

**Brief Summary of
“Polarization and Lawmaking Effectiveness in the United States Congress”
with key figures**

Center for Effective Lawmaking working paper

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Key points:

- Over the past 50 years in Congress, when Democrats have been the majority party, their liberal wing has been the most effective at advancing proposed bills. In contrast, under Republican majorities, the conservative wing has the lowest lawmaking effectiveness among Republicans. (Effectiveness is judged by [Center for Effective Lawmaking’s Legislative Effectiveness Scores](#), and ideology is judged by [VoteView’s DW-NOMINATE Scores](#))

Figure 1: Relationship between LES and Ideological Position in Chamber

Figure 1a: Democratic House

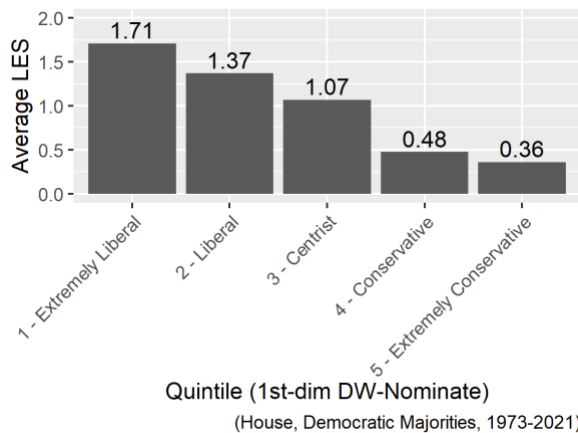


Figure 1b: Republican House

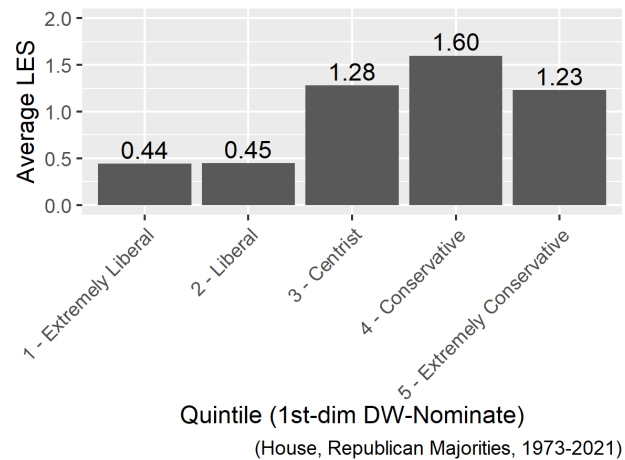


Figure 1c: Democratic Senate

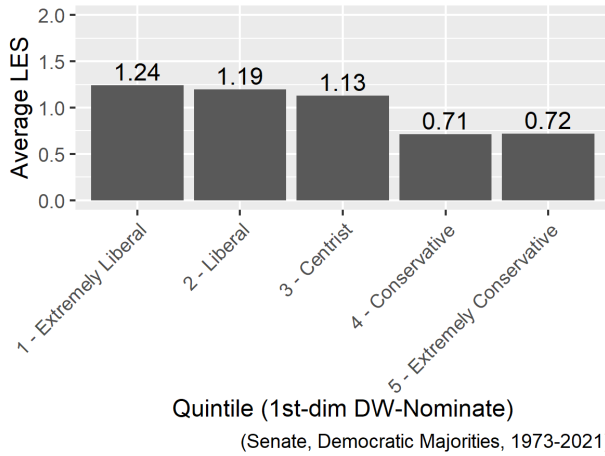
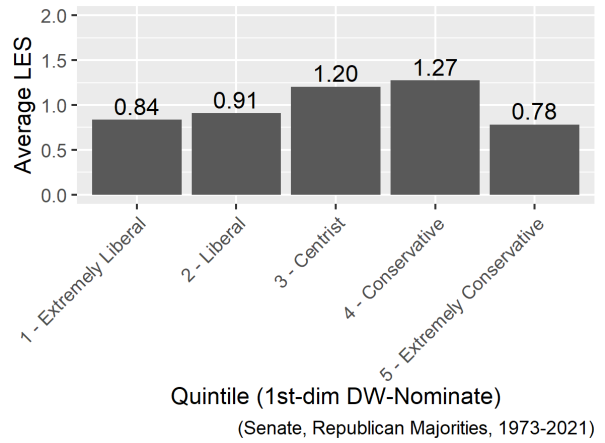


Figure 1d: Republican Senate



2. Because the conservative wing of the Republican Party has newer members, their seniority and likelihood of holding a committee chair are lower than for other Republicans. Moreover, conservative Republicans are much less likely to attract Democratic cosponsors to their proposals. These factors account for a substantial portion of the reduced lawmaking effectiveness of the conservative wing under Republican majorities, above and beyond any natural ideological bias. (Figure shows the proportion of lower lawmaking effectiveness attributed to each of these sources.)

