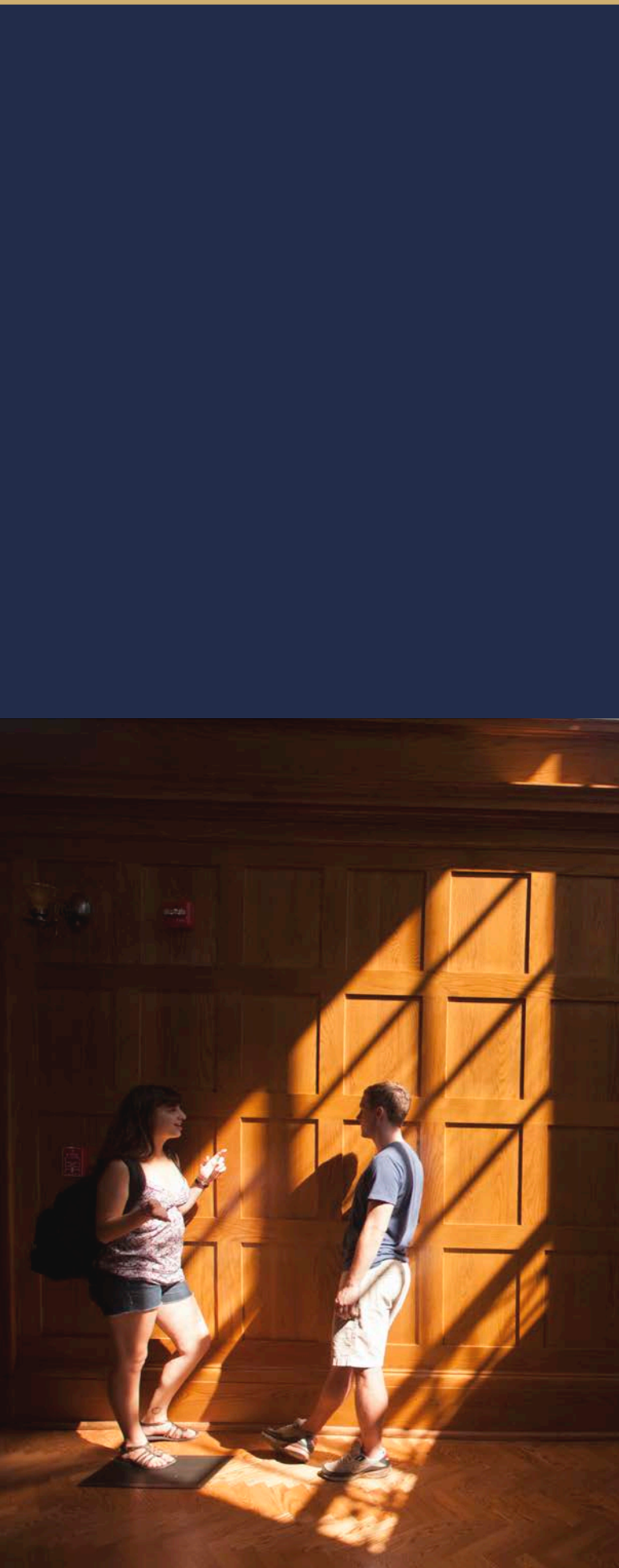


# THE CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE LAWMAKING



**2021 to 2022 Annual Report**



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## VISION

We envision a Congress comprised of effective lawmakers, strong institutional capacity, and the incentive structure needed to address America's greatest public policy challenges.

## MISSION

We advance the generation, communication, and use of new knowledge about the effectiveness of individual lawmakers and U.S. legislative institutions.



**Center for  
Effective  
Lawmaking**



**VANDERBILT  
UNIVERSITY**



**UVA BATTEN**

## LETTER FROM CO-DIRECTORS

Thank you so much for your interest in and support of the Center for Effective Lawmaking. This year we are particularly thankful for the opportunities to reengage with so many of you in person once again.

We were able to host not one but two research conferences, featuring our faculty affiliates and many of our small grant recipients. In November of 2021 we convened at Vanderbilt University for the year-plus pandemic-delayed “third annual” CEL research conference. This was the first travel experience and first in-person research exchange for many participants since the pandemic began; and the conference theme of “Effective Lawmaking and Democratic Accountability” provided much-needed food for thought. We then returned to our normally scheduled conference programming with our very successful Fourth Annual CEL research conference at the University of Virginia in June.

We were also delighted to return to in-person events and presentations, spreading the word about the pivotal role of effective lawmaking in helping to shore up American democracy and to Build a Better Congress. Our interactions with members of Congress and their staffs on and around Capitol Hill gave us hope that our evidence-based advice is starting to be embraced in the lawmaking habits being cultivated in Congress.

In the year ahead, we are most excited about three ongoing and new initiatives. First, we will be generating and sharing our new Legislative Effectiveness Scores upon the conclusion of the 117th Congress. These up-to-date data offer so many insights into the current state of affairs on the Hill, while raising opportunities for improvement.

