No Experience Required:

Early Donations and Amateur Candidate Success in Primary Elections

Abstract

The electoral dominance of "quality" candidates—political insiders with a history of holding office—is well-established. However, research on the recent rise in successful political neophytes is less studied. Despite longstanding trends in the predominance of experienced candidates in primary elections, nearly half of all quality candidates who ran in non-incumbent races lost to a candidate without prior electoral experience in 2018. In this article, we investigate the success of political newcomers by examining a topic often overlooked in the growing literature on primaries: campaign finance. We show that, from 2016-2020, political newcomers saw (1) greater success in future fundraising, and (2) an increased likelihood of primary election victory when they garnered more early contributions from *outside* their district. This contrasts prior elections where early money from *inside* a candidate's own congressional district served as the strongest predictor for future fundraising and electoral success.

The electoral dominance of "quality" candidates—political insiders who have previously held elective office—is well-established. Experienced candidates are judicious in their emergence decisions, have greater name recognition, and possess established networks of supporters. With this arsenal of advantages, quality candidates have been known to beat out their politically inexperienced competition in federal elections with remarkable consistency. However, scholars and pundits alike have noted that, in recent elections, political neophytes have reached new levels of electoral success. Porter and Treul (2018) find that candidates *with* prior experience in elected office are no longer besting those *without* experience in the systematic way they once did. From 1980 to 2014, U.S. House candidates with political experience who ran in primaries without an incumbent beat out amateurs close to 80 percent of the time. Since 2016, though, quality candidates have lost to amateurs in nearly half of these non-incumbent primaries. Indeed, the U.S. House of Representatives is composed of more amateur lawmakers today than any other session in the last thirty years.

In this paper, we use data on early campaign fundraising to better understand who or what might be fueling political amateurs' newfound success. Raising early or "seed" money is vital for candidates who lack elected experience because it helps them to demonstrate campaign credibility. Early campaign receipts are also predictive of future fundraising potential and, according to some research, electoral success (e.g. Biersack et al. 1993). The majority of U.S. House candidates begin fundraising in the year prior to their election—long before their ground campaign has even begun.[1] It is, therefore, unlikely that these early receipts come from run-of-the-mill supporters. These contributors more likely stem from the kinds of political influencers who are active in the "invisible primary" process (Cohen et al., 2008; Rauch and Raja, 2017). We argue that the composition of a candidate's early donor network offers important insight into a candidate's base of support and a glimpse into who may have recruited a candidate to run for office. Employing data on those individual donors, party elites, and political organizations who made donations during the first two months of

[1]Between 2010 and 2020, 72% of all candidates who reported contributions to the FEC began their fundraising campaign in the year prior to the election; this percentage dips to 60% when examining only amateur candidates and increases to 66% when examining amateurs who ran in 2016-2020.

a candidate's campaign, we assess if contributions from *certain kinds* of early supporters are more closely associated with: (1) later fundraising success, and (2) an elevated likelihood of victory in primary elections. Our analysis focuses on three principle fundraising avenues:

Support from Within-the-District

Scholarship on congressional elections has long regarded support from a candidate's "personal circle" as integral to a successful run for office (e.g. Fenno 1978). Organizations like "Run for Something" regularly cite local donors as among the first people a candidate should turn to when she begins fundraising. Early contributions from a candidate's district may also indicate the strength of her support from local elites (Bawn et al., 2012). If political outsiders have indeed gained in popularity (Hansen and Treul, 2019), this would be observable through an increase in early monetary support from within a candidate's own district.

Support from Party Elites

Evidence of party involvement in primary elections is mixed; official party organizations like the DCCC and RNC almost always withhold their donations until the general election. However, more recent work has found evidence of party involvement in primaries by employing a broader definition of party activity. For example, Hassell (2016) uses the proportion of individuals who donated to both a candidate and her party as a signal for party coordination, arguing that such behavior, "quantifies accounts of party organizations as the center of a coordinated effort to direct campaign funds to favored candidates" (p. 80). We similarly use donations from leadership PACs (LPACs) to measure indirect party involvement in primaries. Herrnson (2009) demonstrates that party elites use LPAC contributions to advance party goals. Aldrich et al. (2017) similarly find that LPAC donations often go to candidates who will improve ideological cohesion within the party. Because political amateurs today are generally regarded as "outsider candidates" or "factional figures," we do not expect LPAC contributions to be a key component of early amateur fundraising.

Support from Outside-the-District

Campaign contributions from individuals outside of a candidate's own congressional district have skyrocketed over the last decade. Employing congressional staff interviews, Canes-

Wrone and Miller (2021) show that these out-of-district contributors are, "more ideological and attentive to politics" (p.9), unlike within-district donors who tend to support candidates for personal reasons. Much like ideological PACs, out-of-district donors tend to have "purposive" motivations; they donate because they regard a candidate as a strong advocate for shared policy priorities or view her as possessing ideological predilections similar to their own (Barber, 2016). We suspect that these kinds of out-of-district donors and ideological groups may be providing amateur candidates with the resources and grassroots support necessary to defeat politically experienced candidates in primaries.

