Appendix A   Online Appendix for "The Electoral Costs of Legislative Action: Dynamic Partisanship and Agenda Control in the U.S. Congress"

Contents

A.1 Table of Model Results Assessing Proposition 1: Relationship between House Passage Support & Congressional Approval

Table A.1: Relationship between House Passage Support$_t$ & Congressional Approval$_{t+1}$

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Minority Passage Support$_t$	0.067+	0.122*		
	(0.035)	(0.050)		
Majority Passage Support$_t$	-0.236+	-0.240		
	(0.124)	(0.146)		
Proportion Unity Passage Votes$_t$			-2.911	-8.406*
			(3.467)	(4.229)
Lagged Dependent Variable	✓	✓	✓	✓
Quarterly Controls		✓		✓
Congress-Specific Controls		✓		✓
N	114	114	114	114
R2	0.912	0.926	0.909	0.922
Adjusted R^2	0.910	0.915	0.907	0.912

Models 1-2 evaluate party-specific passage support effect.

Models 3-4 evaluate chamber passage support effect.

+$p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

HC2 robust standard errors reported in parenthesis.

A.2 Table of Model Results Assessing Proposition 2: Non-Linear Relationship between House Passage Support & Congressional Approval

Table A.2: Non-Linear Relationship between House Passage Support$_t$ & Congressional Approval$_{t+1}$, 1991-2019

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Medium Binned Minority Passage Support$_t$	0.460	1.543						
	(0.942)	(1.057)						
High Binned Minority Passage Support$_t$	1.372	3.058*						
	(1.103)	(1.339)						
Medium Binned Majority Passage Support$_t$	-0.414	0.111						
	(0.961)	(1.069)						
High Binned Majority Passage Support$_t$	-1.285	-0.989						
	(1.047)	(1.344)						
Logged Minority Passage Support$_t$			4.739+	8.535**				
			(2.591)	(3.180)				
Logged Majority Passage Support$_t$			-22.413*	-22.639+				
			(10.886)	(13.326)				
Medium Binned Proportion Unity Passage Votes$_t$					-1.191	-2.058*		
					(0.950)	(1.028)		
High Binned Proportion Unity Passage Votes$_t$					-0.439	-2.250+		
					(0.999)	(1.251)		
Logged Proportion Unity Passage Votes$_t$							-1.099	-2.381*

								(0.865)	(0.992)
Lagged Dependent Variable		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Quarterly Controls			✓		✓		✓		✓
Congress-Specific Controls			✓		✓		✓		✓
N		114	114	114	114	114	114	114	114
$R2$		0.910	0.924	0.912	0.926	0.910	0.923	0.910	0.923
Adjusted R^2		0.906	0.911	0.910	0.915	0.907	0.912	0.908	0.914

Models 1-4 evaluate party-specific passage support effect while Models 5-8 evaluate chamber passage support effect.

+$\rho < 0.01$; * $\rho < 0.05$; ** $\rho < 0.01$; *** $\rho < 0.001$. HC2 robust standard errors reported in parenthesis.

A.3 Table of Model Results Evaluating Hypothesis 1: Relationship Between Majority Electoral Support$_t$ & Party Passage Support$_{t+1}$, 1991-2019

Table A.3: Relationship between Majority Electoral Support$_t$ & Party Passage Support$_{t+1}$

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Majority Electoral Support$_t$	-0.603*	-1.788**	0.046	0.341*
	(0.282)	(0.662)	(0.115)	(0.154)
Lagged Dependent Variable	✓	✓	✓	✓
Quarterly Controls		✓		✓
Congress-Specific Controls		✓		✓
N	113	113	113	113
R2	0.402	0.571	0.204	0.559
Adjusted R^2	0.385	0.510	0.182	0.496

Models 1-2 evaluate effect on minority passage support.

Models 3-4 evaluate effect on majority passage support.

$+p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

HC2 robust standard errors reported in parenthesis.

A.4 Table of Models Results Evaluating Hypothesis 2: Relationship Between Majority Electoral Support$_t$ & Passage Party Line Voting$_{t+1}$, 1991-2019

Table A.4: Relationship between Majority Electoral Support$_t$ & Passage Party Line Voting$_{t+1}$

	(1)	(2)
Majority Electoral Support$_t$	0.005+	0.018**
	(0.003)	(0.006)
Lagged Dependent Variable	✓	✓
Quarterly Controls		✓
Congress-Specific Controls		✓
N	113	113
$R2$	0.292	0.492
Adjusted R^2	0.279	0.425

Models 1-2 evaluate effect of majority electoral support on party line passage votes in the U.S. House.

$+\rho < 0.01$; * $\rho < 0.05$; ** $\rho < 0.01$; *** $\rho < 0.001$.
HC2 robust standard errors reported in parenthesis.

