

## Introduction

Inducing politicians to act according to constituent preferences can be difficult when it conflicts with those of the parties with which the politicians identify. Elections may nudge them toward the preferences of the electorate (Miller and Stokes 1963), but it is a blunt instrument after all. They oftentimes choose to implement policies contrary to the view of their constituents (Kirkland and Harden 2018). Therefore, time and time again, the voting public have been trying take things into their own hand by resorting to direct democracy, such as referendum, initiative, and recall. Among them, recall, by allowing constituents to trigger an election where voters decide whether to remove incumbents from their office immediately, stands out as the only mechanism of direct democracy that may cost the incumbents' reelection. Hence, one may expect that when the party and the constituency disagree, an incumbent, seeking reelection and thus wishing to survive a recall or avoid one altogether, will be more likely to side with the constituency instead of the party, thus enhancing politicians' accountability to constituents.

However, the current literature on recall has yet to borne out this expectation. Recalls in general are rather infrequent to begin with, limiting the scholarly interest in recall and, as a result, the volume of the literature on recall. The same infrequency also makes it difficult to argue that recall *actively* constrains the behavior of politicians most of the time when it spends a long time being unactivated. Furthermore, the vast majority of the literature focuses on how constituents initiate and vote in recall elections and few mention

of how recall mechanisms affect politicians' behavior.<sup>12</sup> Those who do attempt to understand their effect on incumbents report mixed results, ranging from evidence for limited accountability (Okamoto and Serdült 2020), to no evidence for accountability (Welp 2016), or worse, evidence for decline in accountability (Haman 2021).

In addition, some of these studies rest on theoretical assumptions the utility of which are yet to be confirmed, preventing us from convincingly asserting whether recall improves accountability. Since recall elections are rather infrequent, researchers have not only sought to explain the frequency and success rates of recall but also used them as the metrics for inferring the extent to which elected officials are held accountable (Haman 2021; Okamoto and Serdült 2020; Qvortrup 2011). Such attempt, though understandable given the rarity of recall elections and the accompanying limitation on data, seems to assume that the more often recall mechanisms get triggered, the more effectively it holds elected officials accountable, which is in direct conflict with the theory of recall acting as a stopvalve (Serdült 2015; Welp and Whitehead 2020a), or as a way for electoral losers to retaliate (Welp 2016), implying that frequent use of recall is a sign that elections are failing voters and thus not necessarily an indicator that recall itself is improving accountability. Though it may be possible to reconcile these competing theories by categorizing recall attempts and specify the

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<sup>1</sup>Recalls in general in the US receives little systematic treatment save Cronin's (Cronin 1989) *Direct Democracy*, despite an inordinately large literature focusing on 2003 recall of California Governor Gray Davis, discussing a wide range of relevant features in this particular recall such as voter turnout (Arbour and Hayes 2005), voter choice (Alvarez and Kiewiet 2009; Shaw, McKenzie, and Underwood 2005), candidate choice (McGhee and Baldassare 2009), partisan coordination and mobilization, (Masket 2016), and voter polarization along racial, and ethnic lines (Segura and Fraga 2008). Understandably, the 2003 California gubernatorial recall engenders little scholarly discussion of how it affects incumbents, due to not only the immediate removal of the incumbent Governor Davis and the installment of new California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger but also how unlikely such a recall attempt would ever succeed again in this solidly Democratic state, which is further corroborated by the recent failed attempt to recall California Governor Newsom Gavin.

<sup>2</sup>For a thorough review of the practice and literature of recalls outside the United States, see Welp and Whitehead (2020 b).

scope condition of each theory, doing so would not only negate the usefulness of frequency of all different types of recall attempts and success . but also introduce questions as to the propriety of criteria for categorization. It appears that the prevailing attention to recall frequency might just create more answers than questions.

In lieu of attempting to understand the frequency of recalls and their significance to accountability, Gordon and Yntiso (2021) take a different approach where they systematically examine incentive effects of recall elections on incumbents. Though familiar to most neoinstitutionalists, Gordon and Yntiso's approach is the first of its kind in the literature of recall election, successfully identify the *threat of recall* as the cause of change in behavior of elected officials, the sentencing severity of elected judges to be more specific. At the same time Gordon and Yntiso (2021) also recognize that the scope condition of the incentive effect has yet to be determined and thus remains a gap in the recall literature, especially given that elected judges are different from most other elected politicians in many ways. Elected judges compete in a legally and culturally nonpartisan conditions, seeking to be above the fray of politics and are at best somewhat sensitive to what their constituents want; whereas most politicians do politics for a living, and their behavior must account for the preferences of both their constituents and their parties, making it difficult to say for certain whether this crosswinds of pressures combined with the threat of recall produces any net behavioral change. In a nutshell, our understanding of whether recall enhances politicians' accountability is still far from complete.

To render a more complete understanding of recall's ability to enhance accountability of incumbents beyond the settings of recalls of judges, who are nonpartisan officials. I shall use evidence from Taiwan's Legislature Yuan which produced a series of political reforms that create two tiers of legisla-

tors who were effectively immune from recall before the new legislation that, for reasons unrelated to the composition of each tier of legislators, made only one tier of legislators vulnerable to credible threat of recall, thus allowing us to use difference-in-difference method to determine whether the incentive effects of the introduction of new recall mechanisms causes the incumbent legislators to (1) be less likely to toe the party line and (2) more likely to behave in accordance with the preferences of their constituents thus enhancing their accountability to constituencies..

In addition to the statistical assessment I will also present a “prototypical” recall mechanism. and its scope condition which undergirds the theoretical development of the incentive effect of recall. This will help isolate the incentive effects of various typical components of recall. Though it is my goal to sketch a theory of recall elections applicable across various institutional arrangements, the diversity of these arrangements is almost at the same level as that of electoral systems around the world. Therefore, this “prototypical” recall mechanism is bound to be quite distinct from that found elsewhere. In fact, it will become clear that this prototype is a bit different from the actual recall mechanism found in Taiwan and most US state and local jurisdiction. Reader should bear in mind that this prototype only serves a starting point for developing the incentive theory and should be adjusted when the difference between the particular feature of recall under study and the prototype justifies it.

## Some Definitions and Stylized Facts

I would like to begin this inquiry by making a simple observation that recall can be treated as just another election an incumbent needs to survive. This allows for appropriation of a number of findings and techniques that have been long established in electoral behavior literature, the first one of which being a simple

stylized fact that each candidate with a realistic chance of winning an election belongs to a party. Then when constituents cast a vote for a candidate, one part of the decision is based on the candidate's personal traits, and the other part depends on the performance of the candidate's party. One may thus say that there is both a *personal vote* and a *party vote* for the candidate.

## Personal Vote and Party Vote

Cain, Ferejohn and Fiorina (1987) define the personal vote as the “portion of a candidate's electoral support which originates in his or her personal qualities, qualifications, activities, and record.” (9) The significance of the personal vote has long been recognized, though the employment of this term is not so universal as it manifests itself through a different name or an analogous concept (electoral connection (home style Fenno 1978; electoral connection Mayhew 1974; personal reputation Carey and Shugart 1995; dyadic representation Miller and Stokes 1963; Weissberg 1978; Ansolabehere and Jones 2011; personal representation Colomer 2011; local vote Pattie, Johnston, and Fieldhouse 1995). To clarify their definition of the personal vote, Cain, Ferejohn and Fiorina (1987, 9) further emphasize the personal vote does not include

support for the candidate based on his or her partisan affiliation, fixed voter characteristics such as class, religion, and ethnicity, reactions to national conditions such as the state of the economy and performance evaluations centered on the head of the governing party

which will serve as my working definition of “party vote” are distinct types of support.

While these definitions offered by Cain, Ferejohn, and Fiorina (1987) who coined and defined the term “personal vote” clearly demarcate two different kinds of support received by a candidate at the poll, they have not prevented

other political scientists from putting forward their own definitions of these terms or their respective analogs. More importantly, to differentiate these two kinds of support do suggest that pursuing both of them simultaneously present a conflict, which, as Carsey, Winburn, and Berry (2017) posit, need not be a real one. Carsey, Winburn, and Berry (2017) argue that, though a candidate cultivating a personal vote based on policy orientation would almost inevitably conflict with seeking a party vote based on party platform, it is theoretically possible to seek electoral support through non-policy work like providing constituency service without undermining the incumbent's pursuit of party vote. Whether such proposition is true, Carsey, Winburn, and Berry (2017) argue, should only be determined empirically. Though I do believe that such conflict is real, even in non-policy areas, it seems prudent to recognize this validity of this critique by explicitly dividing both party vote and personal vote into a policy component and a catch-all non-policy component and then focus on their conflict in policy component for the time being.

The above definitions of the personal vote and party vote provide a nice segue to the next stylized fact: incentive structures that encourages incumbents to pursue a strong personal vote generally improves their accountability to their constituents. Given that recall elections are essentially up or down votes on the incumbents and thus greatly resemble elections held under the first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral system, which is known for incentivizing incumbents to cultivate a strong personal vote, one should expect recall elections to improve incumbents' accountability to their constituents.

Unfortunately the second stylized fact on its own does not carry the argument very far in large part due to the fact that an incumbent is usually unable to the discussion above which has established that pursuing a strong personal vote generally conflicts with retraining the party vote. One may virtually rest

assured that parties would adapt to the new institution by creating new incentive structures on top of it if doing so suits the need of the parties. As a result, it is difficult to assert that recall always enhances accountability of incumbents to their constituencies without qualification.

## **Setting the Baseline**

To defend the view that recall does offer the potential of holding politicians accountable to their constituents in a partisan electoral environment, I propose to begin with a baseline case where such effect is not only credibly attributable to recall but also more likely to be measurable, and then work toward explaining the harder cases. Taiwan offers a perfect baseline case to begin this line of inquiry. As the threat of recall in Taiwan is already established, I shall demonstrate here that there is a good chance of measuring the effect of recall on the accountability of incumbents by studying legislative recall in Taiwan. Since the island's democratization, Taiwanese legislators not only engage in a high volume of activities to cultivate personal vote, but also change their personal vote seeking behavior in response to institutional reform. Furthermore, the institutional arrangement of legislative recall encourages personal vote seeking behavior while limiting the need for partisan coordination, thus providing one of the best opportunities to observe recall holding incumbents more accountable to their constituencies.

### **Recall in Taiwan as a Baseline**

Cultivating a personal vote has always been a priority for legislators, even before voters got a chance to pick them in free and fair elections. Under the one-party rule of Kuomintang, both politicians within and without the ruling party, have to skirt around the ban on forming political parties by establishing their own

personal brands and/or factions. When free and fair elections did arrive, the single nontransferable vote (SNTV) electoral system was adopted. Under this system, virtually all constituencies are multi-member districts (MMD) where each constituent gets only one vote to choose one candidate, and a constituency of size  $n$  would be represented by the  $n$  candidates receiving the most votes in the Legislative Yuan. This electoral system promotes personal vote to a far greater extent than other candidate-centered electoral system like FPTP, yet simultaneously undermines the legislators' accountability to the local constituencies who are represented by multiple legislators, making it rather difficult to effectively reward and punish incumbents who can survive at the poll with varying level of personal vote.

The 2008 electoral reform saw the Legislative Yuan eliminate all MMDs and replaced SNTV with the FPTP system for the legislative elections, which incentivizes cultivating a personal vote to a lesser extent than before. Though many conventional methods of cultivating a personal vote, including constituency service, remain alive and well, the electoral reform saw a dramatic decline in dissenting votes against their party leadership on the legislative floor. These behavioral patterns serve underline the high volume and pliability of personal vote seeking behavior in the legislative arena in response to institutional constraints in the past and hopefully in the case of recall reforms as well.

## Main Theory

As I have previewed in the previous section, recall on its own directly incentivizes incumbents to cultivate a stronger personal vote, as party vote is much harder to influence and much less useful in a recall where parties feature less prominently than they do in general elections. It remains to see how recall affects parties, which in turn respond by imposing their own set of incentive structures that



together with the direct incentive effect of recall and determine the net incentive effect of recall, the main motivation of this study. Therein also lies the key difficulty as a party, created by its individual members for their own reelection, are tasked with providing public goods for its members and thus must determine how much “tax” to exact from them in the form of disciplinary action. Thus, when recall is instituted, the party must decide whether to impose more or less tax/discipline. If past experimentation of anti-party reform is any indication, such decision is very difficult to predict.

In the interest of promoting transparency while staying true to the exploratory nature of this study, I will provide in this section the main theory and in the next section alternative theories. Reader shall soon see that the main theory predicts that a party, especially that in government, will *always* agree with their members that more personal vote of some sort will be in the interest of both the incumbents and their party, resulting in an increase in activities done toward that end. Given that in the baseline case of Taiwan, incentives encouraging incumbents to a strong personal vote is very strong, there is a good chance of falsifying it with data of incumbent policy positions and performance alone. Alternative theories, on the other hand, require more variables to predict whether a net increase or decrease in activities aimed at cultivating personal vote will result. Testing the alternative theories then require more variables and thus deserve more in-depth treatment in the future.

## Recency Bias

To establish a theory of recall, it helps to begin with three stylized facts:

1. An incumbent receives two distinct kinds of support, one based on the personal reputation, which is called *personal vote*, and the other based on the incumbent’s party’s reputation, which is called *party vote*.

2. For any incumbent, there is a tradeoff between pursuing personal vote and party vote.
3. An incumbent cultivates a personal vote by providing more services and porks to the constituency and representing the aggregate preference of a constituency.

which implies that institutional arrangements that induce an incumbent to pursue more personal vote than party vote *generally* improves the incumbent's accountability to the constituency. As the previous section's argument goes, holding more frequent elections under candidate-based electoral system, such as FPTP, incentivizes incumbents to pursue a stronger personal vote. Legislative recall in Taiwan, by putting the name of the incumbent alone on the ballot for an up or down vote, effectively constitutes yet another FPTP election for incumbents. Then for the incumbent, the lesser the margin of victory is in the last election, the more likely the incumbent may be recalled in a hypothetical recall. This implies that people who are more likely to be recalled, cannot rely on the party vote alone and are thus more likely to need to cultivate a stronger personal vote; and when recall becomes feasible, they have an even stronger reason to do so. This raises an important question: will the party stand for it?

To this question, my answer is a qualified yes. First, I shall assume that personal vote has no role in elections and elections is simply a result of the sampling of the constituents' partisan identification and policy evaluation and the sampling error accounts for the election results. Accordingly, each party becomes a unitary actor and its members but interchangeable cyphers mindlessly executing the party's instruction. Second, I shall illustrate in the next subsection that before recall is feasible, policymaking making process in Taiwan follows the same pattern and mechanism of political business cycle that allow the legislative members of the government party, which is defined here as the party

that controls the executive branch of the government, to avoid electoral punishment for passing extreme policies toward the beginning of their term. Third, I shall demonstrate how the recall changes the calculus of the government party, whose members can now be punished early on for such opportunistic timing of policy implementation, causing the government party to introduce less extreme policies. Finally, I shall put the personal vote back into the equation to show that giving the incumbents more personal vote, which enhances their accountability to their local constituencies, actually helps the party to implement their policies, thus completing the theory.

Political business cycle was intended as a way to explain economic conditions with political institutions, more specifically the exogenously fixed election dates. There are several assumptions underlying this mechanism:

1. Voters make their choice at the poll based on the macroeconomic conditions which signals government competence. More specifically, they do so by voting for government party candidates when unemployment rate is low and voting for opposition party candidates when unemployment rate is high.
2. Voters have rather limited memory, consequently they attach greater importance to the macroeconomic condition when the election day is drawing closer.
3. Incumbents seek reelection.
4. Incumbents can manipulate the economy by increasing the inflation rate that lowers the unemployment rate in the short run as predicted by the Philips curve.
5. At the general election, voters decide the composition of both the executive and legislative branch of the government.

6. The dates of general election are exogenously set by the statute and cannot be altered.

It follows that, come next election day, voters' memory of the macroeconomic conditions right after the last election is much weaker than that in the run up to the next election day. Consequently, voters will reward the government party for low unemployment rate before the election day even if the unemployment rate is high after the last election. Then, unable to move the date of general election, the government party realizes that it can win the next election by raising the inflation rate to temporarily lower the unemployment rate before the election day without losing the election after the next for rising unemployment right after the election day. Hence, the political business cycle becomes the equilibrium result, as long as the assumption holds.

Much as it offers a simple and compelling mechanism, political business cycle in its original conception has received its fair share of criticism. Some point out the flaws in the behavioral assumptions of voters and incumbents which may prevent the emergence of an electoral cyclical pattern in macroeconomic conditions; Others question whether incumbents are capable effecting changes in macroeconomic conditions that make such manipulation possible. Still others investigate how changing the institutional arrangements stipulated in the assumptions may modify the cyclical pattern. These lines of inquiry have contributed to the development of a vast literature where a more nuanced sketch of a conditional electoral cycle of both policy instruments and economic conditions has emerged. Given that not all the studies in this literature do not all concern cyclical patterns of macroeconomic indicators, it would be inappropriate to consider all of them part of the political business cycle literature. However, for lack of a better term, this literature will hereinafter be referred to as PBC literature where PBC, though usually an abbreviation of political business cycle

or political budget cycle, is meaningless here except as a label.

In the PBC literature two developments are especially noteworthy for this study. One offshoot of this literature trains its aim on political legislation cycle, which refers to the cyclical pattern of legislative process in general instead of focusing on one particular type of policy instruments like fiscal policies, budgeting among other policies. Most work along this line of inquiry focuses on the volume of legislative activity at different points in time throughout the legislative term. Another branch of the PBC literature investigates how changes to the timing of elections yields changes to the cyclical pattern of the policy or economic outcomes. This study of recall contributes to these two branches of the PBC literature by sketching a theory illustrating that, policies implemented by the government party in the legislature tend to be more extreme after the election days and less extreme before the election days under the typical assumptions that general elections are held on exogenously fixed dates (usually every four years) and that by threatening to trigger a legislative recall, which is effectively just another election for the incumbent legislator, in the middle of the legislative term, voters can incentivize government party legislators to cultivate a stronger personal vote *throughout the legislative term* than before where more effort is exerted when election day draws near.

To begin with, I first sketch a theory of political legislation cycle when recall is not feasible. This theory preserves most of the fundamental ingredients would stay in place. That incumbent legislators single-mindedly seek reelection has been a longstanding assumption in political science and will continue to be the case here. Voters also continue to retain a recency bias whereby they discount the utility of incumbents' past policies attach greater importance to events closer to the present is also well-established. These assumptions are central to the prediction that voters discount past job performance such that

doing a good job when the election is coming would *more than* compensate a mistake committed in the more distant past.

However, this theory will make one crucial change to the conventional assumptions made by many studies in the PBC literature. I propose a different assumption about voter motivation which stipulates voters electorally reward the government for a high degree of policy congruence, and punish the government for a low degree of policy congruence. Strangely enough, the issue of policy congruence has largely been sidestepped in PBC literature, even though it is central to the spatial theory of voting. Many studies in the PBC literature avoid discussing policy congruence by focusing on one type of policy instrument for which voter preference is relatively straightforward. Another way to avoid doing so is to assume that high volume of policymaking activities by itself can improve the government party's chances of winning reelection. Such assumptions could very well become untenable as in the case of the original political business cycle theory which is frequently criticized for ignoring the possibility that one party prefers low unemployment whereas the other party low inflation, leading to a competing theory that the political business cycle revolves around partisan changeovers instead of electoral calendar. Therefore, if a theory of cyclical pattern of policies that revolves around electoral calendar is to remain robust against heterogeneity or change over time of preferences among the electorate, policy congruence should be treated as the ultimate goal for voters.

Finally, this theory further assumes additional institutional arrangements on which this theory will be built. It is assumed that, with or without recall institution, both the chief executive and the legislators normally serve a fixed term bookended general elections held on exogenously fixed election day where voters choose both the chief executive and the legislator. Finally, both the chief executive and the legislators are chosen by constituents in single-member dis-

tricts (SMDs) under the first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral system. Naturally, the chief executive is elected by a jurisdiction-wide SMD and the legislators are elected by SMDs which are geographically bounded constituencies that partition the entire jurisdiction.

Now that all the assumptions about voters and incumbent legislators are in place, the prediction of the political legislation cycle can be spelled out. As voters attribute blames and praise of policy outcomes to the government party which is in charge of implementing them, they electorally reward and punish government party incumbents based on these policies as well. Given that the government party is very unlikely to lose safe seats but very likely to lose swing seats in marginal constituencies, its main goal is to help reelect their members standing in the marginal constituency elections. Knowing that voters discount the utility of policy congruence by the amount of time elapsed since the bill was passed, the government party in the legislature can pass extreme policies early in the legislative term, and dole out moderate policies in the run up to the next election to win the retain their seats in *marginal constituencies* needed to maintain a workable majority for government bills in the legislature. Hence, I make the first hypothesis that

Hypothesis 0.0: When recall is not feasible, the government bills passed earlier in the legislative term are on average more extreme than those passed later in the legislative term, especially the last year of the legislative term.

In the language of spatial theory of voting, Hypothesis 0.0 can also be expressed as thus:

Hypothesis 0.0: When recall becomes feasible, the distances between government bills passed earlier in the legislative term and those passed later in the legislative term, especially the last year of the legislative term, in the policy space are on average positive.

Furthermore, since this political legislation cycle theory is predicated on the government party's ability to pass extreme policies and its need to win elections in marginal constituencies in order to maintain a majority for government bills, such behavior is conditional on the size of the government party size in the legislature, the number of marginal constituencies represented by the members of the government party. Strobl, Bäck, Müller (2021), argue that the government is less likely to pass austerity policy early in the legislative term both when it does not hold a majority, which gives the party in opposition the power to forestall it or prevent it altogether and when the government party has a large majority, which makes it easier to appease voters. Following I make the analogous hypothesis that

Hypothesis 0.1: When recall is not feasible, the closer the size of the government party is to the minimum-winning majority, the more likely its extreme bills will be passed early in the legislature term.

One word of caution may be required to note that Hypothesis 0.1 does not predict that the government party will pass the most extreme policy when it controls a minimum-winning majority. It simply predicts that the government party will most likely to opportunistically time their policy implementation which intends to maximize the distance between policies introduced before and after the election day, which helps the government party to exploit the recency bias to the fullest extent.

This political legislation cycle thus far does not bode well for moderate voters. It suggest that, given sufficient amount of time, the government party can bounce back from any dip in its popularity come election day, by passing policies that appease voters in the marginal constituencie. Consequently, legislators, especially those belonging to the government party, are effectively unaccountable for their policies passed early in their legislative term.



This is precisely where the recall comes in to enhance legislators' accountability to their constituents throughout the legislative term. Voters no longer have to wait until the election day to punish the government party in the legislature for bad policy outcome. Instead, they can do that immediately after the government party passes extreme bills or, better yet, threaten to punish the government party if it passes the bills. This time around, the recency bias works in favor of voters seeking to hold legislators in the middle of their term, as it results in a voter choice at the recall election based for most part on the assessment of the recent policies. and constitutes a threat the credibility of which decreases in the legislator's margin of victory. Consequently, voters in the marginal constituency are in a better position to demand the government party to pass bills that are closer to their aggregate preferences by wielding the threat of recall leading to this first hypothesis about recall's incentive effect:

Hypothesis 1.0: When recall becomes feasible, the maximum distance between government bills and the preferences of the marginal constituencies will be lower than that before recall becomes feasible.

In addition, if recall can be triggered at anytime, it no longer makes sense for the government party to pass extreme policies *in the hope that* voters can forgive them for passing moderate policies that are more congruent with their preferences. Instead, the government party now expects the threat of recall of its members representing marginal constituencies to materialize very soon if the extreme policies are to be passed at anytime, which defeats the purpose of engineering a political legislation cycle in the first place - to pass extreme policies *without* losing swing seats. This leads to the following hypothesis about legislative recall:

Hypothesis 1.1: When recall becomes feasible, the distance between government bills passed earlier in the legislative term and those passed later in the

legislative term, especially the last year of the legislative term, in the policy space decreases.

In addition, since the threat of recall is more credible in marginal constituencies, its effect on the government party's policies will also be the most pronounced when the government party has the strongest need for marginal seats. Per the arguments of Strobl, Bäck, Müller (2021) sketched above, the need for marginal seats is the strongest when the government has the minimum-winning majority. As a result, recall's ability to undermine the political business cycle is at its strongest when the government has the minimum-winning majority. This leads to the supplementary hypotheses below:

Hypothesis 1.0.0: When recall is feasible, further than that before recall becomes feasible, the closer the size of the government party is the minimum-winning majority, the closer the maximum distance between government bills and the preference of the marginal constituencies will be.

Hypothesis 1.1.0: When recall is feasible, the closer the size of the government party is the minimum-winning majority, the lesser the distance is between government bills passed earlier in the legislative term and those passed later in the legislative term, especially the last year of the legislative term, in the policy space.

Of course, even if the foregoing hypotheses hold, recall may not completely eliminate political legislation cycle. Government parties in legislatures around the world often have to implement unpopular policies for various reasons, and elections may still be capable of generating a window of opportunities for passing extreme policies, even when recall is in the picture. Voters' positive feeling toward the chief executive at the beginning of the executive term, which, under the previously stated assumptions, coincide with the legislative term, may well spill over into the legislative arena, thus allowing the government party in the

legislature to pass some extreme policies in the legislature during that period without losing many of its government party legislators at recall or general elections, thus continuing the political legislation cycle. Thus, it is entirely possible that recall may simply produce a damping effect on political legislation cycle, without eliminating it.

Suppose the political legislation cycle remains, would recall generate other incentive effect that distorts the cycle by encouraging the government party to *intentionally* pass more extreme policies toward the middle of the term? Naturally, negotiation within the government party and that between the government party and the opposition may prevent bill passage to take place as soon as possible, but that should remain the goal if the government party operates on the assumption that voter has recency bias. Would recall introduce a new ideal timing for passing extreme policies?

While this question deserves more detailed treatment in the future, my intuition suggests the answer is most likely no. The above argument based on the existence of honeymoon period, suggests that providing for recall throughout the legislative term would not prevent the government party from considering it ideal to implement extreme policies during the honeymoon period at the beginning of the term as soon as possible. Any institutional arrangements that prevent voters from recalling the incumbents at the beginning of their term would only reinforce this tendency.

Technically speaking, passing extreme policies in the middle of the term. Suppose voters are forbidden from recalling incumbents during some idiosyncratic time period in the middle of their term, say the second year of a four-year term, then it may make sense to predict that extreme bills would be more like to be passed in the second year of a four-year term. That sort of institutional arrangement, though, is difficult to justify and still more difficult to implement.

Even if recall is permissible throughout the legislative term. it still makes sense to pass extreme policies as soon as possible after the election is over.

Ultimately, the ideal political legislation cycle desired by the government party should see the passage of extreme policies right after the election day and the passage of moderate policies right before the election day.

However, while the ideal timing for passing extreme and moderate policies would most likely remain the same even when recall becomes feasible, the actual timing for passing extreme policies in the legislature, may actually be distorted as a result of recall institutional arrangements. In the hypothesis about legislative recall the government party with a minimum winning has the greatest incentive to pass the extreme policies as soon as possible, but will it be able to do so?

This question offers a good opportunity to revisit the previous assumption that personal vote is not important. Under this assumption, choosing the timing of bill passage at any point during the legislative term poses no difficulty as long as the government party controls the majority, and a minimum winning majority would allow the government to pass extreme policies right at the beginning of the legislative term. This is where the assumption truly stretches credulity given that passing extreme bills at a great speed does not seem like a strong suit of the government party holding only a minimum-winning majority in the legislature. In fact, protracted bargaining where the government party tries to win the support of legislators on the fence seems to be the norm

Though there may be a number of ways to explain away the protracted bargaining process, consideration of personal vote presents an easy path. When the government with a minimum winning majority seeks to pass an extreme bill which conflicts with the constituency preferences, a legislator has an incentive to kill the bill unless the party doles out enough side payment for supporting

the bill. Here, I suggest one way recall institutional arrangement may affect the actual timing of the actual timing. Remember that when recall is assumed to be feasible throughout the legislative term, there is no reason particular reason to pass an extreme bill at anytime other than the beginning of the legislative term since voters can always recall legislators immediately after they pass it. That assumption is violated in some jurisdictions, Taiwan included, where there exist legal prohibition against recalling incumbents until a period of time after the term began. While this type of legal protection against early recall has the potential to preserve the political legislation cycle, it also means that there is a clear disincentive against passing extreme bills *after* a certain point in time during the legislature. This means that it is possible to observe a sharp drop in the policy extremeness after that point in time. Such drop is especially likely to be observed when the size of the government party in the legislature is close to minimum-winning majority where means the government party members' incentives to haggle and to avoid recall are both at its strongest. This offers an important test of recall's incentive effect on political legislation cycle which will be explored further later when discussing how to put the theories to test in the baseline case of Taiwan.

More importantly, bringing the personal vote back in not only sheds light on the policy timing but also other legislative behavior that is directly tied to cultivating a personal vote and ultimately their accountability to voters. Before the recall sets in, government party legislators' need for reelection can be somewhat reliably met by the political legislation cycle which generates more positive views toward them in the run-up to the election. Unfortunately, the government party legislators no longer enjoy this benefit when extreme government bills. Consequently, if the government party ever wants to pass extreme government bills when recall is possible, it needs its members in the legislature

to cultivate a *stronger* personal vote to ward off recall or threat thereof.

First, the need for a stronger personal votes required to pass extreme government bills without losing its members representing marginal constituencies induces the government party, to convince the voters that its members are not merely vehicles by allowing them to take dissenting positions that is costly to the government including votes against party. Otherwise, the voters represented by the government party legislator, believing that their legislator will never oppose the government bills, will always threaten to recall the legislator, to prevent extreme government bills from passing, ultimately threatening to deprive a workable majority for government bills. leading to the hypothesis that

Hypothesis 2.0: Recall causes the position of the government party members that represent marginal constituencies to move away from the party position.

Second, the government party also wants to encourage its members in marginal constituencies to cultivate a stronger personal vote by giving them even more pork for which they could claim credit than they received before, which entails the following hypothesis

Hypothesis 2.1: Recall causes the marginal constituencies to receive a greater amount of pork than it otherwise would have.

There are other ways the government party legislators could cultivate a stronger personal vote. However, since these methods may be more specific to the how incumbents did it in the past before recall becomes feasible, I will provide more hypotheses about them in the next section where I discuss how to test the more general hypotheses and context-specific hypotheses in Taiwan's legislative arena.

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