Data and Methods

In our analysis, we pair campaign finance data from the Federal Elections Commission (FEC) with data on candidate electoral experience to investigate the relationship between a candidate's early donor network and her campaign's success. We define early contributions as those donations that occur in the first two months of a candidate's fundraising campaign, which begins when her first donation is recorded by the FEC.[2] We use this definition to account for the staggered election calendar where primaries are held any time between March and September of an election year. On average, candidates raise $30,461 in the first two months of their fundraising campaign.[3] This constitutes approximately 23% of the total donations a candidate will raise during her primary fundraising cycle. When broken down by experience, these figures are similar for quality and amateur candidates. Following Jacobson (1989), we consider candidates to be "quality" candidates if they previously held or currently hold any kind of publicly elected office.

To identify a candidate's earliest supporters as hailing from within-the-distinct or outside-the-district, we rely on geolocation data provided by the FEC. In FEC contributions data,

[2]Our 60-day definition of early money in congressional primaries follows Biersack et al. (1993). Extending our cut-off to the first 90 days of candidate fundraising, as employed by Bonica (2017), produces similar but weaker results, which can be found in Tables 3, 4, and 7 of the online appendix. Moreover, if a candidate does not begin fundraising until March of their election year, then their first donations are not considered "early" for our purposes. We replicate our analyses changing this cut-off to April 31st, May 31st, and June 31st; these robustness exercises produce no substantive changes and only negligible shifts in statistical significance.

[3]This excludes the 30% of candidates in our sample who raised no money during the primary election.

individual donors are identified by their ZIP code rather than congressional district. Therefore, we use a new method developed by Curiel and Steelman (2018) to assign donations as either in-district, in-state, or out-of-state, which does not make the same strong assumptions as other approaches.[4] Using this method is a principle innovation of this paper as it has not yet been applied to work on primary elections.

Giving from PACs is easily identifiable in FEC data through the entity codes assigned to every campaign contribution. We more specifically identify ideological PACs and leadership PACs using summary data on political action committees provided by OpenSecrets.org. Leadership PACs are strictly defined by the FEC as political committees controlled or maintained by a candidate or an individual holding federal office, but are not authorized committees of a candidate or officeholder. Ideological PACs, on the other hand, have a much more nebulous definition. For our purposes, we follow OpenSecrets' definition for ideological PACs: political committees that are heavily partisan or focused on a single-issue area (e.g., abortion, environment, or guns).

In our analyses, we examine all congressional candidates who ran in non-incumbent primaries[5] from 2010-2020; which includes a sample of three election cycles (2016-2020) where amateur candidates have seen increased success in beating out quality candidates for their party's nomination.[6] These six election cycles provide approximately 5,000 candidates and nearly 1,500 races to examine. We constrain our analyses to non-incumbent primaries to better evaluate the types of electoral contexts in which amateurs are beating quality candidates in order to reach office. Only 6% of political amateurs who won the general election from 2010-2020 reached Congress by primarying an incumbent.[7] Given the overwhelming advantage of incumbency, early monetary support in congressional primaries should be the most strategic and have the greatest impact in races where an incumbent is not running.

[4]For a more complete account of this methodology see Section A of the online appendix.

[5]This includes vacant seats (i.e., no incumbent due to death, resignation, or retirement) and non-incumbent party primaries (e.g., Republican primary with a Democratic incumbent).

[6]This includes caucuses and conventions; for brevity we refer to all nominating processes as primaries. We exclude candidates running in top-two primary states from our analysis.

[7]Only twelve candidates (6 quality candidates and 6 amateurs) reached Congress by beating incumbents in primaries from 2016-2020.

Results

To evaluate the relationship between a candidate's early contributions and her later fundraising success, we estimate a hierarchical linear model with random effects by primary and district fixed-effects.[8] To measure local support, our model includes early contributions from within a candidate's district. To measure party support, our model includes early contributions from LPACs. Finally, to measure out-of-district support, our model includes early contributions from individuals within a candidate's state, individuals outside of a candidate's state, and ideologically-motivated PACs. These contribution-based independent variables are logged and interacted with candidate experience to assess the differential effects of early money on future fundraising success for quality candidates and amateurs. Data on whether or not a candidate has previously held elective office (i.e. candidate quality) is provided by Porter and Treul (2018). Our dependent variable is a measure of all logged primary election contributions received by a candidate *after* her early fundraising period.

Figure 1 plots the magnitude of coefficients from our hierarchical model. Across almost all fundraising types, amateurs get more "bang for their buck" than do their politically experienced counterparts when they collect early money. In particular, our model shows that early in-district and out-of-state donations have a statistically significantly weaker effect on future fundraising success for quality candidates as compared to amateurs. To illustrate, converting the coefficient on in-district contributions (β=0.320) for amateurs in 2010-2014, each early dollar raised from the district generates another \$1.44 of contributions later in the fundraising cycle. Amateurs who fundraised early generated, on average, \$13,550 from in-district contributors, which means that this fundraising would garner them an additional \$19,512 in total contributions before their primary election. This dividend effect is statistically significantly weaker for those *quality* candidates who raised early money from their district (β=0.126); resulting in \$4,143 fewer dollars or a 21% decrease in later contributions to quality candidates. This finding aligns with our expectations, given the important role early fundraising plays in demonstrating amateur candidate viability.

