

***Revised Version of “Party Calls and Reelection in the U.S. Senate”
ms. #170798 for publication in the Journal of Politics
Response to Reviewers’ and Editor’s Suggestions***

We appreciate the opportunity to revise our paper and resubmit it for further consideration at the *Journal of Politics*. We have found the editorial and referee suggestions to be quite valuable and have altered our manuscript significantly in response. In this memo we offer detailed descriptions of our responses to those suggestions.

Broadly speaking, we have incorporated nearly all of the referee suggestions in the current revision. That said, given that we were given a firm mandate to maintain the current length of the paper, we found ourselves having to make choices about what material we included in the body and what material we relegated to appendices, to ensure that the manuscript was streamlined and tightly focused. Taken together, we believe that these revisions have substantially improved the paper, hopefully making it of sufficient value and broad appeal to be included in *JOP*; but to the extent that the choices we made in the revision process might have led us to exclude a consideration that the editor and/or reviewers feel is crucial to include to bolster our arguments, we welcome guidance about further revisions.

Specific Reviewer comments and revisions are as follows:

Reviewer #1 recommended that the editor “go ahead and publish this as a short article” without any additional suggestions for modification.

Reviewer #2 wrote that the paper “is interesting and could be useful with some changes.” Most broadly, the reviewer suggested that the paper better fits a traditional long article format than the current short article format. Because the editor has offered us the invitation to revise and resubmit under the current short article format, we are looking to do so while simultaneously addressing as much of the concerns of this reviewer as possible. Specific suggestions included:

a) Explore how the characterization of “party-call votes” here align or differ from “party unity votes” found in Carson et al. as well as throughout this literature. How do such alternative measures of party unity correlate with our dependent variable? To address this point, we constructed party unity scores following the Carson et al. approach. Specifically we labeled as party votes those on which a majority of Republicans opposed a majority of Democrats. About 78% of all votes were coded the same by this method and our party calls method. We then created party unity scores based on the voting patterns with the party on party unity votes. These correlate with our Responsiveness measure in each Congress at rates ranging from 0.65 to 0.98. We then used the non-party-unity votes to create Non-Party-Vote Unity scores, comparable to our Baseline Rate. Finally, we reran our main analyses, substituting these relevant party-unity-based measures for the party call measures. In so doing, we establish that once again the Ideological Extremism variable is positive and significant. That said, this analysis does exhibit some peculiarities that are indicative of the problems with this approach. Because it involves no effort to disentangle ideology from partisanship, those two concepts are still intertwined, yielding what appear to be implausibly large coefficients on the ideological extremism measure. Also, and more tellingly, this approach fails the placebo test constructed to

explore whether Senators up for reelection behave differently on non-party-unity votes. We report this entire process, the results of the analyses, and our conclusions in Supplemental Appendix E.

b) Explore how the patterns uncovered in this manuscript hold up to over-time changes. In particular, are the largely cross-sectional findings here also robust to time-series changes in such variables as ideological extremism? To address this question, we replicated our analyses with first-difference estimates of all relevant changing variables. These models appear in Table R1, appended to the end of this response memo. These analyses produced results very much in line with those found in the main analyses of the manuscript, namely that increases in ideological extremism are positively associated with increasing responsiveness to party calls and that becoming up for reelection is negatively related to changes in responsiveness. Although a valuable addition that lends more confidence to our original findings, the page constraints imposed by this article format do not allow us to include such additional results in the manuscript itself.

c) The manuscript includes a summary sentence that ideological extremists “benefit the most” from responding to party calls. Why is this the case, when moderates may well face the largest electoral risks from party failings? We very much appreciate this point and the opportunity to be more careful in our language and clearer in the theoretical underpinnings of the theory of party calls. To address the latter, we now more fully define party calls and discuss the theoretical claims in the introduction (see p. 1). On the clarity of language, we have changed the particular sentence in question (see p. 9), as well as all language throughout the manuscript, to align with that theoretical explanation.

d) How does electoral safety fit in with the theory of party calls? Perhaps a two-stage model would be useful. Although we agree that a fuller linking between electoral considerations and the theory of party calls is ripe for additional study, the short article format limits our ability to engage these issues at present. Our current manuscript shows that the theory of party calls holds up in the Senate and in recent Congresses in both the House and the Senate. It also shows the value of the metrics produced as part of this effort to address major issues of politics and policymaking in the Senate including electoral patterns. Most specifically, we show that party leaders cannot count on Senators who are up for reelection to vote as faithfully with the party on party-call votes as do those not up for reelection (see pp. 7-8). Thus the electoral connection generally does receive some significant exploration here despite the short article format.

e) More literature could be engaged with respect to the relationship between ideology and partisanship: We appreciate the suggestions of each reviewer regarding additional scholarly connections to include and have expanded our links to the literature (see pp. 1, 6, 7, and 9) and our references section (see pp. 9-10). That said, it remains limited due to the page restrictions of the short article format.

