

The Impact of Presidential Selection Methods on Executive-Legislative Conflict

MARCIA LYNN WHICKER

*Professor of Public Administration
Rutgers University*

RUTH ANN STRICKLAND

*Associate Professor of Political Science/Criminal Justice
Appalachian State University*

Abstract

This paper used computer simulation to test the effectiveness of nine different presidential selection methods in generating executive-legislative conflict. Interest group ratings from the 101st Congress are used to simulate presidential nominees selected under both partisan and non-partisan methods. Three measures of ideological conflict for liberalism, conservatism, and the average ideological difference of the two are calculated between the simulated presidents and each member of Congress, and then averaged across all members of Congress. Through sensitivity analysis, the current method of selection which sequences partisan primaries in small states first in the process is found to result in the most executive-legislative conflict of all the methods examined. Nonpartisan methods generally result in less conflict than their partisan counterparts, although reductions in conflict may be achieved with the adoption of certain partisan selection options.

Sources of Executive-Legislative Conflict

The separation of powers and checks and balances structure instituted by the Founders in the U.S. Constitution is an “invitation to struggle,” especially between the executive and legislative branches of government (Fisher 1985). The Founders’ intent was to promote compromise and accommodation, but their invention also produces hostility and divided government. Power shifts and turf battles between the presidency and Congress are a staple feature of American politics, making conflict inevitable. Loose party labels, issues or triggering events, and personalities combined with the decentralized structure make for a lethal cocktail (Davidson, 1988). The relationship between Congress and the president has also been characterized as “two on a seesaw,” so that when one is up, the other is down (Hogan, 1985: 127). Internal power fluctuations and intervening factors further complicate the ebb and flow of power between the two branches (Davidson, 1988: 20).

Much tension is generated between these two branches particularly when one part occupies the presidency and another party dominates Congress. Even without

this precondition, battles for supremacy on agenda-setting and over legislative programs occur as the President and the 535 members of Congress may have different attitudes toward national policy and the directions it should take (Edwards, 1980, 1989). Partisan conflict merely reinforces and intensifies natural institutional rivalries and policy preference differences (Pfiffner, 1991; Whicker and Moore, 1988: 7; Light, 1983).

Presidential popularity, the level of party factionalism, the ability of majority presidents to exert control over the committee system in Congress, the cohesion of the loyal opposition and the ability of presidents to capitalize on crosss-pressured representatives in order to build supportive coalitions affect executive-legislative relations and the probability of conflict (Bond and Fleisher, 1990; Gilbert, 1989; Pritchard, 1986; Rivers and Rose, 1985; Sullivan, 1988; Bond and Fleisher, 1984; Covington, 1988; Kerbel, 1989; Gribbin, 1989). Presidential ambitions and agendas have also been linked to legislative success of White House proposals (Forshee and Renka, 1991).

One source of potential conflict between presidents and members of Congress lies in the different constituencies to whom each must appeal. Fenno (1978) has shown the significant impact member perceptions of their own constituencies can have on the actions of members of Congress and how members may have several different constituencies at any point in time. Whicker and Moore (1988) have identified key “constituent” audiences to whom successful presidents must listen and whom they must persuade. Yet differences in selection methods may also result in presidents who survived the approval of different geographic and party constituents. Surviving presidential contenders under various selection methods may assume, or at least closely approximate the views of key constituencies who dominated their selection process. Thus, the views and ideological leanings of key “gatekeeper” constituencies under various selection methods may also be a source of conflict between the president who adopts them to become elected and members of Congress.

The purpose of this paper is to examine presidential-congressional conflict generated by different geographical and party constituencies on whom presidents might depend under various selection methods. Given the “deadlock of democracy” viewed with alarm by some scholars (Burns, 1963), methods which produce less probable conflict, *ceteris paribus*, are preferred. Since the method of presidential selection is not varied at any point in time, and has varied only incrementally across time, a deductive simulation approach using sensitivity testing will be used.

Presidential Selection Methods

Numerous methods for selecting the nation’s chief executive have been suggested, from the times of the Founders to the present. Among them are the direct vote plan which eliminates the electoral college, and the district system which parallels congressional structure by allocating a single electoral vote to each congressional district to be cast in accordance with the majority popular vote within each district, and two additional electoral votes to each state to be cast according to statewide popular votes. A proposed proportional plan would retain the current

apportionment of electors based on representatives and senators in Congress but would allow each state to cast its electoral votes in blocks for different candidates in proportion to the popular vote each candidate received within the state. The automatic system plan is actually not a separate plan but is compatible with one of the first three; it would restrict any discretion of electors to deviate from the popular vote (Peirce and Longley, 1981; Sayre and Parris, 1970; Matthews, 1973).

While many of these plans have been the subject of great scholarly debate, they have not been given serious political attention nor placed on the national agenda in recent decades. Thus this analysis explores a more limited range of presidential options, some of which have been seriously considered or have been tried by one or both parties in recent elections. The presidential selection methods considered here are: the direct partisan national primary; the regional partisan primary; the regional nonpartisan primary; and sequencing of state primaries under both partisan and nonpartisan primaries to emphasize large states early in the selection process. The current process which emphasizes small atypical states (New Hampshire and Iowa) early in the nomination phase of presidential selection will also be considered under both partisan and nonpartisan conditions. These selection methods will be compared using simulation and sensitivity analysis applied to data from the 101st Congress to determine the likely impact of presidential selection method on potential executive-legislative conflict.

Partisan State Primaries, Small States First

Under the current system of selecting presidential nominees, some but not all states have primaries. Reforms which began in the late sixties resulted in the spread of primaries. The Democrats held seventeen primaries in 1968 while the Republicans held sixteen. In 1988, however, the number of primaries increased to 38 overall for both parties (Nelson, 1989; Crotty, 1985).

