Supplemental Material for Tannenbaum, Fox, & Rodgers "On the misplaced politics of behavioral policy interventions"

Contents

1 Supplemental Studies S1A and S1B

We report an additional two studies that replicate the partisan nudge bias observed in Studies 3A and 3B. In Study S1A we examined economic political objectives (providing assistance for low-income vs. high-income citizens), and in Study S1B we examined social political objectives (promoting safe sex education vs. abstinence-only education).

Methods

For Study S1A, we recruited a sample of 139 MTurkers (69% male, mean age = 29 years, range: 18–66 years). Participants were provided with a brief description about the use of strategically selecting default options as a general approach to public policy. To illustrate the concept, participants were provided with an illustration of how the policy could be used. Half of the policymakers read an example where low-income earners were defaulted to automatically receive supplemental food assistance benefits (e.g., food stamps). The other half of participants read an example where high-income earners were defaulted to automatically receive capital gains tax breaks. In both cases, citizens were free to opt-out of receiving such benefits if they chose to do so. We reminded participants that they were evaluating the use of the nudge as a general approach to public policy, and provided evaluations using the same six-item scale used in Study 1 (Cronbach's α = .90). At the end of the study participants were asked to report their political orientation separately for social and economic issues, as well as their attitudes towards the policy objective they had just read about (e.g., "How do you feel about promoting food stamp programs for low-income individuals?"; 1 = *strongly oppose*, 7 = *strongly support*).

For Study S1B, we recruited a sample of 139 MTurkers (63% male, mean age = 31 years, range: 18–71 years). The design was identical to Study S1A except that illustrations of the nudge involved either automatically enrolling public school children into an educational program on safe sex practices and effective contraception use, or into an educational program on abstinence-only education. In both cases, participants were told that parents were free to un-enroll their children from receiving the educational program if they chose to do so. Participants responded to the same six-item scale of nudge evaluations (Cronbach's α = .91).

Results

Consistent with our other studies, participants tended to confuse their feelings about the policy nudge with their feelings about the policy objective. For Study S1A, evaluations of policy nudges were influenced by the interaction between participants' political orientation and the policy objective used to illustrate the nudge ($p = .028$). When the political illustration was to default low-income individuals to automatically receive food stamps, liberal participants tended to display more support than conservatives for the use of defaults as general policy tools ($\beta = -.52, p < .001$). However, when the policy nudge was instead illustrated by defaulting high-income individuals to receive tax benefits, this effect was attenuated ($\beta = -.13, p = .29$).

For Study S1B, we observed a similar partisan nudge bias ($p = .018$ for the interaction term). When the policy objective was to default students into safe sex educational programs, liberal participants tended to display more support than conservatives for the use of defaults as general policy tools ($\beta = -.31$, $p = .009$). However when the policy nudge was instead used to default students into abstinence-only educational programs, this effect was eliminated ($\beta = .10$, $p = .42$).

Similar to the previous studies, we tend to find stronger effects when using more direct proxies of attitudes about policy objectives. In both Studies S1A and S1B we observed a significant relationship between support for the political objective used to illustrate the nudge and evaluations of the nudge as a general policy tool (Study S1A: $\beta = .38$, $p < .001$; Study S1B: $\beta = .45$, $p < .001$).

2   Study 1 Materials

For this study you will read and respond to questions about approaches to public policy. This is a short survey, so we ask that you please pay attention and read all materials before responding.

Policy Proposal: Automatic Enrollment

Researchers have suggested that one useful approach to public policy is to automatically enroll people into a program. The basic idea is that most people have a greater tendency to stick with the default course of action, regardless of what that option happens to be. Behavioral scientists have found that automatic enrollment defaults increase participation in a program, while also preserving individuals' ability to opt-out if they wish to do so.

No Information Condition:
For example, lawmakers have enforced a law (the Pension Protection Act) that encourages companies to automatically enroll their employees into a plan that deducts money from their earnings and deposits these funds into a retirement savings plan; employees who wish to opt-out of the plan are free to do so. When companies set the default to automatically induce employees to save for retirement, lawmakers expected employees to save at dramatically higher rates than they otherwise would have.

George W Bush Condition:
For example, the George W. Bush administration enforced a law (the Pension Protection Act) that encourages companies to automatically enroll their employees into a plan that deducts money from their earnings and deposits these funds into a retirement savings plan; employees who wish to opt-out of the plan are free to do so. When companies set the default to automatically induce employees to save for retirement, the Bush Administration expected employees to save at dramatically higher rates than they otherwise would have.

Barack Obama Condition:
For example, the Barack Obama administration enforced a law (the Pension Protection Act) that encourages companies to automatically enroll their employees into a plan that deducts money from their earnings and deposits these funds into a retirement savings plan; employees who wish to opt-out of the plan are free to do so. When companies set the default to automatically induce employees to save for retirement, the Obama Administration expected employees to save at dramatically higher rates than they otherwise would have.

This approach of strategically selecting default options can be used across a wide range of policies beyond the illustration above. Putting this particular example aside, how do you feel about actively setting default options *as a general approach to public policy*.

1. How much do you support this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
2. How much do you oppose this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
3. How ethical is this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
4. How manipulative is this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
5. How unethical is this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
6. How coercive is this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)

Additional Questions:

When it comes to social issues, I am ...

