Democratic caucus to lead the BLM, and I expect her nomination to be approved later today.

Finally, I am also pleased that today President Biden is announcing the nomination of another outstanding judge from my home State: Dale Ho to serve as district judge for the Southern District of New York.

Like so many of President Biden's judicial nominees, Mr. Ho is a prominent civil rights lawyer and voting rights expert. A graduate of Yale and Princeton, a veteran of the NAACP and the ACLU, Mr. Ho would bring an impressive resume to the judiciary. I am thrilled that President Biden has taken my advice to nominate Mr. Ho, and I look forward to working on his confirmation.

In a more general note on this issue, I am proud that the Senate is not only increasing the demographic diversity on the bench—more women, more people of color, and more individuals from immigrant families—but also its occupational diversity as well—voting rights experts, civil rights lawyers, public defenders, and more. This is how we work to strengthen not only diversity in our judiciary but the trust that it represent all Americans.

DEBT LIMIT

Madam President, finally, on the debt limit, just as our Republican colleagues realized a government shutdown would be catastrophic, they should realize that a default on the national debt would be even worse.

Throughout American history, the Federal Government has consistently paid its debt on time. The unbroken promise is what made the United States the leading economy in the world for so long, benefiting countless millions of families. So when we talk about extending the debt limit, that is what is at stake.

All week long, Senate Democrats presented our Republican colleagues with reasonable proposals to prevent a default from happening. We offered to hold a simple majority vote so Democrats could fix the debt ceiling ourselves. They rejected that offer.

We are not even asking Republicans to vote yes, even though we know they should, but, instead, just to get out of the way; just get out of the way, and let us keep the faith and credit in America's finances intact. Unfortunately, Republicans spent the week solidifying themselves as the party of default; the party that says America doesn't pay its bills; the party that would send our economy into unknown and dangerous territory.

On Monday, Republicans unanimously blocked a measure that would have funded the government and raised the debt ceiling.

On Tuesday, the Republican leader blocked the proposal to raise the debt ceiling with only Democratic votes—exactly what Republicans insisted they wanted from the start.

By Wednesday, it was clear that Republicans were committed not only to voting in favor of default but even preventing Democrats from solving this risk crisis on our own.

Every day that Republicans continue their cynical obstruction, they risk causing irreparable harm to the economy. The last time Republicans played games with the full faith and credit of the United States, our sovereign debt was downgraded. This time around, the consequences for American families could be far worse.

Despite Republicans' intransigence, the facts have not changed. We must raise the debt ceiling. We cannot allow America to default.

Yesterday, the House approved legislation providing for a clean debt limit extension until the end of 2022. At the appropriate time, I will move to proceed to its consideration, which could come as early as next week.

By now, we are not asking Republicans to vote with us to solve the debt limit crisis they have created. If they want to oppose this measure and bring us closer to financial disaster, they can write their names in the history books as the Senators who let the country default for the first time ever. But Republicans need to get out of the way so Senate Democrats can address the issue quickly and without needlessly endangering the stability of our economy.

We cannot afford the risk of a drawn-out, unpredictable process sought by the minority, which could very well actually cause a default, no. The way to resolve this crisis is much more simple. Either Republicans snap out of their insane position and work with Democrats or they get out of the way while we solve the problem ourselves.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the previously scheduled votes begin at 11:05 a.m. and that all provisions of the previous order remain in effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

H.R. 5305

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, we will have before us a substitute amendment identical to H.R. 5305, which we will be voting on today. H.R. 5305 is the House-passed continuing resolution, except that the provision raising the debt ceiling has been removed because Republicans continue to block raising the debt ceiling.

But the stop-gap measure really keeps the government funded through December 3. It provides $28 billion to help States that have been ravaged by hurricanes and wildfires. It provides critical assistance to Afghan refugees who fled the Taliban in the wake of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. Many of those refugees have worked with American forces and helped us. So I urge all members to vote for it.

But I agree with the majority leader that it is shameful we can't reach an agreement today to raise the debt ceiling and protect the full faith and credit of the United States. If Republicans don't want to vote to protect the full faith and credit of the United States, if the Republicans don't want to vote for the money that pays for the programs that they had supported under Donald Trump, well, then, stand out of the way and Democrats can raise the debt ceiling.

