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Abstract

The mayor's office potentially offers a launchpad for statewide and national political ambitions. We know relatively little, however, about how frequently mayors actually run for higher office, and which mayors choose to do so. This paper combines longitudinal data on the career paths of the mayors of two hundred big cities with new survey and interview data to investigate these questions. While we find that individual and city traits—especially gender—have some predictive power, the overwhelming story is that relatively few mayors—just under one-fifth— ever seek higher office. We suggest that ideological, institutional, and electoral factors all help to explain why so few mayors exhibit progressive ambition.

1 Introduction

In a *Time Magazine* profile of New Jersey Senator Cory Booker, political scientist and commentator Larry Sabato cited the value of his experience as a mayor to his progression to higher office: "When he inevitably runs for President, Booker will claim executive experience from Newark and national expertise via the Senate" (Netwon-Small 2013). Booker is not alone in thinking of local office as a first step in a national political career. Democratic presidential runner-up (and Vermont senator) Bernie Sanders and Democratic vice presidential nominee (and Virginia Senator) Tim Kaine similarly launched their political careers as mayors.

A wide body of scholarship on progressive ambition suggests that local offices are good starting points for ambitious politicians (Schlesinger 1966; Black 1972; Rohde 1979; Kazee 1994; Fox and Lawless 2005, 2010). In describing the electoral successes of former U.S. Senator Scott Brown, Stewart (2012) succinctly outlines why these offices provide effective political launchpads: "His success derived in part from his opportunity to hone his political skills through seeking election in a series of interlocking and ever-larger constituencies" (pp. 146). In their Citizen Political Ambition Survey, Fox and Lawless (2005) find that potential office-seekers are well aware of this "career ladder." Seventy percent select a local office as their prospective first race, with between 30 and 40% of respondents indicating that they *eventually* plan to run for higher office (pp. 649). Holding local office—a relatively low-cost position to obtain—should create a natural constituency for an upwardly mobile politician, and could boost his or her sense of efficacy, an important driver of the decision to run for higher office (Fox and Lawless 2005).

Given the importance of local office as a career launchpad, a wealth of research has explored the progressive ambitions of local politicians. The bulk of this research has centered on the paths of state legislators by investigating the personal and structural factors that shape when and why they seek higher office (Maestas 2000, 2003; Maestas et al. 2006; Fulton et al. 2006). Much of this literature focuses specifically on decisions about when to run for

Congress, rather than higher office more generally (Maestas 2000; Powell 2000; Tothero 2003; Steen 2006; Maisel and Stone 2014). Within the context of statehouses, this focus makes sense. State legislators are natural candidates for higher *legislative* positions. Nonetheless, by focusing on one pool of candidates—state legislators—and one particular higher office—U.S. congressional representative—this scholarship necessarily provides researchers with an incomplete picture of progressive ambition. This substantive limitation is compounded by methodological ones: these studies rely on case studies of subsets of legislators or surveys of legislators. To our knowledge, no studies of politicians (or prospective politicians) have combined survey evidence with longitudinal career path data on the full set of politicians.

To address these substantive and methodological limitations, we study the career paths of mayors by combining an original survey with historical data on the careers paths of *all* mayors of large cities. There are several reasons we might expect local politicians in *executive* positions—mayors—to have a different decision calculus in choosing whether to run for higher office. For both ideological and institutional reasons, mayors may have different policy concerns and priorities than those who are attracted to statewide and national office. Mayors may genuinely enjoy working on urban issues, and have little interest in national ones. In his work on party politics, Sorauf (1980) notes that the American urban machine is "provincially concerned with the city, and its politics are almost completely divorced from the issues that agitate our national politics" (pp. 70). Banfield and Wilson (1963) similarly contend that local parties rarely have a "concrete program or platform" (pp. 277). Issue passion is an important component of the decision to seek office (Wilson 1962; Canon 1990; Thomas 1990). If the issues that motivate mayors are starkly different from those that motivate governors and federal legislators, then we may not observe high levels of progressive ambition among mayors. In contrast, state legislators would naturally share state-level policy interests with governors, and, relative to the local level, state-level legislative debates more closely mirror those occurring nationally. While the partisan cleavages endemic to national politics have filtered to some extent to the local level (Tausanovitch and Warshaw 2014;

Einstein and Kogan 2016), they are much less prominent (Frug 1980; Peterson 1981; Vigdor 2004; Brooks and Phillips 2010; Gamm and Kousser 2013) than at the state level (Shor and McCarty 2011).

Second, the natural next step up (or most similar power base) for many mayors (and state legislators) is Congress. In most cases, being elected senator or governor requires appealing to a much larger state-level voting population. Unlike state legislators, mayors would have to give up executive power and autonomy to join Congress. Certain political leaders may have natural inclinations for executive positions and others for legislative ones. Or, it might be hard to give up executive power to become one of many in a potentially gridlocked legislature.

Third, mayors—as local officeholders—may be reluctant for family or life-cycle reasons to move from the local stage to state or national offices. State legislators (Gaddie 2004) and members of Congress (Theriault 1998) stress the challenges of balancing family with these political offices. Unlike legislators, mayors do not serve in a wider governing body that requires them to spend significant time outside their own home city. This fact may make the leap to higher office—which would presumably require more time spent in their state's capitol or Washington, D.C.—a challenging one for many mayors. Mayors get to work in, and lead, their chosen hometowns (usually while staying in their own homes) which increases the personal opportunity cost of higher offices.

Fourth, in many cases, running for higher office would require a mayor to engage in significantly more fundraising, campaigning, and partisanship than her current position requires. The House of Representatives in particular is hyper-partisan, and requires constant campaigning and fundraising (Hall 2016). Unlike the factors mentioned above, this issue is not distinctive to mayors and is likely a factor for all local officeholders.

The current empirical evidence on *mayors'* career ambitions is limited and decidedly mixed. Gittell (1963) contends that mayors generally are unsuccessful in seeking election to higher offices, particularly when they attempt to campaign outside their home city. Murphy

(1980), on the other hand, argues that mayors tend to perform at similar levels to those coming from other "stepping-stone" offices—particularly state legislators.[1] Moreover, he contends that the mayoralty is frequently the culmination of a political career, a point supported by other research (McNitt 2010). While all of these studies represent informative starting points—and yield important insights into separate research questions—they almost exclusively focus on a narrow subset of the nation's largest cities.[2] While case studies of these cities with unique powers (Judd and Swanstrom 2014) are common (Sonenshein 1993; Mollenkopf 1994; Kaufmann 2004), focusing on roughly twenty abnormal cities necessarily limits the power to make generalizable insights.

Moeover, these studies have largely eschewed questions about the *types* of mayors that seek higher office. We thus have little evidence on whether issues like race, gender, partisan context, and city institutional features shape mayors' propensity to run for other positions. These questions have been the subject of a wide strand of scholarship on progressive ambition in other arenas (Fox and Lawless 2005; Lawless 2012).

This relative lack of information about mayoral ambition has potentially important representative and policy implications. In particular, there is strong evidence that ambitious politicians behave differently than their counterparts without aspirations for higher office. At the local level, Leroux and Pandey (2014) find that ambitious city leaders are more likely to use interlocal service delivery to enhance policy efficiency. State legislators with progressive ambition are more likely to monitor constituents' opinions (Maestas 2003), and more professionalized state legislatures yield more representative policy outcomes in part because of the opportunities they afford for career progression (Maestas 2000).

To address these questions we collected two different data sets. The first comprises comprehensive data on the career trajectories of all mayors who have led cities over 150,000 people (and a systematically selected group of other large cities) since 1992. We couple

[1]Bledsoe's (1993) study of city councillors, however, reveals that state legislative seats tended to be better routes for career advancement than the mayoralty.

[2]For example, although McNitt's (2010) data includes 848 mayors, he only studies 19 "major American cities" longitudinally.

these historical data with responses from a national survey of over 90 mayors of cities over 75,000 people—including many of the nation's largest cities—that explores, among other issues, mayoral career ambition. These data offer unprecedented access into the self-reported political ambitions of *elected officials* at the local level. Qualitative comments from the surveys help us elucidate proposed theoretical mechanism outlined in the next section.

Our data reveal that a low percentage of medium to big city mayors—less than one-fifth—seek higher office. In other words, the former mayors who played prominent roles in the 2016 election are outliers. Mayors disproportionately end their political careers without pursuing and/or filling higher offices. The qualitative and quantitative evidence from the survey speaks to potential political, policy, and lifestyle mechanisms and explanations introduced above. Interestingly, we also find some variation in which mayors are interested in running. Most notably, we find evidence of a gender gap driven by female mayors being less interested in pursuing higher office even as they report being recruited at similar rates to males. A mayor's race, city racial context, city population, and city institutional features all also appear to have some limited predictive power in the historical data.

2 When Do Mayors Run?

Motivated by the concerns outlined above, we begin with a simple question: at what rate do mayors run for higher office? Within this broad query, however, lie additional questions about *the kinds* of mayors that exhibit progressive ambition. We turn to exploring the types of individual and contextual factors that might promote or hinder mayoral career progression. We identify two broad sets of characteristics that might help us to better understand mayoral ambition: individual and contextual.

