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The Iraq War, Partisanship, and Candidate Attributes: Variation in Partisan Swing in the 2006 U.S. House Elections

Although partisan swing is often assumed to be uniform across congressional districts, our analysis of the 2006 House elections demonstrates that systematic variation exists. In addition to incumbency status, partisanship, spending, and scandal, variation in the local salience of national issues across districts affects vote shifts in these districts. Notably, partisan swing in Republican districts proved highly sensitive to the number of Iraq war deaths from that district and, to a lesser degree, to the roll-call vote of Republican House members on the war resolution. These findings have implications for theories of anticipatory representation, retrospective voting, and electoral accountability.

Few political observers dispute that the Iraq war influenced the outcome of the 2006 midterm elections. The perceived failure of U.S. policy in Iraq contributed to President George W. Bush's low approval rating, which in turn disadvantaged Republican congressional candidates. Pundits suggested that the Democratic wave was across the board, contributing to the national partisan swing of the election. We analyzed the partisan swing in U.S. House elections in 2006 and found that three factors explain the variation in swing across House districts: candidate attributes, the Iraq war, and the underlying district partisanship. Regarding the Iraq war, we discovered that the number of district-level "hometown" fatal casualties and legislators' votes authorizing the war can explain the variation in the partisan swing, although this effect is contingent on the legislator's party.

In 2006, Democrats regained control of the House of Representatives for the first time since the 1994 Republican landslide. The party captured 30 seats, producing a 233-202 House majority at the start of the 110th Congress. Nationally, Democrats won an estimated 54% of

the two-party vote for the House, an increase of 5.4 percentage points from the 48.6% they garnered in 2004.[1] If that 5.4-point partisan swing had been universal across all districts, then the Democrats would have struggled to win control of the House and come nowhere near a 30-seat pickup. Although it has been convenient for preelection forecasters to think in terms of a national partisan swing with little variation across congressional districts, that viewpoint is not valid. Partisan swing may typically vary somewhat across districts, as the importance of challenger quality, scandal, campaign spending, and incumbency status of the seat differentially affect races. But the 2006 election was not typical. In addition to these conventional factors, the salience of the Iraq war may have led to larger partisan swings in some districts.

We investigated what factors influenced the amount of swing between 2004 and 2006 across House districts and to what degree the variation in swing was systematic. To do so, we accounted for some variables that scholars have commonly included in the analysis of congressional elections, such as incumbent versus open seat, quality of challenger, and scandal. In addition, we examined the underlying partisan composition of each district and the salience of a key national issue. Aside from some results consistent with previous studies, we found that the swing was larger in Republican districts, in districts that were party competitive, and in districts where a key issue (the Iraq war) was most salient. Voters held individual Republican members of Congress accountable for the local impact of Iraq war deaths in their congressional districts and also held GOP members accountable for their roll-call votes on the Iraq war. Voters did not reward or punish Democrats for their votes on the Iraq war or the number of war deaths in their districts.

2006 House Elections: Expectations and Reality

As the 2006 elections approached, many scholars and pundits hedged on the question of whether or not the Democrats would win control of the House or Senate. In the latter case, reservations arose from the fact that the Democrats were more exposed, holding 18 of the 33 seats to be contested, thus limiting the number of targets from which they could make gains. For the House, however, attention focused on a perceived small number of potentially competitive seats. As Abramowitz (2006, 863) correctly noted in his article forecasting the midterm elections, only 12 of the Republicans elected in 2004 won with less than 55% of the two-party vote and only 16 represented

districts that presidential candidate John Kerry carried in that election. Campbell (2006) was even more guarded in his expectations. His forecasting model accounted for the substantial decline in the number of competitive House seats in recent decades. Campbell contended that prediction models had to account for the fact that fewer seats were "in play," and he observed how few seats were "marginal or closely fought" in the previous four national elections (Campbell 2006, 10).[2] To win control of the House, the Democrats would not only have to hold nearly all of the seats they had going into the 2006 election, but they would also have to win GOP seats that were not competitive in 2004. Yet as the election neared, and despite the reservations, a consensus began to develop that the 2006 midterm elections would produce a national tidal wave favoring the Democrats, one sufficient to return the party to majority status in the House. President Bush's low job-approval ratings, the increasing unpopularity of the Iraq war, the sizable margins in the generic congressional poll, and a series of scandals all pointed in the same direction (Bafumi, Erikson, and Wlezien 2006; Cook 2006; Rothenberg 2006).[3]

Comparing the 2004 and 2006 House elections at the district level, however, we were immediately struck by the unevenness of the so-called tidal wave election. Using the percentage of the two-party vote that the Democratic candidate received in open-seat and incumbent-held districts with major-party opposition in both 2004 and 2006 and where no redistricting occurred between the two elections, the swing between the two elections ranged from a low of –19.2 (Democratic loss of more than 19 percentage points) to a high of 34.6 (Democratic gain of more than 34%), with a mean of 4.2 and a standard deviation of 6.1.[4] As one might expect, the two extreme districts in terms of partisan swing were both open seats in 2006.

But the unevenness of the swing is not merely in the difference between incumbent-held seats and open seats. In Tables 1 and 2, we provide descriptive statistics for the 2006 partisan swing for each party's incumbents separately. In districts where an incumbent ran for re-election in 2006, the swing range remained very sizable, running from –15.8 to 28.6, with a mean of 4.6 and a standard deviation of 5.4 for GOP incumbents and a mean of 2.7 and a standard deviation of 4.8 for Democratic incumbents.[5] Tables 1 and 2 also reveal that the partisan swing varies in size across districts. These statistics suggest that generalizing about national partisan swing from a central-tendency measure may camouflage substantial variation. We will now investigate if the sources of that variation extended beyond the conventional, established ones.

TABLE 1
Republican Incumbents in 2006 and the
Democratic Two-party Vote Swing, Descriptive Statistics

District Partisan Performance in 2004 (no. of GOP incumbents in 2006 in each category)	Mean Democratic Two-party Vote-share Change, 2004–06 (standard deviation)	Minimum Democratic Two-party Vote-share Change, 2004–06 (name of incumbent)	Maximum Democratic Two-party Vote-share Change, 2004–06 (name of incumbent)
< 50% Bush 2-party vote in 2004 (n = 15)	8.7 (5.8)	0.4 (Jim Gerlach, R, PA-6)	17.2 (Nancy Johnson, R, CT-5)
Bush 2-party vote 50–54.9% (n = 35)	7.1 (5.0)	−0.3 (Jim Ramstad, R, MN-3)	19.2 (John Sweeney, R, NY-20)
Bush 2-party vote 55–59.9% (n = 42)	2.9 (3.8)	−11.9 (Randy Forbes, R, VA-4)	9.2 (Dave Weldon, R, FL-15)
Bush 2-party vote 60–64.9% (n = 41)	3.6 (6.1)	−15.8 (Charles Boustany, R, LA-7)	17.5 (Don Young, R, AK-1)
Bush 2-party vote 65–69.9% (n = 23)	4.2 (4.9)	−7.2 (Louis Gohmert, R, TX-1)	14.8 (Mark Souder, R, IN-3)
Bush 2-party vote 70% and up (n = 10)	2.7 (5.1)	−10.1 (Randy Neugebauer, R, TX-19)	8.0 (Jeff Miller, R, FL-1)
All GOP Incumbents (n = 166)	4.6 (5.4)	−15.8 (Charles Boustany, R, LA-7)	19.2 (John Sweeney, R, NY-20)
National Democratic Swing (all voters)	5.4	———	———

Note: This table includes only Republican incumbents running for reelection in 2006, excludes districts redistricted between 2004 and 2006, and excludes any incumbents who were unopposed or faced no major-party opposition in either 2004 or 2006.

