



## **Outcome-Consequential Campaigning**

**Mackenzie R. Dobson, University of Virginia\***  
**Craig Volden, University of Virginia**  
**Alan E. Wiseman, Vanderbilt University**

**October 2024**

### **Abstract**

Campaigns can feature simple electoral posturing or actual commitments of behaviors that politicians will engage in upon being elected. But can campaigns also offer insights into likely policy outcomes, including those resulting from collective policymaking? To address this question, we take advantage of new scholarship highlighting the enhanced lawmaking effectiveness of bipartisan legislators (Harbridge-Yong et al. 2023). We identify bipartisan campaigners from among more than 800 congressional Representatives. Despite increased polarization, since the year 2000 more than a third of congressional freshmen invoked bipartisan language on the campaign trail. These bipartisan campaigners became effective lawmakers. Their enhanced effectiveness was especially pronounced in Representatives' earlier terms in office and linked to the lawmaking stages requiring significant coalition-building activities. These findings suggest that campaigns offer voters meaningful insights not only into candidates' subsequent behaviors regarding the issues they attend to and the legislative votes they take, but also into policy outcomes via their effective lawmaking.

---

\* The authors thank: Halinta Diallo, Benjamin Dooley, Emma Finkelstein, Joanna Goodman, Catherine Hall, Owen Hart, Amanda Rosensky, Maria Schense, Andrew Sharpe, Morgan Smith, Joel Thomas, Brandon Velez, Isabella Wuco, Kelly Wulf, Jessica Zhang, Nicholas Zochowski, and Leeraz Zuo for valuable research assistance; Gary Jacobson and Laurel Harbridge-Yong for sharing data; and Larry Bartels, John Holbein, and participants at the 2023 Midwest Political Science Association meetings for helpful advice. Volden and Wiseman thank the U.S. Democracy Program of the Hewlett Foundation for continued support for the Center for Effective Lawmaking ([www.thelawmakers.org](http://www.thelawmakers.org)).

Congressmen Scott Peters and Tony Cárdenas share several similarities. Both are members of the Democratic Party, represent California districts, served on their respective city councils (San Diego for Peters, Los Angeles for Cárdenas), and were first elected to Congress in 2012 (to be seated in the 113th Congress). Yet, differences in how they presented themselves during their first congressional campaigns were quite stark.

Candidate Peters drew attention to his record as a member (and President) of the San Diego City Council, to highlight his bipartisan approach to policymaking; and media coverage of his campaigns (and those who publicly advocated for him) highlighted his problem-solving skills and his ability and willingness to reach across the aisle. “Scott is the only candidate in the race for California’s new 52<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District who has drawn support from Democrats, independents ... and Republicans ... [he] has a track record of solving tough problems by bringing opposing sides together to find common ground and get things done—something Congress desperately needs right now” (Targeted News Service 2012).

Candidate Cárdenas, in contrast, did not emphasize bipartisanship in his campaign materials. Instead, commentators pointed to how Cárdenas focused on advancing his party’s goals and objectives. He appreciated the “importance of winning the respect of party leaders early on,” (House 2012) and he was very forthcoming about his goal of raising \$1 million that could then be distributed to other Democrats’ campaigns, to help secure a Democratic majority in the House. As Cárdenas noted in his own words, “I’d like to get [to the House] with strength and hopefully in the majority ... I’m going to do whatever I can to help.”

These differences in how they presented their views on their roles in Congress and lawmaking mapped into clear differences once they were elected to the House. In his freshman term, Representative Peters appeared to be a more engaged lawmaker than Representative

Cárdenas, introducing 27 bills, two of which received action beyond committee and passed the House, and one of which became law. Given that he was a first-term Representative in the minority (Democratic) Party, the scope of his legislative success placed him among the most effective lawmakers in his cohort. In contrast, Representative Cárdenas introduced 18 bills, none of which received any attention after being referred to committee. This difference in lawmaking engagement and success between Representatives Peters and Cárdenas continued over the next several Congresses. Representative Cárdenas failed to achieve any forward movement on any of his sponsored bills in the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress, and he did not see any of his bills pass the House or become law until the Democrats took over the chamber in the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress (2019-21). In contrast, Peters continued to shepherd his bills through key stages of the legislative process in every Congress while he was still in the minority; and when the Democrats took control of the chamber in 2019, he experienced lawmaking success that was comparable to the more partisan Cárdenas.

The fact that the conflicting campaign sentiments of Representatives Peters and Cárdenas appear to have mapped into different degrees of lawmaking success after first being elected (and in subsequent Congresses) raises several important questions regarding the relationship between campaigning and policymaking. First, are campaigns systematically informative regarding the likely lawmaking approaches of members of Congress? And, more specifically, might congressional campaigns provide voters with insights about the likely lawmaking effectiveness of candidates, if elected? Put a different way, are electoral campaigns outcome-consequential for public policy? Or are they inconsequential electoral posturing, or simply behavior-consequential (e.g., Sulkin 2005, 2011) in ways that do not necessarily translate into policy outcomes?

To engage with these questions, we look at every member of the U.S. House of Representatives who served in the 112<sup>th</sup>-116<sup>th</sup> Congresses (2011-2021), examining how they campaigned ahead of their first election to Congress. Based on recent research indicating that bipartisan legislators are more effective at lawmaking (Harbridge-Yong, Volden, and Wiseman 2023), we construct a novel dataset of media coverage (press releases, local, state, and national newspapers, newswires, and blog posts) of first-time congressional candidates who subsequently won their election. Using Boolean search strings and hand coding by a team of research assistants, we identify whether these candidates presented themselves in a bipartisan manner, willing to reach across the aisle to advance policy solutions. We then analyze subsequent legislative outcomes – specifically, whether those Representatives who expressed an interest in bipartisan lawmaking were more effective in advancing their policy goals than those who did not signal bipartisanship in their campaigns.

Our results suggest that campaigning on a commitment to bipartisanship efforts is not merely electoral posturing, as conventional wisdom and punditry might suggest. Nor is it merely an indication of likely subsequent political behavior – indeed some of the bipartisan campaigners pursued bipartisan cosponsorships more or less vigorously than did others. Rather, we find that those Representatives who expressed bipartisan sentiments in their campaigns exhibited systematic and statistically significant differences in the lawmaking outcomes they achieved after being elected to the House. In particular, their bills advanced more successfully through the legislative process, so that they were ultimately more effective lawmakers than those who were not bipartisan campaigners in their first races. This effect is especially pronounced for Representatives in their first three terms, in which bipartisan campaigners produce about 25% more laws. The lawmaking effectiveness gap between bipartisan and partisan campaigners

dissipates later in their careers as acquired skills and institutional positions eclipse the initial approaches to lawmaking that junior members bring.

Taken together, our results suggest that electoral campaigns may be informative not just in revealing which issues candidates care about and what policy positions they favor, but also in an outcome-consequential manner, by forecasting whether certain candidates will become effective lawmakers. Voters can therefore rely on candidate statements and media portrayals as informative signals when forming judgments about whether candidates will approach lawmaking in ways that help them successfully advance their legislative agendas and achieve new policy outcomes.

### **The Policy Consequences of Electoral Campaigns**

We argue that the policy consequences that follow electoral campaigns can take one of three forms. Inconsequential campaigning occurs when candidate promises are mainly electoral posturing or when the subsequently elected officials have no actual authority over policymaking in the area of the promise. Behavior-consequential campaigning occurs when candidates follow through on the behavior promised, such as putting forward a proposal or voting a certain way on a promised issue; but that behavior alone does not produce meaningful policy change. Outcome-consequential campaigning goes a step further, featuring not only behavioral steps in the direction of a promise, but actual policy outcomes aligned with that promise. To some extent, these three forms of campaigning fall on a continuum, with inconsequential campaigning and outcome-consequential campaigning marking the ends of the spectrum and behavior-consequential campaigning falling somewhere in between. How close behavior-consequential campaigning comes to achieving significant policy outcomes often depends on the granted authorities and policymaking abilities of the subsequently elected officials.

Each of these three types of campaigning has received some attention in the scholarly literature, although the focus has typically been in terms of whether campaigns have any governing consequences at all. As Mansbridge (2003, 515) suggests, the rhetoric and image that candidates present to their potential constituents is a form of “promissory representation,” whereby “during campaigns representatives [make] promises to constituents, which they then [keep] or [fail] to keep.”

Much of the scholarship on campaign promises (and candidate follow-through) in American politics has focused on presidential campaigns, where presidents may have the power to make outcome-consequential promises. The extant literature collectively suggests that presidents largely keep their promises (Fishel 1985, Krukones 1984), especially when such promises are not limited by the checks and balances of legislative action (King and Riddlesperger 1996; Su, Neustadt, and Clawson 1995). National party platforms have been linked to federal expenditures (Budge and Hofferbert 1990) in ways that align with partisan issue ownership (Egan 2013), although not always with constituent preferences.

