

Unexpected effects of national social insurance on support for county-level public health policies

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Research funding: The University of Oregon Department of Economics, a University of Oregon COVID-19 Research Innovation Award, the continuing support of the R.F. Mikesell Foundation

Introduction

Background

- Significant political polarization in US
- Major disagreement over the role of government in providing for those in need
- Pandemic policies have significant short-term effects on employment rates, increasing reliance on social safety net
- Strength of social safety net may affect support for pandemic mitigation strategies

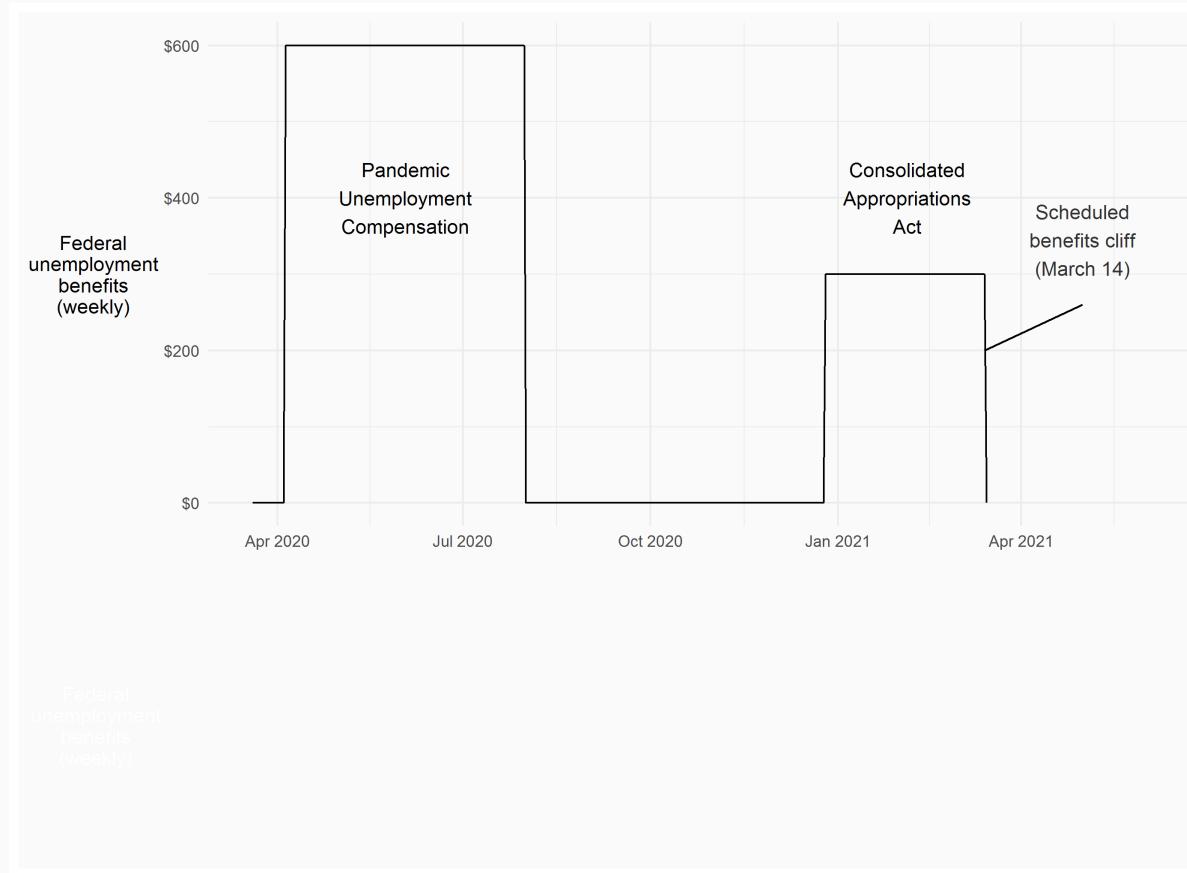
Introduction

Research question: How does national social safety net affect support for local pandemic policies?