Second, we are dramatically expanding our training and development opportunities for members of Congress and their staffs. We have updated our New Member Guide, offering advice and insights for new members of Congress into how to become effective lawmakers from day one. We are convening a panel of experts for an informational session on Capitol Hill to demonstrate all of the resources available to support their legislative efforts. And we are offering our “Office Hours” consulting program to the legislative offices of all members of the House and Senate who are entering their seventh year in Congress, helping them to reflect on their past challenges and triumphs as they formulate a lawmaking strategy for the middle stages of their careers.

Third, we are significantly growing our footprint in studies of (and support for) effective lawmaking in the U.S. state legislatures. We have found very strong interest in our State Legislative Effectiveness Scores and the insights that are based on them. We therefore seek to continually update our scores, to generate new research insights, and to use those evidence-based practices as the foundations for training and development of the lawmakers who can help secure the future of American democracy.

We hope that you share our enthusiasm for these new initiatives and the exciting times ahead. Many thanks for your continued support!

Take care, Craig and Alan





## KNOWLEDGE GENERATION

This was an outstanding year for the Center for Effective Lawmaking. While we continued to navigate a unique situation as the world comes out of the pandemic, we found we were still able to influence discussions around effective lawmaking in a relevant manner.

To complement our work at the federal level, we completed the coding and construction of State Legislative Effectiveness Scores, which capture state legislators' lawmaking activities over recent decades in 97 state legislative chambers (all except Kansas). Our initial research paper from these efforts won the American Political Science Association SPPQ Award for best paper on state politics and policy presented in 2020. The revised version is under review for publication and we have been making the data available to the scholarly community, responding to numerous requests.

We are currently advancing five scholarly papers building from these scores, and we are seeking to fund a broader endeavor that will allow us to regularly update these scores, disseminate them broadly, highlight top performing state legislators in our "Conversations with Effective Lawmakers" interview series, and offer training and support to state legislators and their staffs who wish to become more effective at lawmaking.

While these exciting new research outputs were published and shared, we continued to pursue new scholarly work; and we look forward to sharing the results of those projects in the upcoming years. Altogether, it has been rewarding to see our work impact public dialogue in such a powerful way, and to steward the upcoming body of scholarship that we know will be just as influential.

**\$15,000**  
in grants  
awarded

**2**  
post-doctoral  
researchers

**2**  
graduate  
associates

**5**  
works  
published

**26**  
faculty affiliates  
at 21 institutions

**37**  
active research  
projects

**7**  
research  
assistants

## SMALL GRANT PROGRAM

In October 2021, the CEL awarded seven research grants for a total of \$15,000 to scholars across the country. Research from these awards covers a variety of topics in the legislative effectiveness subfield such as the role of race and gender, as exemplified in “The Legislative Effectiveness of Black Women” and “Activists in the House: Insights on Legislative Effectiveness from Progressive Women of Color,” as well as lawmaking within legislative committees, as seen in “Effective Legislators and Dissent in Congressional Committees” and “Measuring the Changing Role of Legislative Committees.”

We continue to support the growing community of scholars who study legislative effectiveness, and we look forward to expanding our working paper library to reflect these dynamic new additions to the field.

**The Center for Effective Lawmaking’s research team has developed three areas of focus for our research activities:**

*identification* of the characteristics of those who would likely become effective lawmakers once elected;

*cultivation* of effective lawmakers and institutional structures within Congress;

and *accountability* of legislators for their lawmaking effectiveness.

## RESEARCH RELEASED

1. Crosson, Jesse M. (CEL faculty affiliate), Alexander C. Furnas, Timothy LaPira (CEL faculty affiliate), and Casey Burgat. 2021. “Partisan Competition and the Decline in Legislative Capacity among Congressional Offices,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly*.
2. Minta, Michael (CEL faculty affiliate). 2021. *No Longer Outsiders: Black and Latino Interest Group Advocacy on Capitol Hill*, University of Chicago Press.

## RESEARCH RELEASED CONTINUED

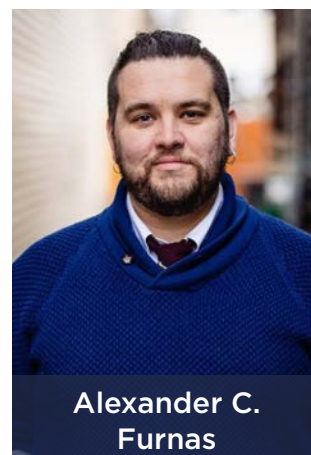
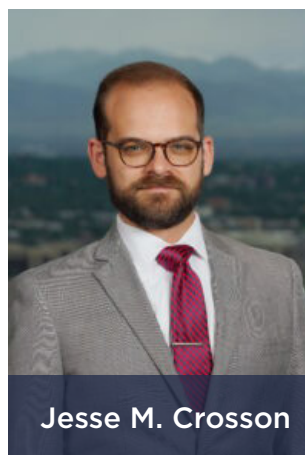
3. Ban, Pamela, Ju Yeon Park (CEL grant recipient), and Hye Young You (CEL faculty affiliate). 2022. “How Are Politicians Informed? Witnesses and Information Provision in Congress,” *American Political Science Review*.