[8] We also include several control variables such as the number of quality candidates in a race and candidate gender. The full model can displayed in Table 2 of the online appendix.

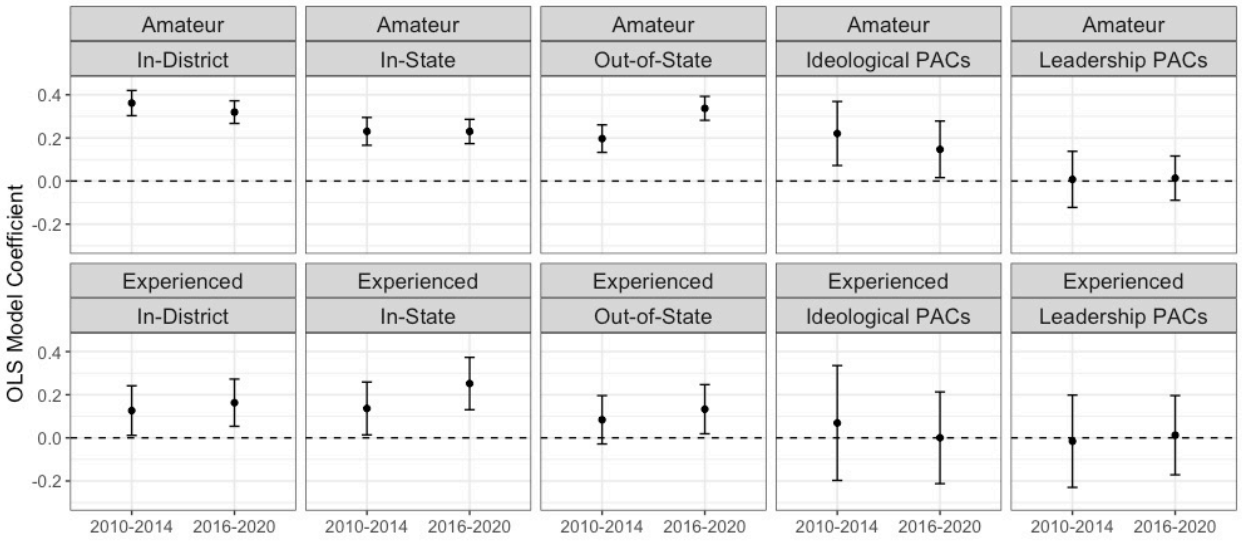

Figure 1: Effect of Early Fundraising on Future Fundraising Success

Dots represent OLS regression coefficients with 95% confidence intervals, where future fundraising success is explained by type of early campaign donation. See appendix Table 2 for the full regression output.

For both quality and amateur candidates, the effect of each contribution type on future fundraising success remains relatively consistent across both 2010-2014 (t_1) and 2016-2020 (t_2)—with the exception of out-of-state contributions to amateur candidates. Moving from t_1 to t_2, there is a statistically significant increase in the effect of out-of-state contributions on future fundraising success. From 2010-2020, the average amateur candidate raised \$8,700 of early contributions from outside her district, leading to an additional \$10,594 in later contributions. This dividend effect increases by 15% in t_2, garnering amateur candidates an additional \$12,186 in later contributions. In sum, consistent with our expectations, we find that: (1) out-of-state contributions have the largest effect on future fundraising potential for amateurs, (2) this effect is not detected among quality candidates, and (3) this effect increases across our observed period of amateur success.

We next examine the association between out-of-district funding and amateur candidate electoral success in non-incumbent primary elections. Modeling candidate success in primaries presents a challenge because outcomes are not independent; a candidate's success depends on the performance of other candidates in that race. To account for this dependency, we employ a conditional logit where the unit of analysis is a primary election rather than a

Table 1: Early Contributions as a Predictor for Primary Election Success, 2010-2020

	DV: Won Primary Election	
	2010-2014	2016-2020
Individual, In-District Contributions	**0.126***	0.001
	(0.044)	(0.036)
Individual, In-State Contributions	**0.153***	**0.098***
	(0.047)	(0.042)
Individual, Out-of-State Contributions	−0.024	**0.130***
	(0.044)	(0.039)
PAC, Ideological	0.042	**0.112***
	(0.080)	(0.053)
PAC, Leadership	0.041	0.067
	(0.065)	(0.042)
PAC, Other	**0.100***	0.026
	(0.050)	(0.030)
Observations	295	305

Conditional logit model of candidate success as a function of type of fundraising is estimated with 95% confidence intervals. The units of analysis are non-incumbent congressional primary elections. Contribution variables are logged. See appendix Table 5, Column 1 and Table 6, Column 1 for full regression output.

candidate.[9] In this model, the DV—a candidate's success in a given primary—is expressed as a function of that candidate's characteristics—such as electoral experience, gender, and early fundraising—along with the characteristics of other candidates running in that same race. Because district characteristics cannot be incorporated into the model, we constrain races examined to include (1) districts that are safe for a candidates party, or (2) districts that are two- party competitive.[10] By doing this, we exclude those primaries where amateurs may easily win, but will have little chance of succeeding in the general election.

