# Geography and Individual Campaign Contributions to Congressional Candidates

Michael H. Crespin
Political Institutions and Public Choice Program
*Michigan State University*
crespinm@msu.edu
www.msu.edu/~crespinm

Abstract

Most of the money in congressional elections comes from individual contributors, yet there is little systematic study of this important group of political activists. In this paper, I first show that representatives' abilities to earn money from different geographic regions are dependent on their demand for funds and the available supply of contributions in each area. Second, I demonstrate that the more a member's district changes, the more money they lose. However, members can make back some of that money from their new constituents and those that have left the district. Finally, I illustrate the differences between Democratic and Republican contribution patterns.

**Introduction**

Individual contributions represent over half of the total money given to congressional candidates (Jacobson 2004), yet relatively few scholars focus on the contributions that originate from this important group of political activists. One exception to this lack of research is Francia, Green, Herrnson, Powell and Wilcox (2003:105) who argued that, "Geography is the most important factor influencing contribution decisions." Francia et al. (2003) found that contributors are 33 percent more likely to give to a candidate if they reside in that representative's district. On the surface, this would seem to run counter to Grenzke (1988) which reports that over half of individual donations come from outside a member's district. However, if the roughly 434 possible contributors outside the district for every one inside the district are taken into account, then this outcome becomes empirically plausible.

Although the numbers "add up," a set of interesting questions still remains. What enables a member of Congress to collect a substantial portion of her contributions from outside her district? Are different forces influencing contributors based on their geographic location relative to the candidate? Finally, what does it say about representation if members' money constituencies lie outside their geographic constituency? In this paper, I seek to understand which factors contribute to incumbent members of Congress receiving money from areas inside and outside the district. I will argue that a member's ability to fundraise from different geographic areas is constrained by both supply and demand of the donor pool and both of these factors are a function of incumbent, election, and district characteristics.

In the following section of the paper, I examine the influence of redistricting on a member's fundraising totals. Although most of a district remains intact after redistricting,

some parts of the district may be removed while other areas are added. Consequently, redistricting allows for a quasi-experimental research design where the bonds of representation are severed for some individuals who find they are living in new districts after the boundaries have changed. By way of a new continuous measure of district change, I can test a member's ability to earn contributions from constant, new, and old areas of the district. This will shed light on whether members form representational bonds with new constituencies as well as whether they hold onto their link with old donors who have left the district.

Next, I review redistricting and campaign finance literature in order to develop a theory and test hypotheses with respect to individual campaign contributions to incumbent members of Congress residing from different geographic locations. Building on this, I am able to determine the influence of redistricting on a member's ability to fundraise and show that there is a difference between the two parties. Finally, I conclude and offer suggestions for future research.

## Previous Research

### Redistricting

The literature on congressional redistricting is quite extensive. Butler and Cain (1992) wrote one of the most comprehensive examinations of this topic. They cover the court decisions that led to the revival of nationwide redistricting in the 1960s, how the process worked during the 1980s and 1990s as well as comparing the efforts by different states.

A portion of this research has been devoted to the influence of redistricting on congressional stability (see, e.g., Bullock 1975; Gelman and King 1994a), minority

representation (see, e.g., Lublin 1997; Lublin and Voss 1997; Canon 1999; Epstein and O'Halloran 1999; Shotts 2001) and responsiveness (Tufte 1973; Ferejohn 1977; Gelman and King 1994b; Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart 2000, 2001). Redistricting has also influenced the competitiveness of individual House races over time. Prior scholars examining this issue have linked the decline in competitiveness to the growth in the incumbency advantage (Mayhew 1971, Tufte 1973).[1]

Beyond the incumbency advantage, scholars have also focused on the aggregate effects of redistricting in terms of the partisan balance of seats in the House (Abramowitz 1983; Cain 1985; Butler and Cain 1992; Niemi and Winsky 1992; Niemi and Abramowitz 1994).[2] In the best recent account of the consequences of the redistricting process, Cox and Katz (2002) showed how the courts influenced the drawing of new district boundaries in the 1960s. In addition, Carson and Crespin (2004) showed that competition can vary when courts or commissions become involved with the redistricting process.

Scholars have also focused some attention on changes in member's voting behavior as a result of redistricting (Glazer and Robbins 1986; Stratmann 2000; Boatright 2004). Finally, some have shown that members may concentrate work directed at different parts of the district based on changes in sub-constituencies after redistricting (Bickers and Potoski 2000, Grose 2000, Ansolabehere, Gerber and Snyder 2002).

Until recently, redistricting students have not paid much attention to how altering district boundaries can influence campaign fundraising. Boatright (2004) demonstrated

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[1] For a response and critique of the Tufte argument, see Burnham 1974, Ferejohn 1977 and Cox and Katz 2002.
[2] On this topic see also Squire 1985, Cain and Campagna 1987, Basehart and Comer 1991, Lyons and Galderisi 1995 and Swain, Borrelli and Reed 1998.

that candidates increase their fundraising in response to partisan and racial changes in the district. Boatright's piece, unlike this paper, focused on total fundraising numbers (PAC and individual) by the candidates and did not directly account for movement of new and old constituents.

**Campaign Fundraising**

Similar to the redistricting literature, there is quite a lot of work dealing with congressional campaign fundraising. Most of the research focuses on political action committees (see e.g. Jacobson 1980; Smith 1985; Wright 1985; Hall and Wayman 1990; Cigler and Loomis 1991; Romer and Snyder 1994; Stratmann 1995; Wright 1996; Herrnson 1998; Herrnson, Shaiko and Wilcox 1998; Box-Steffensmeier and Radcliffe 2001; Jacobson 2004). However, few scholars focus on individual campaign contributions, even though they make up over half of all contributions to congressional elections (Herrnson 1998; Jacobson 2004).

In the words of the some of leading the leading scholars in the field of campaign finance, "There is little systematic research on the motivations and strategies of individual congressional donors," (Francia et al. 2003:12). Some of the earliest to study individual contributors were Jones and Miller (1985) who used questions from the 1980 National Election Study to examine determinants of the donation. They found that voters, people who were interested in politics and respondents who felt a high degree of civic duty contributed to candidates. Another early look at individual donations by Grenzke (1988) demonstrated that over 50 percent of individual and nearly all PAC contributions

come from outside of the district.  However, most of the out of district money did come

from inside the member's state.[3]

  Recently, Francia et al. (2003:16) undertook a survey of contributors to the 1996

congressional election and provided a "thick description" of individual contributions.

They also relied on a smaller longitudinal survey of "big" donors as well as interviews

with donors and campaign officials.  They found that contributors were, for the most part,

rich, highly-educated white males.  However, reasons for contributing were quite varied.

They stylize three types of contributors, "investors" who gave for financial gain;

"ideologues" who gave for more broad societal reasons and finally "intimates" who gave

for reasons of solidarity, such as a personal relationship with the candidate or their

fundraising surrogates.[4]  Although this study has helped to lay the groundwork for

studying contributions from individuals, there are still many questions left unanswered.