2.1 Individual Characteristics

At the individual level, a rich body of scholarship suggests that a politician's race and gender shape his/her propensity to run for higher office. In particular, ample empirical evidence reveals that being a member of underrepresented groups reduces progressive ambition (Constantini 1990; Moncrief, Squire, and Jewell 2001; Fox and Lawless 2005; Lawless and Fox 2005). There are a variety of mechanisms at play here. Given the dramatic overrepresentation of white men in the vast majority of elected bodies in the United States, women and minorities may not believe that higher office is a realistic possibility (Fox and Lawless 2005). Moreover, members of historically excluded populations are less likely to be recruited (Eulau and Prewitt 1973; Matthews 1984), may feel less efficacy as candidates, and/or lack a politicized upbringing (Fox and Lawless 2005). Taken together, this research leads us to anticipate that female, black, and/or Hispanic mayors will be less likely to run for higher office than their white and/or male counterparts.

2.2 Contextual Characteristics

In addition, a variety of city-level contextual characteristics might affect whether a mayor chooses to run for higher office. Here, we highlight three: institutional configuration, size, and racial demographics.

Most large American cities have one of two forms of government: mayor-council or council-manager. Under the mayor-council system, the mayor typically acts as an executive with a large degree of autonomy. He/she can veto city council ordinances and is responsible for appointing a wide array of critical city officials (Judd and Swanstrom 2012). Conversely, under council-manager system the mayor and city council make policy decisions (typically with the council wielding greater authority), with a city manager taking responsibility for the day-to-day operation of government (Judd and Swanstrom 2012). Local political offices create natural constituencies and help the progressively ambitious bolster their political skills. We thus might anticipate that mayor-council systems—which confer both greater electoral

pressures and professional responsibilities on mayors— should yield more successful candidates for higher office than mayors in council-manager systems. This logic suggests that mayors governing under mayor-council systems should evince greater progressive ambition than those in council-manager cities.

On the other hand, the powers that allows for constituency and skill development might make leading in a mayor-council system more attractive than higher offices. Because they can wield greater influence and accomplish policy goals, these mayors might actually feel less frustrated in their current positions, and could therefore be less inclined to pursue higher office. In addition, their positions may leave them less time to run than their council-manager counterparts.

The size of a city might similarly affect mayoral ambition. Stewart (2012) outlines why constituency size matters: "[A]t each step along the way, the constituency of the old position was a subset of the constituency at the new position. A career in elected office, therefore, often is a matter of winning a majority in a small constituency, shoring up that constituency through diligent service, and then using the smaller constituency as a base in trying to win a larger constituency" (p.144). Intuitively, larger cities, then should be more amenable to progressively ambitious politicians simply because they will comprise a larger share of any subsequent constituency. In addition, big city mayors face unique challenges and wield unique powers (Judd and Swanstrom 2012). Thus, as with the mayors of mayor-council cities, the mayors of large cities will have more opportunities to develop their political skills, and will likely have greater confidence in their political efficacy. Therefore, we expect that mayors of larger cities will exhibit greater progressive ambition than their counterparts governing smaller cities.

Finally, city racial demographics might shape mayoral progressive ambition. Mayors who represent a more diverse constituency might find it challenging to move to a higher office that corresponds with a whiter voting population. Given racial/ethnic differences in policy preferences (Hochschild, Weaver, and Burch 2012), mayors of more diverse constituencies

may struggle to maintain support among their base while appealing to broader district views. Thus, we expect that mayors of cities with higher proportions of minorities will exhibit less progressive ambition than their counterparts governing whiter cities.

3 Historical Data on Mayors' Career Trajectories

We collected information for all mayors of cities with populations greater than 150,000 people (based on total population in the 2013 American Community Survey). There are 165 such cities, ranging from New York City (population 8,268,999) to Pomona, California (population 150,006). We also included the 24 state capitals that do not meet this cutoff, and an additional seven cities that are the largest in their respective states, but not already in the sample, for a total of 196 cities. For example, no city in New Hampshire exceeds 150,000 people, but we include Concord, the state capital (pop. 42,419), as well as Manchester, the largest city in the state (pop. 109,942).[3] We include the state capitals and largest city in each state to ensure that at least one significant city in each state is included. This reflects the fact that major cities are defined by their contexts. Figure 1 maps the cities in our sample.[4]

For each city, we gathered information on every person elected or appointed mayor from 1992 to 2015.[5] We collected a variety of background information, including dates of birth and death, gender, and race, along with political party (where available), and electoral/career history.[6] In particular, we sought to identify every elected office for which the mayor ran, both before and after serving as mayor. For example, Ed Rendell, the former mayor of

[3]In South Carolina, which also lacks a city greater than 150,000 people, we only include Columbia (population 131,686), which is both the state capital and the largest city in the state).

[4]See Appendix Table A1 for a complete list of the cities in our sample.

[5]We exclude interim mayors who are not later elected or appointed to a subsequent term. In some cases we were unable to identify all of the mayors back to 1992. In these cases we collected as many mayors as possible. Excluding these cities does not substantively change our results.

[6]Collecting this data is challenging because, unlike most federal and state offices, there is no existing dataset on mayors. We primarily relied on city websites and local newspapers to assemble the list of mayors and biographical characteristics. For candidate information, we used each state's Secretary of State website, municipal election databases, and local newspapers.

Philadelphia, first won election as District Attorney in 1977. He later ran for governor (in 1986) and mayor (in 1987). In both instances he lost in the Democratic primary. He then ran for mayor again in 1991 and won before being elected governor in 2002. While there are many offices for which a mayor could run, we focused on statewide and federal races for the main analyses (we report results on mayors seeking state legislative seats in the appendix in Tables A12 and A13). We excluded other local, county, and state legislative offices, as the relative power and prestige of these offices compared to even moderately sized and powerful mayoral positions is unclear. Overall, we collected data on 695 mayors. Table 1 provides summary statistics about the cities and mayors in our sample.

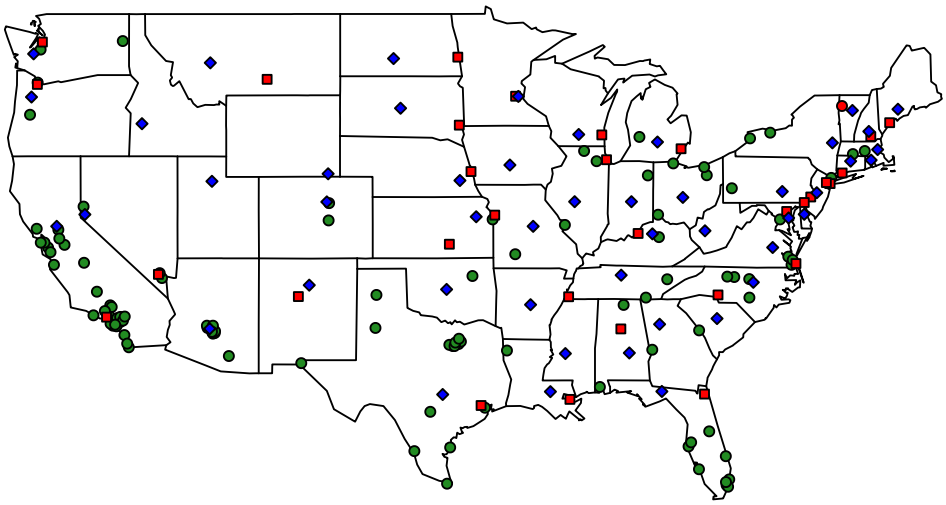


Figure 1: **Map of Cities in Sample**. Diamonds indicate state capitals; squares indicate the largest city in the state (if other than the state capital). Not shown: Anchorage, AK; Juneau, AK; Honolulu, HI.

Cities		Mayors	
N	191	N	695
Mean Pop.	385,571	% Women	15.54
Median Pop.	218,172	% Black	14.10
Mean Mayors	3.61	% Hispanic	6.62
% Strong Mayor System	49.74	Mean Tenure (years)	6.79

Table 1: Summary statistics for cities and mayors

We merged the mayor-level data with data on city-level demographics and institutional

structures. We gathered racial and population data from the U.S. Census Bureau for the 1990, 2000, and 2010 censuses. To study each city's institutional characteristics, we performed a comprehensive survey of city charters to identify term limits, length of mayoral terms, mayoral structure (classified as either a strong or weak mayor system), and the method of selection. Most of the mayors in our sample (97%) were directly elected by the voters. A smaller subset (24) were appointed by the city council, generally from among their own ranks.[7]

Our dependent variable, *Candidate*, is coded as "1" if a mayor runs for a higher office after their first successful mayoral election, and "0" if they never do so, regardless of their success in actually winning higher office. This includes mayors who enter a party primary for higher office but do not win the primary.[8]

We begin by exploring the basic descriptive question of mayoral ambition: at what rate do mayors run for higher office?[9] 15% of mayors run for a higher office, and 5% ultimately win one. To offer some comparison with other offices, in 2002, only 45 of the nation's 7500 state legislators ran for U.S. House (Maestas et al. 2006, pp. 196); the proportion of mayors running is certainly higher than this figure. However, that 7500 includes everything from part-time legislators to members of highly professionalized bodies. Moreover, a snapshot of one year and one office does not capture what these legislators' lifetime career ambitions. Hain (1974, 1976) provides perhaps the most analogous longitudinal evidence; he interviews 473 lower chamber legislators in 1957 and tracks their career paths through 1970. He finds that 44% of these legislators ran for higher office (including the upper chamber of their state legislature)—a far greater level of progressive ambition than we find among mayors. Finally,

[7]This practice is generally used to fill a mayoral vacancy, but a few cities use this system to select mayors instead of direct election.

