

Campaign Contribution Limits and Corruption

Evidence from the 50 states

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Table 1 are models of “corruption”Corruption Reflections" (CRI). If I’m interpreting stuff correctly, then: The model that performed best was a logged DV, non-logged IVs, with no fixed time or state effects. In that model, a number of campaign finance limits (ind2pty_limits_dummy, pac_limits_2010, pac_limits_dummy) were associated with lower levels of corruption. This is theoretically strange; the only possibility that immediately strikes me is that it is party and pac money that is associated with corruption, but not individual donations.

Table 2 is what happens when I take the best-performing CRI model and try to standardize the coefficients:

Table 3 are the models for corruption convictions (CCI). If I’m interpreting stuff correctly, then: The model that performed best was a logged CCI, non-logged IVs, with no fixed time or state effects. In that model, one campaign finance limits (ind2pty_limits_dummy) was associated with higher corruption; one (pac_limits_2010) was associated with lower corruption. This is even theoretically stranger than the previous model.

Table 4 is what happens when I take the best-performing CCI model and try to standardize the coefficients:

Table 1: Models of Contribution Limits and Corruption Reflections

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Corruption Reflections Index (logged)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Individual limit amounts		0.00 (0.00)		−0.00 (0.00)
Individual limit (logged)			0.01 (0.01)	
Individual limit (dummy)		0.20 (0.17)	0.03 (0.03)	−0.17 (0.34)
Individual-to-party limit amount		0.00 (0.00)		0.00 (0.00)
Individual-to-party limit (logged)			0.00 (0.01)	
Individual-to-party limit (dummy)		−0.03* (0.02)	−0.05*** (0.02)	−0.07** (0.03)
PAC limit amounts		−0.00** (0.00)		−0.00 (0.00)
PAC limit (logged)			−0.01 (0.01)	
PAC limits (dummy)		−0.18** (0.09)	−0.01 (0.03)	−0.09 (0.13)
AUSAs per million population	0.00** (0.00)	0.00*** (0.00)	0.00*** (0.00)	−0.00 (0.00)
Citizen ideology measure	−0.00*** (0.00)	−0.00*** (0.00)	−0.00*** (0.00)	−0.00 (0.00)
Percent high school graduates	−0.42*** (0.13)	−0.35*** (0.13)	−0.38*** (0.13)	−0.52* (0.31)
Real per capita gov revenues (1000s)	0.00*** (0.00)	0.00*** (0.00)	0.00*** (0.00)	0.00*** (0.00)
Inequality: Male wages	−0.01*** (0.00)	−0.00** (0.00)	−0.00** (0.00)	−0.00 (0.00)
Urbanization	0.00*** (0.00)	0.00*** (0.00)	0.00*** (0.00)	−0.01 (0.00)
Log of population (millions)	0.03*** (0.01)	0.02*** (0.01)	0.03*** (0.01)	−0.03 (0.14)
Constant	0.30*** (0.07)	0.22 (0.20)	0.22* (0.13)	
	Base Model	With IVs	Pooled	FE
Observations	672	672	672	672
R ²	0.21	0.24	0.24	0.03
Adjusted R ²	0.20	0.23	0.22	−0.09
F Statistic	24.92*** (df = 7; 664)	16.19*** (df = 13; 658)	15.61*** (df = 13; 658)	1.57* (df = 13; 598)

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 2:

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	log(CRI + 1)	
	(1)	(2)
ind_limits_2010	0.00000 (0.00000)	0.727*** (0.00000)
ind_limits_dummy	0.196 (0.166)	0.666*** (0.166)
ind2pty_limits_2010	0.00000 (0.00000)	0.092*** (0.00000)
ind2pty_limits_dummy	-0.033* (0.018)	-0.115*** (0.018)
pac_limits_2010	-0.00000** (0.00000)	-0.799*** (0.00000)
pac_limits_dummy	-0.185** (0.086)	-0.652*** (0.086)
eopop	0.003*** (0.001)	0.111*** (0.001)
citi6006	-0.001*** (0.0004)	-0.136*** (0.0004)
high_school	-0.350*** (0.128)	-0.106 (0.128)
rgenrevpc	0.0001*** (0.00002)	0.171*** (0.00002)
men_ineqincwag	-0.004** (0.002)	-0.098*** (0.002)
urbanization_2	0.002*** (0.0004)	0.311*** (0.0004)
logpop	0.022*** (0.008)	0.153*** (0.008)
ind_limits_2010:ind_limits_dummy		
ind2pty_limits_2010:ind2pty_limits_dummy		
pac_limits_2010:pac_limits_dummy		
Constant	0.222 (0.197)	0.000 (0.197)
Observations	672	672
R ²	0.242	0.242
Adjusted R ²	0.227	0.227
Residual Std. Error (df = 658)	0.123	0.123
F Statistic (df = 13; 658)	16.193***	16.193***