That said, far more campaigns involve choices neither of presidents nor of national party platforms, but instead select representatives to collective bodies like Congress, state legislatures, or city councils. Given the checks and balances across branches of government, coupled with the complexities of joint decision-making in legislative settings, candidates in such races are often limited to offering behavior-consequential promises. Much of the relevant literature, therefore, focuses on such behaviors – bill introductions or likely voting behaviors. Ringquist and Dasse (2004), for example, find that, at least within the realm of environmental policy, members of Congress appear to keep their campaign promises in terms of the votes they cast; and they argue that “[campaign] promises are powerful predictors of congressional behavior

even when controlling for other factors” (414). Voters understand the difference between a general policy stance and a promise to vote in a specific way; and, as such, voters judge candidates more harshly if they do not follow through on their promises (Bonilla 2021).

Such promises extend not only to legislative votes to be cast but also to the proposals that lawmakers will make in their bill sponsorships. As Fenno (1996, 75) argues, “it is through the interpretation of a campaign that the winning candidate derives some of the impulses, interests, and instructions that shape his or her legislative behavior.” Consistent with this claim, Sulkin (2011) establishes that legislators’ behavior in office is shaped by what transpired during the campaign; and Sulkin (2005) demonstrates that lawmakers sponsor legislation not only on the issues they themselves raise in campaigns but also in areas raised by their opponents. Taken together, these findings suggest that congressional campaigns may often serve as good signals about positions and priorities for their upcoming legislative service.

Perhaps behavior-consequential campaigning is the best that voters can hope for when electing representatives to collective legislative bodies. At the same time, however, voters seem to be wanting something more. They often hold elected officials accountable not just for their behaviors but for outcomes (e.g., Holbein 2016), including for outcomes that may be beyond elected officials’ immediate control (e.g., Achen and Bartels 2017).

If candidates can at best make behavioral promises and voters demand actual results in policy outcomes, there is a mismatch in expectations that may undermine trust in American democracy. Is there any hope for outcome-consequential campaigning? Or do candidates simply find themselves in the precarious position of wanting to make outcome-consequential promises but then falling short and becoming inconsequential in ways that are problematic in future elections?

We argue that one way to square this circle is to focus on behavioral campaign promises that are in fact outcome-consequential. Specifically, a substantial literature is arising that suggests that particular legislative behaviors are associated with effective lawmaking that produces concrete results in terms of new laws. Whether based on the staff they hire (Crosson et al. 2020), the networks they form (Battaglini et al. 2020), the caucuses they join (Clarke et al. 2024), or the bipartisan behaviors they undertake (Harbridge-Yong et al. 2023), some members of Congress adopt behaviors that are strongly associated with effective lawmaking. Such behaviors involve not only the introduction of bills or the promised votes of a single legislator, but outcome-consequential lawmaking. Put simply, legislators who adopt these best practices can campaign not only on the behaviors they will undertake but also the policy outcomes they can help deliver.

We seek to build upon these findings in order to connect the dots between campaigning and effective lawmaking, thus highlighting the possibility of outcome-consequential campaigning in legislative politics. Although many traits and habits are associated with effective lawmaking (Volden and Wiseman 2014), we focus here on one that has received significant attention recently, both on the campaign trail and in Congress: bipartisanship.

In recent years, the American political landscape has been characterized by an increasingly polarized Congress that struggles to reach bipartisan agreement on meaningful legislation (Mann and Ornstein 2016). Ideological common ground has shrunk, making it difficult for members of Congress to take moderate positions and reach across the partisan divide, especially when facing threats of costly repercussions from extreme party members (Pyeatt 2015), campaign contributors (Barber 2016), and ideologues in the electorate (Harbridge, Malhotra, and Harrison 2014). Moderates are opting out of even running for Congress in the



first place (Thomsen 2017). Moreover, general elections have become less competitive, such that winning one's primary (often by signaling party loyalty) is a sound indicator of the likelihood of being elected to Congress. In spite of these partisan pressures, however, it is also true that bipartisan coalitions (Harbridge 2015) and bipartisan supermajorities (Curry and Lee 2020) remain quite common – and in many cases, procedurally necessary – in Congress. In other words, bipartisan lawmaking continues to exist, despite the electoral incentives of individual lawmakers to appeal to their partisan bases of support.

Harbridge-Yong, Volden, and Wiseman (2023) engage with this puzzle, demonstrating that bipartisan lawmaking is positively associated with higher levels of lawmaking effectiveness for members of the U.S. House and Senate. The root causes of this relationship are extensive. For instance, leaders in committees and subcommittees value bipartisan cosponsorship as a signal that broader coalitions exist to overcome future legislative obstacles. And the enhanced effectiveness of bipartisan lawmakers holds irrespective of whether a legislator is in the majority or minority party. Combined with evidence from Treul et al. (2022), demonstrating that effective lawmakers face fewer high-quality primary election challengers, these findings suggest that bipartisan legislative strategies are likely electorally valuable.

Bipartisanship therefore presents an opportunity to explore outcome-consequential campaigning. Specifically, we seek to answer a series of questions. Do prospective members of Congress campaign on a promise of bipartisanship? And, for those who do, is such campaigning inconsequential, behavior-consequential, or outcome-consequential? In other words, do those who campaign as likely bipartisan lawmakers follow through on those promises all the way to their policy outcomes (exhibiting effective lawmaking and producing new laws at a disproportionate rate)?

## Measuring Bipartisan Campaigning and Its Lawmaking Consequences

To answer these questions and demonstrate the nature of outcome-consequential campaigning, we require data on candidates' campaign positions regarding their commitments to bipartisan efforts, as well as their subsequent legislative behavior and outcomes in terms of their overall lawmaking effectiveness once elected to Congress. The strongest case for outcome-consequential campaigning can be made with a focus on campaign promises made *prior to* exhibiting any ability to deliver on those promises in any meaningful way. In contrast, reelection campaigns combine retrospective and prospective elements – candidates' campaigning on bipartisanship is often more a recounting of what they have done rather than a promise for the future. By focusing on initial campaigns, our research design also helps answer a secondary important question: can the effectiveness of lawmakers be detected in political campaigns even before their lawmaking behaviors and successes have been observed by voters?

To measure candidates' bipartisan promises during their first congressional campaigns, we focus on whether they made such commitments directly on the campaign trail and whether media outlets portrayed them as bipartisan candidates. Specifically, for all 814 Representatives who served during the 112<sup>th</sup>-116<sup>th</sup> Congresses (2011-2021), we identify all media coverage of their *first* successful congressional campaigns – those leading to their freshman term. We leverage LexisUni's (formerly LexisNexis) media content archival database, restricting our searches of this corpus by incorporating Boolean search strings comprised of Candidate *i*'s name, state name, and an array of bipartisan keywords and phrases that tap into the concept of

bipartisan lawmaking, such as “bipartisan,” “across the aisle,” and “common ground.”<sup>1</sup> In total, we analyzed 38,319 unique documents spanning over 300,000 pages of campaign coverage.

Candidates who rendered no results when providing the search criteria were assigned a value of 0 for *Bipartisan Campaigner*, our dichotomous variable that captures whether an individual made bipartisan commitments on the campaign trail. Although the search criteria were helpful for this initial vetting process, they cannot assess the valence of the speech (such as a partisan campaigner expressing disgust with across-the-aisle approaches to lawmaking). To account for speech valence and other subtleties in news coverage, multiple coders read the documents to determine whether each candidate was a bipartisan campaigner based on candidates’ own statements and media portrayals of their prospective lawmaking. Coders conducted a holistic assessment of candidates’ bipartisan commitments (or lack thereof) by reading all the sourced coverage of the campaign. Two coders independently coded the materials for each candidate, yielding an intercoder reliability above 91%.<sup>2</sup> Where they reached different conclusions, an independent third coder reviewed the news coverage and the coders’ reasoning for their coding decision and resolved the discrepancy.