4. Kroeger, Mary (CEL faculty affiliate). 2022. “Groups as Lawmakers: Group Bills in a U.S. State Legislature,” *State Politics and Policy Quarterly*.

5. Treul, Sarah (CEL faculty affiliate), Danielle M. Thomsen (CEL faculty affiliate), Craig Volden (CEL Co-Director), and Alan E. Wiseman (CEL Co-Director). 2022. “The Primary Path for Turning Legislative Effectiveness into Electoral Success,” *Journal of Politics*.

## RESEARCH AWARDS

In coordination with our Fourth Annual Research Conference, we announced the 2022 Award for Best Publication on Effective Lawmaking. The award was presented to Jesse M. Crosson, Alexander C. Furnas, Timothy LaPira, and Casey Burgat for their 2021 article in *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, titled “Partisan Competition and the Decline in Legislative Capacity among Congressional Offices”; it explored what factors have contributed to Representatives shifting office resources away from traditional legislative functions and towards what they denote as “representational activities.”





## RESEARCH PROJECTS

The Center for Effective Lawmaking has continued to move significant research forward in the three main areas of identification, cultivation and accountability with a diverse and growing group of scholars. The CEL has expanded our research to explore each of these three main research areas in regards to lawmaking effectiveness in U.S. state legislatures.

Current works in progress in these four areas that are coauthored by Center Co-Directors Craig Volden and Alan Wiseman, CEL affiliates, and/or CEL small grant award winners, include the following:

1. Identification: Exploring the degree to which educational backgrounds establish the skills and networks that enhance lawmaking effectiveness. Coauthors: Craig Volden, Jonathan Wai, and Alan Wiseman. Working paper entitled, “Elite Education and Legislative Behavior in the U.S. Congress,” currently being revised for submission to a peer-reviewed journal.
2. Identification: Exploring the degree to which combat veterans become effective lawmakers in Congress. Author: Richard E. Hagner (Lt. Col. U.S. Army, and Vanderbilt University Ph.D. Graduate). CEL Working Paper entitled, “Legislative Effectiveness of Veterans in the U.S. House of Representatives: The Increased Effectiveness of a New Post-9/11 Cohort,” currently under review for publication.
3. Identification: Exploring the extent to which candidates reveal characteristics during their early electoral campaigns that can be used to identify them as future effective or ineffective lawmakers once elected. Coauthors: Mackenzie Dobson (CEL graduate student affiliate), Craig Volden, and Alan Wiseman. Currently entitled “Bipartisan Campaigners Become Effective Lawmakers,” with research in progress.
4. Identification: Study of the relationship between redistricting and effective lawmaking. Author: Geoffrey M. Lorenz (CEL faculty affiliate and CEL grant recipient). Currently entitled “Drawing Better Lawmakers: Redistricting Institutions and Legislative Entrepreneurship,” with research in progress.
5. Identification and Cultivation: Exploring how prior experiences relevant to lawmaking help cultivate skills of effective lawmakers. Author: Sarah Treul (CEL faculty affiliate and CEL grant recipient). Currently entitled “The Effect of Experience on Institutional Influence and Congressional Capacity” with research in progress.
6. Identification and Cultivation: Exploring which policy areas lawmakers focus their attention on, to be responsive to constituents, to take advantage of resources from staff, committees, and interest groups, and to learn from past successes. Coauthors: Geoffrey Lorenz (CEL faculty affiliate), Craig Volden, Alan Wiseman, and Hye Young You (CEL faculty affiliate). Currently entitled “Lawmaking Portfolios” with research in progress.