[8]We also collected data on two additional dependent variables. The second dependent variable, *Nominee*, is coded as "1" if the mayor is on the ballot in the general election as the Democratic or Republican nominee or as an independent. The third dependent variable, *Winner*, is coded as "1" if the mayor won election to a higher office. We present results for these two additional dependent variables—which are separate from theories of candidate ambition—in our appendix.

[9]Higher offices here do not include mayors who opt for state legislative seats. A small number of mayors do run for those state legislative seats. We provide details about these mayors in the supplemental appendix in Tables A12 and A13.

in their survey evidence of prospective political candidates, Fox and Lawless (2005) find that 19% of mayoral candidates are interested in higher office, compared with 41% of state legislators. Our historical data appear to be in line with their survey data, suggesting, on balance that mayors of large cities exhibit relatively low levels of progressive ambition.

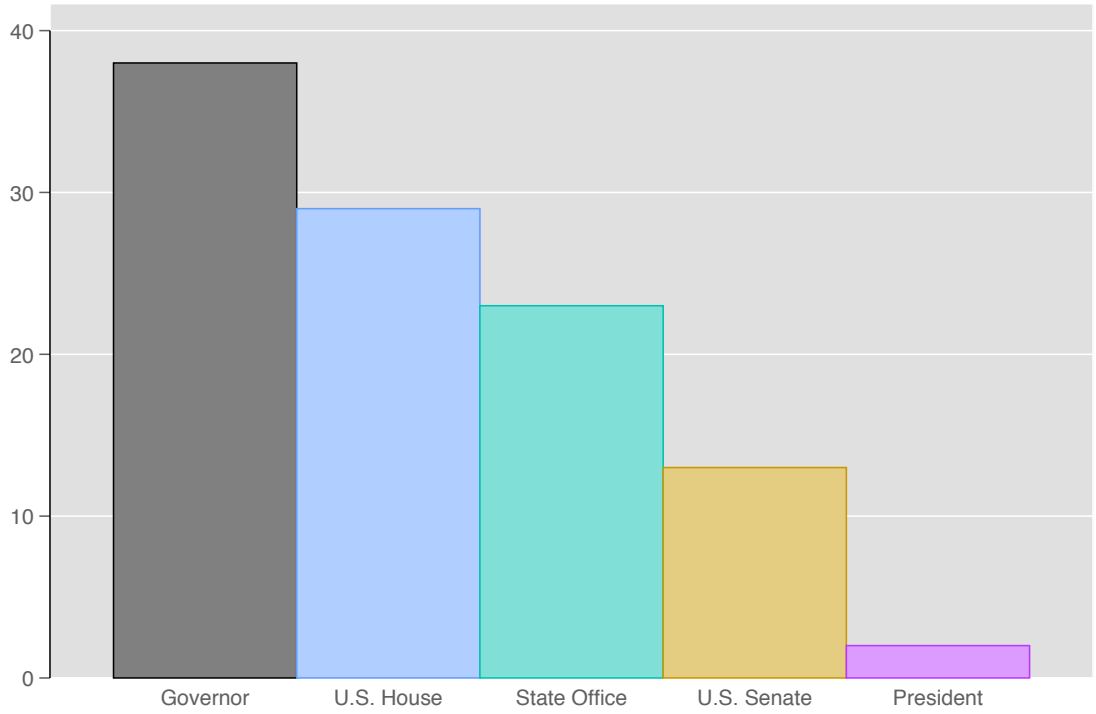


Figure 2: Number (raw count) of Mayors Running for Higher Office

The number of mayors running for higher office may be especially surprising considering that we are looking at a population of previously successful politicians who hold positions that could facilitate further ambitions. Nonetheless, over the course of the 23 years and 200 cities covered by our sample, 90 mayors do seek higher office.[10] Figure 2 shows the number (raw counts) of mayors who ran for higher office by position. The most popular office was governor; 41% the mayors who ran for higher office ran for governor. Of all of the mayors who ran for at least one higher office, 56% ran for executive offices, 34% ran for legislative

[10]Some mayors run for multiple higher offices. 67 mayors run for one office, 18 for two, four for three, and one for four (Scotty Baesler, the mayor of Lexington, KY from 1982 to 1993, ran for governor in 1991 and lost; won election to the U.S. House in 1992 and was reelected in 1994 and 1996; ran for Senate in 1998 and lost, and ran again for the U.S. House in 2000 and lost).

offices, and 10% ran for at least one of each. This overall preference for executive positions is consistent with our prediction that mayors would largely eschew legislative positions because of their ideological nature and lack of direct governing power.

Turning towards the question of *which* mayors run for higher office, Tables 2 and 3 display OLS coefficient estimates and standard errors from models predicting mayoral ambition based on individual-level and contextual characteristics, respectively. Each table includes two models: the first uses the entire sample of mayors, and the second restricts the sample to former mayors only.[11]

Starting with the individual-level model (Table 2)—which also includes control variables for the mayor's political party—we find mixed support for the prediction that black and Hispanic mayors would be less apt to run for higher office. Black mayors appear to be less likely to run for higher office generally. The coefficient estimates suggest that they are about nine percentage points less likely to run in a primary, all else equal. The coefficient for Hispanic ethnicity is negative, but falls well short of conventional standards for statistical significance. The results in Table 2 also yield some support for the hypothesis that female mayors would be less likely to run for higher office. The significance of the coefficient differs across the two samples, but is negative for both.

Turning to Table 3, we also evaluate a series of predictions exploring how city-level characteristics might correspond with mayoral ambition. These models—which feature the same dependent variable as in Table 2—include controls for whether a city has term limits and whether it is in the South, along with city and state-level percent Democratic variables.[12] Consistent with our prediction that mayor-council systems would foster the development of

[11] Appendix Table A9 reports results where the models include both the individual and contextual variables together. The results are consistent with the separate models. The coefficients on mayoral race and largest city in the state are similar across all models. In the pooled model, Democratic party is weakly significant, while the coefficient on strong mayor system decreases and is no longer significant (the coefficient is positive in all models). In the Former Mayors subsample, there is a weakly significant coefficient on % Hispanic in the city that is not significant in the pooled model.

[12] We estimate presidential vote at the city level using the two-party presidential vote of each city's county/counties. We use the last presidential election prior to the end of each mayor's time as mayor; for current mayors we use the 2012 presidential election. State and county presidential data was collected from Congressional Quarterly's "Voting and Elections Collection" dataset, http://library.cqpress.com/elections.

	(1) All Mayors	(2) Former Mayors
Female	-0.0494	-0.0693
	(0.0401)	(0.0431)
Black	-0.0850**	-0.0977**
	(0.0430)	(0.0488)
Hispanic	-0.0203	-0.0187
	(0.0600)	(0.0643)
Democrat	-0.0388	-0.0473
	(0.0360)	(0.0401)
Independent	-0.201***	-0.226***
	(0.0429)	(0.0465)
Constant	0.233***	0.261***
	(0.0290)	(0.0324)
Observations	600	526
R^2	0.049	0.060

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 2: **Individual Variables**. The dependent variable is a binary indicator of if the mayor was a candidate for higher office. Model 1 includes all mayors in the sample, and Model 2 restricts the sample to former mayors who had left office as of 2015.

political skills, we find that, all else equal, leading a strong-mayor city increases a mayor's probability of running in a primary by about 8 percentage points. There is a slight negative relationship between the city's percent black population and progressive ambition, and—in contrast with our predictions—a slight positive relationship for the percent Hispanic population, though in both cases the relationship is imprecise. Perhaps because of Hispanics' rising salience as a swing constituency (Hochschild, Weaver, and Burch 2012), mayors of these communities strategically believe that they have a better chance of obtaining higher office.

	(1) All Mayors	(2) Former Mayors
Largest City in State	0.137***	0.155***
	(0.0347)	(0.0385)
State Capital	0.0127	0.00620
	(0.0346)	(0.0382)
Strong Mayor System	0.0816**	0.0956**
	(0.0342)	(0.0380)
Mayoral Term Limits	0.0281	0.0279
	(0.0310)	(0.0341)
South	-0.0337	-0.0326
	(0.0410)	(0.0449)
% Black	-0.0530	-0.0785
	(0.117)	(0.128)
% Hispanic	0.131	0.155*
	(0.0835)	(0.0938)
% Dem Vote in City	0.0232	0.0923
	(0.156)	(0.174)
% Dem Vote in State	-0.0607	-0.218
	(0.220)	(0.246)
Constant	0.0666	0.113
	(0.106)	(0.117)
Observations	585	510
R^2	0.054	0.066

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 3: **Contextual Variables**. The dependent variable is a binary indicator of if the mayor was a candidate for higher office. Model 1 includes all mayors in the sample, and Model 2 restricts the sample to former mayors who had left office as of 2015.