TABLE 2
Democratic Incumbents in 2006 and the
Democratic Two-party Vote Swing, Descriptive Statistics

District Partisan Performance in 2004 (no. of Democratic incumbents in 2006 in each category)	Mean Democratic Two-party Vote-share Change, 2004–06 (standard deviation)	Minimum Democratic Two-party Vote-share Change, 2004–06 (name of incumbent)	Maximum Democratic Two-party Vote-share Change, 2004–06 (name of incumbent)
Bush 2-party vote ≥ 50% in 2004 (n = 32)	3.9 (5.2)	−6.0 (John Spratt, D, SC-5)	16.4 (Stephanie Herseth, D, SD-AL)
Bush 2-party vote 45–49.9% (n = 16)	5.2 (7.0)	−2.1 (James Oberstar, D, MN-8)	28.6 (Brian Higgins, D, NY-27)
Bush 2-party vote 40–44.9% (n = 31)	3.1 (3.6)	−1.9 (Raul Grijalva, D, AZ-7)	13.4 (Russ Carnahan, D, MO-3)
Bush 2-party vote 35–39.9% (n = 18)	0.9 (5.0)	−14.3 (Doris Matsui, D, CA-5)[a]	10.7 (Patrick Kennedy, D, RI-1)
Bush 2-party vote 30–34.9% (n = 10)	1.6 (2.5)	−1.8 (Eliot Engel, D, NY-17)	7.3 (Sam Farr, D, CA-17)
Bush 2-party vote < 30% (n = 22)	0.6 (3.0)	−9.9 (Bill Jefferson, D, LA-2)[b]	4.5 (Jerrold Nadler, D, NY-8)
All Democratic Incumbents (n = 129)	2.7 (4.8)	−14.3 (Doris Matsui, D, CA-5)[a]	28.6 (Brian Higgins, D, NY-27)
National Democratic Swing (all voters)	5.4	———	———

Note: This table includes only Democratic incumbents running for reelection in 2006, excludes districts redistricted between 2004 and 2006, and excludes any incumbents who were unopposed or faced no major-party opposition in either 2004 or 2006.
[a]Doris Matsui was first elected in a special election in 2005 to replace her deceased husband, Robert Matsui. We subtracted her 2006 vote from her 2005 special-election vote to garner the Democratic two-party vote-share change.
[b]For runoffs without a Republican versus a Democratic candidate, Louisiana's Democratic vote-share change from 2004 to 2006 was calculated using the two-party vote based on the vote of the top vote-getting candidate and the highest vote-receiving candidate from the opposite party.

Explaining Variation in the Partisan Swing:
Candidate and Seat Attributes

The literature on congressional elections suggests variables that might explain the differences in partisan swing across congressional districts. We expect that incumbents of the president's party would be able to insulate themselves better from the partisan swing than their party's candidates in open-seat contests. Although scholars disagree about the sources of incumbency advantage—use of perks of the office; Mayhew's (1974) triad of advertising, credit claiming, and position taking; casework and ombudsman service; or fund-raising advantages linked to incumbency— and about whether or not it is as sizable now as it was from the mid-1960s to the 1980s, the combined effects discourage strong challengers from entering and disadvantage those who do run (see, for example, Alford and Hibbing 1981; Cain, Ferejohn, and Fiorina 1987; Erikson 1971; Fiorina 1989; Herrnson 2003; Jacobson 2003; and Oppenheimer 2005). Accordingly, we would expect the district's incumbency status to affect the amount of swing.

For an election year when the prospects are not favorable for a given party, Jacobson and Kernell (1983) argue that strategic candidacies lead to a stronger-than-normal pool of challengers to that party's incumbents and a weaker-than-normal pool challenging the favored party's incumbents.[6] But such a trend affects contests selectively, where quality challengers ultimately decide to run. For example, we would expect a larger swing in a district where an incumbent Republican had a quality challenger in 2006 than in a similar district with no quality challenger (Jacobson 1989). Also, candidate spending—and particularly opponent spending—has been shown to make congressional elections more competitive (Jacobson 2003).

Further, Fenno (1978) reminds us of the importance of qualification in building a trust relationship between a House member and constituents and the dire consequences that arise when qualification is lost, as when an incumbent is implicated in some personal or professional scandal (Abramowitz 1988; Jacobson and Dimock 1994). In 2006, general concerns related to corruption in government dogged many GOP members, but the individual-level effects of scandals are exacerbated in races where a candidate is directly implicated.

In sum, the existing literature on congressional elections provides support for the idea that some commonly examined factors (incumbency, challenger quality, challenger spending, and scandal) may have caused variation in the amount of swing across House contests between 2004 and 2006. But we also suspect that the salience of an important national issue may have had an effect, as well.

The Iraq War: Anticipatory Representation,
Responsible-party Government, and the Swing

It is likely that the Iraq war had an effect on differentials in the vote swing across districts. Our expectations regarding the war's effect emerged from two different (although not necessarily competing) theoretical perspectives on representation: Mansbridge's (2003) theory of legislative anticipatory representation, and responsible-party government theory.

Mansbridge (2003), following Arnold's (1990) insights, has argued that theoretical conceptions of representation in legislatures should move beyond what she terms "promissory representation," defined as legislators dyadically enacting policies with reference to voters' expressed beliefs revealed in the previous campaign (see also Key's 1961 discussion of "latent opinion"). In Mansbridge's theory, and as an alternative to promissory representation, she contends that legislators engage in "anticipatory representation," estimating future policy outcomes and calculating the likely negative or positive conse-quences of these policies when casting votes. In the theory of anticipa-tory representation, legislators are more concerned with voters' future reactions to roll-call decisions and resultant policy outcomes than they are with district-level opinion at the time that roll-call votes are cast. Mansbridge posits that voters grant leeway to their legislators on any host of issues and roll calls in the short run but will hold them accountable for outcomes of these decisions over the long run (also see Bianco 1994). This concept of anticipatory representation is similar to the idea of retrospective voting (Fiorina 1981).

