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Further Tests of Legislators Paying to Deviate from Constituent Interests

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Lopez and Campbell (2004) find a statistically significant, positive relationship between incumbents' deviations from their constituents' preferences and incumbent's subsequent campaign expenditures. We replicate their empirical program using a different measure of incumbent deviation based on Berry, Ringquist, Fording, and Hanson (1998). Using both measures of incumbents' deviations we both confirm and disconfirm the Lopez and Campbell result, implying either the construct of incumbents' deviations from constituents' interests or its operationalization is underdeveloped.

INTRODUCTION

Lopez and Campbell (2004) examine the empirical relationship between vote score residuals and incumbents' campaign expenditures in the subsequent re-election bid. The incumbent's goal is to get re-elected. The literature on legislator voting has consistently shown that deviating from constitu-

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ents' preferred policies makes this objective more difficult (Bender and Lott, 1996). Despite this, an incumbent may occasionally deviate from constituents' preferences with good reason (to pursue personal views, to service interest group pressure, to demonstrate loyalty to party leaders, etc.). To deviate while diminishing the costs of deviating, incumbents may increase their campaign expenditures in an effort to convince constituents to vote for them regardless of their policy positions. This interpretation of re-election expenditures has been termed "persuasive" campaigning (Mueller and Stratmann, 1994). If we view congressional seats as an economic good and re-election expenditures as the unit price paid by an incumbent for the good, then incumbents may "buy" some deviation, in the form of diminished electoral punishment, by expending more in their re-election bids. Lopez and Campbell (2004) find a statistically significant positive empirical relationship between incumbents' deviations and their subsequent campaign expenditures for the 1992 through 1998 Congressional elections, indicating persuasive campaign expenditures.

However, to derive their measure of incumbent deviation, Lopez and Campbell rely on the widely used but still controversial "residualization" procedure pioneered by Kau and Rubin (1979). This paper seeks to replicate the empirical program of Lopez and Campbell without recourse to the controversial empirical technique by using a different literature to derive a different measure of incumbent deviation. Berry, Ringquist, Fording, and Hanson (1998) present a framework for producing an alternative measure on congresspersons' ideology based on interest group ratings of congresspersons (like the Kau and Rubin measure) and election results. Using a method similar to that of Berry, *et al.*, we produce an alternative measure of incumbents' deviations from electorate wishes.

Using our new measure of incumbents' deviation from constituents' interests, we replicate the Lopez and Campbell empirical procedure. Contrary to the findings of Campbell and Lopez (2004), we find that our measure of incumbent deviations is not significantly related to incumbents' re-election expenditures. However, we find that more incumbent deviation significantly predicts lower vote margins for the incumbent and lower opponent's expenditures in the incumbent's subsequent re-election bid. Taken together, these findings imply that incumbent deviation does matter, as implied by Bender and Lott (1996). Furthermore, the incumbent is *not* able to "buy back" some of his deviation in a subsequent election bid. Rather, the electorate rewards the challenger with higher voter support regardless of incumbent expenditure.

However, closer inspection of our results is not as injurious to Lopez and Campbell (2004) as first inspection might indicate. Despite the proposition that Lopez and Campbell's deviation variable and our current deviation variable measure the same phenomena, and despite the shared derivation of both measures—adjusted ADA scores for incumbents—the two variables have a low correlation coefficient of 0.049. Furthermore, models applying both deviation variables *both* reconfirms the main Lopez and Campbell (2004) result *and* reconfirms this study's result. These findings imply to us that either the construct of incumbent deviations from constituent's purported interests, or the operationalization of the construct, is underdeveloped.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows: section two considers background theoretical issues, section three presents the empirical results, while section four discusses and concludes.