(1 = *Very liberal*, 2 = *Liberal*, 3 = *Somewhat Liberal*, 4 = *Moderate*, 5 = *Somewhat Conservative*, 6 = *Conservative*, 7 = *Very Conservative*)

- *Click here instead if you are completely unsure*
- *Click here instead if you haven't given it much thought*

When it comes to economic issues, I am ...

(1 = *Very liberal*, 2 = *Liberal*, 3 = *Somewhat Liberal*, 4 = *Moderate*, 5 = *Somewhat Conservative*, 6 = *Conservative*, 7 = *Very Conservative*)

- *Click here instead if you are completely unsure*
- *Click here instead if you haven't given it much thought*

Do you identify primarily as a Republic, Democrat, or neither?

- *Republican*
- *Democrat*
- *Neither*

Prior to this study, had you ever heard of the Pension Protection Act?

- *Yes*
- *No*

Rate your level of familiarity with the Pension Protection Act prior to this study? (1 = *Not at all familiar*, 4 = *Somewhat familiar*, 7 = *Extremely familiar*)

Prior to this survey, how familiar were you with the use of automatic enrollment defaults in public policy?

- *None*
- *Very little*
- *Some*
- *A fair amount*
- *A great deal*

Gender:

- *Male*
- *Female*

Age: _____ years old

Finally, any questions, comments, or suggestions for this study?

3 Study 2 Materials

For this study you will read and respond to questions about approaches to public policy. This is a short survey, so we ask that you please pay attention and read all materials before responding.

Policy Proposal: Default Options

Researchers have suggested that one useful approach to public policy is to strategically select default options. The basic idea is that most people tend to stay with the default option, regardless of what the default happens to be. Behavioral scientists have found that setting an option as the default increases the likelihood that people will choose that option.

Control:
For example, people may generally wish to engage in a certain type of behavior, but normally fail to act. Knowing this, policymakers could set "automatic enrollment" as the default and allow people to opt-out. By automatically defaulting people into a program, policymakers can expect a greater number of individuals to participate in that behavior.

Food Stamps:
For example, some low-income individuals may wish to participate in food stamp assistance programs they are legally eligible for, but normally fail to claim such benefits. Knowing this, policymakers could automatically enroll these individuals to receive food stamps, while allowing them to opt-out if they wish to do so. By setting the default to automatically receive these benefits, policymakers can expect a greater number of low-income individuals to actively participate in food stamp assistance programs.

Tax Breaks:
For example, some high-income individuals may wish to take advantage of capital gains tax breaks they are legally eligible for, but normally fail to claim such benefits. Knowing this, policymakers could automatically enroll these individuals to receive tax breaks, while allowing them to opt-out if they wish to do so. By setting the default to automatically receive these benefits, policymakers can expect a greater number of high-income individuals to take advantage of capital gains tax breaks.

Safe Sex:
For example, some parents may wish for their high-school aged children to learn about safe sex practices and effective contraceptive use, but normally fail to enroll their children into such educational programs. Knowing this, policymakers could automatically enroll high-school students to receive additional information on practicing safe sex and proper use of contraception, while allowing parents to opt-out if they wish to do so. By setting the default to automatically receive this form of sex education training, policymakers can expect a greater number of high-school children to participate in these safe-sex and contraceptive-use educational programs.

Intelligent Design:
For example, some parents may wish for their high-school aged children to learn about the idea of "intelligent design" as an alternative to biological evolution, but normally fail to enroll their children into such educational programs. Knowing this, policymakers could automatically enroll high-school students to receive additional information on intelligent design, while allowing parents to opt-out if they wish to do so. By setting the default to automatically receive this form of educational training, policymakers can expect a greater number of high-school children to participate in these

intelligent design educational programs.

This approach of strategically selecting default options can be used across a wide range of policies. Putting this particular example aside, how do you feel about actively setting default options *as a general approach to public policy*?

Policy Proposal: Planning Prompts

Researchers have suggested that one useful approach to crafting policy is to get individuals to form concrete, specific plans for acting. The basic idea is that people often have good intentions, but fail to act on those intentions. Behavioral scientists have found that prompting people to form concrete, specific plans increases the likelihood that they will follow through on those plans.

Control:
For example, people may generally wish to engage in a certain type of behavior, but normally fail to act. Knowing this, policymakers could prompt these individuals to schedule a specific date and time to follow-through on that behavior. By prompting these individuals to form a concrete plan of action, policymakers can expect a greater number of individuals to actively engage in that behavior.

Food Stamps:
For example, some low-income individuals may wish to participate in food stamp assistance programs they are legally eligible for, but normally fail to claim such benefits. Knowing this, policymakers could prompt these individuals to schedule a specific date and time to claim these benefits. By prompting these individuals to form a concrete plan of action, policymakers can expect a greater number of low-income individuals to actively participate in food stamp assistance programs.

Tax Breaks:
For example, some high-income individuals may wish to take advantage of capital gains tax breaks they are legally eligible for, but normally fail to claim such benefits. Knowing this, policymakers could prompt these individuals to schedule a specific date and time to claim these benefits. By prompting these individuals to form a concrete plan of action, policymakers can expect a greater number of high-income individuals to actively take advantage of capital gains tax breaks.

Safe Sex:
For example, some parents may wish for their high-school aged children to learn about safe sex practices and effective contraceptive use, but normally fail to enroll their children into such educational programs. Knowing this, policymakers could prompt these parents to schedule a specific date and time to enroll their children into these programs. By prompting these parents to form a concrete plan of action, policymakers can expect a greater number of parents to actively enroll their children into these safe sex and contraceptive-use educational programs.