Figure 3a: Impacts of Institutional and Lawmaking Factors on Decreased LES for Most Conservative House Republicans Under House Majorities

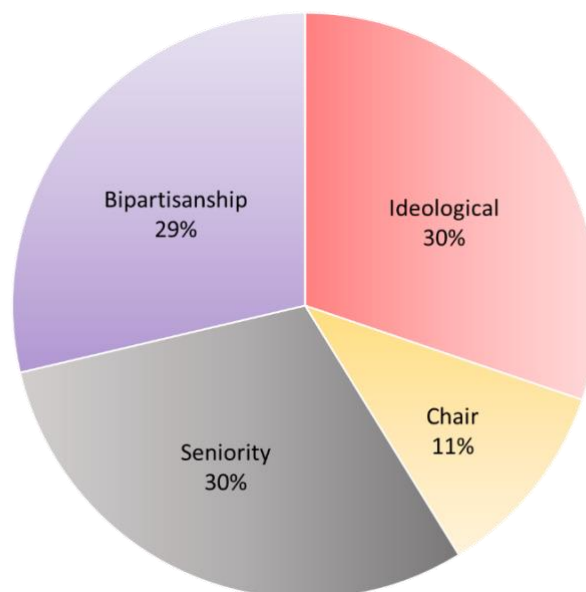
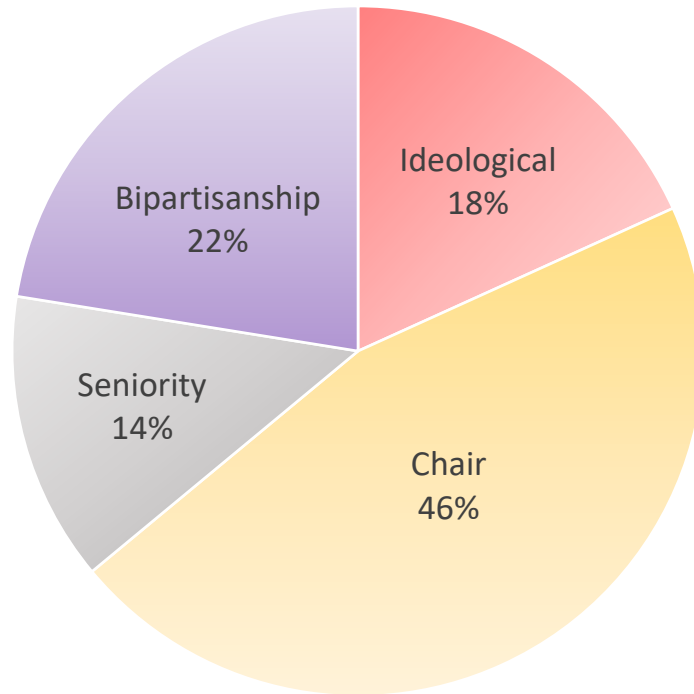


Figure 3b: Impacts of Institutional and Lawmaking Factors on Decreased LES for Most Conservative Senate Republicans Under Senate Majorities



Note: the figures show the component parts that contribute to the total disadvantage in lawmaking effectiveness for Republicans in the most conservative quintile when Republicans are the majority party in the House (Figure 3a) Senate (Figure 3b) between 1973-2021.

- Due to this limited lawmaking effectiveness of conservative Republicans, the overall position of the average lawmaking outcome in Congress has remained remarkably stable ideologically over time, despite the conservative shift in the Republican Party.

Figure 4a: House Party Medians and Average LES-Weighted DW-NOMINATE Scores

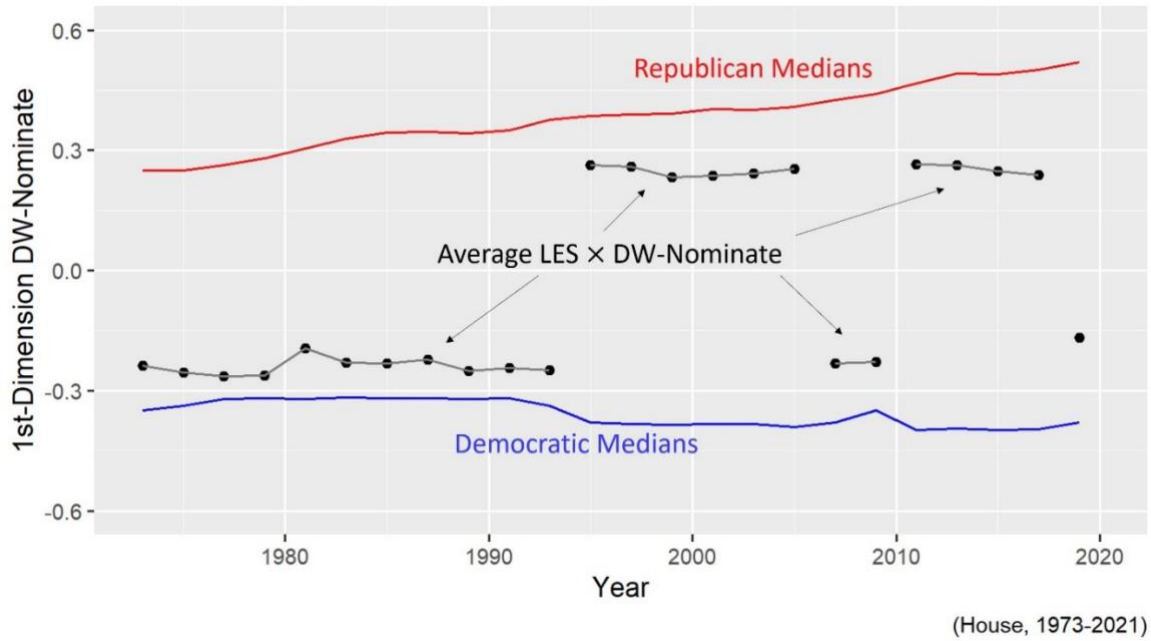


Figure 4b: Senate Party Medians and Average LES-Weighted DW-NOMINATE Scores

