

Why Are There So Many Lawyers in Congress?

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Abstract. For centuries, scholars have sought to explain the overrepresentation of lawyers in Congress. This paper draws on a wealth of data to explore the causes and consequences of this representational imbalance. While lawyers enter politics at higher rates, self-selection at best provides a partial explanation. Conditional on running, lawyers win at twice the rate of candidates from other backgrounds. Contrary to prevailing theories in the literature, voters do not reward candidates with backgrounds in law. Rather, lawyers win because of a sizable competitive advantage in early fundraising, owing in large part to their professional networks. This study has important implications for who runs for office, who wins, and the demographic composition of Congress. It also identifies an under explored mechanism by which the U.S. system of campaign finance sustains deep representational imbalances.

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In reflecting on the role of lawyers in the early American Republic, Alexis De Tocqueville famously referred to the legal profession, comprised of the bench and the bar, as the “American Aristocracy” (Tocqueville, 1840). Nearly two centuries later, lawyers continue to dominate American politics. In addition to laying claim to an entire branch of government, lawyers are well represented in elected office. While comprising a mere 0.4 percent of the voting age population, lawyers accounted for 39 percent of seats in the House and 56 percent of seats in the Senate in the 115th Congress. The overrepresentation of lawyers vastly exceeds even that of millionaires. Relative to the average citizen, millionaires are approximately ten times more likely to be elected to Congress.¹ Lawyers, by comparison, are nearly 100 times more likely to be elected to Congress.

The implications of concentrating political power in the hands of a single profession were not lost on Tocqueville. Lawyers as a group have shared interests, incentives, and concerns, which, in turn, shape their political outlook and understanding of policy. Along these lines, contemporary legal scholars have argued that legal profession’s unique relationship with politics has benefited lawyers both economically and politically (Hadfield, 2000, 2008; Posner, 1993). Such claims are consistent with evidence that vocational background can influence the attitudes and choices of legislators (Carnes, 2012, 2013; Matter and Stutzer, 2015). Lawyers have also influenced the organization and inner workings of Congress. Miller (1995) documents the various ways lawyers have shaped the rules, procedures, and cultural norms of Congress, often to their advantage.

The overrepresentation of lawyers speaks to what is perhaps the fundamental question in the study of democratic representation: *Why are some segments of society so much better represented than others?* Accounting for the electoral success of lawyers offers insights into what it takes to run for office successfully, the barriers to entry and how they are overcome, and what makes some individuals better positioned than others to navigate the electoral process.

There is no shortage of theories on why so many lawyers are elected to Congress. In his book *The High Priests of American Politics*, Mark Miller (1995) compiles an impressive compendium of

¹ Millionaires occupy a slightly greater share of seats during this period (48 percent) but also draw from a much larger share of the population (4.5 percent) (Cody, 2014).

claims and hypotheses put forth over the years by 94 different scholars. Most of these explanations focus either on (1) how a heightened interest in politics combined with career incentives specific to the legal profession make lawyers more likely to pursue careers in politics or (2) how certain traits or skills associated with lawyers might appeal to voters or otherwise make for effective candidates. However, lacking data to test these claims, scholars have been left to speculate which, if any, hold weight.

