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Congressional Approval & Responsible Party Government: The Role of Partisanship & Ideology in Citizen Assessments of the Contemporary U.S. Congress

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Conditional Acceptance Manuscript Memo

I would like to thank the reviewers for their careful read of the manuscript and for their insightful comments throughout this publication process. I strongly believe that their revisions helped improve the manuscript's contribution to the literature on collective representation and I am appreciative of their recommendation to publish this final manuscript revision. To address the editorial's points on this conditional acceptance decision, I have more carefully proofread the final version of the manuscript and also uploaded all necessary replication materials (i.e., data & replication `R` scripts) to the *Political Behavior* Replication Dataverse. The link to the replication materials are articulated in the manuscript cover letter and the final manuscript title page.

I hope that the reviewers enjoy this manuscript and its contribution to the study of how citizens perceive the contemporary United States Congress. Thank you again for the recommendation of publication acceptance and tremendous assistance throughout this publication process.

Title Page with ALL Author Contact Information

Congressional Approval & Responsible Party Government: The Role of Partisanship & Ideology in Citizen Assessments of the Contemporary U.S. Congress*

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October 2020

Abstract

While scholars posit an electoral link between congressional approval and majority party electoral fortunes, it is unclear whether citizens are grounding their assessments of approval on policy or valence grounds, such as retrospective economic evaluations. Whereas it is commonly understood that there is an ideological component to constituents' job approval of their individual members of Congress, in addition to a strong partisan effect, the ideological basis of institutional approval has not been established. Using cross-sectional and panel survey data, which allow for scaling citizens and the congressional parties in the same ideological space, I demonstrate that, distinct from the partisan basis of congressional approval, citizens' ideological distance from the majority party has a separate and distinct effect. These results suggest that the link between congressional approval and majority party fortunes is rooted in the collective ideological representation provided by the legislative majority in an increasingly responsible U.S. Congress.

Key words: Collective legislative approval, ideological scaling, proximity, responsible party government

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1 Introduction

> "*Well, I think all of us realize that if we fail on taxes, that's the end of the Republican Party's governing majority in 2018.*"
>
> - U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC)(*11/26/2017*)[1]

After months of internal negotiation behind closed doors and in a joint conference committee, the Republican-controlled House and Senate overcame unified Democratic opposition to pass the *Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017* on December 19th and December 20th, respectively.[2] Despite charges by Senate Democrats that the legislation provides for economic redistribution to the wealthy, the successful passage of the Republican tax bill also provided President Trump with the first significant legislative victory of his early presidency and, for the first time since since the 109th Congress, a significant policy victory delivered by unified Republican government a mere months after failing on the key campaign promise to repeal the *Affordable Care Act*.[3]

In the lead-up to ultimate passage of the Republican tax bill, Republicans expressed a sense of urgency in securing a significant legislative victory and passing a conservative bill that they argued reduces the tax burden on individuals and corporations. In an interview on CNN's *State of the Union*, Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC) suggested that the 2018 midterm elections would be "the end of the Republican Party's governing majority" if his conference failed to use the rare opportunity of unified partisan control of government to pass its tax reform bill. Forcefully arguing that "the economy needs a tax cut and the Republican party needs to deliver," Sen. Graham warned his colleagues that their majority would be politically accountable for failure to enact a signature piece of their conservative legislative agenda that they promised to voters in the preceding 2016

[1] *CNN: Graham on passing tax reform: 'I think we'll get there'*

[2] The post-conference committee vote to pass the bill was 224-201 in the U.S. House & 51-48 in the U.S. Senate. With the exception of 12 Republican defections in the House, the Republican tax bill passed on a straight party-line vote. Given the temporary nature of the individual and pass-through tax cuts, the Congressional Budget Office ruled that the post-conference Republican tax bill could pass under the budget reconciliation process, which only requires a simple majority in the Senate rather than the 60 vote threshold provided by the legislative filibuster (CBO 2017).

[3] This is articulated in Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer's (D-NY) remarks on the verge of passage in his official press release.

campaign. Sen. Graham's suggestion of political ramifications for failure to pass the *Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017* explicitly assumes that citizens evaluate the job performance of the U.S. Congress based on the policies espoused and passed by the congressional majority. Indeed, the argument that failure to pass their conservative tax legislation would lead to unfavorable evaluations by voters, particularly among co-partisans and conservatives, suggests that citizens evaluate their Congress in partisan and ideological terms. In a subsequent news conference following passage of the bill, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) proclaimed that Republicans will "sell" the virtues of the bill to the public by emphasizing increased take-home pay and tax relief for individuals.[4]

While the literature identifies that majority party incumbents are increasingly evaluated as collective partisans and are held responsible for their party's leadership stewardship of Congress (Jones & McDermott 2004; Jones 2010), it is unclear *how* citizens evaluate the collective job performance of Congress. While majority congressional partisans may believe that the public evaluates the performance of their collective institution by the policies it passes, it is unclear as to whether citizens take into account the ideological orientation of the congressional parties when evaluating congressional job performance. This is in stark contrast to the literature of congressional elections, which finds strong evidence that citizen-level candidate vote-choice is partly conditional on voter ideological proximity to the candidates independent of partisanship (see Joesten & Stone 2014; Shor & Rogowski 2016; Tausanovitch & Warshaw 2017; Algara & Hale 2019). This article seeks to fill this gap in the literature by specifying a model positing that citizen evaluations of congressional job performance are a function of both ideological proximity to the congressional parties and citizen partisan identity. Taking advantage of recent perceptual-based and roll-call policy based scaling methods that allow for the placement of citizens and members of Congress in the same ideological common space, I evaluate this model using cross-sectional and panel survey data from the *Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES)*.[5]

[4] *The Herald Sun (12/28/2017): Mitch McConnell says Congress can sell American people on tax reform*

[5] As a robustness check, I also evaluate the model using perceptual-based ideological scaling and survey cross-sectional data from 1980 to 2016 provided by the *American National Election Study*. The findings of the model, which can be found in the supporting information of this manuscript, hold in this context.

Using the 2008-2016 cross-sectional data and the 2010-2014 panel survey waves, I find strong evidence that congressional approval features a significant ideological component independent of the partisan component. Specifically, I find that during periods of Democratic control of Congress, Democratic partisans and citizens closer in ideological proximity to congressional Democrats are more likely to express approval in congressional job performance. By contrast, I find that these same set of voters (i.e., Democrats and those closer in ideological proximity to congressional Democrats) are more likely to express disapproval of Congress during periods of Republican or split partisan control of Congress. I also find that both the ideological component of approval is distinct from the partisan component, with partisans in both parties increasing their evaluations of congressional job performance on the basis of their ideological policy preferences. The results lend support that citizens are not only able to form meaningful ideological preferences, but they also use these preferences and their proximity to the congressional parties to inform their perceptions of congressional job performance. This study compliments recent work on the salience of congressional approval in electoral choice by suggesting that the basis of approval is rooted in the ideological direction of policy proposed by the governing majority rather than conventional valence considerations.

2 Ideological & Partisan Origins of Congressional Approval

2.1 Collective Policy Representation by a "Responsible" Congress:

In *Federalist 51*, James Madison declared that "*in republican government, the legislative authority necessarily predominates*." As the chief policymaking institution, the United States Congress plays a paramount role in American political life by being constitutionally tasked with composing policy solutions to satisfy the demands of the public. When Congress does perform its constitutional prerogative and acts (or doesn't) on behalf of the public, it does so in unison as a

collective institution. Yet, the traditional focus on congressional representation has not been on how Congress provides representation as a *collective institution* (Weissberg 1978; Hurley 1982). The overwhelming literature on congressional representation focuses on assessing the Madisonian dyadic link between individual members of Congress (MCs) and their districts (Bartels, Clinton & Geer 2014). The focus of the literature on how well MCs represent the views of their district is understandable, given the traditional ineffectiveness of congressional parties to provide distinct ideological representation (American Political Science Association 1950) and the natural tension between reelection incentives and how Congress functions as an institution (Mayhew 1974; Fenno 1978).[6]

The traditional model of low visibility and weak congressional parties is best articulated by Stokes & Miller (1962) when observing the parties of the late 1950's: "*the legislative parties speak not as two voices but as a cacophony of blocs and individuals fulfilling their own definitions of the public good.*" With the advent of pronounced polarization between the congressional parties over the course of the 20th century, scholars have updated their view of the weak party model on the basis of increased partisan differences in ideological platforms (Rohde 1991; Hetherington 2001; Roberts & Smith 2003). While there is considerable scholarly debate as to the causes of partisan polarization (see Smith 2007, Ch. 3), there is no debate as to whether the congressional parties are more ideological homogeneous and distinct than those present during the weak party thesis (McCarty, Poole & Rosenthal 2006). Moreover, the increased centralization of agenda-setting powers in Congress by party leaders and away from autonomous committees (e.g., Rohde 1991; Cox & McCubbins 2005) has provided scholars with evidence of an emergence of the responsible party government in Congress. As a consequence, the contemporary Congress is defined as one of intense partisan conflict featuring cohesive parties advocating distinct ideological positions on policy (Roberts & Smith 2003; Theriault & Rohde 2011).

[6]To that end, this is congruent with the argument popularized by Fenno (1978), that MCs have a strong incentive to "bash" Congress as a collective institution. With incumbents choosing to"run for Congress by running against it," they are able to skirt collective accountability and focus on individual accountability, the notion of being evaluated as individuals rather than as members of a collective partisan team. In theory, this maximizes their chances of being re-elected by skirting responsibility for unpopular congressional policies.

The contemporary state of the congressional parties has stark consequences for the collective policy representation that citizens get from their Congress. First, previous work suggests that citizens are aware of ideological differences between parties and candidates. Second, given the stark ideological differences of the two parties, the policy outputs produced by Congress are conditional on the partisan majority. To the first point, scholars note that elite polarization helps citizens assess partisan ideological differences and strengthens the electoral utility of partisan brands (Hetherington 2001; Levendusky 2009; Algara 2019). Greater ideological homogeneity within the congressional parties allows for a more consistent cue about the nature of ideological positions held by MCs. Similarly, Harbridge & Malhotra (2011) find that ideological conflict over the legislative agenda can further clarify the ideological positions of the two parties in the eyes of citizens. Moreover, Noel (2014) finds that contemporary conflict is aligned with distinctions between liberal and conservative preferences. As such, citizens are clearly able to discern partisan and ideological differences that define the contemporary Congress.

The stark ideological differences that define the contemporary Congress, provide clearer distinctions with respect to the content of the legislative policy agenda. Scholars note that liberals and conservatives split on nearly every salient policy issue (Layman et al. 2010) and activist interest groups are progressively picking partisan sides to form two distinct ideological teams (Noel 2014). This ideological split on policy issues naturally shifts the nature of the legislative agenda, especially around economic redistribution issues (Jennings Jr. 1979; Erikson, Wright Jr. & McIver 1989). [7] In the context of state legislatures, Garlick (2017) finds that partisan control of the state legislature influences the ideological direction of the legislative agenda, largely in response to a partisan activist base. In the same context, Caughey, Warshaw & Xu (2017) find that partisan control does have an impact on the ideological orientation of policies. According to Caughey, Warshaw & Xu (2017, p.1344), "only if the parties diverge from the median voter do partisan policy effects-counter factual differences in policy liberalism under Democratic and

[7] Indeed, one of the consistent findings in the comparative literature is that macroeconomic outcomes are associated with partisan control of governments, with liberal governments passing more redistributive policies than conservative governments (Franzese 2002).

Republican control-actually emerge." The notion that MCs "die in their ideological boots" (Poole 2007) and are consistently more ideologically extreme than the median voter of their districts is a well-documented find in the contemporary Congress (Bafumi & Herron 2010; Stone 2017). This "leap-frog" representation-in which Democratic (Republican) MCs are more liberal (conservative) than their districts suggests that the congressional agenda crafted by the majority party will be strongly conditioned by which party is in charge. Coupled with the notion that the congressional agenda is conditional on the support of the increasingly extreme majority median member (Cox & McCubbins 2005), the congressional agenda may change dramatically as the Congress changes partisan majorities.Cox & McCubbins's (2005) procedural cartel theory of legislative organization also explicitly posits that the majority party excludes the minority party from agenda-setting activities, ensuring that the majority reaps the electoral benefits and costs of public opinion towards their agenda. As such, the contemporary responsible-party Congress provides collective representation which starkly varies under which party is in control.

2.2 Partisan & Ideological Components of Congressional Job Approval

Thus far, I have argued that the polarized nature of the contemporary Congress provides voters with stark differences in the collective representation depending on which party is tasked with crafting policies as the majority party, and that citizens are aware of these differences. However, the consequential question is whether citizens use their ideological evaluations of the parties to inform their assessment of congressional job performance. With the exception of one model (Jones & McDermott 2002), there is little support for the notion that citizens assess the performance of Congress in ideological terms.[8] Traditional models of Congressional job performance posit that approval is driven by how citizens feel about the general direction of the country (Stimson

[8]I should note that Jones (2013) shows that congressional approval may rise in the event of a significant majority party victory. In the context of the passage of the Affordable Care Act in the 111th Congress, Jones (2013) finds that passing healthcare reform raised approval amongst supporters of the bill (i.e., Democrats) and lowered it amongst opponents of the bill (i.e., Republicans). However, no evidence is found that these changes in approval brought about by healthcare reform stem from comprehensive ideological "outlooks." (Jones 2013).

2004), their own members of Congress (Parker & Davidson 1979), the economy (Rudolph 2002), the president (Lebo 2008), or partisan conflict (Hibbing & Theiss-Morse 1995; Ramirez 2009). The common theme of these standing models of congressional approval is that citizens evaluate Congress in valence non-ideological terms rather than in policy terms.

While some models of congressional approval posit that majority co-partisans are more likely to approve of Congress (e.g., Kimball & Patterson 1997; Hibbing & Theiss-Morse 1995), they tell us relatively little about the potential of an ideological component of approval. Partisan preferences may be driven by symbolic identity rather than by liberal-conservative ideological preferences on policies across the issue space (Iyengar, Sood & Lelkes 2012). Naturally, the debate between symbolic pre-rational partisanship and more policy-based rational models of partisanship (Fiorina 1978, e.g.,) is well documented (Bartels 2010). Thus, while co-partisans of the congressional majority may be more likely to approve of Congress than minority out-partisans, this may simply reflect satisfaction that their "partisan team" is in the majority rather than any substantive policy preferences. As Kimball & Patterson (1997) bluntly state: "rose-colored glasses of partisan identification may bias" citizens perceptions of how Congress functions as a collective institution, particularly if Congress passes policies against the preferences of co-partisans.[9]

Indeed, there is reason to suspect that approval of the contemporary Congress is still tied to partisanship. Scholars note that Americans are becoming much more consistent partisans (Hetherington 2001; Bafumi & Shapiro 2009). As Abramowitz & Webster (2016) note, Americans are much more loyal partisans today than they were at any time during the post-war period. Today, partisans harbor much more negative feelings about the opposing party (Abramowitz & Webster 2016) and consistently cast straight partisan tickets in elections. However, recent trends in congressional approval suggest that there may not be a salient partisan component given the historically low approval rating of the contemporary Congress (Griffin 2011).[10] Plotting

[9]Indeed, with MCs being more extreme than even the partisan median voter in their district (Bafumi & Herron 2010), they may consider and act on policies that are even more extreme than the preferences of their co-partisans. As such, majority co-partisans may approve of Congress even though the majority may be passing legislation that is more ideologically extreme than their preferences.

[10]Griffin (2011) finds in his review of aggregate congressional approval that the nadir of occurred in 2008. According to data from Gallup, the nadir of 9%, reached in November of 2013.

aggregate survey data may provide a clue bout whether partisan differences exist in contemporary congressional approval. To that end, Figure 1 plots the weighted mean level of approval by partisan preference using survey data from the American National Election Study (ANES) and the Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) in Figure 1.