4 Mayors' Preferences: Survey Evidence

To better understand the key insight of our historical data—that mayors seldom run for higher office—we turn to a second novel data source: a nationally representative survey of

mayors of cities over 75,000. We recruited *all* mayors from cities over 75,000 (465 in the U.S.) to participate in an in-person/phone survey on a wide array of topics. 94 mayors participated—a response rate of 20%.[13] Table 4 compares the participating cities' traits to the total population of U.S. cities with more than 75,000 residents. In-sample mayors largely resemble the demographics of the country as a whole. The participants, however, generally skew toward bigger cities. For a study of mayoral career ambition, this skew is not especially problematic. If anything, it means that more of the mayors in our sample have thought of and/or are plausible candidates for higher office. Given the questions we are focused on, having a moderate sample size in which all or nearly all of the respondents are plausible candidates for higher office is advantageous relative to having a larger sample size with more mayors of smaller cities and towns.[14]

	In Sample	All Cities Over 75k
N	94	465
Population	281,722	222,946
% Black	18.1%	14.5%
% Hispanic	18.7%	24.5%
Median Income	$50,107	$ 55,010
Median Housing Price	$193,393	$237,049
Poverty Rate	15.1%	13.5%
Unemployment Rate	9.9%	10.1%
Strong Mayor	41.0%	36.1%

Table 4: In sample city traits vs. the national population

Table 5 illustrates that the participating mayors come from a variety of backgrounds. The relatively large number of female and black mayors allows us to make comparisons along racial and gender lines. The small number of Hispanic mayors limits our ability to test for ethnicity effects. Our sample is representative along partisan lines. It is 65% Democrat

[13]This response rate is similar to recent comparable elite surveys (Fisher and Herrick 2013; Harden 2013; Butler et al. 2015).

[14]This skew may be somewhat surprising; at first glance, it seems like it should be much easier to schedule interviews with the mayors of small cities rather than their counterparts governing larger communities. Our experience running this survey over multiple years, however, suggests that the mayors of larger cities have more professionalized scheduling offices, which actually made it easier to schedule our 15-30 minute phone/in-person interviews.

Female	26%
Race	
White	79%
Black	14%
Hispanic	4%
Partisanship	
Democrat	65%
Republican	35%
Highest Degree	
BA/BS	41%
JD	31%
MBA	5%
PhD	4%
Other	19%
Years in Office	5.7

Table 5: Traits of participating mayors

and 35% Republican. These figures closely mirror the national rates in large cities (Gerber and Hopkins 2011).

The survey included two questions about career ambitions intermingled with items addressing a variety of topics. This wide ranging survey assures us that mayors did not opt in because of an atypical interest in discussing career trajectories. The first question asked mayors, "If you could no longer be mayor of your city, how appealing would each of the following positions be?" Mayors were then asked to rate a series of positions on a five-point scale ranging from "very unappealing" to "very appealing." These jobs were: city councilor, state legislator, U.S. congressman/congresswoman, U.S. senator, governor, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Secretary of Transportation, and something outside of government. The second question we asked centered on recruitment. We asked "During your time as mayor, have you been seriously recruited or encouraged to run for a different political office?"

Figure 3 displays mayors' average ratings of other political offices and non-governmental work. This plot suggests two general findings: (1) mayors are not especially enthusiastic

about filling other governmental offices, and (2) to the extent they are enthusiastic, their preferences align with the influence and prestige of the other offices. Perhaps the most striking result is the appeal of non-governmental work which was by far the highest rated option on average. Over 80% of mayors rated such jobs as "very appealing" or "appealing." No single government job came close to matching those figures. Importantly, this lack of enthusiasm for higher office does not appear to be a consequence of lack of encouragement. When asked whether they had been "seriously recruited" for higher office, 75% said yes. Moreover, because we conducted the interviews over the phone, we were able to, at least in some cases, determine that these recruitment efforts were credible with follow up discussion.

Figure 3: Mayors' mean ratings of the appeal of other positions

Of course, at least some mayors viewed some of the higher offices as attractive. A majority of mayors viewed four of the political jobs listed—U.S. Senate, governor, HUD Secretary, and Transportation Secretary—as very or somewhat appealing. Conversely, only 30% of mayors expressed similarly positive sentiments about running for U.S. Congress, and only 10% exhibited any interest in city council or state legislature. There is no evidence that

mayors as a group had unusual or idiosyncratic preferences over the set of offices. We do not see, for example, evidence of a singular focus on urban issues. The two elected offices dealing with state and local issues were almost universally unattractive. Moreover, while it was generally well regarded, the position of HUD secretary, which would allow one to focus almost exclusively on city issues, did not stand out from the other appealing positions. In sum, based on the overall attractiveness ratings, it appears that mayors' views of other government positions are rather conventional.

Figure 4 further unpacks mayors' views towards the three elected positions that could plausibly be described as more prestigious than the mayor's office: governor, Senate, and House. It displays the proportion of mayors who labeled each of the three positions as either appealing or very appealing. Two aspects of the graph stand out. First, as with the more comprehensive plot in Figure 3, mayors have little interest in running for Congress. Only about one third of mayors rated Congress at least appealing, and only 5% described it as very appealing. This finding is consistent with the proposition that mayors have a distaste for the legislative process generally, and that they especially revile the partisan fighting, fundraising, and frequent elections that are an integral part of running for and serving in the House. The second striking result in Figure 4 is the relative parity of the Senate and governor options. About 66% and 60% found governor and Senate appealing, respectively. These differences are not significant (p=.41). About 72% of those that were enthusiastic about governor were also enthusiastic about Senator, and 87% of those who saw the Senate as appealing felt similarly about the governor's office.

The qualitative evidence also speaks to the proposed explanations for mayors' lack of interest in higher office. One mayor we spoke with indirectly bolstered our theory that mayors were more attracted to offices that tackled urban issues in discussing his enthusiasm about a national position like HUD Secretary. This northeastern mayor of a medium-sized city noted the attractiveness of the position because "CDBG funds [Community Development Block Grants from HUD] are a lifeline for urban mayors." In other words, he found this national

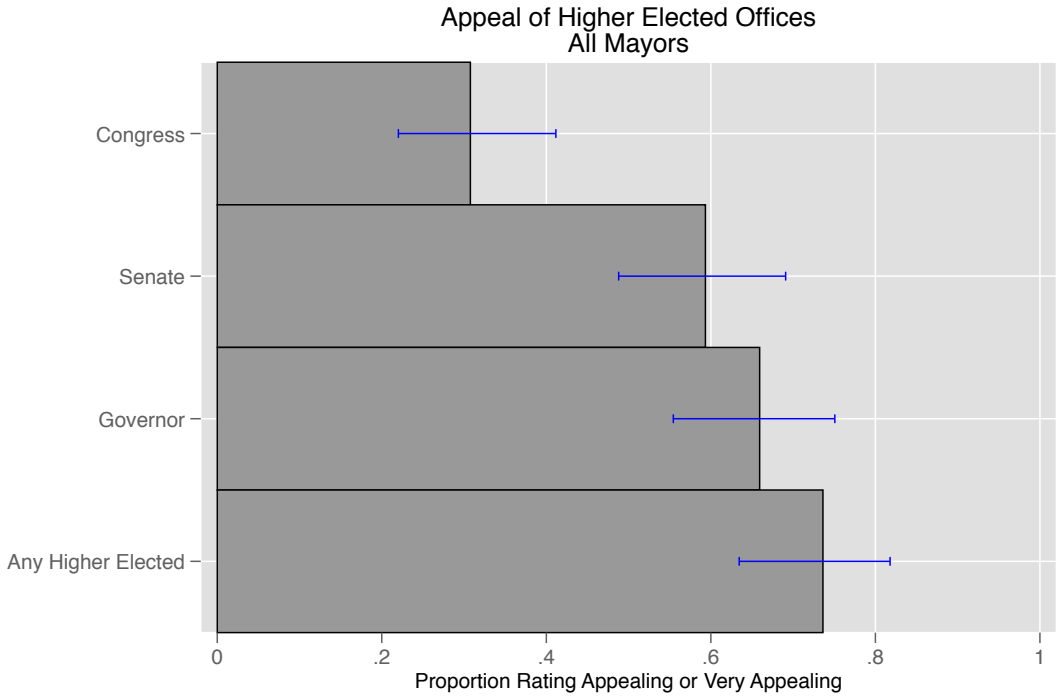


Figure 4: The proportion of mayors who rate higher elected offices as appealing or very appealing

position attractive at least in part because it would allow him more power and authority to work on urban issues.

Several mayors highlighted the unattractiveness of legislative positions—a qualitative sentiment that conforms with the more systematic low ratings of the U.S. Congress. One western mayor observed: "I decided a long time ago that I don't have a great legislative personality. I like to surround myself with intelligent people and have some control over that....U.S. Congress, I thought about it at one time, but have decided I'd be miserable." Any mayor moving to Congress would naturally be a junior member and would be stepping down in terms of power and autonomy. Indeed, one mayor of a medium-sized southern city who had been recruited for higher office worried about his inability to accomplish policy goals, particularly because he would "have to wait so long to move up in seniority."

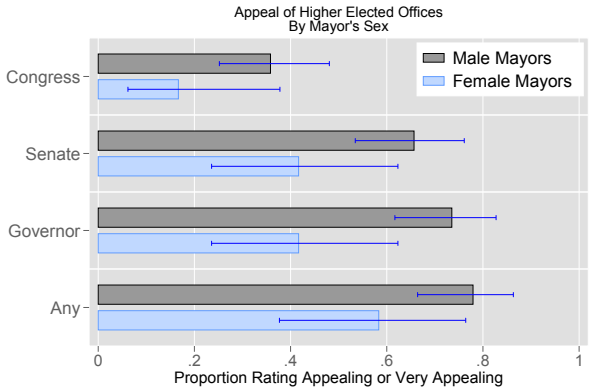
Relatedly—and again consistent with mayors' distaste for Congress—several mayors emphasized the unappealing nature of the fundraising, frequent elections, and partisan bickering

endemic to the House of Representatives. The mid-sized city mayor quoted above said he had no interest in running for Congress because you "have to run every two years and [it's] so partisan." Another southern mayor similarly dismissed moving on to Congress: "I wouldn't want to run every two years."