## RESEARCH PROJECTS

7. Identification and Cultivation: Examination and scoring of the extent to which legislators in Congress value the quality of legislation in solving public policy problems in addition to the ideological positions of such proposals. Coauthors: Craig Volden, Alan Wiseman, and still recruiting others. Currently entitled “Who Cares about Quality Proposals in Congress?” with research in progress.
8. Cultivation: Study of the role and capacity of congressional staff in conducting dual oversight and lawmaking activities. Coauthors: Jennifer Selin and Hanna Brant, CEL grant recipients. Currently entitled “Brain Drain? Understanding Congressional Staffers’ Legislative and Oversight Capabilities” with research in progress.
9. Cultivation: Examination of whether participation in ideological caucuses in Congress enhances or undermines the effectiveness of members. Coauthors: Andrew J. Clarke (CEL faculty affiliate), Craig Volden, and Alan E. Wiseman. CEL Working Paper, entitled “The Conditional Lawmaking Benefits of Party Faction Membership in Congress” currently under review for publication.
10. Cultivation: Examination of the extent to which bipartisan lawmakers are more effective in Congress. Coauthors: Laurel Harbridge Yong (CEL faculty affiliate), Craig Volden, and Alan E. Wiseman. CEL Working Paper, entitled “The Bipartisan Path to Effective Lawmaking,” forthcoming in Journal of Politics.
11. Cultivation: Examination of numerous prior Center findings upon assigning credit for lawmaking successes to those whose language is incorporated in bills as they progress in the lawmaking process. Coauthors: Mary Kroeger (CEL faculty affiliate), Erinn Lauterbach (CEL faculty affiliate), Kelsey Shoub (CEL faculty affiliate), Craig Volden, and Alan E. Wiseman. Currently entitled “LES 2.0,” with research in progress.
12. Cultivation: Examination of the extent to which lawmakers who lose their committee positions due to changes in the majority party or number of seats on a particular committee subsequently become less effective. Coauthors: Darrian Stacy (CEL faculty affiliate), Craig Volden, and Alan E. Wiseman. Current working paper, entitled “The Importance of Committee Assignments for Legislative Effectiveness,” being revised for future submission to a peer-reviewed journal.
13. Cultivation: Exploring whether those with more concentrated policy portfolios are more effective than those with more diffuse or diverse policy portfolios. Coauthors: Craig Volden and Alan E. Wiseman. Entitled “Foxes vs. Hedgehogs: Issue Specialization and Effective Lawmaking in the U.S. Congress,” currently being revised for submission to a peer-reviewed journal.
14. Cultivation: Exploring how personal networks of lawmakers influence their legislative behavior. Coauthors: James Curry and Jason Roberts (CEL grant recipients). Currently entitled “Personal Relationships and Legislative Effectiveness in Congress,” with research in progress.



## RESEARCH PROJECTS

15. Cultivation: Exploring the relationship between congressional oversight and lawmaking effectiveness in Congress. Author: Kenneth Lowande (CEL grant recipient). Currently entitled “Measuring the Quality of Legislative Oversight,” with research in progress.
16. Cultivation: Exploring the degree to which Congress and the President work together to advance policy proposals. Coauthors: Samuel Kernell, Roger Larocca, Craig Volden, and Alan E. Wiseman. Currently entitled “Unification of Powers: When Effective Lawmakers Sponsor Presidential Proposals in Congress,” presented at the 2022 European Political Science Association conference, being revised for submission to a peer-reviewed journal.
17. Cultivation: Exploring the conditions under which specifically worded legislation or vaguer ideas lead to coalition formation and legislative advancement in Congress. Coauthors: Erinn Lauterbach (CEL faculty affiliate), Craig Volden, and Alan E. Wiseman. Currently entitled “Policy Specificity and Effective Lawmaking,” presented at the 2022 European Political Science Association conference, being revised for submission to a peer-reviewed journal.
18. Cultivation: Exploring continuation of partisan lawmaking patterns in the U.S. Senate over the past decade. Coauthors: Craig Volden and Alan E. Wiseman. Currently entitled “The Surprisingly Effective Lawmaking of Minority-Party Democrats During the Trump Years,” under review for publication.
19. Cultivation: Exploring the role of amendments within committees as part of effective lawmaking. Coauthors: Nicholas Howard and Mark Owens (CEL grant recipients). Currently entitled “Committees as a Venue for Effectiveness,” with research in progress.
20. Cultivation: Exploring the lawmaking successes of progressive women of color in Congress. Author: Cathy Wineinger (CEL grant recipient). Currently entitled “Activists in the House: Insights on Legislative Effectiveness from Progress Women of Color,” with research in progress.
21. Cultivation: Exploring the resolution of policy dissent within congressional committees. Author: Jonathan Lewallen (CEL grant recipient). Currently entitled “Effective Legislators and Dissent in Congressional Committees,” with research work in progress.
22. Cultivation and Accountability: Exploring whether major laws put forth by effective lawmakers have greater longevity than those advanced by others. Coauthors: Charles R. Shipan, Craig Volden, and Alan E. Wiseman. Currently entitled “Lawmaking Effectiveness and Policy Longevity,” with research work in progress.