Traditionally, the first state to conduct a presidential primary in a presidential election year has been New Hampshire. In recent elections, the role of New Hampshire as the first indicator of presidential candidate appeal has been overtaken by the presidential caucuses in Iowa. Proponents of the current system argue that it protects minorities, allowing them to wield influence by using significant blocs of electoral votes within a state. It recognizes the role of states as important political units and requires that Presidents obtain a geographically broad constituency. Critics have argued that the system is complicated and inconsistent since states are allowed to choose electors differently. Also, great attention is focused on atypical smaller, less populous states in the early days of a presidential campaign which limits the field of candidates to those who evidence appeal to a relatively homogeneous set of voters in those small states (Berman, 1987). Partisan constituencies in small states limit presidential candidates even further in their ability to articulate views appealing to diverse audiences.

Partisan State Primaries, Large States First

To counter the early impact of New Hampshire and Iowa in limiting the initial field of presidential contenders, some proponents of change have advocated

altering the sequence of state partisan primaries to place large states earlier in the selection process. Proponents argue this method would retain much of the flexibility of the current system but would force presidential candidates surviving early stages of the electoral process to be more representative of the entire nation. In particular, Democrats in California, a large heterogeneous state with over one-tenth of the entire national electorate, have considered moving their primary to the early phases of the process. Party officials in other large states could consider such sequence changes as well.

Partisan Home State Primaries of Presidential Hopefuls

One variation on the current system is the early sequencing of state partisan primaries which are the home states of presidential hopefuls and favorite sons. This would allow home state candidates to appeal initially to constituencies with which they have the greatest familiarity and likely the greatest compatibility.

Nonpartisan State Primaries, Small States First

Nonpartisan state primaries provide an option to partisan state primaries. States that do not have party registration in essence move toward nonpartisan primaries by allowing any voter to participate in any primary. Sequencing small states first with this option, however, restricts initial candidate constituencies to more homogeneous audiences, although not as homogeneous as partisan primaries in small states.

Nonpartisan State Primaries, Large States First

Nonpartisan primaries may also be conducted initially in large states. By virtue of state size, initial candidate constituencies are likely somewhat more representative of the whole nation than are small state primaries. The nonpartisan character further broadens initial constituency bases.

Regional Partisan Primaries

Various regional primary plans have been proposed which could possibly lessen the role of individual states. One regional partisan primary plan, the Mondale Plan, divides the nation into six regions and sequences primaries in two-week intervals within these regions from the end of March until the beginning of June. States are encouraged to hold closed primaries to unify and strengthen parties. This plan retains the national party convention and tries to strengthen the role of political parties in the process.

Proponents of regional partisan primaries believe that they could reduce the disproportionate impact of small, idiosyncratic early state primaries. Order of regional primaries could be rotated to prevent any long term impact of early regional primaries. Opponents argue that forced national campaigns produce less grassroots campaigning and generate longer periods of fundraising activity (Crotty and Jackson, 1985: 226–228).

Regional Nonpartisan Primaries

Nonpartisan regional primaries are a possibility, although not particularly popular. Under such a method, party registration would not restrict the primary in which voters participated. Under the Packwood Plan, five regions are specified. Within each region, each state would hold its primary or caucus on the same date. The dates are staggered with one primary per month starting in March and ending in July. Candidates receive direct votes and delegate votes are apportioned to candidates in proportion to candidate strength in each state. All voters in all regions are allowed to choose among all candidates (Crotty and Jackson, 1985).

Proponents argue such a method would increase candidate representativeness. If this system was augmented by open primaries, which many states now have, however, party elite control of the selection process would be weakened. Critics argue that weakening the party system is undesirable and that such a schema still allows front loading where smaller, less populous states would occasionally be in the leading regions by the luck of the draw in some election years (Polsby and Wildavsky, 1984).

National Partisan Primaries

National partisan primaries are another alternative method for winnowing out presidential candidates. The most common proposal allows Congress to designate a national primary election day for each political party. Primaries are then opened only to party members and candidates who qualify only if they file petitions in seventeen states and gather signatures which amount to one percent of the state's vote in the previous election. If no single candidate receives forty percent of the vote, a runoff is held shortly. National conventions would be held primarily to select a vice president, finalize party platforms and conduct other party activities. Other variations of the national partisan primary have been suggested (Crotty and Jackson, 1985).

By abolishing all state primaries, national partisan primaries nationalize elections, lessen the piecemeal nature of the current selection process and reduce the length of presidential campaigns. This process might diminish the disproportionate impact any single state or region would exert under many other primary systems. At the same time, critics argue that nationwide challengers need a large war chest of funds at the beginning to enhance their name recognition. They also contend that national partisan primaries weaken the party system, encourage personalistic campaigns and give rise to demagogic candidates who have little to lose by making unrealistic promises or by stirring up mass hatreds (Polsby and Wildavsky, 1984).

National Nonpartisan Primary

A national nonpartisan primary would be the equivalent of a multicandidate general election popular vote, if candidates from both political parties ran. Such a method would likely force candidates to adopt moderate views closely aligned with the national average, but may result in a plurality rather than a majority, forcing a runoff.

Data and Research Questions

The remainder of this paper explores through computer simulation and sensitivity testing with empirical evidence the ramifications of various approaches to presidential selection. Various scholars have generally supported the notion that members of Congress vote in accordance with the views of their constituencies, particularly on salient visible issues (Miller and Stokes, 1963; Powell, 1982; and Erikson, 1978). Interest group ratings of Congress members have been used as measures of state ideology, despite obvious limitations, to reflect ideologies of members from various states, regions, and partisan constituencies (Holbrook-Provow and Poe, 1987; Rabinowitz et al., 1984).