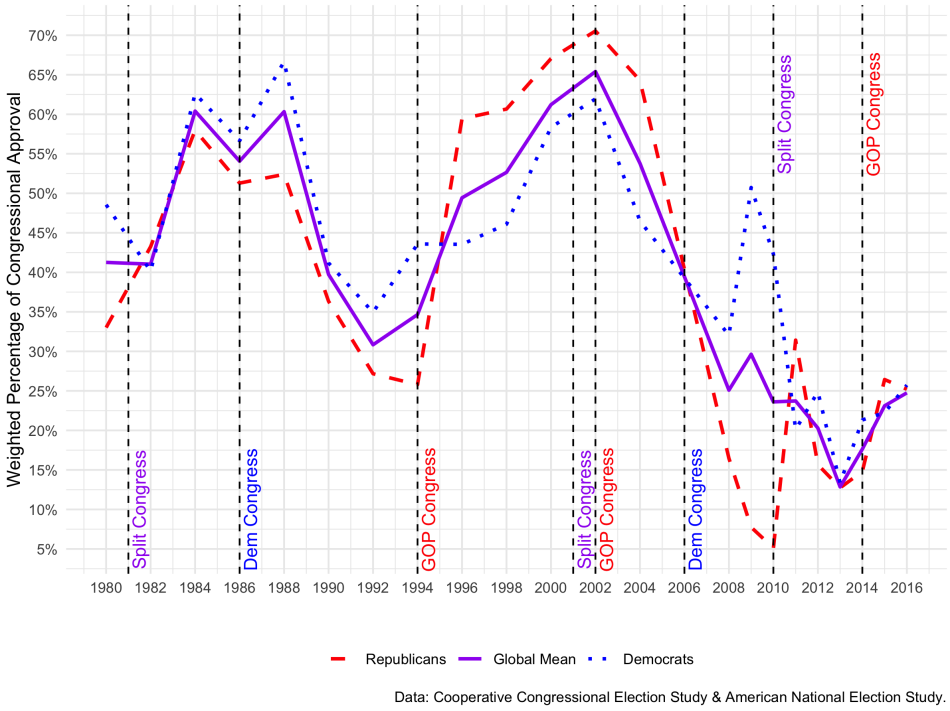
Figure 1 provides descriptive evidence that, at least during periods of one-party control of Congress, clear partisan differences in congressional approval emerge. During the Democratic Congresses from 1987 to 1994, approval is higher among majority Democrats than minority Republicans. This pattern reverses in the Republican Congresses following the 1994 Republican Revolution. After the loss of the Republican majority following the 2006 elections, approval is greater amongst majority Democrats from 2007 to 2010. While overall approval from 2007 to 2010 is far less than the levels found during the early time periods (the 1980s to the early 2000s), partisan differences in congressional approval persist. Aside from periods of split control of Congress, the only period with no partisan differences in approval is during the recent 114^{th} Republican Congress. In sum, descriptive evidence suggests a persistent partisan component to congressional approval. This gives rise to the empirical expectations below.

- $\star$ $\boldsymbol{H}_1$: During periods of Democratic control of Congress, majority Democratic partisans will be significantly more likely to approve of Congress than minority Republican partisans.

- $\star$ $\boldsymbol{H}_{1.1}$: During periods of Republican control of Congress, minority Democratic partisans will be significantly less likely to approve of Congress than majority Republican partisans.

To be clear, partisan differences in congressional approval are not evidence of congressional approval. For an ideological component to manifest itself, citizens must explicitly weigh the ideological positions of the congressional parties against their own ideological preferences. Speaking in the context of elections, Downs (1957) argued that citizens weigh candidate positions on a unidimensional liberal-conservative ideological policy and vote for the candidate that is closest to their ideological preference (or ideal point). The logic of this spatial model differs from attitude-driven models of vote choice (i.e., the partisan model) in that citizens are only motivated by

Figure 1: Partisan Trends in Congressional Approval, 1980-2016



their rational self-interest and vote for candidates that advocate positions consistent with those interests (Joesten & Stone 2014). This spatial logic can be applied to how citizens approve of the collective representation they receive for their institutions. In the context of modeling institutional approval of the U.S. Supreme Court, Malhotra & Jessee (2014) show that closer ideological proximity to the pivotal median justice of the court increases support for the court. Moreover, Malhotra & Jessee (2014) use a policy-based measure of ideological preferences to assess their model of court approval. By asking citizens how they would vote on various Supreme Court cases, Malhotra & Jessee (2014) are able to place citizens and the court on the same ideological scale and evaluate the ideological component of court approval.This lends support that citizens do weigh their ideological proximity to their institutions when evaluating their job performance.

In the context of citizen evaluations of Congress, only one model explicitly posits that citizens evaluate collective legislative representation in ideological terms. Using cross-sectional data from the American National Election Study, Jones & McDermott (2002) find evidence that citizens

are more likely to approve of Congress if they perceive the majority party to be closer to them in ideological proximity.[11] However, Jones & McDermott (2002) recognize the limitations of their model for evaluating the ideological component of congressional approval. As Jones & McDermott (2002) articulate: "ideally, this measure would use respondent's ideological ratings of the majority party's contingent in Congress, rather than the party in general." This limitation in measurement is consequential in two key respects. First, as Jones & McDermott (2002) readily concede, their study does not explicitly place citizens on the same scale as the congressional parties. Second, and perhaps more consequential, the use of raw placements of the national parties by citizens may be subject to systematic bias. As Hare et al. (2015) articulate, respondents place their preferred political stimuli (i.e., candidates and parties) near the middle of the scale while placing their least preferred stimuli to the ideological extremes. Thus, their measure of ideological proximity may be endogenous to their evaluations of Congress, with citizens that approve of Congress being predisposed to favorably placing themselves and the majority party in close ideological proximity.

Nevertheless, Jones & McDermott (2002) advance our understanding of congressional approval by providing evidence that citizens are motivated by ideological preferences to assess congressional job performance. Given the stark ideological differences in collective representation by Congress during periods of Democratic and Republican control, citizens are able to discern these differences and assess whether they feel ideologically represented by the congressional majority. If citizens feel they are not ideologically represented by the congressional majority and have ideological preferences closer in proximity to the congressional minority, they should be less likely to express approval in congressional job performance. Formally, this gives rise to the following empirical expectation.

⋆ $\boldsymbol{H}_2$: During periods of Democratic control of Congress, citizens closer in ideological proxim-

[11] It is important to note that Jones & McDermott (2002) do not explicitly apply a spatial model to their analysis. They define ideological proximity as the absolute difference between respondent raw self-perceived ideological placement and their perception of the location of the majority party rather than proximity between the respondent and the two parties.

ity to congressional majority Democrats will be significantly more likely to express approval of congressional job performance.

- ⋆ $\boldsymbol{H}_{2.1}$: During periods of Republican control of Congress, citizens closer in ideological proximity to congressional minority Democrats will be significantly less likely to express approval of congressional job performance.

Until now, the discussion has focused on the nature of collective ideological representation by Congress during the event of one-party control. However, Congress may feature split partisan control when different parties control each chamber. While far less common compared to periods of one-party control, which comprises 86% of years since the direct-election of Senators in 1914, episodes of split-control of Congress may obfuscate the relationships posited in the preceding hypotheses. [12] Previous work may provide a clue about how voters perceive ideological representation in a split Congress. In their analysis of the 1982-1986 Congresses featuring a Democratic House and Republican Senate, Jones & McDermott (2002) find that ideological distance to the House majority party to be a significant and negative predictor of congressional approval during the split-control period of 1982-1986. By contrast, distance from the Senate majority party was an insignificant predictor of congressional approval. Jones & McDermott (2002) state that this finding is due to the House Democratic majority being the "salient" congressional party given that "Reagan railed against the Democratic Congress" during this period.

However, there is reason to suspect that ideological proximity and partisanship may have a negative relationship with congressional approval under a split-control Congress. By definition, policymaking will require compromise or legislative gridlock will ensue (Binder 1999). For example, consider the split Congresses of 2011-2014. Co-partisan Democrats of the president and Senate majority may disapprove of Congress given that the House, which controls one of the chambers, may consistently block the president's agenda. Citizens closer to congressional Democrats may

[12] To that point, split control Congresses are a very rare phenomena. Since the 1914 midterm elections, the first election cycle in which the electorate elected both MCs and Senators, split Congresses only occurred from: 1931-1932/1981-1986 (Democratic House/Republican Senate) and 2001-2002/2011-2014 (Republican House/Democratic Senate). This makes for a total of 14 out of 102 years that featured a split control Congress.

disapprove of the job performance of the split Congresses of this period given obstruction of the presidential agenda by House Republicans. Conversely, citizens closer in proximity to the presidential out-party and presidential out-party co-partisans may disapprove of Congress for the same reason. Moreover, previous research suggests bipartisan disgust with Congress over congressional gridlock and intra-Congress conflict (see Hibbing & Theiss-Morse 1995; Harbridge & Malhotra 2011; Ramirez 2009). In sum, there is clear expectation in the literature for the relationships articulated in the hypotheses during the rare periods of split-control of Congress.

3 Research Design

The theoretical model presented in the preceding section posits two distinct components of congressional approval, a partisan and ideological component. Broadly, citizens that experience poorer collective representation by the Congress (i.e., policy representation by the majority party) should be less likely to express congressional approval than those that experience better collective representation. Like many standing models of representation seeking to evaluate the degree of overlap between the ideological preferences of the mass public and their elected elites (i.e., Congress, MCs, Presidents, Senators, parties), the model requires a measure that places candidates and elites on the same ideological scale. While scholars have long tackled the difficult task of mapping citizens and their elected elites on the same scale (e.g., Miller & Stokes 1963; Achen 1977), recent advancements in joint-scaling of citizen and elite ideological preferences have made it possible to evaluate theories of representation (Broockman 2016). In this section, I outline the measurement strategy used to scale citizens and the congressional parties on the same scale. First, I discuss the perceptual-based method, developed by Ramey (2016), of estimating the ideological preferences (ideal points) of citizens and members of Congress using respondent perceptions of their ideology and the ideological location of their members of Congress (Ramey 2016). Second, I present a differing approach, developed by Jessee (2016), that uses citizen responses to various policy-based roll-call items to jointly scale their ideological ideal points and

their members of Congress. Lastly, I specify the primary analytical model used to evaluate the theoretical model presented. I rely on yearly cross-sectional data from 2008-2016 *Cooperative Congressional Election Study* (CCES) for the scaling analysis and specifying the baseline approval model.

3.1 Estimating Ideological Preferences of Citizens & Congress on the Same Scale

Aldrich-McKelvey Perceptual-Based Scaling: Asking respondents to place themselves and political stimuli (the President, candidates, parties, MCs, Supreme Court, etc.) on an ideological scale is a constant in conventional survey datasets of public opinion such as the *Cooperative Congressional Election Study* and the *American National Election Study* (Ansolabehere & Rivers 2013).[13] Using the spatial theory of choice and judgment, Aldrich & McKelvey (1977) scaling is a method to estimate citizens and political elites on the same scale using citizen perceptions of their ideological preferences and their collective placement of political stimuli. What makes Aldrich-McKelvey scaling a potent analytical tool is that it corrects for the inherent bias in how respondents interpret and evaluate issue scales (i.e., differential item functioning). For example, liberal Democratic respondents may place themselves and their party as more moderate than a conservative respondent, which may place the Democratic party as far left (Hare et al. 2015). The scaling method corrects for such biases by treating raw self-placements as linear distortions of the "correct" location of stimuli and estimating distortion parameters for each respondent. Thus, this method allows for the recovery of unbiased "true" stimuli positions and for correct ideal point estimates corrected for differential item functioning.[14]

[13] This is usually done on the standard 7 point scale from 1 (very liberal) to 7 (very conservative).

[14] Thus, the ideal point of respondents (x_i) can be articulated in the following form: $x_i = \frac{z_{i(self)} - \alpha_i}{\beta_i}$, where $z_{i(self)}$ is raw self-placement on the ideological scale, α_i is the shift distortion parameter, and β_i is the weight distortion parameter. Note that positive values of α_i indicates over-placement of themselves and the stimuli on the scale while positive values of β_i (the weight parameter) indicates correct placement of the stimuli (i.e., placement of liberal stimuli to the left of the conservative stimuli) (Hare et al. 2015). Respondent ideal points (x_i) are recovered from citizen left-right placements of themselves and national stimuli consistently present over the survey cross-sectional years (i.e., placements of the Democratic party, the Republican party, and President

While Aldrich-McKelvey scaling is powerful analytical tool, its primary application has been in the context of national-level stimuli such as parties, presidential candidates, and the Supreme Court. While the CCES does not ask all respondents to place 535 congressional elites, the CCES does ask respondents to place their individual members of Congress and two U.S. Senators (a citizen's congressional delegation) on the liberal-conservative ideological scale. I rely on the method developed by Ramey (2016) to estimate the ideological positions of individual MCs and Senators by: (1) estimating the position of the national parties on the full national sample; (2) estimating the district-centered (state-centered) stimuli of MCs (Senators) and parties; and (3) rescaling the sub-national stimuli to the overall national space. [15] By utilizing Ramey's (2016) method, I am able to estimate the ideological location of members of Congress, Senators, and citizens in the same common space using citizen placement of themselves and their congressional delegation on the same liberal-conservative scale. [16]

Joint-Scaling Roll-Call Based Scaling: An alternative methodological approach to placing citizens and congressional elites on the same ideological scale involves using bridging roll-call items. This method leverages survey questions asking respondents to take policy positions which can be matched to the preferences expressed by their legislators in the roll-call record (Jessee 2016). The assumption of this method is that the same unidimensional ideological space structures respondent and legislator preferences across a diverse set of policy items. This assumption may seem implausible given the differences in application of ideal points to inform ideological preferences (Broockman 2016). Jessee (2016) sums up the problem: "support for a certain policy could be strongly related to ideological position for members of Congress, but not for ordinary citizens." To alleviate this problem, Jessee (2016) develops a Bayesian "group-based" ideal point

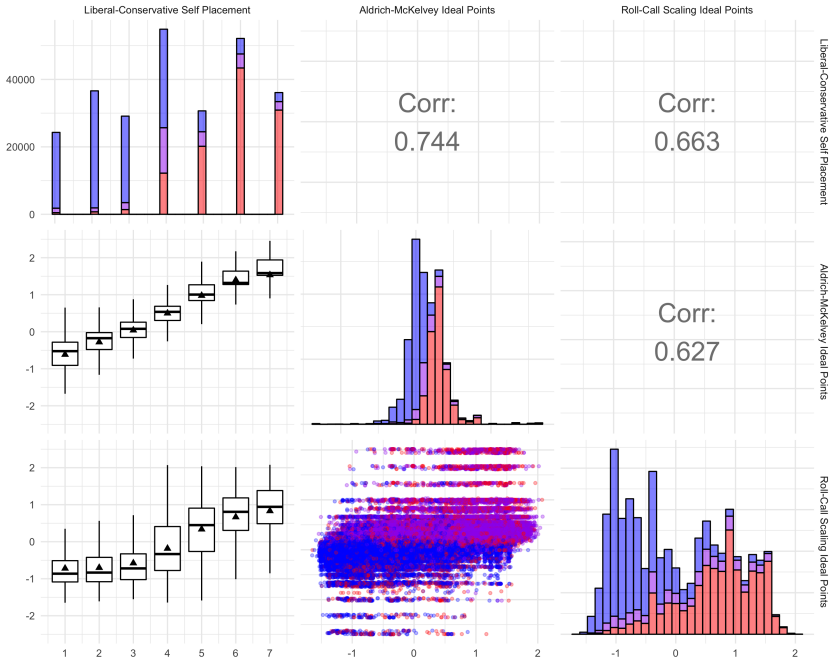
Obama).

[15] As Ramey (2016) mentions, the third step is simply a linear transformation which adjusts the subnational stimuli estimates to the overall space by assuming that estimates of party locations at the district and state-level are comparable to those estimated using the national-level sample. Moreover, this method accounts for the heterogeneity in perceptions of the two parties over subnational units.