## RESEARCH PROJECTS

23. Cultivation and Accountability: Exploring the complementary nature of lawmaking and constituency service. Author: Nicole Kalaf-Hughes (CEL grant recipient). Currently entitled “Collaboration as a Means to Effective Representation in Congress,” with research work in progress.
24. Cultivation and Accountability: Exploring the degree to which vilifying public rhetoric is linked to less effective lawmaking. Author: Seth Warner (CEL grant recipient). Currently entitled “Affective Polarization and Legislative Behavior: Citizen Heat and Elite Red Meat,” with research work in progress.
25. Accountability: Study of the representational quality of lawmakers as seen in congressional town halls. Coauthors: Andrew Clarke (CEL faculty affiliate) and Daniel Markovits, CEL grant recipients. Currently entitled “Congressional Town Halls and Legislative Effectiveness,” CEL Working Paper.
26. Accountability: Study of the extent to which constituents are aware of (and care about) the lawmaking effectiveness of their representatives in the U.S. House. Coauthors: Daniel M. Butler, Adam G. Hughes, Craig Volden, and Alan E. Wiseman. Current working paper, entitled “Do Constituents Know (or Care) about the Lawmaking Effectiveness of their Representatives?” Forthcoming, Political Science Research and Methods.
27. Accountability: Exploring how effective and ineffective lawmakers communicate with their constituents. Author: Annelise Russell (CEL grant recipient). Currently entitled “Communicating Effectiveness: Legislative Success as Constituent Communication,” with research work in progress.
28. Accountability: Examination of the extent to which effective lawmakers can generate greater amounts of campaign contributions. Coauthors: Geoffrey Lorenz (CEL faculty affiliate), Craig Volden, Alan Wiseman, and Hye Young You (CEL faculty affiliate). Currently entitled “Do Campaign Contributions Follow Legislative Effectiveness?” with research work in progress.
29. Accountability: Exploring whether voters hold lawmakers accountable for their effectiveness on issues of greatest salience to their districts. Author: Carlos Algara (CEL grant recipient). Currently entitled “Issue Salience and Effective Representation,” presented at 2022 American Political Science Association meeting.
30. States (and Identification): Exploring the extent to which effective lawmaking in state legislatures translates into effective lawmaking in Congress. Coauthors: Peter Bucchianeri (CEL research affiliate), Craig Volden, and Alan Wiseman. Currently entitled “Moving on Up: Are State Legislatures Good Training Grounds for Effective Congressional Lawmaking?” currently being revised for submission to a peer-reviewed journal.

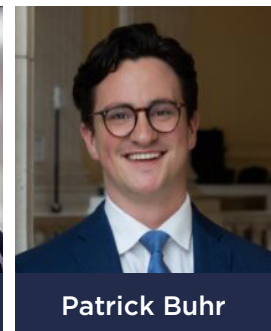
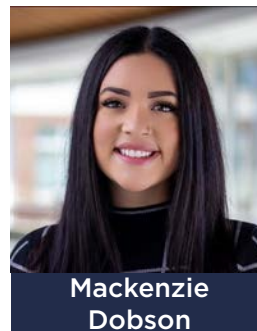
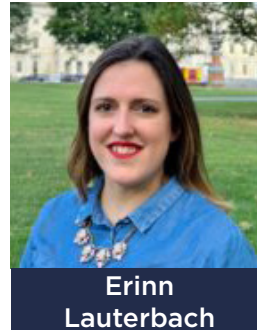


## RESEARCH PROJECTS

31. States (and Identification): Exploring the rise in the number of veterans serving in state legislatures and their relative effectiveness at lawmaking. Coauthors: Nicole Kliwer (CEL grant recipient), Craig Volden, and Alan Wiseman. Currently entitled “The Lawmaking Effectiveness of Veterans in State Legislatures,” with research work in progress.
32. States (and Identification): Exploring whether effective or ineffective state lawmakers are more likely to run for Congress and win their elections. Coauthors: Danielle Thomsen (CEL faculty affiliate), Sarah A. Treul (CEL faculty affiliate), Craig Volden, and Alan E. Wiseman. Currently entitled “Legislative Effectiveness, Progressive Ambition, and Electoral Success,” presented at the 2022 American Political Science Association conference, being revised for submission to a peer-reviewed journal.
33. States (and Cultivation): Exploration of the relative effectiveness of state legislators and how institutional structures influence their abilities to advance legislation. Coauthors: Peter Bucchianeri (CEL research affiliate), Craig Volden, and Alan Wiseman. CEL working paper entitled “Legislative Effectiveness in the American States,” presented at the 2020 Annual Meetings of the American Political Science Association, currently under review for publication. Received American Political Science Association SPPQ Award for best conference paper on state politics and policy presented in 2020.
34. States (and Cultivation): Explorations of Black women in state legislatures as “heavy lifters” of legislative initiatives. Author: Jatia Wrighten (CEL grant recipient). Currently entitled “The Legislative Effectiveness of Black Women,” with research work in progress.
35. States: Exploring Black disenfranchisement in the American South in the 19th Century, and its impact on lawmaking. Author: Michael Olson (CEL grant recipient). Currently entitled “Black Disenfranchisement and the Effectiveness of Southern State Lawmakers,” with research work in progress.
36. Comparative legislatures: Extending legislative effectiveness research to Brazil. Author: Beatriz Rey (CEL grant recipient). Currently entitled “Legislative Effectiveness in Comparative Perspective: The Case of Brazil’s Chamber of Deputies,” with research work in progress.
37. Comparative local legislatures: Exploring the effect of term limits in municipalities on the potential for effective local policymaking. Author: Susan Miller (CEL grant recipient). Currently entitled “Legislative Term Limits in Municipalities: How Term Limits Shape Effective Lawmaking at the Local Level,” with research work in progress.