Connecting this theoretical framework to the key national issue of the 2006 elections, the Iraq war, we expect voters to punish those members most directly tied to the war's negative consequences. Because the U.S. House initially approved the Iraq war in 2002, "future" policy outcomes linked to that initial war vote can be measured in two ways: (1) voters in 2006 generally disapprove of the war, regardless of the local salience of the war, and thus voters punish those legislators who voted for the 2002 war resolution; and (2) the past roll-call vote yields a policy outcome with local consequences in 2006 (such as home-town Iraq war deaths), thus increasing the war's negative outcomes in specific districts. Therefore, in addition to voters punishing Republicans generally, we infer from Mansbridge's theory that individual legislators will be punished or rewarded in the 2006 election for both (1) their 2002 votes on the Iraq war, and (2) any collateral consequences (namely, district-level war deaths) of this earlier vote. Further, the Iraq war was

a highly charged issue during the 2006 campaign, making it an "easy" issue for voters to connect to legislators' past decisions, much as Carmines and Stimson (1980) argue that race was an easy, emotionally charged issue.

If the predictions of this theory of anticipatory representation are not demonstrated (and instead promissory or dyadic representation is used by legislators and voters), then there is not likely to be a specific electoral effect tied to either fatal casualties or roll calls at the individual district level. In sum, the theoretical expectation derived from Mansbridge (2003) and Arnold (1990) would be that legislators' past roll calls, higher deaths in specific districts (a policy outcome due to past roll calls), or both will be rewarded or punished at the polls.

Responsible-party government offers an alternative, although not entirely competing, theoretical view to Mansbridge's work. "Anticipatory representation" suggests an application to all legislators, regardless of party, but a "responsible-party government" conception of accountability (APSA Report 1950) suggests that voters will punish the party in power and not the minority party, regardless of the individual responsibility that each specific legislator holds. The responsible-party government theory implies that these individual legislator- and district-specific factors are unlikely to matter and that Republican legislators will generally and across the board fare poorly, regardless of the local salience of the war.

As a third alternative, merging the predictions of both the Mansbridge and responsible-party government conceptions of representation may yield reasonable expectations for the effect of the Iraq war on the partisan swing in 2006. Combining a party-government form of voter behavior with the theory of legislative anticipatory representation, we expect that (1) legislators who voted for the war would face negative electoral consequences; (2) legislators who represented districts with higher fatal casualties would also suffer electoral punishment; and (3) these patterns would be more pronounced among Republican legislators.

Most work in the field has focused on the effect of military events on public opinion (see, for instance, Berinsky and Druckman 2007; Boettcher and Cobb 2006; Gartner and Segura 1998; Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler 2005/2006; and Mueller 1973). Still, prior research provides some support for and some doubts about a relationship between variation in Iraq war salience and the partisan swing across House districts. Gartner, Segura, and Barratt (2004) have shown that higher numbers of Vietnam casualties reduced the electoral margins of senators from 1966 to 1972, an effect "ameliorated when the incumbent opposes

the war . . ."(467). Karol and Miguel (2007, 647) found a negative relationship between Iraq war casualties and the vote in states for President Bush in the 2004 election, controlling for other factors that predict the vote, and they wonder if there are similar localized effects on the 2006 elections. Kriner and Shen (2007) found that the number of Iraq war casualties negatively affected the vote share of incumbent Republican U.S. Senate candidates in 2006. But one might doubt that similar issue effects will be found in House campaigns. For example, Kahn and Kenney (2002) have contended that issues and ideology have an effect in Senate campaigns but that House campaigns "simply do not provide enough information to citizens" for issues to have a similar effect (64). Many House campaigns are not competitive, and issues do not receive emphasis in noncompetitive campaigns. More important, from the perspective of our research, is Kahn and Kenney's contention that the poor fit of media markets with House districts leads to sparse information available to voters about issues.

District Partisanship and Variations in Partisan Swing

In addition to the variables we have discussed, other factors that have previously received little or no consideration may have contributed to the variability in partisan swing across districts in the 2006 House elections. First, we hypothesize that the underlying partisan competitiveness of the congressional district may have played a role. Incumbency advantage is not ubiquitous across all congressional districts (Erikson and Wright 1993). If incumbency advantage is operationalized as the ability of an incumbent to exceed the vote expectation for the district that would be predicted from underlying district partisan composition, then existing analyses show that incumbents in competitive districts primarily earn incumbency advantage. That is, incumbents in competitive districts have strong incentives to exceed their expected vote because of the underlying partisanship of their districts; incumbents from very safe, one-party districts do not. Given that distinction, we expect that a midterm election with a strong national trend favoring one party will result in a district-level vote swing that will make members who rely heavily on incumbency advantage most vulnerable. As national partisan forces become more important in an election, legislators dependent on incumbency advantage should suffer the largest erosion of support as partisanship increasingly displaces incumbency as a voting cue. These tidal wave elections should yield "partisan corrections" to overvalued incumbents, much as a correction to the stock market deflates overvalued stocks.

Second, we hypothesize that the amount of partisan swing in 2006 would differ in Democratic- and Republican-held districts. Hibbing and Alford (1981) discovered that when the economy is weak, the negative effect on House incumbents of the president's party exceeds any positive effect for out-party incumbents: "When voters are motivated to 'throw the bastards out' or alternatively to 'keep the good guys in,' the referent is always an incumbent member of the in party" (431). Although Hibbing and Alford's findings were part of an investigation of the effect of economic conditions, and the state of the economy was neither strong enough or weak enough to play a major role in the 2006 elections, we expect Hibbing and Alford's findings to extend to other salient factors for which voters may blame in-party candidates.[7] We hypothesize that the effect of general disaffection with the president will result in bigger negative swings in GOP districts than the positive swings in Democratic ones.[8]

Specification of the Empirical Models

We estimated eight multivariate models, four each for seats held by each party entering the 2006 election. We estimated separate party models because we suspected that the effects of most key independent variables would differ across parties.[9] We excluded districts that were redistricted between the 2004 and 2006 elections because the election results are not comparable.[10] We also excluded districts with no major-party opposition in 2004 or in 2006.[11] The dependent variable in all models is the *Democratic Vote-share Swing* from 2004 to 2006, measured as the 2006 Democratic House candidate two-party vote share minus the 2004 Democratic House candidate two-party vote share.[12] Negative values indicate a reduction in Democratic vote share in 2006; positive values indicate an increase in Democratic vote share in 2006.

We included a number of independent variables to capture national-level and district-specific expected effects. In the following descriptions, we discuss the expected direction of the effects for both Republican and Democratic members. Because the dependent variable in both Republican and Democratic models is the Democratic vote swing, the directional effect for all variables will be opposite for Democrats compared to Republicans, unless we indicate otherwise. As we later discuss in more detail, we estimated four models in each split-party sample because of concerns regarding multicollinearity across some key independent variables.

We included *Bush 2004 Two-party Vote in District* to assess the effect of the underlying partisanship of the district and to determine if

this tidal wave election was a "partisan correction." We expect marginal Republican districts (those where Kerry won or where Bush carried the district narrowly) to have a larger swing than Republican districts that were somewhat less marginal, as measured by the underlying partisanship of the district. For Democratic seats, the theoretical relationship would be the same but yield a positive statistical relationship: very unsafe districts would have large vote-share swings, and safer districts would have smaller swings.

