

Institutional Variation in Constituents' Responses to Congressional Votes

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Paper prepared for the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, April 11-14, 2013.

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Quite properly, the quality of representation has been a central focus of normative and empirical theory about modern democracies (Przeworski, Stokes, and Manin 1999). In studies of the United States, the dyadic relationship between legislators and their constituents has received the most attention (Erikson and Wright 1989, 2000; Canes-Wrone, Brady, and Cogan 2002; Miller and Stokes 1963; Weissberg 1978, 1979), although system-level performance of the U.S. Congress and American public opinion has been the subject of influential studies (Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson 2002; Page and Shapiro 1983). On balance, Congress appears to respond to shifts in public opinion in the aggregate and legislators are reasonably well matched to the general policy preferences or ideological outlook of the states and districts. The political science literature confirms the powerful influence of the electoral connection (Mayhew 1974).

At the same time, the literature suggests that the American public's knowledge about politics is limited (Campbell *et al.* 1960; Stokes and Miller 1962; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). The public knowledge of legislators' voting records is so limited that legislators must have considerable leeway in voting on specific policies. In fact, the authors of *The American Voter* emphasized that only a small fraction of Americans mention specific legislative issues when answering open-ended questions about their likes and dislikes for members of Congress (Miller and Stokes 1963; Stokes and Miller 1962). The difference between these findings and themes has been explained by the need for only a small part of the electorate to potentially care about an issue enough to affect its vote and the election outcome for the electoral connection to be influential (Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson 2002).

The literature on roll-call voting behavior in Congress takes a parallel track (Arnold 1990; Clausen 1973, Key 1961, Kingdon 1974, Matthews and Stimson 1975, Smith 2007). Legislators, it is emphasized, must vote on so many issues that they cannot make a full evaluation of policy and political considerations that are at stake on the typical vote. They rely on cues given by trusted colleagues, staff, the president, key political advisors, and outside groups. With the help of these cues, they try to anticipate how a vote might mobilize constituents to vote for or against them, but they generally develop a pattern of voting that suits their political circumstances and stick with it. This process generates a reasonably good and predictable match between legislators' behavior and constituents' policy preferences without requiring constituents to have detailed knowledge of legislators' behavior on the average congressional vote.

This is a credible account that was largely unchallenged until Ansolabehere and Jones (2010) offered new evidence on the American public's knowledge of legislators' voting records. Based on findings from surveys in which

samples of Americans were asked about roll-call votes cast by their local member of the U.S. House of Representatives, Ansolabehere and Jones argue that:

[A] large majority has beliefs about how their U.S. Representatives actually voted on these bills. Those beliefs, in turn, strongly and causally affect constituents' approval of their representatives and tendency to vote for their representatives. The effect is substantively large: all else being equal, the independent effect of policy representation on job approval has about as strong an overall effect as legislators' party on assessments of job approval (Ansolabehere and Jones 2010, 584).

Americans' beliefs often may be based on assumptions about how congressional partisans behave rather than direct knowledge of legislators' behavior on specific votes, but legislators' votes appear to have an effect on constituents' beliefs about their votes independent of the legislators' party affiliation. This finding is consistent with the literature demonstrating the incumbent members of Congress face electoral adversity if their roll-call voting behavior strays too far from district preferences (Canes-Wrone, Brady, and Cogan 2002; Carson *et al.* 2010)

In this paper, we evaluate new survey evidence from a panel survey conducted in 2012. It allows us to go beyond the Ansolabehere and Jones evidence to compare the American public's knowledge of and agreement with policy positions taken by members of the House of Representatives, members of the Senate, and the president. The survey allows us to expand the analysis to senators and the president, for whom the correspondence between elected officials' behavior and respondents' beliefs and attitudes is likely to be different from less visible representatives.

We find support for the proposition that the salience of an elected policy maker conditions the accuracy and effects of beliefs about voting behavior on job approval and vote choice at election time. Accuracy increases from representatives to senators to presidents. The effects of perceived agreement on job approval increases in parallel fashion, and the effects of perceived agreement on election vote choice increases from representatives to senators and the president.