Representatives who served in the 112<sup>th</sup>-116<sup>th</sup> Congress were first elected as early as 1955 (John Dingell, D-MI, in a special election) and as late as 2020. For those first elected in each campaign cycle, we display the percent who campaigned on a commitment to bipartisanship from 1992-2020 in Figure 1.<sup>3</sup> These data reveal that congressional campaigning on bipartisanship was relatively uncommon prior to the mid-1990s, perhaps because it was assumed

---

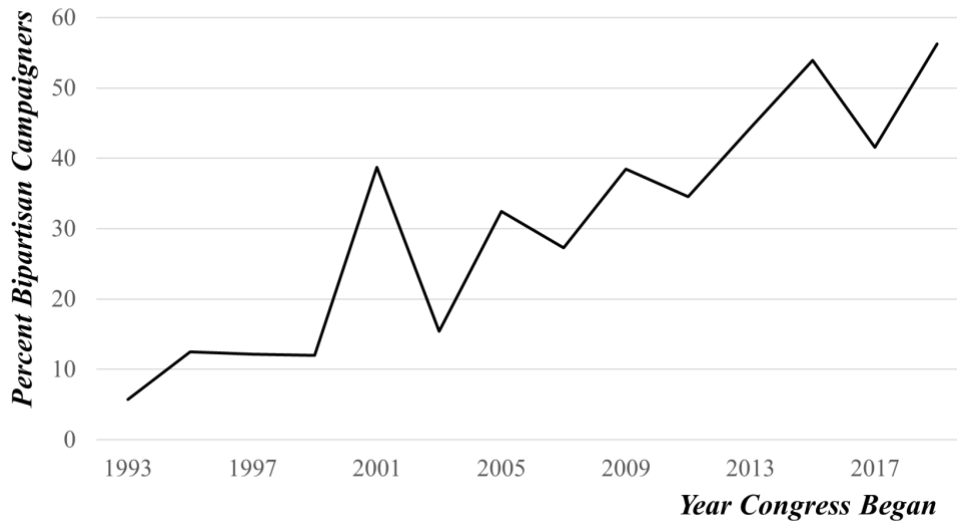
<sup>1</sup> The exhaustive list of these keywords and phrases can be found in Appendix A. These words were derived from a systematic analysis of all coverage of the original campaigns for all members of the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress.

<sup>2</sup> Specifically, the individual coders reached identical conclusions on 691 out of the 759 candidates that were hand coded.

<sup>3</sup> According to our data, very few candidates embraced themes of bipartisanship in their campaigns prior to 1992.

that most members would act in a bipartisan manner, given the significant ideological overlap across parties.

**Figure 1: The Rise in Bipartisan Campaigning Over Time**



*Note:* The figure shows the percent of members of Congress who campaigned on a commitment to bipartisan efforts during their first congressional campaign. Invoking bipartisan language on the campaign trail has increased over time.

Following the Republican takeover of the House in the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress (1995-1997) and the related rise in partisan polarization, however, some candidates chose to differentiate themselves from others by signaling their bipartisan approach and intentions. Around 36% of first-time candidates have campaigned on bipartisanship since the 2000 election. In the contemporary era of “insecure majorities” (Lee 2016), candidates face a tension between signaling their loyalty to their party versus a willingness to form bipartisan coalitions in the early stages of the lawmaking process in order to work constructively with others. The approach they choose may offer meaningful insights into their future lawmaking strategies and successes in bringing about policy change.

**Table 1: Characteristics of Bipartisan Campaigners**

<b>DV: Bipartisan Campaigner</b>	Model 1.1	Model 1.2
Majority Party		-0.494** (0.178)
Female	0.472** (0.202)	0.467* (0.203)
African American	0.530 (0.344)	0.500 (0.346)
Latino	-0.098 (0.350)	-0.181 (0.354)
State Delegation Size	0.010 (0.007)	0.008 (0.007)
State Legislative Experience	0.401 (0.301)	0.345 (0.303)
State Legislative Experience × Legislative Prof.	-0.304 (0.865)	-0.275 (0.869)
Other Party's Presidential Vote Share	0.061** (0.010)	0.066** (0.010)
Congress	0.204** (0.023)	0.206** (0.023)
Constant	-26.3** (2.70)	-26.4** (2.71)
N	804	804
Pseudo-R <sup>2</sup>	0.15	0.16

*Notes:* Logit Regression analyses, dependent variable takes on a value of “1” if the legislator embraced bipartisan themes in their first congressional campaign.

\*  $p < 0.05$  (one-tailed), \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (one-tailed).

In Table 1, we present results from logit regression analyses, where we explore who engages in bipartisan campaigning. This analysis reveals that very few individual- or institution-level characteristics correlate with candidates' decisions to campaign on bipartisan themes, with a few exceptions. Female candidates, as well as candidates who are running in districts that are less friendly to their political party (as measured by the percentage of the other party's presidential vote share) are more likely to emphasize bipartisan themes in their campaigns. Members likely to be entering the majority party in the House, on the other hand, are shown in

Model 1.2 to be less likely to campaign on bipartisanship than are members joining the House minority.<sup>4</sup>

With the Bipartisan Campaigner indicator variable in hand, we measure a Representative's subsequent lawmaking effectiveness in Congress using Volden and Wiseman's (2014) *Legislative Effectiveness Score* (LES). The LES is a summary metric that captures a legislator's success in advancing her sponsored bills across five stages of the lawmaking process, with bills weighted based on their substantive significance. Scores are normalized to have an average value of 1 within each two-year Congress, with higher scores capturing greater lawmaking effectiveness.<sup>5</sup> A quick comparison of their freshmen Legislative Effectiveness Scores shows bipartisan campaigners averaging 0.78 – a full 37% boost over the 0.57 average of those who did not campaign on bipartisanship ( $p < 0.01$ ).

### **Finding Outcome-Consequential Campaigning**

Drawing on these data, we estimate a series of Ordinary Least Squares regressions, where the dependent variables are Representative  $i$ 's Legislative Effectiveness Score, as well as the different legislative hurdles that a bill must overcome (e.g., receiving any action in committee) on its way to becoming law. If bipartisan campaigning is indeed outcome-consequential, we should expect to obtain a positive correlation between *Bipartisan Campaigner* and *LES*, as well as a positive correlation between *Bipartisan Campaigner* and achieving success in each of the

---

<sup>4</sup> Of course, there is uncertainty during the elections regarding which party will be in the majority, so this metric is a noisy indicator of likely candidate expectations.

<sup>5</sup> While LES is a widely accepted metric of legislative effectiveness, it is worth noting that it does not capture an array of activities that legislators engage in, such as constituency services and oversight. Relatedly, as constructed prior to the 117th Congress, it also does not consider instances where portions of a legislator's bills get attached to successful omnibus bills (e.g., Casas et al. 2020, Wilkerson et al. 2015), or alternative pathways for legislators to influence the lawmaking process, such as adding amendments to bills that advance further in the legislative process (e.g., Eatough and Preece forthcoming).

major legislative stages (including in their bills becoming law, an undeniably consequential outcome).

In exploring whether bipartisan campaigners are more effective lawmakers, we also control for the conventional set of covariates that have been explored and utilized in extant literature on legislative effectiveness (Volden and Wiseman 2014). Specifically, we control for whether a Representative is a member of the majority party, her seniority, whether she holds a committee or subcommittee chair, whether she is a member of her party's leadership, whether she sits on a "power" committee (Ways & Means, Appropriations, or Rules), her ideology, gender and ethnicity, the size of her state's congressional delegation, whether she previously served in a state legislature, and her vote share in her previous election.<sup>6</sup> These factors may influence both bipartisanship in Congress and lawmaking effectiveness, and are therefore included to help avoid any false inference if they are also correlated with campaign messaging.

In Table 2 we present the results from a series of Ordinary Least Squares regressions, where the dependent variable is Representative  $i$ 's *Legislative Effectiveness Score* in Congress  $t$ , and the independent variable is *Bipartisan Campaigner*, our dichotomous variable that captures whether or not Representative  $i$  expressed a commitment to bipartisan lawmaking in her first congressional campaign. The cross-section includes every Representative who served in at least one of the 112<sup>th</sup>-116<sup>th</sup> Congresses, while the time series includes each Congress in which they served from the 93<sup>rd</sup> (1973-75) through the 116<sup>th</sup> (2019-21). In each of our specifications, we cluster the standard errors by member to account for multiple observations per member, and we include Congress fixed effects to account for over-time trends. As discussed above, consistent with outcome-consequential campaigning, we expect that the coefficient on *Bipartisan*

---

<sup>6</sup> Descriptive statistics and sources for the covariates used can be found in Appendix B1.

*Campaigner* will be positive and statistically significant, indicating that Representatives who campaign on a commitment to bipartisan lawmaking during their first congressional campaign are more effective lawmakers than those who do not signal an openness to bipartisan legislative strategies.

As we see in Model 2.1, the coefficient on *Bipartisan Campaigner* is, indeed, positive and statistically significant by conventional standards. Moreover, the magnitude of the coefficient (0.155) is substantively meaningful – those who embraced bipartisanship in their initial congressional campaigns have Legislative Effectiveness Scores that are approximately 15% higher than those Representatives who did not signal bipartisanship. In comparing the magnitude of this coefficient across other variables in our model, we see that the relative impact of a campaign commitment to bipartisanship is analogous to the seniority-based impact of serving three additional terms in Congress on one’s Legislative Effectiveness Score.