Intelligent Design:
For example, some parents may wish for their high-school aged children to learn about the idea of "intelligent design" as an alternative to biological evolution, but normally fail to enroll their children into such educational programs. Knowing this, policymakers could prompt these parents to schedule a specific date and time to enroll their children into these programs. By prompting these parents to form a concrete plan of action, policymakers can expect a greater number of parents to actively enroll their children into these intelligent design educational programs.

This approach of prompting people to form concrete, specific plans can be used across a wide range of policies. Putting this particular example aside, how do you feel about actively prompting people to form concrete plans *as a general approach to public policy*?

Policy Proposal: Public Commitments

Researchers have suggested that one useful approach to crafting policy is to get individuals to publicly commit to a behavior. The basic idea is that people often have good intentions, but fail to act on those intentions. Behavioral scientists have found that asking people to publicly pledge to that behavior increases the likelihood that they will follow through on those plans.

Control:
For example, people may generally wish to engage in a certain type of behavior, but normally fail to act. Knowing this, policymakers could ask these individuals to publicly pledge to engage in that behavior. By prompting individuals to commit to acting, policymakers can expect a greater number of individuals to actively engage in that behavior.

Food Stamps:
For example, some low-income individuals may wish to participate in food stamp assistance programs they are legally eligible for, but normally fail to claim such benefits. Knowing this, policymakers could ask these individuals to publicly pledge to claim these benefits. By prompting individuals to commit to acting, policymakers can expect a greater number of low-income individuals to actively participate in food stamp assistance programs.

Tax Breaks:
For example, some high-income individuals may wish to take advantage of capital gains tax breaks they are legally eligible for, but normally fail to claim such benefits. Knowing this, policymakers could ask these individuals to publicly pledge to claim these benefits. By prompting individuals to commit to acting, policymakers can expect a greater number of high-income individuals to actively take advantage of capital gains tax breaks.

Safe Sex:
For example, some parents may wish for their high-school aged children to learn about safe sex practices and effective contraceptive use, but normally fail to enroll their children into such educational programs. Knowing this, policymakers could ask these parents to publicly pledge to enroll their children. By prompting parents to commit to acting, policymakers can expect a greater number of a greater number of parents to actively enroll their children into these safe sex and contraceptive-use educational programs.

Intelligent Design:
For example, some parents may wish for their high-school aged children to learn about the idea of "intelligent design" as an alternative to biological evolution, but normally fail to enroll their children into such educational programs. Knowing this, policymakers could ask these parents to publicly pledge to enroll their children. By prompting parents to commit to acting, policymakers can expect a greater number of a greater number of parents to actively enroll their children into these intelligent design educational programs.

This approach of prompting individuals to publicly commit to a behavior can be used across a wide range of policies. Putting this particular example aside, how do you feel about prompting individuals to publicly pledge to a behavior *as a general approach to public policy*?

Policy Proposal: Public Commitments

Researchers have suggested that one useful approach to crafting policy is to get individuals to publicly commit to a behavior. The basic idea is that people often have good intentions, but fail to act on those intentions. Behavioral scientists have found that asking people to publicly pledge to that behavior increases the likelihood that they will follow through on those plans.

Control:
For example, people may generally wish to engage in a certain type of behavior, but normally fail to act. Knowing this, policymakers could ask these individuals to publicly pledge to engage in that behavior. By prompting individuals to commit to acting, policymakers can expect a greater number of individuals to actively engage in that behavior.

Food Stamps:
For example, some low-income individuals may wish to participate in food stamp assistance programs they are legally eligible for, but normally fail to claim such benefits. Knowing this, policymakers could ask these individuals to publicly pledge to claim these benefits. By prompting individuals to commit to acting, policymakers can expect a greater number of low-income individuals to actively participate in food stamp assistance programs.

Tax Breaks:
For example, some high-income individuals may wish to take advantage of capital gains tax breaks they are legally eligible for, but normally fail to claim such benefits. Knowing this, policymakers could ask these individuals to publicly pledge to claim these benefits. By prompting individuals to commit to acting, policymakers can expect a greater number of high-income individuals to actively take advantage of capital gains tax breaks.

Safe Sex:
For example, some parents may wish for their high-school aged children to learn about safe sex practices and effective contraceptive use, but normally fail to enroll their children into such educational programs. Knowing this, policymakers could ask these parents to publicly pledge to enroll their children. By prompting parents to commit to acting, policymakers can expect a greater number of a greater number of parents to actively enroll their children into these safe sex and contraceptive-use educational programs.

Intelligent Design:
For example, some parents may wish for their high-school aged children to learn about the idea of "intelligent design" as an alternative to biological evolution, but normally fail to enroll their children into such educational programs. Knowing this, policymakers could ask these parents to publicly pledge to enroll their children. By prompting parents to commit to acting, policymakers can expect a greater number of a greater number of parents to actively enroll their children into these intelligent design educational programs.

This approach of prompting individuals to publicly commit to a behavior can be used across a wide range of policies. Putting this particular example aside, how do you feel about prompting individuals to publicly pledge to a behavior *as a general approach to public policy*?