We also included independent variables for the incumbency status of seats and the presence of quality challengers. *Incumbent* is coded as 1 if the incumbent ran for reelection in 2006 and as 0 if the seat was open. We expect this variable to be negative for Republicans because incumbents should have less of a Democratic swing, but we expect this variable to be positive for Democrats because incumbent Democrats should have benefited from the national swing combined with advantages accrued from incumbency. *Quality Challenger* is coded similarly. We defined quality challengers, according to Jacobson's typology, as candidates who had previously held elected office and who ran against incumbents.[13] This variable is coded as 1 if there was a quality challenger running against an incumbent in 2006 and as 0 if there was no quality challenger.[14] We expect this variable to be positive for Republican seats and negative for Democratic seats.

We included a dummy variable for scandal, coded as 1 if the candidate running was associated with a scandal in 2006 and coded 0 otherwise. We determined whether or not a candidate was involved in a scandal by referring to the *Hotline*. In November 2006, the *Hotline* identified House candidates and districts involved in personal, financial, or other scandals, and we used this list to construct the variable.[15] *Opponent Spending* controls for the effect of campaign spending on the swing (data for this variable came from *Politics in America*). We measured this variable as the 2006 expenditures by the opponent minus the 2004 expenditures by the opponent. Thus, for the GOP models (because this variable measures the change in Democratic candidate spending between 2004 and 2006), we expect this variable to be positive. For Democratic seat models, we expect this variable to be negative (because the measure is based on Republican candidate spending change).[16]

We employed several measures to (1) assess the effect of national issues (specifically the Iraq war) on the 2006 Democratic vote-share swing; (2) determine whether this prominent issue affected all House members relatively equally or if this issue's effect was contingent upon district- or legislator-specific factors; and (3) evaluate anticipatory-

representation expectations and responsible-party expectations. Our measures account for the Iraq war deaths in each congressional district, the roll-call vote of the representative in authorizing the war, and an interaction of the war deaths and the roll call, respectively.

In Model 1, we included the variable *Iraq War Deaths in District (Measure 1)*, which is the number of soldiers from the congressional district who were killed in Operation Iraqi Freedom between January 1, 2006 and November 6, 2006.[17] To construct this variable, we consulted the list of fatal casualties reported by the Department of Defense, which includes the hometown, referred to as the "home of record," of each American killed in Iraq. The "home of record" refers not to the location of the military base of the soldier, but the soldier's listed hometown prior to military service. The casualty database does not provide zip codes, only city/town names. To compile the number of Iraq war deaths per district, we used all "home of record" cities in the casualties database, looked up all zip codes for these cities, and then, using the *Congressional Staff Directory*, paired zip codes to congressional districts (the *Congressional Staff Directory* lists every zip code in a congressional district). If a city's set of zip codes overlapped multiple districts, then each death was attributed to all congressional districts (for example, zip codes for the "home of record" of New York, New York, overlap four House districts; if there was one total death in the "home of record" of New York, New York, then all four of these districts were coded as having one death). The mean number of Iraq war deaths per district by this measure is just over 2, although there is quite a bit of variation across districts. The minimum value is 0 deaths, and the maximum is 9 deaths.[18]

The results in Model 2 rely on an alternative measure of Iraq war deaths, *Iraq War Deaths in District (Measure 2)*, which differs from the measure in Model 1 regarding home of record and district overlaps. When the hometown's set of zip codes did not identify only one district, we divided by the number of congressional districts "claiming" the Operation Iraqi Freedom fatality. For instance, if there was one death in New York, New York, then all four districts that overlap New York, New York, were coded as having 0.25 deaths (1 death/4 districts = 0.25).

We also estimated two other models examining the effect of war deaths, legislators' roll-call votes on the decision to go to war in Iraq, and the interaction of these two variables. In Model 3, we included *Iraq War Deaths (Measure 1)* and the additional variables that follow; in Model 4, we included *Iraq War Deaths (Measure 2)* and the additional independent variables that follow. We coded *Iraq War Vote* as 1

if the member voted for H.J. Res. 114 to authorize the war in Iraq on October 10, 2002. We coded this variable as 0 if the member did not serve during October 10, 2002, if he or she abstained, or if the 2006 race in the district was an open seat (only one representative running in 2006, Solomon Ortiz, abstained). The variable was coded –1 if the member voted against H.J. Res. 114 and thus voted against the war in Iraq. On the Republican side, of those candidates running for reelection in 2006, only four Republican incumbents voted against the war, while 153 voted for the war. Yet 75 Republican seats had candidates (either incumbents or new candidates in formerly GOP open seats) who did not vote on H.J. Res. 114, primarily because they did not serve during that time period. The large number of seats held by Republicans in 2006 where the Republican incumbent or open-seat candidate did not serve during the vote provides the key variation compared to legislators who served and voted for the bill. If voters blamed individual members for the war, then those Republicans not serving and thus not voting for the Iraq war resolution should yield a smaller Democratic vote swing. On the Democratic side, quite a few members voted for the war, voted against the war, or were not serving in 2002: 103 Democratic incumbents running for reelection in 2006 voted against the war, 54 voted for the war, and 46 did not serve or abstained during the Iraq war vote.

If voters punish specifically those members who voted for the war, then, regardless of the legislator's party, the effect of this vote variable should be positive for GOP seats and negative for Democratic seats. If, however, voters punish only individual GOP members for their roll calls, then we should not find a relationship between *Iraq War Vote* in the Democratic seats models, but we should find one between *Iraq War Deaths in District* and the dependent variable in the GOP seats models. Further, we included the interaction of *Iraq War Vote* and *Iraq War Deaths* because voters may punish members who voted for the war according to the number of Iraq war fatalities per district. This variable is in keeping with Gartner, Segura, and Barratt's (2004) findings that the effect of casualties in Vietnam on Senate elections was reduced if the senator had opposed the war. Because of potential collinearity between the Iraq war deaths measures and the Iraq war vote base and interaction variables, we estimated models with and without *Iraq War Vote* and *Iraq War Vote x Iraq War Deaths*.[19]

Finally, we wanted to control for confounding variables related to districts with large military constituencies (Karol and Miguel 2007; Kriner and Shen 2007). *Veterans in District* is the percentage of the district civilian population that are veterans. *Armed Forces Population*

of District is the percentage of the district population aged 18–64 in the armed forces. Both of these variables are based on 2000 census data. Kriner and Shen (2007) argue that conventional wisdom suggests that military communities may be more likely to support the GOP in 2006, although they also suggest that these communities "may have viewed the war and the administration's military policies through a distinctly different and more critical lens . . ." (515).