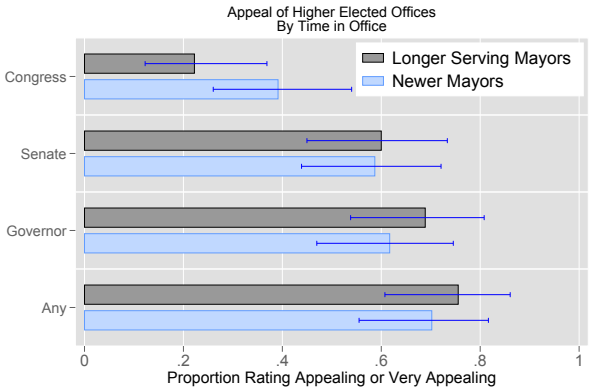
Finally, we also found some qualitative support for the expectation that a geographic preference for staying close to home would mute mayors' political ambitions. One western mayor rated all other higher offices—including those in her own state—as relatively unappealing, noting: "I don't have a grand master plan of what I want to run for next...I have four kids at home. [Being mayor] is a great opportunity to build my community." We do not, however, find more systematically that mayors from state capitals exhibit greater (state-level) progressive ambition. It may be, then, that, while for certain mayors these concerns are paramount, on a more systematic basis, geographic preferences do not drive mayoral progressive ambition.

The individual-level survey data also allow us to further unpack which kinds of mayors show an interest in running for higher office. We focus on assessments of the House, Senate, and governor offices as the three most plausible avenues for *electoral* progressive ambition. The other elected offices were almost universally panned and one cannot choose to run for the cabinet positions in the same way one runs for other elected positions. Figure 5 reports the proportion of mayors rating each electoral position "appealing" or "very appealing" by six variables of interest that speak to a range of potential sources of differences in preferences. These variables include personal traits (sex, time in office, and partisanship) and city ones (institutional form, city size, and distance to Washington, D.C).

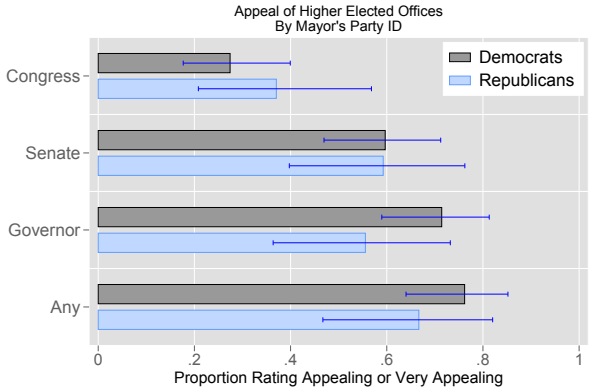
By far the most notable source of variation is the mayors' sex. Males are much more enthusiastic about each of the more prestigious elected offices, sometimes significantly so. While the small number of female mayors limits the confidence of the estimates, the pattern is clear and substantial across all higher offices. Female mayors were 20-30 percentage points less likely to view higher offices as appealing. These differences are even starker when limiting



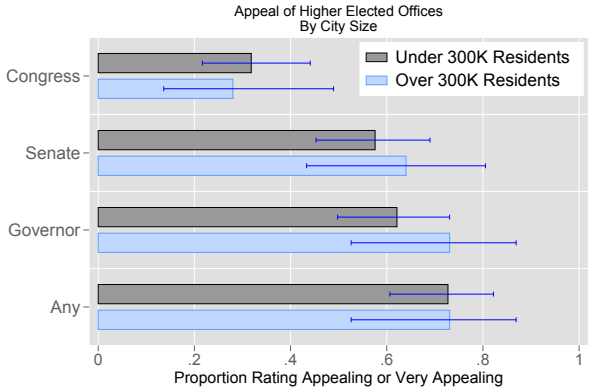
(a) Sex



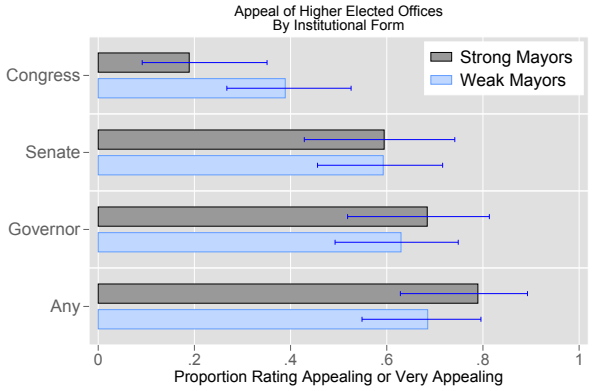
(b) Time in Office



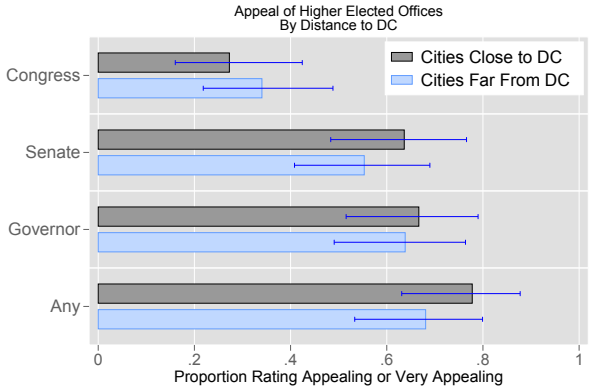
(c) Political Party



(d) City Size



(e) Institutional Form



(f) Distance to Washington, D.C

Figure 5: Proportion of mayors rating each electoral position as appealing by individual traits (sex, time in office, partisanship) and city attributes (institutional form, city size, and distance to Washington, D.C.).

the analysis to those who rated each job "very appealing" (e.g. those most likely to pursue higher office) in Figure 6. Almost *none* of the female mayors saw the higher offices as being very appealing. Only 5% saw the Senate and governorship as very appealing, respectively, compared to about 30 and 50% of male mayors. (Interestingly, neither group rates Congress as very appealing, again consistent with our other results revealing a mayoral antipathy towards Congress.) This is especially striking given that our sample surveys individuals who *have already run for and won political office in a medium- to large-sized city.* In other words, our sample inherently selects for a disproportionately politically ambitious set of women. Even among these politically-minded women, there is a significant ambition gap.[15]

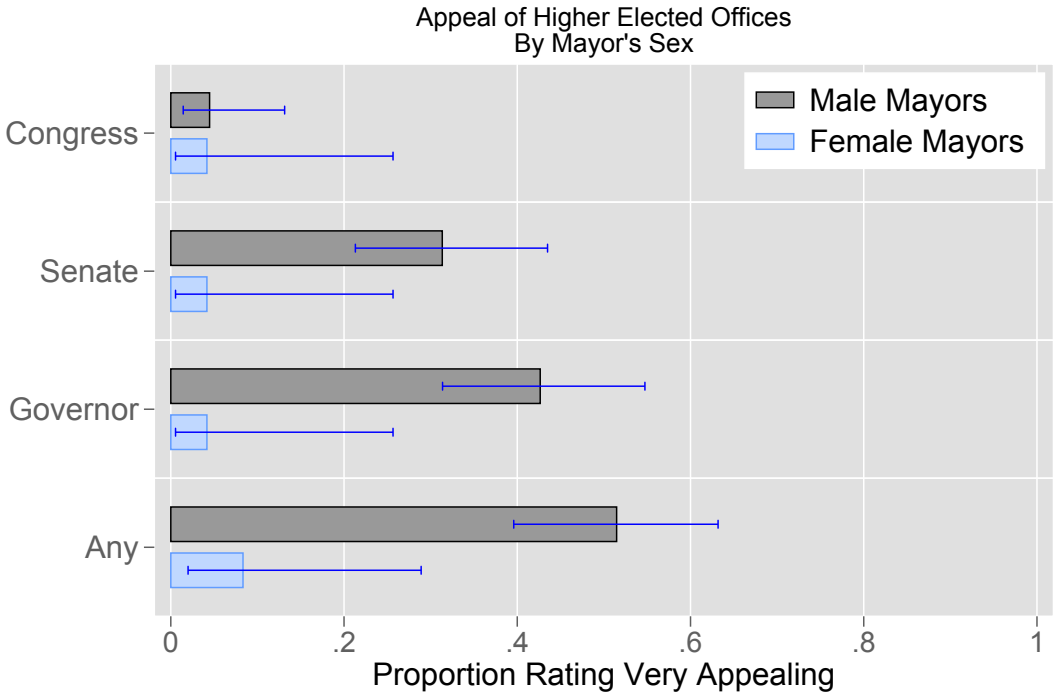


Figure 6: The proportion of male and female mayors rating the elected offices "very appealing."

This lack of progressive ambition among female candidates does not appear to be a consequence of a disproportionate recruitment of male candidates. An identical proportion of male and female mayors—75%—reported being recruited for higher office. This evidence contrasts

[15]Regression models with full controls (Table A10) largely confirm these results. Though our gender coefficient is not statistically significant in all models, it is consistently negative and similar in magnitude.

with scholarship that finds that party elites recruit men more than women (Fox and Lawless 2010; Crowder-Meyer 2013) and bolsters recent evidence that women are less receptive to recruitment efforts than men (Preece, Stoddard, and Fisher 2015; Butler and Preece 2016; Preece 2016). The other two mayoral level traits do not exhibit notable variation.