[9]Similar to a multinomial logit, the conditional logit groups discrete alternatives by choice set. In a conditional logit the explanatory variables for alternative selection (candidate success) within a choice set (primary election) are attributes of the alternatives (candidates).

[10]In the online appendix, we include alternative specifications of this model as a robustness check to ensure our results are not a fixture of modeling decisions. These models can be found in Table 5 (Columns 2-3) and Table 6 (Columns 2-3). Across all three model specifications, we find substantively similar results.

Our results, presented in Table 1, highlight several important shifts in the association between early money and candidate success across recent primary elections. From 2010-2014, an amateur candidate who out-raised her opponent by $500 worth of in-state contributions increased her predicted probability of winning by 7%. However, in t_2, there is no statistically significant relationship observed. An inverse shift can be seen when examining out-of-state contributions. From 2016-2020, an amateur candidate who out-raised her opponent by $500 worth of out-of-state contributions increased her predicted probability of winning by 5%. However, in t_1, there is no statistically significant relationship observed. Similarly, we observe a statistically significant relationship between ideological PAC contributions and amateur candidate success in t_2, but such a relationship is non-existent in t_1.

Conclusion

Amateur candidates have become more successful in recent congressional elections. Not only are they beating out their politically experienced counterparts to gain their party's nomination, but they are also winning a greater proportion of seats in Congress. Extant scholarship, however, has not coalesced on an explanation for this change. To answer this question, we investigate the role of early campaign fundraising in primaries and, furthermore, suggest that these early contributions will have differential impacts depending on their source. We also argue that the composition of a candidate's early donor network provides important insights into the types of political forces that are recruiting, grooming, and preparing candidates to run for office in the "invisible primary." Examining donations from individuals, ideological PACs, and party elites, we find that contributors from outside a candidate's own district have become a key financial constituency in congressional campaigns; these contributions are predictive of both future fundraising and electoral success in primary elections.

This paper takes a first step towards understanding the factors contributing to amateur candidate success by recognizing the impact that early out-of-district support has down the road in campaigns. However, critical questions remain about the motivations and broader giving behaviors of these contributors. Between 2010 and 2020, the electoral environment

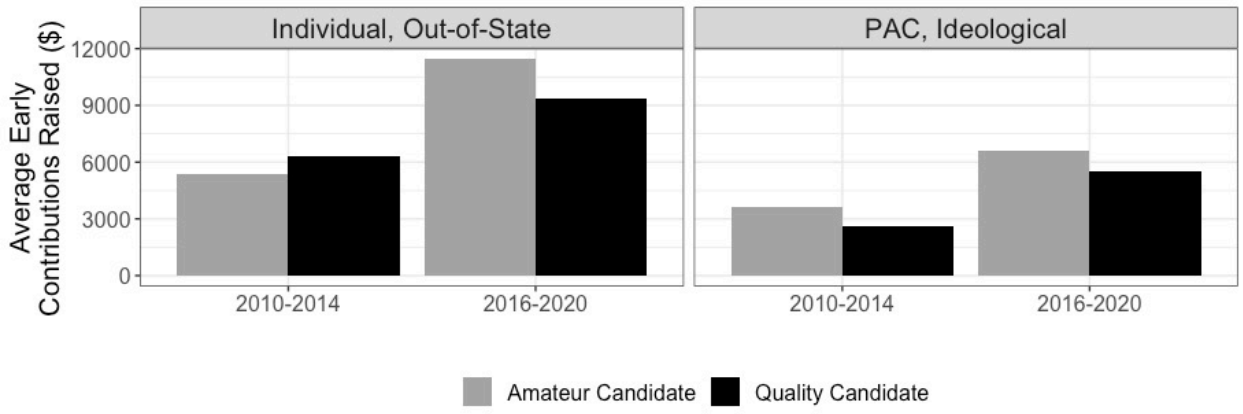

Figure 2: Average Early Fundraising for Quality and Amateur Candidates, 2010-2020

Bars represent the mean total out-of-state and ideological PAC contributions raised during the early funding period. Candidates who raised no money before their primary election.

shifted, resulting in an observable increase in the association between out-of-district influences and amateur candidate success. One potential explanation for this shift could be that these donors are pouring more money in amateurs' campaign coffers. Figure 2 confirms that the average amateur candidate running from 2016-2020 received $6,091 more in early contributions from out-of-district donors than in 2010-2014—an increase of more than 110%. Another explanation may hinge on changes to the composition of these out-of-district early donor networks. If out-of-district donors have become less like the professional colleagues described by Bonica (2017) and more like the ideological activists described by Canes-Wrone and Miller (2021), this could account for the observed shift in their importance to amateur candidates' campaigns. This follows work by Rauch and Raja (2017), who show that out-of-district donors and other ideological interests have the tools, resources, and grassroots networks needed to get amateur candidates campaigns off the ground.