**Geography and Fundraising**

Many accounts that offer a description of individual fundraising (Grenzke 1998,

Herrnson 1998) point out that a significant portion of funds come from outside a

member's district with a non-trivial fraction coming in from outside of the state.  Since

money is a necessary factor to win elections (Davidson and Oleszek 2004), then

candidates will go wherever the money is to get it.  A member's ability to fundraise from

different geographic regions - district, state, and out of state - should be based on their

demand for resources, which is constrained by the supply.  In congressional elections,

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[3]Grenzke's study included the 1981-82 election cycle that encompassed 1982 redistricting but she did not take this into account.

[4] See Snyder 1990 and Baron 1994 for more discussion on investors and Rosenstone and Hanson 1993 for ideologues.

supply and demand is a function of three factors, those specific to the incumbent, the election, and the characteristics of their district.

**Incumbent**

Previous research (Franica et al. 2003) suggests that a candidate's ideology is an important factor in the decision making calculus for individuals who contribute to congressional campaigns. Indeed, Grenzke (1988) found that as members become more liberal, they are more likely to earn a greater share of their campaign funds from outside the district. The political parties like to claim that extremists from both ends of the spectrum are improperly influencing members of Congress because the supply of potential donors increases as they become more extreme. Citizens who are moderates, and do have strong opinions on many issues, will be less likely to make a contribution. The Republicans like to blame the Hollywood liberals while the Democrats favorite whipping boys are the Texas oil tycoons. In addition, both parties like to point to Wall Street fat cats as contributing to problems with government. If these relatively small groups from distinct geographic areas are contributing to polarization in politics, then extreme members should get a greater share of their contributions from out of their district and state, relative to more moderate members.

The size of a candidate's donation network should have a significant effect on a member's ability to raise funds from outside of the district by increasing the potential money supply. Once members have tapped the bulk of their district for funds, they will have to look elsewhere for money. If members want to increase the size of their network, they will have to look outside of their district. Therefore members with large networks will have an easier time earning contributions from out of state compared to members

with small networks. In view of the fact that incumbents are unlikely to give up their lists of potential donors, I argue that a representative's seniority will be a good proxy for the size of their donor network. According to Fenno (1978), members spend the early part of their career in what he called an "expansionist phase." During the phase, members work to increase their base of support. Although Fenno's work focused on the member *in* the district, it is not much of a stretch to argue that members will also work to expand their donor list during this stage of their career. The longer members serve and the larger their networks, then they are more likely to earn a greater portion of their contributions from outside of the district and less from inside the district.

Members who serve on important committees receive more contributions from PACs (Herrrnson 1995), but what about from individuals? Prestige committees such as Ways and Means and Budget tend to produce bills that target broad constituencies from around the country. Therefore, members on prestige committees should attract more money from outside their district. In contrast, constituency committees produce bills that are more geographically focused. Further, members frequently try to serve on constituent committees that are relevant to their constituency. If this is indeed the case, then representatives on constituency committees should collect a smaller percentage of their funds from out of state, and more from inside the district. Finally, a member's party affiliation should affect their ability to raise funds from different areas. Since Democrats tend to represent less affluent districts and thus have a smaller supply of money in the district, they are forced to go outside of their district to look for funds. Thus, they should collect less from inside the district and more from other areas of the state compared to Republicans.

**Election**

Election factors that will influence where members raise funds fall largely on the demand side. The factors include the total amount of spending in the race and whether the incumbent is facing a quality challenger. Both of these election characteristics send a signal that the incumbent is in a competitive race and have a greater demand for funds. In terms of spending, the more money that is spent, the more that the incumbent needs to raise. Also, if donors see that a race is competitive, they may be more likely to contribute since their contribution may make a difference in the outcome. Given that the donor pool within the district is finite relative to the pool outside the district, members who are in high spending races will need to look outside the district for more money. Therefore, as total spending increases, members should earn a smaller percentage of their contributions from inside the district and more from areas outside the district and state. Another signal that the incumbent is in a competitive race is whether or not their opponent is a quality challenger, defined as someone who has held previous elected office (Jacobson 2004). These candidates should also have a greater demand for more money and they too should collect more money from outside the district and state. Further, if it appears that an incumbent is vulnerable, then political activists from around the country may contribute in order to defeat the sitting member of the House.

**District**

Finally, there are supply and demand factors relevant to the member's district that will influence their fundraising. An incumbent who resides in a district that has more wealth, and thus a greater supply of money, should collect more money from inside their

district.  In contrast, members in poorer districts will have to look beyond their district and possibly outside the state for contribution.

Since fundraising can be costly, nearly 12 percent of a House candidate's budget (Herrnson 2000), then members will likely try to minimize costs.  One way to keep costs low is to solicit funds from people that live in or near the district.  Fenno (1978) argued that those closest to the member, inside the personal constituency, are often a source of campaign funds.  However, any candidate who needed to raise enough money to win a congressional election would quickly bankrupt that circle if he repeatedly relied on them as the only source of campaign funds.  Further, the limitations placed on the size of donations from individuals would also make it difficult to run a successful campaign if the personal constituency was the only donor pool.  As Francia et al. (2003) argue, this group does makes for a good source of seed money, but it is probably not enough to win. The next logical step then, is to look for the next closest set of donors.  Donors who live near the incumbent's district make for relatively less costly solicitations and are more likely to have a connection (personal or business) with the incumbent or his chief fundraisers.  In this respect, members of the personal fundraising constituency need not be inside the geographic district.  Previous research (Grenzke 1988) is consistent with this idea and found that most of the money comes from inside the state or district and contributors are more likely to give if they live in the candidate's state or district (Francia et al. 2003).   If this is true, then the size of the state will be important in determining how much money candidates receive from different geographic areas.  Incumbents who live in larger states should be less likely to collect money from outside the state.  However, since

the state's donor pool is large relative to the districts, these members will be able to earn more from the state than their districts.

Members who live in districts where they are a good political match to the underlying political conditions should demand less money from their district because they are relatively safe and insulated from a strong challenger from the other party. Owing to their safety, they may also be able to spend less time in the district and more time elsewhere raising funds. In sum then, a member's ability to raise funds is dependent on their demand for money and where they can find it. Members who need more money, will go where they have to in order to get it.

## Campaign Finance data

In order to test the hypotheses developed above and throughout the paper, I turn to data for incumbent members of Congress who ran for reelection in the 2000 or 2002 congressional elections. The 2000 election to the 107th Congress was the last held with the old district boundaries while the 2002 election immediately followed the national round of reapportionment and redistricting. After the passage of the 1974 Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA) any contribution over $200 must be reported to the Federal Election Commission and is then made public.[5] Attached to each contribution is the contributor's name, ZIP code and the name of the candidate who received the contribution.[6] By manipulating these data with geographic information systems and using

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[5] Contributions over $200 represent approximately 75 percent of all individual contributions (Lioz 2003).
[6] The contributor's full address is not made public as this would likely invite unwanted solicitations from other candidates and interest groups.