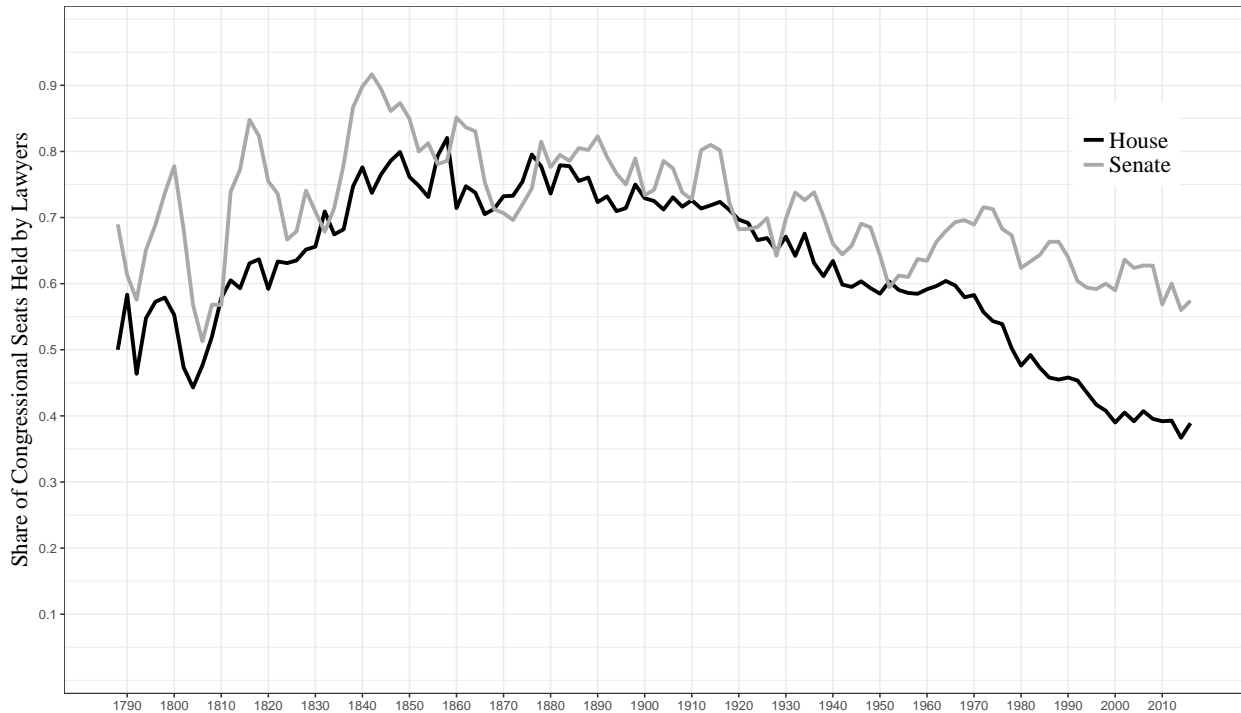
The study leverages a new dataset on the educational and professional backgrounds of thousands of congressional candidates to empirically test several key claims and hypotheses advanced in the literature. In covering the candidate population more broadly, the dataset enables a systematic accounting of rates of entry into the candidate pool and electoral success by profession and educational background. In line with past accounts, I find that even when compared to similarly high-status professions, lawyers are more likely to run for political office. While important, this, at best, provides a partial explanation. Conditional on running for office, lawyers enjoy much higher rates of electoral success than candidates from other backgrounds—but not for the reasons typically offered by scholars. Lawyers are neither held in high-esteem by voters nor do they appear to be uniquely skilled as campaigners. Rather, their competitive advantage lies in their strength as early fundraisers.

The early fundraising advantage is sizable. Lawyers running as nonincumbents fundraise at twice the rate as candidates from other backgrounds during the initial months of their campaigns, generating crucial resources and momentum heading into the primaries. Their success as early fundraisers owes in large part to money raised from other lawyers. Combined with evidence that primary elections are especially sensitive to early fundraising outcomes, this suggests that professional networks are instrumental to electoral success. It also identifies a key mechanism by which the U.S. system of campaign finance sustains deep representational imbalances.

2 Lawyer-legislators in Historical and Comparative Perspective

Congress has historically been a body composed primarily of lawyer-legislators. Using information from the Biographical Directory of the U.S. Congress, I categorize members based on their

Figure 1: Share of Congressional Seats Held by Lawyers



Source: Authors calculations. Biographical Directory of the U.S. Congress (<http://bioguide.congress.gov/>).

prior occupations. I then calculate the share of seats held by lawyer-legislators for the 1-115th Congresses.

The historical trends, shown in Figure 1, are striking. Lawyer-legislators have averaged 62 percent of seats in the House and 71 percent in the Senate. During the first few decades of Congress, lawyer-legislators accounted for about half its members. Starting in the early 19th Century lawyer-legislators began to steadily consolidate their share of seats, reaching a peak of 82 percent in 1858. Not until the early 20th Century did their numbers begin to gradually decline in the House, falling from 74 percent in 1910 to 40 percent in 2000. The Senate has not experienced a similar decline. Lawyers' share of seats has held steady at around 60 percent since the 1950s.