Reforms to primary elections in the mid-20^{th} century were intended to give constituents the power to deliberate and nominate the candidate who would best represent their party. However, our findings indicate that forces outside a candidate's own district play a much greater role in the nominating process than previously thought. Our findings suggest scholars should turn their attention outward rather than looking inside the district to explain the recent rise in amateur candidate success.

References

Aldrich, J. H., Ballard, A. O., Rohde, D. W., and Lerner, J. Y. (2017). Does the gift keep on giving? house leadership pac donations before and after majority status. *Journal of Politics*, 79(4).

Barber, M. (2016). Donation motivations: Testing theories of access and ideology. *Political Research Quarterly*, 69(1):148–159.

Bawn, K., Cohen, M., Karol, D., Masket, S., Noel, H., and Zaller, J. (2012). A theory of political parties: Groups, policy demands and nominations in american politics. *Perspectives on Politics*, 10(3):571–597.

Biersack, R., Herrnson, P. S., and Wilcox, C. (1993). Seeds for success: Early money in congressional elections. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 18(4):535–551.

Bonica, A. (2017). Professional networks, early fundraising, and electoral success. *Election Law Journal*, 16(1).

Canes-Wrone, B. and Miller, K. M. (2021). Out-of-district donors and representation in the us house. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*.

Cohen, M., Karol, D., Noel, H., and Zaller, J. (2008). *The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations Before and After Reform*. Chicago.

Curiel, J. A. and Steelman, T. S. (2018). Redistricting out representation: Democratic harms in splitting zip codes. *Election Law Journal: Rules, Politics, and Policy*, 17(4):328–353.

Fenno, R. F. (1978). *Home Style: House Members in Their Districts*. Longman, New York.

Hansen, E. and Treul, S. A. (2019). Inexperience or anti-washington? voter preferences for congressional candidates. `http://ehansen4.sites.luc.edu/documents/Hansen_Treul_MPSA_2019.pdf`. Presented at MPSA 2019.

Hassell, H. G. (2016). Party control of party primaries: Party influence in nominations for the us senate. *Journal of Politics*, 78(1).

Herrnson, P. S. (2009). The roles of party organizations, party-connected committees, and party allies in elections. *Journal of Politics*, 71(4).

Jacobson, G. C. (1989). Strategic politicians and the dynamics of u.s. house elections, 1946-1986. *American Political Science Review*, 83(3):773–93.

Porter, R. and Treul, S. A. (2018). Inexpereince and success in congressional primaries. `https://rachelporter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/PorterTreul919.pdf`.

Rauch, J. and Raja, R. J. L. (2017). Re-engineering politicians: How activist groups choose our candidates—long before we vote. Brookings Report.

Online Appendix
No Experienced Required: Early Donations and Amateur Candidate Success in Primary Elections

A Contribution Assignment using *arealOverlap*

To isolate in-district donors, it is necessary to identify whether donors contributed to candidates that were running in the same congressional district as the donor. In many cases, the FEC only provides the ZIP code for each individual contribution made to candidates that can be used to assign contributions to the congressional district they originated in Gimpel et al. (2008). However, not all ZIP codes are located within a single congressional district. In fact, approximately 18% of ZIP codes are split between two or more districts for any one congressional map. To overcome this issue associated with isolating in-district donors, we use a Python script for ArcGIS and accompanying R package *arealOverlap* developed by Curiel and Steelman (2018). This package allows us to locate individual donations to their likely congressional district of origin using only the ZIP code associated with the donation. The *arealOverlap* package accomplishes this by using the population distribution of a ZIP code and its corresponding congressional districts and assigns a ZIP code to the congressional district it shares the highest proportion of its population with.

To calculate the overlap between ZIP codes and congressional districts, the process first merges Census ZCTAs with Census Block Groups (CBGs), the smallest level of geography with demographic information and made up of approximately 40 Census blocks. When there was not perfect overlap between either a congressional district or ZCTA and CBG, the population is weighted by the geographic overlap between the two levels being merged, as is standard in spatial methods. The process then uses the three-way intersection between congressional districts, ZCTAs and CBGs to calculate the given population of a ZCTA within a congressional district and vice versa. Assignment of a ZIP code, and its corresponding donations, to a congressional district is then based on the ZIP code and congressional district pair for which the greatest population overlap exists. Given the over 220,000 CBGs, 43,000 ZCTAs and 435 congressional districts, the script took approximately 80 minutes to run per Congress.

B Supplementary Results

Table 2: Future Fundraising Success in Primary Elections, 2010-2020

	DV: Logged Primary Election Contributions (Excluding Early Contributions)	
	2010-2014	2016-2020
IND, In-District	0.362*	0.320*
	(0.030)	(0.027)
IND, In-State	0.230*	0.230*
	(0.033)	(0.029)
IND, Out-Of-State	0.197*	0.337*
	(0.033)	(0.028)
PAC, Ideological	0.221*	0.147*
	(0.076)	(0.067)
PAC, Leadership	0.008	0.013
	(0.066)	(0.052)
PAC, Other	0.196*	0.103*
	(0.048)	(0.032)
Self-Financing	0.907*	0.733*
	(0.120)	(0.093)
Experienced*In-District	−0.235*	−0.157*
	(0.059)	(0.056)
Experienced*In-State	−0.094	0.022
	(0.063)	(0.062)
Experienced*Out-of-State	−0.113*	−0.204*
	(0.057)	(0.058)
Experienced*Ideological PAC	−0.152	−0.147
	(0.136)	(0.109)
Experienced*Leadership PAC	−0.023	−0.001
	(0.109)	(0.094)
Experienced*Other PAC	−0.040	0.037
	(0.063)	(0.053)