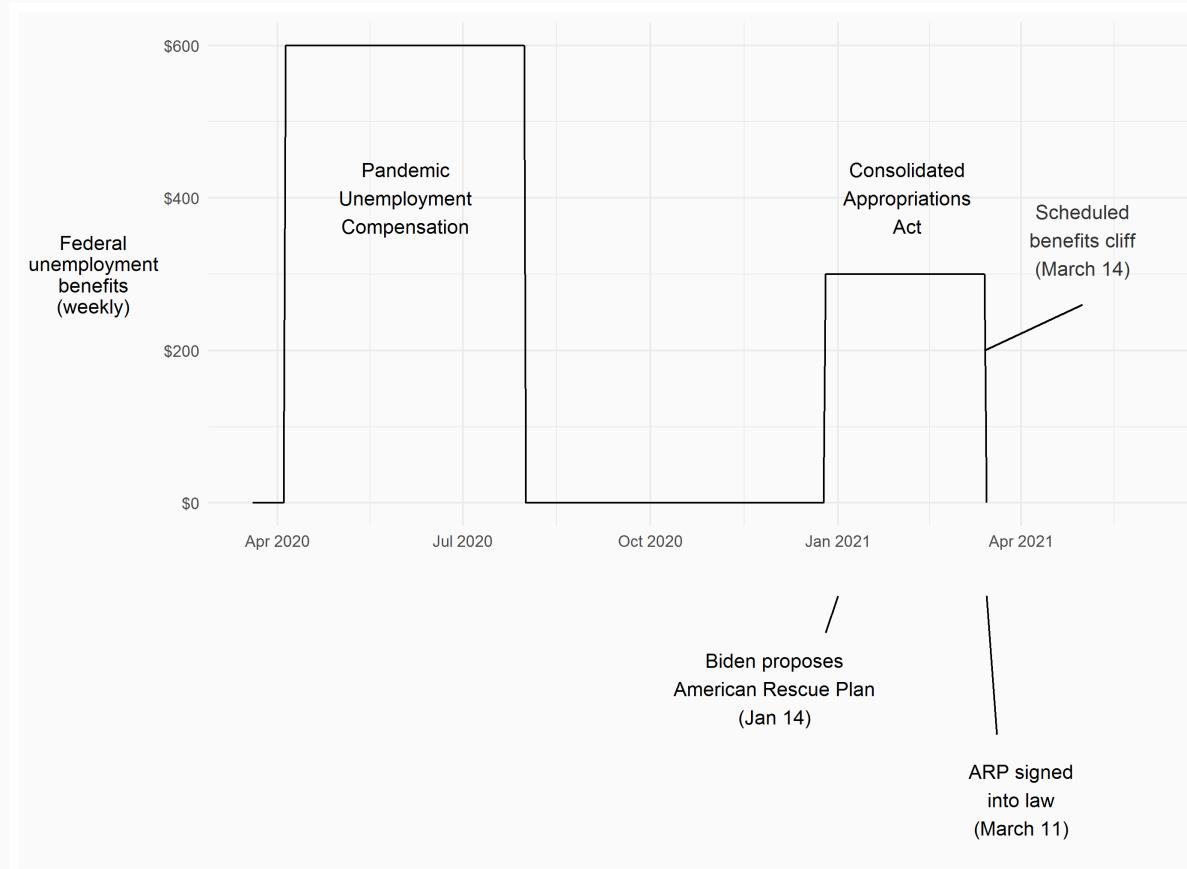
Method: Choice experiment with randomized pandemic scenarios and policies

Significance: Political polarization is a problem with no end in sight. The next pandemic is just around the corner.