While the extent to which lawyers have dominated Congress has fluctuated over the centuries, the broader patterns of representation are remarkably stable given the historical context. Lawyers have sustained astronomical levels of overrepresentation even as the nation and its electoral institutions have changed in profound ways.

In the early republic, lawyers represented an “enlightened class” of educated professionals in

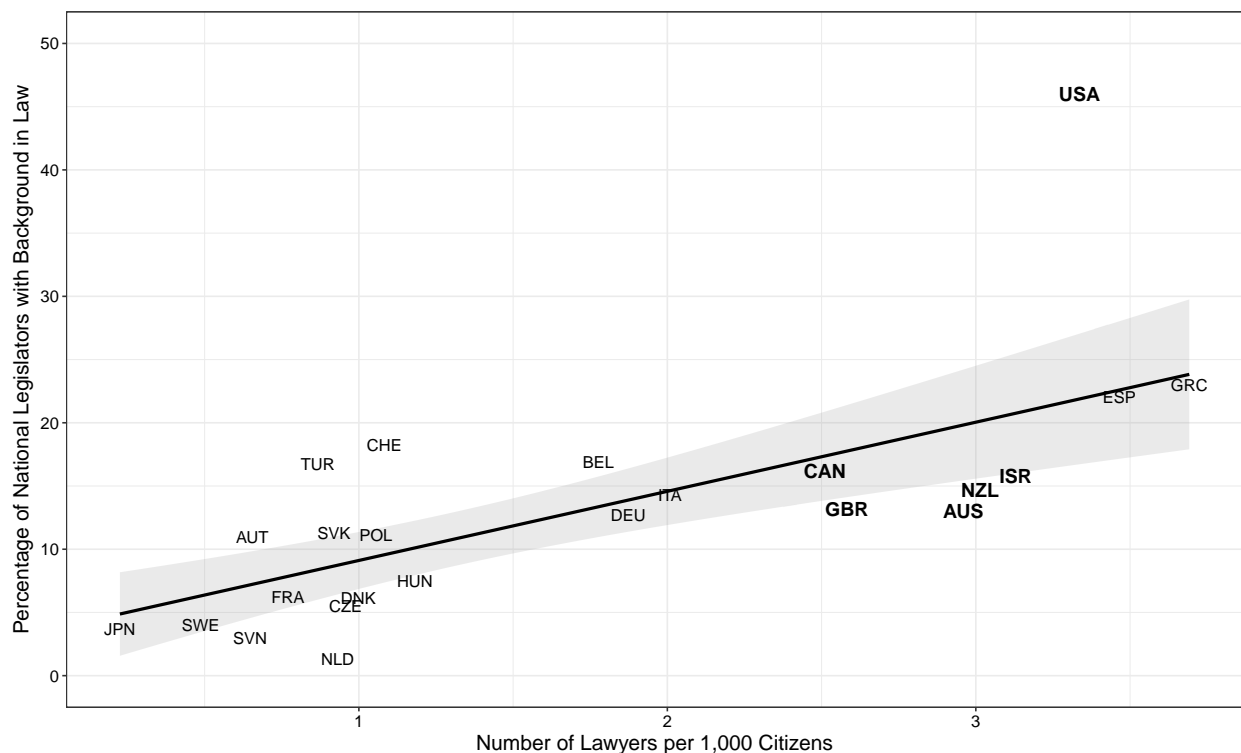
a largely rural society. Lawyers' distinctive advantage steadily eroded as the 20th Century gave rise to an increasingly educated and professionalized work force. No longer could lawyers credibly claim to be uniquely qualified to hold office. Meanwhile, changes to electoral institutions meant that party elites could no longer monopolize the candidate selection process. Before the widespread adoption of direct primaries during the early 20th Century, the recruitment and nomination of candidates were largely party affairs. Candidates for state and federal office were chosen by party leaders—among whom, lawyers were no doubt heavily overrepresented—in private meetings and officially nominated at state party caucuses. The system of “old boy networks” that had dominated many state parties offered an ideal environment for lawyers to consolidate seat shares to the exclusion of other groups.