Previous Analysis and Hypotheses

Ansolabehere and Jones (2010) asked survey respondents about their own positions and the position they believed their representative took on eight roll-call votes cast in the House of Representatives during 2005 and 2006. In addition, they had the actual votes of representatives. These data allowed them to calculate several measures: (a) a comparison of the conservatism reflected in respondents' and representatives' policy preferences, (b) the accuracy of respondents' perceptions of their representatives' votes, and (c) the perceived and actual agreement between a respondent's and the representative's preference on a vote. The most important measure is perceived agreement, which, if high, is

taken as

- (1) Respondent's perceived agreement score for each vote: +1 when in perceived agreement, -1 when in perceived disagreement, and 0 otherwise (no perception reported, no vote)
- (2) Respondent's average perceived agreement: Mean perceived agreement score for a set of votes

The key finding of the Ansolabehere and Jones analysis is that constituents are accurate 82 percent of the time when the representative voted with a majority of his or party legislative party but only 42 percent of the time when the representative voted in opposition to the majority of his or her party. Nevertheless, controlling for the representative's party, the representative's actual vote has a strong effect on the respondent's perception of the representative's vote. Moreover, the respondent's perceived agreement is positively related to job approval and vote for the representative, controlling for party and general ideological match. Ansolabehere and Jones infer that "constituents have the capacity to and do in fact hold their members of Congress accountable for roll-call votes" (Ansolabehere and Jones 2010, 596).

This result is surprising, Ansolabehere and Jones assert, because previous work suggests that constituents' lack the knowledge and even the policy preferences required to hold legislators accountable for their votes. They are "agnostic about how people learn about the voting behavior" of their representatives. They speculate that constituents often use party to develop a reasonably accurate belief about the representatives' voting behavior, but many constituents appear to have acquired accurate beliefs about representatives' votes from other sources.

We find the Ansolabehere and Jones analysis to be persuasive as far as it goes, although it has features that warrant exploration in the future. The point of departure for the Ansolabehere and Jones analysis is the observation that much of the political science literature leads us to expect that constituents have little knowledge of legislators' votes. That literature emphasizes typical or average issues, constituents, and representatives, but the Ansolabehere and Jones analysis is based on some of the most salient issues of the 2005-2006 period (gay marriage, abortion, immigration reform, bankruptcy reform, the Patriot Act, and so on). These are issues on which considerable public discourse in the media and campaigns occurs, usually led by prominent party leaders. They also were issues on which there was a deep party division, with relatively few intra-party divisions, that may have facilitated good "guesses" about representatives' votes on the part of respondents. Thus, findings on constituents' beliefs about representatives' behavior on such votes may not undermine the long-standing literature on typical votes as much as claimed.

Moreover, while Ansolabehere and Jones worry about the simultaneity of beliefs about votes and approval of the representative, they fail to account for the

way elected officials may adjust their voting behavior to the expectations of their constituents. This is a theme of the literature on the elected officials' learning of public opinion, the use of public opinion polls by presidents and legislators, legislator-constituency congruence that considers the effects of legislators' electoral vulnerability, the electoral cycle, differences between district and state constituencies, and the conditioning effect of institutional position on constituency and party influences (for a review of the older literature, see Kuklinski 1979; also see Bulloch and Brady 1983; Elling 1982; Fenno 1982; Grofman, Griffin, and Glazer 1991; Herbst 1992; Jacobs and Shapiro 1995; Jacobson 1987; Shapiro, Brady, and Brody 1990; Sullivan and Uslander 1978). With legislators and their leaders seeking to create a legislative record that produces electoral wins, we might expect that congressional votes are cast to meet the expectations of the electoral coalition that keeps them in office. Those expectations then drive both the congressional votes we observe and the public's hunches about how legislators' vote.

In addition, the summary proposition of Ansolabehere and Jones goes beyond their evidence. They conclude that "constituents have the capacity to and do in fact hold their members of Congress accountable for roll-call votes" (Ansolabehere and Jones 2010, 596). The evidence for this claim is the finding that agreement with legislators' voting positions has a statistically significant effect on job approval and vote choice. It may be a necessary condition for accountability but it is not sufficient. A statistically significant relationship can be generated by the predicted behavior of only a fraction of the sample. There is no evidence in Ansolabehere and Jones analysis that most constituents give significant weight to the votes of the kind studied in their evaluations of job performance or ballot alternatives.