Policy Proposal: Highlighting Losses

Researchers have suggested that one useful approach to crafting policy is to strategically highlight

the potential costs or losses associated with certain behaviors. The basic idea is that people tend to be especially sensitive to losses, more so than to corresponding benefits or gains. Behavioral scientists have found that people are more likely to avoid options when those options are framed as potential losses than as foregone gains.

Control:
For example, people may generally wish to engage in a certain type of behavior, but normally fail to act. Knowing this, policymakers could describe the disadvantages of failing to act on that behavior. By highlighting the potential costs of not acting, policymakers can expect a greater number of individuals to actively participate in that behavior.

Food Stamps:
For example, some low-income individuals may wish to participate in food stamp assistance programs they are legally eligible for, but normally fail to claim such benefits. Knowing this, policymakers could describe to low-income individuals the disadvantages of failing to claim food stamp assistance. By highlighting the potential costs of not acting, policymakers can expect a greater number of low-income individuals to actively participate in food stamp assistance programs.

Tax Breaks:
For example, some high-income individuals may wish to take advantage of capital gains tax breaks they are legally eligible for, but normally fail to claim such benefits. Knowing this, policymakers could describe to high-income individuals the disadvantages of failing to claim these tax breaks. By highlighting the potential costs of not acting, policymakers can expect a greater number of high-income individuals to actively take advantage of capital gains tax breaks.

Safe Sex:
For example, some parents may wish for their high-school aged children to learn about safe sex practices and effective contraceptive use, but normally fail to enroll their children into such educational programs. Knowing this, policymakers could describe to these parents the disadvantages of not enrolling their children. By highlighting the potential costs of not acting, policymakers can expect a greater number of parents to actively enroll their children into these safe sex and contraceptive-use educational programs.

Intelligent Design:
For example, some parents may wish for their high-school aged children to learn about the idea of "intelligent design" as an alternative to biological evolution, but normally fail to enroll their children into such educational programs. Knowing this, policymakers could describe to these parents the disadvantages of not enrolling their children. By highlighting the potential costs of not acting, policymakers can expect a greater number of parents to actively enroll their children into these intelligent design educational programs.

This approach of strategically highlighting the costs or disadvantages with certain behaviors can be used across a wide range of policies. Putting this particular example aside, how do you feel about strategically highlighting to people the disadvantages of a behavior *as a general approach to public policy*?

Policy Proposal: Popularity Information

Researchers have suggested that one useful approach to crafting policy is to provide individuals with information about how other individuals typically behave when confronting the same decision.

The basic idea is that people are more likely to choose an option when they learn that option is most popular. Behavioral scientists have found that providing people with information about what is popular increases the likelihood that people will engage in that behavior.

Control:
For example, people may generally wish to engage in a certain type of behavior, but normally fail to act. Knowing this, policymakers could provide them with information about the number of people who engage in that behavior. By providing people with information about the popularity of a behavior, policymakers can expect a greater number of individuals to actively participate in that behavior.

Food Stamps:
For example, some low-income individuals may wish to participate in food stamp assistance programs they are legally eligible for, but normally fail to claim such benefits. Knowing this, policymakers could provide them with information about the number of low-income individuals who participate in food stamp programs. By providing these individuals with information about the popularity of food stamp assistance programs, policymakers can expect a greater number of low-income individuals to actively participate in these programs.

Tax Breaks:
For example, some high-income individuals may wish to take advantage of capital gains tax breaks they are legally eligible for, but normally fail to claim such benefits. Knowing this, policymakers could provide them with information about the number of high-income individuals who take advantage of such tax breaks. By providing these individuals with information about the popularity of capital gains tax breaks, policymakers can expect a greater number of high-income individuals to actively take advantage of these tax breaks.

Safe Sex:
For example, some parents may wish for their high-school aged children to learn about safe sex practices and effective contraceptive use, but normally fail to enroll their children into such educational programs. Knowing this, policymakers could provide these parents with information about the number of other parents who enroll their children into these educational programs. By providing these individuals with information about the popularity of these educational programs, policymakers can expect a greater number of parents to actively enroll their children into safe sex and contraceptive-use educational programs.

Intelligent Design:
For example, some parents may wish for their high-school aged children to learn about the idea of "intelligent design" as an alternative to biological evolution, but normally fail to enroll their children into such educational programs. Knowing this, policymakers could provide these parents with information about the number of other parents who enroll their children into these educational programs. By providing these individuals with information about the popularity of these educational programs, policymakers can expect a greater number of a greater number of parents to actively enroll their children into these intelligent design educational programs.

This approach of providing people with information about popular behaviors can be used across a wide range of policies. Putting this particular example aside, how do you feel about providing people with information on the popularity of a behavior *as a general approach to public policy*?

Additional Questions:

Do you identify primarily as a Republic, Democrat, or neither?

- *Republican*
- *Democrat*
- *Neither*

When it comes to social issues, I am . . .

(1 = *Very liberal*, 2 = *Liberal*, 3 = *Somewhat Liberal*, 4 = *Moderate*, 5 = *Somewhat Conservative*, 6 = *Conservative*, 7 = *Very Conservative*)

- *Click here instead if you are completely unsure*
- *Click here instead if you haven't given it much thought*

When it comes to economic issues, I am . . .