During this period, the legal profession was being transformed from within. Membership in bar associations was on the rise, and with it, organized efforts to restrict entry into the profession through the introduction of formalized legal education and bar exams. Practicing law was no longer the egalitarian gateway into politics it had once been. Gone were the days where “self-taught” lawyers, of the type perhaps best epitomized by Abraham Lincoln, could practice law as a way to gain their footing before embarking on a career in politics. As entry into the legal profession became more costly, both in terms of time and money, it became less viable an option for those looking to gain experience, or simply to add to one's resume, before running for office. At the same time, costs incurred during law school have made it harder to leave the profession. Along these lines, Robinson (2015) suggests the pressures of a contemporary legal career—including increasing time demands and reduced flexibility—might discourage lawyers from entering politics.

The prevalence of lawyers in Congress is often dismissed as a natural consequence the special relationship between law and politics (e.g., Eulau and Sprague, 1964). This, of course, implies that lawyers should be similarly well-represented in legislatures around the world. Using data on the professional and educational backgrounds of members of national legislatures collected from the Inter-Parliamentary Union Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections, I calculated the proportion of members with backgrounds in law for 25 OECD member nations.

As Figure 2 shows, there is substantial cross-national variation in lawyers as a share of the population and national legislatures. There is a clear relationship between the numbers of lawyers

Figure 2: Legal Professionals as Proportion of National Legislatures and Lawyers Per Capita for OECD Member States



Sources: Data on lawyers in the U.S. Congress are from the author’s calculations. The seat shares of lawyer-legislators for other countries are calculated from data on professional backgrounds of members published by the Inter-Parliamentary Union Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections. Cross-national estimates of lawyer populations are from Michelson (2013). These are divided by population estimations from the World Bank to calculate lawyers per capita.

Note: Nations with commonwealth legal systems are in bold.

per capita and seat shares held by lawyers in national legislatures.² Even so, the U.S. is an outlier, with over twice as many lawyer-legislators as predicted by the fitted line. By comparison, lawyer-legislators account for just 13 percent of the U.K. Parliament. The percentages are similar for other nations that inherited the English Commonwealth system of law. Canada, New Zealand, and Australia are at 15, 14, and 13 percent, respectively. The percentages for France, the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, and Japan are much lower, ranging from 2 to 6 percent.

² There is no reason to assume that the number of lawyers per capita is exogenous to the prevalence of lawyers-legislators. Several scholars have linked the political overrepresentation of lawyers to government-induced demand for legal services (Crandall, Maheshri, and Winston, 2011; Hadfield, 2008; Posner, 1993).

Figure 2 shows that a lawyer-dominated legislature is not an inherent feature of representative democracies. Neither is it innocuous. The following section provides evidence that lawyers have influenced important political outcomes.

3 Why the Overrepresentation of Lawyers Matters

Electing so many lawyers is not without consequence. In this section, I address two ways lawyer-legislators have influenced political outcomes.

Consequences for Descriptive Representation Contemporary democratic norms hold that legislatures ought to reflect the diversity of the societies they represent. In addition to making Congress less representative with respect class and occupation, lawyer-legislators, from both parties, are disproportionately white and male.

The lack of diversity in Congress has been, at least in part, inherited from the legal profession. Michelson (2013) finds that the U.S. legal profession lags behind international standards in gender diversity. He estimates that as of 2010 women accounted for 32 percent of lawyers in the U.S. as compared with 48 percent in the U.K. and 50 percent in France. Meanwhile, scholars have uncovered systematic evidence of gender and racial biases within the legal profession (Sen, 2014; Gorman, 2005; Phillips, 2005).

Table 1 reports the percentage of seats held by race and gender since 1992, referred to as the “Year of the Woman” (Dolan, 1998), for lawyers and non-lawyers. During this period, only 9 percent of lawyer-legislators were women, compared to 19 percent of non-lawyers. When broken down by party, the gender disparity becomes even more striking. Lawyer-legislators, in both parties, are significantly less likely to be women. The differences are especially stark for Democrats. Women accounted for just 13 percent of seats held by Democrats with law degrees versus 30 percent of seats held by Democrats without law degrees.³

³ See Table A9 for regression results for multiple professional groups and controls for party and election cycle.