[16] To adjust for the potential time-varying dynamics, I use the national-level party stimuli to perform a linear transformation on the individual MC and Senator stimuli estimates to place all estimates in the same space over time. This transformation is minimal, given the lack of variation in the placements of the national Democratic and Republican parties from 2008 to 2016.

estimation model which allows for estimating the structure of the ideological dimension by the positions of a specific subgroup of actors, such as citizens, MCs, and U.S. Senators, or using the ideological structure of all groups to estimate the overall ideological space.[17] Using data from the 2008 CCES which asks citizens a set of 8 roll-call items taken in the House and Senate, Jessee (2016) shows that the ideal point estimates for each subgroup (MCs, Senators, and citizens) are identical if one uses Senators, MCs, or citizens to structure the ideological space.[18] In contrast to using the self-placements and the placements of political stimuli to scale citizens and Congress, Jessee's (2016) approach allows for an explicitly policy-based approach to assess the ideological proximity between citizens and their congressional parties.

Figure 2: Perceptual & Roll-Call Based Ideal Points by Self-Placements



I use cross-sectional survey data from the CCES, encompassing every year from 2008 to 2016,

[17] For full specification of the model, see Jessee (2016). Table 2 of the appendix contains all the roll-call items used to scale citizens and elites by survey year.

[18] Moreover, it is important to note, that another contribution of Jessee's (2016) model is the ability to jointly-scale citizens and legislators using a small amount of roll-call items and limitations in survey sample size. These points are significant given the flexibility of the model to jointly scale the CCES panel and their legislators and the large amount of measurement error which may present itself in using a small number of roll-call survey questions to jointly scale citizens and elites.

and the two scaling methods to derive ideal point estimates of citizens and their members of Congress.[19] Figure 2 shows the relationship between the estimated citizen ideal points and their own liberal-conservative placement on the seven-point ideology scale from very liberal (1) to very conservative (7). Indeed, the correlation between self-placement & Aldrich-McKelvey ideal point is $\rho = 0.74$ while the correlation between self-placement & roll-call based ideal point is $\rho = 0.67$ [20] This provides a basic face validity check that citizen ideal point estimates are correlated with their self-perceptions and that, particularly in the case of the roll-call based estimates, the estimated ideal points are meaningful and are strongly related to prevailing ideological views held by citizens.

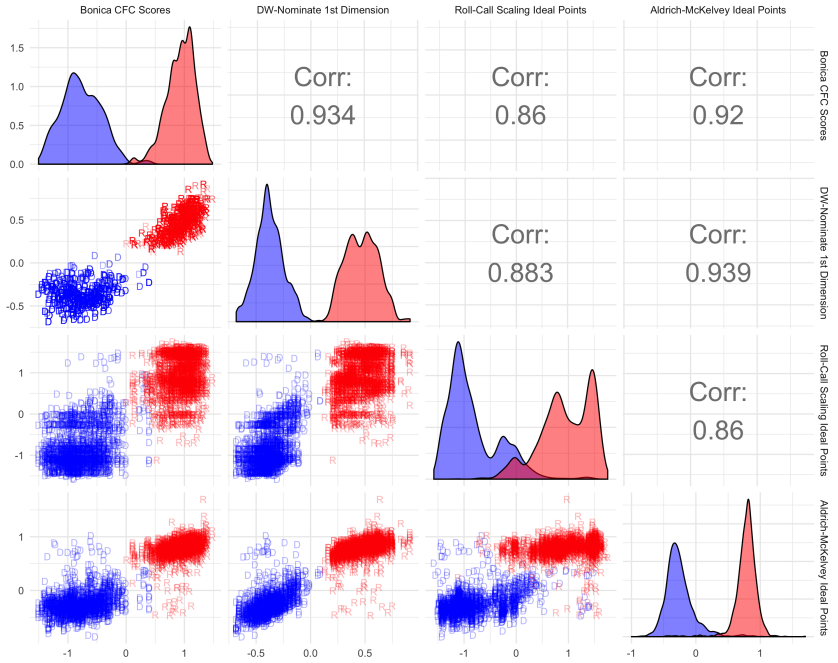
The scaling methods also yields estimated ideological scores with high face validity for individual members of Congress. Figure 3 illustrates the correlation between estimated ideal points and by the two conventional measures of legislator ideology in the literature, roll-call based DW-Nominate scores (McCarty, Poole & Rosenthal 2006) and campaign-finance derived CFC common space ideological scores (Bonica 2014), for the U.S. House and Senate respectively. As Figure 3 Panel A and Panel B shows, there is a strong correlation between the estimated scaled ideal points and the two widely used measures of legislator ideology in both the U.S. House and U.S. Senate. The perceptual-based Aldrich-McKelvey ideal points are highly correlated with both DW-Nominate scores and campaign finance CFC scores in the House ($\rho = 0.94$ & 0.92) and the Senate ($\rho = 0.96$ & 0.97). Similarly, the roll-call based joint-scaling ideal point estimates are also highly correlated with DW-Nominate and CFC scores in the House ($\rho = 0.86$ & 0.86) and in the Senate ($\rho = 0.85$ & 0.97). This suggests that the roll-call items used in the scaling procedure-those asked to respondents in the CCES is representative of the typical set of roll-calls that receive floor votes in Congress. In sum, there appears strong face validity in both sets of ideal points estimated for citizens and their congressional elites.

[19] I estimate Aldrich-McKelvey ideal points using Poole et al.'s (2016) `basicspace` `R` package and, for the roll-call based ideal point estimation, I use Jackman's (2017) `pscl` `R` package.

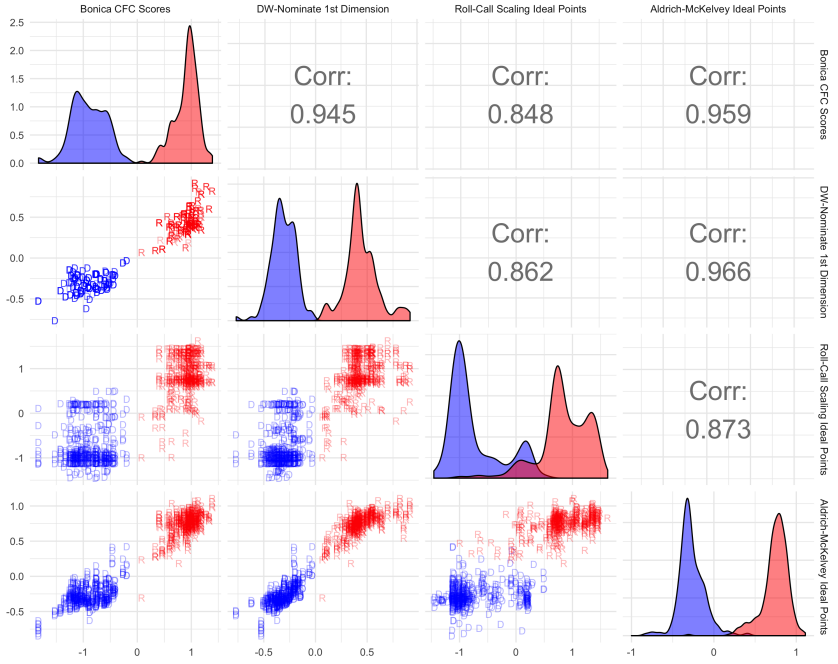
[20] Citizen perceptual Aldrich-McKelvey ideal points & roll-call based ideal points are correlated at $\rho = 0.62$.

Figure 3: Elite Ideal Points by Conventional Ideological Measures, 2008-2016

(a) United States House of Representatives



(b) United States Senate



3.2 Specifying a Model of Congressional Approval

Now that citizens and their congressional elites are scaled in the same ideological space, I turn my attention to the specification of the primary congressional approval model. In order to test the the presence of a distinct partisan and ideological component of approval, I specify the following pooled baseline logistic regression model:

$$\begin{aligned} Pr(Approval) = \text{logit}^{-1}\{&\beta_0 + \beta_1 * Proximity + \beta_2 * Dem + \beta_3 * DemCongress \\ &+ \beta_4 * (Proximity \times DemCongress) + \beta_5 * (Dem \times DemCongress) \\ &+ \beta_i * Controls + \varepsilon_{it}\}^{21} \end{aligned} \quad (1)$$

The dependent variable in the model is a binary variable measuring citizen approval of Congress, coded 1 if a respondent indicates approval with Congress and 0 for disapproval.[22] The main two variables of interest in the model are citizen partisanship and ideological proximity to the congressional parties. I code the partisan preference of citizens using two binary variables, with one indicating a Democratic preference and the other indicating a partisan independent. The omitted base-line category for this variable is citizens with a Republican preference. For the coding of the variable indicating ideological proximity to their majority party, I indicate a standard spatial model, used in previous vote-choice models (i.e., Joesten & Stone 2014) based on a respondent's estimated ideal point (C_i) and the ideological positions of the two congressional

[21] The logistic regression model omits certain constituent and interaction terms for presentation purposes. The omitted constituent terms are: binary variables for partisan independents and periods of split-control of Congress (2011-2014). This allows for a base line comparison consistent with the presented hypotheses. As such, the partisanship omitted category are Republican voters, and the Congress-type omitted category indicates a year in which there is a Republican-controlled Congress (2015-2016).The model is specified with relevant survey weights. As such, the omitted interaction terms are: $(Indy \times DemCongress)$, $(Indy \times SplitCongress)$,$(Dem \times SplitCongress)$, & $(Proximity \times SplitCongress)$.

[22] Throughout the entire pooled data series, Congress sports a weighted approve-disapprove rating of 21%-79%. Reflecting the general unpopularity of Congress, the individual year weighted approval-disapproval rating is as follows: 21%-79% (2008), 30%-70% (2009), 24%-76% (2010), 24%-76% (2011), 18%-82% (2012), 13%-87% (2013), 18%-82% (2014), 23%-77% (2015), & 24%-76% (2016).

parties (DM_j and RM_j):

$$\text{Proximity} = |RM_j - C_i| - |DM_j - C_i| \tag{2}$$

I define the ideological position of a congressional party as the mean ideological location between the House partisan median and the partisan median Senator. For example, in coding this variable for a respondent in the 2008 CCES survey, the position of congressional Democrats is simply the average between the ideological location of the median House Democrat and the median Senate Democrat as estimated from the 2008 sample. The resulting quantity in equation 2 captures the relative proximity between a citizen's ideological ideal point (preference) and the ideological ideal point locations (preferences) of the two congressional parties. If the quantity in equation 2 is negative ($|RM_j - C_i| < |DM_j - C_i|$), the respondent is closer to congressional Republicans in ideological proximity. If the quantity in equation 2 is positive, ($|RM_j - C_i| > |DM_j - C_i|$), the respondent is closer to congressional Democrats in ideological proximity. I specify two proximity measures, a perceptual-based and roll-call based measure, given the two ideological scaling estimations outlined in the previous section.

The hypotheses posit that the relationship between Democratic partisanship, proximity to congressional Democrats, and congressional approval is conditional on the collective ideological representation they receive from Congress. This collective representation is predicated on which majority party controls Congress. Partisan control of Congress can take the following three forms: Republican-control, Democratic-control, and split-control in which different parties control the U.S. House and U.S. Senate. I thus code partisan control of Congress using two binary variables, one indicating split-control of Congress and the other indicating Democratic-control of Congress.[23] Congruent with the conditional relationships articulated in the first two hypotheses, I interact partisanship and ideological proximity with partisan-control of Congress. The inter-

[23]The arrangement of split-control of Congress, as witnessed from 2011-2014, is a Democratic Senate and a Republican House. Democrats controlled the House & Senate from 2008-2010 and the Republicans controlled both congressional chambers from 2015 onward.

action between Democratic-control (Republican-control) and Democratic partisanship will have a significant and positive (negative) influence on the probability of congressional approval, thus providing support for H_1. Likewise the expectation of the model is that the interaction between Democratic-control (Republican-control) and proximity to congressional Democrats to have a significant and positive (negative) influence on the probability of congressional approval, providing support for H_2. Lastly, the model controls for known predictors of congressional approval: citizen attitudes about presidential job performance, the job performance assessment of their congressional delegation (MC and Senate delegation), retrospective economic evaluations, and political sophistication. The model also controls for the possibility that congressional approval is a function of the quality of dyadic ideological representation between a citizen and her incumbent representative (Tausanovitch & Warshaw 2017). I estimate the model twice, one with the perceptual-based measure of ideological proximity and one with the roll-call based measure of ideological proximity.[24]

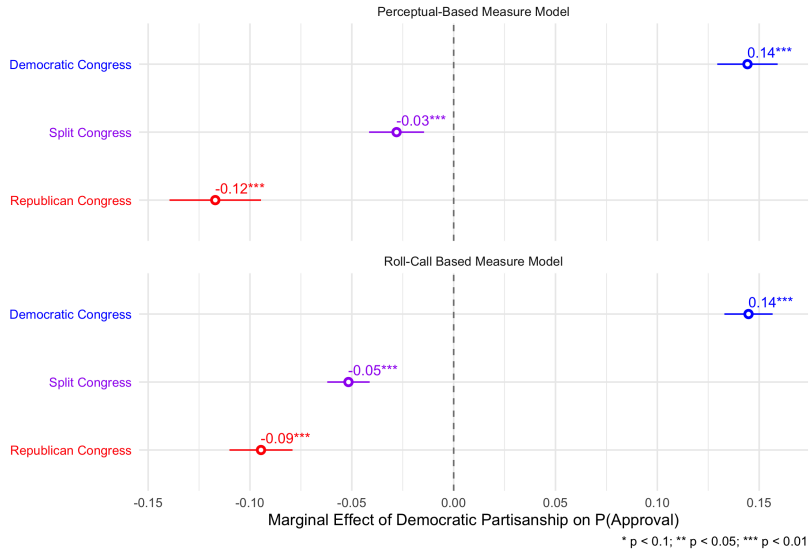
4 Evidence of the Ideological & Partisan Origins of Congressional Approval

4.1 Cooperative Congressional Election Study, 2008-2016

Results of the baseline model of congressional approval are articulated in the marginal effects of interest in Figures 4 and 5. The model finds strong support of a distinct partisan and ideological component to congressional approval. Figure 4 plots the marginal effect of partisanship on approval by congress-type. During Democratic congresses and consistent with H_1, the marginal effect of Democratic partisanship on probability of congressional approval is 14% in the perceptual and roll-call based model. During Republican congresses and consistent with $H_{1.1}$, the

[24]Full model results can be found in the Table 3 series of the appendix. I specify the pooled models with Eicker-Huber-White clustered standard errors by year-district. Full coding of the control variables can be found in the appendix. All model marginal effects are post-estimated using Leeper's (2017) `margins` package in `R`.

Figure 4: Interactive Effect of Partisanship & Partisan Control of Congress on Pr(Approval)

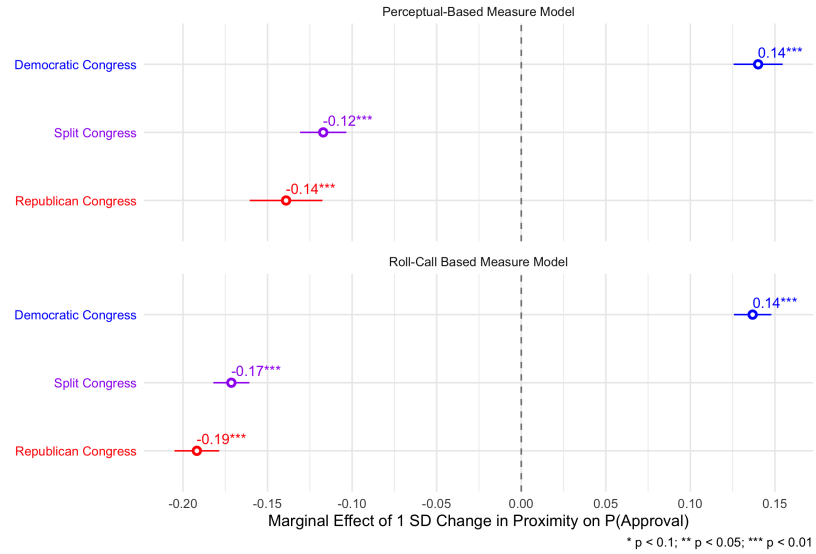


marginal effect of Democratic partisanship results in a 12% and 9% decline in the probability of congressional approval in the perceptual-based and roll-call based models, respectively.