Over and over, the last few days, we heard from Members on the other side of the aisle speak about the importance of passing a continuing resolution that contained disaster relief to help hurricane-ravaged States, like Louisiana and Texas. They are pleading for help. Well, we are about to pass a CR that provides that help.

I have always taken the position that if there is a disaster in any State, that we should all come together to provide assistance because we are the United States of America; it is not just one State. Whether it is my State of Vermont or Texas or any other State, we can provide the assistance.

But they may go home and say: Hey, we voted to get money, disaster relief for our hurricane-ravaged States.

Somebody is going to say: Well, wait a minute, where does the money come from to help recover and build if the U.S. Treasury is literally out of money?

In other words, they have a position where they can vote for something that would be popular back home, and it is kind of like "the check is in the mail." We are not going to give you any money for it, but, boy, we are going to speak about how important it is to help.

Many Senators here today want to provide a billion dollars to fund Israel's so-called Iron Dome, even though Israel has not spent the money we have already given them. Well, we will pass a bill to do just that. But if there is no money in the U.S. Treasury to pay the bills, it is nothing but an empty promise to one of our closest allies. We are voting on a blank check.

According to the Treasury Department, we are going to reach the debt ceiling in 18 days. Now, I say that because we ought to know what we are not voting on. What we are not voting on—as the majority leader pointed out, we are not voting on the debt ceiling.

We could say: Oh, we are helping hurricane-ravaged areas; oh, we are making others happy with things we vote for, but we are not voting for the money.

If we don't raise the debt ceiling, once that happens, we run out of money to pay our men and women in uniform. We all support our men and women in uniform. We are just not going to put in the money to pay them. We can't send out Social Security checks. Find a Senator in this place that would say they are against Social Security. But to put the money in for it, they are not ready to do that. Just saying: Oh, we all support our veterans. Of course, we do. We are just not going to put the money in to support them.

For the first time in history, the U.S. will default on its debt. The economy will take such a hit that it will take years to recover. Millions of people will be out of work. Bills will not be paid. Watch the stock market go down faster than we have ever seen and millions of Americans' lifetime savings will be at risk. Oh, we are for all of those—we just—you are on your own.

Now, the Republican Party is playing political games with U.S. economy and with people's livelihoods, and it is shameful. Senator MCCONNELL said he would not provide a single Republican vote to raise the debt ceiling. It is interesting because most of this debt was incurred under a Republican President and a Republican-controlled Senate.

But as irresponsible as it is for the Republican leader to say we won't vote to pay for the debt that we incur, we, on the Democratic side, are prepared to show what leadership looks like and do it all on our own. We are willing to pass this with Democratic votes.

But the Republicans continue to filibuster. If we don't resolve the debt issue in the coming days, make no mistake where the blame lies: squarely at the feet of the Senate Republicans.

When we go back and say all these wonderful things we have done for you in the continuing resolution, but we are not going to pay for it—we need to pass the CR today, of course, to avert a government shutdown tomorrow. A government shutdown, as we know from those in the last administration, wastes billions, accomplishes nothing. But it is also essential not only to pass the continuing resolution, but to unite and pass the debt limit extension, or there is not going to be money in the Treasury—no money to pay for the funding of this bill for American families, for the elderly, for our troops.

Now, prior to the final passage, we will have a series of three amendment votes. With only 13 hours for the government set to shut down—13 hours and a few minutes—any one of these amendments could peril the continuing resolution. They are controversial. They could complicate House passage. So I would urge a "no" vote on all three amendments and an "aye" vote for final passage.

Any one of those things in those three amendments, bring them up as legislation somewhere else, but don't shut down the government because you didn't get your political amendments.

AMENDMENT NO. 3830

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.)

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I call up amendment No. 3830.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Vermont [Mr. LEAHY] proposes an amendment numbered 3830.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

AMENDMENT NOS. 3833, 3831, AND 3832 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3830

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to call up all remaining amendments, in order, with respect to H.R. 3505 en bloc, and ask that they be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the amendments by number en bloc.