Interest group ratings are particularly appropriate for this study, since our primary focus is upon executive-legislative conflict. The ratings represent the ideological views of various members of Congress. We simulated various presidential candidates representative of different geographic constituencies by assuming that interest group ratings also were representative of the views of the appropriate constituency being modeled. We took ten interest group ratings per member from Barone and Ujifusa (1990) for all U.S. representatives and Senators, for the 101st Congress. When a member was newly elected with no ratings, the ratings of the predecessor were used. These ratings all ranged from 0 to 10 and represent the percentage of time a member voted in accordance with a group's position on issues of concern to the group.

Simulated presidents under various selection methods were assigned ideologies equivalent to the region, state, or party constituency that dominated their selection process. Absolute differences between these simulated presidential ideologies and each member of each House were then computed and averaged to gain an overall measure of conflict with each house for simulated presidents selected under various options. All members from a state delegation from both House and Senate were used to calculate average state ideology for nonpartisan analyses. All members from a state's partisan delegation from both House and Senate were used to calculate averages for partisan state primaries. A similar approach was used for nonpartisan and partisan regional primaries.

Five liberal ratings and five conservative ratings were used. The five liberal ratings reflected various dimensions of liberalism: ADA (inequality and civil rights); ACLU (free speech and civil liberties); COPE (labor issues); CFA (consumer issues); and LCV (environmental issues). A mean of these five ratings was calculated to form an overall liberalism index (LIB).

The five conservative ratings also reflected various dimensions of conservatism: ACU (budget and foreign policy issues); NTLC (resistance to taxes and government spending); NSI (national security issues); COC (established business interests); and CEI (free enterprise positions). As with the five liberal ratings, a mean of these five conservative ratings was also calculated to form an overall conservatism index (CON).

In general, an inverse relationship was expected between the LIB and CON indices, although due to the myriad of issues rated in the various indices and the complexity of issue space, the relationship was not expected to be monotonic (monotonic would imply conservatism increased, liberalism would automatically decrease, and vice versa). Thus, both liberal and conservative indices are reported for all regions and states.

TABLE 1
Ideology in Congress by Party

	ADA	ACLU	COPE	CFA	LCV	LIB
House:						
Democrat	74.5	72.6	79.6	77.8	66.0	74.1
Republican	20.4	27.7	22.4	42.0	35.2	29.5
All members	52.9	54.7	56.7	63.5	53.7	56.3
Dem-Rep	54.1	44.9	57.2	35.8	30.8	44.6
Senate:						
Democrat	71.1	62.4	79.1	87.1	56.9	71.3
Republican	19.7	28.5	22.9	40.7	37.8	29.9
All members	47.5	46.8	53.3	65.8	48.1	52.3
Dem-Rep	51.4	33.9	56.2	46.4	19.1	41.4
	ACU	NTLC	NSI	COC	CEI	CON
House:						
Democrat	19.0	17.8	27.6	37.3	18.0	23.9
Republican	79.3	69.1	91.2	85.4	59.0	76.8
All members	43.1	38.3	53.0	56.5	34.4	45.1
Rep-Dem	60.3	51.3	63.6	48.1	41.0	52.9
Senate:						
Democrat	18.7	17.2	30.0	37.3	18.4	24.3
Republican	74.9	64.7	83.9	76.8	53.7	70.8
All members	44.6	39.1	54.8	55.5	34.7	45.7
Rep-Dem	56.2	47.5	53.9	39.5	35.3	46.6

Ideology by Party

If political parties differ in ideological approaches to public issues, then party differences will impact upon partisan presidential primaries. Presidents from one party will have greater potential conflict with Congress when one or more houses are dominated by the opposing political party.

Despite complaints about the American political parties as being similar, and predictions by Downs (1957) and others that political parties in a two-party single-member district system of representation where opinion is predominantly unimodal will be adjacent and moderate on their issue stances on a left-right ideological continuum, considerable differences occur across parties in the 101st Congress. (See Table 1).

Parties in the House differ by more than thirty percentage points on all the liberal interest group ratings. The differences by party on ADA and COPE exceed fifty points, while the differences on ACLU approach fifty points. In each instance, the Democrats are more liberal than the Republicans. On the overall liberal index, House Democrats score 74.1, while House Republicans score 29.5, a difference of 44.6 points. This represents considerable ideological difference between the two parties within Congress. The Senate pattern for liberalism measures varies slightly from House scores but basically represents a similar pattern. The overall Senate liberal index for Democrats (71.1) exceeds the overall Republican index (29.9) by 41.4 points.

An examination of conservative interest group ratings for House and Senate likewise reveal significant ideological differences both on individual ratings and the overall conservative index. On overall conservatism, House Republicans (76.8) exceed