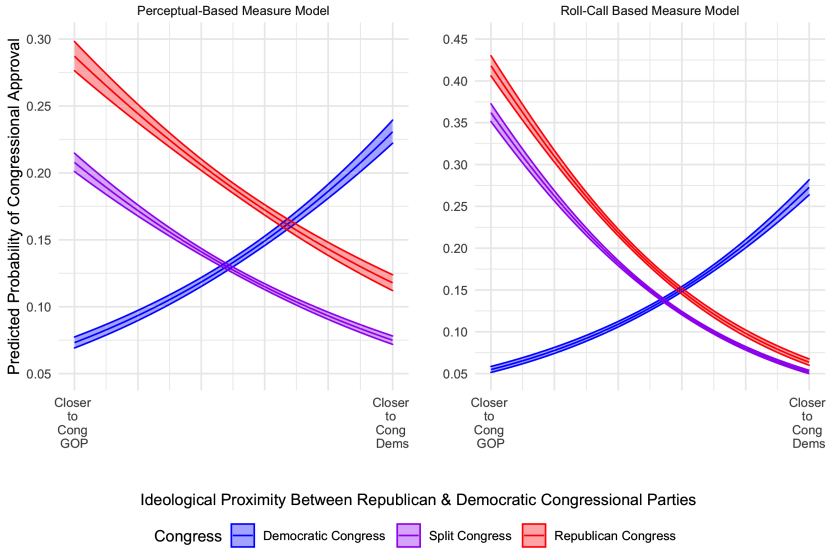
Figure 5A finds support for an independent ideological component to congressional approval. Consistent with H_2, one standard deviation change in ideological proximity closer to congressional Democrats, according to the perceptual-based measure, results in a 14% increase in the probability of congressional approval during Democratic congresses, a 12% decrease in split Congresses, and a 14% decrease during Republican Congresses. Similarly, the roll-call based measure model yields the same substantive finding, but to a greater degree. During Democratic congresses, a one standard deviation change in ideological proximity to congressional Democrats results in a 14% increase in the probability of congressional approval while, during split and Republican congresses, one standard deviation change in ideological proximity to congressional Democrats results in a 17% and 19% decrease in approval, respectively. This significant relationship between proximity and approval is shown in Figure 5B, which plots the predicted probability of approving of Congress by congress-type (i.e., Democratic, split, and Republican Congresses) for both models. At the minimum value of ideological proximity towards congressional Democrats, the predicted probability of congressional approval is approximately 7% (5%), 21% (36%), and 29% (42%) during

Figure 5: Interactive Effect of Proximity & Partisan Control of Congress on Probability of Approval

(a) Marginal Effects



(b) Predicted Probabilities



Democratic, split, and Republican Congresses in the perceptual-based (roll-call based models). By contrast, at the maximum value of ideological proximity towards congressional Democrats the predicted probability of approval is approximately 23% (27%), 7%, (5%), and 12% (6%) during Democratic, split, and Republican Congresses in the perceptual-based (roll-call based models). Taken together, both figures provide strong evidence of a salient and independent ideological

component of congressional approval, with the probability of approval rising during periods of Democratic Congresses and falling during periods of Republican Congresses as a function of closer ideological proximity to congressional Democrats.

The baseline model also finds that the dynamics of the partisan and ideological components of approval are nearly identical in split Congresses and in Republican Congresses. During split Congresses, a one standard deviation change in proximity towards the Democrats results in a 12% and 17% decrease in congressional approval in the perceptual and roll-call based models, respectively. Similarly, the marginal effect of Democratic partisanship results in a 14% and 5% decline in congressional approval during split Congresses. Relative to economic evaluations, a standard valence predictor of congressional approval identified in the literature (Rudolph 2002), the proximity term in both models are more salient predictor of approval given that weaker retrospective evaluations only lower approval by 4% and 3% in the perceptual and roll-call based models. This provides support alluded to by Jones & McDermott (2002), that citizens view the out-party majority as the "congressional party" rather than the presidential-party majority of the opposing chamber. Indeed, the results during the split Congresses of the Obama era lends support to the notion that citizens evaluated congressional job performance on the basis of the ideological agenda provided by the House Republican majority, rather than the agenda of the Democratic Senate majority.

4.2 Cooperative Congressional Election Panel Study, 2010-2014

The results of the baseline model lend support for the notion that congressional approval features a distinct ideological and partisan component (H_1 & H_2). However, the previous analysis relies on pooled yearly cross-sectional survey data, severely limiting the causal link between partisanship, ideological proximity, and approval. To gain better empirical leverage on the causal effect of proximity and partisanship on the likelihood of congressional approval, I exploit the 2010-2014 CCES Panel Survey study to evaluate the posited model. This three-wave survey features a nationally representative sample of 9,500 respondents and provides pre-election and post-election

interviews during the 2010, 2012, and 2014 election cycles.[25]

The advantage of this three-wave panel survey is that it measures the same citizens' perceptions of Congress job performance at three distinct time points.[26] Importantly, these data capture citizens' attitudes towards a Democratic Congress before the 2010 Republican take-over of the U.S. House.[27] In order to evaluate the baseline hypotheses ($H_1 \& H_2$) using the panel data it is essential to scale the panel respondents on the congressional parties on the same scale. Given that the panel survey lacks district-centered samples, the Ramey (2016) perceptual-based scaling method is inappropriate to estimate citizen and elite ideological ideal points. By contrast, Jessee's (2016) scaling method is designed to jointly-scale citizens and elites from relatively small datasets.These joint-scaling survey items encompass all the salient planks of the Democratic majority agenda , providing for a salient sample of legislation considered during the transformative 111$^{\text{th}}$ Congress (Adler & Wilkerson 2012).[28] Using these jointly-scaled ideal point estimates, I am able to respecify the baseline model of congressional approval for analysis using the panel survey (equation 1). I specify three models for each survey wave. The dependent variable of each model is approval of Congress at time t (measured during that survey wave year) coded 1 for approval and 0 for disapproval. The variables of interest, proximity and partisanship, are coded to reflect preferences during the initial 2010 survey wave (i.e., time $t-1$). Each model includes the baseline control variables, coded at time t. Additionally, the 2012 and 2014 survey wave models include a control reflecting congressional approval during the previous survey wave.[29]

[25]The pre-election interviews are typically conducted in October and the post-election interviews are typically conducted in November. For more details on the panel survey see Schaffner & Ansolabehere (2015).

[26]The panel dataset also reflects the general trend of congressional unpopularity found in the cross-sectional survey data with the following weighted approval-disapproval job ratings for each survey panel wave: 20%-80% (2010), 14%-86% (2012), & 11%-89% (2014).

[27]Ideally, one would want the three distinct Congress-types (Democratic, Republican, split) to be covered by the panel survey. Given the limitation in years here, the only comparison that can be evaluated is the comparison between a Democratic Congress and a split Congress.

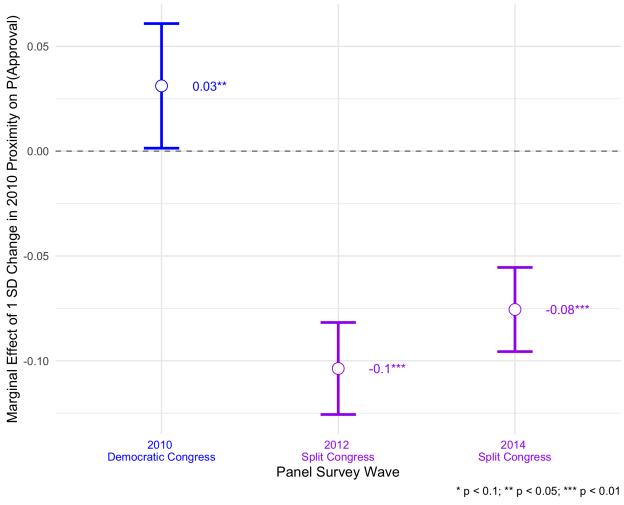
[28]The resulting congressional ideal points are correlated with first-dimension DW-Nominate at 0.93 for the House and 0.95 for the Senate. Citizen ideal points are correlated with raw 7 point self-placements at 0.76. These strong correlations provide face validity of the joint-scaling estimating procedure on the panel dataset.

[29]Congressional approval in 2010 is correlated at 0.09 and 0.07 with approval in 2012 & 2014. There is no control for lagged partisanship given that partisanship is stable across the survey panel. Indeed, 2010 partisanship is correlated at 0.94 and 0.93 with partisan preferences in 2012 & 2014, respectively. Results of the panel models are articulated in Table 3 series of the appendix.

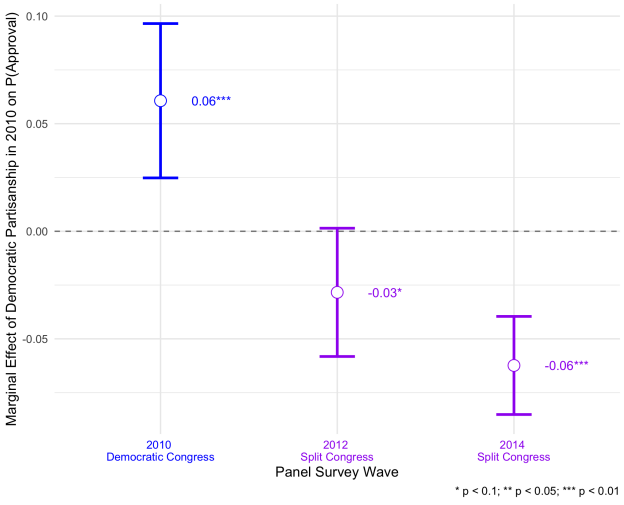
Figure 6 plots the marginal effects of ideological proximity and partisanship on the probability of approval. Again, we see additional evidence of a distinct partisan and ideological component of approval. During the 2010 wave, a one standard deviation change in proximity towards congressional Democrats results in a significant 3% increase in the probability of approval. However, after the Republicans gain control of the House following the 2010 elections, a one standard deviation increase in proximity towards congressional Democrats results in a significant 4% decrease in probability in congressional approval. This change persists in the 2014 wave, with the significant 8% decrease in approval for a one standard deviation change in proximity towards congressional Democrats. Similarly, Democratic partisanship results in 6% increase in the probability of congressional approval in the 2010 wave while it decreases the probability of approval by 3% and 6% in the 2012 and 2014 waves. This panel analysis lends more support that citizens respond to changes in collective representation provided by Congress on ideological grounds and diverging majority party representation centered on policy differences.[30]

Figure 6: Interactive Effects of Interest across CCES Panel Wave

(a) Ideological Proximity in 2010



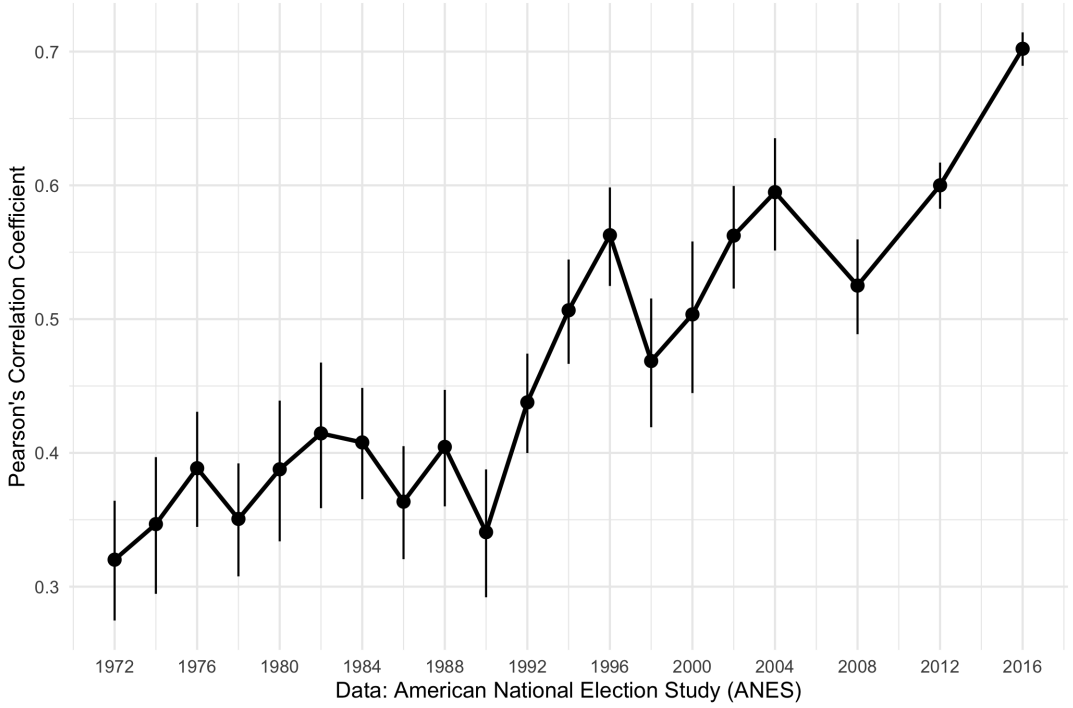
(b) Partisanship in 2010



[30] In this panel wave analysis, weaker retrospective economic evaluations lowers congressional approval by 7% in 2010, 15% in 2012, while being an significant predictor in 2014. This compliments the preceding pooled analysis by finding that ideological proximity is a more consistent predictor of congressional approval than valence economic evaluations.

5 Disentangling the Ideological & Partisan Components of Contemporary Approval

Figure 7: Correlation between Partisan & Ideological Preferences, 1980-2016



Thus far, the presented pooled and panel logistic regression models suggest distinct ideological and partisan components of citizen congressional approval. The specified models leveraging perceptual and roll-call based ideal points lends support for the theory positing that congressional approval is determined by both partisan identity and ideological policy considerations. However, a critique of the preceding model specifications can manifest itself in the fact that the ideological component is partly dependent on partisan identity. Descriptive analysis of data from the 1972-2016 American National Election Study waves in Figure 7 lends support for this critique. As Figure 7 shows, there is an almost monotonic rise in the correlation and congruence of partisan and ideological preferences over time, culminating in the strong correlation of $\rho = 0.7$ during the

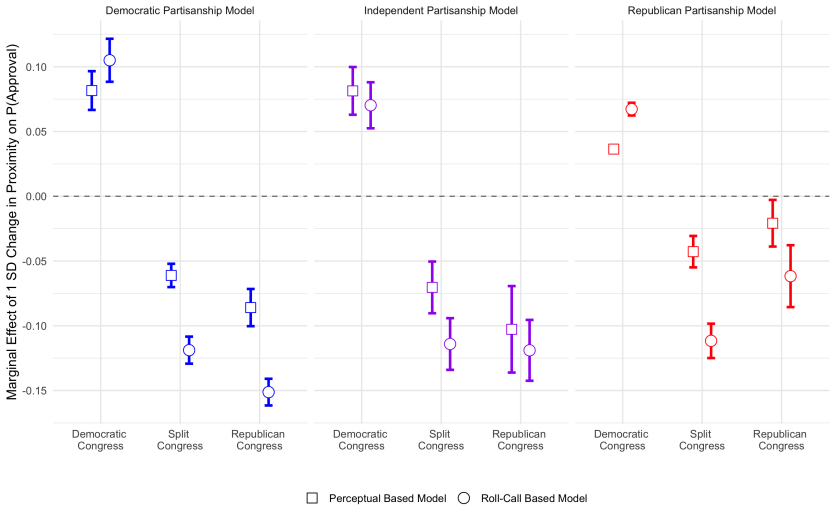
polarized era of 2016.[31] Indeed, scholars have remarked the increasing correlation between partisan and ideological preferences during a period of more polarized and responsible congressional parties (Bafumi & Shapiro 2009; Hetherington 2001). This increasing interdependence suggests that partisan and ideological preferences are both highly correlated and relatively indistinguishable from one another during an era of pronounced polarized congressional parties. Indeed, the high correlation between partisan identity and ideological policy preferences may cast doubt on the independent explanatory power of ideological proximity. This is of particular concern given that the theoretical framework posits that the influence of ideological preferences on congressional approval is rooted in relative proximity to the ideological platforms advocated by both congressional parties rather than a partisan rationale.