Table 1: Demographics of Members of Congress Weighted by Seat Shares (1993-2014)

	Degree Type	% Female	% Latino	% African American	% White Male	N
All	Law Degree	9	5	8	81	3,036
	No Law Degree	19	4	8	72	3,419
Dem	Law Degree	13	5	14	71	1,683
	No Law Degree	30	8	17	54	1,511
Rep	Law Degree	5	2	0	93	1,348
	No Law Degree	11	2	1	86	1,896

Sources: Author's calculations. Congressional Quarterly.

Policy Implications Barton (2010) has written extensively on the lawyer-judge bias in the legal system. He argues that judges, having spent their formative years training and becoming professionalized as lawyers, retain personal and professional biases that favor the legal profession. He documents the numerous ways the courts have acted to promote the interests of lawyers.

Here, I show that these professional biases also carry over to a legislative setting. I adopt an empirical strategy similar to that used to estimate party influence on roll call voting (McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal, 2001; Snyder and Groseclose, 2000; Clinton, Jackman, and Rivers, 2004). For each roll call vote cast in the House and Senate during the 100-114th Congresses, vote choices are modeled as a function of legislative ideology (as measured by DW-NOMINATE scores) and lawyer-specific effects. Specifically, for roll call j , restricted and unrestricted models are fit with a probit function,

$$\text{Restricted} : Y_{ij} \sim \beta_0 + \beta_1 dwnom_i \quad (1)$$

$$\text{Unrestricted} : Y_{ij} \sim \beta_0 + \beta_1 dwnom_i + \beta_2 lawyer_i \quad (2)$$

Likelihood ratio tests are used to measure improvement in model fit. The likelihood ratio statistic (LR) captures the relative importance of the lawyer-specific effects in explaining vote choices. β_2 has as similar interpretation but provides additional information on the direction of the effect.

Table 2: Top Congressional Roll Calls Ranked By Improvement in Model Fit

	Title	Question	Description	<i>LR</i>	β_2	<i>ABA</i>	
104	H.R. 956	Common Sense Product Liability Legal Reform Act	Passage	Enact comprehensive product liability reform; implement “loser pays” rule in product liability suits.	21.0	-1.01 (0.23)	–
107	H.R. 2563	Thomas Amdt.	Adopt	Limits personal injury claims in medical malpractice.	19.8	-1.14 (0.28)	–
100	H.R. 1054	Military Medical Malpractice Claims	Passage	Permit active members of the military to sue the federal government for malpractice occurring in U.S. military hospitals.	19.3	0.85 (0.20)	+
104	H.R. 988	Attorney Accountability Act of 1995	Passage	Enact civil litigation reform; limit attorney fees; sanction attorneys for frivolous law suits.	16.5	-1.02 (0.28)	–
104	H.R. 956	Cox Amdt.	Adopt	Eliminate joint and several liability for noneconomic losses in civil lawsuits involving interstate commerce.	16.2	-0.79 (0.20)	–
106	H.R. 833	Conyers Amdt.	Adopt	An amendment to waive the provisions of title 11 relating to small business debtors where they result in the loss of 5 or more jobs.	15.6	-0.79 (0.20)	–
107	S. 1052	Craig Amdt.	Table	Allow beneficiaries to bring personal injury claims against health insurers for damages resulting from a denial of claim for coverage.	15.2	-2.85 (1.12)	–
107	H.R. 956	Flake Substitute To Smith Amdt.	Adopt	Amendment to prohibit funding to administer the Cuban Assets Control Regulations with respect to travel.	14.8	-0.56 (0.15)	
113	H.R. 4660	Scott Amdt.	Adopt	Eliminate all funding to Legal Services Corporation.	14.5	-0.81 (0.22)	–
104	H.R. 956	Common Sense Legal Standards Reform Act	Recommit	Limit punitive damages in product liability suits to \$1m.	14.5	1.10 (0.31)	+

Note: The table lists the top ten roll call votes (out of 28,430) by improvement in model fit associated with including lawyer-specific effects. The column labeled *LR (D)* reports the likelihood ratio statistic. The column labeled β_2 reports the estimated coefficients and standard errors (in parentheses) of the lawyer-specific effects. The column labeled *ABA* indicates the implied directionality based on the ABA’s stated legislative priorities.