ZIP codes as the key link between different geographic areas, I can determine who the contributor gave to and where they lived at the time of the contribution.[7]

The accounting of ZIP codes and their corresponding congressional districts requires only simple spatial techniques and data readily available from the U.S. Census. The necessary data include the 2000 and 2002 district and 2000 ZIP code boundary files. They consist of a series of XY coordinates that GIS programs can translate into polygons that represent the shapes for the districts and ZIP codes.[8]

The first step in the process is to merge the FEC data with the shape files that represent the postal ZIP codes. A piece of information about ZIP codes is worth mentioning here. Technically, a ZIP code is not a geographic area because it is really just a list of addresses that follow a postal route and lines, by definition, do not have an area. Instead, the shape files used here are zip code tabulation areas (ZCTAs), which are a statistical geographic entity that *approximates* the delivery area for a U.S. Postal Service five-digit zip-code. Further, not all ZIP codes are included in the geographic boundary files. According to the U.S. census bureau, ZIP codes for businesses that have their own ZIP codes, post office boxes and general delivery addresses primarily located in areas otherwise served by a rural route or city style mail delivery are not represented by ZCTAs. Approximately, 7 percent of the data were lost due to the inability to match the ZIP code listed in the FEC file with the ZCTAs.[9] While this may appear problematic, assuming that ZIP codes and the ZCTAs are similar is a necessary assumption to answer the questions posed in this paper.

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[7] See Bolstad 2002 for an introduction to GIS and spatial analysis.
[8] The census data and boundary files used in this paper are available at www.census.gov.
[9] This unmatched data could also include cases where the ZIP code was incorrectly reported by the candidates committee.

After merging the two files, I initially summed the total amount of contributions from each ZIP code to incumbent members of Congress running for reelection.[10] I then overlaid the ZCTA shape file with the boundary files for the respective congressional districts, the 107th and the 108th. The new attribute table, which is automatically updated by the GIS program after the intersection, makes it relatively easy to identify in which district the ZIP codes fall for each election.[11]

Figure 1 displays these data for each ZCTA for the 2001-02 election cycle. The shaded areas denote the percentage of the total for each ZCTA that recorded a contribution that went to Democratic incumbents running for reelection and the black lines are the 2002 district boundaries. An initial look at the map, and the attached table, suggests that the Republican Party gets money from more areas of the country compared to the Democrats. For instance, 6,241 ZIP codes gave 100% of their contributions to Republicans while only 3,752 gave only to the Democrats. The map also clearly shows the Republicans dominating in the West while the Democrats do well on the coast and in cities. Both California and New York provide interesting juxtapositions between contributions from the two parties. Democrats do well on the California Coast and in New York City, but fair poorly in the Central Valley and in upstate New York. This is, of course, consistent with how well they do at the polls. Arkansas appears to be an anomaly in the South with most of the state giving to Democrats. However, three of the

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[10] I excluded members not up for reelection since they are likely to change their fundraising behavior.

[11] Since some ZIP codes cross district boundaries, some post-processing of the data is necessary. Further, spatial analyses frequently create small spurious polygons called "slivers" which are an artifact of imprecise overlay (Bolstad 2002:398). The result in the attribute tables are the repeated listing of ZIP codes with the same number, but with different weights based on the size of the area in each district. For example, if 25 percent of the area resides in one district and 75 percent in another, the same ZIP code would be listed twice with weight of .75 and .25, respectively. To erase the slivers and place ZIP codes in the appropriate district if there was an overlap, I dropped all of the repeated ZIP codes except for the ones with a weight greater than 50 percent. This technique produced a final attribute table that had only one unique entry for each of the original ZIP code areas.

four members of the House from this state are Democrats, with the exception of John

Boozman who represents the lightly shaded area in the Northwest corner of the state.

Generally speaking, this map is consistent with the electoral success of the two parties.

That is, contributions tend to come from areas where the parties win.

In order to asses the how much money is coming from different areas, instead of just

which party is receiving the contribution, I created Figure 2. In this figure, separated by

party, the shaded areas represent the total dollar amount from each ZIP code, with darker

shading meaning more money. As one might expect, the Democrats received large

contributions from areas such as Los Angeles and the California coast, Seattle,

Minneapolis, Chicago, Dallas/Forth Worth, Houston, Detroit, Atlanta and the east coast

cities of Boston, New York and Washington D.C. The largest ZIP code contributor to the

Democrats was Manhattan, donating over $500,000. The Republicans also did well in

big cities, but closer inspection reveals that they also collect quite a bit of money from the

suburbs too. For example, while most of the Democratic contributions from Illinois

appear clustered around Chicago, the Republican contributions extend much further out

from the center city. Of course, Republicans also collect quite a bit of money from more

rural areas such as Montana, Wyoming and Idaho. However, the largest Republican ZIP

code contributor is just outside of Washington D.C. in Potomac, MD.

**The 2000 Congressional Election**

In order to determine why incumbents receive contributions from different areas, I

need to measure if the contribution came from inside the incumbent's district, inside the

incumbent's state, or came from out of state. These measures are easily created from a

dataset similar to the one used to create Figures 1 and 2, but for the 1999-2000 election

cycle. Data from this cycle will be free from any contamination as a result of redistricting for the 2002 election. As such, I created three variables; the first is the percent of money from areas inside each member's district, the second is the percent from outside the district but in the state and the final is the percent from out of state. According to Table 1, Republicans garner 14 percent more of their contributions from inside the district compared to Democrats (significantly different at $\alpha < .05$ one-tailed, $t_{388} = 6.38$). This is not too surprising since Democrats traditionally are elected in districts with lower incomes.[12] In contrast, Democratic incumbents get more money outside of their district than Republicans. They earn 4 percent more from in the state and 10 percent more outside it (both significantly different at $\alpha < .05$ one-tailed; $t_{388} = -1.95$ and -5.02 respectively). Since contributors will presumably vote for the candidate that they give to, the fact that Republicans have an additional advantage over Democrats in in-district contributions might give them an advantage on Election Day.

Measures that may influence a member's fundraising include factors that are specific to the incumbent, the particular election and the district. Factors that are specific to the incumbent include measures of their behavior, their seniority, the committees they serve on and their party affiliation. Most of these variables are relatively standard in the congressional literature. In order to test if more extreme members are receiving contributions, I use the *absolute value of the incumbent's w-nominate* score where members become more extreme as this variable increases.[13] If extreme members are receiving more contributions from any of the three geographic regions, then the sign on

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[12] This is also an empirical fact as the median household income for districts held by Democrats is about $2600 less than that of Republicans.