To isolate the independent explanatory power of the ideological component of congressional approval, I specify party-specific logistic regression models analogous to the model articulated in equation 1 of the manuscript. This respecification drops the partisan identification covariates from the manuscript model and allows me to run the same baseline model for Democratic, Republican, and Independent partisans. Given that the manuscript's theory posits that the effect of ideological preferences is conditional on which party controls Congress since the ideological orientation of congressional outputs is conditioned by partisan majority, I keep the key interaction between ideological proximity and partisan control of Congress. If the ideological component of approval is truly distinct from partisan preferences, then the effect of ideological proximity to congressional Democrats on the probability of congressional approval should be positive (negative) for each party-specific model during periods of Democratic (Republican) control of Congress. During split Congresses featuring a Republican House majority and a Democratic Senate majority, I expect the effect of ideological proximity to congressional Democrats on the probability of congressional approval to be negative for each party-specific model, consistent with the findings of the manuscript and previous work on the effect of ideological preferences on congressional ap-

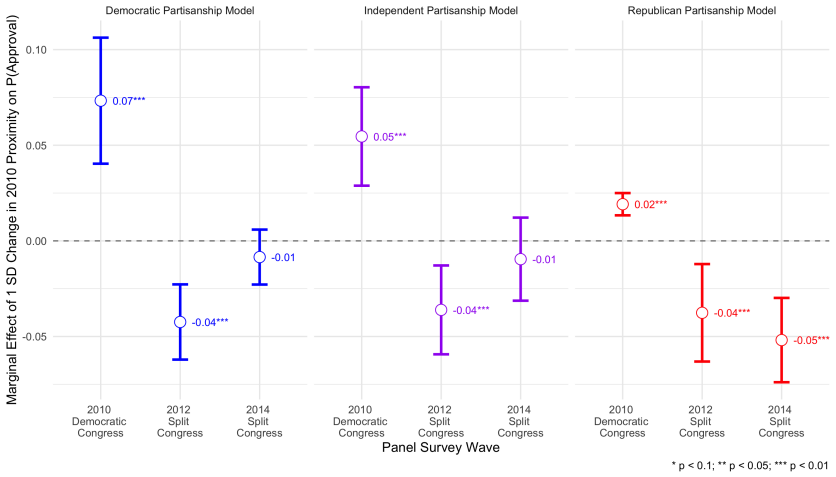
[31] To that end, the correlation between partisan affinity and estimated ideological ideal points presented are $\rho = 0.62$ for the Aldrich-McKelvey perceptual-based ideological measure and $\rho = 0.66$ for the roll-call based joint scaling measure.

Figure 8: Party-Specific Models Isolating Effect of Proximity on Congressional Approval

(a) Perceptual & Roll-Call Based Models



(b) Panel Model



proval (e.g., Jones & McDermott 2002). If the ideological component of congressional approval is truly not separate and independent of partisanship, then the effect of ideological proximity on the probability of congressional approval should be insignificant in the party-specific models, particularly for citizens with a partisan preference for the minority party (i.e., Democrats during Republican Congresses and Republicans during Democratic Congresses). I present the results of the pooled CCES party-specific models, using both the perceptual-based and roll-call based

ideological proximity measures, and the panel models in Figure 8.[32]

The results of the party-specific models provide clear support for the thesis that there is an ideological component of congressional approval distinct from partisan preferences. Holding partisanship constant, Figure 8 Panel A shows the effect of ideological proximity to congressional Democrats during periods of Democratic Congresses is positive and significant for each partisan group and regardless of ideological proximity measure for the pooled CCES models. During Democratic Congresses, a one standard deviation increase in ideological proximity towards congressional Democrats increases the probability of approving of Congress by 8% (10%) for Democrats, 8% (7%) for Independents, and 4% (7%) for minority party Republicans using the perceptual-based (roll-call based) proximity measure. Conversely, the marginal effect of proximity to Congressional Democrats on the probability of approval is negative for all partisan groups during periods of Republican control of Congress. During periods of Republican control, a one standard deviation increase in ideological proximity towards congressional Democrats *decreases* the probability of approving of Congress during Democratic Congresses by 9% (15%) for Democrats, 10% (12%) for Independents, and 2% (6%) for majority party Republicans using the perceptual-based (roll-call based) proximity measure. Figure 8 Panel B also shows a distinct ideological component manifest itself in the panel models. A one-standard deviation increase in proximity towards Democrats significantly increases the probability of congressional approval by 7% among Democrats, 5% among Independents, and 2% among Republicans during the 2010 Democratic Congress panel survey wave. In the 2012 split Congress survey wave following the 2010 House Republican takeover, this same proximity effect results in a significant decrease in congressional approval of 4% among Democrats, 3% among Independents, and 4% among Republicans. Indeed, rather strikingly, this proximity effect persists among Republicans during the 2014 wave, with a one standard deviation increase towards congressional Democrats resulting in a 4% decline among Republicans during the 2014 panel survey wave.

The presence of congruent ideological proximity effects, both with respect to significance and

[32]Full party-specific model results can be found in the Table 4 series of the appendix.

direction, across each party-specific model suggests a robust independent component of congressional approval. This analysis isolating the ideological component of approval compliments the fully specified models assessing both the partisan and ideological components of Congress simultaneously. The critical tests presented here strengthen the substantive inference provided by the model incorporating both the proximity and partisanship covariates on the right hand side and ease concerns that the ideological component of approval is not distinct from the partisan component.

6 Discussion: The Rational Origins of Approval

The empirical results of this manuscript provide clear support for a model positing that citizens weigh the collective policy representation they receive from Congress through a partisan and ideological lens. Moreover, the model provides a contribution to the literature of congressional approval by demonstrating that citizens weigh the ideological representation they receive from the congressional majority, relative to their policy ideal point preferences, in judgments about congressional job performance. This suggests a rational component of congressional approval, in that citizens are motivated to asses congressional job performance on the congruence between their policy preferences and the standing congressional majority. This citizen-level model compliments aggregate work, most notably by Ramirez (2012), arguing for a rational ideological component of congressional approval and that approval is not merely a function of partisanship or general abstract feelings of the direction of the country (Stimson 2004).

I motivated this paper with the suggestion by U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC) that congressional Republicans may pay a price for failing use the opportunity of unified government to pass the conservative *Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017*. Similar to the plight faced by the Democratic congressional majorities during the first two years of President Obama's first term, Sen. Graham's assertion suggests that legislators feel pressure to deliver stark ideological policies during the rare opportunity of unified government. The results presented here provide justification

for this institutional pressure, in that citizens use the ideological orientation of the congressional majority to formulate rational assessments of congressional approval. The results presented also lend support for Sen. Graham's concern that a lack of conservative policy victories by unified Republican government may be met with negative consequences by Republican partisans and activists.

The implication of this ideological component, independent of citizen partisan identity, provides an incentive for congressional majorities to pass policies congruent with the preferences of the mass public. Indeed, previous work finds that citizens do weigh their evaluation of congressional job performance when evaluating the electoral choice between a majority party candidate or a minority candidate (McDermott & Jones 2005; Jones 2010). The results presented suggest that passing more moderate policies may raise citizen evaluations of congressional job performance, which, in turn, could benefit the majority party at the ballot box. Indeed, the research presented compliments work suggesting that the electoral link between congressional approval and majority party fortunes is rooted in the congruence of ideological preferences between elites and the electorate.

The results here provide a framework for how the congressional majority may raise their institutional approval among citizens for their electoral benefit. In the era of polarized and more responsible party government, the majority party can provide a distinct legislative record of accomplishments by which their candidates can seek election (Cox & McCubbins 2005). The work presented here suggests a clear voter-level ideological component of congressional approval, which scholars have suggested is an electorally salient consideration in congressional elections during the responsible party government era (Jones 2010; Jones & McDermott 2004). By passing a more ideologically moderate record, the majority party may raise congressional approval and the collective party brand to the benefit of their candidates waging campaigns in individual districts. In his review of recent trends of congressional approval, Griffin (2011) notes that public evaluations of congressional approval have hit their historical nadir in recent years. With congressional approval consistently in the teens and with bipartisan disgust over legislative gridlock (Harbridge

& Malhotra 2011), the analysis here suggests that the congressional majority may raise approval of the institution if they pass ideologically moderate policies that appeal to a broad swath of the citizenry. Indeed, such a strategy may serve the governing majority well as they wrestle with low institutional approval and popular perception that they are not up to the task of solving the nation's policy problems. While future research is needed to assess the causal effect of congressional policies on approval, this analysis lays the groundwork for investigating how rational attitudes about policy shapes how citizens evaluate their national legislature.

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7 Manuscript Appendix

7.1 Control Variable Coding Scheme for the CCES Cross-Sectional & Panel Models

Political Sophistication: The political sophistication measure is coded as a summated rating scale encompassing the following political participation and political knowledge items: attendance at political meetings, participation in putting up a political yard sign, participation in donating money to political candidates & causes, self-reported interested in political affairs, and correct recall of the following political stimuli: U.S. House majority party, U.S. Senate majority party, Governor, U.S. Representative, both U.S. Senators, and the majority party in both chambers of the state legislature. All of these variables, available for each year of the CCES cross-sectional surveys, are coded dichotomously, 1 for correct office recall/self-reported political participation and 0 for incorrect office recall/self-reported lack of political participation. This required recoding the interest into political affairs as a 1 if the respondent indicated following political affairs "most of the time" or "some of the time" or a 0 if the respondent indicated following political affairs "hardly at all" or "only now and then." The survey panel models incorporate each of these indicators with the exception of the political indicator measuring interest in following political affairs. Instead, the survey panel variable incorporates a binary indicator if the respondent has worked on a political campaign during the election cycle, coded 1 if the respondent participated in this form of political activity and 0 if not. The panel wave also includes two voting validated measures if the respondent voted in the primary or general election during the electoral cycle, coded 1 if the respondent voted in the corresponding election or 0 if not. The resulting composite measure has a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.82 for the CCES cross-sectional data and the 0.81, 0.74, & 0.76 for the 2012, 2014, & 2016 CCES panel data waves. The political sophistication variable is measured on a summated rating scale from 0 (low) to 1 (high) .

Congressional Delegation Approval: This variable is a summated rating scale, from 0 to 1, capturing the degree to which a citizen approves of the job performance of their congressional delegation (i.e., their member of Congress, their Senior U.S. Senator, and their Junior U.S. Senator). Each approval variable used in this summated scale of congressional delegation approval is dichotomous, coded 1 if a citizen approves of their legislator and 0 if the citizen disapproves. A score of 1 would indicate that a citizen approves of the job their entire delegation or, in other words, approves of the individual job performance of their U.S. Representative and both U.S. Senators.

Presidential Approval: This is an ordinal variable captures the degree to which a citizen approves of the job performance of President Barack Obama. This variable is coded on a scale of 1 (strongly disapprove) to 4 (strongly approve) for the CCES pooled model and on a dichotomous scale of 0 (disapprove) to 1 (approve) for the CCES panel models. The latter is due to the chronic lack of variation in non-extreme evaluations of presidential job approval (i.e., somewhat disapprove, somewhat approve) in the CCES panel sample. This coding decision does not change the substantive results presented. Given the incredibly polarized and endogenous nature of presi-

dential approval to partisanship (Montagnes, Peskowitz & McCrain 2019)[33], the Democratic and Republican partisan panel models do not include the presidential approval covariate. Reflecting this salient point and pronounced lack of variation, President Obama's approval rating ranges from 2-3% among Republican identifiers in the panel survey. This is hardly surprising, given that the CCES panel sample tends to include more politically sophisticated and active respondents than the full CCES Schaffner & Ansolabehere (2015).

Retrospective Economic Evaluations: This ordinal variable captures a citizen's retrospective evaluation of the national economy. This variable is coded on a scale from -2 (gotten much worse) to 2 (gotten much better).

Quality of Dyadic Representation: This variable captures the ideological divergence between a citizen's ideological ideal point and their member of Congress. This variable is specified by taking the absolute difference between the ideological location of a member of Congress and a given respondent (i.e., constituent). Greater values indicate a greater ideological divergence between legislator and constituent. This measure is specified using Aldrich-McKelvey perceptual-based ideal points and roll-call based policy ideal points.

Table 1: Congressional Roll-Call Policy Items Used in Joint-Scaling Ideal Point Estimation, 2010 CCES Panel

Roll-Call Policy Item Vote	**U.S. House Yea-Nay Votes**	**U.S. Senate Yea-Nay Votes**	**CCES Respondents Y-N-DK%**[1]
American Reinvestment & Recovery Act	240-186	61-37	49-50-1
Authorizing Carbon Tax	215-211	**N/A**	52-46-2
Dodd-Frank Financial Reform	223-199	60-39	67-32-1
Expanding SCHIP Funding	284-138	66-32	68-32-1
Affordable Care Act	219-211	60-39	49-50-1
Kagan SCOTUS Confirmation	**N/A**	62-37	51-47-3
Repealing Don't Ask Don't Tell	230-194	65-31	60-39-1

[1] *Note: Column shows percentage of CCES panel respondents (N = 9,500) supporting, opposing, & saying "don't know" on policy items. Table shows congressional roll-call votes.*

[33] Montagnes, B. Pablo, Zachary Peskowitz, and Joshua McCrain. 2019. "Bounding Partisan Approval Rates under Endogenous Partisanship: Why High Presidential Partisan Approval May Not Be What It Seems." *Journal of Politics* 81(1): 321–26.