Reviewer #3 notes that the manuscript “is well executed and compelling” and that, with “minor revisions, I believe the paper is publishable in JOP.” The reviewer offered four suggestions for improvement:

a) The reviewer asks that the theory be made clearer and that we offer a more precise discussion of how the theory does and does not translate well to the Senate: We appreciate this reaction, and note that it also reinforces comments from other reviewers. We have now offered a clearer articulation of the theory of party calls, contrasted with other theoretical claims about party influence (see p. 1). We couple that articulation with a discussion of which

theoretical elements carry over from the House to the Senate, setting the stage for our expectations from the data analysis (see pp. 3-4).

b) Ground the paper more fully in the Senate literature: Although the short article format limits how extensively we can bring in additional literatures and connections, we agree with this reviewer and others that additional brief connections are welcome, and have added a few more throughout the manuscript (see pp. 1, 6, 7, 9).

c) Flesh out the language about the treatment and control groups: We appreciate this suggestion and have now clarified our terms and tests along these lines (see pp. 7-8).

d) Make a bigger deal of the important contribution about who party leaders can rely upon for party call votes during various election cycles: We agree that this was under-developed previously and have therefore emphasized it more fully in the current manuscript (see abstract and p. 9).

Reviewer #4 recommends “publishing this article with minor revisions,” and offers the following suggestions for improvement:

a) The reviewer asks that we take the time and space to properly define a party call: This resonates with the comments of the other reviewers, and we have now incorporated such a definition in the introduction of the paper (see p. 1).

b) Contrast the theory of party calls with party influence occurring through agenda control, and clarify what is meant by a weaker ability to coerce party members in the Senate: We now (briefly) discuss alternative methods of party influence in defining the party calls theory and note that they differ between the House and the Senate (see p. 1).

c) Improve framing by further noting House and Senate differences: We appreciate this suggestion and now incorporate such differences not only in the discussion of theories of party influence but also in what a focus on the Senate in terms of party calls allows us (and future researchers) to accomplish in our scholarship, such as a better understanding of member responsiveness to party calls under different electoral conditions (please see pp. 1-2, 5, 6).

In sum, we found these suggestions quite valuable, have embraced almost all of them, and believe that the revised manuscript is a much stronger product than the original submission. We hope that you find it suitable for publication in *JOP*.

Table R1: First Difference Models of Responsiveness to Party Calls

	Model 1 House	Model 2 Senate	Model 3 Senate
Ideological Extremism Diff.	1.05 (0.59)	2.94*** (0.57)	2.41*** (0.57)
Baseline Rate Diff.	0.03 (0.05)	0.28*** (0.06)	0.28*** (0.06)
Up For Reelection Diff.			-1.11*** (0.27)
Vote Share Diff.	0.06* (0.03)	0.03 (0.02)	0.02 (0.03)
Presidential Vote Share Diff.	-0.03 (0.05)	0.07 (0.04)	0.06 (0.04)
Party Leader Diff.	0.71 (0.40)	0.63 (0.56)	0.69 (0.52)
Committee Chair Diff.	3.36*** (0.84)	3.10** (1.00)	2.99** (1.01)
Power Committee Diff.	1.49* (0.64)	0.35 (0.70)	0.29 (0.69)
Best Committee Diff.	-0.06 (0.05)	-0.04 (0.13)	-0.03 (0.13)
Freshman Diff.	0.93** (0.33)	1.06** (0.35)	1.17** (0.36)
Intercept	0.36 (0.34)	0.44 (0.38)	0.53 (0.38)
R ²	0.05	0.16	0.18
Adj. R ²	0.05	0.16	0.17
Num. obs.	6743	1655	1655
RMSE	5.31	5.84	5.79

DV = first differences in *Responsiveness to Party Calls*

*** p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05