(1 = *Very liberal*, 2 = *Liberal*, 3 = *Somewhat Liberal*, 4 = *Moderate*, 5 = *Somewhat Conservative*, 6 = *Conservative*, 7 = *Very Conservative*)

- *Click here instead if you are completely unsure*
- *Click here instead if you haven't given it much thought*

How do you feel about promoting food stamp programs for low-income individuals?

(1 = *Strongly Oppose*, 2 = *Moderately Oppose*, 3 = *Slightly Oppose*, 4 = *Neither Support nor Oppose*, 5 = *Slightly Support*, 6 = *Moderately Support*, 7 = *Strongly Support*)

How do you feel about promoting tax breaks for high-income individuals?

(1 = *Strongly Oppose*, 2 = *Moderately Oppose*, 3 = *Slightly Oppose*, 4 = *Neither Support nor Oppose*, 5 = *Slightly Support*, 6 = *Moderately Support*, 7 = *Strongly Support*)

How do you feel about promoting high school educational programs on safe sex and effective contraceptive use?

(1 = *Strongly Oppose*, 2 = *Moderately Oppose*, 3 = *Slightly Oppose*, 4 = *Neither Support nor Oppose*, 5 = *Slightly Support*, 6 = *Moderately Support*, 7 = *Strongly Support*)

How do you feel about promoting high school educational programs on "intelligent design"?

(1 = *Strongly Oppose*, 2 = *Moderately Oppose*, 3 = *Slightly Oppose*, 4 = *Neither Support nor Oppose*, 5 = *Slightly Support*, 6 = *Moderately Support*, 7 = *Strongly Support*)

People in our society often disagree about how far to let individuals go in making decisions for themselves. How strongly you agree or disagree with each of these statements?

(1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 2 = *Moderately Disagree*, 3 = *Slightly Disagree*, 4 = *Neither Agree nor Disagree*, 5 = *Slightly Agree*, 6 = *Moderately Agree*, 7 = *Strongly Agree*)

1. The government interferes far too much in our everyday lives.
2. Sometimes government needs to make laws that keep people from hurting themselves.
3. It's not the government's business to try to protect people from themselves.
4. The government should stop telling people how to live their lives.
5. The government should do more to advance society's goals, even if that means limiting the freedom and choices of individuals.
6. Government should put limits on the choices individuals can make so they don't get in the way of what's good for society.

Gender:

- *Male*
- *Female*

Age: _____ years old

Finally, any questions, comments, or suggestions for this study?

4 Study 3A Materials

For this study you will read and respond to questions about approaches to public policy. This is a short survey, so we ask that you please pay attention and read all materials before responding.

Policy Proposal: Automatic Enrollment

Researchers have suggested that one useful approach to public policy is to automatically enroll people into a program. The basic idea is that most people tend to stay with the default course of action, regardless of what that option happens to be. Behavioral scientists have found that automatic enrollment defaults increase participation in a program, while also allowing individuals the ability to opt-out if they wish to do so.

Food Stamps:
For example, some low-income individuals may wish to participate in food stamp and supplemental assistance programs they are legally eligible for, but normally fail to claim such benefits. Knowing this, policymakers could identify these individuals based on previous tax returns and automatically enroll them to receive food stamps, while allowing them to opt-out if they wish to do so. By setting the default to automatically receive these benefits, policymakers can expect a greater number of low-income individuals to actively participate in food stamp assistance programs.

Tax Breaks:
For example, some high-income individuals may wish to take advantage of capital gains tax breaks they are legally eligible for, but normally fail to claim such benefits. Knowing this, policymakers could identify these individuals based on previous tax returns and automatically enroll them to receive tax breaks, while allowing them to opt-out if they wish to do so. By setting the default to automatically receive these benefits, policymakers can expect a greater number of high-income individuals to take advantage of capital gains tax breaks.

This approach of strategically selecting default options can be used across a wide range of policies. Putting this particular example aside, please tell us how you feel about the strategic use of automatic enrollment defaults *as a general approach to public policy*.

1. How much do you support this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
2. How much do you oppose this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
3. How ethical is this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
4. How manipulative is this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
5. How unethical is this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
6. How coercive is this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)

Additional Questions:

Do you identify primarily as a Republic, Democrat, or neither?

- *Republican*
- *Democrat*
- *Neither*

When it comes to social issues, I am . . .

(1 = *Very liberal*, 2 = *Liberal*, 3 = *Somewhat Liberal*, 4 = *Moderate*, 5 = *Somewhat Conservative*, 6 = *Conservative*, 7 = *Very Conservative*)

- *Click here instead if you are completely unsure*
- *Click here instead if you haven't given it much thought*

When it comes to economic issues, I am . . .

(1 = *Very liberal*, 2 = *Liberal*, 3 = *Somewhat Liberal*, 4 = *Moderate*, 5 = *Somewhat Conservative*, 6 = *Conservative*, 7 = *Very Conservative*)

- *Click here instead if you are completely unsure*
- *Click here instead if you haven't given it much thought*

How do you feel about promoting [food stamp programs for low-income individuals/tax breaks for high-income individuals]?

(1 = *Strongly Oppose*, 2 = *Moderately Oppose*, 3 = *Slightly Oppose*, 4 = *Neither Support nor Oppose*, 5 = *Slightly Support*, 6 = *Moderately Support*, 7 = *Strongly Support*)

Gender:

- *Male*
- *Female*

Age: _____ years old

Are you, or have you ever been, elected to a public office?

- *Yes*
- *No*

Are you, or have you ever been, appointed to a public office?