TABLE 2
Ideology in Congress by Region

	<i>ADA</i>	<i>ACLU</i>	<i>COPE</i>	<i>CFA</i>	<i>LCV</i>	<i>LIB</i>
House:						
New England	74.8 H	72.0 H	73.3 H	76.1 H	77.2 H	74.7 H
Industrial Belt	59.3	61.0	66.1	71.2	59.7	63.4
South	40.9 L	42.5 L	46.9 L	55.7 L	40.9 L	45.2 L
Farm Belt	52.9	54.3	49.8	58.5	61.6	55.4
West	52.2	56.1	52.6	58.6	51.8	54.2
All members	52.9	54.7	56.7	63.5	53.7	56.3
High-Low	33.9	29.5	27.3	20.4	36.3	29.5
Senate:						
New England	70.0 H	67.6 H	65.5 H	78.1 H	76.5 H	71.6 H
Industrial Belt	59.8	56.8	68.5	77.3	58.6	64.2
South	36.0 L	34.7 L	46.4	60.7	31.3 L	41.8 L
Farm Belt	42.1	44.1	49.1	63.4	48.5	49.5
West	41.3	42.8	43.6 L	56.8 L	43.4	45.6
All members	47.5	46.8	53.3	65.8	48.1	52.3
High-Low	34.0	32.9	21.9	21.3	45.2	29.8
	<i>ACU</i>	<i>NTLC</i>	<i>NSI</i>	<i>COC</i>	<i>CEI</i>	<i>CON</i>
House:						
New England	22.4 L	32.0 L	24.4 L	42.0 L	25.8 L	29.3 L
Industrial Belt	35.6	33.5	45.5	51.0	29.0	38.9
South	55.5 H	40.0	71.3 H	63.7 H	38.0	53.7 H
Farm Belt	44.5	49.4 H	48.1	61.6	40.0 H	48.7
West	44.3	42.4	50.1	58.5	39.2	47.0
All members	43.1	38.3	53.0	56.5	34.4	45.1
High-Low	33.1	17.4	46.9	21.7	14.2	24.4
Senate:						
New England	23.4 L	30.9	30.1 L	47.7	26.0	31.6 L
Industrial Belt	30.1	25.8 L	40.0	46.6 L	23.5 L	33.2
South	54.4 H	41.0	71.9 H	59.3	35.5	52.4
Farm Belt	52.3	46.2	55.0	58.4	39.3	50.2
West	52.3	48.5 H	61.0	61.1 H	44.8 H	53.6 H
All members	44.6	39.1	54.8	55.5	34.7	45.7
High-Low	31.0	22.7	41.8	14.5	21.3	22.0

House Democrats (23.9) by 52.9 points, while Senate Republicans (70.8) exceed Senate Democrats (24.3) by 46.6 points. While considerable variation exists within parties, as much literature about the lack of party accountability has illustrated, considerable ideological differences between parties do exist.

Ideology by Region

Do significant ideological differences persist across regions? If the answer is yes, then presidential candidates from different regions will exhibit different perspectives on national issues. Further, national tickets must be constructed to appeal to different ideological perspectives that vary by region. Table 2 examines this question.

Similar patterns for the House and Senate emerge by region, further bolstering our assumption that presidential candidates will reflect the ideological perspectives of the geographic constituencies from which they are selected. When House overall liberalism is examined, New England, the most liberal region (74.7) exceeds the South, the least liberal (45.2) by 29.5 points. The second most liberal region, the

TABLE 3
Ideology by Region, Party, and Chamber

Region	House		Senate	
	LIB	CON	LIB	CON
New England	74.7	29.3	71.6	31.6
Democrat	85.5	12.8	88.6	11.6
Republican	55.5	58.8	51.1	55.6
Party difference	29.7	46.0	37.5	44.0
Industrial Belt	63.4	38.9	64.2	33.2
Democrat	80.1	18.0	78.0	17.4
Republican	37.6	71.3	42.7	57.8
Party difference	42.5	53.3	35.3	40.4
South	45.2	53.7	41.8	52.4
Democrat	59.7	36.8	59.2	32.7
Republican	20.0	83.1	13.9	83.9
Party difference	39.7	60.0	45.3	51.2
Farm Belt	55.4	48.7	49.5	50.2
Democrat	77.5	23.1	66.1	32.5
Republican	31.9	75.9	32.8	67.9
Party difference	45.6	52.8	33.3	35.4
West	54.2	47.0	45.6	53.6
Democrat	81.4	18.0	74.3	22.6
Republican	20.6	82.9	24.5	76.2
Party difference	60.8	64.9	49.8	53.6
All members	56.3	45.1	52.3	45.7
Democrat	74.1	23.9	71.3	24.3
Republican	29.5	76.8	29.9	70.8
Party difference	44.6	52.9	41.4	46.5

Industrial Belt (63.4), is followed by the Farm Belt (55.4) and the West (54.2). By region, Senate overall liberalism is slightly less than in the House: New England (71.6), Industrial Belt (66.2), Farm Belt (49.5), West (45.6), and South (41.8). The liberalism gap between New England and the South is 29.8.

Similar rankings are obtained when examining the overall conservatism index by region for the House, with the Farm Belt and West shifting positions in the House, and the South and the West shifting in the Senate. Conservatism in the House ranges from 29.3 for New England to 53.7 for the South, a gap of 24.4 points. The conservatism range in the Senate is from a low of 31.6 for New England to 53.6 in the West, a gap of 22.0. With a ranking of 52.4, the South barely trails the West in conservatism in the Senate.

Ideology by Region and Party in the House and Senate

National tickets must appeal to various regional ideological biases once nominated, but must also appeal to party biases within regions to be nominated. Considerable variation exists within regions as well as across them. Tables 3 and 4 examine party biases across regions.

As Table 3 indicates, in the House, the least difference between parties within a region occurs in New England where both Democrats and Republicans are comparatively liberal. The party difference on liberalism in New England is 29.7, while on

conservatism, it is 46.0, the lowest for all regions. The fact that Republicans in this region are more liberal than the overall national average for both parties, and less conservative than the overall average illustrates why New England Republicans have played a very limited role in nomination politics for national tickets in recent elections.

In Table 3 in the House, the greatest differences between parties on both liberalism (60.8) and conservatism (64.9) occur in the West, where Democrats are very liberal, and Republicans are very conservative. This suggests the problem for a national ticket of striking an ideological balance between competing party interests will be particularly challenging in the West. A similarly challenging problem exists for national tickets addressing conservative issues in the South, where the party difference between Republicans and Democrats is great (60.0).

Similar results pertaining to the West are found in the Senate. As in the House, in the Senate the biggest gap between Democrats and Republicans occurs in the West for both liberalism (49.8) and conservatism (53.6). Unlike the House, however, where the smallest ideological differences on both liberalism and conservatism occur in New England, the smallest differences on both indices in the Senate occur in the Farm Belt.