Results: Predicting the Democratic Swing

Table 3 displays the results of the Republican-held seat models of the Democratic swing. Table 4 shows the results of the Democratic-held seat models of the Democratic swing.[20] In Table 3, most variables in Models 1 and 2 are predictors of the partisan swing for Republicans: *Incumbent, Scandal, Opponent Spending, Iraq War Deaths,* and *Veterans in District* all have a statistically significant effect on the vote-share swing for GOP incumbents. [The veterans variable is positive and significant, consistent with the 2006 Senate election findings of Kriner and Shen (2007)]. When we add *Iraq War Vote* and the Iraq vote-deaths interaction variable in Models 3 and 4 in Table 3, all of the variables in the first two models remain significant, and *Iraq War Vote* is also significant. *Quality Challenger* is insignificant, likely because *Opponent Spending* is correlated with the quality-challenger measure: the strongest challengers are able to raise and spend large amounts of money.

These models' findings indicate that voters punished Republicans contingent upon the local context of war deaths. Voters also punished those Republicans who voted for the war in Iraq, although the level of statistical significance here is not as great as for other variables. Thus, a combination of anticipatory-representation and responsible-party government explanations, contingent upon district- and member-specific factors pertaining to salience of the Iraq war as an issue, seems to be key to understanding swing variation in GOP House seats in 2006. As Iraq war deaths increased in congressional districts, the issue salience of the war increased, thus magnifying its impact in Republican-held districts.

To better illustrate the relative effect of statistically significant election-specific factors, we created figures of the predicted Democratic swing based on the results in Model 3, Table 3. Figure 1 displays the predicted swing for GOP seats only, with other variables held constant. In Figure 1, the presence of an open seat in 2006 led to a predicted value of 10.4% for the seat's Democratic vote-share change

TABLE 3
Predicting the Democratic Swing, 2004–06, Republicans Only
(robust standard error in parentheses)

Dependent Variable: Change between 2004 and 2006 Democratic two-party vote share in district (+ = increase; − = decrease)

Independent Variables	Model 1 Coefficient	Model 2 Coefficient	Model 3 Coefficient	Model 4 Coefficient
Bush 2004 Two-party Vote in District	−0.007 (0.072)	−0.004 (0.070)	−0.004 (0.073)	−0.001 (0.071)
Incumbent	−4.396 (2.007)**	−4.282 (1.983)**	−5.409 (2.106)***	−5.376 (2.071)***
Quality Challenger	0.919 (1.020)	0.820 (1.030)	1.065 (1.018)	0.969 (1.025)
Scandal	4.065 (1.627)***	3.947 (1.620)***	3.977 (1.621)***	3.855 (1.609)***
Opponent Spending (in 100,000s)	0.261 (0.061)***	0.270 (0.064)***	0.249 (0.059)***	0.257 (0.062)***
Iraq War Deaths in District (Measure 1)	0.507 (0.163)***		0.574 (0.277)**	
Iraq War Deaths in District (Measure 2)		0.879 (0.297)***		1.044 (0.497)**
Iraq War Vote (−1 = no; 0 = no vote; 1 = yes)			1.557 (1.115)*	1.796 (1.113)*
Iraq War Deaths in District x Iraq War Vote			−0.146 (0.354)	−0.308 (0.605)
Veterans in District	0.363 (0.176)**	0.319 (0.181)*	0.382 (0.173)**	0.345 (0.176)*
Armed Forces Population of District	−0.276 (0.219)	−0.270 (0.208)	−0.296 (0.214)	−0.298 (0.204)
Constant	2.393 (4.685)	2.579 (4.795)	2.027 (4.747)	1.991 (4.889)
F (8, 177)	15.19***	14.54***		
F (10, 175)			13.01***	13.08***
R^2	0.42	0.43	0.43	0.44
N	186	186	186	186

Note: All regressions are estimated with robust standard errors. All models include only Republican seats, exclude districts redistricted between 2004 and 2006, and exclude any seats for which candidates ran unopposed or faced no major-party opposition in either 2004 or 2006.
*$p \leq 0.10$; **$p \leq 0.05$; ***$p \leq 0.01$ (all one-tailed tests, except *Veterans*, *Armed Forces*, and interaction variable in Models 3 and 4).

FIGURE 1

Predicted Values of Democratic Swing Percentage,
by Election-Specific Factors, Republican Seats Only

(based on Model 3, Table 3)
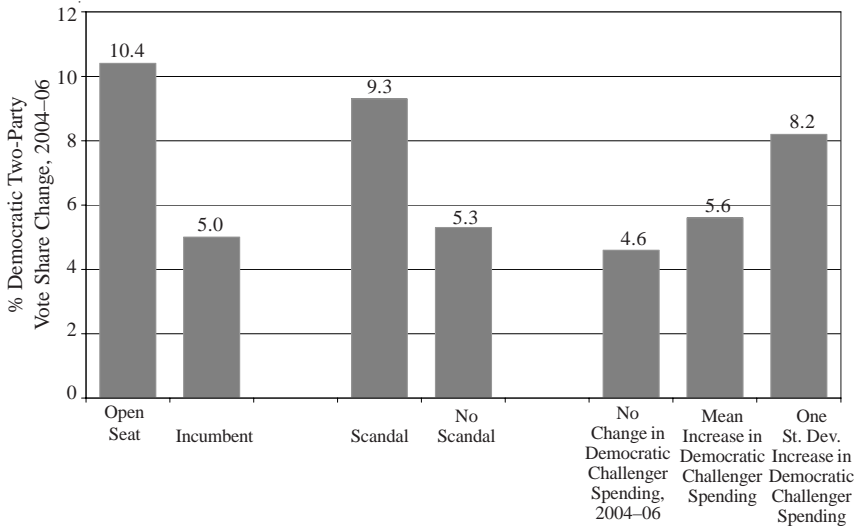
between 2004 and 2006.[21] In contrast, when GOP incumbents ran, the swing was less than half that size.[22]

Also shown in Figure 1 are the effects of a scandal and challenger spending if we hold all else equal. *Scandal* clearly affected GOP seats, resulting in a 4.0% larger Democratic vote-share swing.[23] While scandal clearly had an effect, only 15 GOP seats were directly affected by scandal, according to our measure. Also, those districts that had no increase in spending by the Democratic challenger in 2006 have predicted swings of only 4.6, which is less than the national swing of 5.4. In contrast, those districts with increases in the levels of Democratic spending from 2004 to 2006 had larger predicted swings.