[13] Scores are available from Keith Poole at http://www.voteview.com. See Poole and Rosenthal 1997 for more information.

the coefficient for this variable should be positive.  A member's *Seniority* is measured as the number of terms that an incumbent has served.  I expect that the more senior the member, the larger their contribution network will be.  Therefore, as seniority increases, they should get more of their contributions from outside of the district.

Another member factor that may influence incumbents' fundraising abilities is their committee assignments.  Members on "constituent committees" should do a better job at providing particularized benefits to their constituents so individuals should be more likely to give to their own representative.  Representatives serving on a "prestige committees" deliver goods that are not as geographically concentrated.  Therefore, they should earn more money from beyond the district's borders.  If a member served on a constituency committee during the 107th Congress, then the dichotomous variable *Constituency Committee* is coded one, zero otherwise.  *Prestige Committee* is also coded one if the member served on a prestige committee.[14]  If either of these variables contributes to a member's ability to raise funds from a particular area, then they should be positive and significant.  Since Table 1 suggests that there is a difference between the parties in terms of in vs. out  of district fundraising, I also include a variable *Party* that is equal to one if the member is a Democrat, zero otherwise.

Factors particular to the specific election may also have an effect on fundraising.  Members who are in a costly race must by definition raise substantial sums of money.  This is also a signal that the race is competitive.  Therefore, I created a variable *Total Spending,* that is the sum of the incumbent and challenger's spending, divided by 10,000.

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[14] Following the guidance of Smith and Deering 1990 and Alvarez and Saving 1997 I coded Appropriations, Budget, Rules and Ways and Means as prestige committees and Agriculture, Armed Services, Resources, Transportation and Infrastructure, Science, Small Business and Veterans' Affairs as constituency committees.   Committee and seniority data are from the 2002 and 2004 issues of CQ's *Politics in America*.

Since there is relatively less money available in a member's district compared to the rest of the donor pool, I expect this variable to be negative for fundraising in the district and positive outside the district. If a member is facing a quality challenger, a cue that the incumbent is vulnerable (Jacobson 2004), then they may be more likely to raise funds outside of the district. To test this, I include a variable, *Quality Challenger* that is coded one if the incumbent is facing a challenger that has previously held elective office.[15]

There are factors related to the member's district that may influence where a candidate raises funds. If a member is from a relatively wealthy district, then they should be less likely to look outside the district for money. To control for this, I included *District Median Income* which is the median household income for the member's district, again divided by 10,000.[16] Members who do not match up well with their district politically may also need to look elsewhere for funds to bolster their reelection changes. This possibility is tested with a variable that measures the two-party share of the *District Presidential Vote* for the incumbent's party from the 2000 presidential election as reported by *CQ's Politics in America*. Finally, I include a variable that measures the number of districts in a member's state. Since previous research (Grenzke 1988) shows that most money comes from inside the member's state, then representatives who live in more populous states have a greater number of potential contributors. Thus, if a member is in a large state, they should get more of their contributions from inside that state and less from outside the state or from the district.

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[15] Spending and quality challenger data were provided by Gary Jacobson.
[16] Data obtained from the US Census www.census.org.

**Results**

   The results from an ordinary least squares regression are displayed in Table 2.  Recall

that the dependent variable is the percent of contributions raised from each of the three

areas, in the district, in the state but outside the district and outside the state.  In the first

model, and indeed in each of the three models, more extreme members do not receive a

higher level of contributions from any particular area relative to incumbents who are

more moderate.[17]  Thus, there is no evidence that more extreme representatives are

collecting more money from individuals who live outside the district and could be

influencing their voting behavior.  This also runs contrary to the results by Grenzke

(1988:91) who found that incumbents with liberal voting records receive a higher

proportion of contributions from outside the district.[18]  However, Grenzke did not control

for party affiliation and speculated that conservatives may come from wealthier districts.

   A member's seniority does have a discernable influence on where they earn

contributions.  For every additional term of seniority, members collect 2.6 percent more

of their campaign money from outside their state. As expected, when members accrue

seniority they receive less of their campaign funds from inside the district and state and

more from outside the state.  This is consistent with Fenno's (1978) notion of career

expansion where he argued that during a course of a member's career, they work to

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[17] A separate analysis also shows that this is true if the total *amount* instead of the percent of contributions is the dependent variable.  If the party variable is removed from the model in Table 2, more extreme members actually get a greater percentage of their money from inside the district.  However, since Republicans are more extreme compared to Democrats (as measured by average w-nominate scores) I feel it is appropriate to control for a member's party affiliation.  This extremity may be a function of majority status but the two measures, party affiliation and majority status are observationally equivalent.  I also tested the robustness of the results to determine if different states are driving the results.  I ran models that included state fixed effects, clustered the standard errors on the states and one that controlled for multiplicative heteroskedasticity between individual states.  The results did not substantively change as a a result of estimation technique.

[18] These results still hold if ideology is measured with a member's nominate score, not the absolute difference.

expand their base of support.  Although more speculative, it may be that as members enter into the protectionist phase of their career also described by Fenno, they have more time to attend fundraisers outside of the district since they do not have to spend all of their time meeting with constituents.

A member's committee assignment seems have an effect over where they collect their contributions, but not necessarily in the expected direction. Representatives on prestige committees collect about 6 percent more of their funds from *inside* the district and 3 percent less from *outside* the state compared to members who did not serve on any of the prestige committees.  This runs contrary to the predictions.  It may be that members on prestige committees such as appropriations are able to selectively target their constituencies and this is contributing to the result.  However, members on constituency committees act as expected.  They bring in less from outside the state, probably because they are less likely to help individuals from outside the district.  Finally, in terms of incumbent factors, Democrats collect 12.3 percent less of their money from outside of the district, with most of that (8.9 percent) coming from inside the member's state.  However, neither party collected significantly more money from outside the state.  This result combined with the null finding on the extremity variable suggests that liberal Democrats are at least as answerable to Hollywood liberals as conservative Republicans are to Texas oil tycoons.

When it comes to election characteristics, it appears that as the total cost of the race increases, incumbents collect less money from inside that district and are forced to look outside the district into other states for more funds.  However, candidates who face a

quality challenger do not receive a greater percentage of contributions from any of the three areas.

District characteristics also prove to be influential in determining where members collect their campaign funds. As the underlying partisanship of the district moves away from the representative, they earn less money from inside the district and more from contributors in other areas of their state. The partisanship of the district does not seem to force members to look outside the state though for contributions. Again, this is evidence against the argument that money is pouring in from outsiders and adversely affecting democratic representation. Finally, the size of the state has the hypothesized effect. If an incumbent is serving in a large state, they collect a smaller percentage of their campaign funds from the district, but instead get it from other areas of the state. Further, if there are more potential contributors in member's states, they are less likely to get a higher percentage of contributions from beyond the state's borders.