For this report, we set aside these deserving concerns and pursue an extension of the Ansolabehere and Jones analysis to senators and the president. Our thesis is that the salience of the elected official conditions the relationship between constituents and legislators and presidents. Relative to representatives, senators and the president are considerably more visible than representatives and their positions on issues of the day are more likely to be known by their constituents. Therefore, we hypothesize that

- (1) Americans' beliefs about the policy positions of senators and the president are more accurate than they are for representatives; and
- (2) Americans' beliefs about the policy positions of senators and the president are more important, relative to party and general ideology, in shaping job performance ratings and election vote choice.

These hypotheses reflect long-standing themes in the political science of American democracy. The differences in visibility between representatives and senators plays a significant role in studies of elections (Abramowitz 1988; Abramowitz and Segal 1992; Carson 2005; Franklin 1993, Hinkley 1980; Krasno 1994; Westlye 1991, Stokes and Miller 1962). While incumbent representatives

tend to have an advantage in visibility over their electoral challengers than senators have over their challengers, incumbent representatives tend to be less visible than incumbent senators. This is particularly true in populous states in which House districts are much smaller than media markets (Campbell, Alford, and Henry 1984; Levy and Squire 2000).

Data

Data for our analysis are drawn from the 2012 surveys of *The American Panel Survey* (TAPS). TAPS is a monthly online survey of about 2000 people. Panelists were recruited as a national probability sample with an addressed-based sampling frame in the fall of 2011 by Knowledge Networks for the Weidenbaum Center at Washington University. Individuals without internet access were provided a laptop and internet service at the expense of the Weidenbaum Center. In a typical month, over 1700 of the panelists complete the online survey, which yields three groups of about 500 subjects. More technical information about the survey is available at <http://taps.wustl.edu>.

In the month following selected congressional votes, TAPS panelists were asked the same questions as in the Ansolabehere and Jones study. The items inquired about the respondent's position on the issue, the position of the respondent's representative, senators, and the president on the issue, and party and ideology of the respondent's representative, senators, and the president. Party identification and ideological identification were measured at the time respondents were recruited. Most important, job approval was measured for each respondent's representative, senators, and the president at regular intervals during the year. This permits us to use of measure of job approval that is more proximate to the time of the roll-call vote.

In most cases, we chose congressional votes on which both chambers of Congress cast roll-call votes. This limited us to relatively significant issues and to roll-call votes on final passage or conference reports for bills on those measures. We used three votes that were conducted on identical motions in the two houses and one unique vote in the House for a total of four votes. The details of the votes chosen are listed in the appendix.

We use the same measures of perceived and actual agreement as used in the Ansolabehere and Jones study. Ansolabehere and Jones report that they experimented with different treatments of "don't know" responses to questions about the respondent's policy position and legislator's vote with little effect on estimates. We accept the Ansolabehere and Jones specification (that is, to score as 0 a don't know response on a +1, 0, -1 scale) to preserve comparability with their published results.

We differ from Ansolabehere and Jones in our use of panel data. The monthly TAPS panel allows us to separate in time our measures of views about a roll-call vote, which occur in the month following each congressional vote, and

our measure of vote choice, which occurs in the month following the November 2012 election. The timing of questions should reduce the effect of time on memory about congressional votes and reduce the likelihood that answers to questions about congressional votes contaminate answers to the question about vote choice,

Findings

Accuracy

We begin with assessing respondents' beliefs about elected officials' on our selected roll-call votes. Table 1 presents accuracy scores between the respondent and their representative, their senators, and the president. For members of the congressional delegation we distinguish whether the member voted with the majority of his or her party caucus. For House members, the average accuracy across the four votes was only 65.8 percent. Accuracy increased to 69.4 percent in instances in which the member voted with the party, but only 44.5 in cases where the member defected from his or her party caucus. Our accuracy result is lower than the one found by Ansolabehere and Jones for votes with a member's party and very similar to their findings with respect to party defectors.