Ideology In Congress By State

Table 4 displays the overall average liberalism and conservatism indices for House members in individual states within the various regions as well as their electoral votes. The Industrial Belt contains the largest number of electoral votes, followed by the South and West. New England and the Farm Belt together do not contain as many electoral votes as the West, the third ranking region. (See Table 4).

Again, considerable variation in liberalism and conservatism exists within regions by state. In New England, New Hampshire plainly stands out from other more liberal states as being conservative (26.6 on liberalism and 88.1 on conservatism). Within the Industrial Belt, Delaware ranks highest on the liberalism index (78.0), but West Virginia (72.1) ranks second, as well as lowest on the conservatism index (20.8). Ohio is the most conservative state in the Industrial Belt (48.6), followed by Indiana (44.7) and Pennsylvania (44.4). In the Farm Belt, the Dakotas are somewhat more liberal than other states (ND 74.0, SD 72.8), while Nebraska (75.9) is the most conservative.

In the South, rankings for liberalism and conservatism are not exactly mirror images, reflecting populist strains within the region. Arkansas (55.1) is the most liberal state, closely followed by North Carolina (54.2) and South Carolina (53.5). Louisiana is the least liberal (33.1), followed by Alabama (39.7), Virginia (41.3), and Texas (42.1). Louisiana (65.0) ranks highest in the South on conservatism, followed by Alabama (63.8) and Virginia (60.0). In contrast to popular myth, Mississippi ranked least conservative among southern states (41.4).

In the West, Wyoming stands out from other states as the most conservative. It ranks lowest on liberalism (7.8) and highest on conservatism (89.6). Washington (69.3) is the most liberal, but Hawaii is the least conservative (32.6). California, with its powerful block of electoral votes (47) ranks slightly above the national

TABLE 4
Ideology in House by State

State	LIB	CON	Electoral Votes	State	LIB	CON	Electoral Votes
New England	74.7	29.3	36	South	45.2	53.7	155
CT	77.8	35.3	8	AL	39.7	63.8	9
ME	78.4	30.4	4	AR	55.1 H	43.5	6
MA	86.8 H	11.2 L	13	FL	46.0	54.2	21
NH	26.6 L	88.1 H	4	GA	43.0	55.6	12
RI	77.4	23.4	4	KY	47.7	51.8	9
VT	60.0	29.2	3	LA	33.1 L	65.0 H	10
High-Low	60.2	76.9		MS	45.1	41.4 L	7
Industrial Belt	63.4	29.3	186	NC	54.2	46.9	13
DE	78.0 H	37.0	3	OK	48.2	55.7	8
IL	57.0	42.7	24	SC	53.5	52.5	8
IN	57.1	44.7	12	TN	49.6	44.9	11
MD	73.3	31.9	10	TX	42.1	54.2	29
MI	70.0	33.7	20	VA	41.3	60.0	12
MO	53.7 L	46.6	11	High-Low	22.0	23.6	
NJ	70.3	34.6	16	West	54.2	47.0	112
NY	69.8	32.8	36	AK	40.2	60.2	3
OH	54.3	48.6 H	23	AZ	25.4	72.9	7
PA	58.4	44.4	25	CA	59.4	41.1	47
WV	72.1	20.8 L	6	CO	51.8	54.3	8
High-Low	24.3	27.8		HI	68.5	32.6 L	4
Farm Belt	55.4	48.7	47	ID	32.9	69.7	4
IA	54.2	51.6	8	MT	48.6	43.9	5
KS	41.4	62.6	7	NV	46.0	59.1	4
MN	63.8	41.9	10	NM	35.5	57.3	5
NE	26.9 L	75.9 H	5	OR	58.3	45.8	7
ND	74.0 H	25.0	3	UT	35.5	67.6	5
SD	72.8	23.4 L	3	WA	69.3 H	37.0	10
WI	62.0	41.4	11	WY	7.8 L	89.6 H	3
High-Low	47.1	52.5		High-Low	61.5	57.0	

average of 56.3 on liberalism (59.4) and moderately below the national average of 45.1 on conservatism (41.1). A California national candidate reflective of state values, then will cast a slightly liberal tenor to the ticket.

Comparing across tables, we see that the greatest ideological gaps for single interest group ratings across regions are less than those across parties. The greatest gaps in the House are between New England and the South on the LCV liberal rating and the NSI conservative rating. The same pattern occurred in the Senate. The greatest partisan conflict occurred on both LIB and CON measures in the West, in both the House and the Senate. This indicates the West presents a particular challenge to national tickets, for the differences between political parties as reflected by representative voting in Congress is greatest in that region.

Simulation Methodology and Sensitivity Testing

The purpose of this analysis is to examine the discrepancies between simulated presidents selected under various selection options. We attribute to each simulated president the average ideology for the region or party that is the basis for selecting that president. We then compare the simulated ideologies of the “president”

chosen by a particular selection method with the ideology of each of the 535 members of Congress. The combined discrepancy is our measure of probable executive-legislative conflict. We use three measures of ideological difference: LIBDIF measures the difference between the simulated president's liberal views and aggregated liberalism score of each member of Congress; CONDIF measures the difference between presidential and congressional conservatism; IDDIF measures the average of the liberalism and conservatism differences, thus reflecting the average ideological conflict.

If great discrepancies exist between a simulated president and members of Congress on ideological indices of liberalism and conservatism, then the method under which the president was selected has the potential for generating greater executive-legislative conflict. However, if only small discrepancies exist between a simulated president and members of Congress, then the method under which the president was selected has lower or little potential for generating executive-legislative conflict.