In sum, member, election and district characteristics are influential in determining where members of congress collect their contributions from individuals. As representatives serve longer, they appear to increase their donor networks and collect a greater percentage of their contributions outside of the state. Democrats, who represent less affluent districts, are forced to seek out contributions from beyond the boundaries of the geographic constituency. As such, is looks as if they make up that deficit by collecting from inside their state. This is also apparent for representatives who serve in a district that is a poor match politically. They too receive less from inside the district and more from their state. Members who are in costly races also earn less of their funds from inside the district. However, in this situation, members search outside of their state

for more money.  Lastly, when incumbents reside in more populous states, they earn more of their contributions from the state, and less from their district or other areas of the country.

### Redistricting and Contributing

Although the above analysis explains where members collect contributions from individual contributors, it rests on an important assumption.  The assumption is that the geographic areas remain constant over time.  In actuality, the assumption does not always hold as every ten years states are forced to redraw district boundaries to accommodate for changes in population.  After the boundaries change, some contributors may find themselves living in a new district.  This event provides a unique opportunity to test the link between the representative and the contributor.  If a member's ability to fundraise is not effected by redistricting, then it suggests a weak link between being elected to represent a contributor and earning their donation.

After each round of redistricting, members of Congress find that some of their old constituents no longer remain in their districts while new ones take their place.  In Fenno's (1978) language, this represents a change in the geographic constituency.  Figure 3 presents a stylized depiction of how a member's district can change.  The upper portion of the figure, pre-redistricting, shows two districts, one and two, separated by the solid vertical line.  It also shows four areas, A, B, C and D, separated by both the solid vertical line and the horizontal dashed line.  In this simplified version of redistricting, each of the areas contain an equal number of constituents.  The lower portion of the figure shows the new districts post-redistricting, now separated by the solid *horizontal* line.  The table

depicts an exhaustive but non-mutually exclusive typology of areas. For example, area A was part of district one before and after redistricting so it is type in-in for district one but out-out for district two. Area B, however, left district one after redistricting and is now new to district two so it is labeled type in-out for district one and out-in for district two. Area C is out-in for district one and in-out for district two while area D is out-out for district one and in-in for district two. Since each of the areas contains equal populations, both district one and district 2 are 50 percent continuous, or conversely, 50 percent new.

This section of the paper seeks to determine what happens to the contribution patterns from areas that are continuous to a district (in-in), new to the district (out-in) and areas that no longer remain inside the boundaries (in-out). In their study, Francia et al. (2003:105) find a strong link between geography and the contribution. If there is a solid link between contributing to a representative and living in that person's district then I expect that the more a district changes in terms of population, the less an incumbent will earn from the area that remains within the district (in-in) before and after redistricting, *ceteris paribus,* compared to members who represent districts that do not change.[19] Members earn less the more the district changes because they have a smaller district continuous core compared to a district that does not change. If members collect less money as a result of district change, then this implies that the bond between a member and contributor can be broken.

Keeping that in mind, individuals who are in districts that undergo a large amount of change will have more of their old constituents in other districts and should be able to

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[19] There is some evidence that redistricting may not matter. For example, Francia et al. (2003:23) point out that 45 percent of donors who gave to a member in 1978 continue to give to that member in 1996, even though they are now represented by someone else. Yet, this still leaves 55 percent who did not continue to give.

continue to collect from those individuals. As such, the more a district changes, the more a member should collect from areas that have left the district (in-out) compared to representatives who have few of their previous constituents living outside the district. Members in large changing districts will also have the opportunity to earn contributions from individuals that are new to the district. Therefore, the more a district changes, the more a member can collect from areas that are new to the district (out-in).[20]

**District change data**

To test these hypotheses, I use a model similar to the one used in the first set of regressions with a few modifications. First, as the hypotheses suggest, the dependent variable is the *amount* of money collected from each of the three redistricted areas for the 2002 election divided by 10,000. I estimate three separate models, one for each of the areas.

In order to gauge district change I use a measure, detailed in Crespin (2005) which I will briefly describe. First, the district boundaries for the 2000 and 2002 congressional elections are spatially intersected. Then, these areas are overlaid on top of census tract boundary files.[21] After this step, the census tracts are deemed new (drawn into the incumbent's district), removed (drawn into a new district and no longer remaining in the incumbent's district) or continuous (remain in the district pre and post-redistricting). Next, the population of the tracts that are continuous to the incumbent's district is divided by the total district population. This number is then subtracted from 100 percent and the result is the percent of the population that is new to a member's district. Referring back

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[20] Since the out-out category remains constant before and after redistricting, it is not included in the analysis.

[21] According to the census, tracts are small subdivisions of a county. They are designed to be relatively homogeneous units and average about 4,000 inhabitants.

to Figure 3, the percent new in district one would be the population from area A divided by the sum of the population from areas A and C. I expect that the sign for the coefficient for this variable, *% New population*, to be negative in the continuous area regression and positive for the other two, out-in and in-out. Percent new population is also interacted with another variable, Δ *Presidential vote* to create a variable that measures both direction and magnitude of change.

Change in presidential vote is the standard measure used to gauge political change in the district (Ansolabehere, Snyder and Stewart 2000, 2001). This measure is taken from *CQ's Politics in America* and is the difference between the two-party share of the vote in 2000 and the share of the vote recalculated to the new district boundaries for the 2002 elections. Al Gore's vote share is used for Democrats and George W. Bush's for Republicans so positive numbers mean the district is moving in the incumbent's direction.[22] In addition to these two variables and the interaction term, each model has a variable that measures the median household income for the respective areas. As the median income increases, I expect the incumbent to earn more contributions.

**Redistricting Results**

Table 3 displays the results of the ordinary least squares regressions used to test the influence of redistricting on individual campaign contributions. In terms of the control variables, members with more seniority collect less from the core of their district and from constituents that left the district. This is consistent with the earlier results that found as members serve additional terms, they collect more money from out of the state. This

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[22] For example, if Bush received 63 percent in 2000 which was then calculated to be 61 percent in a new Republican district in 2002, the change in presidential vote would be 61-63=-2.

suggests that members may be trying to insulate themselves from redistricting during the course of their career. Next, the results indicate that Democratic incumbents lose money from the core of their district (in-in) and earn fewer contributions from new constituents compared to Republicans. Similar to the previous model, the more spending in a race, the more money members earn. Finally, in each of the three areas, as median incomes increase, members are more successful at fundraising.

Because the main variable of interest (percent new population) is interacted, the marginal effects and standard errors from the table are sufficient for interpretation since they vary depending on the values of the two interacted terms.[23] Figure 4 displays meaningful marginal effects and standard errors for percent new in the district, however, the dependent variable is rescaled to actual dollars instead of tens of thousands of dollars. In the figures, the solid line is the marginal effect of one percent new in the district over the range of change in presidential vote while the dashed lines represent 95 percent confidence intervals. The Y axis is total dollars and the X axis represents the change in presidential vote. Recall that negative numbers mean that the district is moving away from the incumbent. In the first column are the results for continuous areas, the second column shows results for areas that are new to a district and the final column represents the marginal effect for areas that were drawn out of the district. As long as the dashed lines do not bound zero (the dotted line), then percent new in the district is significant for that particular value of change in presidential vote.