	DV: Logged Primary Election Contributions (Excluding Early Contributions)	
	2010-2014	2016-2020
Experienced*Self-Financing	−0.908*	−0.616*
	(0.227)	(0.223)
Experienced Candidate	4.594*	3.410*
	(0.334)	(0.322)
Candidate Gender	0.343	0.977*
	(0.201)	(0.153)
Candidate J.D.	0.905*	0.489*
	(0.272)	(0.245)
District: Safe, Same-Party	0.067	0.182
	(0.272)	(0.266)
District: Safe, Other-Party	−0.452*	−0.464*
	(0.221)	(0.212)
District: # of Quality Candidates	−0.208*	−0.067
	(0.092)	(0.091)
District: Open Seat	−0.592*	0.013
	(0.229)	(0.217)
Constant	4.521*	3.262*
	(0.294)	(0.264)
Observations	2,245	2,673
Log Likelihood	−5,993.301	−7,123.006
Akaike Inf. Crit.	12,034.600	14,294.010
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	12,171.800	14,435.400

Hierarchical linear model of future candidate fundraising as a function of candidate and district characteristics with 95% confidence intervals. The units of analysis are all candidates who ran in non-incumbent primaries for the U.S. House of Representatives. Contribution variables are logged. Random effects by primary election included to account for within-race dependencies in candidate fundraising. Dependent variable is total logged campaign contributions in primary election *after early fundraising period*. Early fundraising is defined as all contributions received in the first 60 days after FEC records indicate a candidate received her first campaign contribution.

Table 3: Future Fundraising Success in Primary Elections, 2010-2014

(Early Fundraising Period Increased from 60 to 90 Days)

	DV: Logged Primary Election Contributions (Excluding Early Contributions)	
	60 Day Period (Original Model)	90 Day Period (Extended Model)
IND, In-District	0.362*	0.361*
	(0.030)	(0.026)
IND, In-State	0.230*	0.243*
	(0.033)	(0.029)
IND, Out-Of-State	0.197*	0.206*
	(0.033)	(0.029)
PAC, Ideological	0.221*	0.090
	(0.076)	(0.064)
PAC, Leadership	0.008	−0.044
	(0.066)	(0.054)
PAC, Other	0.196*	0.026
	(0.048)	(0.038)
Self-Financing	0.907*	0.774*
	(0.120)	(0.085)
Experienced*In-District	−0.235*	−0.179*
	(0.059)	(0.058)
Experienced*In-State	−0.094	−0.054
	(0.063)	(0.063)
Experienced*Out-of-State	−0.113*	−0.055
	(0.057)	(0.056)
Experienced*Ideological PAC	−0.152	−0.026
	(0.136)	(0.094)
Experienced*Leadership PAC	−0.023	0.062
	(0.109)	(0.082)
Experienced*Other PAC	−0.040	0.009
	(0.063)	(0.056)

	DV: Logged Primary Election Contributions (Excluding Early Contributions)	
	2010-2014	2016-2020
Experienced*Self-Financing	−0.908*	−0.640*
	(0.227)	(0.160)
Experienced Candidate	4.594*	3.926*
	(0.334)	(0.405)
Candidate Gender	0.343	0.137
	(0.201)	(0.190)
Candidate J.D.	0.905*	0.294
	(0.272)	(0.258)
District: Safe, Same-Party	0.067	0.240
	(0.272)	(0.271)
District: Safe, Other-Party	−0.452*	−0.401
	(0.221)	(0.221)
District: # of Quality Candidates	−0.208*	−0.197*
	(0.092)	(0.093)
District: Open Seat	−0.592*	−0.362
	(0.229)	(0.229)
Constant	4.521*	2.703*
	(0.294)	(0.299)
Observations	2,245	2,245
Log Likelihood	−5,993.301	−5,878.468
Akaike Inf. Crit.	12,034.600	11,804.940
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	12,171.800	11,942.130

Hierarchical linear model of future candidate fundraising as a function of candidate and district characteristics with 95% confidence intervals. The units of analysis are all candidates who ran in non-incumbent primaries for the U.S. House of Representatives. Contribution variables are logged. Random effects by primary election included to account for within-race dependencies in candidate fundraising. Dependent variable is total logged campaign contributions in primary election *after early fundraising period*. Early fundraising in column 1 is defined as all contributions received in the first 60 days after FEC records indicate a candidate received her first campaign contribution. Early fundraising in column 2 Early fundraising is defined as all contributions received in the first 90 days after FEC records indicate a candidate received her first campaign contribution.