To better show the importance of the local context of Iraq war deaths, we display in Figure 2 the predicted values of the Democratic vote-share swing in Republican-held districts.[24] We list the minimum, mean, maximum, and the values for one and two standard deviations above the mean for Republican incumbents who voted for the war, and we provide an example of an actual member of Congress's district that takes on those values in the data. We also show the predicted value for an open seat with no deaths cross-referenced to an actual GOP open seat.[25] Holding all else equal, we find that the significance

FIGURE 2

Predicted Values of Democratic Swing Percentage, by
Number of Iraq War Fatalities in District, Republican Seats Only

(based on Model 3, Table 3)
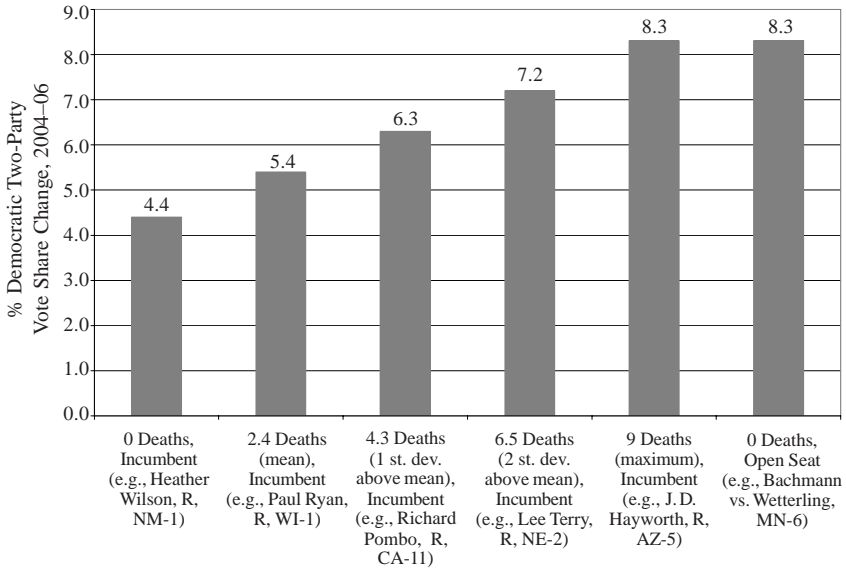
of Iraq war deaths for Republican seats where the incumbent voted for
the war is not inconsequential. Going from no deaths in the district
(which is 15% of the GOP districts analyzed in Table 3) to two stan-
dard deviations above the mean results in a change from a Democratic
swing of 4.4 to 7.2 (an increase of nearly 3 percentage points). This
value is just slightly smaller than the value associated with the effect
(displayed in Figure 1) of a legislator directly implicated in a scandal.
Further, the changes in the predicted vote swing for Republican
incumbents in Figure 2 indicate an approximately 1 percentage increase
in the Democratic swing for every two deaths per district. Because we
are examining the swing between 2004 and 2006, and not a static
measure of vote share in 2006, this is a large effect. The size of the
coefficients in Model 4, Table 3, reveals an even larger substantive
effect of deaths (although the range of this second deaths variable is
smaller than the first Iraq war deaths variable).

Also notable, the maximum number of deaths in an incumbent's
district (nine deaths, which is how many deaths the unsuccessful GOP
incumbent J. D. Hayworth had in his Arizona district) leads to a
prediction of 8.3. This is exactly the same predicted value as a district

TABLE 4

Predicting the Democratic Swing, 2004–06, Democrats Only

(robust standard error in parentheses)

Dependent Variable: Change between 2004 and 2006 Democratic two-party vote share in district (+ = increase; − = decrease)

Independent Variables	Model 1 Coefficient	Model 2 Coefficient	Model 3 Coefficient	Model 4 Coefficient
Bush 2004 Two-party Vote in District	0.117 (0.029)*	0.125 (0.032)*	0.108 (0.029)*	0.115 (0.031)*
Incumbent	5.401 (2.163)*	5.258 (2.032)*	5.471 (2.178)*	5.352 (2.038)*
Quality Challenger	0.193 (1.070)	0.057 (1.104)	0.268 (1.092)	0.140 (1.129)
Scandal	−7.140 (1.829)*	−6.775 (1.832)*	−7.063 (1.943)*	−6.681 (1.823)*
Opponent Spending (in 100,000s)	−0.361 (0.096)*	−0.359 (0.098)*	−0.361 (0.098)*	−0.360 (0.100)*
Iraq War Deaths in District (Measure 1)	−0.015 (0.154)		−0.040 (0.162)	
Iraq War Deaths in District (Measure 2)		−0.287 (0.384)		−0.320 (0.393)
Iraq War Vote (−1 = no; 0 = no vote; 1 = yes)	—	—	0.518 (0.523)	0.596 (0.510)
Iraq War Deaths in District x Iraq War Vote	—	—	−0.157 (0.151)	−0.320 (0.257)
Veterans in District	−0.114 (0.114)	−0.105 (0.113)	−0.099 (0.115)	−0.096 (0.115)
Armed Forces Population of District	−0.000 (0.236)	0.043 (0.263)	0.046 (0.254)	0.099 (0.280)
Constant	−6.522 (2.294)*	−6.461 (2.202)*	−6.329 (2.302)*	−6.182 (2.188)*
F (8, 128)	10.40*	12.01*		
F (10, 126)			8.07*	9.89*
R^2	0.42	0.43	0.43	0.43
N	137	137	137	137

Note: All regressions are estimated with robust standard errors. All models include only Democratic seats, exclude districts redistricted between 2004 and 2006, and exclude any seats for which candidates ran unopposed or faced no major-party opposition in either 2004 or 2006.

*$p \leq 0.01$ (all one-tailed tests, except *Veterans*, *Armed Forces*, and interaction variable in Models 3 and 4).

with an open seat with 0 deaths, suggesting that the incumbency advantage is clearly muted in districts with large numbers of fatal casualties caused by the Iraq war.

Many of the factors that affected the magnitude of the swing in Republican-held districts played a weaker role in Democratic-held districts. Table 4 displays the models for the Democratic vote-share swing in Democratic seats. Although the underlying partisanship of the district (as measured by the *Bush 2004 Two-party Vote*), *Incumbent*, *Scandal*, and *Opponent Spending* are all significant predictors of the Democratic vote swing in the expected directions, *Quality Challenger*, *Veterans in District*, and *Armed Services Population in District* are not statistically significant in any of the four Democratic seat models in Table 4.

Interestingly, none of the Iraq war variables affected the vote swing in Democratic House seats.[26] These insignificant results of the Iraq war variables in Table 4, tied with the significant impact of *Iraq War Deaths* and the *Iraq War Vote* in the GOP model in Table 3, clearly suggest that Republican legislators broadly were blamed for problems dealing with the Iraq war, but Democrats were not. These findings support a responsible-party government model. Fifty-four Democrats running in 2006 voted for the war in Iraq, yet the Democratic vote-share swing for these Democrats was no different than the swing for those Democrats who voted against the war or those Democrats who were not present for the war vote. Our findings regarding the Iraq war variables in the Democratic and Republican models are consistent with Hibbing and Alford's (1981) results suggesting that voters punish the in-party for poor economic conditions; we find that voters punished the in-party for the Iraq war.

Conclusion

There are a number of theoretical and empirical implications of this analysis. The 2006 election for Congress was clearly a watershed election, and this sort of nationalized election can provide insights about congressional elections generally. We have long known that the president's party tends to fare poorly in "six-year itch" midterm elections. Yet variation in how poorly the president's party performs has been quite substantial in recent history (for instance, the Democrats in 1998 bucked historical trends and the Republicans in the House in 1986 lost only a few seats). As our research shows, partisan swing is far from uniform across congressional districts. It is affected by contest-specific variables and the local salience of national issues.