Table 2: Congressional Roll-Call Policy Items Used in Joint-Scaling Ideal Point Estimation, 2008-2016

Year	Roll-Call Policy Item Vote	U.S. House Yea-Nay Votes	U.S. Senate Yea-Nay Votes	CCES Respondents Y-N-DK%[1]
2008	Gay Marriage Ban	199-166	49-48	43-47-11
2008	Raising Minimum Wage	307-114	94-3	72-21-7
2008	Allow Fed. Funding Stem Cell Research	244-171	63-34	53-30-17
2008	Funding SCHIP	263-156	68-31	58-26-16
2008	Withdrawing from Iraq	169-248	28-70	47-41-12
2008	Extending NAFTA	282-131	77-18	31-34-35
2008	Funding Foreclosure Assistance	239-170	84-12	39-39-22
2008	Authorizing FISA	293-129	69-28	59-27-14
2008	Authorizing TARP Bailout Plan	263-171	74-25	20-54-26
2009	American Reinvestment & Recovery Act	240-186	61-37	48-50-2
2009	Authorizing Carbon Tax	215-211	**N/A**	54-43-3
2009	Ledbetter Equal Pay Act	250-177	61-36	62-36-2
2009	Expanding SCHIP Funding	284-138	66-32	75-24-1
2009	Affordable Care Act	219-211	60-39	47-51-2
2009	Shepherd Hate Crimes Bill	249-175	63-28	61-38-1
2009	Sotomayor SCOTUS Confirmation	**N/A**	68-31	49-48-3
2010	American Reinvestment & Recovery Act	240-186	61-37	48-51-1
2010	Authorizing Carbon Tax	215-211	**N/A**	53-45-2
2010	Dodd-Frank Financial Reform	223-199	60-39	66-32-2
2010	Expanding SCHIP Funding	284-138	66-32	69-30-1
2010	Affordable Care Act	219-211	60-39	50-50-0
2010	Authorizing TARP Bailout Plan[2]	224-148	**N/A**	10-4-86
2010	Allow Fed. Funding Stem Cell Research[2]	218-138	**N/A**	63-36-1
2010	Kagan SCOTUS Confirmation	**N/A**	62-37	47-49-4
2010	Repealing Don't Ask Don't Tell	230-194	65-31	57-41-2
2011	American Reinvestment & Recovery Act[2]	240-186	61-37	55-44-1
2011	Authorizing Carbon Tax[2]	215-211	**N/A**	19-14-67
2011	Authorizing TARP Bailout Plan[2]	224-148	**N/A**	9-24-67
2011	Expanding SCHIP Funding[2]	284-138	66-32	24-9-66
2011	Affordable Care Act[2]	219-211	60-39	51-48-1
2011	Expanding Stem-Cell Funding[2]	218-138	**N/A**	66-33-1
2011	Repealing Don't Ask Don't Tell[2]	230-194	65-31	64-35-1
2012	Affordable Care Act[2]	167-167	50-37	56-43-1
2012	Repeal ACA (HR 2)	245-189	**N/A**	43-53-4
2012	Repeal ACA (HR 6079)	244-185	**N/A**	43-53-4
2012	Tax Hike Prevention Act	**N/A**	51-48	70-25-5
2012	Authorize Ryan Budget	235-193	40-57	18-80-2
2012	Authorize Simpson-Bowles Budget	38-382	**N/A**	48-50-2
2012	Middle Class Tax Cut Act	**N/A**	45-54	58-37-5
2012	Authorize Keystone XL Pipeline	293-127	56-42	66-24-10
2012	Korea Free Trade Act	278-151	83-15	49-47-4
2012	Religious Exception Birthcontrol	**N/A**	56-42	38-59-2
2012	Panama Free Trade Act	77-22	300-129	**N/A**
2012	Colombia Free Trade Act	262-167	66-33	**N/A**

[1] *Note: Column shows percentage of CCES respondents supporting, opposing, & saying "don't know" on policy items. Table shows congressional roll-call votes.* [2] *Survey policy item from previous Congress.*

Table 2: Congressional Roll-Call Policy Items Used in Joint-Scaling Ideal Point Estimation, 2013-2016

Year	Roll-Call Policy Item Vote	U.S. House Yea-Nay Votes	U.S. Senate Yea-Nay Votes	CCES Respondents Y-N-DK%[1]
2013	Authorize Simpson-Bowles Budget	75-348	**N/A**	34-65-1
2013	Authorize Keystone XL Pipeline	192-224	59-41	67-30-3
2013	VAWA Reauthorization	285-138	79-22	88-11-1
2013	Repeal Affordable Care Act	229-195	45-54	52-45-3
2013	Student Success Act	221-207	**N/A**	46-52-2
2013	Abortion Ban	228-196	**N/A**	62-37-1
2013	Marketplace Fairness Act	**N/A**	69-27	43-55-2
2013	Constrain NSA Funding	205-217	**N/A**	71-27-2
2014	Authorize Simpson-Bowles Budget	77-348	**N/A**	31-67-2
2014	Authorize Ryan Budget	133-293	**N/A**	22-77-1
2014	Raise Debt Ceiling	222-203	55-43	46-52-2
2014	Tax Hike Prevention Act	378-46	76-16	26-70-4
2015	Repeal Affordable Care Act	240-189	52-47	56-43-1
2015	Increase Iranian Sanctions	246-181	**N/A**	79-19-2
2015	Authorize Keystone XL Pipeline	270-152	62-36	55-40-5
2015	VAWA Reauthorization	241-118	70-22	92-8-1
2015	Freedom Act	337-88	67-32	32-17-51
2016	Repeal Affordable Care Act	240-190	52-47	54-46-0
2016	K-12 Education Adjustment Bill	361-65	81-17	78-22-0
2016	Increase Iranian Sanctions	246-181	**N/A**	79-21-0
2016	Freedom Act	337-88	67-32	15-5-80
2016	Raise Minimum Wage	**N/A**	**N/A**	70-30-0
2016	Garland SCOTUS Nomination	**N/A**	**N/A**	11-9-80
2016	Trade Adjustment Assistance Act	**N/A**	**N/A**	17-3-80
2016	Medicare Accountability Act	**N/A**	**N/A**	68-32
2016	Highway Funding Act	**N/A**	**N/A**	83-17-0
2016	Trans-Pacific Partnership	**N/A**	**N/A**	55-45-0

[1] *Note: Column shows percentage of CCES respondents supporting, opposing, & saying "don't know" on policy items. Table shows congressional roll-call votes.*[2] *Survey policy item from previous Congress.*

Table 3A: Pooled CCES Interactive Models Assessing Partisan & Ideological Components of Congressional Approval

	Perceptual-Based Model[1]	Roll-Call Based Model[2]
Independent Partisan	-0.71 (0.07)	-0.79 (0.06)
Democratic Partisan	-0.75 (0.07)	-0.65 (0.05)
Ideological Proximity	-0.76 (0.04)	-0.46 (0.02)
Split Congress	-0.71 (0.05)	-0.35 (0.04)
Democratic Congress	-1.89 (0.06)	-1.36 (0.05)
Independent × Split Congress	0.03 (0.09)	0.03 (0.08)
Democrat × Split Congress	0.52 (0.09)	0.25 (0.06)
Independent × Democratic Congress	0.90 (0.10)	1.01 (0.09)
Democrat × Democratic Congress	1.87 (0.10)	1.77 (0.07)
Proximity × Split Congress	-0.03 (0.05)	0.00 (0.02)
Proximity × Democratic Congress	1.04 (0.05)	0.82 (0.02)
Political Sophistication	-1.38 (0.01)	-1.43 (0.04)
Congressional Delegation Approval	1.03 (0.03)	1.22 (0.03)
Presidential Approval	0.58 (0.01)	0.64 (0.01)
Retrospective Economic Evaluations	-0.09 (0.01)	-0.07 (0.01)
Dyadic Representation Quality	-0.03 (0.01)	0.12 (0.01)
Intercept	-1.88 (0.06)	-2.35 (0.05)
Pseudo R^2	0.14	0.17
AIC	173,913.20	202,821.70
N	227,309	256,816

[1] Indicates model with perceptual-based Aldrich-McKelvey ideological measures.
[2] Indicates model with roll call-based policy Bayesian joint-scaling ideological measures.
Models estimated with robust standard errors clustered by congressional district-year in parenthesis & logistic regression coefficients reported.

Table 3B: CCES Panel Additive Models Assessing Partisan & Ideological Components of Congressional Approval

	2010 Survey Panel Wave[1]	2012 Survey Panel Wave[2]	2014 Survey Panel Wave[2]
Independent Partisan	-0.34 (0.21)	-0.96 (0.16)	-1.07 (0.21)
Democratic Partisan	0.55 (0.17)	-0.27 (0.15)	-0.98 (0.18)
Ideological Proximity	0.10 (0.05)	-0.37 (0.04)	-0.42 (0.05)
Political Sophistication $_t$	-0.78 (0.21)	-0.55 (0.06)	-1.18 (0.27)
Congressional Approval $_{t-1}$	-	1.77 (0.12)	2.85 (0.09)
Congressional Delegation Approval $_t$	0.66 (0.11)	0.66 (0.24)	1.36 (0.14)
Presidential Approval $_t$	2.86 (0.20)	0.71 (0.16)	1.78 (0.18)
Retrospective Economic Evaluations $_t$	0.19 (0.05)	-0.61 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.07)
Dyadic Representation Quality $_t$	-0.09 (0.05)	0.66 (0.11)	0.27 (0.07)
Intercept	-3.82 (0.22)	-2.85 (0.18)	-3.57 (0.22)
Pseudo R^2	0.36	0.09	0.30
AIC	4,485.40	5,058.27	3,419.01
N	8,892	8,797	8,766

[1] Indicates Democratic majority in both Congressional chambers.

[2] Indicates split-control Congress, with House Republican majority & Senate Democratic majority. Models estimated with bootstrapped standard errors drawn from 1,000 iterations in parenthesis & logistic regression coefficients reported.

Table 4A: Pooled CCES Models Isolating the Ideological Component Of Congressional Approval, Democratic Partisanship Model

	Perceptual-Based Model[1]	Roll-Call Based Model[2]
Ideological Proximity	-0.62 (0.05)	-0.58 (0.02)
Split Congress	-0.33 (0.06)	-0.17 (0.04)
Democratic Congress	0.56 (0.06)	0.51 (0.05)
Proximity × Split Congress	0.12 (0.06)	0.11 (0.03)
Proximity × Democratic Congress	1.00 (0.06)	0.82 (0.03)
Political Sophistication	-1.96 (0.06)	-1.79 (0.06)
Congressional Delegation Approval	1.15 (0.04)	1.30 (0.04)
Presidential Approval	0.55 (0.02)	0.60 (0.02)
Retrospective Economic Evaluations	-0.10 (0.02)	-0.07 (0.01)
Dyadic Representation Quality	-0.03 (0.02)	0.09 (0.02)
Intercept	-2.15 (0.09)	-2.58 (0.08)
Pseudo R^2	0.14	0.16
AIC	93,997.36	111,319.50
N	105,716	120,113

[1] Indicates model with perceptual-based Aldrich-McKelvey ideological measures.
[2] Indicates model with roll call-based policy Bayesian joint-scaling ideological measures.
Models estimated with robust standard errors clustered by congressional district-year in parenthesis & logistic regression coefficients reported.

Table 4B: Pooled CCES Models Isolating the Ideological Component Of Congressional Approval, Republican Partisanship Model

	Perceptual-Based Model[1]	Roll-Call Based Model[2]
Ideological Proximity	-0.13 (0.06)	-0.16 (0.03)
Split Congress	-0.79 (0.07)	-0.61 (0.05)
Democratic Congress	-1.31 (0.07)	-1.66 (0.06)
Proximity × Split Congress	-0.22 (0.07)	-0.19 (0.04)
Proximity × Democratic Congress	1.37 (0.07)	1.05 (0.04)
Political Sophistication	0.06 (0.08)	-0.09 (0.07)
Congressional Delegation Approval	0.78 (0.04)	0.90 (0.04)
Presidential Approval	0.69 (0.02)	0.79 (0.02)
Retrospective Economic Evaluations	-0.04 (0.02)	-0.03 (0.02)
Dyadic Representation Quality	-0.02 (0.02)	0.12 (0.02)
Intercept	-2.60 (0.10)	-2.90 (0.09)
Pseudo R^2	0.12	0.16
AIC	64,319.77	69,277.62
N	97,293	104,565

[1] Indicates model with perceptual-based Aldrich-McKelvey ideological measures.
[2] Indicates model with roll call-based policy Bayesian joint-scaling ideological measures.
Models estimated with robust standard errors clustered by congressional district-year in parenthesis & logistic regression coefficients reported.

Table 4C: Pooled CCES Models Isolating the Ideological Component Of Congressional Approval, Independent Partisanship Model

	Perceptual-Based Model[1]	Roll-Call Based Model[2]
Ideological Proximity	-0.55 (0.09)	-0.43 (0.05)
Split Congress	-0.70 (0.09)	-0.37 (0.08)
Democratic Congress	-0.54 (0.10)	-0.37 (0.09)
Proximity × Split Congress	-0.02 (0.11)	-0.07 (0.06)
Proximity × Democratic Congress	1.21 (0.12)	0.74 (0.06)
Political Sophistication	-1.42 (0.13)	-1.34 (0.10)
Congressional Delegation Approval	1.46 (0.09)	1.64 (0.08)
Presidential Approval	0.65 (0.04)	0.78 (0.03)
Retrospective Economic Evaluations	-0.10 (0.04)	-0.03 (0.03)
Dyadic Representation Quality	-0.03 (0.05)	0.09 (0.04)
Intercept	-2.98 (0.16)	-3.68 (0.13)
Pseudo R^2	0.15	0.20
AIC	13,971.70	19,767.22
N	24,300	32,138

[1] Indicates model with perceptual-based Aldrich-McKelvey ideological measures.
[2] Indicates model with roll call-based policy Bayesian joint-scaling ideological measures.
Models estimated with robust standard errors clustered by congressional district-year in parenthesis & logistic regression coefficients reported.

Table 4D: Panel CCES Models Isolating the Ideological Component Of Congressional Approval, Democratic Partisanship Model

	2010 Survey Panel Wave[1]	2012 Survey Panel Wave[2]	2014 Survey Panel Wave[2]
Ideological Proximity	0.19 (0.04)	-0.35 (0.12)	-0.12 (0.10)
Political Sophistication $_t$	0.15 (0.18)	-2.45 (0.38)	-1.97 (0.53)
Congressional Approval $_{t-1}$	-	1.81 (0.14)	3.63 (0.17)
Congressional Delegation Approval $_t$	0.89 (0.11)	0.99 (0.21)	2.44 (0.27)
Retrospective Economic Evaluations $_t$	0.38 (0.04)	-0.40 (0.10)	0.07 (0.11)
Dyadic Representation Quality $_t$	0.00 (0.05)	0.42 (0.10)	0.67 (0.12)
Intercept	-1.47 (0.15)	-2.10 (0.26)	-4.51 (0.38)
Pseudo R^2	0.05	0.16	0.42
AIC	3,747.77	1,988.82	1,173.521
N	4,071	4,034	4,036

[1] Indicates Democratic majority in both Congressional chambers.

[2] Indicates split-control Congress, with House Republican majority & Senate Democratic majority. Models estimated with bootstrapped standard errors drawn from 1,000 iterations in parenthesis & logistic regression coefficients reported.

Table 4E: Panel CCES Models Isolating the Ideological Component Of Congressional Approval, Republican Partisanship Model

	2010 Survey Panel Wave[1]	2012 Survey Panel Wave[2]	2014 Survey Panel Wave[2]
Ideological Proximity	0.89 (0.13)	-0.16 (0.05)	-0.31 (0.06)
Political Sophistication $_t$	-4.44 (0.60)	1.40 (0.30)	-0.58 (0.35)
Congressional Approval $_{t-1}$	-	1.30 (0.30)	2.36 (0.11)
Retrospective Economic Evaluations $_t$	0.41 (0.16)	-0.39 (0.12)	0.12 (0.08)
Dyadic Representation Quality $_t$	-0.96 (0.24)	0.14 (0.08)	-0.07 (0.09)
Intercept	-0.49 (0.47)	-3.30 (0.23)	-2.70 (0.25)
Pseudo R^2	0.32	0.03	0.17
AIC	718.61	2,745.58	2,103.57
N	3,948	3,902	3,880

[1] Indicates Democratic majority in both Congressional chambers.

[2] Indicates split-control Congress, with House Republican majority & Senate Democratic majority. Models estimated with bootstrapped standard errors drawn from 1,000 iterations in parenthesis & logistic regression coefficients reported.

Table 4F: Panel CCES Models Isolating the Ideological Component Of Congressional Approval, Independent Partisanship Model

	2010 Survey Panel Wave[1]	2012 Survey Panel Wave[2]	2014 Survey Panel Wave[2]
Ideological Proximity	0.56 (0.17)	-0.45 (0.17)	-0.16 (0.20)
Political Sophistication $_t$	-1.35 (0.65)	-0.20 (0.85)	1.06 (1.06)
Congressional Approval $_{t-1}$	-	4.55 (0.46)	4.75 (0.43)
Congressional Delegation Approval $_t$	2.08 (0.45)	1.25 (0.43)	3.00 (0.58)
Retrospective Economic Evaluations $_t$	0.81 (0.19)	-0.67 (0.23)	0.56 (0.29)
Dyadic Representation Quality $_t$	0.01 (0.24)	-0.24 (0.27)	0.09 (0.40)
Intercept	-3.31 (0.64)	-4.51 (0.64)	-6.63 (0.78)
Pseudo R^2	0.25	0.39	0.57
AIC	360.68	225.79	166.52
N	908	883	889

[1] Indicates Democratic majority in both Congressional chambers.