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[23] For example, if $\hat{Y} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X + \beta_2 Z + \beta_3 XZ$ then the marginal effect, $\dfrac{\partial Y}{\partial X} = \beta_1 + \beta_3 Z$ and the

variance used to calculate standard errors is, $\hat{\sigma}^2 \dfrac{\partial Y}{\partial X} = \text{var}(\hat{\beta_1}) + Z^2 \text{var}(\hat{\beta_3}) + 2Z \text{cov}(\hat{\beta_1} \hat{\beta_3})$ (see

Bambor, Clark and Golder 2005).

When it comes to continuous areas, the marginal effect for each percent new in the district is negative and significant until change in presidential vote is equal to positive six. Substantively, this means that if the district moves away from the incumbent or slightly in their favor, they collect less money from individuals compared to a district that did not change. If the district moves more in favor of the incumbent, then the amount of population change has no effect on the amount of funds raised. When change in the district is politically neutral, members lose $2,034 for every percent of the population that is new. In terms of dollars then, this means that at the average level of percent new, 21.4 percent, and no political change, members lose about $43,500. This corresponds to 35 percent of the total collected from continuous areas and about 13 percent of the total amount of contribution from individuals.

Although members lose money from their core district after a redistricting, they can still hope to earn contributions from their new constituents and those that have left the district. However, as the results indicate, they do not take in enough new money to make up for the money that they lose. For districts that have neutral political change, members earn $576 from new constituents and $634 from constituents that have left the district for every one percent new population. At the average amount of district change then, this amounts to a net loss of about $17,600 or about 5 percent of the total collected from individuals as a result of redistricting. While this result is not overwhelming, it is non-trivial since members who are losing voters are the most in need of additional campaign funds.

**Motivations for Giving**

The results so far indicate that geography is an important determinant of the contribution, but the process does not take place in a vacuum. Individuals do not give simply because they reside in the same district as the member. Many give because they expect something in exchange for the contribution (Snyder 1990). Some contributors are looking for tangible rewards and are deemed "investors" by Francia et al. (2003). These types of contributors are in search of *narrow* benefits for their particular industry, company or even their personal financial situation. However, it may not be correct to assume that all donors are seeking a monetary reward. The study also found that others, deemed "intimates", give for solidary or social motives. Similar to the interest group literature (e.g. Olsen 1971), these contributors donate for the psychological rewards that come from the social aspect of giving. Unlike investors, solidary contributors do not give seeking tangible rewards. Consistent with solidary motivations, this type of contributor will give when invited to a fundraiser or directly asked by the candidate or a close friend. Some intimates stated "that friendship with a candidate or a solicitor was always important in helping them to decide to contribute," (47). Others acknowledged that local community ties played a major role in the decision calculus. In other words, there needs to be a social or local connection between the contributor and the campaign for an intimate to donate.

These two types of contributors, the study determined, were not evenly distributed across the two major parties. Democrats gave largely based on solidary reasons while Republican focused on material gains. Since 75 percent of contributions did not cross party lines (Francia et al. 2003:105), it is reasonable to assume that Democratic members

get most of their individual contributions from people who give for solidary reasons while Republicans receive donations based on material rewards. Below, I extend their theory to incorporate changes as a result of redistricting.

Given the different types of contributors, it may not be clear how redistricting will influence their behavior. Based on the reasons for giving, it may be the case that redistricting does not influence the types equally. However, it seems reasonable to assume that since investors, i.e. Republicans, are giving for tangible rewards, they should be more likely to abandon their previous representative. This should hold especially if the member in the old district no longer has the ability to exchange particularized benefits for contributions.[24] Solidary contributors, i.e. Democrats, are likely to give if their social group is connected to a candidate or local party. Since contributors who live in a different district after redistricting physically reside in the same location, their social networks are unlikely to have changed. In view of this detail, Democrats who have been drawn into new districts should be less likely to abandon their former member of Congress.

To test if this hypothesis, I reran the regression on areas that were drawn out of the district separately for the Democrats and Republicans. These results are presented in Table 4 and are quite similar across the two parties, except for one key difference. The sign on the interaction term is negative for Democratic incumbents and positive for Republicans. Substantively, this means that as a Democrat's district becomes more Republican, he collects *more* money from areas that have left the district. In contrast, as a Republican's district becomes more Democratic, she earns *less* money from those areas.

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[24] While there is no evidence of one to one exchanges between contributors and representatives, it is likely that a member of Congress will target rewards *in* their district versus outside of the district if given a chance.

These results are made more apparent in Figure 5, a figure analogous to Figure 4. In the first column, the marginal effect of each percent new in the district is positive and significant for Democrats until the district moves five percentage points in the Democratic direction. At this point, the effect is no longer significant. Further, the slope of the line is negative indicating that Democrats collect less money the more their district moves away from them. This implies that Democratic contributors are willing to help their old representative out if they are in trouble but if the old member is safe, they will no longer contribute.[25] Almost the exact opposite is evident for Republicans. Republicans will collect more money from their old constituents only if it looks like they have a good chance of returning to office. As the district moves in favor of the Republican incumbent they pick up more money from areas that previously were in their district. However, if the change in presidential vote is negative, then the effect is not statistically significant. Both of these pieces of evidence are consistent with Francia et al.'s theory that Democratic and Republican donors have different motivations for giving. Since Democrats receive contributions if they are more likely to lose, then it is unlikely that Democratic contributors are seeking some sort of tangible reward. On the other hand, Republican incumbents receive more contributions from their old constituents only if they have a good shot at returning to office. This means that Republican contributors are more likely to give if they can get something in return.

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[25] One could also argue that members who are in trouble would be more likely to ask former constituents for a donation.

**Conclusion and Future Research**

In this paper, I have shown that representatives' abilities to earn money from different geographic regions are dependent on their demand for funds and the available supply of contributions in each area. Although members of Congress frequently have to look outside of the district for funds, there was no evidence that more extreme incumbents were more successful at earning outside donations. When it comes to factors that are specific to each member, more senior incumbents take home a greater percentage of their individual contributions from outside the state, and less from inside their home state or district. Democrats also collect more from outside the district, but largely from inside their state. However, there is no evidence that more extreme members collect a greater percentage of money from outside their states.

When total spending in a race is high, and members demand for money increases, they are forced to look outside the district to other states for money. Members also look outside the district, although within the state, when they are not a good political match for the district. Finally, members who represent districts in large states are able to collect a greater share of their contributions inside the state, but not necessarily from the district.