## RESEARCH TEAM

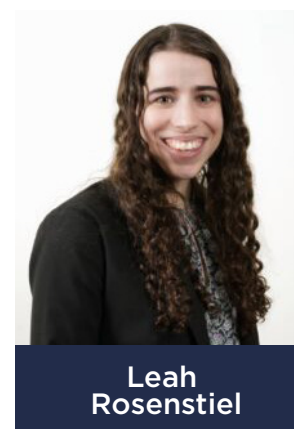
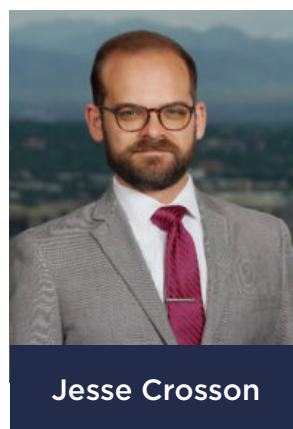
This year, the CEL supported two post-doctoral researchers: Erinn Lauterbach at the University of Virginia (now a faculty affiliate of the CEL and a faculty member at Villanova University) and Nicole Kliewer at Princeton University. Both contributed actively to CEL research projects focused on Congress and the state legislatures, respectively. Mackenzie Dobson (PhD student at the University of Virginia) and Patrick Buhr (PhD student at Vanderbilt University) served as CEL Graduate Affiliates. Throughout the year, we also employed six research assistants between Vanderbilt University and the University of Virginia and one at New York University.



## FACULTY AFFILIATES

Since the launch of our Faculty Affiliate program in 2018, our network of affiliates has grown to twenty-six members across twenty-one institutions (including universities, colleges and think tanks) across the U.S. The Faculty Affiliate program promotes a sense of community, and also facilitates increased data and resource sharing among scholars. Aligned with our diversity, equity, and inclusion goals, fifteen of the CEL faculty affiliates are women and/or underrepresented minorities. About half our Faculty Affiliates are currently working on CEL research projects, while others are working to advance the CEL mission in other ways, including building connections and communicating relevant research findings to external stakeholders.

This year we proudly added the following associates:





## BOARD OF ADVISORS

Seven enthusiastic supporters of the Center have agreed to serve on our Board, with the most recent addition being Thomas Wickham, former Parliamentarian of the U.S. House of Representatives (currently at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce). Our Advisors offered excellent guidance on how best to implement different aspects of our strategic plan. Our board has a diverse range of experiences and professional perspectives, having collectively worked in academia, the for-profit consulting industry, and government (including the White House and the U.S. Congress). Our Board of Advisors is co-chaired by Congressman Jason Altmire and Professor Kathryn Pearson of the University of Minnesota.



**Congressman  
Jason Altmire**

United States House of  
Representatives (2007-  
2013)



**Sarah Binder**

Professor of  
Political Science, George  
Washington University



**Kyle Nevins**

Co-founder, Harbinger  
Strategies



**Kathryn Pearson**

Associate Professor of  
Political Science,  
University of Minnesota



**Dean Ian Solomon**

Dean of the Frank  
Batten School of  
Leadership and Public  
Policy



**Thomas Wickham**

Former  
Parliamentarian of the U.S.  
House of  
Representatives



**Chancellor Emeritus  
Nicholas S. Zeppos**

Chancellor of  
Vanderbilt University  
(2008-2019)

As the CEL continues to grow, we look forward to expanding our Board of Advisors to help us engage with new goals and activities.



## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



Given the value of in-person work for interns around engagement events and other activities of the Center, we decided to place our internship program on hold for this fiscal year. However, we continued working remotely with the student intern from our diversity, equity, and inclusion pipeline internship program. We are set to resume the internship program for the coming academic year. Our research assistant program continued in full force in a virtual environment. Throughout the year, we employed six research assistants between Vanderbilt University and the University of Virginia and one at New York University.

We held a number of events of interest to students. For example, the CEL hosted three congressional staff members for an online event in October 2021, entitled “Capitol Conversations: Hoos on the Hill and the Life of a Staffer.” This event was targeted to University of Virginia students interested in exploring public service in Washington, DC.

## EVENTS

### Signature Events

We held our pandemic-delayed **3rd Annual Research Conference** at Vanderbilt University in **November 2021**. The theme of the conference was “Effective Lawmaking and Democratic Accountability.” The main sessions featured five one-hour-length presentations and discussions, as well as four short presentations from CEL grant recipients. Topics ranged from deliberative democracy and effective communications with constituents to accountability for effective lawmaking to legislative oversight of the executive branch. Thomas Wickham, former Parliamentarian of the U.S. House of Representatives, offered a keynote address and question-and-answer session during the concluding dinner.