[Table 1 here]

The results are mixed with respect to senators. The overall average accuracy was also 65.8 percent. However, when senators vote with their party was 77.2, which is higher than what we found with House members, but perceived accuracy was only 38.2 when senators defected from the position of a majority of their co-partisans, which is slightly lower than what we found for House members. Respondents did the best job with respect to the president, with approximately 91 percent correctly predicting his position on the bills in our study.

There is considerable variation across votes. Respondents had the most difficulty placing House members on the budget resolution, which is the most arcane bill we asked about. The student loan bill had the highest level of perceived accuracy among the House votes and is notable in that respondents did fairly well at predicting the votes of members who defected from their respective party caucus. It is worth noting that all of the party defections on the student loan bill came from the more conservative wing of the Republican party.

Overall, our results are similar to those reported by Ansolabehere and Jones. Respondents usually hold accurate beliefs about the position of their elected representatives, but only when the legislator votes with his or her party. In most cases, fewer than a majority of respondents correctly identify when one of their elected member's defects from his or her party caucus. Beliefs about the president's positions are very accurate.

Plainly, the party label is guiding beliefs about legislators' views for many respondents. This finding highlights one of the potential difficulties a member faces in trying to develop and maintain a reputation as a moderate member in the current partisan environment. Roll-call voting independence may go unnoticed and hence unrewarded at the ballot box.

Constituency-Legislator Perceived Agreement

The levels of perceived policy agreement across our set of votes are reported in Table 2. When the legislator voted with his or her party, there are few differences between perceived and actual party agreements in most cases. For House members, perceived agreement averages 61.1 percent compared to 65.8 percent actual agreement. For senators, perceived policy agreement was 60.7 percent compared to 65.8 actual agreement. In the aggregate, then, the difference between actual and perceived agreement is not overwhelming, but respondents tend to have higher actual agreement with their legislatures than they do perceived agreement, which suggests a less than ideal representational linkage. Legislators represent respondents' views more often than respondents give them credit for.

[Table 2 here]

Job Approval and Vote Choice

According to the Ansolabehere and Jones account, accountability for legislators' voting behavior is robust and evidenced by the effect of beliefs about votes on job approval and vote choice independent of party and general ideological considerations. We evaluate the relationship between members' roll-call behavior and constituents' evaluations of members through a series of multivariate models that parallel those in the Ansolabehere and Jones analysis. We model both the approval rating of members and how respondents reported voting in the 2012 election as a function of perceived policy agreement, party agreement, ideological difference and distance, and a series of control variables employed.¹

¹ We follow the lead of Ansolabehere and Jones (2012) in constructing the measures for our multivariate models. Approval is measured on a five-point scale, which is coded +1 for strongly approve, 0.5 for approve, 0 for neither approve nor disapprove, -0.5 for disapprove, and -1 for strongly disapprove. Aggregate perceived agreement is the number of correct choices divided by the number of votes in which the respondent offered a response. Party agreement is coded 1 if the member and respondent have the same party affiliation, 0 if the respondent does not know the member's party and -1 if the member and respondent have different party identification. Ideological distance is the absolute value of the difference between each respondent's position on the 7-point ideology scale and the perceived ideological location of the member. Ideological distance is the

Table 3 reports results for House members. Focusing first on the approval models on the right hand side of the table we do see an association between perceived roll-call agreement and approval. Approval is measured on a five-point scale, which is coded +1 for strongly approve, 0.5 for approve, 0 for neither approve nor disapprove, -0.5 for disapprove, and -1 for strongly disapprove. Both the aggregate agreement score and three of the four individual roll-call votes are associated with House member approval in the predicted direction. The substantive effect of perceived roll-call behavior is modest. Holding all else equal, a perceived agreement score of zero translates into a slightly negative approval rating (-0.11), while a perfect perceived agreement score translates into a modestly positive approval rating (0.20).

We also see that party agreement between the legislator and the respondent and the ideological distance between the legislator and the respondent are significant predictors of approval. The substantive effect of partisan agreement is quite large. Holding all else equal, approval ranges from slightly negative (-0.16) to quite positive (0.36) if the constituent and the member share a party affiliation. The biggest substantive effect in these models is the perceived ideological distance between the member and the respondent. Holding all else equal, respondents who perceive their member being at the opposite end of the 7-point ideology scale report a strong negative rating (-.60), compared to a quite positive rating (.40) for respondents who perceive themselves as having the same ideological views as their House member. Therefore, while we do find an association between perceived roll-call agreement and approval the effect is substantively much smaller than the effects of partisan and ideological agreement.