A.5 Table of Models Results Evaluating Hypothesis 3: Relationship Between Majority Electoral Support$_t$ & Minority Passage Support$_{t+1}$ by Electoral Proximity, 1991-2019

Table A.5: Relationship between Majority Electoral Support$_t$ & Minority Passage Support$_{t+1}$ by Electoral Proximity

	(1)	(2)
Majority Electoral Support$_t$	-1.788**	-1.725*
	(0.662)	(0.769)
Quarters to Election	-0.117	0.861
	(0.521)	(6.197)
Majority Support$_t$ x Quarters to Election		-0.020
		(0.121)
Lagged Dependent Variable	✓	✓
Quarterly Controls		✓
Congress-Specific Controls		✓
N	113	113
$R2$	0.571	0.571
Adjusted R^2	0.510	0.505

Models 1 presents the full model testing Hypothesis 1.

Model 2 presents full model with interaction term.

+$\rho < 0.01$; * $\rho < 0.05$; ** $\rho < 0.01$; *** $\rho < 0.001$.

HC2 robust standard errors reported in parenthesis.

A.6 Table of Models Results Evaluating Hypothesis 4: Relationship Between Majority Electoral Support$_t$ & Passage Party Line Voting$_{t+1}$ by Electoral Proximity, 1991-2019

Table A.6: Relationship between Majority Electoral Support$_t$ & Passage Party Line Voting$_{t+1}$ by Electoral Proximity

	(1)	(2)
Majority Electoral Support$_t$	0.018**	0.016*
	(0.006)	(0.007)
Quarters to Election	0.001	-0.030
	(0.005)	(0.065)
Majority Support$_t$ x Quarters to Election		0.001
		(0.001)
Lagged Dependent Variable	✓	✓
Quarterly Controls		✓
Congress-Specific Controls		✓
N	113	113

R_2		0.492	0.493
Adjusted R^2		0.425	0.421

Models 1 presents the full model testing Hypothesis 2.

Model 2 presents full model with interaction term.

+$p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

HC2 robust standard errors reported in parenthesis.

A.7 Table of Models Results Evaluating Hypothesis 5: Relationship Between Majority Electoral Support$_t$ & Party Passage Support$_{t+1}$ by Legislative Salience, 1991-2019

Table A.7: Relationship between Majority Electoral Support$_t$ & Minority Passage Support$_{t+1}$ by Legislative Salience

	(1)	(2)
Majority Electoral Support$_t$	-2.092**	-0.234
	(0.698)	(0.803)
Legislative Bill Salience$_t$	-3.234	63.605**
	(2.133)	(19.979)
Majority Support$_t$ x Legislative Bill Salience$_t$ e		-1.332**
		(0.391)
Lagged Dependent Variable	✓	✓
Quarterly Controls		✓
Congress-Specific Controls		✓
N	77	77
R2	0.727	0.755
Adjusted R^2	0.660	0.690

Models 1 presents the full model testing Hypothesis 1.

Model 2 presents full model with interaction term.

+$p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

HC2 robust standard errors reported in parenthesis.

A.8 Table of Models Results Evaluating Hypothesis 6: Relationship Between Majority Electoral Support$_t$ & Passage Party Line Voting$_{t+1}$ by Legislative Salience, 1991-2019

Table A.8: Relationship between Majority Electoral Support$_t$ & Passage Party Line Voting$_{t+1}$ by Legislative Salience

	(1)	(2)
Majority Electoral Support$_t$	0.012*	-0.003
	(0.006)	(0.010)
Legislative Bill Salience$_t$	0.004	-0.503*
	(0.021)	(0.247)
Majority Support$_t$ x Legislative Bill Salience$_t$		0.010*
		(0.005)
Lagged Dependent Variable	✓	✓
Quarterly Controls		✓
Congress-Specific Controls		✓
N	77	77

R_2	0.536	0.557
Adjusted R^2	0.440	0.457

Models 1 presents the full model testing Hypothesis 2.

Model 2 presents full model with interaction term.

$+\rho < 0.01$; * $\rho < 0.05$; ** $\rho < 0.01$; *** $\rho < 0.001$.

HC2 robust standard errors reported in parenthesis.

A.9 Robustness Check 1: Majority Support & Proportion of Distributive Policy Roll-Call Votes

Table A.9: Relationship between Majority Electoral Support & Proportion Distributive Roll-Calls

	(1)	(2)
Majority Electoral Support	0.003	0.006
	(0.002)	(0.005)
Lagged Dependent Variable	✓	✓
Quarterly Controls		✓
Congress-Specific Controls		✓
N	113	113
R^2	0.204	0.380
Adjusted R^2	0.189	0.299

$+\rho < 0.01$; * $\rho < 0.05$; ** $\rho < 0.01$; *** $\rho < 0.001$.

HC2 robust standard errors reported in parenthesis.

A.10 Robustness Check 2: Majority Support & Proportion Roll-Calls Passing the U.S. Senate

Table A.10: Relationship between Majority Electoral Support & Proportion Roll-Calls Passing U.S. Senate

	(1)	(2)
Majority Electoral Support	0.003	-0.019+
	(0.007)	(0.011)
Lagged Dependent Variable	✓	✓
Quarterly Controls		✓
Congress-Specific Controls		✓
N	101	101
R^2	0.213	0.458
Adjusted R^2	0.197	0.377

$+\rho < 0.01$; * $\rho < 0.05$; ** $\rho < 0.01$; *** $\rho < 0.001$.