When it comes to redistricting, the more a member's district changes, the less money they earn from individuals compared to districts that do not change. On average, representatives lose about $17,600 as a result of redistricting. This amount includes money lost when the district core shrinks, and money gained from new constituents. When it comes to holding onto old contributors, there is a difference between the two parties. Democrats earn money from the former parts of the district if their new district is more Republican. In contrast, Republicans receive money from their old contributors

when their new district is more favorable politically. This helps to highlight the differences between contributors who give for solidary or tangible reasons. In terms of representation, this paper showed that the relationships between a member and contributor are not static; rather they can change depending on where the contributor resides.

In future research dealing with individual contributors and geographic areas I hope to move on to a more micro analysis at the individual donor level. By matching up contributors across elections, I will better be able to test the influence that redistricting has on constituent behavior. I anticipate that individuals moving from districts that were in the minority to the majority and vice versa may also change their donation behavior in different ways. Although this paper has answered some basic questions, it could not answer all of them and in turn, has raised others. By moving beyond the aggregate level, I hope to find answers to some of those questions.

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**Table 1 – Percent of Money to Incumbent Candidates, 1999-2000 Election Cycle**

| Party | In District | Out of District/ In State | Out of State |
|---|---|---|---|
| Democrat | .30 | .27 | .43 |
| Republican | .44 | .23 | .33 |

**Table 2 – Percent Contribution from Geographic Areas**

| Variable | OLS Coefficient (Standard Error) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | In the District | Out District of in State | Out of State |
| **Member** | | | |
| Absolute Value W-NOMINATE | -.026 (.060) | -.003 (.060) | .029 (.048) |
| Seniority | -.019* (.002) | -.007* (.003) | .026* (.003) |
| Prestige Committee | .060* (.025) | -.026 (.025) | -.034* (.017) |
| Constituency Committee | .023 (.024) | .012 (.024) | -.035* (.017) |
| Party (1=Dem.) | -.123* (.026) | .089* (.026) | .034 (.022) |
| **Election** | | | |
| Total Spending | -.0003* (.0001) | .0001 (.0001) | .0002* (.0001) |
| Quality Challenger | .017 (.027) | -.013 (.026) | .0007 (.019) |
| **District** | | | |
| District Median Income | -.002 (.009) | .006 (.009) | -.0008 (.006) |
| District Presidential Vote | -.003* (.0009) | .002* (.001) | .0007 (.0008) |
| Number of Districts | -.002* (.0007) | .004* (.0007) | -.002* (.0005) |
| Constant | .735* (.086) | .145 (.083) | .120 (.062) |
| N | 388 | 388 | 388 |
| F | 19.71* | 9.03* | 16.66* |
| Adj. $R^2$ | .25 | .17 | .34 |

Dependent Variable - % of Individual Contributions
*$p<.05$

**Table 3 – Contributions from Areas that are Continuous, New or Left the District**

| Variable | OLS Coefficient (Standard Error) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Continuous (In-In) | New to the District (Out-In) | Left the District (In-Out) |
| **Member** | | | |
| Absolute Value W-NOMINATE | -6.66 | -1.66 | .589 |
| | (4.24) | (.952) | (.926) |
| Seniority | -.692* | 0.040 | -.147* |
| | (.134) | (.030) | (.036) |
| Prestige Committee | 1.92 | .349 | .191 |
| | (1.42) | (.292) | (.425) |
| Constituency Committee | -1.18 | .501 | -.092 |
| | (1.34) | (.303) | (.393) |
| Party (1=Dem.) | -6.74* | -.707* | .221 |
| | (1.47) | (.303) | (.411) |
| **Election** | | | |
| Total Spending | .059* | .008* | .007* |
| | (.014) | (.002) | (.003) |
| Quality Challenger | 1.64 | .068 | -.073 |
| | (2.63) | (.437) | (.562) |
| **District** | | | |
| Median Income Continuous Areas | 1.79* | --- | --- |
| | (.602) | | |
| Median Income New Areas | --- | .299* | --- |
| | | (.091) | |
| Median Income Old Areas | --- | --- | .334* |
| | | | (.084) |
| District Presidential Vote | -.072 | .026 | -.009 |
| | (.057) | (.016) | (.017) |
| % New Population | -.203* | .058* | .063* |
| | (.036) | (.011) | (.011) |
| Δ Presidential Vote | -.757* | .114 | .112 |
| | (.335) | (.076) | (.094) |
| % New Population × Δ Presidential Vote | .020* | -.002 | -0.0004 |
| | (.009) | (.002) | (.002) |
| Number of Districts | -.041 | -.008 | -.001 |
| | (.028) | (.008) | (.008) |
| Constant | 18.35* | -2.36* | -1.28 |
| | (4.37) | (1.03) | (1.16) |
| N | 384 | 283 | 284 |
| F | 11.05* | 8.78* | 7.74* |
| Adj. $R^2$ | .42 | .33 | .33 |

Dependent Variable – Amount of Contributions divided by 10,000.
*$p < .05$

**Table 4 – Contributions from Areas Drawn Out of the District (In-Out) by Party**

| Variable | OLS coefficient (standard error) | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | **Democrat Incumbent** | **Republican Incumbent** |
| **Incumbent** | | |
| Absolute Value W-NOMINATE | .273 | .970 |
| | (1.13) | (1.74) |
| Seniority | -.156* | -.136* |
| | (.058) | (.039) |
| Prestige Committee | .365 | -.289 |
| | (.700) | (.340) |
| Constituency Committee | .475 | -.278 |
| | (.726) | (.331) |
| **Election** | | |
| Total Spending | .020* | .003* |
| | (.006) | (.001) |
| Quality Challenger | .349 | -.188 |
| | (1.05) | (.367) |
| **District** | | |
| Median Income | .369* | .319* |
| Old Areas | (.136) | (.110) |
| District Presidential Vote | .013 | -.0001 |
| | (.025) | (.025) |
| % New Population | .067* | .048* |
| | (.022) | (.008) |
| Δ Presidential Vote | .189 | .023 |
| | (.137) | (.118) |
| % New Population × | -.004 | .004 |
| Δ Presidential Vote | (.003) | (.003) |
| Number of Districts | -.012 | -.003 |
| | (.013) | (.008) |
| Constant | -3.97 | -1.12 |
| | (2.02) | (1.54) |
| N | 122 | 162 |
| F | 3.83* | 10.47* |
| Adj. $R^2$ | .41 | .37 |

Dependent Variable – Amount of Contributions divided by 10,000. All income and spending variables divided by 10,000
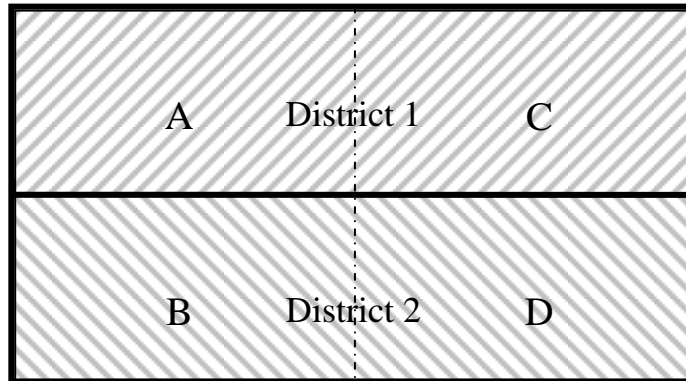*$p<.05$