[Table 3 here]

We find a stronger effect for perceived roll-call agreement on vote choice for a representative than on job approval. Holding all else equal, a respondent with complete roll-call disagreement votes for the incumbent about in approximately one-third of cases (0.34), compared with 0.60 for 100 percent perceived agreement. Again, the effects of party and ideology are more pronounced than the effects of roll-call vote agreement. All else equal, the probability that a respondent reports voting for the incumbent is only 0.22 if they are of the opposite party, compared to 0.80 for co-partisans. For ideology, we find that the probability of a respondent supporting the incumbent is 0.69 if they are in ideological lockstep compared to 0.14 if they are polar opposites.

difference between the perceived location of the member and the respondent's own placement. Party correct is coded as 1 if the respondent correctly identifies the member's party, 0 for don't know, and -1 for incorrect classification. Independent, moderate, and Republican member are indicator variables representing self-reported independents, respondents labeling themselves moderate and respondent with a Republican representative or senator.

Of course, with respect to partisanship, ideology, and roll-call behavior, all else is typically not equal. We rarely see cases where co-partisans have complete roll-call disagreement or cases where members and constituents agree on roll-call votes but are of different parties. However, even in cases where this is true we see only very small substantive effects of perceived roll-call agreement on the probability of voting for an incumbent. At the theoretical extremes of roll-call agreement, the probability of reporting a vote for the incumbent only ranges from 0.69 to 0.87 in cases where members and respondents share a party affiliation. Similarly, the range of reporting a vote for the incumbent only ranges from 0.13 to 0.31 in cases where the member and the respondent have opposing party affiliations. In short, the results in Table 3 suggest that perceived roll-call agreement has a discernible effect on respondent approval of the member and reported voting behavior, but the magnitude of these effects pale in comparison to the effects of partisan affiliation and ideology.

In Table 4 we consider the effects of perceived roll-call agreement on Senator approval and vote for Senate incumbents. For the approval models we include a respondent's evaluation of both senators and cluster the standard errors by respondent, for election models we focus only on the respondents who had an incumbent senator running for reelection in 2012. Otherwise our models mimic those reported for House members. Combined with our results presented in Table 1, the results in Table 4 suggest that respondents are both more aware and more responsive to the voting behavior of senators. For incumbent senators, controlling for party and ideology, a respondent's probability of reporting a vote for an incumbent senator doubles from 0.40 in the case of complete disagreement on roll-calls to 0.80 in cases of complete roll-call agreement.

We see similar patterns for Senate approval. All three votes we ask about are statistically significant and the substantive effect of roll-call agreement is larger than what we found for House members. All else equal, predicted approval increases from -0.18 to 0.19 as we move from complete roll-call disagreement to complete agreement. The effects of party agreement and ideological distance on senator approval and vote for an incumbent senator are similar in magnitude to what we find for House members.

Finally, Table 5 reports parallel models of vote choice and job approval for the president. We find vote agreement, party, and ideology effects for both presidential vote choice and job approval. The effects of all three are stronger for the president than for legislators. For job approval, the vote agreement effects are slightly stronger for the president than for senators, and stronger still than for representatives. For vote choice, the vote agreement effects for the president are essentially the same as for senators.

Discussion

Overall, we find support for the proposition that the salience of an elected policy maker conditions the accuracy and effects of beliefs about voting behavior

on job approval and vote choice at election time. Accuracy increases from representatives to presidents, although overall accuracy for representatives was similar to accuracy for senators. The effects of perceived agreement on job approval increases from representatives to senators to presidents, and the effects of perceived agreement on election vote choice increases from representatives to senators and the president. Thus, both hypotheses are substantially confirmed.

We confirm and extend the Ansolabehere and Jones argument by going beyond members of the U.S. House of Representatives and incorporating senators and the president in the analysis. What applies to the House is even more true for senators and the president. For senators and the president, we have shown an even stronger effect of beliefs about vote positions on job approval and election vote choice than for representatives.