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 3: Models of Contribution Limits and Corruption Convictions

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>			
	Corruption Convictions Index (logged)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
ind_limits_2010		0.00 (0.00)		0.00** (0.00)
log(ind_limits_2010)			0.05 (0.04)	
ind_limits_dummy		0.69 (0.79)	0.12 (0.16)	3.58* (1.83)
ind2pty_limits_2010		0.00 (0.00)		0.00 (0.00)
log(ind2pty_limits_2010)			0.04 (0.03)	
ind2pty_limits_dummy		0.19** (0.09)	0.16* (0.09)	0.16 (0.17)
pac_limits_2010		-0.00** (0.00)		-0.00 (0.00)
log(pac_limits_2010)			-0.06 (0.04)	
pac_limits_dummy		-0.99** (0.41)	-0.14 (0.13)	-0.89 (0.72)
jdiv	-0.14*** (0.05)	-0.13*** (0.05)	-0.14*** (0.05)	-0.08* (0.05)
eopop	0.03*** (0.00)	0.03*** (0.01)	0.03*** (0.01)	0.03*** (0.01)
high_school	-2.63*** (0.61)	-2.62*** (0.62)	-2.73*** (0.63)	0.46 (1.68)
rgenrevpc	0.00*** (0.00)	0.00** (0.00)	0.00** (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)
urbanization_2	-0.00* (0.00)	-0.00** (0.00)	-0.00** (0.00)	-0.01 (0.03)
logpop	0.22*** (0.03)	0.21*** (0.04)	0.22*** (0.04)	1.86** (0.73)
Constant	1.67*** (0.30)	2.01** (0.87)	1.44** (0.59)	
	Base Model	With IVs	Pooled	FE
Observations	671	671	671	671
R ²	0.13	0.14	0.14	0.04
Adjusted R ²	0.12	0.13	0.12	-0.08
F Statistic	16.60*** (df = 6; 664)	9.23*** (df = 12; 658)	8.92*** (df = 12; 658)	1.92** (df = 12; 598)

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4:

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	log(CCI + 1)	
	(1)	(2)
ind_limits_2010	0.00001 (0.00001)	0.610*** (0.00001)
ind_limits_dummy	0.691 (0.785)	0.515 (0.785)
ind2pty_limits_2010	0.00000 (0.00000)	0.091*** (0.00000)
ind2pty_limits_dummy	0.188** (0.086)	0.143* (0.086)
pac_limits_2010	-0.00001** (0.00000)	-0.853*** (0.00000)
pac_limits_dummy	-0.987** (0.414)	-0.761* (0.414)
jdiv	-0.130*** (0.047)	-0.102** (0.047)
eopop	0.028*** (0.005)	0.227*** (0.005)
high_school	-2.618*** (0.619)	-0.174 (0.619)
rgenrevpc	0.0002** (0.0001)	0.104*** (0.0001)
urbanization_2	-0.004** (0.002)	-0.133*** (0.002)
logpop	0.212*** (0.037)	0.328*** (0.037)
ind_limits_2010:ind_limits_dummy		
ind2pty_limits_2010:ind2pty_limits_dummy		
pac_limits_2010:pac_limits_dummy		
Constant	2.014** (0.872)	0.000 (0.872)
Observations	671	671
R ²	0.144	0.144
Adjusted R ²	0.128	0.128
Residual Std. Error (df = 658)	0.594	0.594
F Statistic (df = 12; 658)	9.231***	9.231***

Note: