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Remaking the House and Senate: Personal Power, Ideology, and the 1970s Reforms

Although much has been written on the critical congressional reforms of the 1970s, few studies have analyzed support for reform systematically. In this article, we draw upon previously untapped sources of information that make an individual-level, quantitative analysis possible. We analyze 20 indicators that measure support for a wide variety of reforms in both chambers. Our results reveal a remarkably consistent pattern: in virtually every case, junior members and liberals were more pro-reform than were senior members and conservatives. Also, Republicans were often more likely than Democrats to back reform. Our findings challenge the view that the reform movement was essentially a Democratic party phenomenon; liberals and junior members in both parties—not just Democrats—supported reform.

Introduction

The 1970s stand out in congressional history as an era of reform. Both the House and the Senate adopted a number of changes intended to transform internal power relations. For example, the seniority “rule” for selecting committee chairs was weakened in the House and the Senate, sunshine laws in both chambers exposed more of the legislative process to the public, House subcommittees and party leaders gained substantial new resources, and the Senate revamped its committee system and allocated additional staff to junior members. Numerous studies attest to the profound implications of these changes for subsequent congressional politics (see, for example, Davidson 1992, Dodd and Oppenheimer 1981, Rieselbach 1994, Rohde 1991, and Sinclair 1989).

Given the importance of the 1970s reforms, how should we interpret this era of congressional history? What were the key forces driving members' support for, or opposition to, reform? How did these decisions shape the authority structure of Congress?

Recent accounts tend to emphasize liberals' policy goals, arguing that the reform movement was primarily an effort by liberal Democrats to undermine the power of conservative southern chairs (Rohde 1991). Rohde claims that junior members' desire for a larger base of power reinforced the reform movement at times but that liberal Democrats' policy goals "provided the major impetus for institutional change" in the House (1991, 33). Rohde concludes that the reforms facilitated a revival of Democratic party government. Other recent analyses have also treated the reform movement—particularly in the House—as principally a Democratic party phenomenon (e.g., Aldrich 1995, 230–32; Polsby 1981, 29; and Polsby 1986, 114–25, 226). For example, Cox and McCubbins (1993, 278) conclude that the 1970s reforms were a "predictable consequence of the shrinkage and liberalization of the southern wing of the [Democratic] party" and were intended to spread power "to a substantially larger number of party members." Similarly, Stewart (2001, 122) notes that the declining number of southern conservative Democrats created strains in Congress that "eventually were resolved as the Democrats changed how they organized the House for business." Wright (2000, 219) notes that the "prevailing explanation" for the 1970s reforms is the "public policy demands from liberal Democrats."¹ As party voting increased in the 1980s and 1990s, many scholars came to see reform as fundamentally a Democratic party matter.²

A closer examination of the reform period suggests this view is too limited. Two other groups in particular played key roles in formulating and supporting specific changes. The first was Republicans, who saw reform as a means to empower their members. This Republican support has not always been noted or appreciated. The second important group was junior members, who lacked access to bases of institutional power. The distinctive interests of junior members have received little theoretical attention, yet their battles with senior members who had long dominated key power bases had substantial consequences for the content of reform. Extant theoretical models have highlighted how institutions can serve the electoral interests of all members (Mayhew 1974; Weingast and Marshall 1988), the partisan interests of majority party members (Cox and McCubbins 1993; Rohde 1991), or the policy interests of an ideological faction or of the median voter (Krehbiel 1991; Remington and Smith 1998; Rohde 1991; Schickler 2000). We suggest, however, that power-base dynamics provide another consideration for

legislators—one potentially commensurate with policy or party—and thus add a significant cross-current to legislative organization.

We are by no means the first to argue that junior members and Republicans helped produce these reforms. Initial accounts of the reform movement emphasized that Republicans were an important constituency for reform (see, for example, Bibby and Davidson 1972 and Davidson 1980a). These accounts also cited the importance of the junior-senior cleavage (Davidson 1980a; Davidson and Oleszek 1977; Hinckley 1976; Malbin 1975). Although these works noted the role of liberal Democrats' policy and partisan goals (e.g., Davidson 1980a), they did not disentangle the contributions of seniority, ideology, and party. Therefore, while some political scientists have long believed that each of these factors played some role in the reform movement, the factors' relative importance has not been assessed empirically.

We also are not the first to argue that multiple motivations explain institutional reform (see, for instance, Schickler 2001 and Smith and Remington 2001). Nevertheless, systematic investigation of the goals underlying the 1970s reforms provides new insights. First, the consistent effects of seniority suggest that more theoretical attention ought to be given to the junior-senior cleavage; we take up this issue in the conclusion. Second, we find that the coalitions supporting seniority, sunshine, and committee reform were quite similar in the House and the Senate. Indeed, we argue that the consistent pattern of results across chambers supports the hypothesis that changes in the electoral system as a whole undergirded the reform movement. Our focus on multiple interests helps to generate a synthesis that incorporates the changes in both chambers: a coalition of juniors, liberals, and (often) Republicans drove both chambers to adopt a range of reforms that empowered rank-and-file members against traditional seniority leaders. Unlike their counterparts in the Senate, however, House Democrats adopted a series of additional changes that also empowered party leaders against the committee chairs. As Democrats became increasingly homogeneous in the 1980s (see Rohde 1991), party leaders exercised their new prerogatives more aggressively and the party-building changes of the 1970s assumed increasing importance. Such party-strengthening changes as the development of restrictive rules eventually allowed Democratic leaders to gain a measure of control over the unwieldy process created by the decentralizing reforms put forward by juniors, liberals, and Republicans. A full understanding of the reform movement requires attention to the dynamics common to the two chambers, the distinctive party-building track in the House, and the interaction between decentralization and party-building.

Our analysis draws on previously untapped quantitative data, including cosponsorship behavior and roll-call votes as well as data from two more unorthodox sources: a December 1972 survey of members conducted by Common Cause, and an unofficial tally of a key reform vote in the Senate Republican Conference. The Common Cause survey comes from the organization's archives at Princeton University and was a product of the group's "Open up the System" campaign of the time. We discuss the survey methods and response rate in greater detail in the Appendix, but it is worth noting here that Common Cause sent the survey to all newly or reelected members of Congress shortly after the 1972 elections and that organization members were instructed to follow up with individual senators and representatives who did not initially respond.³ We found the GOP conference vote tally while reviewing coverage of the seniority changes in *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* (1973a).

Few studies have brought such quantitative data to bear on the forces behind specific reforms. Those that have done so focus on a single reform in one chamber, rather than drawing comparisons across reforms and between the House and the Senate (see Adler 1999 and Ornstein and Rohde 1974, for example). The primary reason for the paucity of quantitative analyses is that much of the action took place in party caucuses, which did not make members' votes public. By drawing on a diverse array of data, we are able to provide the first systematic evidence of the forces behind the reform movement.⁴

This evidence demonstrates that liberal ideology mattered in the House, as Rohde argues, as well as in the Senate. Junior members' power goals, however, also had a consistent and substantial impact on support for reform in both chambers. On the whole, our findings suggest that seniority played a role roughly equal to that of liberal ideology. In both the House and the Senate, liberals and junior members were the primary constituencies for reform.⁵ Furthermore, we find that, when one controls for ideology, Republicans tended to support reforms more strongly than did Democrats. This result is not simply an artifact of the collinearity between party and ideology; the two forces worked in opposite directions in several important cases. Our analysis thus provides quantitative support for the initial notion that liberals, junior members, and Republicans were each significant constituencies for reform, and it challenges the emergent conventional wisdom that the reform movement was fundamentally a Democratic phenomenon.

The 1970s Reforms

The reform era of the 1970s encompassed a broad array of changes intended to transform congressional operations. We focus on changes that fall into three broad categories: seniority, sunshine, and committee reform. Both the House and the Senate curbed seniority and increased sunshine, thereby making deliberations more transparent. Committee reform, by contrast, took different paths in each chamber. House Democrats empowered subcommittees but rejected a major effort to reorganize committee jurisdictions and procedures, whereas the Senate opted for a somewhat different approach, allocating committee staff to individual members and streamlining the committee system via the Stevenson reforms.

For each institutional change, we analyze the most direct indicators of support for reform. Reform meant many things in Congress in the 1970s, so no single roll-call vote or survey item can capture it entirely. To paint an accurate portrait, our measures range as widely as possible while still remaining true to the original concept. The result is a large number of dependent variables that are each meant to capture the same underlying construct.

Seniority

The first major changes in the seniority system were adopted on January 21, 1971. House Democrats changed party rules to specify that the Democratic Committee on Committees could nominate committee chairs by relying on criteria other than seniority; party rules were also amended to allow any ten party members to demand a caucus vote on an individual nomination. Acting that same day, House Republicans voted to allow their Committee on Committees to use criteria other than seniority to select ranking committee members. These new rules also specified that each nominee for ranking member would be subject to a secret ballot vote in the GOP conference. Two years later, the Democrats expanded their reforms, providing for an automatic caucus vote on each chair and specifying that the vote would be by secret ballot if one-fifth of the membership so requested. Finally, in January 1975 came the most dramatic challenge to seniority: Democrats voted to overthrow three senior chairs and replace them with more junior committee members (Crook and Hibbing 1985; Hinckley 1976).

Since all of these activities occurred in party caucuses, the Common Cause survey provides the first available direct indicator of support for changes in seniority. Common Cause asked members, "Will

you support in your party caucus an end to the seniority system by requiring an automatic, public vote on each individual committee chairmanship?" and invited responses of "yes," "no," or "undecided." One hundred forty-seven members answered "yes," and 54 members answered "no." Fifty-six members volunteered that they supported secret ballot votes on chairs, rather than public votes. We coded such responses as "yes." In addition, 143 members did not respond (see the Appendix for details on the coding).⁶

Although Senate Democrats and Republicans did not overthrow any sitting chairs or ranking members, they too served notice that seniority was no longer "automatic." In 1973, Senate Republicans adopted a rule allowing the Republicans on each committee to vote on their ranking member; the rule specifically freed members to rely on criteria other than seniority. Each ranking member was then subject to a recorded vote in the full conference. Senate Democrats also reformed their chair selection process in 1975, providing for a secret ballot vote on each chair if one-fifth of conference members requested it.

As in the House, the Senate seniority changes occurred in party conference meetings and were not subject to recorded votes. We found, however, several reasonable indicators of support for these changes. The clearest roll-call votes on seniority reform took place in 1970 during debate on the Legislative Reorganization Act. Charles Mathias (R-MD) sponsored an amendment specifying that the majority party would elect each chair and that this selection would not be by seniority alone. Robert Packwood (R-OR) sponsored a similar amendment, empowering the majority party members on each committee to elect that committee's chair. The Mathias amendment was defeated 44 to 23 and the Packwood amendment 46 to 22.⁷ Floor debate suggests that many members opposed the proposals, in part, because they believed that seniority reform should be left up to the party conferences rather than the full chamber. Nonetheless, we examined these roll calls. A better and timelier indicator of Republicans' support for seniority reform is available from *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* (1973). As noted above, the GOP conference voted on January 9, 1973, to make ranking committee members subject to election by committee Republicans and then ratification by the full conference. Opponents of the reform sponsored a motion to recommit (and thus kill) the proposal, but this motion failed on a 20–16 vote. Although conference votes are generally not made public, *CQWR* reported, and we analyze, an "unofficial tally" of how each senator voted on recommitment.

Sunshine

The reform movement also sought to open up congressional deliberations to increased public scrutiny. The first key victory for this sunshine movement occurred in 1970, when the House ended secret votes on floor amendments. The “recorded teller rule” enabled 20 members to force a recorded vote on any floor amendment. This rule was the most important modification promoted by a bipartisan coalition seeking to strengthen the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970; indeed, the recorded teller change is generally regarded as the LRA’s premier legacy (see, for example, Kravitz 1990). Since the recorded teller amendment passed on a voice vote (senior members dropped their opposition when its passage appeared certain), there are no roll-call data on its approval. Cosponsorship of the amendment provides a reasonable proxy measure, however (182 members were cosponsors). We also examine a 1974 roll call on a proposal to scale back the recorded teller change. Facing numerous embarrassing amendments from Republicans, beleaguered Democratic leaders tried to increase the number of members required to generate a recorded vote on an amendment from 20 to 40. This effort to scale back the earlier reform was tabled (and thus killed) in a 252–146 vote.⁸

We also examine the March 1973 vote by the House to require all committee meetings to be held in public (a committee could vote to close a meeting, but only under limited circumstances). Common Cause asked members their position on committee openness: “Will you vote in your party caucus to require all Congressional committees to vote and meet in open session except in cases of national security and personal privacy?” Interestingly, the March 1973 House roll-call vote on open meetings was more lopsided than the survey response, suggesting that many members dropped their opposition when the popular reform became inevitable.⁹ Thus, the Common Cause item arguably provides a better measure of support for open meetings than does the roll call. Nonetheless, we examine both dependent variables.

The Senate narrowly rejected similar open committee rules later in 1973, only to embrace them in 1975. In March 1973, the Senate voted (47–38) to reject a proposal sponsored by William Roth (R-DE) that would have required a public vote by a committee before it could close a meeting. Two years later, following the successful Ervin committee hearings on Watergate, Roth’s proposal was adopted unanimously. The one contested vote concerned a Rules Committee substitute that would have allowed individual committees to set their own open meeting policies. The substitute was rejected by a healthy 77–16 margin. This

second roll call supplements the more closely contested 1973 vote. In addition, we examine cosponsorship of the open meetings resolution in 1975 and of a resolution to require open conference committee meetings, which was folded into the open meetings resolution that was eventually adopted.¹⁰ Thirty-six senators cosponsored the open meetings resolution and 22 cosponsored the conference meetings resolution.¹¹

Committee Reform

A third major thrust of the reform movement was committee reorganization. In the House, the bipartisan Select Committee on Committees (also known as the Bolling Committee, after its leader, Democrat Richard Bolling of Missouri) failed in its bold effort to revamp committee jurisdictions and procedures.¹² The Democratic Caucus's Hansen Committee on Organization, Study, and Review put forward a much less ambitious alternative that did little to modify jurisdictions or committee procedures but did expand committee staffing and empower the Speaker to refer bills to multiple committees.¹³ In October 1974, the House voted 203 to 165 to substitute the Hansen Committee proposal for the Bolling plan. We analyze the vote on this substitution, coding a pro-Bolling vote as pro-reform and a pro-Hansen vote as antireform.¹⁴

The effort for committee reorganization was more successful in the Senate. The Stevenson Committee reforms of 1977 created a new Energy Committee, eliminated three minor committees, rearranged the jurisdictions of several others, restricted the number of committees and subcommittees on which a member could serve, and limited the number of chairs a member could hold (Davidson 1980b). The new rules also mandated staff allocations in proportion to the size of each party's committee delegation and specifically guaranteed the minority party at least one-third of staff funds on each committee. We first analyze cosponsorship of the resolution to create the Stevenson Committee itself. This analysis helps illuminate the origins of the reform effort. Second, we analyze the votes on those amendments that primarily concerned internal power distribution.¹⁵ One amendment, sponsored by Dick Clark (D-IA), forbade full committee chairs from heading more than two subcommittees; the amendment passed on a voice vote, but only after a 47–42 vote to defeat a motion to table. We analyze the motion to table. We also examine two amendments that were defeated but that targeted committee leaders: a Clark amendment to require committees to establish legislative subcommittees (tabled 63–20)¹⁶ and an amendment by Gaylord Nelson (D-WI) to require the rotation of committee chairs (tabled 62–26). The Stevenson reforms were ultimately approved, 89–1.

Committee revamping in the Senate also entailed a 1975 change granting each individual senator three staff assistants who would help with committee work. Prior to 1975, committee chairs and ranking minority members controlled the lion's share of committee staff. The 1975 staffing change was also the subject of several roll-call votes. The first key vote concerned Rules and Administration Committee Chairman Howard Cannon's (D-NV) motion to table the staffing resolution. This bid to kill the reform was rejected (55–40), paving the way for passage. A second key vote concerned an amendment sponsored by Alan Cranston (D-CA) and William Brock (R-TN) to provide even more funding for staffing than allotted by the original proposal by Mike Gravel (D-AK). This amendment was narrowly rejected, 49–47. The Senate then approved the resolution on a 63–35 vote.

To sum up, we examine the following indicators of support for reform in the **House**:

Seniority

1. The Common Cause survey item on seniority

Sunshine

2. Cosponsorship of the recorded teller amendment in 1970
3. The 1974 roll call on raising the threshold required for a recorded vote
4. The Common Cause survey item on open committees
5. The 1973 roll call on final passage of open committee meetings

Committee Reforms

6. The 1974 roll call on substituting the Hansen resolution for the Bolling committee reorganization proposal

In the **Senate**, we analyze:

Seniority

1. The Mathias antiseniority amendment of 1970
2. The Packwood antiseniority amendment of 1970
3. Republicans' votes on the change in party rules concerning seniority in 1973

Sunshine

4. The 1973 roll call on open committee meetings (the Roth Amendment)
5. The 1975 roll call on open committee meetings (the Rules Committee substitute)
6. Cosponsorship of the open meetings resolution, 1975
7. Cosponsorship of the open conference committees resolution, 1975

Committees: Stevenson Reforms

8. Cosponsorship of the resolution to create the Stevenson Committee, 1975
9. The 1977 roll call on tabling Clark's amendment limiting the number of chairs that members could hold
10. The 1977 roll call on tabling the Clark amendment requiring legislative subcommittees
11. The 1977 roll call on tabling the Nelson amendment for rotation of committee chairs

Committees: Staffing

12. The 1975 roll call on tabling the Gravel staffing resolution
13. The 1975 roll call on passage of the Gravel resolution
14. The 1975 roll call on the Cranston-Brock staffing amendment

Our analysis does *not* subsume all of the diverse institutional changes adopted in the 1970s. We do not examine the Democrats' subcommittee bill of rights because there are no data on support for that reform.¹⁷ We also do not analyze House Democrats' party-building reforms (except insofar as the attack on seniority can be viewed as a party-building change). Again, the reason is a lack of data. In the discussion section, however, we consider how these party-building changes relate to the reforms we examine.¹⁸ Finally, we do not examine those innovations that were primarily inspired by legislative-executive conflict, such as the Budget Act of 1974 and the War Powers Resolution. Although important, these changes were qualitatively different from reforms that primarily targeted internal power relations (see Fisher 1995 and Wander 1984).¹⁹ Nonetheless, we do examine the available indicators of support for reform in each of the remaining areas, which together constitute the lion's share of the period's changes. We believe this varied assortment of indicators provides a rich representation of reform.

Hypotheses

The literature on the reform movement generates three main hypotheses concerning changes in the seniority rule, sunshine rules, staffing, and committee reorganization.

Hypothesis 1: Liberals were more likely to support reform than were conservatives.

Each of these reforms attacked entrenched committee leaders, who tended to be conservative southerners (Rohde 1991; Sinclair 1989). This hypothesis obviously applies to the seniority rule, but it applies to

the sunshine reforms as well. Members believed that committee chairs gained power from secrecy: when voting behavior was hidden, constituent pressures were weaker, which in turn helped committee leaders pressure liberal members to buck constituent sentiment (Kravitz 1990; Zelizer 2000).²⁰ The Senate committee reorganization and staffing changes also might have benefited liberals: each undermined the place of chairs, in the reorganization case by limiting the number of committee leadership positions that chairs could hold and in the staffing case by dispersing control over resources. Conservative committee leaders became increasingly vulnerable to such liberal attacks in the late 1960s and 1970s, as the number of southern Democrats declined in the aftermath of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Rohde 1991; Zelizer 1999).

We rely primarily on first-dimension D-NOMINATE scores to measure ideology (Poole and Rosenthal 1997). First-dimension scores are generally thought to measure an economic left-right continuum. Negative scores indicate liberal policy views.²¹ Because of the high correlation between party and ideology (generally in the .70 range), we also analyze each dependent variable separately for Republicans and Democrats.

Hypothesis 2: Democrats were more likely to support reform than were Republicans.

Scholars have not only emphasized that reformers were liberals but also that they were Democrats (Rohde 1991; Sheppard 1985). Although the correlation between ideology and party makes disentangling these effects somewhat difficult, party remains a potentially distinct independent variable. Since all majority party Democrats share a common party label and thus may benefit from rules that foster effective party government (Cox and McCubbins 1993), Democrats could have been a particularly important constituency for reforms. An alternative hypothesis comes from Ornstein and Rohde (1978, 282–83): as an “embattled minority,” Republicans may have benefited from changes that promised to spread influence and to make the legislative process more “unwieldy and unpredictable” for the majority party (see also Bibby and Davidson 1972). Nevertheless, the prevailing view currently is that Democrats were the primary constituency for reform (Cox and McCubbins 1993, 278; Polsby 1986; Rohde 1991; Wright 2000, 219). We measure party with a dummy variable for Democrats.

Hypothesis 3: Junior members were more likely to support reform than were senior members.

In a sense, junior members had a stake in reform for the same reason as liberals: committee chairs frustrated their ambitions. One possibility is that the junior-senior cleavage was simply (or at least

mostly) a reflection of a deeper ideological struggle. But there are reasons to believe junior status exerted a significant, independent effect. Junior members entered a Congress where seniority brought numerous perquisites, including committee chairs, ranking member positions, and staff resources. By reducing reliance on seniority in selecting committee leaders, undermining chairs, and dispersing staff resources, juniors could enhance their power. All juniors would benefit from an authority structure that depended less on seniority.

Considerable qualitative evidence suggests that junior members' power-base interests motivated these reforms, as reformers repeatedly emphasized the need to redistribute power to newer members. For example, Republican reformer Charles Whalen (1982, 22) of Ohio observed, "for junior members, procedural revamping offered the opportunity to...construct a leadership bus with more seats."²² In the Senate, Adlai Stevenson (D-IL) characterized the battle over reform as "a contest of power. . . . The juniors are no longer on their knees. We're not asking, we're demanding. We're organizing and using power" (*Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* 1975b, 2717). Packwood echoed these thoughts during the staffing fight, declaring, "this is a battle between the haves and the have-nots" (*Congressional Record* 1975, 17860) and adding that junior senators simply wanted "an equal shot with the senior senators" (*Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* 1975a, 1236). It is noteworthy that junior senators crossed party lines to push reform. In 1972, Republican Mathias and Democrat Stevenson chaired informal hearings that highlighted the need for seniority and sunshine reforms (*Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* 1973b, 501–04). A few years later, juniors organized a bipartisan group of senators elected since 1968. Co-chaired by Republican William Brock and Democrat Lloyd Bentsen (TX), the group pushed for the 1975 staffing change and the Stevenson committee reforms (Malbin 1975). For quantitative analysis, we operationalize seniority as the number of continuous two-year terms of service in the chamber.

Results

House

Table 1 describes each dependent variable for the House and includes the distribution of support overall and within each party. Interestingly, the effect of party at this bivariate level is mixed. Democrats were slightly more likely than Republicans to cosponsor the 1970 recorded teller change and to support open committees in the Common Cause survey, but slightly less likely to support seniority reform

TABLE 1
Reform Vote Outcomes in House

Vote	Year	Content of Measure or Text of Survey Question	Distribution of Support (yea-nay) or (cosponsor-no cosponsor)		Outcome of Vote	
			Overall	Republicans		
Common Cause Survey						
Seniority Question	1972	“Will you support in your party caucus an end to the seniority system by requiring an automatic, public vote on each individual committee chairmanship?”	203–53	105–43	98–10	pro-reform
Open Committees Question	1972	“Will you vote in your party caucus to require all Congressional committees to vote and meet in open session except in cases of national security and personal privacy?”	236–42	146–16	90–26	pro-reform
Roll-Call Votes/Cosponsorships						
Cosponsorship of LRA Recorded Teller Reform	1970	Cosponsorship of proposal to set at 20 the number of votes required to establish a recorded vote on an vote on an amendment	182–248	109–133	73–115	n/a
Roll Call to Table Recorded Teller Change	1974	Kill proposal to increase from 20 to 40 the number of votes required to force a recorded vote on an amendment	252–146	95–128	157–18	pro-reform
Roll Call for Open Committee Reform	1973	Actual roll-call vote to open committee sessions to public	371–27	198–18	173–9	pro-reform
Roll Call on Hansen substitute for Bolling reform	1974	Substituted weaker Hansen reforms for stronger Bolling plan	203–165	152–64	51–101	antireform

Note: We did not include nonresponses for the Common Cause Survey items. On the seniority question, there were 71 nonresponses from Democrats and 72 from Republicans. On the open committees question, there were 70 nonresponses from Democrats and 68 from Republicans. See Table A1 for an analysis of these items with nonresponses included.

TABLE 2
Logit Analyses of 1970s House Reforms

	Common Cause Survey Items			Roll-Call Votes		
	Cosponsorship of RTA	Seniority	Open Committees	Open Committees	Tabling RTA Rollback	Hansen Substitute
Number of Terms	-.15* (.03)	-.11* (.03)	-.09* (.03)	-.01 (.01)	-.12* (.03)	-.07* (.03)
NOMINATE-1	-.32* (.02)	-.26* (.07)	-.14* (.05)	-.16* (.03)	.02 (.03)	-.17* (.03)
Democrat	-.49* (.08)	-.34* (.07)	.02 (.05)	-.08* (.03)	-.41* (.06)	-.57* (.06)
2 × Log-likelihood	431.0	192.1	194.4	135.0	402.1	427.4
χ^2	154.9*	69.0*	41.7*	62.4*	121.1*	77.2*
P.R.E.	.41	.37	.24	.37	.36	.25
% correctly predicted	76.7	85.2	84.5	93.5	75.1	69.2
N	432	256	278	398	398	367
Δ prob ($M_{rep} - M_{dem}$)	-.21* (.05)	.09* (.05)	-.20* (.05)	-.01 (.01)	.44* (.04)	.34* (.05)

Notes: Table entries are the effect of each variable on the probability of support for reform, with standard errors in parentheses. Dependent variables are coded so that 1 is a pro-reform vote and 0 is an antireform vote. For number of terms and NOMINATE-1, table entries represent the effect of a one-standard-deviation increase from the variable's mean on the predicted probability of a "pro-reform" position, with all other variables held at their sample means. For party, the first difference represents the effect of a change from Republican to Democrat, with all other variables held at their sample means. The last row of the table presents the change in probability of a pro-reform position when moving from the median Democrat to the median Republican, with seniority held at its sample mean. * $p < .05$ (two-tailed).

and to vote for passage of the open committees change. Meanwhile, Republicans were far more likely than Democrats to oppose the attempted increase in the threshold for recorded teller votes, although this should not be surprising since Democratic leaders sponsored this bid to roll back the 1970 reform.²³ Similarly, Republicans were more likely to favor the Bolling plan over the Hansen substitute, which, after all, had been framed by a Democratic Caucus committee.

Table 2 contains predicted probabilities derived from logit models of these same House votes.²⁴ We model each dependent variable as a function of seniority, ideology, and party. The table entries represent

the effect of each variable on the predicted probability of support for reform. Specifically, these entries capture the effect of a one-standard-deviation shift in seniority and ideology, as well as a shift from Republican to Democrat, with all other variables held at their means.

The results make two main points. First, the contribution of seniority and ideology is consistent across dependent variables. Both variables have a statistically significant impact in nearly every case. The signs are also in the expected direction: greater conservatism and a longer tenure in the House each made a member less likely to support reform. Excepting one instance in which ideology has a weak effect, the probability of supporting reform drops at least .14 for a one-standard-deviation shift to the right. Also ignoring seniority's single anomalous result (the highly lopsided roll call on open committees), we find that a one-standard-deviation increase in terms served has a slightly weaker but still notable effect on the remaining five dependent variables.

Second, party itself has an unexpected effect. The effect is strongly significant and quite large, but its generally negative sign suggests that, controlling for seniority and ideology, Democrats were *less* likely than Republicans to support reform. This result runs counter to many accounts of this period.²⁵ Nevertheless, it is consistent with the Ornstein and Rohde (1978) hypothesis described earlier. The substantive magnitude of partisanship is somewhat variable. It is weak for the open committee survey item (.02) and roll-call vote (-.08) but is much stronger for the seniority survey question (-.34), second recorded teller vote (-.41), and Hansen substitute (-.57). These estimates are not necessarily comparable to those for seniority and ideology, however, because a change from Republican to Democrat is roughly two standard deviations on the party variable. If anything, these estimates overstate the strength of the party effect.

Indeed, in interpreting the coefficients, it is important to keep in mind that ideology and party typically work in opposing directions.²⁶ Republicans and liberals were more likely to support reform than were Democrats and conservatives but, of course, most liberals were Democrats and most conservatives Republicans. Therefore, to determine the relative impact of party and ideology, it is helpful to examine the change in the probability of support for reform as a representative shifts from a liberal Democrat to a conservative Republican.

Toward this end, we compare the median Democrat (using first-dimension NOMINATE scores) to the median Republican, holding seniority at its mean.²⁷ These estimates, presented at the bottom of Table 2, show that liberal Democrats were more pro-reform than conservative Republicans in just three of six cases: cosponsorship of the recorded teller amendment,

the open committees survey item, and the roll-call vote on open committees (although the point estimate is quite small for this vote, $-.01$). In the remaining three cases—the Common Cause seniority item, the recorded teller rollback, and the Hansen substitute vote—conservative Republicans were actually more pro-reform than were liberal Democrats.

Overall, then, the effect of seniority is always in the expected direction and almost always meaningful. The relative size of the party and ideology effects, however, differ across these indicators. A critical question is whether or not the results are sensitive to alternative model specifications. The seniority and ideology effects are especially robust, but the effect of party is less so. We experimented with various versions of seniority—including dichotomous indicators with various cut-points as well as a logged terms measure—and obtained very similar results. Estimating the baseline model separately for each party produces coefficients for ideology and seniority that are almost always significant, in the predicted direction, and of roughly the same magnitude as the results in Table 2. Adding the second-dimension NOMINATE score to the model tends to reduce party to insignificance but continues to show significant estimates for seniority and liberalism. Substituting ADA scores and other alternative measures of ideology for first-dimension NOMINATE scores changes nothing at all.²⁸ Including a dummy variable for the South has little effect on the other coefficients, and the variable itself is significant only in the case of the open committees survey item (as one would expect, southerners tended to oppose open meetings).²⁹ Finally, the effect of seniority was strong even when we included dummies for committee chairs and ranking minority members; the dummies were generally small and insignificant. Apparently the seniority effect extended beyond the desire to retain a leadership position and included a member's desire to improve his or her place in the pecking order.³⁰

As a final robustness check, we incorporated nonresponses to the Common Cause survey. After all, one might argue that the refusal to respond indicated hostility to reform. Using multinomial logit, we once again found that juniors and liberals were the main constituencies for reform (see Table A1 for estimates). The estimates also indicated that those who did not respond were fairly similar to those who gave antireform responses. This finding led us to estimate our baseline logit model with the “no” and “no response” categories collapsed. The only change from Table 2 was that Democrats became significantly less likely to back the open committees reform than were Republicans, in contrast to the earlier null results. Considering “no responses” thus appears to strengthen the conclusion that junior members, liberals, and Republicans were each major constituencies for reform.

Senate

Table 3 presents a description of each indicator of reform support in the Senate. The breakdown by party demonstrates that, early on, roughly equal proportions of Republicans and Democrats supported these measures. The votes on seniority reform and open committees are particularly illustrative. Later, however, as the Senate considered the Stevenson and staffing reforms, the two parties diverged somewhat, with Republicans providing greater support for reform. For example, it was actually Republicans who defeated Cannon's motion to table the Gravel proposal for increased staffing; a slight majority of Democrats favored this attempt to kill staffing reform. As in the House, it appears that it was the minority party, if any, that leaned toward these institutional changes.

Table 4 presents the results from a series of logit analyses, where, for the sake of simplicity, the dependent variables are selected from the various indicators of support for reform outlined previously. This subset of models analyzes the most relevant indicators of support within each overall topic (seniority, open committees, staffing, and the Stevenson reforms).³¹ Moreover, the results are representative of the Senate findings overall. (See Table A2 in the Appendix for the results from the remaining indicators of reform.) As before, each model contains three independent variables: the number of terms a senator had served, the first-dimension NOMINATE score, and a dummy variable for party. The table entries again represent the effect of each variable on the predicted probability of support for reform.

Although the models are numerous, a strikingly consistent story emerges, one that suggests underpinnings of reform similar to those in the House. In Tables 4 and A2, seniority and ideology are each properly signed and significant for 13 of 14 indicators of reformism. As hypothesized, support for reform decreases as members become more senior and more conservative. In general, the effect of seniority is nearly equal to, and at times larger than, that of the first-dimension NOMINATE score. If one averages these changes in predicted probability across all 14 Senate models, then the results are nearly equivalent: .176 for seniority and .170 for ideology.

Just as noteworthy is the presence of the same party effect seen in the House. Party is statistically significant in 8 of 13 models, but its effect is contrary to the party hypothesis: after controlling for seniority and ideology, Democratic party membership is *negatively* associated with support for reform (see Tables 4 and A2). That is to say, Republicans were more likely to support reform, controlling for seniority and ideology.

TABLE 3
Reform Vote Outcomes in Senate

Vote	Year	Content of Measure	Distribution of Support (yea-nay) or (cosponsor-no cosponsor)		Outcome of Vote
			Overall	Democrats Republicans	
Seniority Reform					
Mathias Amendment	1970	majority party would elect each chair, with seniority not the only criterion	26-50	12-28 14-22	antireform
Packwood Amendment	1970	majority party members on a committee would elect chair	26-51	13-27 13-24	antireform
Motion to Recommit (Republican Caucus)	1973	kill proposal to make ranking members elected by committees	16-20	- 16-20	pro-reform
Open Committee Meetings					
Roth Amendment	1973	require a public vote to close committee meetings	44-53	25-29 19-23	antireform
Rules Committee substitute for Roth proposal	1975	allow committees to set open meetings policies	16-77	7-49 9-28	pro-reform
Cosponsorship of open committee meetings	1975	all committee meetings open to public	36-63	24-36 12-27	-
Cosponsorship of open conference committee meetings	1975	conference committee meetings open to public	22-77	14-46 8-31	-

(continued on next page)

TABLE 3
(continued)

Vote	Year	Content of Measure	Distribution of Support (yea-nay) or (cosponsor-no cosponsor)		Outcome of Vote
			Overall	Democrats / Republicans	
Staffing					
Cannon's motion to table Gravel proposal	1975	kill Gravel's staffing reform proposal	42-57	32-28 / 10-29	pro-reform
Cranston-Brock Amendment	1975	provide more funding for staff than Gravel proposal	48-50	21-38 / 27-12	antireform
Passage of Gravel proposal	1975	increased staffing	63-35	37-23 / 26-12	pro-reform
Stevenson Reforms					
Cosponsorship of resolution to create Stevenson Committee	1975	create Stevenson Committee	52-47	30-29 / 22-18	-
Table Clark Amendment	1977	kill proposal to bar chairs from heading more than 2 subcommittees	42-47	28-26 / 14-21	pro-reform
Table Nelson Amendment	1977	kill proposal to require rotation of chairs	63-27	36-20 / 27-7	antireform
Table Clark Amendment #2	1977	kill proposal to establish legislative subcommittees	63-20	34-19 / 29-1	antireform

TABLE 4
Logit Analyses of Selected Senate Votes on Reform

	Seniority		Open Committees		Staffing		Stevenson Reforms	
	Packwood Amendment (1970)	Motion to Recommit (Republicans, 1973)	Roth Amendment (1973)	Motion to Table Gravel Proposal	Cosponsor Resolution to Create Stevenson Committee	Vote on Tabling Clark Amendment		
Number of Terms	-.09* (.05)	-.33* (.10)	-.25* (.06)	-.19* (.06)	-.35* (.05)	-.26* (.06)		
NOMINATE-1	-.10* (.06)	-.12* (.06)	-.25* (.06)	-.22* (.08)	-.29* (.07)	-.26* (.07)		
Democrat	-.41* (.16)	-	-.47* (.16)	-.51* (.12)	-.50* (.17)	-.45* (.14)		
Log-likelihood	-21.1	-11.9	-32.3	-54.7	-41.9	-46.5		
χ^2	14.7*	9.1*	23.0*	17.1*	21.2*	15.5*		
Pseudo R ²	.57	.52	.51	.19	.40	.25		
% correctly predicted	89.6	86.1	82.3	71.7	81.8	76.4		
N	77	36	96	99	101	89		
Δ prob ($M_{rep} - M_{dem}$)	-.13 (.09)	-	-.35* (.13)	.24* (.11)	-.07 (.13)	.04 (.13)		

Notes: Table entries are the effect of each variable on the probability of support for reform, with standard errors in parentheses. Dependent variables are coded so that 1 is a pro-reform vote and 0 is an anti-reform vote. For number of terms and NOMINATE-1, table entries represent the effect of a one-standard-deviation increase from the variable's mean on the predicted probability of a "pro-reform" position, with all other variables held at their sample means. For party, the first difference represents the effect of a change from Republican to Democrat, with all other variables held at their sample means. The last row of the table presents the change in probability of a pro-reform position when moving from the median Democrat to the median Republican, with seniority held at its sample mean.

* $p < .05$ (two-tailed).

The effect of party, when significant, is also sizable but, as noted above, it cannot be compared directly with that of seniority or ideology. As illustrated in Table 3, the bivariate relationship between party and support for several of the reforms suggests that this unexpected effect is not an artifact of the collinearity between party and ideology.

Since the ideology and party effects tend to work in opposite directions, we once again compare liberal Democrats (i.e., the median Democrat) to conservative Republicans (i.e., the median Republican). These results, presented at the bottom of Tables 4 and A2, indicate that the ideology effect was generally stronger than the party effect. Thus, liberal Democrats were more likely than conservative Republicans to back seniority reform, open committee meetings, and the Stevenson reforms. The main exception was staffing, which conservative Republicans were more supportive of than were liberal Democrats. This disparity makes sense given Republicans' longstanding complaints about their party's lack of committee staff.³²

Discussion

Our findings strongly indicate that junior members' power goals and liberals' policy interests each contributed to the congressional reforms of the 1970s. Seniority and ideology were both significantly associated with nearly every indicator of reform in both houses. In many cases, Republicans' partisan interests also contributed to the reform cause but, on the whole, party was less important than ideology or seniority. Junior members and liberals—regardless of party—promoted seniority, sunshine, and committee reforms.

These results provide the first extensive quantitative evidence on the sources of the 1970s reforms. We confirm Rohde's (1991) hypothesis that liberals played a critical role in driving the reform movement in the House. Our account demonstrates that the reform movement was not simply a Democratic party phenomenon, however. Liberal Democrats played a critical role, but Republicans and junior members also provided important support for sunshine rules, seniority reform, and committee reorganization.³³ The junior-senior and liberal-conservative cleavages transcended party, shaping reform battles in both the House and Senate.

One possible objection to this conclusion is that, regardless of who supported reform, liberal Democrats played a bigger role in *initiating* the various changes than did Republicans. It is true that the liberal Democratic Study Group (DSG) played a critical role across the entire range of House reforms. Nevertheless, Republicans, and junior Republicans in particular, promulgated several key reforms. For example,

the amendments strengthening the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 emanated from a series of meetings between the DSG and a group of junior House Republicans led by Barber Conable of New York and William Steiger of Wisconsin (*National Journal*, 25 July 1970, 1607–14).³⁴ Republicans Conable, Steiger, and Pete McCloskey (CA) were also early advocates of seniority reform (Bibby and Davidson 1972, 175). Similarly, Senate Republicans Packwood and Mathias were among the first to propose seniority reform, Republican Roth was arguably the leading Senate sponsor of open committees, and Republican Brock worked closely with Stevenson in initiating the 1977 committee reorganization.

Our evidence that seniority and liberalism each mattered raises two important questions. First, when will junior members' power interests generate reform? A hypothesis that emerges from Diermeier's (1995) model of deference to committees is that a sudden influx of junior members can produce major institutional change (see also Ainsworth and Sened 1998). According to Diermeier, a dramatic change in the seniority distribution can unravel norms of deference to committees that had previously been sustained by a delicate balance across overlapping generations of members.

The evidence concerning this hypothesis is mixed at best. An examination of the percentage of first-year members in Congress during the 1970s suggests that rising Senate turnover did correspond, at least roughly, with the reform movement. Whereas new members averaged just under 10% of the Senate in the 1960s, they averaged almost 14% in the 1970s. Turnover was particularly high in the 95th Congress of 1977–79 (17% were new members), when the Stevenson reforms were adopted. Turnover was not especially high in the 94th Congress (9%), however, when the Senate staffing change of 1975 was adopted, and turnover actually peaked in the 1979–82 period, *after* the reform era had ended.³⁵ In the House, the share of new members in the 1970s was about the same as in the 1960s. Turnover did spike in 1975—the same year that Democrats unseated three senior chairs—but the reforms of 1970 through 1974 took place amid turnover levels comparable to those of the 1950s and 1960s.³⁶

An alternative explanation comes from Sinclair's (1989) work on the Senate. Sinclair argues that three sets of changes in the 1960s and early 1970s—the rising number and diversity of interest groups active in Washington, the decline of parties, and the increased importance of national media—combined to transform the incentives facing individual senators. The new environment rewarded senators for broad involvement across issues and arenas. For junior senators, this activism required

institutional changes that gave them more resources and internal influence. Since House members confronted similar changes in their electoral environment, this explanation could also apply to the House. Indeed, one benefit of simultaneously analyzing the House and Senate reforms is that the similar pattern of results suggests we look for broader underlying explanations that would have applied to both chambers, rather than focusing on merely intra-institutional variables.

More generally, Sinclair's argument suggests that an electoral environment that rewards individual activism will encourage changes that disperse power to junior members. Since this hypothesis was derived from events of the 1960s and 1970s, assessing its validity requires a broader time frame. The next step, therefore, is to identify institutional changes that either concentrated or dispersed resources along seniority lines and then to assess whether or not these changes map onto changes in the electoral environment, such as the rise of the Australian ballot, direct primaries, and candidate-centered elections.³⁷ The strong evidence that seniority, along with liberal ideology, played a leading role in the 1970s reform movement thus suggests the need for more empirical research and theoretical work on generational conflict in legislatures.

The second question is how our results—the role of both liberalism and seniority, as well as the support of Republicans for many reforms—affect how we understand the reforms of this era. Increasingly, the common view of the 1970s is that this period facilitated the revival of party government in Congress. There is considerable merit to this view. Liberal reformers attacked conservative committee leaders in order to dislodge an impediment to Democratic party programs.

Our evidence suggests that this interpretation is incomplete, however. The sunshine, seniority, and subcommittee reforms attracted Republicans and junior members in both parties who sought to fragment power. Thus, reform not only helped liberals fight conservative chairs, it also created new opportunities for both Republicans and junior members. These centrifugal pressures did not necessarily complement another aspect of liberals' agenda: strengthening party leaders to help pass ambitious domestic programs. Instead, Democratic leaders actually confronted a more treacherous legislative environment. House Republicans became adept at using floor amendments to force Democrats to take public positions on controversial issues—often overwhelming the efforts of inexperienced subcommittee chairs to manage their bills on the floor (Bach and Smith 1988). The House became “a more unwieldy place than it used to be” (Congressional Quarterly 1980, 873; see also Cohen 1979). Thus, Speaker Tip O'Neill wondered aloud in 1980 whether “we put power into the hands of too many? You now have 158

House committees and subcommittees, each with a chairman. . . . People are saying, ‘We’ve gone too far; let’s retrench’” (*US News and World Report* 1980, 24).

House Democrats did adopt several countervailing changes in the mid- to late 1970s that strengthened their leaders’ control of floor deliberations and committee assignments. Party members voted to shift power over committee assignments from the Democrats on the Ways and Means Committee to a Steering and Policy Committee that included several leadership representatives; they also gave the Speaker direct control over nominations to the Rules Committee. Lack of data precludes analyzing these changes quantitatively, but prior research shows that the partisan goals of liberal and moderate Democrats played a critical role (see, for example, Rohde 1991).³⁸ Although Democratic leaders did not immediately take full advantage of their new powers, they adopted a more aggressive and effective stance in the mid-1980s, using restrictive rules and other tools to control the House agenda (Davidson 1992; Rohde 1991).

This interplay between centrifugal and centripetal changes—that is, between reforms that privileged individual members and reforms that privileged party leaders—becomes clearer when one takes account of multiple member interests. The case of restrictive rules is particularly illustrative. The recorded teller rule of 1970 had been a product of juniors’, liberals’, and Republicans’ (temporary) shared interest in facilitating floor challenges to committee decisions. But Republicans used the new rule to promote politically damaging amendments, which provoked Democrats to adopt more and more restrictive special rules in the 1980s (Smith 1989). This Democratic response—made possible by the 1974 decision to allow the Speaker to appoint the Democrats on the Rules Committee—is rightly taken as a sign of reviving party strength. Under the new system, however, party leaders must deploy considerable resources to ensure floor passage of each *individual* special rule. This cost enmeshes the leaders in recurrent political battles that would have been less necessary if not for the earlier change providing for recorded teller votes. Thus, the important party-building reforms of the 1970s and 1980s have operated in a challenging context created, in part, by the decentralizing reforms put forward by juniors, liberals, and Republicans.

Senators also acknowledged that the 1970s reforms had fragmented power excessively, but they proved less willing to empower party leaders³⁹ (Sinclair 1989). It is fair to conclude that the Senate reforms fostered an individualistic, entrepreneurial authority structure, whereas House institutions developed through a more complicated

intermingling of partisan and power-base interests. Therefore, our findings reinforce earlier accounts that portrayed the 1970s reforms as having important decentralizing effects. The results also caution against the recent tendency to view the reform era as paving the way for party government. The reforms of the 1970s empowered both rank-and-file members and party leaders, creating a partially contradictory combination of institutions.

The more general lesson from the 1970s reforms is that major institutional changes tend to derive from multiple, distinct member interests, rather than any single interest such as party, ideology, or personal power. Indeed, a close analysis of congressional history suggests that institutional change typically occurs through a confluence of multiple, potentially competing interests (see Schickler 2001). This confluence explains both individual changes and sequences of development over time. As was true in the 1970s, the resulting institutions are not coherent wholes but rather historical composites full of tensions and contradictions.

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APPENDIX: THE COMMON CAUSE SURVEY

Common Cause conducted a survey of reelected and newly elected members of Congress following the November 1972 elections. The group used its extensive network of volunteers to attempt to reach all representatives and senators. A total of 307 representatives responded to at least one question on the survey. Of these respondents, 181 were Democrats and 126 were Republicans (the response rates were 75% for Democrats and 66% for Republicans). In the Senate, only 24 members responded, making statistical analysis infeasible.

As mentioned in the text, some members volunteered responses to the seniority question. First, 41 members specified that they favored an automatic but secret vote on chairs. Common Cause preferred a public vote, but many reformers believed that it would be easier to oppose committee leaders if votes were by secret ballot (which was the method chosen by Democrats at their 1973 caucus). Therefore, we code either a "Yes" or a "Yes, secret ballot" response as pro-reform. Second, 15 Republicans gave a slightly different response, claiming to support an automatic vote for chairs but using the method adopted by the GOP conference in 1971. The GOP method involved an automatic, secret ballot vote on each ranking member nominated by the party's Committee

on Committees. Thus, this response is essentially identical to the “Yes, secret ballot” response given by Democrats. We therefore also coded this as pro-reform.

