**MEMORANDUM**

**To:**            Amelia Malpas, Leah Stein, David Struhs  
**CC**: Gary King, Noah Dasanaike

**From:**       Joshua Henderson

**Date:**         November 4, 2024

**Subject:    Gov 2020 Paper Feedback**

I. Code ran smoothly. Had some trouble loading “rnaturalearthhires” into the environment, but might have been an issue on my end.

II. Title: Current title is an improvement on previous version we discussed in class (and abstract sufficiently clarifies the current framing in title), but “all incumbents” is a little too vague for me—you’re not talking about locally elected officials, correct? Just nationally-elected representatives—presidential and House? I’d make that clear in the title. Similarly, it seems your key point is that voters don’t reward politicians who vote for policies they (the voters) benefit from. A farming that emphasizes that point would draw me in more than the current version.

III. Findings: I know you’re waiting on 2024 election data for your “actual” findings, but flagging that you placeholder finding in the data section (“We find that units that received CHIPS funding increase their Democratic presidential vote share by 14 percentage points”) directly contradicts the title and abstract’s conclusion.

IV. How do you define “received CHIPS funding?” One difficulty in using the CHIPS act as your case study for effect of industrial policy on voter behavior is that (a) Only 50% of overall funding has been disbursed (as of Sept. 2024) and (b) The R&D/design-heavy nature of semiconductor manufacturing means investments don’t translate to jobs + manufacturing until 5-10 years down the road (Arizona’s TSMC plant, which has been in construction for years now, is a good example). I haven’t looked carefully at the project-by-project data, but it’s conceivable to me that districts have had local companies/facilities be awarded funding but either have not yet received the funding (i.e. not yet disbursed) or haven’t seen that funding translate to any observable outcomes in the district. In these cases, you’d be treating the knowledge that funding will be disbursed in the future and expectation that the disbursement will translate to positive job outcomes as “benefit” from CHIPS funding. That seems highly implausible to me. So, as you build out the paper, I think (a) a clear account of precisely what stage (approved funding vs. disbursed funding) various CHIPS Act projects are in; and (b) An explanation of how these projects might plausibly lead to meaningful benefits/outcomes for voters in project districts over the past 1.5 years would be very useful.

V. Policy folks will find this kind of research very interesting, as I anticipate a massive, sustained uptick in US industrial policy over the next decade—regardless of administration. Once you get your data and clarify your findings, injecting a policy-relevant twist in your discussion section could lead to pretty significant engagement outside of the Poli Sci community.