We held our **4th Annual Research Conference** at the University of Virginia in **June 2022**. Following the successful format from previous conferences, the main sessions featured five one-hour-length presentations and discussions, as well as four short presentations from CEL grant recipients. Topics ranged from the value of developing social networks within legislatures as a means of facilitating successful lawmaking initiatives, to legislative strategies for bill advancement, to accountability and idea generation through congressional town hall sessions with constituents.

Both conferences were well-attended, each drawing in 30-40 scholars from colleges and universities across the United States and around the world, as well as engaging with students and faculty at the host universities. Venue highlights included Andrew Jackson’s Hermitage in Nashville and Thomas Jefferson’s Rotunda Dome Room at UVA. Additionally, at these respective conferences, we announced the award winners for the inaugural and second annual CEL Research Award.





## EVENTS

### Other Academic Events

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Hosting University of Minnesota Professor and CEL Faculty Affiliate Michael Minta at Vanderbilt University for a discussion of his research and recently-published book titled “No Longer Outsiders: Black and Latino Interest Group Advocacy” on Capitol Hill, as part of a public-facing roundtable discussion on



“Race and Political Representation Inside and Outside of Congress,” with Professor Michael Eric Dyson of Vanderbilt University, and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) (whom engaged with the panel remotely via Zoom); the panel was moderated by CEL Co-Director Alan Wiseman. The event was well received in person and the recording was viewed by hundreds online. While on campus, Professor Minta met with groups of undergraduate and graduate students to discuss his research; and he also presented new scholarship in an academic-oriented presentation.



Hosting UVA Professor and CEL Faculty Affiliate, Jennifer Lawless, for a discussion of her research report, “The Gender Gap in Political Ambition: Everything You Need to Know in 10 Charts,” through a live conversation for a community and university audience, also made available in virtual format on the CEL website.



## EVENTS

### Other Academic Events

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As part of the UVA Batten School's Faculty Research Seminar Series, we hosted Prof. Srinivas Parinandi from the University of Colorado, who presented research on state-level lawmaking, specifically related to addressing the opioid epidemic.

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The CEL assembled and proposed a panel for the 2021 American Political Science Association meetings, held in Seattle in Fall of 2021. Due to pandemic-related issues, the panel was held remotely, but it featured insightful scholarship and lively discussion among panelists. The recorded panel was made available through the APSA platform to be viewed broadly by scholars. For panelists and CEL faculty affiliates who attended the in-person conference events in Seattle, the Center hosted a dinner to build community and collaborative opportunities among the nine scholars who were in attendance.

## EVENTS

### Community Events

Engagement with the local community has always been of importance to the Center for Effective Lawmaking. Whether sharing our work with emerging leaders, facilitating conversations with politically engaged and active citizens, or making ourselves available for panels on lawmaking effectiveness in legislative bodies around the world, we believe that presenting our research to broad audiences is critical to our mission. Accordingly, this past year the Center for Effective Lawmaking was honored to participate in the following in-person and virtual community events:

Continued promotion of an online “short course,” available on our website and YouTube channel, regarding the history of the CEL, the creation of the Legislative Effectiveness Scores (LES), and what we can learn about effective lawmaking.

Beginning a series of in-person meetings with congressional staff on Capitol Hill, addressing their questions, interviewing them for research projects, and offering guidance on effective lawmaking (with three days of meetings in Spring 2022).

Featured speakers during the “Expert Chats” series at the UVA’s Batten School.

Faculty affiliates speaking about effective lawmaking in their universities and communities.



## EVENTS

### Staff Events

As part of our goal to use our portfolio to build a better Congress, the CEL continued to pursue opportunities to share our findings with practitioners and staff currently working on Capitol Hill. We continued our “Office Hours” program, which involves in-depth consultations with the legislative staff from a Representative or Senator’s office. We report on how well the member has, in the past, adopted evidence-based effective activities to advance their lawmaking agendas, and then we engage in wide-ranging discussions about the best path forward regarding what the office is trying to accomplish in their legislative proposals. Additionally, during our Spring 2022 visits to Capitol Hill, we engaged with several offices of highly effective Senators and Representatives to interview them for current and future research projects, adding qualitative insights to our quantitative analyses. Based on our past successful interactions, we are poised to approach the offices of nearly forty lawmakers in the new Congress next year.

