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Supplementary Online Appendix

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The Impact of District Magnitude on Campaign Fundraising

The number of legislators elected in a single district influences many aspects of state legislative elections. However, there is a dearth of research on how district magnitude influences campaign fundraising. We theorize that the greater competition for funds in multimember districts results in candidates raising less money and encourages them to be more entrepreneurial in their fundraising efforts. Specifically, we expect multimember district candidates to raise contributions from more diverse sets of interests than candidates in single-member districts, raise more funds out of state, and create more unique financial constituencies. Using data on candidates for Maryland's House of Delegates in 2006 and 2010, we find support for our hypotheses.

The structuring of legislative districts influences the types of candidates who get elected, how they work with other lawmakers, the nature of constituent relationships, and the outputs of the policymaking process. Campaign fundraising is necessary for the viability of a campaign, consumes a substantial amount of time and effort, results in the creation of financial constituencies, and influences legislative behavior. Electoral arrangements and the financing of elections have important implications for representation and policymaking.

The most visible legislative elections in the United States are single-member simple-plurality contests preceded by substantial fundraising efforts, especially in elections with uncertain outcomes. However, 10 states use some form of multimember districts (MMDs) to elect at least some state representatives—as do many counties, cities, towns, school boards, and other so-called special governments.[1] Prior to the Apportionment Act of 1842, many states used MMDs to elect members of the U.S. House of Representatives (Martis 1982). In fact, MMDs were used periodically to elect members of Congress until they

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were most recently outlawed in 1967. Elections in MMDs tend to be characterized by more uncertainty and greater competition. Yet little is known about the financing of campaigns in them. This study addresses the question: does fundraising by state legislative candidates in MMDs differ systematically from candidates in single-member districts (SMDs)?

We theorize that the larger the number of candidates elected from one legislative district (i.e., the greater the district magnitude), the more challenges candidates experience when raising funds. We hypothesize that candidates in districts with greater magnitudes will respond to these challenges on the basis of self-interest. That is, they will compete with each other, seeking to raise funds from a more diverse array of organized interests, collect money from a larger geographic area, and create donor pools that are unique from the same-party candidates in their district. We test these hypotheses, and hypotheses based on a more cooperative perspective on campaigning, using a new data set consisting of the fundraising records of general election candidates for the lower chamber of the Maryland state legislature in the 2006 and 2010 elections. Although its legislative elections are similar to those in many states, Maryland provides some relative advantages for assessing the impact of district magnitude on campaign fundraising. Among the most significant is that some members are elected from SMDs, while others are elected from two-member or three-member districts. Because there is variation in district magnitude among elections for one legislative chamber in one state, these data allow us to avoid the complications that arise in multistate studies as a result of differences among political institutions and political cultures.

Our results demonstrate that MMD elections pose greater fundraising challenges for candidates. They also establish support for our hypotheses regarding how self-interested candidates adapt their campaign fundraising in response. They have important implications for electioneering, representation, and the legislative process in the American states.

District Magnitude and Electoral Politics

Political institutions play a key role in structuring political behavior (e.g., March and Olsen 1984; Riker 1980; Shepsle 1979). The study of elections is replete with analyses of the effects of specific institutional structures. Research has highlighted, among other things, the impact of voluntary registration (Jackman 1987; Powell 1986), systems of representation (Amy 2002; Blais and Carty 1990; Franklin 1996; Jackman and Miller 1995; Norris 2004), the participatory nominations process (e.g., Cohen et al. 2008), campaign finance reform (Herrnson 2009; Hogan 2005), and the redistricting process (Mann and Cain 2005; Winburn 2008) on various aspects of the electoral process at the federal and state levels.

The impact of district magnitude on American elections has received some scholarly attention. At the most basic level, district magnitude influences the number of candidates that can compete in and win an election. This has dramatic consequences on the conduct of elections and the behavior of candidates. For one, it reduces the certainty of electoral outcomes. With more, and more viable, candidates in competition, the overall percentage of the vote won by each candidate tends to be lower, and the margins of victory are smaller. More candidates typically have a realistic chance at winning (Jewell and Breaux 1991; but see Weber, Tucker, and Brace 1991). As a result, turnover rates in state legislatures are much higher in MMDs than SMDs (Carey, Niemi, and Powell 2000; but see Holbrook and Tidmarch 1991).

Similarly, some of the incumbency advantages that are so prevalent in single-member elections systems are weaker in MMDs. For example, Cox and Morgenstern (1995) find that campaign spending advantages, typically a major part of the incumbency advantage, have a much weaker effect on reelection rates in MMDs than in SMDs. Squire (2000) reports that MMDs increase overall competition, reducing the likelihood of reelection (see also Carey, Niemi, and Powell 2000; Niemi and Winski 1987; but see Cox and Morgenstern 1995). Moreover, the advantages of incumbency continue to decrease as district magnitude increases. Hirano and Snyder (2009) show that the incumbency advantage is weaker in MMDs that elect candidates to three or more seats, but not in MMDs that elect only two candidates. The differences may be due, in part, to the increased voter confusion or ballot drop-off (casting fewer ballots than allowable) in districts with larger magnitudes (Niemi and Herrnson 2003; Wattenberg, McAllister, and Salvanto 2000).