Contrary to some of the theoretical expectations, city level traits have little relation to preferences over the other offices. Strong and weak mayors are equally enthusiastic about the other higher offices. At least as notably, mayors of big (over 300,000 residents) and smaller cities gave similar responses. These similarities included their evaluations of Congress. One might expect that Congress would be more exciting and a bigger step up for mayors from smaller cities as it would represent an increase in constituency size. Lastly, a city's distance to Washington, D.C. (travel inconvenience) did not affect its mayor's interest in national office.[16]

5 Conclusion: Obstacles or Preferences

While we have uncovered interesting variations in *which* mayors run for higher office largely consistent with theoretical expectations, one central finding stands out as needing further discussion: mayors of medium and large cities typically choose not to run for higher office. Indeed, in light of other research suggesting that local office should be an excellent jumping off point for progressively ambitious candidates, the fact that fewer than one-fifth of mayors ever seek higher office is striking.

We have proposed a number of explanations for this result—including interest in urban issues, executive preference, geographic location, and distaste for fundraising, frequent elections, and partisan bickering—and found some support for all of them, particularly the ideological and electoral factors that render the House of Representatives especially unattractive. One final factor may be the (perhaps) under-appreciated attractiveness of big city mayors' offices. Mayors Rahm Emanuel of Chicago and Tom Barrett of Milwaukee are two

[16]Table A11 displays similar results in full regression models with controls.

examples of ambitious politicians who, after serving in the U.S. House of Representatives, opted to become mayors. It could be that being an executive of a large city, then, is simply more attractive than most other political offices, including federal legislative positions, that might be (mis)characterized as steps up. Future research into the career paths of other local officials—particularly longitudinal analyses of state legislators and city councillors—might help to shed further insight into how the mayoralty stacks up in the minds of ambitious politicians.

The seemingly widespread perceptions of governing inefficacy at the state and (especially) federal levels have led mayors to view cities as the only places where exciting legislation can get passed. As the mayor of a western city put it, cities "are where you actually get work done." Until views of state and federal government become more positive, many politicians who would likely be high quality political candidates will eschew higher office.

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Appendix

Table A1: **List of Cities in the Sample**

City	**Population (2013)**
New York, NY†	8,268,999
Los Angeles, CA†	3,827,261
Chicago, IL†	2,706,101
Houston, TX†	2,134,707
Philadelphia, PA†	1,536,704
Phoenix, AZ*†	1,473,639
San Antonio, TX	1,359,033
San Diego, CA	1,322,838
Dallas, TX	1,222,167
San Jose, CA	968,903
Austin, TX*	836,800
Jacksonville, FL†	829,721
Indianapolis, IN*†	828,841
San Francisco, CA	817,501
Columbus, OH*	800,594
Fort Worth, TX	761,092
Charlotte, NC†	757,278
Detroit, MI†	706,663
El Paso, TX	660,795
Memphis, TN†	650,932
Boston, MA*†	629,182
Seattle, WA†	624,681
Baltimore, MD†	621,445
Washington, DC	619,371
Denver, CO*†	619,297
Nashville-Davidson, TN*	614,908
Louisville/Jefferson County, KY†	601,611
Milwaukee, WI†	596,459
Portland, OR†	594,687
Las Vegas, NV†	591,496
Oklahoma City, OK*†	590,995
Albuquerque, NM†	556,495
Tucson, AZ	523,278
Fresno, CA	500,819
Sacramento, CA*	471,477
Long Beach, CA	465,424
Kansas City, MO†	462,378
Mesa, AZ	447,002
Virginia Beach, VA†	442,151
Atlanta, GA*†	432,589

*State capital. †Largest city in the state. Continued on next page...

Table A1: **List of Cities in the Sample** (continued)

City	Population (2013)
Colorado Springs, CO	425,805
Omaha, NE†	422,499
Raleigh, NC*	414,530
Miami, FL	407,526
Oakland, CA	397,011
Cleveland, OH	394,335
Tulsa, OK	393,709
Minneapolis, MN†	389,112
Wichita, KS†	383,703
Arlington, TX	371,267
New Orleans, LA†	357,013
Bakersfield, CA	352,918
Tampa, FL	343,768
Honolulu, HI*†	340,639
Anaheim, CA	340,081
Aurora, CO	332,820
Santa Ana, CA	328,719
St. Louis, MO	318,955
Riverside, CA	309,150
Corpus Christi, TX	308,993
Pittsburgh, PA	306,062
Anchorage, AK†	300,950
Lexington-Fayette, KY	300,843
Cincinnati, OH	297,150
Stockton, CA	294,406
St. Paul, MN*	288,802
Toledo, OH	285,459
Newark, NJ†	277,357
Greensboro, NC	273,228
Plano, TX	266,740
Lincoln, NE*	262,365
Henderson, NV	261,953
Buffalo, NY	260,568
Fort Wayne, IN	254,435
Jersey City, NJ	251,717
Chula Vista, CA	248,048
St. Petersburg, FL	246,642
Orlando, FL	244,931
Norfolk, VA	244,090
Chandler, AZ	241,096
Laredo, TX	240,524
Madison, WI*	237,395
Durham, NC	234,922

*State capital. †Largest city in the state. Continued on next page...

Table A1: **List of Cities in the Sample** (continued)

City	Population (2013)
Lubbock, TX	233,162
Winston-Salem, NC	232,219
Garland, TX	230,177
Glendale, AZ	230,047
Baton Rouge, LA*	229,426
Hialeah, FL	228,943
Reno, NV	228,442
Chesapeake, VA	225,597
Scottsdale, AZ	221,283
Irvine, CA	221,266
Irving, TX	220,856
North Las Vegas, NV	219,725
Fremont, CA	218,172
Gilbert, AZ	215,683
Birmingham, AL†	212,295
San Bernardino, CA	211,528
Rochester, NY	210,624
Boise, ID*†	209,726
Spokane, WA	209,478
Richmond, VA*	207,878
Des Moines, IA*†	205,415
Montgomery, AL*	204,760
Modesto, CA	202,629
Fayetteville, NC	201,755
Tacoma, WA	200,890
Shreveport, LA	200,715
Oxnard, CA	199,574
Akron, OH	199,038
Aurora, IL	198,726
Fontana, CA	198,692
Yonkers, NY	197,493
Augusta-Richmond, GA	196,395
Mobile, AL	195,116
Little Rock, AR*†	195,092
Columbus, GA	194,949
Glendale, CA	193,381
Huntington Beach, CA	193,197
Amarillo, TX	193,153
Grand Rapids, MI	189,735
Salt Lake City, UT*†	188,141
Tallahassee, FL*	183,638
Huntsville, AL	182,317
Worcester, MA	181,901

*State capital. †Largest city in the state. Continued on next page...

Table A1: **List of Cities in the Sample** (continued)

City	Population (2013)
Newport News, VA	181,025
Knoxville, TN	180,830
Grand Prairie, TX	178,195
Providence, RI*†	178,056
Brownsville, TX	177,795
Santa Clarita, CA	177,366
Overland Park, KS	176,520
Jackson, MS*†	173,997
Garden Grove, CA	172,785
Chattanooga, TN	170,246
Oceanside, CA	169,407
Santa Rosa, CA	169,005
Fort Lauderdale, FL	168,603
Rancho Cucamonga, CA	167,743
Port St. Lucie, FL	166,641
Ontario, CA	165,702
Tempe, AZ	164,742
Vancouver, WA	164,111
Springfield, MO	161,189
Cape Coral, FL	158,415
Sioux Falls, SD†	157,675
Lancaster, CA	157,368
Pembroke Pines, FL	157,324
Eugene, OR	157,318
Peoria, AZ	157,152
Salem, OR*	156,937
Elk Grove, CA	155,350
Corona, CA	155,227
Palmdale, CA	153,885
Springfield, MA	153,428
Salinas, CA	152,340
Rockford, IL	152,138
Pasadena, TX	150,785
Pomona, CA	150,006
Bridgeport, CT†	147,216
Columbia, SC*†	131,686
Topeka, KS*	127,625
Hartford, CT*	125,130
Charleston, WV*†	123,267
Springfield, IL*	116,495
Lansing, MI*	114,274
Manchester, NH†	109,942
Fargo, ND†	108,371

*State capital. †Largest city in the state. Continued on next page...

Table A1: **List of Cities in the Sample** (continued)

City	**Population (2013)**
Billings, MT†	105,864
Albany, NY*	98,424
Trenton, NJ*	84,349
Wilmington, DE†	71,525
Santa Fe, NM*	69,976
Bismarck, ND*	67,034
Portland, ME†	66,318
Cheyenne, WY*†	59,466
Carson City, NV*	54,080
Harrisburg, PA*	49,188
Olympia, WA*	48,338
Jefferson City, MO*	43,330
Concord, NH*	42,419
Burlington, VT†	42,284
Annapolis, MD*	38,722
Dover, DE*	37,366
Juneau, AK*	32,660
Helena, MT*	29,596
Frankfort, KY*	27,453
Augusta, ME*	18,793
Pierre, SD*	13,984
Montpelier, VT*	7,755

*State capital. †Largest city in the state.