# Figure 3 – Area Typology

## Pre-Redistricting
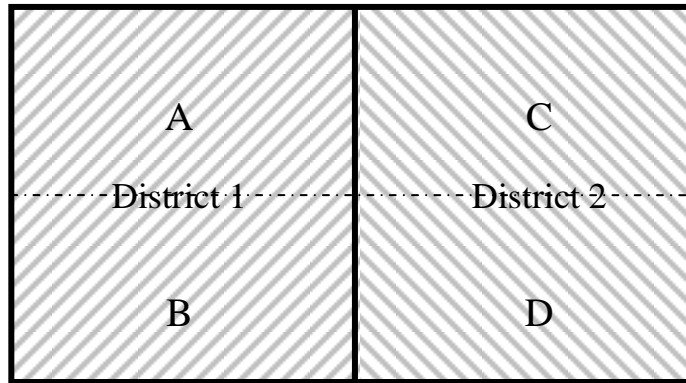


## Post-Redistricting



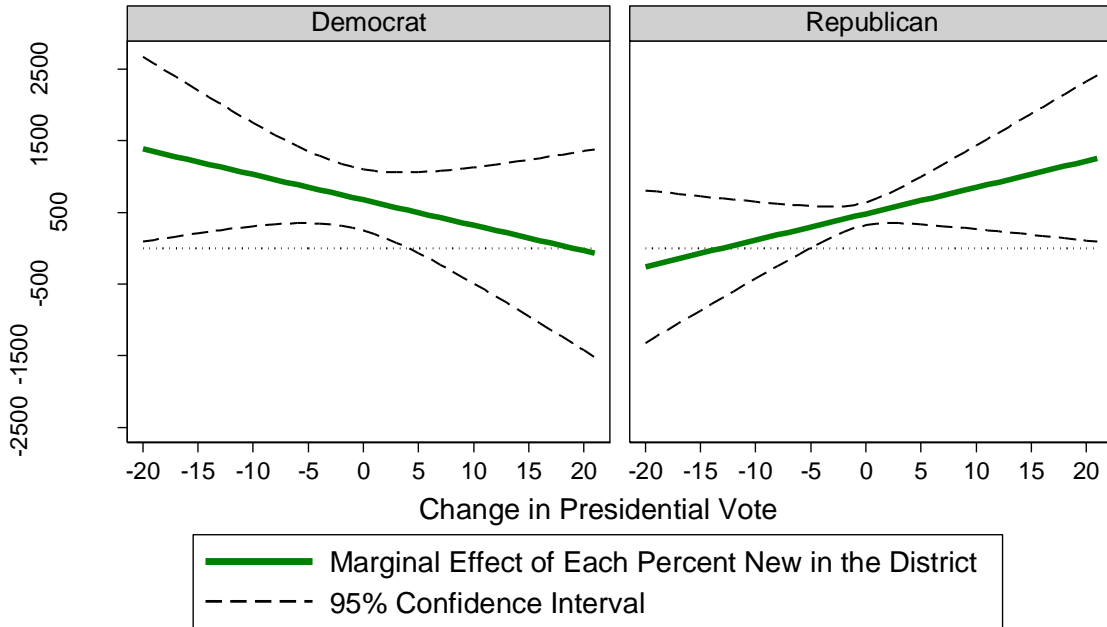| District | Area | Type |
|----------|------|---------|
| One | A | In-In |
| | B | In-Out |
| | C | Out-In |
| | D | Out-Out |
| Two | A | Out-Out |
| | B | Out-In |
| | C | In-Out |
| | D | In-In |

# Figure 4 - Effect of Percent New in the District On Contributions
## Dependent Variable - Contributions from ZCTAs



Change in Presidential Vote

Marginal Effect of Each Percent New in the District
95% Confidence Interval
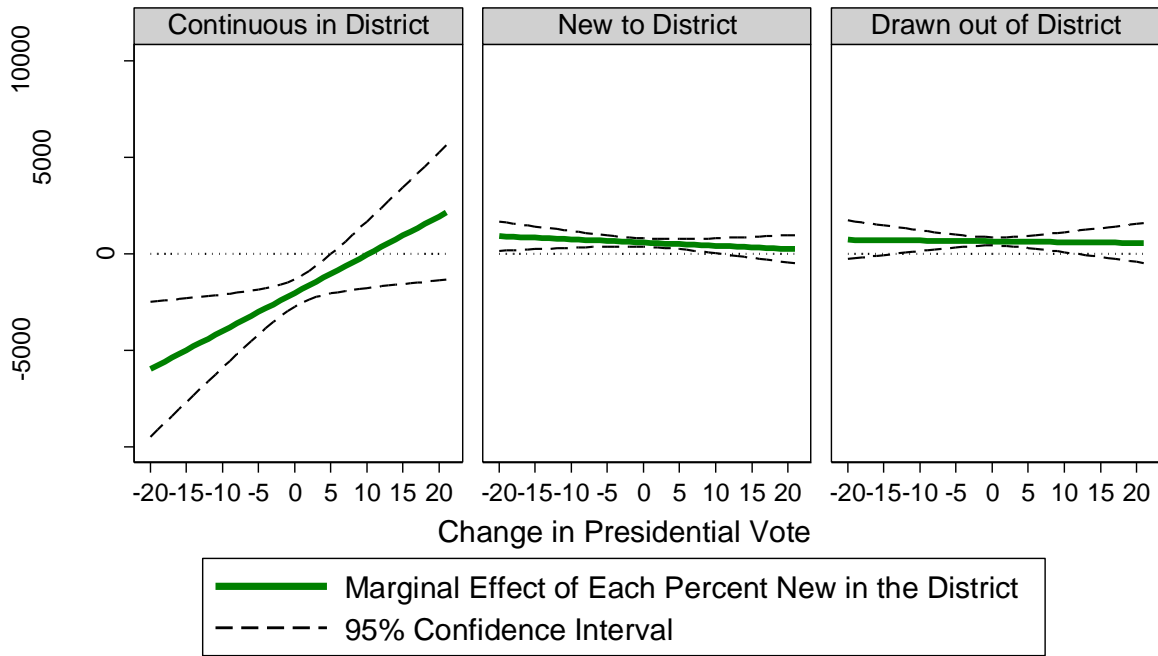
ZCTAs - Zip Code Tabulation Areas

# Figure 5 - Effect of Percent New in the District On Contributions
## Dependent Variable - Contributions from Old ZCTAs



Change in Presidential Vote

Marginal Effect of Each Percent New in the District
95% Confidence Interval

ZCTAs - Zip Code Tabulation Areas