To assess the validity of coding the pro-secret ballot responses as pro-reform, we performed a multinomial logit analysis treating the public vote and secret ballot responses as separate categories. We also treated the decision not to respond to the survey as a separate category and assessed the dynamics of such nonresponses. Since nonresponse was also an issue for the Common Cause open committee item, we estimated models for both dependent variables. Table A1 presents these results. A response of “no” (antireform) is the baseline category. The basic findings remain unchanged: juniors and liberals were pro-reform, and seniors and conservatives opposed reform. Republicans were more likely to support reform than Democrats in the seniority case, but the parties were indistinguishable in the open committees case. For the seniority item, the coefficients for the “secret ballot vote” response were similar to the coefficients for the “public vote” response. The members who did not respond to the survey appear to have been more senior and conservative than members who gave pro-reform answers but were a bit more junior than were members who gave antireform responses.

TABLE A1
Multinomial Logit Analyses of Common Cause Open Committee
and Seniority Responses

	Open Committee Survey Item			Seniority Survey Item			
	Yes	No Response	Undecided	Yes	Automatic, Secret Vote	No Response	Undecided
Number of Terms	-.18*** (.04)	-.09* (.04)	-.19** (.08)	-.19*** (.04)	-.10* (.05)	-.05 (.04)	-.09 (.05)
NOMINATE-1	-3.68*** (.98)	.94 (.95)	-2.48* (1.55)	-5.99*** (.98)	-4.07*** (1.17)	.41 (.81)	-1.31 (1.15)
Democrat	.05 (.52)	1.09* (.51)	.88 (.90)	-3.08*** (.58)	-4.08*** (.71)	-1.15* (.50)	-1.31* (.68)
Constant	2.81***	1.22***	-.24	3.69***	2.83***	2.12***	2.12***
2 × Log-likelihood		791.6			1078.6		
χ^2		103.1***			168.6***		
P.R.E.		.24			.34		
N	236	138	16	147	56	143	33

Notes: Table entries are multinomial logit coefficients, with standard errors in parentheses. Reference category is “no.”

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$ (one-tailed).

TABLE A2
Logit Analyses of Other Senate Votes on Reform

	Seniority			Open Committees			Staffing			Stevenson Reforms	
	Mathias Amendment (1970)	Rules Committee Substitute (1975)	Cosponsor Open Committee Meetings (1975)	Cosponsor Open Conference Committee Meetings (1975)	Vote for Gravel Proposal	Cranston-Brock Amendment	Vote on Tabling Nelson Amendment	Vote on Tabling Clark Amendment #2			
Number of Terms	-.12* (.04)	-.15* (.06)	-.19* (.04)	-.09* (.03)	-.12* (.06)	-.19* (.06)	-.08 (.04)	-.06* (.03)			
NOMINATE-1	-.17* (.04)	-.08 (.07)	-.16* (.05)	-.11* (.03)	-.21* (.08)	-.19* (.08)	-.13* (.04)	-.09* (.04)			
Democrat	-.50* (.14)	.07 (.11)	-.17 (.15)	-.24* (.12)	-.28 (.14)	-.58* (.14)	-.09 (.14)	.05 (.13)			
Log-likelihood	-30.1	-35.3	-51.1	-43.2	-56.9	-53.9	-48.5	-30.3			
χ^2	23.1*	16.4*	19.0*	15.2*	10.5*	17.2*	8.0*	18.1*			
Pseudo R ²	.38	.17	.21	.18	.11	.21	.12	.34			
% correctly predicted	80.3	82.8	69.7	77.8	70.4	73.5	75.6	86.8			
N	76	93	99	99	98	98	90	83			
$\Delta \text{prob} (M_{\text{rep}} - M_{\text{dem}})$	-.05 (.10)	-.19* (.09)	-.18 (.10)	-.08 (.08)	.007 (.10)	.32* (.11)	-.20 (.10)	-.32* (.08)			

Notes: Table entries are the effect of each variable on the probability of support for reform, with standard errors in parentheses. Dependent variables are coded so that 1 is a pro-reform vote and 0 is an anti-reform vote. For number of terms and NOMINATE-1, table entries represent the effect of a one-standard-deviation increase from the variable's mean on the predicted probability of a "pro-reform" position, with all other variables held at their sample means. For party, the first difference represents the effect of a change from Republican to Democrat, with all other variables held at their sample means. The last row of the table presents the change in probability of a pro-reform position when moving from the median Democrat to the median Republican, with seniority held at its sample mean.

*p < .05 (two-tailed).

NOTES

1. Wright (2000) also views the Democrats as the primary constituency for reform but argues that the drive to raise campaign money, rather than liberal policy goals, propelled the reform movement.

2. Not all recent accounts focus solely upon the Democrats' role in the reform movement (see, for example, Rieselbach 1994). Most of the scholarship in the past 15 years, however, has emphasized the role of reform in strengthening Democratic party government and, as a result, has paid less attention to elements of the reform movement that had different goals in mind.

3. The only other survey evidence we are aware of comes from a random sample of 87 House members conducted by Davidson, Kovenock, and O'Leary (1966) in 1963 and 1964 and from a stratified sample of 153 House members conducted by the Obey Commission on Administrative Review in 1977. Since the Davidson, Kovenock, and O'Leary survey was conducted well before the 1970s reform era began, we believe the Common Cause survey provides better measures for the underpinnings of reform. In addition, the small sample size limited the former to reporting the results of cross-tabulations. Given this evidence, the authors concluded that support for reform was fairly low as of 1963–64 but that juniors and liberals were more likely to support reform than were their colleagues. The Obey survey took place after the main reforms had already passed and focused on issues of time management and legislative-executive relations. Thus, it does not provide measures of support for seniority reform, open committees, empowering subcommittees, or Democrats' party-building reforms.

4. Absent quantitative evidence of seniority's effect on reform, it makes sense that scholars have not sought to specify theoretically when conflict between juniors and seniors will shape institutions. Diermeier (1995) offers a potential theoretical framework for considering this issue (see discussion below; see also Ainsworth and Sened 1998 and Dodd 1986).

5. This finding also provides new evidence for Sinclair's (1989) argument that junior senators and liberals each played a key role in the "transformation" in Senate organization.

6. We will show that members who did not respond to the survey question were statistically similar to those who were opposed to the reform. This finding suggests that nonresponses indicated hostility to reform. As a validity check, we compared Democrats' responses to the survey to the party caucus vote in January 1973 on secret ballot election of chairs. The results were extremely similar. Of the 150 Democrats who responded to the survey, 70% claimed to support an automatic vote on chairs, and 67% of Democrats voted in favor at the caucus. The similar levels of support help address concerns that the Common Cause question wording (along with the group's reputation as a reform supporter) may have biased the results. It is also worth emphasizing that the results using the Common Cause seniority item are quite similar to those obtained for the other House indicators of reformism and for the Senate votes on seniority reform (see Tables 2 and 4).

7. In analyzing this and all other roll calls, we include paired yes and no votes as actual yeas and nays.

8. In 1979, Democratic leaders succeeded in slightly increasing the number of members required for a recorded vote, from 20 to 25, as part of a broader package of rules changes approved on a near party-line vote.

9. The Democratic Caucus endorsed the change on an 83–37 vote in February 1973, yet only 16 Democrats voted against the change on the floor (146 voted in favor). This disparity suggests that some members dropped their opposition when the measure came to the floor. The caucus vote was not recorded and thus cannot be analyzed.

10. The Senate approved Roth's amendment to add open conference committee meetings to the new rules, 81–6.

11. Common Cause also asked senators about seniority and open committees, but the senators' low response rate—combined with the small size of the Senate—makes statistical analysis of these survey responses infeasible.

12. David Martin (R-NE) was the vice-chair of the Committee, which is also often referred to as the Bolling-Martin Committee.

13. The Hansen Committee was chaired by Julia Butler Hansen (D-WA). The Bolling plan not only included many more jurisdictional changes than the Hansen plan did, it also limited members to a single major committee assignment. The Hansen package dropped the latter provision, which was “considered most onerous to many senior Democrats” because it would have forced them to leave committees on which they had gained considerable seniority (*CQ Almanac* 1973, 637). Both plans included a provision for multiple referrals.