Further, if we use a delegate model of representation and assume that members of Congress reflect the ideological perspectives of their geographic constituencies, then the presidential selection method that generates the least discrepancies between the simulated president and members of Congress results in a more representative president. Thus, from the viewpoint of democratic theory as well as easing executive-legislative tensions, the option that represents the least discrepancy between leader ideology and constituent ideology is the most ideal.

Tables 5 and 6 provide the results of the sensitivity testing employed in this analysis. For the current method of sequencing small states first, partisan and nonpartisan averages of members of Congress for Iowa and New Hampshire were used to create a president selected under the current method where these states have a winnowing impact on the presidential nomination process. For the selection method of sequencing large state primaries first, partisan and nonpartisan large state averages were used for single large states in the same manner as the averages of Iowa and New Hampshire were used to generate simulated presidents limited by the need to appeal ideologically to those states. Additional states of current interest which have served as the home states of recent presidential hopefuls were also tested.

For the method of regional partisan primaries, overall party averages for all members of Congress from each party from each region were used to generate simulated presidents selected from each of the five regions. For non-partisan regional primaries, the average ideological indices of all members of Congress in a particular region, regardless of party, were used to create simulated presidential nominees. For national partisan primaries, all party members in Congress regardless of region were averaged to create stimulated presidents. The national nonpartisan primary was simulated more to provide a base of comparison than as a realistic presidential selection option, since it approximates the abolition of the electoral college and general election outcomes.

In each of these tables, the three measures of executive-legislative conflict discussed above (LIBDIF, CONDIF, and IDDIF) are provided for each sensitivity test under each selection method. For each of these three measures, the minimum possible score is 0, while the maximum possible discrepancy is 100.

Results

When simulated presidents were compared to all members of Congress to derive ideological differences indicative of likely executive-legislative conflict under various presidential selection methods, the following results were obtained:

Partisan State Primaries, Small States First

The current sequencing of small states first in partisan results in the largest discrepancy between the ideology of the president and of members of Congress of any of the selection methods tested here. While the discrepancy and conflict between the president and Congress is smaller if Iowa is used as a major winnowing state early on as it currently is used, using New Hampshire as a limiting state produces great executive-legislative conflict, and results in a president less representative of the nation than any other selection method. As Table 5 indicates, the average discrepancy for a simulated president from New Hampshire and the House is 40.0 while equivalent discrepancy for the Senate is 40.0. This was among the highest discrepancies observed in the various sensitivity tests.

Table 6 develops chamber means on the combined measure of executive-legislative conflict (IDDIF) for both chambers across the sensitivity tests run and reported in Table 6. The combined mean for overall conflict for both houses here is 36.0, ranking this option last among all the selection methods as creating the most executive-legislative conflict.

Partisan State Primaries, Large States First

Under this selection method, executive-legislative conflict as measured by IDDIF declines somewhat, especially compared to New Hampshire. For Democrats, Texas actually scores the lowest on the overall IDDIF for both chambers of the largest states in each region (28.2). Among other large states for Democrats, Florida scores even lower on mean presidential/congressional conflict (27.8). The combined average for this method for Democratic primaries in the ten largest states is 32.2.

For Republicans, New York is the state that results in the lowest conflict (29.0) when the largest state in each of the five regions is examined. Among other large states, a simulated president assuming the views of Pennsylvania Republicans also generates relatively low conflict (30.4).

A simulated president with the views of Texas Republicans, however, does not fare as well as a simulated president with the views of Texas Democrats. The combined measure of executive-legislative conflict for a Texas Republican president is 44.3, the highest of all sensitivity tests conducted. This implies Bush, a Texas Republican, would experience much more conflict with Congress than did Lyndon Johnson, a Texas Democrat, to the extent the views of each was similar to the views of fellow party members in Congress. Nor is the combined conflict mean for California Republicans particularly salutary, with relatively high score of 39.4.

The combined average for Republican primaries in the ten largest states is 35.5. Simulated Republican presidents from the largest states experience 3.3 points more presidential-congressional conflict than do simulated Democratic presidents from the

TABLE 5
Discrepancies between Members of Congress and
Presidents Selected Under Various Options

Option	House			Senate			Both Chambers ID
	LIBDIF	CONDIF	IDDIF	LIBDIF	CONDIF	IDDIF	
(1) <u>Partisan state primaries, small states first</u>							
<i>Small states with current influence—Democrats</i>							
IA	30.7	32.5	31.6	34.2	32.1	33.1	32.4
NH	37.4	42.7	40.0	35.8	41.5	38.7	39.4
<i>Small states with current influence—Republicans</i>							
IA	30.4	36.4	33.4	29.0	35.3	32.2	32.8
NH	37.4	42.7	40.0	35.8	41.5	38.7	39.4
(2) <u>Partisan state primaries, large states first</u>							
<i>Largest state per region—Democrats</i>							
MA	33.9	36.2	35.0	37.5	36.5	37.0	36.0
NY	31.7	33.6	32.6	35.3	33.5	34.4	33.5
TX	26.4	29.6	28.0	27.6	28.9	28.3	28.2
WI	31.9	33.3	32.6	35.6	33.2	34.4	33.5
CA	31.6	33.8	32.7	35.4	33.8	34.6	33.7
<i>Other large states—Democrats</i>							
IL	28.5	32.3	30.4	31.3	32.2	31.7	31.1
FL	26.3	29.2	27.8	27.3	28.3	27.8	27.8
PA	28.1	32.3	30.2	30.3	32.2	31.3	30.8
OH	30.0	32.4	31.2	32.7	32.3	32.5	31.9
MI	32.7	35.4	34.1	36.0	35.6	35.8	35.0
<i>Largest state per region—Republicans</i>							
MA	31.1	31.5	31.3	33.4	31.0	32.2	31.8
NY	27.8	31.0	29.4	27.3	29.8	28.6	29.0
TX	45.3	45.4	45.3	42.2	44.4	43.3	44.3
WI	33.5	38.3	35.9	31.7	37.0	34.4	35.2
CA	39.2	41.6	40.4	36.7	40.4	38.5	39.5
<i>Other large states—Republicans</i>							
IL	35.8	39.5	37.6	33.4	38.2	35.8	36.7
FL	37.6	40.5	39.1	35.2	39.1	37.1	38.1
PA	28.6	33.3	31.0	27.6	32.0	29.8	30.4
OH	35.9	40.4	38.1	33.4	39.2	36.3	38.8
MI	28.6	34.5	31.5	27.9	33.2	30.5	31.0
(3) <u>Partisan home state primaries of presidential hopefuls</u>							
<i>Additional states with presidential hopefuls—Democrats</i>							
AR	27.6	30.1	28.8	28.5	29.7	29.1	29.0
GA	26.9	29.2	28.1	26.7	27.9	27.3	27.7
MO	27.9	31.1	29.5	30.4	30.9	30.7	30.1
NB	32.4	31.9	32.2	30.4	30.5	30.4	31.3
NJ	29.7	31.8	30.8	32.4	31.7	32.0	31.4
TN	26.6	29.8	28.2	28.1	29.4	28.8	28.5
VA	26.4	28.9	27.6	26.7	27.9	27.3	27.5