AMENDMENT NO. 3833 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3830

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

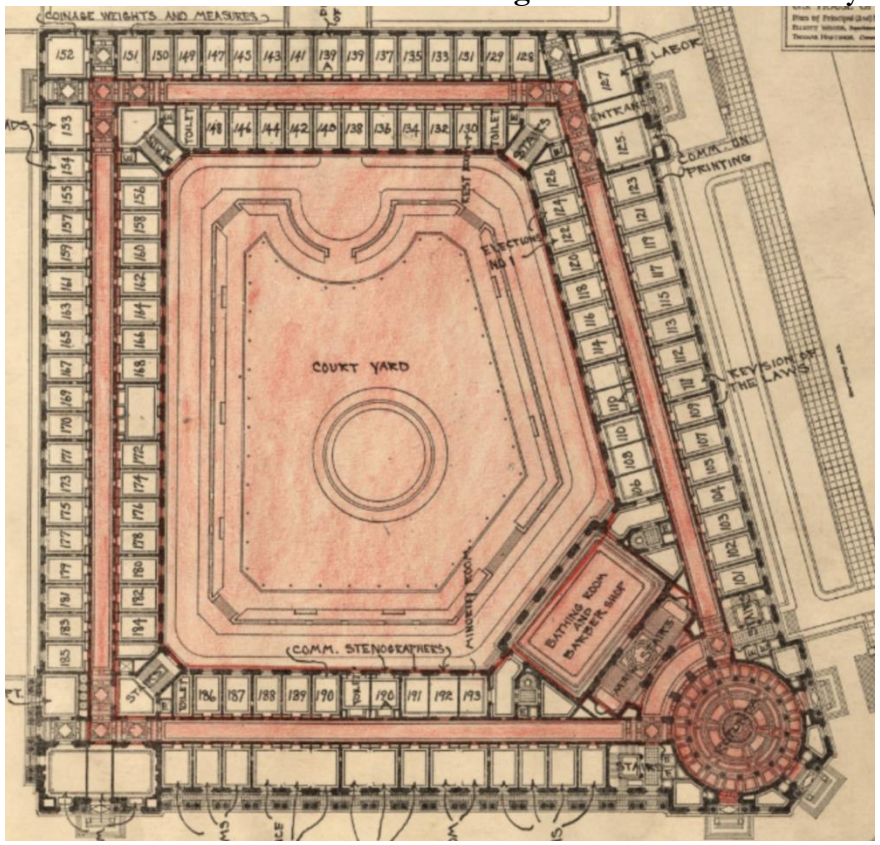
The Senator from Vermont [Mr. LEAHY], for Mr. COTTON and others, proposes an amendment numbered 3833 to amendment No. 3830.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To modify the immigration benefits for which certain Afghan nationals are eligible)

Beginning on page 80, strike line 6 and all that follows through page 83, line 4, and insert the following:

Figure A3: Cannon and Rayburn Building Floor Map



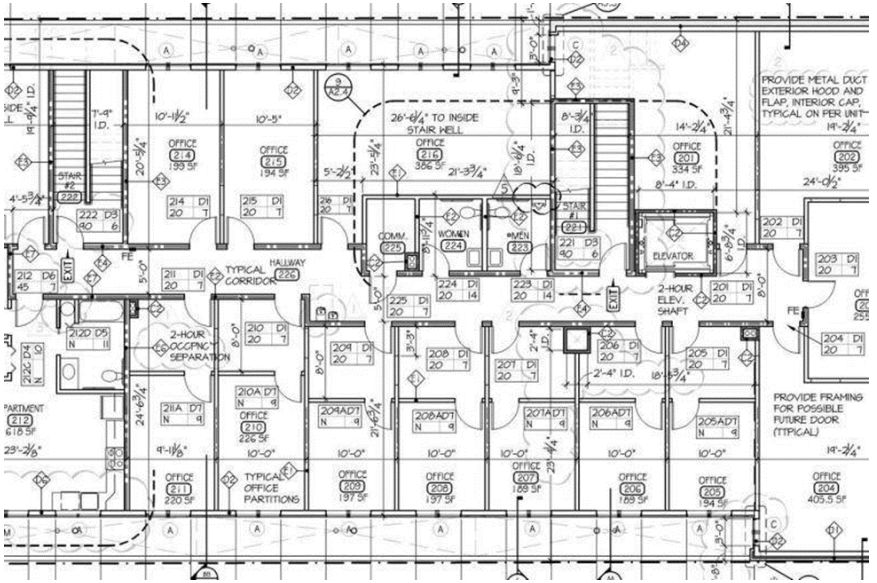


Figure A4: Office Lottery Draw for Incoming Freshman in the House



Numbered chips are placed in order before the start of the room lottery draw and selection for the incoming members of the 114th Congress in November 2014. (Bill Clark/CQ Roll Call file photo)