14. This indicator of “reformism” is a bit more complicated than the other dependent variables. The Bolling-Hansen fight was shaped by distributive concerns and by direct jurisdictional gains and losses reflecting individual members' committee assignments (Adler 1999), factors that were not at work in the other cases examined. Furthermore, Democrats were particularly concerned about a few elements of the Bolling proposal, such as splitting the Education and Labor Committee, and thus might be expected to oppose this plan (unlike most of the other reform cases). Finally, one might argue that a vote in favor of the Hansen substitute was not entirely “anti-reform” since Hansen did make several organizational changes and some members may have believed that sticking with the more ambitious—and thus more controversial—Bolling plan would have led to a final outcome of no reform. Still, the Hansen-Bolling fight was a key moment in the House reform conflict and thus warrants inclusion.

15. We do not analyze the handful of votes to change committee jurisdictions or to rescue committees that the Stevenson Committee had sought to abolish. These votes were driven by constituency concerns. For example, senators voted 90 to 4 to restore the Select Aging Committee following lobbying by senior citizens' groups.

16. This amendment targeted the Finance Committee, which lacked legislative subcommittees for much of this period. Finance Chairman Russell Long (D-LA) agreed to allow subcommittees, apparently to reduce support for the Clark amendment (*Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* 1977, 279–84).

17. The subcommittee bill of rights transferred the power to appoint subcommittee leaders from the full committee chair to the committee's majority party members. It also guaranteed subcommittees an adequate budget and staff. Previous qualitative work suggests that both liberals and junior members drove its adoption (see Schickler 2001).

18. The main party-strengthening moves occurred in 1974. House Democrats voted to shift power over committee assignments from the Democrats on the Ways and Means Committee to a Steering and Policy Committee that included several leadership representatives; they also gave the Speaker direct control over nominations to the Rules Committee. It is unclear whether or not one should expect seniority to have an impact on the party-building changes. Junior members' interest in fragmenting power may have made them suspicious of moves to strengthen party leaders. On the other hand, juniors may have seen party leaders as allies in their battles with committee chairs, and so may have supported these reforms (Rohde 1991).

19. We also do not consider the Senate cloture rule changes adopted in 1975 and 1979. These changes were essentially another round in the long series of battles over filibusters and thus should not be viewed as a characteristic element of the 1970s reforms (see Binder and Smith 1997 for an account of these changes).

20. Furthermore, northern Democrats' attendance on nonrecorded votes was typically poor in the House; the Democratic Study Group thus believed that the recorded teller change, in particular, would promote liberal victories on floor amendments (Sheppard 1985).

21. We also estimate models using second-dimension NOMINATE scores (which tap into social conservatism) and ADA scores. The models with ADA scores do not include either NOMINATE dimension because they are redundant measures.

22. Additional examples of junior Republicans active in pushing House reforms are Barber Conable of New York, William Steiger of Wisconsin, and John Dellenback of Oregon (Glass 1970).

23. Recall that we code a vote against raising the threshold required for a recorded teller vote as a "pro-reform" position. One might argue that this 1974 vote should not be characterized as a reform issue since some generally pro-reform Democrats backed raising the threshold for a recorded vote, arguing that Republicans had abused the 1970 rule. Excluding this one roll call does not alter the general tenor of our results. We believe it should be included, however, since doubling the threshold required for a recorded vote would have countered the 1970 reform.

24. These probabilities were calculated from logit models with robust standard errors. The probabilities and their standard errors derive from a simulation routine developed by King, Tomz, and Wittenberg (2000) that takes into account uncertainty associated with the individual coefficients and with the statistical model as a whole.

25. This result is not surprising for the recorded teller rollback and Hansen substitute votes, since these were both products of the Democratic Caucus, but it is unexpected in the other cases.

26. The effects are negative in both cases, but higher values on the party dummy tend to be more liberal (because Democrats are coded 1), whereas higher values on the NOMINATE scores are more conservative.

27. This comparison involves a one-unit change in party and a roughly 1.5-standard-deviation change in ideology.

28. In particular, we experimented with the ideology measures developed by Snyder and Groseclose (2000), which exclude lopsided votes. The results were again quite similar, and hence we rely on NOMINATE scores.

29. Furthermore, substituting dummy variables for southern Democrats and northern Democrats (with Republicans the excluded category) changes little. These

dummies tend to have effects in the same direction and of comparable magnitude as the original party dummy variable.

30. We also added an interaction term between ideology and seniority. The interaction was consistently small and insignificant and had little impact on the estimates for the other variables. The same pattern held in the Senate.

31. In the seniority case, we use the vote on the Packwood amendment and the GOP conference vote. For open committees, we highlight the 1973 vote on the Roth amendment because the vote in 1975 on passage of the change was so lopsided. For staffing, we highlight the Cannon tabling motion since this was the main effort to kill the reform. For the Stevenson reforms, we present cosponsorship because it gives a clearer sense of the origins of the reform than do the votes on specific amendments. We emphasize, however, that the results for the remaining indicators of reformism are substantively identical to those in the indicators we highlight in Table 4 (see Table A2).

32. We also examined a range of model specifications to assess the robustness of our results. As in the House, we found that seniority and ideology are extremely robust across model specifications, but the effect of party is less robust. Concerned about the collinearity of party and ideology, we estimated separate models for each party. In these models, both seniority and ideology are generally substantively and statistically significant. The few exceptions are centered among Republicans, where the effects of ideology and seniority are less robust, particularly in the analysis of the staffing and Stevenson reforms. These results may derive from the relatively small number of Senate Republicans—anywhere from 29 to 42 appear in these analyses—and the concomitant decrease in the power of the hypothesis tests. Nearly all insignificant coefficients are of the correct sign. Adding second-dimension NOMINATE scores to the baseline model does not change the significant effects of seniority and liberalism, but it generally reduces the effect of party. As in the analysis of the House, including dummy variables for committee chairs and ranking members does not affect the results, nor does including a dummy variable for the South or dummy variables for southern and northern Democrats. Substituting other ideology measures for first-dimension NOMINATEs in the baseline model also generates much the same story: juniors, liberals, and Republicans were the main constituencies for each reform.

33. Since the party caucuses each adopted seniority reform, junior Republicans' support was not necessary for the changes in the chair selection process adopted by House and Senate Democrats. At the same time, the reform cause undoubtedly benefited from the ferment created by the numerous proposals for change emanating from junior members in both parties.

34. The Republican reform group emerged from "Rumsfeld's Raiders," a bloc of junior Republicans led by Donald Rumsfeld (R-IL) prior to his resignation in May 1969 to join the Nixon administration. After Rumsfeld's departure, Conable, Steiger, and John Dellenback of Oregon assumed leadership of the GOP reformers (see Sheppard 1985).

35. The results are unchanged if one examines the number of senators in their first six-year term as opposed to those in their first two years.

36. This is not to argue that turnover had no impact. For example, the influx of new members clearly facilitated the 1975 deposal of three chairs. Similarly, the defeat of several Senate committee leaders in the 1976 elections likely helped defuse opposition to the Stevenson reforms (see Davidson 1980b and Schickler 2001). Yet several

other key reforms were adopted absent increased turnover, suggesting that support for the Diermeier hypothesis is quite limited. Data on turnover were obtained from ICPSR's "Roster of United States Congressional Officeholders and Biographical Characteristics of Members of Congress, 1789–1986" (datafile ICPSR # 7803).

37. See Schickler 2001 and Schickler and Sides 2000 for examples of such institutional changes; see Brady, Buckley, and Rivers 2000, Cooper and Brady 1981, and Katz and Sala 1996 for analyses of changes in the electoral environment.

38. It is unclear whether or not one should expect seniority to have an impact on the party-building changes. Junior members' interest in fragmenting power may have made them suspicious of moves to strengthen party leaders. On the other hand, juniors may have seen party leaders as allies in their battles with committee chairs, so may have supported these reforms (Rohde 1991).

39. Martin Tolchin "Senate Deplores Disarray in New Chamber of Equals" *New York Times*, 25 November 1984. Smith (1993) describes how Democratic leader George Mitchell (of Maine) and Republican leader Bob Dole (of Kansas) gained a measure of control over the flow of business, but it was primarily through informal mechanisms and assiduously addressing individual members' demands.

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