Model 2.2 shows that these results hold when controlling for the extent to which lawmakers attract a sizable proportion of cosponsors to their bills from the opposing party, which (consistent with Harbridge-Yong, Volden, and Wiseman 2023) is positively related to a Representative’s lawmaking effectiveness. Model 2.3 likewise demonstrates that the positive and statistically significant coefficient on *Bipartisan Campaigner* continues to hold when controlling for the proportion of bills that a Representative cosponsors that are sponsored by members of the other party, which (consistent with Harbridge-Yong, Volden, and Wiseman) is *not* significantly correlated with a Representative’s Legislative Effectiveness Score.



**Table 2: Bipartisan Campaigners Are More Effective Lawmakers**

<b>DV: Legislative Effectiveness Score</b>	Model 2.1	Model 2.2	Model 2.3
<i>Bipartisan Campaigner</i>	0.155** (0.056)	0.132* (0.066)	0.148* (0.067)
Proportion Bipartisan Cosponsors Attracted		0.667** (0.168)	
Proportion Bipartisan Cosponsors Offered			0.233 (0.324)
Majority Party	0.477** (0.093)	0.614** (0.130)	0.575** (0.166)
Seniority	0.058** (0.013)	0.061** (0.013)	0.064** (0.014)
Committee Chair	2.749** (0.357)	3.039** (0.417)	3.100** (0.449)
Subcommittee Chair	0.462** (0.096)	0.488** (0.117)	0.512** (0.120)
Majority Party Leadership	0.341** (0.129)	0.412** (0.158)	0.409** (0.159)
Minority Party Leadership	-0.120* (0.068)	-0.127* (0.069)	-0.092 (0.073)
Speaker	-0.799** (0.249)	0.112 (0.194)	0.066 (0.198)
Power Committee	-0.262** (0.074)	-0.261** (0.082)	-0.259** (0.085)
Distance from Median	-0.305 (0.238)	0.022 (0.260)	-0.247 (0.285)
Female	-0.014 (0.055)	0.003 (0.065)	-0.010 (0.065)
African American	0.013 (0.071)	0.014 (0.080)	-0.002 (0.077)
Latino	-0.120 (0.076)	-0.096 (0.084)	-0.120 (0.084)
State Delegation Size	-0.003 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.003)	-0.003 (0.003)
State Legislative Experience	-0.081 (0.085)	-0.047 (0.100)	-0.044 (0.100)
State Legislative Experience × Legislative Prof.	0.666* (0.287)	0.714* (0.319)	0.719* (0.328)
Vote Share	0.0003 (0.014)	0.004 (0.017)	0.005 (0.016)
Vote Share <sup>2</sup>	-0.00003 (0.0001)	-0.0001 (0.0001)	-0.0001 (0.0001)
Constant	0.409 (0.558)	-0.197 (0.648)	-0.012 (0.669)
N	4,304	3,343	3,403
R <sup>2</sup>	0.36	0.38	0.37

*Notes:* Ordinary Least Squares analyses, dependent variable is a legislator's *Legislative Effectiveness Score*, robust standard errors in parentheses, observations clustered by legislator with Congress fixed effects. Results show that those who signal a bipartisan approach during their initial congressional campaign are more effective lawmakers across their careers.

\*  $p < 0.05$  (one-tailed), \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (one-tailed).

These latter two models offer a contrast between behavior-consequential campaigning and outcome-consequential campaigning. In particular, previous scholarship has shown instances in which campaigners signal the issues on which they subsequently introduce bills (Sulkin 2005, 2011) or the ideological positions that they subsequently uphold in their voting behaviors (e.g., Ringquist and Dasse 2004). What differs here is that the lawmaking outcomes achieved – the advancing of legislative proposals into law – are linked to bipartisan campaigning. It is not simply that bipartisan campaigners become bipartisan legislators, with that behavior alone making them more effective lawmakers. Were that the case, the coefficient on Bipartisan Campaigner would diminish to zero in the latter models. Instead, campaigning on bipartisanship sends a signal about lawmaking effectiveness, about the outcomes of political processes – bills that are advanced and laws that are secured – rather than merely the behaviors that might follow.

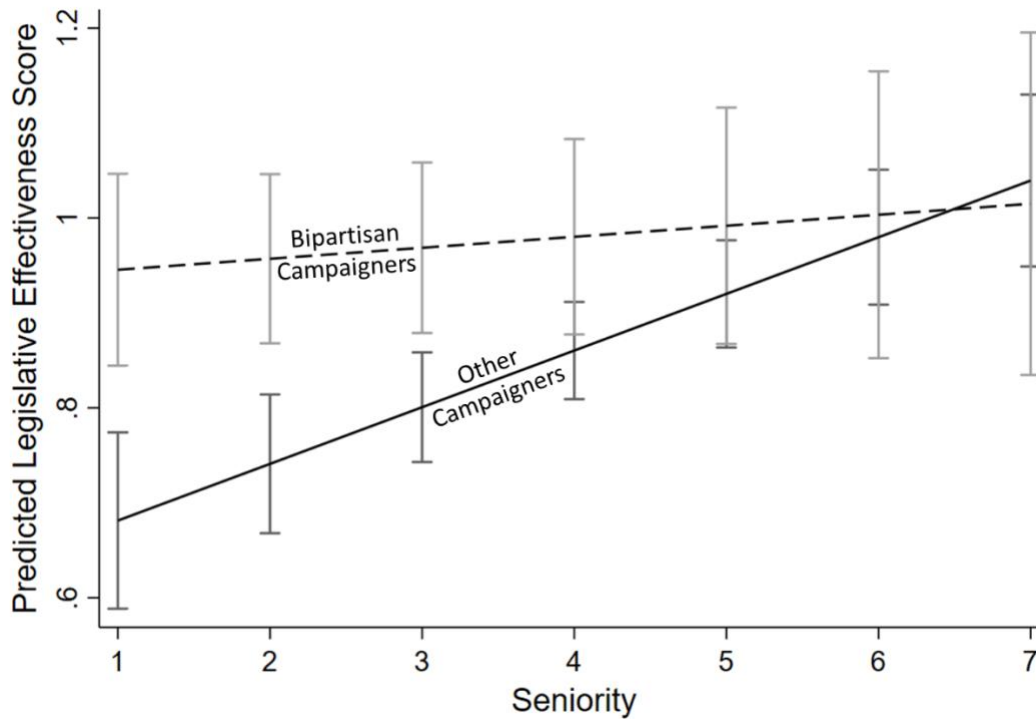
Indeed, raising bipartisanship in a campaign may be a broader outcome-consequential signal rather than a mere behavioral signal about the approach to lawmaking that candidates will embrace. Such campaigning seems to signal the goal of doing whatever it takes to bring about policy outcomes on the whole. In auxiliary analysis, presented in Appendix B2, we find that female Representatives who campaign on bipartisanship attract a higher proportion of out-party cosponsors to their bills compared to non-bipartisan campaigners. However, the same is not true of male lawmakers or of all lawmakers combined. Thus, campaigning on bipartisanship is less a behavior-consequential signal about merely attracting bipartisan cosponsors and more an outcome-consequential signal about taking whatever approach to lawmaking is needed to advance new public policies.

## **The Longevity and Legislative Processes Behind Outcome-Consequential Campaigning**

To what extent is this signal, sent prior to even setting foot in the Capitol, an enduring one? Perhaps candidates elected on a platform pledging to foster bipartisanship and tackle issues across party lines immediately engage with legislative duties upon entering their first Congress. They commit more fully to the legislative process, separating themselves from their peers. However, legislators who are not elected on a proactive problem-solving platform may initially show less engagement with the legislative process upon entering Congress. It could take them time to acclimate and develop their legislative skills. Consequently, these non-bipartisan campaigners may not achieve higher levels of lawmaking effectiveness until they have served multiple terms, acquiring the requisite policy expertise and institutional knowledge that typically accompanies greater seniority.

In auxiliary analysis, presented in Appendix B3, we explore this conjecture by replicating the analysis in Table 2, including an interaction variable *Bipartisan Campaigner*  $\times$  *Seniority*. This allows us to investigate whether the marginal impact of bipartisan campaigning on lawmaking effectiveness diminishes over a Representative's tenure in Congress. Consistent with our conjecture, our findings demonstrate that, while the coefficients on *Bipartisan Campaigner* and *Seniority* remain positive and statistically significant in our revised model (similar to Model 2.1), the coefficient on *Bipartisan Campaigner*  $\times$  *Seniority* is negative and statistically significant. This suggests that the relatively greater lawmaking effectiveness of bipartisan campaigners decreases as Representatives become more senior members of Congress. These findings are also robust to exploring only the more recent era (since 2009) in which we have complete data on all lawmakers' initial campaigns, as shown in Appendix Model B3.2.