- *Yes*
- *No*

Are you a public employee?

- *Yes*
- *No*

Do you have authority over how or whether any government policies affect the public?

- *Yes*
- *No*

Finally, any questions, comments, or suggestions for this study?

5 Study 3B Materials

Survey: Opinions on Automatic Enrollment

Researchers have suggested that one useful approach to public policy is to strategically use automatic enrollment defaults. Behavioral scientists have found that automatic enrollment people into a program increases participation in that program, while also allowing individuals the ability to opt-out if they wish to do so.

Safe Sex:
For example, some parents may wish for their high-school aged children to learn about safe sex practices and effective contraceptive use, but normally fail to enroll their children into such educational programs. Knowing this, policymakers could automatically enroll high-school students to receive additional information on safe sex practices, while allowing parents to opt-out if they wish to do so. By doing so, policymakers can expect a greater number of high-school children to participate in these safe sex and contraceptive use educational programs.

Intelligent Design:
For example, some parents may wish for their high-school aged children to learn about the idea of "intelligent design" as an alternative to biological evolution, but normally fail to enroll their children into such programs. Knowing this, policymakers could automatically enroll high-school students to receive additional information on intelligent design, while allowing parents to opt-out if they wish to do so. By doing so, policymakers can expect a greater number of high-school children to participate in these intelligent design educational programs.

This approach of strategically selecting default options can be used across a wide range of policies. Putting this particular example aside, please tell us how you feel about using automatic enrollment *as a general approach to public policy*. (fill-in one circle per statement below)

1. How much do you support this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
2. How much do you oppose this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
3. How manipulative is this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
4. How coercive is this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)

Additional Questions:

Gender:

- *Male*
- *Female*

Age: _____ years old

Approximately how many constituents, if any, do you represent?

Do you identify primarily as a . . .

- *Republican*

- *Democrat*
- *Neither*

When it comes to political issues, I am . . .

(1 = *Very liberal*, 2 = *Liberal*, 3 = *Somewhat Liberal*, 4 = *Moderate*, 5 = *Somewhat Conservative*, 6 = *Conservative*, 7 = *Very Conservative*)

How do you feel about teaching [safe sex and effective contraceptive use/intelligent design] in public schools?

(1 = *Strongly Oppose*, 2 = *Moderately Oppose*, 3 = *Slightly Oppose*, 4 = *Neither Support nor Oppose*, 5 = *Slightly Support*, 6 = *Moderately Support*, 7 = *Strongly Support*)

6 Study S1A Materials

For this study you will read and respond to questions about approaches to public policy. This is a short survey, so we ask that you please pay attention and read all materials before responding.

Policy Proposal: Automatic Enrollment

Researchers have suggested that one useful approach to public policy is to automatically enroll people into a program. The basic idea is that most people tend to stay with the default course of action, regardless of what that option happens to be. Behavioral scientists have found that automatic enrollment defaults increase participation in a program, while also allowing individuals the ability to opt-out if they wish to do so.

Food Stamps:
For example, some low-income individuals may wish to participate in food stamp and supplemental assistance programs they are legally eligible for, but normally fail to claim such benefits. Knowing this, policymakers could identify these individuals based on previous tax returns and automatically enroll them to receive food stamps, while allowing them to opt-out if they wish to do so. By setting the default to automatically receive these benefits, policymakers can expect a greater number of low-income individuals to actively participate in food stamp assistance programs.

Tax Breaks:
For example, some high-income individuals may wish to take advantage of capital gains tax breaks they are legally eligible for, but normally fail to claim such benefits. Knowing this, policymakers could identify these individuals based on previous tax returns and automatically enroll them to receive tax breaks, while allowing them to opt-out if they wish to do so. By setting the default to automatically receive these benefits, policymakers can expect a greater number of high-income individuals to take advantage of capital gains tax breaks.

This approach of strategically selecting default options can be used across a wide range of policies. Putting this particular example aside, please tell us how you feel about the strategic use of automatic enrollment defaults *as a general approach to public policy*.

1. How much do you support this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
2. How much do you oppose this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
3. How ethical is this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
4. How manipulative is this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
5. How unethical is this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
6. How coercive is this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)

Additional Questions:

Do you identify primarily as a Republic, Democrat, or neither?

- *Republican*
- *Democrat*
- *Neither*

When it comes to social issues, I am . . .

(1 = *Very liberal*, 2 = *Liberal*, 3 = *Somewhat Liberal*, 4 = *Moderate*, 5 = *Somewhat Conservative*, 6 = *Conservative*, 7 = *Very Conservative*)

- *Click here instead if you are completely unsure*
- *Click here instead if you haven't given it much thought*

When it comes to economic issues, I am . . .

(1 = *Very liberal*, 2 = *Liberal*, 3 = *Somewhat Liberal*, 4 = *Moderate*, 5 = *Somewhat Conservative*, 6 = *Conservative*, 7 = *Very Conservative*)

- *Click here instead if you are completely unsure*
- *Click here instead if you haven't given it much thought*

How do you feel about promoting [food stamp programs for low-income individuals/tax breaks for high-income individuals]?

(1 = *Strongly Oppose*, 2 = *Moderately Oppose*, 3 = *Slightly Oppose*, 4 = *Neither Support nor Oppose*, 5 = *Slightly Support*, 6 = *Moderately Support*, 7 = *Strongly Support*)

Please indicate your Gender:

- *Male*
- *Female*

How old are you? _____ years old

Finally, any questions, comments, or suggestions for this study?