Nevertheless, we cannot infer, as Ansolabehere and Jones do, that “constituents have the capacity to and do in fact hold their members of Congress accountable for roll-call votes” (Ansolabehere and Jones 2010, 596). What we can infer with confidence is that for relatively important votes constituents have accurate beliefs about legislators’ votes when legislators are voting with their parties in Congress. Party seems to mislead most Americans when legislators vote opposite their party majorities. To us, that is more of a qualification on accountability than Ansolabehere and Jones admit.

Moreover, the finding that agreement with legislators’ voting positions has a statistically significant effect on job approval and vote choice does not demonstrate that most constituents “do in fact hold their members of Congress accountable for roll-call votes.” Because a statistically significant relationship can be generated by the predicted behavior of only a fraction of the sample, the finding of such a relationship serves only as a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition, for demonstrating accountability. Estimating how many constituents give significant weight to the votes of the kind studied in their evaluations of job performance or ballot alternatives is a subject for future research.

Table 1
Party-Line Voting and Perceived Accuracy

	Member Voted With Party	Member Defected From Party
House Member		
Budget Resolution	65.3 (702)	64.4 (14)
JOBES Bill	71.6 (613)	24.0 (23)
Student Loans & Highways	74.3 (575)	67.0 (82)
Payroll Tax Extension	67.4 (591)	38.8 (293)
Senators		
JOBES Bill	64.0 (703)	19.1 (328)
Student Loans & Highways	82.0 (892)	59.8 (203)
Payroll Tax Extension	82.5 (934)	41.3 (497)
President Obama		
JOBES Bill	88.3 (870)	
Student Loans & Highways	93.0 (865)	
Payroll Tax Extension	91.5 (1164)	

Note: Cell entries are the percentage of respondents who correctly recalled the roll-call vote of a member, by whether the member voted with the majority of his or her party. The number of respondents in each cell is in parentheses.

Table 2
Party-Line Voting and Perceived Agreement

House Member	Member Voted With Party	Member Defected From Party
Budget Resolution	56.1 (568)	65.0 (11)
JOBES Bill	69.7 (438)	78.8 (18)
Student Loans & Highways	61.1 (503)	46.6 (69)
Payroll Tax Extension	60.4 (545)	61.7 (259)
Senators		
JOBES Bill	62.2 (512)	69.1 (248)
Student Loans & Highways	67.5 (767)	45.5 (174)
Payroll Tax Extension	62.2 (839)	47.7 (497)
President Obama		
JOBES Bill	81.3 (870)	
Student Loans & Highways	69.4 (865)	
Payroll Tax Extension	68.9 (1164)	

Note: Cell entries are the percentage of respondents who report that they think their member agreed with them on a roll-call, by whether the member voted with the majority of his or her party. The number of respondents in each cell is in parentheses.

Table 3
Effect of Perceived Agreement on House Member Approval and Voting

	Vote for Incumbent		House Member Job Approval	
Average Agreement	0.01*		0.003*	
	(0.005)		(0.001)	
House Budget Resolution		0.38 (0.27)		0.14* (0.05)
JOBBS Bill		-0.11 (0.26)		0.16* (0.05)
Student Loans & Highways		0.49 (0.24)		0.13* (0.05)
Payroll Tax Extension		0.17 (0.22)		0.02 (0.05)
Party Agreement	1.01* (0.25)	1.01* (0.25)	0.23* (0.06)	0.21* (0.05)
Ideological Difference	-0.17 (0.13)	-0.15 (0.13)	-0.02 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)
Ideological Distance	-0.36* (0.12)	-0.38* (0.13)	-0.15* (0.03)	-0.15* (0.03)
Ideology	-0.06 (0.18)	0.04 (0.18)	-0.06 (0.03)	-0.04 (0.04)
Moderate	-1.11* (0.53)	-1.12* (0.55)	-0.24* (0.12)	-0.24* (0.10)
Independent	0.97* (0.46)	0.99* (0.44)	0.20 (0.11)	0.21 (0.10)
Party Correct	0.06 (0.34)	0.09 (0.33)	-0.09 (0.07)	-0.10 (0.07)
Republican Member	0.53 (0.52)	0.44 (0.48)	-0.07 (0.12)	-0.05 (0.12)
Constant	-0.07 (0.89)	0.57 (0.83)	0.55 (0.18)	0.62 (0.17)
Respondents	562	562	654	654
R-Square	0.31	0.31	0.55	0.54

Note: The vote for incumbent model report results of a logistic regression, the approval model presents OLS results. Cell entries are coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. Asterisks designate coefficients with p-values less than 0.05.