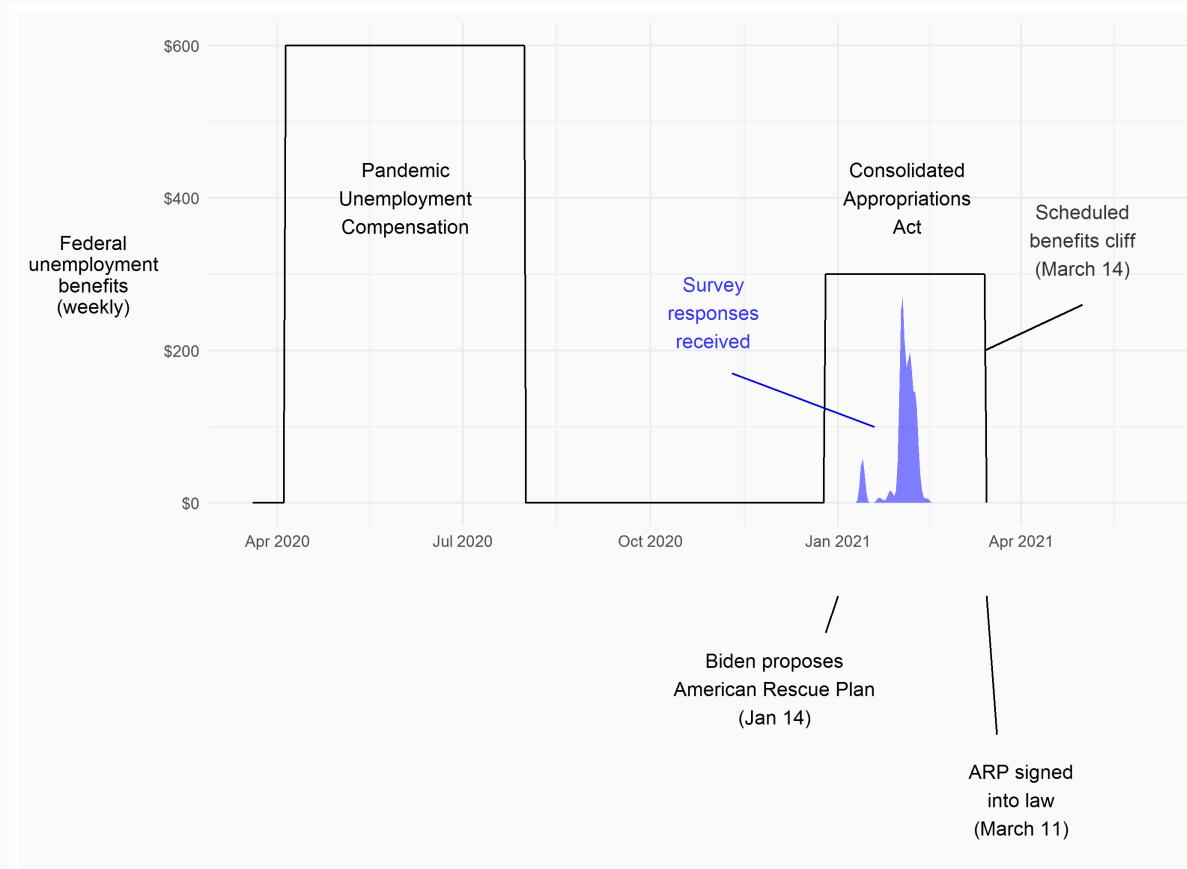
Federal benefits



Federal benefits



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The debate

Coronavirus: GOP Senators object to help for unemployed

Congress is working for pass a \$2T stimulus package

[Mercury News - March 25, 2020](#)

The debate

Coronavirus: GOP Senators obje

Congress is working for pass a \$2T stimulus package

Mercury News - March 25, 2020

“Anytime you’re using federal money, it **shouldn’t disincentivize the ability to work**,” McCarthy said in a separate interview on “Sunday Morning Futures.” “We made a mistake when we overpaid on unemployment insurance where now it’s hard for people to come back to work because **they’re making more on unemployment than they can working**. So we’ve got to straighten that out as we move forward.”

Washington Post - July 20, 2020

The debate

Coronavirus: GOP Senators obje

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Hannity challenges Mnuchin on coronavirus bill: Expanding unemployment benefits 'angers my audience'

The Hill - March 26, 2020

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The debate

Coronavirus: GOP Senators object

Senate is taking a

Hannity claims coronavirus unemployment audience

The Hill - March

Ron Johnson

stated on August 2, 2020 in a TV interview:

“Depending on which study you look at, either 68% or 5 out of 6 individuals ... are making more on unemployment than they did on the job.”

Politifact - August 13, 2020

“Anytime you’re using federal money, it **shouldn’t disincentivize the ability to work**,” McCarthy said in a separate interview on “*Good Morning Futures*.” “We



The debate

Coronavirus: GOP Senators object to Biden's \$1,000 stimulus check

Congress is taking a look at the stimulus package. The Senate is set to vote on a \$1,000 stimulus check for most Americans. But some Republicans are objecting to the proposal. In a separate interview on "Morning Futures," Sen. Ron Johnson said it's important to consider the impact of federal money on people's ability to work.

Hannity challenges Biden's \$1,000 stimulus check

For Many, \$600 Jobless Benefit Makes It Hard To Return To Work

May 26, 2020 · 10:14 AM ET

SCOTT HORSLEY

NPR - May 26, 2020

Ron Johnson
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"Anytime you're using federal money, it shouldn't disincentivize the ability to work," McCarthy said in a separate interview on "Morning Futures." "We



The image shows a screenshot of a news article from NPR. The headline discusses a challenge to Biden's \$1,000 stimulus check by Hannity. Below the headline, a quote from Ron Johnson is presented, followed by a Politifact Truth-O-Meter rating of 'Mostly True'.

The debate

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New Study Finds Expanded Jobless Benefits Don’t Reduce Employment

July 31, 2020 · 4:10 PM ET

Heard on All Things Considered

NPR - July 31, 2020

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New Study Finds Expanded Jobless

Benefits Don't Reduce Employment

Millions of unemployed in US face hardship under Republican benefit cuts

The Guardian - May 21, 2021

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CNN - May 21, 2021

The "debate"



The debate



Stated choice experiment

- Survey instrument
 - Short update on county and national covid conditions
 - Description of choice task
 - Referendum-style vote on hypothetical pandemic policies
- Policies described in terms of:
 - Duration
 - Reduction in cases
 - Reduction in deaths
 - Restrictions on 10 categories of businesses/activities
 - Increased unemployment and resulting loss in income
- 993 participants from Washington, Oregon and California, collected Jan 13 - Feb 16