**Figure 2: Bipartisan Campaigners are Especially Effective Early in Their Careers**



*Note:* The figure shows the relationship between a Representative’s tenure in office and her predicted Legislative Effectiveness Score based on whether she campaigned in a bipartisan manner compared to other Representatives, where the predicted values are based on the results in Model B3.1 in Appendix B3. Bipartisan campaigners are more effective lawmakers than “other” campaigners for their first three terms in Congress; and after that, the differences between these groups of lawmakers diminish significantly.

These relationships are shown in Figure 2, demonstrating that the most significant disparity in lawmaking effectiveness between bipartisan campaigners and non-bipartisan campaigners occurs during their initial terms in Congress. Comparing the freshman averages, we see that bipartisan campaigners are a remarkable 40% more effective than other lawmakers in their first term. Over time, these differences diminish, fading to zero by the Representatives’ sixth term in office. It is, therefore, evident that bipartisan campaigners commence their congressional careers as more effective lawmakers. However, non-bipartisan campaigners have the potential to narrow this gap in lawmaking effectiveness over successive terms, leveraging the expertise gained through seniority to compensate for any initial disparities in legislative intent

and skill between these groups of legislators. Such patterns comport with the vignettes above, where Reps. Peters and Cárdenas began their congressional careers with substantially different legislative performances but converged to both become effective lawmakers later in their careers.

Thus, while early campaigns offer valuable signals about policy outcomes and lawmaking effectiveness, they do so most meaningfully in the years immediately following those campaigns. In terms of valuable signals to voters, these results are quite promising. Given that lawmaking effectiveness in later terms is highly correlated with that in earlier terms (Volden and Wiseman 2014), the strong initial signal gained in the first campaign can be supplemented by actual outcomes achieved as voters seek to assess likely future lawmaking impacts of their more senior Representatives.

While the results in Table 2 are consistent with outcome-consequential campaigning, it is difficult to infer immediately where in the legislative process a commitment to bipartisanship might contribute to a Representative's lawmaking success. Legislative Effectiveness Scores capture success across multiple stages of the lawmaking process, not merely the number of laws that legislators are able to secure from among their sponsored bills. It could be the case that those Representatives who commit to bipartisanship in their campaigns introduce significantly more bills than those who do not campaign on bipartisan commitments. Consequently, their higher Legislative Effectiveness Scores might result from the behavior-consequential act of advancing a broader legislative agenda rather than from the outcome-consequential act of shepherding those bills through key legislative stages and into law. To explore these possibilities, we turn to Table 3, where we disaggregate the Legislative Effectiveness Score into its component stages to identify where a commitment to bipartisanship (as expressed in one's first campaign) appears especially valuable for legislative success.

**Table 3: Bipartisan Campaigners Are Effective in Later Lawmaking Stages**

<b>DVs: Stage of the Lawmaking Process</b>	Model 3.1 BILL	Model 3.2 AIC	Model 3.3 ABC	Model 3.4 PASS	Model 3.5 LAW
<i>Bipartisan</i>	0.957	0.342**	0.243*	0.219*	0.092*
<i>Campaigner</i>	(0.743)	(0.138)	(0.129)	(0.101)	(0.043)
Majority Party	3.661**	1.317**	0.983**	0.646**	0.108
	(1.551)	(0.233)	(0.187)	(0.155)	(0.068)
Seniority	0.499**	0.092**	0.083**	0.056**	0.029**
	(0.131)	(0.034)	(0.028)	(0.018)	(0.009)
Committee Chair	2.763*	4.293**	5.506**	3.913**	1.695**
	(1.191)	(0.587)	(0.684)	(0.502)	(0.267)
Subcommittee Chair	1.462*	1.101**	0.852**	0.583**	0.216**
	(0.750)	(0.212)	(0.176)	(0.141)	(0.067)
Maj. Party Leadership	-1.524	0.462	0.644*	0.709**	0.221*
	(1.338)	(0.306)	(0.296)	(0.241)	(0.120)
Min. Party Leadership	-3.044*	-0.171	-0.079	0.049	0.016
	(1.623)	(0.149)	(0.155)	(0.132)	(0.062)
Speaker	-14.646**	-1.838**	-1.688**	-1.390**	-0.124
	(1.695)	(0.345)	(0.330)	(0.233)	(0.313)
Power Committee	-1.700*	-0.954**	-0.709**	-0.521**	-0.118*
	(0.980)	(0.179)	(0.150)	(0.108)	(0.053)
Distance from Median	4.994	0.330	-1.145*	-0.948**	-0.448**
	(3.646)	(0.600)	(0.493)	(0.384)	(0.172)
Female	2.139*	-0.186*	-0.071	-0.058	-0.070
	(1.006)	(0.110)	(0.111)	(0.090)	(0.044)
African American	-0.318	0.140	0.275*	0.327**	0.154*
	(1.267)	(0.157)	(0.143)	(0.124)	(0.073)
Latino	-2.680*	0.048	-0.070	-0.132	-0.027
	(1.194)	(0.209)	(0.174)	(0.139)	(0.067)
State Delegation Size	0.001	-0.005	-0.005	-0.001	0.002
	(0.031)	(0.008)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.002)
State Leg. Experience	-1.532	-0.161	-0.145	-0.118	-0.042
	(1.090)	(0.211)	(0.180)	(0.139)	(0.069)
State Leg. Experience × Legislative Prof.	3.303	1.221*	1.254*	0.936*	0.461*
	(3.111)	(0.735)	(0.587)	(0.431)	(0.201)
Vote Share	0.315	-0.002	0.0004	-0.013	-0.002
	(0.200)	(0.034)	(0.028)	(0.022)	(0.012)
Vote Share <sup>2</sup>	-0.002	-0.0001	-0.0001	-0.00003	-0.0000
	(0.001)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
Constant	44.757*	0.779	1.137	1.550	0.702
	(17.493)	(1.556)	(1.255)	(1.011)	(0.619)
N	4304	4304	4304	4304	4304
R <sup>2</sup>	0.15	0.32	0.38	0.32	0.20

*Notes:* Ordinary Least Squares analyses, dependent variables are: the number of bills introduced by the Representative (Model 3.1); the number of their bills receiving action in committees (Model 3.2); the number receiving action beyond committee (Model 3.3); the number passing their home chamber (Model 3.4); and the number becoming law (Model 3.5). Robust standard errors in parentheses, observations clustered by legislators and models include Congress fixed effects. The results show that Representatives who campaign on a commitment to bipartisanship have greater success throughout every stage of the lawmaking process except the first stage (bill introductions). These findings offer further support for outcome-consequential campaigning in Congress.

\*  $p < 0.05$  (one-tailed), \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (one-tailed).

In each model, the dependent variable is the number of a Representative's sponsored bills advancing through the five stages of the lawmaking process, measured through the approach of Volden and Wiseman (2014). Specifically, in Model 3.1 we analyze the number of public bills that a Representative sponsors; Models 3.2 and 3.3 examine the number of a Representative's sponsored bills that receive any action in committee (e.g., hearing, markup, subcommittee vote) or action beyond committee (e.g., rule assignment, vote on the floor), respectively; Model 3.4 focuses on the number of a Representative's sponsored bills that pass the House; and in Model 3.5 we analyze the number of a Representative's sponsored bills that ultimately become law. In each specification, the independent variable of interest is *Bipartisan Campaigner*.

Looking across the models, we observe that the coefficient on *Bipartisan Campaigner* is positive in each of the five specifications, and it is statistically significant by conventional standards for each of the final four models (stages from action in committee through finally becoming law). Interestingly, the coefficient on *Bipartisan Campaigner* is not statistically significant in Model 3.1. This indicates that bipartisan campaigners do not generally introduce more bills than Representatives who do not emphasize bipartisan themes in their campaigns. Instead, their enhanced lawmaking effectiveness stems from greater success at advancing their bills through each of the subsequent stages of the legislative process – especially those that require the coalition-building skills of bipartisan lawmakers. Representatives who campaigned on a commitment to bipartisanship during their initial run for Congress see more of their bills receive action in committee, action beyond committee, pass the House, and ultimately become law than those who did not make bipartisan appeals in their campaigns.

One might wonder whether these findings are most prominent in the Congresses closest to the initial campaign (as were our overall findings) or enduring across Representatives'

congressional careers? To address this question, we replicate the analysis in Table 3 in Appendix B4, incorporating an interaction variable, *Bipartisan Campaigner*  $\times$  *First 3 Terms*, along with a new indicator variable (*First 3 Terms*), instead of a continuous seniority variable. This approach allows us to capture the relative success of bipartisan campaigners in their first three terms across the different stages of the legislative process compared to more senior bipartisan campaigners (i.e., those who have served more than three terms in Congress), all compared to non-bipartisan campaigners.