Table 4: Future Fundraising Success in Primary Elections, 2016-2020

(Early Fundraising Period Increased from 60 to 90 Days)

	DV: Logged Primary Election Contributions (Excluding Early Contributions)	
	60 Day Period (Original Model)	90 Day Period (Extended Model)
IND, In-District	0.320*	0.316*
	(0.027)	(0.025)
IND, In-State	0.230*	0.242*
	(0.029)	(0.026)
IND, Out-Of-State	0.337*	0.293*
	(0.028)	(0.027)
PAC, Ideological	0.147*	0.002
	(0.067)	(0.050)
PAC, Leadership	0.013	−0.067
	(0.052)	(0.043)
PAC, Other	0.103*	0.091*
	(0.032)	(0.029)
Self-Financing	0.733*	0.843*
	(0.093)	(0.072)
Experienced*In-District	−0.157*	−0.101
	(0.056)	(0.054)
Experienced*In-State	0.022	0.056
	(0.062)	(0.065)
Experienced*Out-of-State	−0.204*	−0.114*
	(0.058)	(0.056)
Experienced*Ideological PAC	−0.147	0.023
	(0.109)	(0.075)
Experienced*Leadership PAC	−0.001	0.092
	(0.094)	(0.072)
Experienced*Other PAC	0.037	−0.017
	(0.053)	(0.050)

	DV: Logged Primary Election Contributions (Excluding Early Contributions)	
	2010-2014	2016-2020
Experienced*Self-Financing	−0.616*	−0.810*
	(0.223)	(0.153)
Experienced Candidate	3.410*	2.588*
	(0.334)	(0.355)
Candidate Gender	0.0.977*	0.922*
	(0.153)	(0.145)
Candidate J.D.	0.489**	0.197
	(0.245)	(0.231)
District: Safe, Same-Party	0.182	0.001
	(0.266)	(0.241)
District: Safe, Other-Party	−0.464*	−0.631*
	(0.212)	(0.193)
District: # of Quality Candidates	−0.067	−0.099
	(0.091)	(0.082)
District: Open Seat	0.013	0.430*
	(0.217)	(0.198)
Constant	3.262***	2.196*
	(0.264)	(0.264)
Observations	2,673	2,673
Log Likelihood	−5,993.301	−6,957.513
Akaike Inf. Crit.	12,034.600	13,963.030
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	12,171.800	14,104.400

Hierarchical linear model of future candidate fundraising as a function of candidate and district characteristics with 95% confidence intervals. The units of analysis are all candidates who ran in non-incumbent primaries for the U.S. House of Representatives. Contribution variables are logged. Random effects by primary election included to account for within-race dependencies in candidate fundraising. Dependent variable is total logged campaign contributions in primary election *after early fundraising period*. Early fundraising in column 1 is defined as all contributions received in the first 60 days after FEC records indicate a candidate received her first campaign contribution. Early fundraising in column 2 Early fundraising is defined as all contributions received in the first 90 days after FEC records indicate a candidate received her first campaign contribution.

Table 5: Candidate Success in Primary Elections, 2010-2014

	DV: Candidate Won Primary		
	Original Model (No Safe, Other Party)	Quality Candidate (At Least 1 QC)	All Races
Exp. Candidate	1.582*	2.050*	1.720*
	(0.401)	(0.348)	(0.289)
IND, In-District	0.126*	0.117*	0.121*
	(0.044)	(0.053)	(0.026)
IND, In-State	0.153*	0.230*	0.117*
	(0.047)	(0.058)	(0.029)
IND, Out-of-State	−0.024	0.030	0.017
	(0.044)	(0.050)	(0.027)
PAC, Ideological	0.042	−0.052	0.051
	(0.080)	(0.097)	(0.059)
PAC, Leadership	0.041	0.114	0.111*
	(0.065)	(0.074)	(0.049)
PAC, Other	0.100*	0.006	0.093*
	(0.050)	(0.056)	(0.038)
Self-Financing	0.258	0.254	0.271*
	(0.137)	(0.160)	(0.093)
Candidate, Female	−0.036	0.067	0.138
	(0.227)	(0.239)	(0.157)
Candidate, J.D.	0.213	0.604	0.281
	(0.344)	(0.363)	(0.231)

	DV: Candidate Won Primary		
	Original Model (No Safe, Other Party)	Quality Candidate (At Least 1 QC)	All Races
Exp.*In-District	−0.006	0.019	0.002
	(0.068)	(0.064)	(0.049)
Exp.*In-State	−0.121	−0.177*	−0.076
	(0.068)	(0.069)	(0.050)
Exp.*Out-of-State	0.054	−0.005	0.008
	(0.057)	(0.058)	(0.043)
Exp.*Ideological PAC	0.174	0.257	0.157
	(0.121)	(0.134)	(0.108)
Exp*LPAC	−0.074	−0.180	−0.176*
	(0.092)	(0.097)	(0.079)
Exp.*Other PAC	−0.013	0.088	−0.001
	(0.059)	(0.062)	(0.047)
Exp.*Self Financing	−0.177	−0.257	−0.270
	(0.210)	(0.217)	(0.170)
Observations	295	318	657
Log Likelihood	−253.273	−254.302	−539.698

Conditional logit model of candidate success as a function of type of fundraising is estimated with 95% confidence intervals. The units of analysis are non-incumbent congressional primary elections. All early contributions variables are logged; early contributions are defined as all receipts received in the first 60 days after FEC records indicate a candidate received her first campaign contribution. Column 1 includes all primaries where candidates either ran in districts safe for their own party, or those districts that were two-party competitive. Column 2 includes all primaries where at least one quality challenger emerged. Column 3 includes all non-incumbent primaries.