[2] Indicates split-control Congress, with House Republican majority & Senate Democratic majority. Models estimated with bootstrapped standard errors drawn from 1,000 iterations in parenthesis & logistic regression coefficients reported.

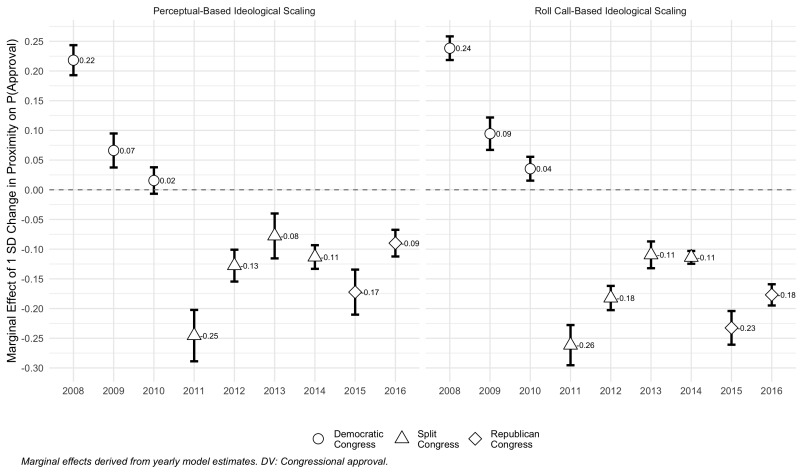
8 Manuscript Supporting Information

8.1 Alternative Specifications: CCES Yearly Models

In addition to the model specification, pooled by Congress-type, I specify yearly cross-sectional models for each of the survey years provided by the Cooperative Congressional Election Study. I specify these yearly cross-sectional models as a robustness check of the theoretical expectation that the effect of partisanship and ideological proximity is conditional on the collective representation provided by Congress during varying periods of partisan control. Results of the cross-sectional models, using both the perceptual-based and roll-call based proximity measures, can be found in the figure below.

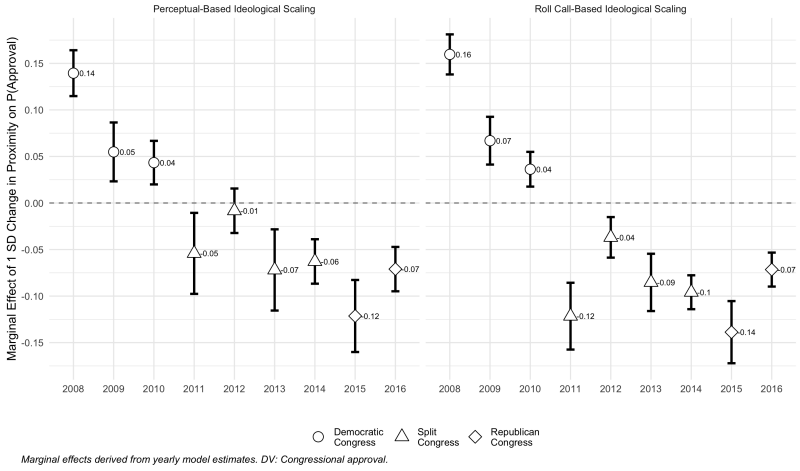
CCES Marginal Effects of Interest by Year on Probability of Approval

(a) Ideological Proximity



Marginal effects derived from yearly model estimates. DV: Congressional approval.

(b) Partisanship



Marginal effects derived from yearly model estimates. DV: Congressional approval.

As one can see, the marginal effect of a one standard deviation increase in ideologi-

cal proximity to congressional Democrats on the probability of congressional approval is positive and statistically significant for the 2008, 2009, and 2010 cross-sectional models encompassing Democratic control of Congress. These findings hold for both the perceptual-based proximity measure and jointly-scaled roll-call proximity measure. With the exception of the 2010 perceptual-based cross sectional model, the marginal effect of proximity on the probability of approval is significant and negative during the years of split congressional control (2011-2014 with a Republican House and Democratic Senate) and Republican control (2015-2016). A similar trend holds for the marginal effect of Democratic partisanship on the probability of congressional approval. During periods of Democratic control, Democratic partisanship increases the probability of approving of Congress while during periods of split and Republican control, Democratic partisanship decreases the probability of congressional approval.[34] These cross-sectional yearly models provide additional support to the theory that collective approval of Congress features both a distinct ideological and partisan component.

8.2 1980-2016 American National Election Study Robustness Check

As an additional robustness check, I test the congressional approval model using data from the *American National Election Study* (ANES). Given the lack of district and state level samples in the ANES to estimate ideal points for individual members of Congress (Ramey 2016; Jones & McDermott 2002), I rely on an alternative ideal point estimation strategy to test the manuscript model. For this robustness check, I use the Bayesian Aldrich-McKelvey method developed by Hare et al. (2015) to scale respondents and parties on the same scale. This Bayesian method allows specification of the ideological common space using liberal-conservative placement by survey respondents of themselves, the two national parties, and other national stimuli (presidential candidates, prominent political figures). The figure below shows estimation of the citizen ideal points using this Bayesian Aldrich-McKelvey scaling.

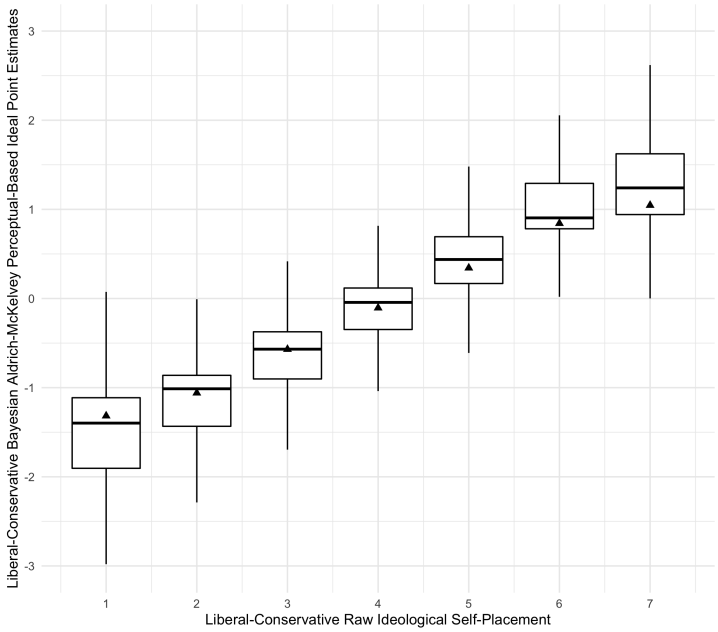
Similar to Figure 2 of the manuscript, the figure above shows the relationship between the estimated Bayesian-Aldrich McKelvey citizen ideal point and a respondent's raw self-placement on the seven point ideological scale from very liberal (1) to very conservative (7). There is clear face validity in the estimated ideal points, with clear evidence that citizens that perceive themselves as more conservative possess higher estimated ideal points. From here, I specify the proximity measure using the estimated stimuli location of the political parties as a proxy for the location of the congressional parties, given the inadequacy of the cluster-sampled ANES to generate legislator ideal points needed to measure the location of the legislative parties. To begin, I specify the same pooled interactive baseline model of congressional approval presented in equation 1 of the manuscript using measures from the 1980-2016 ANES.[35] I begin with the 1980 ANES, given this is

[34] These findings hold in all cross-sectional models with the exception of the 2010 perceptual-based cross sectional model.

[35] This model controls for presidential approval, legislator approval, retrospective economic evaluations, and political sophistication. For the ANES model, I specify a political sophistication measure encompassing a majority recall and political activity battery. This summated measure features a Cronbach's

the first year in which respondents were asked to express their opinions about the job performance of Congress.[36]

Perceptual-Based ANES Ideal Points, 1980-2016



Results of the baseline model can be found in the figure below. The figure provides additional evidence for the theory posited in the manuscript. Consistent with the expectations of H_2, a one standard deviation in ideological proximity towards the Democratic Party increases the probability of approving of congress by 10%. By contrast, and consistent with $H_{2.1}$ a one-standard deviation increase in ideological proximity towards the Democratic party results in a 9% decrease in approving of congressional job performance. The effect of ideological proximity during split Congresses is insignificant in the ANES models.

Results of the baseline model lend support of a partisan component of approval, as articulated in H_1 and $H_{1.1}$. During Democratic (Republican) congresses, the marginal effect of Democratic partisanship increases (decreases) the probability of approving of Congress by 5% (7%). Contrary to the findings in the CCES models, Democratic partisanship increases the probability of approving of Congress by 5% during divided Congresses. However, it is important to note that in contrast to the split Congresses featuring a House Republican majority in the CCES data (2011-2014), the split Congresses in the ANES data primarily feature a Democratic House majority (1982-1986). Indeed, this

alpha reliability coefficient of 0.70.

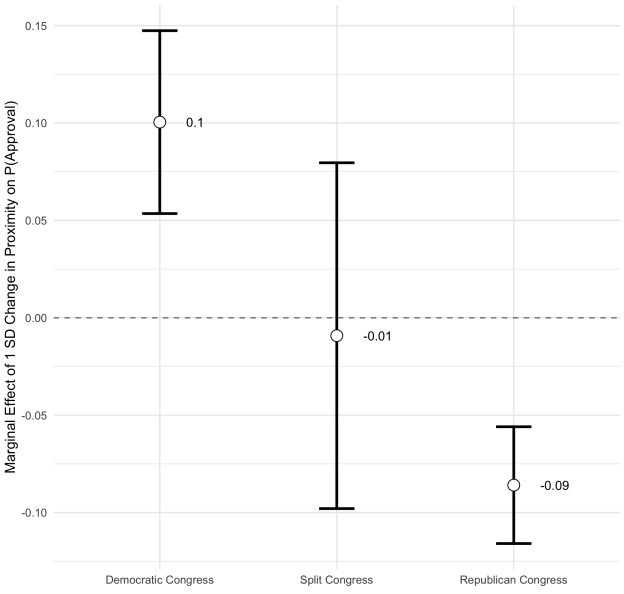
[36]As a consequence, the pooled models encompasses the following ANES survey years: 1980, 1982, 1984, 1986, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2008, 2012, and 2016. This reflects periods of split congressional control (1982-1986, 2002, 2012), periods of Republican control (1996-2000, 2004), and periods of Democratic control (1980, 1988-1994, 2008).

positive effect in Democratic partisanship on approval during the split Congresses is consistent with the findings of Jones & McDermott (2002), in which "the majority party in the House appears to hold more sway over public opinion of Congress than the majority party in the Senate." This is precisely what is found in the CCES data, where the marginal effect of Democratic partisanship on approval is significantly negative during the split Congresses sporting a Republican House majority and a Democratic Senate majority (2011-2014).

Lastly, I respecify the ANES models to test the manuscript hypotheses isolating the independent ideological component of congressional approval. To that end, I specify party-specific models of the baseline model of congressional approval as presented in the manuscript. Results of the ANES robustness checks largely confirm an independent component of congressional approval, with a one-standard deviation increase towards the Democratic Party resulting in a significant decline in the probability of approving for Congress during Republican Congresses for Democrats. By contrast, a one-standard deviation increase towards the Democratic Party results in a significant increase in the probability of approving for Congress during split and Democratic Congresses for Republicans, with this same effect manifesting itself among independents during split Congresses.

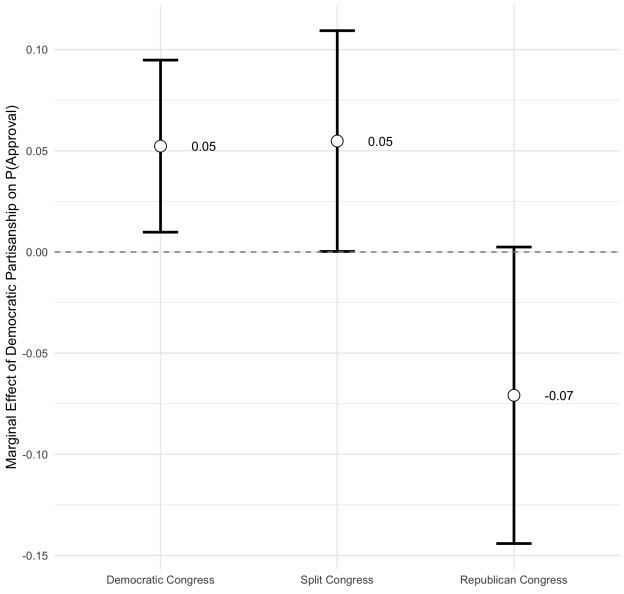
Interactive ANES Marginal Effects of Interest & Partisan Control of Congress on Probability of Approval

(a) Ideological Proximity



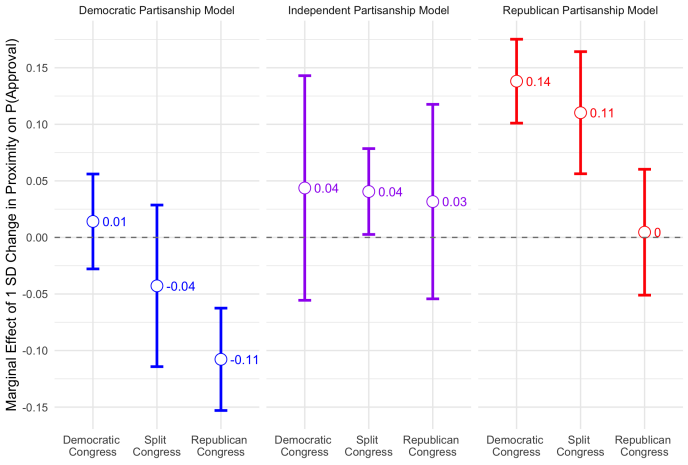
Marginal effects derived from interactive model estimates. DV: Congressional approval.

(b) Partisanship



Marginal effects derived from interactive model estimates. DV: Congressional approval.

Party-Specific ANES Models Isolating Effect of Proximity on Approval



Confidence intervals calculated with standard errors clustered by survey year. DV: Congressional approval.

Cross-Sectional CCES Congressional Approval Perceptual-Based Models Assessing the Influence of Ideology & Partisanship on Congressional Approval

	2008 Survey[1]	2009 Survey[1]	2010 Survey[1]	2011 Survey[2]	2012 Survey[2]	2013 Survey[2]	2014 Survey[2]	2015 Survey[3]	2016 Survey[3]
Independent Partisan	0.39 (0.13)	-0.20 (0.15)	-0.28 (0.14)	-0.97 (0.15)	-0.54 (0.12)	-0.85 (0.19)	-0.78 (0.09)	-0.94 (0.16)	-0.62 (0.07)
Democratic Partisan	1.09 (0.10)	0.45 (0.13)	0.42 (0.11)	-0.32 (0.13)	-0.07 (0.10)	-0.79 (0.23)	-0.51 (0.10)	-0.83 (0.14)	-0.46 (0.08)
Ideological Proximity	0.95 (0.06)	0.31 (0.07)	0.07 (0.05)	-0.78 (0.07)	-0.57 (0.06)	-0.48 (0.11)	-0.48 (0.04)	-0.61 (0.07)	-0.33 (0.04)
Political Sophistication	-0.48 (0.11)	-0.90 (0.13)	-1.59 (0.11)	-0.58 (0.17)	-1.42 (0.10)	-1.75 (0.20)	-1.60 (0.11)	-2.13 (0.17)	-2.49 (0.10)
Congressional Delegation Approval	1.06 (0.07)	1.40 (0.11)	0.97 (0.07)	0.65 (0.11)	0.84 (0.08)	0.98 (0.14)	0.96 (0.07)	1.20 (0.11)	1.20 (0.06)
Presidential Approval	0.58 (0.04)	1.04 (0.05)	1.21 (0.04)	0.30 (0.07)	0.71 (0.04)	0.81 (0.09)	0.85 (0.04)	0.52 (0.06)	0.30 (0.03)
Retrospective Economic Evaluations	-0.01 (0.04)	0.23 (0.03)	0.18 (0.03)	-0.05 (0.04)	-0.16 (0.03)	-0.12 (0.06)	-0.15 (0.03)	-0.03 (0.04)	-0.01 (0.02)
Dyadic Representation Quality	-0.01 (0.03)	0.13 (0.05)	-0.01 (0.03)	0.04 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.04)	0.06 (0.05)	0.03 (0.03)	-0.13 (0.04)	-0.12 (0.03)
Intercept	-3.66 (0.18)	-4.24 (0.21)	-4.42 (0.14)	-1.69 (0.21)	-2.99 (0.15)	-2.85 (0.27)	-2.98 (0.12)	-1.01 (0.22)	-0.72 (0.11)
Pseudo R^2	0.16	0.37	0.34	0.06	0.07	0.09	0.09	0.12	0.10
AIC	22,469.22	8,009.49	22,861.03	9,490.19	28,537.59	6,848.82	30,176.04	7,978.37	32,395.22
N	24,682	10,991	44,301	11,228	39,434	11,551	39,289	9,091	36,742

[1] indicates survey year during a Democratic Congress, [2] indicates a survey year during a split-Congress featuring a Republican House majority and a Senate Democratic majority, and [3] indicates a survey year during a Republican Congress.
Models estimated with robust standard errors clustered by congressional district-year & logistic regression coefficients reported.