In 2006, George W. Bush's low approval ratings led to larger swings in GOP-held districts than in Democratic-held ones. In addition, a war in Iraq that had turned unpopular leading up to the 2006 election affected Republicans in districts with high numbers of war deaths and Republicans who voted for the war. The national sense of outrage regarding the Mark Foley page revelations, the Jack Abramoff scandal, and other disgraces had a more-pronounced effect in districts where a legislator was implicated in scandal.

The 2006 election yields insights and implications regarding the nature of incumbency advantage, as well. In Republican seats, the size of the Democratic swing was much larger for open seats than for districts with incumbents running. Similarly, in Democratic seats, the Democratic swing was larger for incumbents than for open seats, all else being equal. Thus, as we already know, the power of incumbency is important even in a national tidal wave election. But the power of incumbency advantage is muted substantially for Republicans contingent upon a number of other factors, such as challenger spending. Preelection analyses that assume all districts are created equal when predicting the power of the national swing locally should consider district-specific factors before making forecasts.

Further, the power of incumbency advantage is muted substantially by the local context of national issues. In the 2006 election, the national issue of the Iraq war clearly affected a number of districts. Our analysis strongly suggests that voters blamed Republicans for the war, given the effects of war deaths and roll-call votes in our Republican models paired with our null results for the war variables in the Democratic models. Moreover, the local context of casualties can exacerbate problems of the party in power during an unpopular war. One can infer from our analyses that had there been no Iraq war (and thus 0 deaths in each district), Republican incumbents would have performed much better.

A more-realistic counterfactual would be a scenario in which the Iraq war deaths were distributed evenly across districts. The average number of war deaths in Republican districts was a relatively low 2.4 (low compared to those districts bearing the greatest number of deaths), so the concentration of military recruitment in certain districts and regions of the country made the electoral tidal wave bigger than might have been expected from preelection models. The swing percentage in a number of districts with large war deaths was the difference between a Republican or Democratic victory. For instance, all else being equal, GOP incumbent J. D. Hayworth would not have lost his election had the number of deaths in his district reflected the national average instead of the actual value of nine deaths in his district.

Of the 186 Republican seats analyzed in the empirical models, 80 had more fatal war casualties than the average for Republican seats, and 24 of these districts had five or more deaths each. By and large, these Republican-held districts with above-average death rates are rural or exurban and range from solid Republican to swing in terms of underlying partisanship. The GOP districts with a higher-than-average number of deaths were also frequently midwestern and western districts. This uneven distribution of U.S. soldier deaths across GOP districts resulted in uneven electoral consequences. We speculate that as the number of district war deaths increased, the Democratic candidate had an easier time making the war issue resonate with the electorate. Compared to previous U.S. conflicts, the number of war deaths per district is actually quite low. Perhaps surprisingly, these results suggest that American voters are extremely sensitive to a relatively small number of soldier deaths per district.

The results also suggest that members of the incumbent president's party who serve during an unpopular war should be attuned to the potential for loss of electoral support as casualties mount. These district-specific effects have implications for electoral effects in the wake of changing public opinion. Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler (2005/2006), examining aggregate public opinion, have argued that the U.S. public will tolerate increasing casualties if a war is perceived as successful and justified (although see Berinksy and Druckman 2007). Our district-specific results based on the Democratic vote swing suggest that if the aggregate public perception of the war shifts from a perception of success toward one of failure (as was the case leading up to the 2006 election), then this shift in opinion combined with casualties can have very specific electoral consequences in districts that may have previously supported the war. Many of these high-casualty Republican House seats are likely places that Bush initially relied upon to support the war. But as individual casualty numbers increased in those districts and the war's rationale began to deteriorate in the mind of the public generally, the result was surprisingly strong Democratic showings in many of these House districts. The district-level interaction between public opinion on the success of the war and casualties deserves greater inquiry. Future scholars should also consider the effects, if any, of war deaths on the 2008 congressional elections.

If deaths are too highly concentrated in certain regions, then the national effects of an unpopular war will be exacerbated in districts bearing the greatest numbers of casualties. Critics such as Representative Charlie Rangel (D-NY) have noted the increased reliance of the military on more-segmented populaces in the United States compared

to wars generations ago, and these uneven military recruitment patterns have electoral implications. And because elections have policy consequences, foreign policy may be affected substantially by the fact that war deaths are differentially distributed across districts. This trend has major implications for the ability of the U.S. government to engage in prolonged wars.

Finally, the results suggest broader theoretical implications beyond the impact of war deaths. Voters clearly punish the party in power and also punish individual legislators within that party contingent upon the local context of the war and past roll-call votes. Anticipatory-representation theory, which maintains that legislators will attempt to anticipate policy outcomes and that voters will reward and punish legislators according to their roll-call votes, appears valid for GOP-held seats. But voters did not punish Democrats who voted for the war, and there was no local effect of the war in Democratic districts—results suggesting that the importance of anticipatory representation and retrospective voting is greater for the majority party.

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NOTES

1. The Clerk of the House was our source for the 2004 figures, and Alan Abramowitz provided the 2006 figures.

2. Abramowitz's model did nevertheless predict a Democratic seat gain sufficient to win control of the House, whereas Campbell projected a seat gain that would leave the Democrats just short.

3. According to the archive of presidential approval polls at the Roper Center for Public Opinion, Bush's approval rating hovered in the mid-30s to low-40s in the latter half of 2006 leading up to the November 7, 2006 election. The November polls taken right before Election Day showed Bush with an approval rating ranging from 35% (*Newsweek* poll, November 2–3, 2006) to 41% (Pew, November 1–4, 2006). In the same Pew poll taken right before Election Day, 56% of respondents said the decision to invade Iraq was a mistake, public disapproval of Congress was at 70%, and the Democrats beat the Republicans in the generic congressional poll, 51–44%.

4. The mean swing of 4.2 is considerably less than the estimated swing in the national vote for the House between 2004 and 2006. At least two factors may account

for this difference. First, there is considerable variation in the number of votes cast in House districts; some districts, even in the same state, cast more than twice the number of votes as other districts. The mean swing per district treats all districts equally, regardless of the number of votes that were cast in each, whereas districts that cast more votes have a greater effect on partisan swing as measured by the national vote for the House. Second, the national vote for the House includes votes cast for candidates without major-party opposition.

    5. Again, these data and the data reported in Table 1 and Table 2 refer to all districts with major-party opposition in 2004 and 2006 that were not redistricted between 2004 and 2006.

    6. Hetherington, Globetti, and Larson (2003) have also found that a perception of electoral vulnerability can lead to the strategic emergence of quality challengers.

    7. We used Hibbing and Alford's finding regarding the economy and extended it to the most relevant national issue with district-level consequences in 2006 (the Iraq war). Ideally, we would have included an examination of district-level economic change, but there are no reliable measures of economic change at the House-district level. Further, the economy did not change dramatically between 2004 and 2006 in most districts, and it was not a major issue in the 2006 elections.