Continued

largest states. As Table 6 shows, the average across both parties for the twenty partisan primaries, both Democratic and Republican, in the ten largest states is 33.9, ranking this selection method sixth in total executive-legislative conflict.

Partisan Home State Primaries of Presidential Hopefuls

How much conflict results if presidential candidates are greatly shaped by the views of the partisan delegation in their home states? Several presidential hopefuls in previous presidential elections were from the largest states (Cuomo in

TABLE 5 *continued*

Option (State/Region/Party)	House			Senate			Both Chambers ID
	LIBDIF	CONDIF	IDDIF	LIBDIF	CONDIF	IDDIF	
<i>Additional states with presidential hopefuls—Republicans</i>							
AZ	42.7	42.4	42.6	39.9	41.1	40.5	41.6
IN	38.5	40.8	39.7	35.9	39.7	37.8	38.8
SC	34.7	36.9	35.8	32.3	35.3	33.8	34.8
(4) <u>Nonpartisan state primaries, small states first</u>							
<i>Small states with current influence</i>							
IA	26.6	30.7	28.7	26.9	29.8	28.4	28.6
NH	37.4	42.7	40.0	35.8	41.5	38.7	39.4
(5) <u>Nonpartisan state primaries, large states first</u>							
<i>Largest state per region</i>							
MA	33.5	35.6	34.5	37.0	35.8	36.4	35.5
NY	26.8	29.1	27.9	28.8	28.4	28.6	28.3
TX	29.5	30.4	30.0	28.3	29.1	29.7	20.0
WI	29.7	29.9	28.3	27.8	28.9	28.3	28.3
CA	26.3	29.3	27.8	27.3	28.4	27.8	27.8
<i>Other large states</i>							
IL	26.2	29.1	27.7	26.8	28.2	27.5	27.6
FL	28.2	30.5	29.4	27.3	29.1	28.2	28.8
PA	26.2	29.0	27.6	26.8	27.9	27.4	27.5
OH	26.3	29.4	27.8	26.7	28.3	27.5	27.7
MI	27.2	29.3	28.3	29.3	28.7	29.0	27.7
(6) <u>Regional partisan primaries</u>							
<i>Democrats</i>							
NE	32.9	34.8	33.8	36.4	34.9	33.8	33.8
IB	29.5	32.4	31.0	32.4	32.3	32.3	31.7
S	26.2	29.0	27.6	26.8	28.0	27.4	27.5
FB	27.7	30.2	29.0	30.3	29.7	30.0	29.5
W	29.6	32.0	30.8	32.8	31.7	32.3	31.6
<i>Republicans</i>							
NE	27.5	31.6	29.5	28.0	30.2	29.1	29.3
IB	30.2	34.5	32.4	28.8	33.0	30.9	31.7
S	39.8	40.9	40.3	37.1	39.7	38.4	39.4
FB	32.8	36.7	34.8	31.0	35.4	33.2	34.0
W	38.0	40.0	39.0	35.5	38.7	37.1	38.1
(7) <u>Regional nonpartisan primaries</u>							
<i>Region</i>							
NE	28.0	29.7	28.8	30.6	29.1	29.9	29.4
IB	26.1	28.9	27.5	27.4	28.0	27.7	27.6
S	28.3	30.0	29.2	27.4	28.8	28.1	28.7
FB	26.8	30.0	28.4	27.2	29.0	28.1	28.3
W	26.8	29.9	28.3	26.8	28.7	27.8	28.1
(8) <u>National partisan primaries</u>							
<i>Party</i>							
Democratic	27.6	30.5	29.0	29.9	30.2	30.0	29.5
Republican	33.8	37.4	35.4	31.6	35.6	33.6	34.5
(9) <u>National nonpartisan primary</u>							
	27.3	29.3	27.8	26.8	28.2	27.5	27.7

New York; Jerry Brown in California; and John Kerry in Massachusetts for the Democrats; Pete Wilson in California and Bush in Texas for the Republicans).

Additional moderate sized and smaller states were also tested here. States tested with Democratic hopefuls in previous elections include Arkansas (Bill Clinton), Georgia (Sam Nunn), Missouri (Richard Gephardt), Nebraska (Robert Kerrey),

TABLE 6
**Ranking of Presidential Selection Options by
Executive-Legislative Conflict in Both Chambers**

Option	Rank on Mean IDDIF	Mean IDDIF		
		Both Chambers	House IDDIF	Senate IDDIF
National nonpartisan primary	1	27.7	27.8	27.5
Regional nonpartisan primaries	2	28.4	28.4	28.3
Nonpartisan state primaries, large states first	3	29.0	34.7	29.1
National partisan primaries	4	32.0	32.2	32.0
Regional partisan primaries	5	32.7	32.8	32.5
Partisan state primaries, large states first	6	33.9	33.8	33.8
Partisan primaries, home states of presidential hopefuls	7	33.9	32.5	33.4
Nonpartisan state primaries, small states first	8	34.0	34.4	33.6
Partisan state primaries, small states first	9	36.0	36.3	35.7

New Jersey (Bill Bradley), Tennessee (Albert Gore), and Virginia (Doug Wilder and Chuck Robb). Additional states tested for the Republicans were Arizona (John McCain), Indiana (Dan Quayle), and South Carolina (Carroll Campbell).

For Democrats from these moderate sized states, Virginia (27.5) and Georgia (27.7) experience slightly less conflict than others. The simulated president from Arkansas, Bill Clinton's home state, experienced slightly more conflict (28.8 in the House and 29.0 in the Senate, or an average of 28.9). The average for all Democratic candidates from moderate states is 29.4, actually somewhat better than the average for Democratic candidates from the largest states (32.2). For Republicans, however, the findings are the opposite. The average for Republican candidates from selected moderate or small states is 38.4, worse than the 35.5 average for Republicans from the largest states. The combined average for this approach across both parties is 33.9, ranking this selection method seventh in total executive-legislative conflict generated.

Nonpartisan State Primaries, Small States First

If the small states that currently dominate the early phases of the presidential selection process used nonpartisan state primaries instead of partisan primaries and caucuses, 34.0 average combined conflict would result. This method ranks a poor showing of eighth in executive-legislative conflict.

Nonpartisan State Primaries, Large States First

Nonpartisan primaries in the ten largest primaries generate a mean conflict score of 29.0. This selection method produces a relatively good showing of ranking third among the approaches tested here.

Regional Partisan Primaries

For Democrats, the lowest combined presidential-congressional conflict results with the simulated president runs in a southern regional primary, adopting the average views of southern Democrats (27.5). For Republicans, the lowest conflict

results from a simulated Republican president running in a Northeastern regional primary. The Democratic conflict mean across all five regions (30.8) is somewhat lower than the Republican mean across all five regions (34.5), suggesting Democrats have more to gain in terms of lowering inter-branch conflict from partisan regional primaries than do Republicans, and this is especially true if the southern regional primary begun with Super Tuesday is continued. Across parties, this method produces an average of 32.7 in conflict, ranking the method fifth in a field of nine selection methods.

Regional Nonpartisan Primaries

Regional nonpartisan primaries result in relatively low executive-legislative conflict for all regions, with the lowest conflict occurring in the industrial belt (27.6). The average across all regions is 28.4, ranking regional nonpartisan primaries second as a presidential selection method.

National Partisan Primaries

National partisan primaries work more to the favor of Democrats than Republicans. The combined mean across parties and houses for this approach is 32.0. This method ranks fourth in conflict.

National Nonpartisan Primary

A national nonpartisan primary is unlikely, since it approximates a general election. Plurality candidates would likely result, requiring run-offs. Nonetheless, a test of this approach provides a minimum standard against which the scores for presidential-congressional conflict generated by the other approaches can be compared. The combined score across houses for this method is 27.7 ranking this option first, or the method with the lowest amount of conflict of the approaches tested. This indicates that even if a presidential candidate assumed the national average on each of the ten single ratings, a measure of 27.7 conflict with individual members would still result.

Table 6 summarizes the findings for the nine presidential selection methods tested here, and ranks them from lowest to highest conflict. The national nonpartisan primary is ranked first, and provides the standard for judgment. Regional nonpartisan primaries and nonpartisan primaries in large states are ranked second and third. Thus, the top three ranks go to nonpartisan selection methods embracing broader geographic areas and more heterogeneous constituencies.

National partisan primaries, regional partisan primaries, and partisan primaries in large states are ranked fourth, fifth and sixth, respectively, paralleling but trailing their nonpartisan counterparts. The method of partisan primaries in the home states of presidential hopefuls is ranked seventh. Primaries in small states rank the lowest by the criteria of minimizing presidential-congressional conflict. Nonpartisan primaries in small states is slightly above partisan primaries in small states, the current method employed to select presidents and the worst option of those tested here by the executive-legislative conflict criteria.

Conclusion

Interest group ratings of members of Congress were used to develop measures of conflict between simulated presidents and Congress. The data reveal significant differences on measures of liberalism and conservatism across parties in both the House and the Senate. Partisan differences exceed regional differences.

Simulated presidents were generated under nine different presidential selection methods. The ideologies of the simulated presidents as measured by ten different interest group ratings were compared with the same ten interest group ratings for all members of the 101st Congress. Sensitivity tests were conducted under various conditions to generate measures of conflict between the simulated presidents and Congress.

This analysis revealed that the current method of selecting presidents which sequences partisan contests in small non-representative states first in the selection process results in the greatest conflict between president and Congress. Thus the current selection method may be an additional explanation for the "deadlock of democracy."

In general, partially as a result of the significant partisan cleavages in Congress, nonpartisan selection methods using large geographic heterogeneous constituencies resulted in less presidential-congressional conflict than their partisan counterpart selection methods. But certain partisan methods, especially for the Democrats, resulted in significant improvements over the current method of sequencing small states first. In particular, moving to sequence large states first would result in moderate improvements for Democrats and Republicans over the current sequencing of small states first. More sweeping changes result in even larger reductions in conflict. Thus, this analysis suggests that to reduce executive-legislative conflict we do not have to abolish the presidency as parliamentary advocates contend, but rather alter the method by which we pick presidents.

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