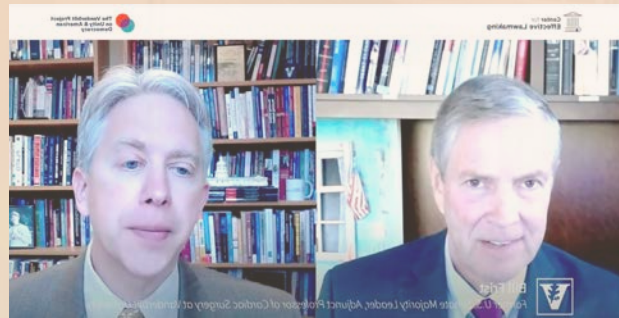
We had particular success with the Brookings LEGIS Fellows event again this year, returning as an in-person event in Washington, DC.

We also held a virtual event for the APSA Congressional Fellows. Like the Brookings event, it was well attended, particularly by congressional staff who are currently working on the Hill.



## EVENTS

### Conversations with Lawmakers Series



The CEL continued its “Conversations with Lawmakers” series. Using in-person meetings and online video platforms, we interviewed and recorded high-performing lawmakers from a variety of backgrounds and experiences to capture the perspectives of those who serve in the U.S. House and Senate. Our series recently featured a conversation with former Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA) and journalist Bob Kaiser, as well as an interview with former Senator and Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-TN), the latter focusing on “The Keys to Effective Lawmaking in Turbulent Times”.

## EVENTS

### Conversations with Lawmakers Series

In addition, we released our interview with Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) as part of a public-facing roundtable discussion on “Race and Political Representation Inside and Outside of Congress,” mentioned above.





## EVENTS

### Featured Conversations With Lawmakers



#### **Former Rep. Barney Frank**

“You have to have pretty good expertise ... if you go in to negotiate, and you don’t know the subject, you don’t know what you’re giving away and what’s important ... The expertise comes first.”



#### **Former Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist**

“The best you can do is introduce...bills that may or may not progress, get bipartisanship, and then have people build on them years later.”



#### **Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton**

“It never occurred to me that I should feel disempowered. Jump right in, and if you don’t get it done, keep jumping.”



## USE OF KNOWLEDGE

We have continued to build relationships with journalists focused on lawmaking on Capitol Hill. In addition, we have begun more concrete conversations with potential partners to help promote the dissemination and use of our Legislative Effectiveness Scores and related research findings. We are hopeful to pilot an initial agreement with one of these organizations in the coming fiscal year.

### Partnerships

This year, the CEL continued to maintain its many relationships with partner organizations on a number of fronts, all in alignment with the CEL mission. New partners included: the APSA Congressional Fellows Program, to whom we made an online presentation to incoming fellows on how to assess and support effective lawmaking in their new congressional positions; the Stennis Fellows Program, for whom we are exploring the possibility of hosting their annual retreat at the University of Virginia in the upcoming academic year; the Dirksen Congressional Center, for whom we are writing a research report for an upcoming edited volume; and the Princeton Initiative on the Constitutional Powers of Congress, with whom we are offering a research and advising role.

## RESOURCES

### Funding Updates

Thanks to the generous financial support by the U.S. Democracy Program of the Hewlett Foundation and The Democracy Fund, today the Center is strong. Additionally, the Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy as well as Vanderbilt University continue to support the work of the Center in meaningful ways.

We were also pleased to continue our partnership with the organization With Honor to thoughtfully engage with research surrounding the work of veterans in state legislatures.

Last year's Bankard Fund award helped offset some of the cost for our 2022 research conference at the University of Virginia.

The CEL has been in communication with development officers at multiple levels of both of our universities about potential future plans, and continues to cultivate a donor base and to make requests for gifts both large and small as it continues to accept investment from engaged citizens.

## OUR FUTURE

This past year, it has been demonstrated to the CEL time and again that the public is clamoring for the type of nonpartisan analysis and research that we do. We remain rooted in our belief that the topics that we engage with are useful not only to today's Congress and legislative processes, but also to the future trajectory of our democracy.

It is our intention to continue to pursue the objectives from our 2020-23 Strategic Plan in new and unique ways to our full abilities, mindful of the current environment of a nation reeling, and recovering, from a pandemic. Yet we know that the work we do is even more important given the state of affairs and that “the search for effective lawmakers is perhaps as crucial as it has ever been. It is at times when institutions are failing that effective leaders are needed more than ever.” (Volden & Wiseman, 2014, p. 13)

### Continuing Objectives

- Continue our Conversations with Lawmakers program
- Host informative and dynamic speakers, academics and former/current lawmakers
- Support our faculty affiliates
- Administer a fifth round of small grants
- Cultivate the next generation of scholars through our post-doctoral, research assistant and intern programs
- Bring awareness, through media outlets, to the general public regarding our updated Legislative Effectiveness Scores, and research findings that can help build a better Congress

### Growth Objectives

- Dramatically expand our Office Hours program in the new Congress
- Advance the communication and use of our State Legislative Effectiveness Scores and related research findings
- Work to publicize our new Legislative Effectiveness Scores for the 117th Congress, making our practical findings available and useful to members of Congress and their staffs



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2021 - 2022 Annual Report**

**[thelawmakers.org](https://thelawmakers.org)**

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