Cross-Sectional CCES Congressional Approval Roll-Call Based Models Assessing the Influence of Ideology & Partisanship on Congressional Approval

	2008 Survey[1]	2009 Survey[1]	2010 Survey[1]	2011 Survey[2]	2012 Survey[2]	2013 Survey[2]	2014 Survey[2]	2015 Survey[3]	2016 Survey[3]
Independent Partisan	0.37 (0.11)	-0.11 (0.13)	-0.15 (0.11)	-1.24 (0.13)	-0.68 (0.10)	-0.98 (0.15)	-0.85 (0.08)	-0.96 (0.14)	-0.77 (0.07)
Democratic Partisan	1.25 (0.09)	0.54 (0.10)	0.34 (0.09)	-0.70 (0.11)	-0.31 (0.09)	-0.90 (0.16)	-0.76 (0.07)	-0.98 (0.12)	-0.46 (0.06)
Ideological Proximity	0.69 (0.03)	0.22 (0.03)	0.10 (0.03)	-0.47 (0.03)	-0.49 (0.03)	-0.47 (0.05)	-0.58 (0.03)	-0.51 (0.03)	-0.40 (0.02)
Political Sophistication	-0.41 (0.09)	-1.08 (0.12)	-1.70 (0.09)	-0.76 (0.14)	-1.56 (0.09)	-1.57 (0.17)	-1.69 (0.09)	-1.61 (0.15)	-2.21 (0.08)
Congressional Delegation Approval	1.24 (0.07)	1.68 (0.10)	1.15 (0.07)	0.95 (0.10)	0.98 (0.08)	1.15 (0.13)	1.06 (0.07)	1.46 (0.11)	1.44 (0.06)
Presidential Approval	0.68 (0.04)	0.96 (0.05)	1.23 (0.04)	0.53 (0.05)	0.84 (0.04)	0.91 (0.07)	0.85 (0.03)	0.65 (0.06)	0.43 (0.03)
Retrospective Economic Evaluations	0.06 (0.04)	0.23 (0.03)	0.15 (0.03)	0.02 (0.04)	-0.09 (0.03)	-0.08 (0.05)	-0.13 (0.03)	0.00 (0.04)	0.06 (0.02)
Dyadic Representation Quality	0.15 (0.03)	0.17 (0.04)	0.05 (0.03)	0.12 (0.05)	0.05 (0.03)	0.21 (0.07)	0.05 (0.04)	0.12 (0.06)	0.15 (0.03)
Intercept	-4.18 (0.17)	-4.29 (0.19)	-4.58 (0.12)	-1.95 (0.19)	-3.09 (0.13)	-3.49 (0.26)	-2.57 (0.10)	-2.17 (0.22)	-1.61 (0.11)
Pseudo R^2	0.18	0.37	0.35	0.08	0.12	0.14	0.14	0.17	0.13
AIC	25,420.83	9,162.493	27,952.91	11,402.42	33,298.37	80,86.78	35,822.10	9,113.32	36,867.87
N	27,034	12,165	48,981	12,754	44,325	13,274	46,511	10,532	41,240

[1] indicates survey year during a Democratic Congress, [2] indicates a survey year during a split-Congress featuring a Republican House majority and a Senate Democratic majority, and [3] indicates a survey year during a Republican Congress.
Models estimated with robust standard errors clustered by congressional district-year & logistic regression coefficients reported.

Pooled ANES Interactive Models Assessing Partisan & Ideological Components of Congressional Approval

	Perceptual-Based Model[1]
Independent Partisan	-0.74 (0.10)
Democratic Partisan	-0.32 (0.15)
Ideological Proximity	-0.14 (0.02)
Split Congress	-0.55 (0.63)
Democratic Congress	-0.28 (0.49)
Independent × Split Congress	0.50 (0.13)
Democrat × Split Congress	0.58 (0.25)
Independent × Democratic Congress	0.50 (0.13)
Democrat × Democratic Congress	0.56 (0.17)
Proximity × Split Congress	0.12 (0.07)
Proximity × Democratic Congress	0.30 (0.04)
Political Sophistication	-2.18 (0.04)
Member of Congress Approval	0.86 (0.08)
Presidential Approval	0.07 (0.10)
Retrospective Economic Evaluations	0.15 (0.05)
Intercept	-0.36 (0.46)
Pseudo R^2	0.07
AIC	18,906.54
N	15,672

[1] Indicates model with perceptual-based Bayesian Aldrich-McKelvey ideological measures. Models estimated with robust standard errors clustered by survey year & logistic regression coefficients reported.

Congressional Approval & Responsible Party Government: The Role of Partisanship & Ideology in Citizen Assessments of the Contemporary U.S. Congress

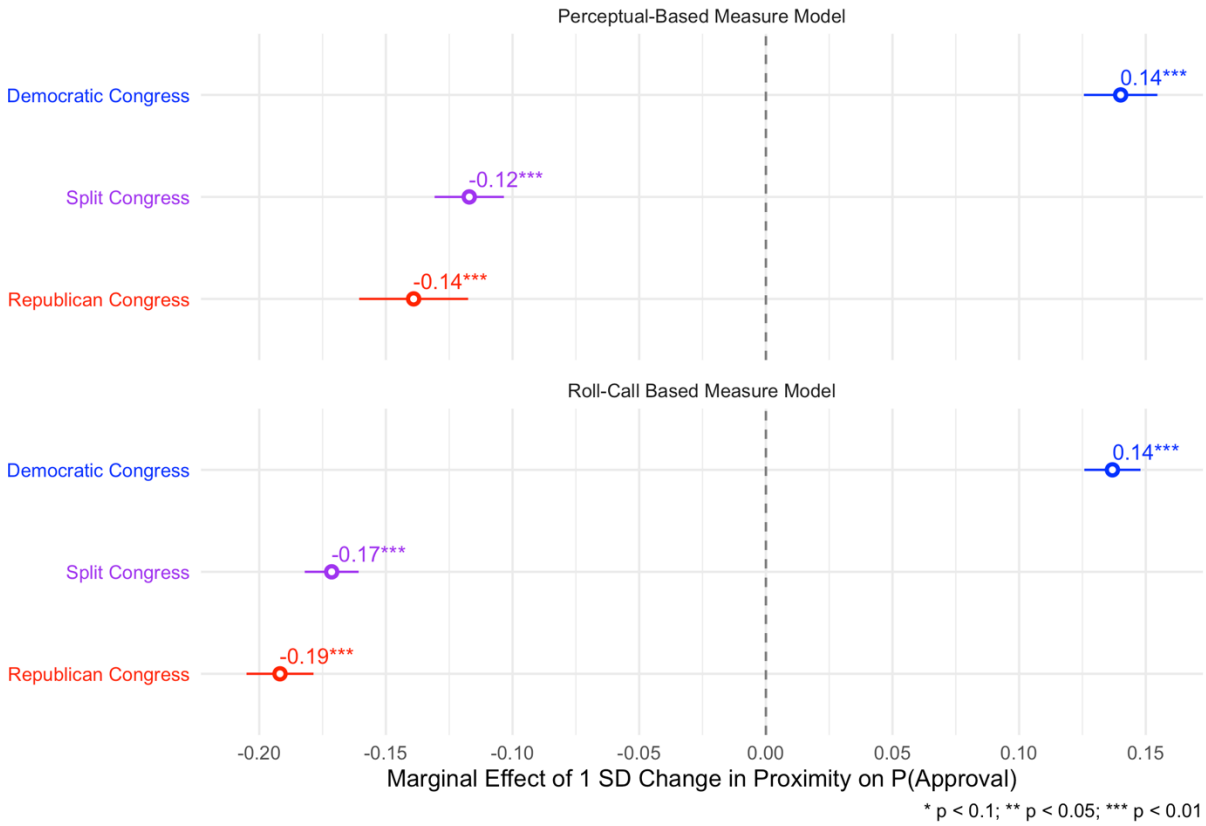
In terms of citizen assessments of the U.S. Congress, pundits and conventional wisdom alike bemoan both low approval ratings and the inability of citizens to evaluate their Congress in policy terms. This conventional assessment of how citizens evaluate the job performance of their Congress is largely incongruent with the scholarly rendition of a national legislature that is marred in stark partisan conflict on the basis of diverging ideological policy programs. Moreover, members of Congress and parties frame electoral competition over the legislative majority in ideological terms centered on competing policy agendas.

Thus, while the contemporary Congress is conceptualized as a place marked with ideological conflict between a majority and minority responsible parties with competing policy agendas, conventional wisdom posits that citizens are incapable of thinking about Congress in policy terms. Indeed, standard theories of congressional job performance typically argue that citizens form their perceptions of congressional job approval on valence considerations, such as retrospective evaluations of the national economy. As such, there is a clear disconnect between how scholars view Congress as an institution marred in ideological conflict by responsible parties and the conventional way citizens form evaluations of congressional job performance.

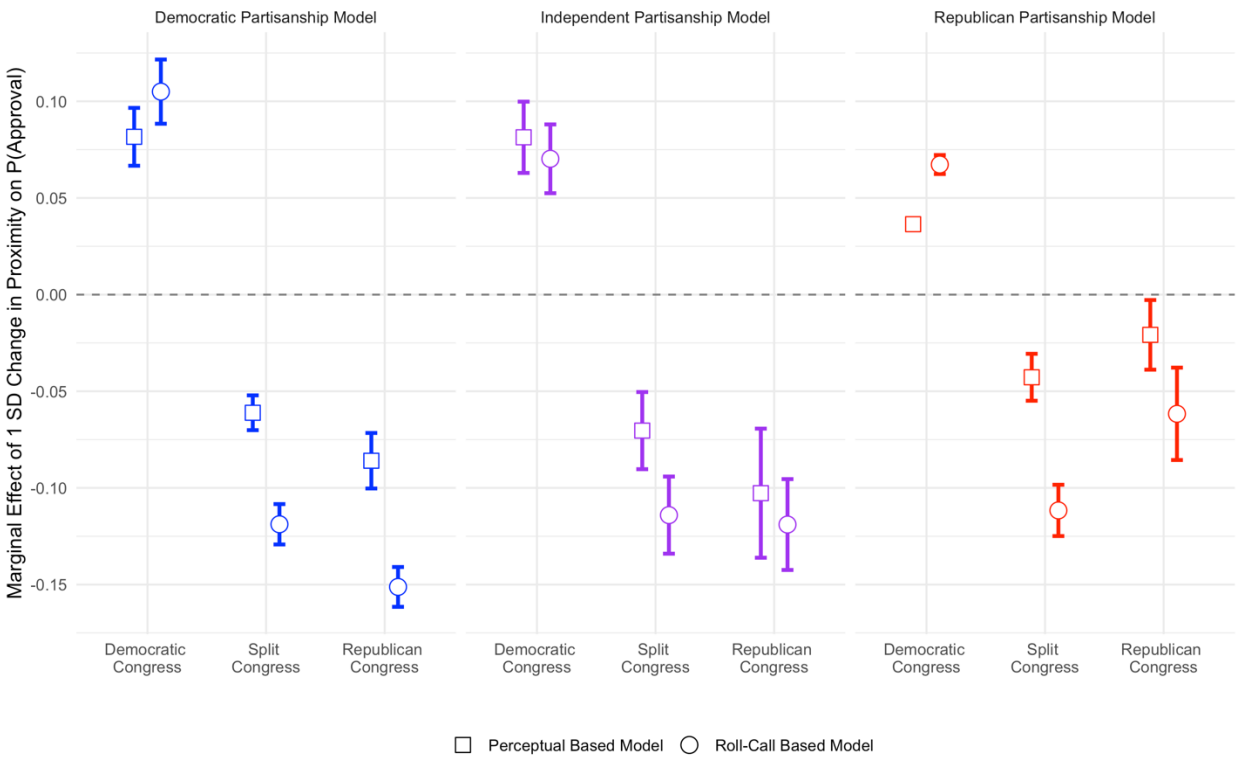
In my forthcoming *Political Behavior* article, I address this disconnect by arguing that citizen assessments of Congressional approval are a function of partisan preferences and, more consequentially, their policy preferences relative to the competing majority and minority parties. Specifically, I argue that citizens closer to the congressional majority party are more likely to approve of congressional job performance than citizens closer to the minority party. I further argue that this ideological proximity effect on congressional approval is distinct and independent of partisan preferences held by citizens.

To evaluate this theory, I rely on cross-sectional survey data from the 2008-2016 Cooperative Congressional Election Study and the 2010-2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study Panel Study. The latter data source provides a more critical test of the theory by providing panel data measuring evaluations of a Democratic Congress in 2010 and the two subsequent split Congresses after the 2010 Tea Party wave election in which Republicans control the U.S. House of Representatives. Before testing the theory, I address the methodological challenge presented by the theory requiring the estimation of the ideological positions of congressional parties and citizens in the same ideological space. To do this, I rely on two methods that leverage survey respondent liberal-conservative self-placements and their responses to various binary roll-call items that were voted on in the Congress. These two methods provide estimated ideal points for citizens and every single member of Congress within the same ideological space, thus allowing for the calculation of ideological proximity between individual citizens and the two congressional parties. From there, I specify a model that estimates probability of congressional approval as a function of partisanship, ideological proximity, and other standard predictors (i.e., evaluations of members of Congress, presidential approval, economic evaluations, etc.).

The paper makes two key empirical contributions regarding how citizens form evaluations of collective congressional job performance. First, there are clear ideological and partisan components of congressional approval, with majority co-partisans and those closer to the majority party in ideological proximity being more likely to approve of congressional job performance after accounting for other standard explanations of approval. This is articulated in the Figure below, with a one standard deviation towards congressional Democrats raising the probability of congressional approval during Democratic Congresses and lowering the probability of approval during Republican controlled Congresses.



Secondly, the ideological component is completely independent from partisan preferences during an era of increased congruence between these two attitudinal preferences. Indeed, closer ideological proximity to the majority party raises congressional approval among independents, majority co-partisans, and even co-partisans of the *minority party*. These findings are articulated in the Figure below.



These results suggesting that citizen perceptions of Congress are rooted in the collective ideological representation provided by the legislative majority in an increasingly responsible U.S. Congress provide two clear implications. First, citizens are able to use their ideological policy preferences and use them to meaningfully assess the representation provided by the collective Congress, which is shaped by the stewardship of the majority party. As a consequence, and given scholarly evidence that congressional approval electorally boosts the majority party, the governing majority may be well served in passing policies that are closer to the ideological preferences of the mass public. Secondly, these results further suggest that despite an era of increasing congruence between partisan and ideological preferences, the mass public are still able to use their ideological preferences independent of their partisanship to evaluate their collective institutions. As such, citizens are able to evaluate their collective institutions on the basis of policy rather than partisan identity during an era of polarized and partisan-centered politics.