Evidence consistent with a lawyer-legislator bias should show that the lawyer-specific effects are more important on votes that would directly impact the legal profession and align with the interests of the legal profession.

Table 2 lists the top ten roll calls (out of 28,430 in total) ranked by improvement in model fit. Nine of the top ten votes directly concern the legal profession. Topping the list is a vote on the *Common Sense Legal Standards Reform Act*. This is followed by two votes pertaining to medical malpractice liability and another vote on the *Attorney Accountability Act of 1995*. Also reported in Table 2 are the estimated coefficients for the lawyer-specific effects (β_2). An adjacent column reports the directionality of the official legislative position of the American Bar Association (ABA).⁴ Consistent with expectations of professional bias, the coefficients consistently align with the ABA. Lawyer-legislators are significantly less likely to support legislation that would cap awards for damages, limit product or medical liability, or regulate attorney fees. Meanwhile, they are more likely to support legislation that would remove constraints on filing suit, increase funding for the Legal Service Corporation, or promote fee shifting provisions in public interest suits.

The above demonstrates that lawyer-legislators look and vote differently than their peers. This should further allay concerns that a lawyer-dominated Congress is inconsequential. To the contrary, it matters a great deal for policies in which lawyers have a direct stake. The following sections turn to explaining why this representation balance persists in the contemporary Congress.

4 Existing Accounts

Existing scholarly accounts for the prevalence of lawyer-legislators generally fall into one of two camps. They either attempt to explain (1) how incentive structures specific to the legal profession increases the supply of lawyer-candidates or (2) how certain traits associated with lawyers or the

⁴ The ABA positions are coded based on a 118-page document published by its governmental affairs office that details the ABA's official positions on hundreds of legislative issues and specific bills (American Bar Association, 2016b).

legal profession appeal to voters, thereby increasing demand for lawyer-candidates at the polls.⁵

4.1 Supply-Side Explanations

One reason lawyers might enter politics at higher rates is that career incentives in the legal profession closely align with holding political office (e.g., Miller, 1995). More so than in other professions, public service is an opportunity for career advancement. Evidence for this comes from the widespread practice among law firms of rewarding associates with a sizable clerkship bonus for spending an extended period away from the firm to clerk for a judge. Likewise, lawyers are well-positioned to translate political experience into higher paying jobs upon leaving office (Diermeier, Keane, and Merlo, 2005; Polsby, 1990; Friedman, 1985).

At the same time, the costs of running for office may be significantly reduced for lawyers. Campaigning for political office is a full-time job. The legal profession may be more accommodating than others regarding the leave of absence required to conduct a serious campaign. Others have gone so far as to argue that lawyers can often treat campaigning as a means of furthering their professional goals (Fowler and McClure, 1990). In particular, it provides an opportunity to advertise and gain name recognition, as well as opportunities for networking, personal brand building, and gaining clients. This type of exposure could go a long way in offsetting the costs of unsuccessful campaigns, thus making it rational for lawyers to run for office even when the odds of success are low.

Lastly, political ambition early in life may encourage self-selection into the legal profession, which is widely viewed as a stepping-stone to a career in politics. Insofar as the legal profession attracts a disproportionate share of aspiring politicians, it should again boost the supply of lawyer-candidates.

4.2 Demand-Side Explanations

Demand-side accounts have focused on identifying personal characteristics associated with lawyers that voters find attractive or otherwise make for talented politicians. One of the earliest explana-

⁵ See Miller (1995) for an excellent treatment of the explanations offered by scholars to explain the prevalence of lawyers in U.S. politics.

tions of this sort is known as the *high status* argument (Tocqueville, 1840). It holds that as members of a well-educated, high-status occupation distinct from the traditional aristocracy, lawyers came to be viewed favorably in the eyes of voters.

Another account known as the *American legal culture* argument holds the legal profession played a formative role in shaping the nation's political culture in its own image, and as a result, made lawyers uniquely qualified to undertake the business of politics (Scheingold, 1974; Halliday, 1979). In a similar vein, other have argued that lawyers possess "special skills" that lend themselves to a career in politics and give them an advantage over other types of professionals (Hain and Piereson, 1975; Podmore, 1980). Proponents of this idea argue that through legal training, lawyers acquire vital skills, including the ability to speak, write, argue, and advocate. Although posited as such, it is unclear why any of these skills would be unique to lawyers. Neither is it obvious that they would be essential on the campaign trail.