7 Study S1B Materials

For this study you will read and respond to questions about approaches to public policy. This is a short survey, so we ask that you please pay attention and read all materials before responding.

Policy Proposal: Automatic Enrollment

Researchers have suggested that one useful approach to public policy is to automatically enroll people into a program. The basic idea is that most people tend to stay with the default course of action, regardless of what that option happens to be. Behavioral scientists have found that automatic enrollment defaults increase participation in a program, while also allowing individuals the ability to opt-out if they wish to do so.

Safe Sex:
For example, some parents may wish for their high-school aged children to learn about safe sex practices and effective contraceptive use, but normally fail to enroll their children into such educational programs. Knowing this, policymakers could automatically enroll high-school students to receive additional information on practicing safe sex and proper use of contraception, while allowing parents to opt-out if they wish to do so. By setting the default to automatically receive this form of sex education training, policymakers can expect a greater number of high-school children to participate in these safe-sex and contraceptive-use educational programs.

Abstinence-Only:
For example, some parents may wish for their high-school aged children to learn about abstinence-only sex practices, but normally fail to enroll their children into such educational programs. Knowing this, policymakers could automatically enroll high-school students to receive additional information on abstinence-only practices, while allowing parents to opt-out if they wish to do so. By setting the default to automatically receive this form of sex education training, policymakers can expect a greater number of high-school children to participate in these abstinence-only educational programs.

This approach of strategically selecting default options can be used across a wide range of policies. Putting this particular example aside, please tell us how you feel about the strategic use of automatic enrollment defaults *as a general approach to public policy*.

1. How much do you support this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
2. How much do you oppose this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
3. How ethical is this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
4. How manipulative is this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
5. How unethical is this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)
6. How coercive is this approach to policy? (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much so*)

Additional Questions:

Do you identify primarily as a Republic, Democrat, or neither?

- *Republican*
- *Democrat*
- *Neither*

When it comes to social issues, I am . . .

(1 = *Very liberal*, 2 = *Liberal*, 3 = *Somewhat Liberal*, 4 = *Moderate*, 5 = *Somewhat Conservative*, 6 = *Conservative*, 7 = *Very Conservative*)

- *Click here instead if you are completely unsure*
- *Click here instead if you haven't given it much thought*

When it comes to economic issues, I am . . .

(1 = *Very liberal*, 2 = *Liberal*, 3 = *Somewhat Liberal*, 4 = *Moderate*, 5 = *Somewhat Conservative*, 6 = *Conservative*, 7 = *Very Conservative*)

- *Click here instead if you are completely unsure*
- *Click here instead if you haven't given it much thought*

How do you feel about promoting [safe sex and effective contraceptive use practices/abstinence-only practices] in public schools?

(1 = *Strongly Oppose*, 2 = *Moderately Oppose*, 3 = *Slightly Oppose*, 4 = *Neither Support nor Oppose*, 5 = *Slightly Support*, 6 = *Moderately Support*, 7 = *Strongly Support*)

Please indicate your Gender:

- *Male*
- *Female*

How old are you? _____ years old

Finally, any questions, comments, or suggestions for this study?

8   Summary of Results Across Studies

The table below represents the average marginal effect of political orientation on nudge evaluations. Positive coefficients indicate that nudge evaluations become more positive with increasing conservativism, and negative coefficients indicate that nudge evaluations become more positive with increasing liberalism. All results implement heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors. Study 2 implements crossed random effects for participants and policy nudges.

	Policymaker/ Policy Illustration	coefficient	std. error	p-value
Study 1	Obama	-0.136	0.057	.017
Study 1	Bush	0.034	0.065	.601
Study 1	Control	-0.037	0.063	.558
Study 2	Food Stamps	-0.124	0.028	$< .001$
Study 2	Tax Breaks	0.057	0.028	.045
Study 2	Safe Sex	-0.050	0.028	.071
Study 2	Intelligent Design	0.050	0.028	.069
Study 2	Control	-0.004	0.028	.888
Study 3A	Food Stamps	-0.101	0.028	$< .001$
Study 3A	Tax Breaks	-0.006	0.029	.589
Study 3B	Safe Sex	0.040	0.121	.636
Study 3B	Intelligent Design	0.366	0.169	.042
Study S1A	Food Stamps	-0.357	0.080	$< .001$
Study S1A	Tax Breaks	-0.093	0.088	.294
Study S1B	Safe Sex	-0.208	0.079	.009
Study S1B	Abstinence-Only	0.067	0.083	.421

9 Nudge Evaluations in "control condition" of Study 2

The table below provides mean (standard deviation) evaluation scores for each type of policy nudge in Study 2 when the data is restricted to policy illustrations that were presented in a decontextualized way (control condition). Higher scores represent more positive evaluations of the nudge as a general policy tool. Test statistics are tested against the scale midpoint of 3 (on a 1–5 scale).