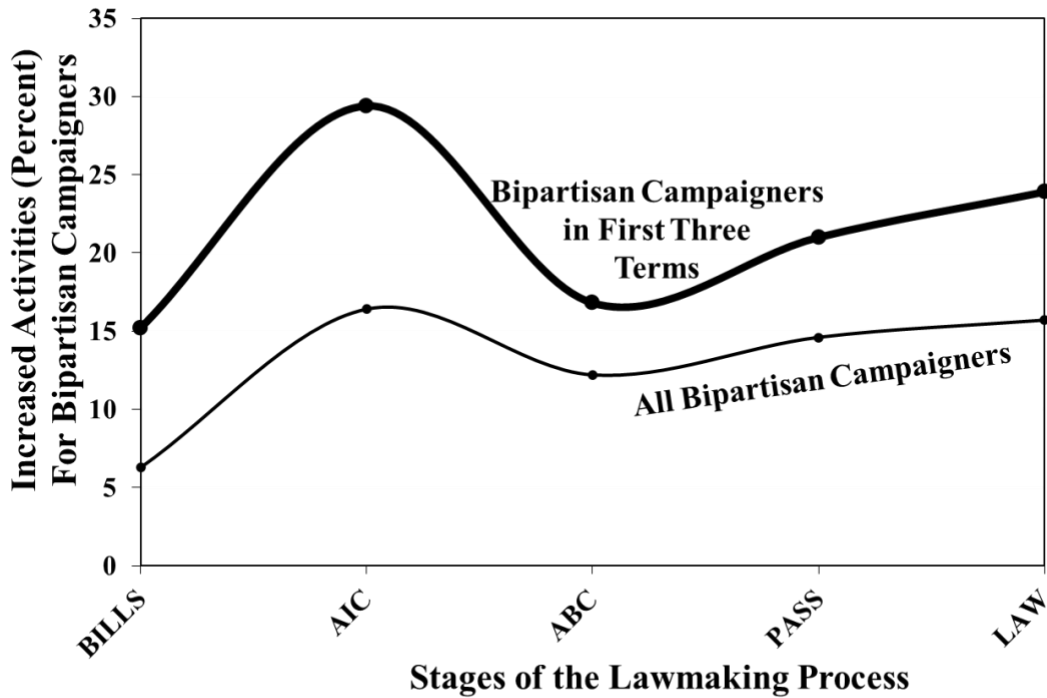
To help appreciate the substantive implications of the coefficients on *Bipartisan Campaigner*, *Bipartisan Campaigner*  $\times$  *First 3 Terms*, and *First 3 Terms* in Appendix B4, we graphically present the relative percentage increases that Representatives who campaign on a bipartisan platform experience at each stage of the lawmaking process in Figure 3. This comparison is made against Representatives for whom *Bipartisan Campaigner* equals zero, with results displayed for Representatives in their first three terms in Congress (top curve) and for all Representatives (bottom curve, based on the models in Table 3).<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> For example, the approximate 29% increase in the number of bills that receive Action In Committee comes from adding the regression coefficients for *Bipartisan Campaigner* and *Bipartisan Campaigner*  $\times$  *First 3 Terms* in Appendix Model B4.2 (-0.123 + 0.597), multiplying by 100, and dividing by the number of bills that receive action in committee for non-bipartisan members in their first three terms (1.614). Specifically,  $(-0.123 + 0.597) \times 100 / (1.614) = 29.4\%$ .



**Figure 3: Legislative Advancement for Bipartisan Campaigners**



*Note:* The figure shows the enhanced legislative advancement for lawmakers who campaigned on a commitment to bipartisanship during their first congressional campaign across the five stages of the lawmaking process. The top curve focuses on the relative success of bipartisan campaigners in their first three terms in Congress, while the bottom curve presents the relative lawmaking success of all bipartisan campaigners regardless of seniority. The figure illustrates how the lawmaking effectiveness of bipartisan campaigners exceeds the effectiveness of those who invoked partisan messaging, controlling for all aforementioned factors. Being a bipartisan campaigner is particularly helpful during the committee stage of the lawmaking process, where bipartisan campaigners’ legislation receives approximately 29 percent more legislative action in committee (AIC) (for those Representatives in their first three terms) and approximately 15 percent more legislative action in committee (AIC) for all Representatives combined.

At each stage of the lawmaking process, bipartisan campaigners experience greater levels of activity and success than those who do not emphasize bipartisan themes in their first congressional campaign. These differences are especially pronounced for relatively junior bipartisan campaigners. For those in their first three terms, bipartisan campaigners see nearly 30% more action in committee on their bills compared to their non-bipartisan counterparts. These junior bipartisan campaigners continue to experience greater levels of success in seeing

their bills receive action beyond committee, pass the House, and become law (with nearly 25% greater law production than those who do not make bipartisan commitments). Indeed, these new legislators who campaigned on bipartisanship experience levels of lawmaking success on par with those who already had more than three terms of seniority, all else equal. All of these findings are notably greater in magnitude than the success experienced by more senior bipartisan campaigners, in comparison to their non-bipartisan campaigner counterparts. Collectively, the enhanced ability of these bipartisan campaigners to overcome these hurdles in the legislative process is shown in their higher Legislative Effectiveness Scores compared to those who do not advance a bipartisan, problem-solving message. This finding provides evidence further supporting the claim that these campaign messages serve as credible outcome-consequential signals.

## **Conclusion**

In their electoral campaigns, candidates make various pledges to voters. These may be simply empty promises designed to gain votes, or they may be consequential in subsequent political activities. Scholars of the U.S. Presidency often seek to discern whether Presidents follow through on their campaign promises in bringing about meaningful policy changes. Indeed, Presidents may be held to account when their earnest attempts to follow through on their campaign promises are thwarted by a Congress unwilling to act, or by their executive orders being overturned by the courts.

In contrast, scholars of the U.S. Congress or other collective political bodies tend to not link campaigns with policy outcomes, but instead focus on the links between campaigns and political behaviors. Do candidates follow through on their promises to introduce bills or to vote against the other party's proposals? While important as a form of electoral connection, such

campaign promises, even when behavior-consequential, are outcome-inconsequential in ways that frustrate voters who seek meaningful policy changes.

We argue that, even in legislative settings, campaigning actually can be outcome-consequential. Politicians can make certain pledges that hold the promise of actual legislative movement all the way through to new laws being made. Such possibilities might come from party leaders committing to act in particular ways, bringing their party along, such as when Republicans put forward the Contract with America in the 1994 elections. But we suggest that outcome-consequential campaigning may in fact be more accessible to a broad array of candidates who pledge to take the sorts of actions that are associated with effective lawmaking, promising to adopt the habits and cultivate the skills needed to produce meaningful new policy outcomes through the legislative process.

We illustrate such outcome-consequential campaigning by studying recent pledges by new candidates for Congress that they will engage in bipartisan lawmaking. We establish that bipartisan campaigners become effective lawmakers. Those who campaign in a bipartisan manner end up being about 15% more effective as lawmakers once elected to Congress. And these enhanced lawmaking outcomes are even more pronounced among those early in their congressional careers. For example, we find that bipartisan lawmakers in their first three terms produce about 25% more laws through their sponsored legislation than do those who do not adopt bipartisan themes and approaches in their campaigns.

Such bipartisan campaigning is not a rare event, despite the heightened scholarly and media focus on partisan polarization in recent years. In recent elections, nearly half of all candidates elected to Congress for the first time have made promises of bipartisan lawmaking. While women seem to follow through more fully on those promises in a behavioral sense –

attracting more cosponsors to their legislation from members of the other party – both women and men who campaign in a bipartisan manner seem equally likely to achieve the consequential outcomes of having more of their bills advance through the lawmaking process and into law. Moreover, we find that it is exactly in the stages that require bipartisan coalition building – such as action in committee – in which those bipartisan campaign promises seem to yield the strongest results.

Overall, these findings demonstrate that legislative campaigns can help voters discern not only the issues on which candidates will focus and the positions they will take on legislative votes, but also the extent to which they will actively and effectively advance their proposals through the lawmaking process. This study, however, is limited to just one signal that voters may receive regarding the traits and habits of effective lawmakers. Additional research exploring whether candidates can also signal their potential effectiveness as lawmakers by emphasizing other aspects of their backgrounds and policymaking approaches may be fruitful. Explorations of the prevalence and magnitude of outcome-consequential lobbying in other legislative settings would also be of great value.