Table 6: Candidate Success in Primary Elections, 2016-2020

	DV: Candidate Won Primary		
	Original Model (No Safe, Other Party)	Quality Candidate (At Least 1 QC)	All Races
Exp. Candidate	1.518*	1.498*	1.248*
	(0.386)	(0.307)	(0.274)
IND, In-District	0.001	0.049	0.054*
	(0.036)	(0.042)	(0.023)
IND, In-State	0.098*	0.140*	0.092*
	(0.042)	(0.048)	(0.026)
IND, Out-of-State	0.130*	0.124*	0.086*
	(0.039)	(0.045)	(0.025)
PAC, Ideological	0.112*	0.160*	0.136*
	(0.053)	(0.067)	(0.049)
PAC, Leadership	0.067	0.084	0.058
	(0.042)	(0.056)	(0.037)
PAC, Other	0.026	−0.046	0.070*
	(0.030)	(0.038)	(0.024)
Self-Financing	0.065	0.237	0.052
	(0.110)	(0.129)	(0.076)
Candidate, Female	0.531*	0.675*	0.896*
	(0.175)	(0.179)	(0.118)
Candidate, J.D.	0.335	−0.079	0.448**
	(0.292)	(0.408)	(0.195)

	DV: Candidate Won Primary		
	Original Model (No Safe, Other Party)	Quality Candidate (At Least 1 QC)	All Races
Exp.*In-District	0.015	−0.012	−0.023
	(0.058)	(0.055)	(0.047)
Exp.*In-State	−0.078	−0.080	−0.037
	(0.062)	(0.062)	(0.049)
Exp.*Out-of-State	−0.081	−0.067	−0.033
	(0.059)	(0.058)	(0.047)
Exp*Ideological PAC	−0.032	−0.049	−0.035
	(0.082)	(0.090)	(0.080)
Exp.*LPAC	0.062	0.018	0.053
	(0.077)	(0.083)	(0.072)
Exp.*Other PAC	0.074	0.134*	0.024
	(0.042)	(0.048)	(0.038)
Exp.*Self Financing	−0.118	−0.351	−0.152
	(0.205)	(0.202)	(0.175)
Observations	305	292	697
Log Likelihood	−324.335	−303.250	−638.860

Conditional logit model of candidate success as a function of type of fundraising is estimated with 95% confidence intervals. The units of analysis are non-incumbent congressional primary elections. All early contributions variables are logged; early contributions are defined as all receipts received in the first 60 days after FEC records indicate a candidate received her first campaign contribution. Column 1 includes all primaries where candidates either ran in districts safe for their own party, or those districts that were two-party competitive. Column 2 includes all primaries where at least one quality challenger emerged. Column 3 includes all non-incumbent primaries.

Table 7: Candidate Success in Primary Elections, 2010-2020

(Early Fundraising Period Increased from 60-90 Days)

	DV: Candidate Won Primary	
	2010-2014	2016-2020
Exp. Candidate	1.672*	1.611*
	(0.574)	(0.463)
IND, In-District	0.142*	0.014
	(0.048)	(0.037)
IND, In-State	0.151*	0.103*
	(0.051)	(0.042)
IND, Out-of-State	0.017	0.098*
	(0.047)	(0.039)
PAC¡ Ideological	0.002	0.031
	(0.061)	(0.042)
PAC, Leadership	0.060	0.068
	(0.053)	(0.039)
PAC, Other	0.016	0.027
	(0.041)	(0.030)
Self-Financing	0.125	0.172
	(0.118)	(0.097)
Candidate, Female	−0.182	0.399*
	(0.232)	(0.180)
Candidate, J.D.	0.017	0.322
	(0.360)	(0.292)

	DV: Candidate Won Primary	
	2010-2014	2016-2020
quality_factor1:In_District	−0.092	0.046
	(0.078)	(0.061)
Exp.*In-District	−0.012	−0.145
	(0.082)	(0.077)
Exp.*In-State	0.028	−0.068
	(0.064)	(0.063)
Exp.*Ideological PAC	0.089	0.043
	(0.082)	(0.061)
Exp.*LPAC	0.002	0.101
	(0.076)	(0.062)
Exp.*Other PAC	0.013	0.070
	(0.054)	(0.047)
Exp*Self-Financing	−0.224	−0.242
	(0.171)	(0.156)
Observations	295	305
Log Likelihood	−242.482	−319.304

Conditional logit model of candidate success as a function of type of fundraising is estimated with 95% confidence intervals. The units of analysis are non-incumbent congressional primary elections. All early contributions variables are logged; early contributions are defined as all receipts received in the first 90 days after FEC records indicate a candidate received her first campaign contribution.