Given an environment of less certainty, candidates in MMDs have been shown to adjust their behavior on the campaign trail and in office. Cox (1984, 1987, 1990) demonstrates that candidates in MMDs take more ideologically extreme positions in order to avoid having votes siphoned off by candidates located to their left or right.[2] Similarly, state legislators elected from MMDs generally possess more ideologically polarized legislative-voting records than those elected in SMDs (Adams 1996; Richardson, Russell, and Cooper 2004; but see Bertelli and Richardson 2008). Outside of the United States, Dow's (1998) and Magar, Rosenblum, and Samuels's (1998) analyses of the Chilean and

Brazilian legislatures also provide evidence that MMDs produce legislatures that are, on the whole, more ideologically polarized.

There also is evidence that legislators elected from MMDs cultivate support through appealing to distinctive groups within their constituency. Ames (1995) finds that Brazilian legislators pander to core constituents through earmarking appropriations (see also Samuels 2002). Crisp and Desposato (2004) find that incumbents in the at-large elections for the Colombian Senate attempt to cultivate groups of supporters that are distinct from those assembled by other candidates.[3] Conceptualizing the U.S. Senate as a set of 50 two-member MMDs, Schiller (2000) finds that senators attempt to develop distinct bases of support within their state by appealing to different voters, industries, interest groups, and geographic bases. This behavior manifests itself in candidates' campaign speeches, the committee assignments senators seek and acquire, and their bill sponsorships, floor speeches, and roll-call votes. It is also visible in election returns: senators from the same state often attract votes from different counties and different areas within counties. Furthermore, Schiller shows that the incentives to differentiate are most prevalent among same-state senators of the same party.

In short, the literature suggests that legislators and candidates in MMDs face more uncertain electoral environments than those in SMDs, and they respond, in part, by trying to develop unique bases of constituency support. We theorize that MMDs have a similar impact on politicians' campaign fundraising. Fundraising is an essential element of state legislative elections (e.g., Gierzynski and Breaux 1996; Hogan 2001) and is sometimes conceptualized as a campaign unto itself. Fundraising differs from soliciting votes in some important ways. Individuals can cast only a finite number of votes, but they can contribute to almost an unlimited number of candidates, depending on state law. Most states allow a variety of interest group organizations, including PACs, to make campaign contributions. Moreover, some individuals and groups contribute only a small sum to one candidate in their district, while others contribute large sums to many candidates, including those contesting elections in distant locations (Cassie and Thompson 1998; Francia et al. 2003). From a candidate's perspective, soliciting contributions from individuals and groups situated outside one's district is typically a successful fundraising strategy (Cassie and Thompson 1998; Gimpel, Lee, and Pearson-Merkowitz 2008). Given that donors are usually concentrated in a few areas, many candidates follow the practice of going where the money is when fundraising. This strategy is unavailable in the campaign for votes, which is constrained by geographic boundaries.

Of course, fundraising is influenced by a variety of factors. Incumbents (Gierzynski and Breaux 1993), legislative leaders (Kim and Phillips 2009; Romer and Snyder 1994), and members of the legislative majority (Cox and Magar 1990; Kim and Phillips 2009; Thompson, Cassie, and Jewell 1994) enjoy fundraising advantages. Candidates for open seats also raise more funds (Gierzynski and Breaux 1991; Hogan and Hamm 1998; Moncrief 1998), in part because they spend more time fundraising (Francia et al. 2003).

The literatures on the effects of campaign finance and district magnitude provide many well-supported generalizations about the conduct of elections. However, there is a lack of overlap between these fields of study. Notably, the findings for campaign fundraising are based primarily on studies of SMD elections, and studies of district magnitude largely ignore fundraising. Given the importance of money in U.S. elections and the large number of MMDs in American politics, it is important to understand campaign fundraising in MMDs.

Our expectations for how district magnitude affects candidate fundraising are based on an understanding of the uniquely competitive environment in MMDs. Unlike in SMDs, candidates in MMDs not only compete with the other party for money and votes, they also compete with other candidates from their own party. This dramatically affects fundraising dynamics. In an SMD election, a major-party candidate has a substantial advantage in attracting contributions from party supporters who wish to influence that race. Given that most donors contribute just to one candidate in a race (Francia et al. 2003), candidates in MMD elections do not enjoy the same advantage. Instead, they have to compete with copartisans in their district for funds. This means that MMD candidates do not as easily obtain some of the most readily available funds, and the competition for money in these districts is more intense. Competing with other candidates within one's party makes it more difficult for candidates to attract the support of donors and more challenging for donors to decide which candidates to support. Electoral uncertainty contributes substantially to both candidates' and donors' predicaments.

While the number of potential campaign donors per candidate is likely to be the same in MMDs as in SMDs (given the proportionally larger population in districts with larger magnitudes), we expect differences between fundraising in SMDs and MMDs to extend beyond the simple calculus of supply and demand. Same-party candidates in MMDs are unlikely to be motivated to split the pool of donors available to them evenly because it is in the self-interest of candidates to try to collect as many contributions from members of their party's donor pool as

the district. The second tested the impact of district magnitude on the amount of money transferred directly to candidates from district-specific joint campaign committees. The results of these analyses further confirm our results and can be found in the online appendix. Specifically, the results of the first tests demonstrate that candidates in two- and three-member districts were actually likely to join fewer of these committees. The results of the second tests demonstrate no impact of district magnitude on committee transfers to candidates.

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