HC2 robust standard errors reported in parenthesis.

A.11 Robustness Check 3A: Placebo Test Assessing Relationship Between Majority Support & Party Procedural Support

Table A.11: Relationship between Majority Electoral Support & Party Procedural Support

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Majority Electoral Support	0.107	0.087	0.772+	-0.343
	(0.268)	(0.277)	(0.423)	(0.914)
Lagged Dependent Variable	✓	✓	✓	✓
Quarterly Controls		✓		✓
Congress-Specific Controls		✓		✓
N	107	107	107	107
$R2$	0.247	0.578	0.187	0.470
Adjusted R^2	0.225	0.514	0.163	0.390

Models 1-2 evaluate effect on minority passage support.

Models 3-4 evaluate effect on majority passage support.

$+\rho < 0.01$; * $\rho < 0.05$; ** $\rho < 0.01$; *** $\rho < 0.001$.

HC2 robust standard errors reported in parenthesis.

A.12   Robustness Check 3B: Placebo Test Assessing Relationship Between Majority Support & Procedural Party Line Voting

Table A.12: Relationship between Majority Electoral Support & Procedural Party Line Voting

	(1)	(2)
Majority Electoral Support	-0.010*	-0.001
	(0.005)	(0.010)
Lagged Dependent Variable	✓	✓
Quarterly Controls		✓
Congress-Specific Controls		✓
N	107	107
$R2$	0.193	0.477
Adjusted R^2	0.178	0.404

Models 1-2 evaluate effect of majority electoral support on party line procedural votes in the U.S. House.

$+\rho < 0.01$; * $\rho < 0.05$; ** $\rho < 0.01$; *** $\rho < 0.001$.
HC2 robust standard errors reported in parenthesis.

A.13 Assumption Check: Assessing Relationship between Mass Public Congressional Approval & Majority Seat Turnover

Table A.13: Relationship between Institutional Approval & U.S. House Majority Party Seat Turnover, 1974-2020

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Congressional Approval (Q3)	0.952**	0.631**	0.624**
	(0.310)	(0.177)	(0.192)
Majority Presidential Approval (Q3)	2.429***	1.946***	1.933***
	(0.453)	(0.246)	(0.270)
Election Cycle Type		17.460***	17.445***
		(4.000)	(4.103)
Pre-Election Majority-Minority Size Diff.			-0.021
			(0.131)
N	24	24	24
R^2	0.574	0.792	0.793
Adjusted R^2	0.533	0.761	0.749

$+\rho < 0.01$; $* \rho < 0.05$; $** \rho < 0.01$; $*** \rho < 0.001$.

HC2 robust standard errors reported in parenthesis.

To establish our own external validity, we also test this proposition using a model predicting seat turnover for the U.S. House majority party from 1974-2020 for a total of 24 election cycles.[1] Our explanatory variables are: (1) congressional approval in the quarter preceding House elections; (2) presidential approval in the quarter preceding House elections coded in the direction of the majority party; (3) an indicator variable indicating the type of election cycle the majority finds itself in coded -1 if the majority is facing a midterm election with a co-partisan president, 0 if the majority is facing a presidential election cycle, and 1 if the majority is facing a midterm election with an opposing party president; and (4) the pre-election size of the majority which ranges from 3 (2002) to 74 (1978). Note that we code presidential approval in the direction of the majority party, such that higher values indicate a more favorable dynamic for the majority party. Thus this variable takes the form of presidential approval for the majority party if a co-partisan occupies the White House and disapproval if an opposing-partisan occupies the White House. We center each approval rating at 50% such that negative values indicate net disapproval and positive values indicate net approval. The outcome variable measuring House majority seat turnover ranges from -63, indicating the number of seats the House Democratic majority lost during the 2010 midterms, to 49 indicating the number of seats the

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[1] We begin with 1974 given that congressional approval is asked consistently enough to estimate a quarterly latent approval trend prior to the 1974 election cycle. We estimate congressional approval for all 191 quarters starting in 1974 Q1 to the 2021 Q3. The latent time series for presidential approval is much more comprehensive, with consistent data measuring presidential approval beginning in 1937. We estimate presidential approval for all 338 quarters starting in 1937 Q3 to the 2021 Q4.

House Democratic majority gained during the 1974 midterms. We expect congressional approval to be a significant positive predictor of majority party seat turnover.

This attempt to establish external validity is shown in the table above. There is clear evidence that congressional approval predicts the majority party's electoral fortunes after accounting for all other salient predictors of congressional elections, especially presidential approval. Turning to the results presented in Model 3, a one-standard deviation change ($\approx$ 12.03%) in congressional approval correlates with a majority seat gain of about 8 seats in the forthcoming House elections (12.03×0.624). Going from the minimum to maximum value of congressional approval (−36.98% to 2.781) correlates with a predicted increase of about 25 seats for the majority party in the forthcoming elections (39.77× 0.62375). While the association between congressional approval and majority party seat turnover is less than what is found in the association between presidential approval and turnover, this analysis helps establish external validity that congressional approval plays a role in shaping the electoral fate of the House majority party.