    8. Unlike Hibbing and Alford, who found that in-party candidates in open-seat contests were not held as accountable as in-party incumbents, we hypothesized that Republican candidates in both types of contests would be negatively affected by Bush's low approval rating.

    9. We also estimated the equations with both Democratic and Republican seats together, using the specifications detailed later, although we also included a dummy independent variable for political party of the legislator. The results of these alternative models are substantively similar to the split-sample results presented in the manuscript. The party coefficient (coded 1 for Democrats, 0 for Republicans) was significant, and Republican seats were more likely to have a greater Democratic swing.

    10. The redrawn districts excluded from the analyses are GA-1 through GA-13, TX-15, TX-21, TX-23, TX-25, and TX-28.

    11. We also estimated the results on all non-redistricted districts, including districts with candidates who faced no opposition or no major-party opposition, and included an additional independent variable for unopposed seats. The results were substantively similar to the ones presented here.

    12. For incumbents running in 2006 who were initially elected in a special election to the 109th Congress held prior to November 2006, we used initial special-election vote shares compared to 2006 vote shares. The results, presented later in the paper, were substantively the same if we instead used the 2006 Democratic vote shares and the 2004 Democratic vote shares of the previous officeholders.

    13. We only coded quality challengers running against an incumbent, not quality candidates in open seats. We are grateful to Gary Jacobson for sharing these data.

    14. We also estimated the models with two different variable measures in place of *Incumbent* and *Quality Challenger*. We included a variable measuring the change in incumbency seat status between 2004 and 2006 (coded as –1 if an incumbent ran in 2004 but the seat was open in 2006; coded as 0 if there was no change in the seat's status between 2004 and 2006; and coded as 1 if there was an open seat in 2004 but an incumbent ran in 2006). We also used a variable measuring the change in quality-

challenger status between 2004 and 2006 (coded –1 if there was a quality challenger running against an incumbent in 2004 and a non–quality challenger in 2006; coded 0 if there was no change from 2004 to 2006—which could mean that a quality challenger ran against an incumbent in both 2004 or 2006 or that there was no quality challenger in either 2004 or 2006—and coded 1 if there was no quality challenger running against an incumbent in 2004, but there was a quality challenger running against an incumbent in 2006). Results were similar to those presented here. We chose to present the dummy variables based on 2006 seat status and quality-challenger presence because they are more parsimonious and because we coded the 2004 quality-challenger data using descriptions in *CQ's Politics in America*, a coding method that may have led us to omit some quality challengers if the description in each district entry did not dwell on the past election. (The 2006 quality-challenger data, provided by Gary Jacobson, are more exhaustive.)

    15. The *Hotline* identified 17 scandal-affected candidates: Richard Renzi (AZ-1); John Doolittle (CA-4); Richard Pombo (CA-11); Jerry Lewis (CA-41); Mark Foley/Joe Negron (FL-16); Dennis Hastert (FL-14); John Shimkus (IL-19); William Jefferson (LA-2); John Sweeney (NY-20); Thomas Reynolds (NY-26); Charles Taylor (NC-11); Deborah Pryce (OH-15); Joy Padgett (OH-18); Curt Weldon (PA-7); Don Sherwood (PA-10); Shelley Sekula Gibbs (TX-22); and Alan Mollohan (WV-1).

    16. We used this measure because challenger spending has most frequently been shown to affect congressional vote shares. We also estimated the model without this variable, since challenger spending is in part a proxy for many of the other variables already specified (for example, quality challenger). When *Opponent Spending* is excluded, the results are generally the same except that the quality-challenger variable is significant.

    17. We chose to examine all deaths in the calendar year of the 2006 election leading up until the day before Election Day (Election Day was November 7, 2006). Alternative specifications that extended over longer periods of time (January 1, 2005 to November 6, 2006) and over shorter time periods (June 1, 2006 to November 6, 2006) yielded substantively similar results to those presented in the text. We prefer the casualty measure encompassing the 2006 year leading up to the election, which is long enough to yield variation on the independent variable yet short enough that the deaths are likely to be remembered and considered by the voters.

    18. The variable specifically measures the total number of district-level casualties, but we do not necessarily assume that most voters know the precise number of deaths in a district. This variable is a proxy for "bad news" regarding casualties in the district. For instance, voters in districts with 0 deaths (15% of the Republican seats analyzed) or few casualties will be much less likely to perceive localized negative policy outcomes of the war compared to voters living in districts with larger numbers of deaths. Larger numbers of local casualties will be a cue or information shortcut that the war is not going well, since there will be more local media coverage and one-on-one interpersonal communications in the district about war casualties when casualties are more frequent.

    19. Estimating the models with *Iraq War Deaths* and *Iraq War Vote*—but without the interaction term—yields substantively similar results to those presented in this article.

    20. By "held," we mean the party holding the seat going into the 2006 election.

21. We calculated these predicted values by varying the value of the incumbent variable while holding all other variables at their means.

22. There is clearly evidence of incumbency advantage among GOP seats. Because we hold other factors constant, however, we may be overestimating the incumbency advantage. Many (although not all) Republican incumbents were present and voted for the war in Iraq, but open-seat candidates do not cast roll-call votes. A GOP incumbent's vote for the war would make the Democratic swing even larger for incumbents than the 5.0 prediction displayed in Figure 1.

23. We calculated the scandal predicted values by varying the value of the scandal variable while holding all other variables at their means. The challenger spending predicted values were calculated by varying *Opponent Spending* and holding all other variables equal.

24. These predictions are based on the equation in Model 3 of Table 3, with all variables held constant at their means except for *Iraq War Deaths in District*, *Iraq War Vote*, *Iraq War Deaths x Iraq War Vote*, and the incumbent variables. For incumbents, we held *Incumbent* equal to 1; we held *Iraq War Vote* equal to 1; we varied *Iraq War Deaths* across a variety of values of interest; and we specified *Iraq War Deaths x Iraq War Vote* to match our values for the base variables (the Iraq war vote component of the interaction variable was held at 1; the Iraq war deaths component value of the interaction variable was specified at the value of interest for *Iraq War Deaths*). For the open-seat district with no deaths shown in Figure 2, we held the incumbent variable equal to 0, the Iraq war vote variable equal to 0, and the Iraq war deaths variable at 0, and thus the Iraq war deaths x Iraq war vote variable was also held at 0 (0 Iraq war deaths x 0 Iraq war vote value = 0).

25. In Figure 2, for instance, we list Paul Ryan (R, WI-1) as an example of a legislator with a district with the mean number of deaths. The Iraq war deaths (Measure 1) variable takes integer values, so these examples are based on the summary statistic nearest to the district's actual value (for example, Ryan's district had two deaths, not 2.4).

26. Unlike with the GOP models, we do not present the predicted values for the swing for Democratic seats. Fewer variables were statistically significant (such as the Iraq war variables).

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