## References

- Achen, Christopher H., and Larry M. Bartels. 2017. *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Barber, Michael J. 2016. "Ideological Donors, Contribution Limits, and the Polarization of American Legislatures." *Journal of Politics* 78(1): 296–310.
- Battaglini, Marco, Valerio Leone Sciabolazza, and Eleonora Patacchini. 2020. "Effectiveness of Connected Legislators." *American Journal of Political Science* 64(4): 739-756.
- Bonilla, Tabitha. 2021. *The Importance of Campaign Promises*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Budge, Ian, and Richard I. Hofferbert. 1990. "Mandates and Policy Outputs: U.S. Party Platforms and Federal Expenditures." *American Political Science Review* 84(1): 111-131.
- Casas, Andreu, Matthew J. Denny, and John Wilkerson. 2020. "More Effective Than We Thought: Accounting for Legislative Hitchhikers Reveals a More Inclusive and Productive Lawmaking Process." *American Journal of Political Science* 64(1): 5-18.
- Clarke, Andrew J., Craig Volden, and Alan E. Wiseman. 2024. "The Conditional Lawmaking Benefits of Party Faction Membership in Congress." *Political Research Quarterly* 77(1): 121-136.
- Crosson, Jesse M., Geoffrey M. Lorenz, Craig Volden, and Alan. E Wiseman. 2020. "How Experienced Staff Contribute to Effective Lawmaking." In Lee Drutman, Kevin Kosar, and Timothy LaPira, eds., *Congress Overwhelmed: The Decline in Congressional Capacity and the Prospects for Reform*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 209-224.
- Curry, James M., and Frances E. Lee. 2020. *The Limits of Party: Congress and Lawmaking in a Polarized Era*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Eatough, Mandi, and Jessica R. Preece. Forthcoming. "Crediting Invisible Work: Congress and the Lawmaking Productivity Metric (LawProM)." *American Political Science Review*.
- Egan, Patrick J. 2013. *Partisan Priorities: How Issue Ownership Drives and Distorts American Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Fenno, Richard F. 1996. *Senators on the Campaign Trail: The Politics of Representation*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Fishel, Jeff. 1985. *Presidents & Promises: From Campaign Pledge to Presidential Performance*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

- Harbridge, Laurel. 2015. *Is Bipartisanship Dead? Policy Agreement and Agenda-Setting in the House of Representatives*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Harbridge, Laurel, Neil Malhotra, and Brian F Harrison. 2014. "Public Preferences for Bipartisanship in the Policymaking Process." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 39(3): 327–355.
- Harbridge-Yong, Laurel, Craig Volden, and Alan E. Wiseman. 2023. "The Bipartisan Path to Effective Lawmaking." *Journal of Politics* 85(3): 1048-1063.
- Holbein, John B. 2016. "Left Behind? Citizen Responsiveness to Government Performance Information." *American Political Science Review* 110(2): 353-368.
- House, Billy. 2012. "Just Like Kevin McCarthy? Dems Find a Role Model." *National Journal*, July 25.
- King, James D., and James W. Riddlesperger. 1996. "Presidential Management and Staffing: An Early Assessment of the Clinton Presidency." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 26(2): 496–510.
- Krukones, Michael G. 1984. *Promises and Performance: Presidential Campaigns as Policy Predictors*. University Press of America.
- Lee, Frances E. 2016. *Insecure Majorities: Congress and the Perpetual Campaign*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Mann, Thomas E., and Norman J. Ornstein. 2016. *It's Even Worse Than it Looks: How the American Constitutional System Collided With the New Politics of Extremism*. New York: Basic Books.
- Mansbridge, Jane. 2003. "Rethinking Representation." *American Political Science Review* 97(4): 515–528.
- Pyeatt, Nicholas. 2015. "Party Unity, Ideology, and Polarization in Primary Elections for the House of Representatives: 1956–2012." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 40(4): 651–676.
- Ringquist, Evan J., and Carl Dasse. 2004. "Lies, Damned Lies, and Campaign Promises? Environmental Legislation in the 105th Congress." *Social Science Quarterly* 85(2): 400–419.
- Su, Tie-ting, Alan Neustadtl, and Dan Clawson. 1995. "Business and the Conservative Shift: Corporate PAC Contributions, 1976-1986." *Social Science Quarterly* 76(1): 20–40.
- Sulkin, Tracy. 2005. *Issue Politics in Congress*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Sulkin, Tracy. 2011. *The Legislative Legacy of Congressional Campaigns*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Targeted News Service. 2012. "Election Day: Peters Can Build Bipartisan Consensus to Create Jobs." November 6.
- Thomsen, Danielle M. 2017. *Opting Out of Congress: Partisan Polarization and the Decline of Moderate Candidates*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Treul, Sarah, Danielle M. Thomsen, Craig Volden, and Alan E. Wiseman. 2022. "The Primary Path for Turning Legislative Effectiveness into Electoral Success." *Journal of Politics* 84(3): 1714-1726.
- Volden, Craig, and Alan E. Wiseman. 2014. *Legislative Effectiveness in the United States Congress: The Lawmakers*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Wilkerson, John, David Smith, and Nicholas Stramp. 2015. "Tracing the Flow of Policy Ideas in Legislatures: A Text Reuse Approach." *American Journal of Political Science* 59(4): 943-956.

*Supplemental Appendix (To be made available Online)*

*Table of Contents*

---

Appendix A: Words and Phrases Regularly Appearing in Press Coverage of Bipartisan Campaigners	1
Appendix B1: Descriptive and Summary Statistics	2
Appendix B2: Bipartisan Campaigners and Out-Party Cosponsors Attracted	3
Appendix B3: Impacts of Bipartisan Campaigning and Seniority on Lawmaking Effectiveness	4
Appendix B4: The Effects of Bipartisan Commitments Across Lawmaking Stages in First Three Terms	5

---



## Appendix A: Words and Phrases Regularly Appearing in Press Coverage of Bipartisan Campaigners

---

### Common Phrases found during Bipartisan Campaigning

---

“bipartisanship”  
“bipartisan”  
“bi-partisan”  
“across the aisle”  
“across party”  
“both sides”  
“both parties”  
“too partisan”  
“work together”  
“common ground”  
“problem solver”  
“problem solving”  
“both Democrat and Republican”  
“both Democrats and Republicans”  
“both Republican and Democrat”  
“both Republicans and Democrats”

---

## Appendix B1: Descriptive and Summary Statistics

Variable	Description	Mean (SD)
LES <sup>a</sup>	Legislative Effectiveness Score	0.97 (1.39)
Bipartisan Campaigner <sup>b</sup>	1 = portrayed as supportive of bipartisanship in initial campaign for Congress, 0 = otherwise	0.20 (0.40)
Proportion Bipartisan Cosponsors Attracted <sup>c</sup>	Average proportion of cosponsors on member's bills (with at least one cosponsor) from opposing party	0.24 (0.17)
Proportion Bipartisan Cosponsors Offered <sup>c</sup>	Average proportion of cosponsorships that member offers to bills sponsored from members of opposing party	0.24 (0.15)
Majority Party <sup>a</sup>	1 = majority party member, 0 = otherwise	0.52 (0.50)
Seniority <sup>a</sup>	Count of number of two-year Congresses that a member served in	5.28 (4.32)
Committee Chair <sup>a</sup>	1 = committee chair, 0 = otherwise	0.04 (0.20)
Subcommittee Chair <sup>a</sup>	1 = subcommittee chair, 0 = otherwise	0.21 (0.40)
Majority-Party Leadership <sup>a</sup>	1 = in majority party leadership position, 0 = otherwise	0.02 (0.14)
Minority-Party Leadership <sup>a</sup>	1 = in minority party leadership position, 0 = otherwise	0.02 (0.16)
Speaker <sup>a</sup>	1 = Speaker of the House, 0 = otherwise	0.002 (0.04)
Power Committee <sup>a</sup>	1 = member sits on Rules, Appropriations, or Ways and Means; 0 = otherwise	0.24 (0.42)
Distance from Median <sup>a</sup>	Absolute distance from member's first-dimension DW-NOMINATE Score to that of floor median	0.42 (0.24)
Female	1 = female, 0 = otherwise	0.18 (0.39)
African American	1 = African American, 0 = otherwise	0.11 (0.32)
Latino	1 = Latino, 0 = otherwise	0.07 (0.25)
State Delegation Size <sup>a</sup>	Number of House seats from member's home state	20.30 (15.90)
State Legislative Experience <sup>a</sup>	1 = member has prior legislative experience in state legislature, 0 = otherwise	0.50 (0.50)
Vote Share <sup>a</sup>	Percent vote share in most recent election	67.94 (13.24)
Other Party's Presidential Vote Share <sup>d</sup>	Presidential two-party vote share for candidate who is not in legislator's political party	37.59 (10.94)

*Sources:*

<sup>a</sup>Volden and Wiseman (2014), as available on [www.thelawmakers.org](http://www.thelawmakers.org).

<sup>b</sup>Coded by authors, as described in the text.