Table 4
Effect of Perceived Agreement on Senator Job Approval and Voting

	Vote for Incumbent		Senator Job Approval	
Average Agreement	0.02*		0.005*	
	(0.006)		(0.001)	
JOBBS Bill		1.59*		0.25*
		(0.40)		(0.05)
Student Loans & Highways		0.39		0.13*
		(0.43)		(0.05)
Payroll Tax Extension		0.75*		0.15*
		(0.32)		(0.04)
Party Agreement	1.27*	1.65*	0.07	0.07
	(0.43)	(0.43)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Ideological Difference	-0.11	-0.06	-0.02	-0.007
	(0.25)	(0.26)	(0.014)	(0.01)
Ideological Distance	-0.37*	-0.45*	-0.18*	-0.17*
	(0.18)	(0.42)	(0.03)	(0.02)
Ideology	-0.63	-0.45	-0.06*	-0.05*
	(0.38)	(0.42)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Moderate	-0.72*	-0.97	-0.06*	-0.07*
	(0.74)	(0.67)	(0.09)	(0.07)
Independent	1.07	1.61*	0.04	0.04
	(0.82)	(0.74)	(0.09)	(0.08)
Party Correct	0.20	0.21	-0.02	-0.04
	(0.57)	(0.47)	(0.09)	(0.07)
Republican Senator	0.004	0.001	0.001	0.001
	(0.009)	(0.01)	(0.001)	(0.004)
Constant	1.88	2.16	0.36	0.52
	(1.36)	(1.31)	(0.18)	(0.14)
Respondents	341	341	951	951
R-Square	0.45	0.52	0.52	0.50

Note: The vote for incumbent model report results of a logistic regression, the approval model presents OLS results. Cell entries are coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. Senate approval models clustered by respondent id. Asterisks designate coefficients with p-values less than 0.05.

Table 5
Effect of Perceived Agreement on Presidential Approval and Voting

	Vote for Obama		Obama Job Approval	
Average Agreement	0.02*		0.006*	
	(0.005)		(0.001)	
House Budget Resolution		0.34 (0.19)		0.20* (0.05)
JOBS Bill		0.13 (0.22)		0.12* (0.05)
Student Loans & Highways		0.57* (0.25)		0.15* (0.05)
Payroll Tax Extension		0.72 (0.23)		0.10* (0.04)
Democrat	1.61* (0.45)	1.67* (0.49)	0.42* (0.11)	0.41* (0.11)
Independent	0.47 (0.43)	0.47 (0.45)	0.12 (0.03)	0.11 (0.09)
Ideology	-0.69* (0.46)	-0.67* (0.11)	-0.18* (0.03)	-0.17* (0.10)
Constant	0.48 (0.83)	1.07 (0.69)	0.19 (0.20)	0.44* (0.16)
Respondents	1080	1080	1080	1080
R-Square	0.42	0.45	0.54	0.53

Note: The vote for Obama model report results of a logistic regression, the approval model presents OLS results. Cell entries are coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. Asterisks designate coefficients with p-values less than 0.05.

Appendix

Roll-Call Votes Used in this Study (Voteview Vote Number)		
Issue	House Vote	Senate Vote
Payroll tax and unemployment benefits extension (H.R. 3630); on conference report	2012-02-17 2nd Session Vote 72	2012-02-17 2nd Session Vote 22
JOBS Act (H.R. 3606); on passage	2012-03-08 2nd Session Vote 110	2012-03-22 2nd Session Vote 55
Budget Resolution (H.Res. 223); on passage	2011-04-14 1st Session Vote 266	
Student Loans (H.R. 4348); on conference report	2012-06-29 2nd Session Vote 451	2012-06-29 2nd Session Vote 172