Policymaker/Objective	Mean (SD)	t-statistic (df)	p-value
Implementation intentions	3.53 (0.93)	6.43 (129)	$< .001$
Highlighting losses	3.27 (0.82)	2.45 (56)	.018
Commitment and consistency	3.16 (0.85)	1.90 (95)	.061
Descriptive social norms	2.95 (0.81)	$-.42$ (39)	.674
Auto enroll defaults	2.43 (0.96)	-6.87 (135)	$< .001$

10 Descriptive statistics: Correlations between items

The table below provides pairwise-correlations between each of the dependent variables for each study:

Study 1	1	2	3	4	5
1. support					
2. oppose	−0.825				
3. ethical	0.724	−0.629			
4. manipulative	−0.450	0.481	−0.525		
5. unethical	−0.669	0.694	−0.746	.620	
6. coercive	−0.380	0.421	−0.435	.601	0.554

Study 2	1	2	3	4	5
1. support					
2. oppose	−0.815				
3. ethical	0.703	−0.660			
4. manipulative	−0.503	0.522	−0.503		
5. unethical	−0.621	0.700	−0.708	.564	
6. coercive	−0.406	0.456	−0.440	.611	0.503

Study 3A	1	2	3	4	5
1. support					
2. oppose	−0.855				
3. ethical	0.667	−0.676			
4. manipulative	−0.491	0.536	−0.543		
5. unethical	−0.579	0.624	−0.767	.416	
6. coercive	−0.339	0.355	−0.455	.538	0.385

Study 3B	1	2	3		
1. support					
2. oppose	−0.867				
3. manipulative	−0.618	−0.676			
4. coercive	−0.617	0.599	0.700		

Study S1A	1	2	3	4	5
1. support					
2. oppose	−0.874				
3. ethical	0.562	−0.614			
4. manipulative	−0.519	0.520	−0.675		
5. unethical	−0.614	0.674	−0.754	.693	
6. coercive	−0.514	0.538	−0.533	.561	0.539

Study S1B	1	2	3	4	5
1. support					
2. oppose	−0.881				
3. ethical	0.740	−0.790			
4. manipulative	−0.541	0.558	−0.581		
5. unethical	−0.668	0.737	−0.740	.616	
6. coercive	−0.479	0.540	−0.577	.682	0.560

11   Descriptive statistics: Political Orientation

The table below reports the distribution of political orientation (combined average on ratings to economic and social issues) across studies. Note that there are only integers in Study 3B because participants rated a single 1–7 scale item.

Political Orientation 1 = very liberal, 7 = very conservative	Study 1 (*n* = 355)	Study 2 (*n* = 462)	Study 3A (*n* = 107)	Study 3B (*n* = 48)	Study S1A (*n* = 139)	Study S1B (*n* = 139)
1	21	50	4	1	14	8
1.5	23	22	7		2	5
2	64	58	7	5	18	22
2.5	20	32	8		16	14
3	48	51	12	13	17	15
3.5	25	38	13		10	15
4	69	93	18	18	27	24
4.5	21	26	14		10	8
5	23	44	6	5	12	13
5.5	10	11	2		6	2
6	21	22	9	5	4	4
6.5	4	6	4			6
7	6	9	3	1	3	3

The next table reports the distribution for self-identified political party across studies.

Political Party	Study 1 (*n* = 354)	Study 2 (*n* = 462)	Study 3A (*n* = 107)	Study 3B (*n* = 47)	Study S1A (*n* = 139)	Study S1B (*n* = 139)
Republican	66	91	28	12	23	27
Democrat	166	212	55	25	73	72
Neither	122	159	24	10	43	40

12   Decomposing Social and Economic Political Orientation

The table below displays regression coefficients (*b*), standard errors (SE), standardized regression coefficients (*β*), and *p*-values for social and economic political orientation for each condition per study. Note that Study 3B is omitted because we did not ask separately for social and economic political orientation. Positive coefficients indicate that more positive nudge evaluations with increasing conservativism, and negative coefficients indicate that more positive nudge evaluations with increasing liberalism. All results implement heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors. Study 2 implements crossed random effects for participants and policy nudges.

	Policymaker/	Social Political Orientation				Economic Political Orientation			
	Policy Illustration	*b*	SE	*β*	*p*-value	*b*	SE	*β*	*p*-value
Study 1	Obama	−.04	0.06	−.06	.451	−.17	0.05	−.28	.001
Study 1	Bush	0.03	0.06	.04	.662	0.03	0.06	.05	.612
Study 1	Control	−.02	0.06	−.03	.732	−.05	0.06	−.08	.445
Study 2	Food Stamps	−.09	0.03	−.14	.001	−.12	0.02	−.21	< .001
Study 2	Safe Sex	−.03	0.03	−.05	.214	−.05	0.02	−.09	.042
Study 2	Tax Breaks	0.05	0.03	.08	.079	0.05	0.02	.08	.056
Study 2	Intel Design	0.07	0.03	.11	.010	0.02	0.02	.03	.429
Study 2	Control	0.00	0.03	.01	.882	−.01	0.02	−.02	.697
Study 3A	Food Stamps	−.10	0.03	−.42	.001	−.08	0.03	−.33	.004
Study 3A	Tax Breaks	0.00	0.03	.01	.922	−.01	0.03	−.05	.673
Study S1A	Food Stamps	−.26	0.07	−.42	.001	−.32	0.08	−.51	< .001
Study S1A	Tax Breaks	−.11	0.08	−.18	.173	−.04	0.09	−.06	.658
Study S1B	Safe Sex	−.15	0.08	−.24	.053	−.20	0.06	−.34	.002
Study S1B	Abstinece-Only	0.12	0.08	.19	.142	0.00	0.07	.00	.982