Table A2: **List of Mayors Who Won Higher Office**

Name	City	Office Won	Election Year
Jerry Abramson	Louisville/Jefferson County, KY	Lieutenant Governor	2011
Michael Albano	Springfield, MA	Governor's Council	2012
Scotty Baesler	Lexington-Fayette, KY	US House	1992
Mark Begich	Anchorage, AK	US Senate	2008
Cory Booker	Newark, NJ	US Senate	2013
Phil Bredesen	Nashville-Davidson, TN	Governor	2002
Bobby Bright	Montgomery, AL	US House	2008
Jerry Brown	Oakland, CA	State Attorney General	2006
Jerry Brown	Oakland, CA	Governor	2010
David Cicilline	Providence, RI	US House	2010
Emanuel Cleaver	Kansas City, MO	US House	2002
Norm Coleman	St. Paul, MN	US Senate	2002
Bob Corker	Chattanooga, TN	US Senate	2006
Bob Duffy	Rochester, NY	Lieutenant Governor	2010
Kay Granger	Fort Worth, TX	US House	1996
Frank Guinta	Manchester, NH	US House	2010
Frank Guinta	Manchester, NH	US House	2014
Gary Hanson	Sioux Falls, SD	State Commissioner	2002
Bill Haslam	Knoxville, TN	Governor	2010
John Hickenlooper	Denver, CO	Governor	2010
Mike Johanns	Lincoln, NE	Governor	1998
Mike Johanns	Lincoln, NE	US Senate	2008
Tim Kaine	Richmond, VA	Lieutenant Governor	2001
Tim Kaine	Richmond, VA	Governor	2005
Tim Kaine	Richmond, VA	US Senate	2012
Dirk Kempthorne	Boise, ID	US Senate	1992
Dirk Kempthorne	Boise, ID	Governor	1998
Byron Mallott	Juneau, AK	Lieutenant Governor	2014
Pat McCrory	Charlotte, NC	Governor	2012
Harry Mitchell	Tempe, AZ	US House	2006
Tim Murray	Worcester, MA	Lieutenant Governor	2006
Gavin Newsom	San Francisco, CA	Lieutenant Governor	2010
Martin O'Malley	Baltimore, MD	Governor	2006
Ed Rendell	Philadelphia, PA	Governor	2002
Norma Torres	Pomona, CA	US House	2014
Raymond Wieczorek	Manchester, NH	State Executive Council	2002

	(1) Candidate	(2) Nominee	(3) Winner	(4) Nominee	(5) Winner
Female	-0.0515	-0.00966	-0.0311	0.260	-0.305
	(0.0403)	(0.0341)	(0.0249)	(0.162)	(0.198)
Black	-0.0854**	-0.0824**	-0.0511*	-0.195	-0.104
	(0.0433)	(0.0365)	(0.0267)	(0.176)	(0.245)
Hispanic	-0.0220	-0.0591	-0.0324	-0.383*	0.0873
	(0.0603)	(0.0509)	(0.0372)	(0.214)	(0.379)
Democrat	-0.0468	0.0263	0.0176	0.285***	0.0314
	(0.0363)	(0.0306)	(0.0224)	(0.103)	(0.149)
Independent	-0.209***	-0.105***	-0.0546**	-0.00290	-0.534
	(0.0433)	(0.0365)	(0.0267)	(0.333)	(0.525)
Constant	0.241***	0.124***	0.0656***	0.503***	0.534***
	(0.0293)	(0.0247)	(0.0181)	(0.0788)	(0.122)
Observations	598	598	598	91	60
R^2	0.051	0.033	0.022	0.128	0.063

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A3: **Individual Variables**. Models 1–3 include the full sample of mayors. The dependent variables are a binary indicator of if (1) the mayor was a candidate for higher office, (2) the mayor was a candidate in the general election, and (3) the mayor won an election for higher office. Models 4 and 5 use the same DVs as models 2 and 3, respectively, but restrict the sample for (4) only mayors that were candidates in the primary, and (5) only mayors that were candidates in the general election.

	(1) Candidate	(2) Nominee	(3) Winner	(4) Nominee	(5) Winner
Largest City in State	0.137***	0.0699**	0.0122	-0.0969	-0.0820
	(0.0347)	(0.0292)	(0.0210)	(0.117)	(0.135)
State Capital	0.0127	0.0198	-0.00736	0.0745	-0.200
	(0.0346)	(0.0291)	(0.0209)	(0.130)	(0.143)
Strong Mayor System	0.0816**	0.0592**	0.0494**	0.0460	0.0769
	(0.0342)	(0.0288)	(0.0207)	(0.135)	(0.157)
Mayoral Term Limits	0.0281	0.00718	-0.0164	-0.0654	-0.234*
	(0.0310)	(0.0260)	(0.0187)	(0.119)	(0.137)
South	-0.0337	-0.0188	0.00929	0.0106	0.268
	(0.0410)	(0.0344)	(0.0248)	(0.166)	(0.187)
% Black	-0.0530	-0.0257	-0.0773	0.0627	-0.855
	(0.117)	(0.0982)	(0.0706)	(0.431)	(0.513)
% Hispanic	0.131	0.0835	-0.0434	0.0143	-1.101***
	(0.0835)	(0.0702)	(0.0505)	(0.342)	(0.361)
% Dem Vote in City	0.0232	0.00558	0.191**	-0.138	2.385***
	(0.156)	(0.131)	(0.0942)	(0.686)	(0.713)
% Dem Vote in State	-0.0607	-0.0596	-0.0974	0.00503	-0.692
	(0.220)	(0.185)	(0.133)	(1.008)	(1.038)
Constant	0.0666	0.0597	-0.00771	0.729	-0.0173
	(0.106)	(0.0892)	(0.0642)	(0.443)	(0.489)
Observations	585	585	585	85	55
R^2	0.054	0.027	0.026	0.024	0.343

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A4: **Contextual Variables**. See Table A3 for model definitions.

	(1) Candidate	(2) Nominee	(3) Winner	(4) Nominee	(5) Winner
Female	-0.0723*	-0.0258	-0.0392	0.239	-0.313
	(0.0434)	(0.0366)	(0.0277)	(0.174)	(0.214)
Black	-0.0981**	-0.0974**	-0.0591*	-0.242	-0.0234
	(0.0490)	(0.0414)	(0.0314)	(0.190)	(0.272)
Hispanic	-0.0209	-0.0617	-0.0376	-0.374*	0.0547
	(0.0646)	(0.0546)	(0.0413)	(0.217)	(0.381)
Democrat	-0.0592	0.0229	0.0179	0.268**	0.0538
	(0.0405)	(0.0342)	(0.0259)	(0.108)	(0.154)
Independent	-0.237***	-0.120***	-0.0658**	-0.0120	-0.548
	(0.0470)	(0.0397)	(0.0301)	(0.338)	(0.526)
Constant	0.274***	0.142***	0.0785***	0.512***	0.548***
	(0.0329)	(0.0278)	(0.0210)	(0.0816)	(0.125)
Observations	523	523	523	86	56
R^2	0.064	0.040	0.027	0.119	0.063

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A5: **Individual Variables — Former Mayors Only**. See Table A3 for model definitions.

	(1) Candidate	(2) Nominee	(3) Winner	(4) Nominee	(5) Winner
Largest City in State	0.155***	0.0861***	0.0137	-0.0629	-0.116
	(0.0385)	(0.0323)	(0.0241)	(0.123)	(0.139)
State Capital	0.00620	0.0196	-0.00419	0.0855	-0.133
	(0.0382)	(0.0321)	(0.0239)	(0.137)	(0.148)
Strong Mayor System	0.0956**	0.0619*	0.0582**	-0.0100	0.0934
	(0.0380)	(0.0319)	(0.0238)	(0.140)	(0.163)
Mayoral Term Limits	0.0279	0.00413	-0.0225	-0.0729	-0.262*
	(0.0341)	(0.0286)	(0.0213)	(0.122)	(0.139)
South	-0.0326	-0.00709	0.00875	0.0674	0.189
	(0.0449)	(0.0377)	(0.0281)	(0.171)	(0.191)
% Black	-0.0785	-0.0633	-0.0828	-0.0863	-0.675
	(0.128)	(0.107)	(0.0800)	(0.447)	(0.530)
% Hispanic	0.155*	0.0876	-0.0401	-0.0854	-1.023**
	(0.0938)	(0.0787)	(0.0588)	(0.356)	(0.383)
% Dem Vote in City	0.0923	0.0662	0.235**	0.0676	2.211***
	(0.174)	(0.146)	(0.109)	(0.720)	(0.753)
% Dem Vote in State	-0.218	-0.200	-0.183	-0.319	-0.576
	(0.246)	(0.207)	(0.154)	(1.039)	(1.065)
Constant	0.113	0.104	0.0182	0.827*	0.0228
	(0.117)	(0.0978)	(0.0730)	(0.454)	(0.492)
Observations	510	510	510	80	51
R^2	0.066	0.033	0.032	0.028	0.358

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A6: **Contextual Variables — Former Mayors Only**. See Table A3 for model definitions.

	(1) All Mayors	(2) Former Mayors
(max) future_primary		
Female	-0.494	-0.670*
	(0.380)	(0.402)
Black	-0.778*	-0.829*
	(0.408)	(0.436)
Hispanic	-0.198	-0.185
	(0.511)	(0.519)
Democrat	-0.268	-0.318
	(0.254)	(0.266)
Independent	-2.834***	-2.935***
	(0.739)	(0.743)
Constant	-1.123***	-0.944***
	(0.198)	(0.208)
Observations	598	523
R^2		

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A7: **Logit Models — Individual Variables**.

	(1) All Mayors	(2) Former Mayors
(max) future_primary		
Largest City in State	0.997***	1.054***
	(0.271)	(0.282)
State Capital	0.0846	0.00948
	(0.284)	(0.300)
Strong Mayor System	0.676**	0.741**
	(0.290)	(0.304)
Mayoral Term Limits	0.233	0.221
	(0.260)	(0.272)
South	-0.325	-0.306
	(0.351)	(0.366)
% Black	-0.308	-0.457
	(0.899)	(0.926)
% Hispanic	1.111	1.243*
	(0.687)	(0.727)
% Dem Vote in City	0.101	0.648
	(1.294)	(1.366)
% Dem Vote in State	-0.442	-1.772
	(1.841)	(1.993)
Constant	-2.517***	-2.067**
	(0.879)	(0.929)
Observations	585	510
R^2		

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A8: **Logit Models — Contextual Variables**.

	(1) All Mayors	(2) Former Mayors
Female	-0.0140	-0.0275
	(0.0398)	(0.0427)
Black	-0.117**	-0.143***
	(0.0483)	(0.0544)
Hispanic	-0.0438	-0.0576
	(0.0668)	(0.0716)
Democrat	-0.0632*	-0.0751*
	(0.0379)	(0.0422)
Independent	-0.159***	-0.181***
	(0.0435)	(0.0472)
Largest City in State	0.131***	0.150***
	(0.0346)	(0.0382)
State Capital	0.00948	-0.00216
	(0.0344)	(0.0377)
Strong Mayor System	0.0563	0.0617
	(0.0348)	(0.0381)
Mayoral Term Limits	0.0294	0.0239
	(0.0305)	(0.0334)
South	-0.0539	-0.0567
	(0.0403)	(0.0437)
% Black	0.0752	0.0788
	(0.126)	(0.135)
% Hispanic	0.125	0.158
	(0.0915)	(0.102)
% Dem Vote in City	0.104	0.184
	(0.158)	(0.175)
% Dem Vote in State	-0.0471	-0.197
	(0.216)	(0.240)
Constant	0.104	0.160
	(0.105)	(0.115)
Observations	587	513
R^2	0.090	0.109

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A9: **OLS Models — Individual and Contextual Variables**.

VARIABLES	(1) Congress	(2) Senate	(3) Governor	(4) AnyHigher	(5) Recruited
Democrat	-0.25	0.28	1.11**	0.83	-0.01
	(0.51)	(0.48)	(0.52)	(0.53)	(0.57)
MinorityMayor	-0.52	-0.61	-0.61	-0.69	0.36
	(0.64)	(0.54)	(0.58)	(0.58)	(0.67)
FemaleMayor	-0.91	-0.98**	-1.60***	-1.01*	-0.16
	(0.62)	(0.50)	(0.53)	(0.53)	(0.59)
LongServingMayor	-0.74	0.13	0.41	0.39	1.62***
	(0.48)	(0.44)	(0.49)	(0.49)	(0.57)
Constant	-0.03	0.50	0.34	0.70	0.45
	(0.47)	(0.46)	(0.47)	(0.48)	(0.50)
Observations	90	90	91	91	92

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A10: **Individual Variables.** The dependent variable (models 1-4) is a binary indicator of whether a mayor rated a higher office as appealing or very appealing. For model 5 it is an indicator of whether the mayor reported being seriously recruited to run for another office. All coefficients are from logit models with standard errors in parentheses.

	(1) Congress	(2) Senate	(3) Governor	(4) AnyHigher	(5) Recruited
PercentBlack	1.36	2.49	5.69*	3.82	0.65
	(2.33)	(2.27)	(3.32)	(3.33)	(4.27)
PercentHispanic	-1.17	-0.43	-1.49	-0.87	-1.66
	(1.82)	(1.58)	(1.74)	(1.66)	(2.06)
CityProportionDemocrat	-0.01	-0.05	0.01	0.00	0.03
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.04)
StrongMayor	-0.72	0.38	0.32	0.75	0.37
	(0.69)	(0.62)	(0.71)	(0.73)	(0.92)
StateProportionDemocrat	0.92	7.08	4.80	2.51	-11.29*
	(4.83)	(5.05)	(5.11)	(5.15)	(6.08)
StateCapital	1.18	0.20	1.84	1.37	-0.36
	(0.80)	(0.78)	(1.20)	(1.17)	(1.29)
LargestInState	-0.64	0.58	0.56	0.34	1.46
	(0.83)	(0.78)	(0.96)	(0.92)	(1.39)
LogDistanceToDC	1.04*	0.38	1.53**	1.07*	0.93
	(0.59)	(0.48)	(0.63)	(0.60)	(0.73)
LogPopulation	0.15	-0.02	-0.51	-0.61	-1.12**
	(0.44)	(0.42)	(0.47)	(0.47)	(0.56)
Constant	-9.16	-2.83	-7.26	-0.91	12.73
	(6.41)	(5.91)	(6.65)	(6.36)	(7.83)
Observations	69	69	70	70	71

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A11: **Contextual Variables.** The dependent variable (models 1-4) is a binary indicator of whether a mayor rated a higher office as appealing or very appealing. For model 5 it is an indicator of whether the mayor reported being seriously recruited to run for another office. All coefficients are from logit models with standard errors in parentheses.

Campaigns for State Legislatures

In addition to the elections discussed above, we also collected data on mayors running for state legislative seats. 38 mayors (6%) run for state legislature, 29 (5%) win the primary, and 15 (2.5%) win election to the legislature. There is limited overlap between the mayors who run for state legislative seats and those who run for other offices. Of the 90 mayors who ran for other offices, only 7 also ran for state legislature.

The position of the state legislatures relative to mayors is hard to judge. For most of the cities in our sample, mayors represent a larger population than state legislators in their states. 80% of the mayors in our sample represent more people as mayor of the entire city than a member of the state legislature's lower chamber represents in their district, and 55% represent more people than a member of the state legislature's upper chamber. While the number of people represented is a crude measure of relative power, it provides some empirical evidence that there is not a clear hierarchical relationship between city mayor and state legislator. This relationship is reflected in the mayors survey, as well. 71% of mayors rated a position as state legislator as "very unappealing" or "unappealing."

The tables below replicate the models in Tables A3 and A4, but with the dependent variables defined as a candidate, nominee, or winner of a state legislative election only.

	(1) Candidate	(2) Nominee	(3) Winner	(4) Nominee	(5) Winner
Female	0.0228	0.0109	0.0245	0.0262	0.312
	(0.0278)	(0.0246)	(0.0179)	(0.181)	(0.288)
Black	0.000136	-0.0239	-0.0210	-0.313	-0.298
	(0.0298)	(0.0263)	(0.0192)	(0.209)	(0.337)
Hispanic	-0.00152	-0.0231	0.00145	-0.310	0.161
	(0.0415)	(0.0367)	(0.0267)	(0.307)	(0.595)
Democrat	-0.0530**	-0.00589	0.00151	0.353**	0.0581
	(0.0249)	(0.0221)	(0.0161)	(0.139)	(0.217)
Independent	-0.106***	-0.0573**	-0.0340*	0.380	-0.469
	(0.0297)	(0.0263)	(0.0191)	(0.424)	(0.549)
Constant	0.111***	0.0664***	0.0303**	0.620***	0.469**
	(0.0202)	(0.0178)	(0.0130)	(0.105)	(0.168)
Observations	600	600	600	38	29
R^2	0.022	0.012	0.012	0.213	0.133

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A12: **State Legislative Campaigns: Individual Variables**. Models 1–3 include the full sample of mayors. The dependent variables are a binary indicator of if (1) the mayor was a candidate for state legislature, (2) the mayor was a candidate for state legislature in the general election, and (3) the mayor won an election for state legislature. Models 4 and 5 use the same DVs as models 2 and 3, respectively, but restrict the sample for (4) only mayors that were candidates in the primary, and (5) only mayors that were candidates in the general election.

	(1) Candidate	(2) Nominee	(3) Winner	(4) Nominee	(5) Winner
Largest City in State	-0.0107	-0.00313	0.00469	-0.0896	0.0299
	(0.0242)	(0.0212)	(0.0152)	(0.264)	(0.397)
State Capital	0.0174	0.0135	0.00419	0.183	0.0654
	(0.0241)	(0.0212)	(0.0152)	(0.221)	(0.317)
Strong Mayor System	-0.0189	-0.0134	-0.0161	0.137	-0.00117
	(0.0241)	(0.0212)	(0.0152)	(0.230)	(0.340)
Mayoral Term Limits	-0.0268	-0.0253	-0.00533	-0.190	0.168
	(0.0216)	(0.0189)	(0.0136)	(0.211)	(0.297)
South	-0.0198	-0.0109	-0.00836	-0.136	-0.0244
	(0.0284)	(0.0249)	(0.0179)	(0.285)	(0.488)
% Black	-0.0369	-0.0598	-0.0583	-0.503	-1.850
	(0.0807)	(0.0708)	(0.0509)	(0.918)	(1.488)
% Hispanic	0.102*	0.0415	0.0184	-0.275	0.226
	(0.0580)	(0.0509)	(0.0366)	(0.402)	(0.571)
% Dem Vote in City	-0.0969	-0.0863	0.00118	-1.359	1.679
	(0.108)	(0.0949)	(0.0682)	(1.014)	(1.552)
% Dem Vote in State	0.316**	0.331**	0.146	2.433	-1.780
	(0.153)	(0.134)	(0.0967)	(1.488)	(2.457)
Constant	-0.0336	-0.0540	-0.0334	0.299	0.645
	(0.0738)	(0.0647)	(0.0465)	(0.762)	(1.412)
Observations	588	588	588	37	28
R^2	0.034	0.033	0.025	0.210	0.234

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A13: **State Legislative Campaigns: Contextual Variables**. See Table A12 for model definitions.