<sup>c</sup>Harbridge-Yong, Volden, and Wiseman (2023).

<sup>d</sup>Coded by authors based on data from Gary Jacobson.

## Appendix B2: Bipartisan Campaigners and Out-Party Cosponsors Attracted

DV: Proportion Bipartisan Cosponsors Attracted	Model B2.1	Model B2.2	Model B2.3
	All	Women	Men
<i>Bipartisan Campaigner</i>	0.008 (0.012)	0.052* (0.024)	-0.004 (0.014)
Majority Party	-0.138** (0.016)	-0.104* (0.045)	-0.143** (0.016)
Seniority	0.002 (0.002)	-0.0005 (0.003)	0.017 (0.017)
Committee Chair	0.043** (0.015)	0.067 (0.042)	0.041** (0.016)
Subcommittee Chair	0.028** (0.009)	0.020 (0.028)	0.027** (0.010)
Majority Party Leadership	0.014 (0.019)	0.053* (0.024)	-0.004 (0.022)
Minority Party Leadership	0.035 (0.027)	0.033 (0.036)	-0.042 (0.035)
Speaker	-0.056* (0.031)	-0.010 (0.032)	-0.082** (0.025)
Power Committee	0.004 (0.011)	0.015 (0.022)	-0.004 (0.012)
Distance from Median	-0.428** (0.037)	-0.393** (0.091)	-0.439** (0.039)
Female	-0.039** (0.011)		
African American	0.018 (0.017)	0.034 (0.038)	0.012 (0.019)
Latino	-0.030* (0.017)	0.011 (0.021)	-0.048* (0.021)
State Delegation Size	0.0004 (0.0003)	0.0008 (0.0008)	0.0004 (0.0004)
State Legislative Experience	0.023 (0.016)	0.072* (0.039)	0.017 (0.017)
State Legislative Experience × Legislative Prof.	-0.073 (0.039)	-0.158* (0.083)	-0.067 (0.045)
Vote Share	-0.002 (0.003)	0.001 (0.006)	0.002 (0.003)
Vote Share <sup>2</sup>	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)
Other Party's Presidential Vote Share	0.003** (0.001)	0.003** (0.001)	0.002** (0.0006)
Constant	0.290* (0.120)	0.073 (0.264)	0.309* (0.133)
N	3,343	558	2,785
R <sup>2</sup>	0.21	0.29	0.20

Notes: Ordinary Least Squares analyses, dependent variable is a legislator's *Proportion Bipartisan Cosponsors Attracted*, which captures the average proportion of cosponsors of a lawmaker's sponsored bills who are from the other party (among bills with at least one cosponsor); robust standard errors in parentheses, observations clustered by legislators with Congress fixed effects.

\*  $p < 0.05$  (one-tailed), \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (one-tailed).

### Appendix B3: Impacts of Bipartisan Campaigning and Seniority on Lawmaking Effectiveness

DV: LES	Model B3.1	Model B3.2
	All	Post-110 <sup>th</sup> Congress
<i>Bipartisan Campaigner</i>	0.312** (0.076)	0.202** (0.083)
<i>Bipartisan Campaigner</i> × Seniority	-0.048** (0.018)	-0.033* (0.018)
Majority Party	0.469** (0.092)	0.226* (0.108)
Seniority	0.060** (0.013)	0.032** (0.010)
Committee Chair	2.746** (0.357)	2.146** (0.290)
Subcommittee Chair	0.465** (0.096)	0.309** (0.073)
Majority Party Leadership	0.343** (0.130)	0.356* (0.189)
Minority Party Leadership	-0.115 (0.070)	-0.107 (0.068)
Speaker	-0.815** (0.249)	-0.919** (0.309)
Power Committee	-0.256** (0.073)	-0.181** (0.069)
Distance from Median	-0.314 (0.237)	-0.769** (0.232)
Female	-0.017 (0.055)	-0.006 (0.054)
African American	0.007 (0.070)	0.110 (0.073)
Latino	-0.120 (0.075)	-0.095 (0.080)
State Delegation Size	-0.002 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.002)
State Legislative Experience	-0.077 (0.085)	-0.075 (0.111)
State Legislative Experience × Legislative Prof.	0.661* (0.286)	0.545 (0.345)
Vote Share	-0.005 (0.014)	0.003 (0.017)
Vote Share <sup>2</sup>	-0.0001 (0.0001)	-0.00004 (0.0001)
Constant	0.218 (0.554)	0.838 (0.600)
N	4,304	2,201
R <sup>2</sup>	0.36	0.32

*Notes:* Ordinary Least Squares analyses, dependent variable is a legislator's *Legislative Effectiveness Score*; robust standard errors in parentheses, observations clustered by legislators with Congress fixed effects.

\*  $p < 0.05$  (one-tailed), \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (one-tailed).

**Appendix B4: The Effects of Bipartisan Commitments Across Lawmaking Stages in First Three Terms**

<b>DVs: Stage of the Lawmaking Process</b>	<b>Model B4.1 BILL</b>	<b>Model B4.2 AIC</b>	<b>Model B4.3 ABC</b>	<b>Model B4.4 PASS</b>	<b>Model B4.5 LAW</b>
<i>Bipartisan Campaigner</i>	-1.481 (1.181)	-0.123 (0.209)	-0.071 (0.196)	-0.049 (0.152)	-0.061 (0.068)
<i>Bipartisan Campaigner × First 3 Terms</i>	3.340** (1.112)	0.597** (0.226)	0.321 (0.200)	0.294* (0.162)	0.163* (0.076)
First 3 Terms	-4.235** (0.728)	-0.650** (0.182)	-0.420** (0.133)	-0.252** (0.102)	-0.102* 0.049
Majority Party	3.599* (1.601)	1.256** (0.273)	0.873** (0.212)	0.557** (0.168)	0.049 (0.073)
Committee Chair	3.761** (1.478)	4.541** (0.692)	5.810** (0.777)	4.135** (0.560)	1.827** (0.296)
Subcommittee Chair	1.428* (0.718)	1.140** (0.180)	0.941** (0.156)	0.657** (0.130)	0.266* (0.061)
Maj. Party Leadership	-1.810 (1.324)	0.435 (0.300)	0.647* (0.298)	0.720** (0.242)	0.233* (0.121)
Min. Party Leadership	-3.095* (1.550)	-0.159 (0.128)	-0.049 (0.137)	0.078 (0.121)	0.037 (0.057)
Speaker	-13.137** (1.343)	-1.505** (0.284)	-1.312** (0.286)	-1.124** (0.225)	0.028 (0.316)
Power Committee	-1.629 (1.000)	-0.909** (0.164)	-0.635** (0.139)	-0.460** (0.105)	-0.078* (0.054)
Distance from Median	5.135 (3.742)	0.336 (0.647)	-1.185* (0.526)	-0.985** (0.403)	-0.475** (0.183)
Female	1.990* (1.010)	-0.220* (0.107)	-0.108 (0.110)	-0.086 (0.090)	-0.086* (0.043)
African American	-0.206 (1.325)	0.162 (0.176)	0.300* (0.155)	0.343** (0.129)	0.162* (0.076)
Latino	-2.949** (1.174)	-0.012 (0.201)	-0.136 (0.173)	-0.180 (0.138)	-0.054 (0.068)
State Delegation Size	0.00002 (0.031)	-0.005 (0.008)	-0.004 (0.007)	-0.001 (0.005)	0.002 (0.002)
State Leg. Experience	-1.821* (1.088)	-0.211 (0.213)	-0.190 (0.180)	-0.146 (0.139)	-0.056 (0.070)
State Leg. Experience × Legislative Prof.	4.133 (3.201)	1.372* (0.785)	1.394* (0.632)	1.029* (0.459)	0.510* (0.218)
Vote Share	0.352* (0.191)	-0.011 (0.031)	0.018 (0.028)	-0.002 (0.022)	-0.007 (0.012)
Vote Share <sup>2</sup>	-0.002* (0.001)	-0.0002 (0.0002)	-0.0002 (0.0002)	-0.0001 (0.0001)	-0.0001 (0.0001)
Constant	47.838* (18.088)	1.013 (1.546)	1.058 (1.300)	1.357 (1.048)	0.513 (0.625)
N	4,304	4,304	4,304	4,304	4,304
R <sup>2</sup>	0.14	0.31	0.37	0.32	0.19

*Notes:* Ordinary Least Squares analyses, dependent variables are: the number of bills introduced by the Representative (Model B4.1); the number of their bills receiving action in committees (Model B4.2); the number receiving action beyond committee (Model B4.3); the number passing the House (Model B4.4); and the number becoming law (Model B4.5). Robust standard errors in parentheses, observations clustered by legislators, with Congress fixed effects.

\*  $p < 0.05$  (one-tailed), \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (one-tailed).