A notable weakness of demand-side explanations is the unsupported claim that lawyers, regardless of the reason, appeal to voters. Evidence from opinion polls casts doubt on the notion that electorate holds lawyers in high esteem. Public perceptions of lawyers are decidedly negative. Overwhelmingly majorities view lawyers as dishonest, unethical, and contributing little or nothing to society (Pew Research Center, 2013; Gallup, 2015). More direct evidence comes from survey experiments that rely on sophisticated methods to estimate the causal effects of candidate attributes on voter assessments. Hainmueller, Hopkins, and Yamamoto (2014) use a conjoint analysis design to investigate how the personal characteristics of candidates affect levels of support. They find significant effects related to age, religion, and military service but no discernible effect associated with a career in law. Fong and Grimmer (2016) employ similarly sophisticated methods to estimate treatment effects of candidate traits from a survey experiment that asked respondents to rate candidates after being shown biographical information. They find that traits associated with legal experience are penalized by respondents.

5 A Framework For Modeling Candidate Entry and Electoral Success

Supply-side and demand-side explanations can both be expressed using a more general model of candidate entry. The *Rational Model of Candidate Entry*, which posits that candidates will enter a race when the expected returns from winning office outweigh the costs of campaigning, provides the theoretical underpinning for much of the academic literature on candidate entry (Black, 1972; Rohde, 1979; Jacobson and Kernell, 1983). The most basic formulation simply weighs the costs and expected payoffs of running for office,

$$E[U] = (P * B) - C \quad (3)$$

where P is the probability of winning, B is the personal benefits of holding elected office, and C is the personal and financial costs of running. The model generates straightforward comparative statics. Reduced costs, increased benefits, and improved chances of success are all positively associated with increased candidate entry.

Supply-side explanations offer a set of arguments for why the career incentives of lawyers enhance the benefits or reduce the cost of entry; whereas, demand-side explanations offer a set of arguments for why lawyers possess certain competitive advantages that increase the probability of success conditional on running. Testing their respective predictions has been constrained by a lack of data on who runs for office. Absent systematic data on the backgrounds of candidates, one cannot determine whether lawyers enter politics at higher rates than other groups. Likewise, data on the professional backgrounds of candidates is needed to determine whether lawyers win at higher rates than other groups.

Here I make use of a newly constructed dataset on the characteristics of congressional candidates from the 2010-2014 election cycles. It covers all 4,966 major party candidates who reached the \$5,000 fundraising threshold set by the Federal Election Commission (FEC) for mandatory reporting. For each candidate, a team of research assistants collected data on educational background, including degree earned, degree-granting institution, and year of conferral. These data were then merged with the DIME data, which includes detailed individual-level data on fundraising and election outcomes (Bonica, 2016).

Consistent with the literature, status as a lawyer is understood here in terms of membership in the legal profession. A functional definition comes from James Wilson who defines a professional as “someone who receives important occupational rewards from a group whose membership is limited to people who have undergone specialized formal education and have accepted a group defined code of proper conduct.” (Wilson, 1989, pp. 60).⁶ Along these lines, I code profession based on degree attainment.⁷ One advantage of this approach is that degree attainment represents a set of unambiguous categorical outcomes.⁸ Moreover, professional training can matter independent of experiences gained during one’s career. Specialized training of any type is designed to instill specific tools and approaches to problem solving. The purpose of law school is to train someone to “think like a lawyer,” which carries over to a career in politics (Barton, 2010; Miller, 1995).

In order to address potential limitations of coding professional backgrounds based on degree attainment, I augment the data set in several ways. First, not everyone who earns a professional degree pursues a career in the field. However, in practice, nearly all do. I coded professional background from data on employment history from Project Vote Smart for 83 percent of candidates. Of those with law degrees, only about 1 in 20 had not practiced law. Second, law graduates might be more likely to spend time in politics before running for office. I adjust for this by constructing two variables capture prior political experience. The first controls for prior experience working

⁶ Wilson develops this definition in the context of the bureaucracy. Professional background, he argues, is important because it exerts an external influence on bureaucrats separate from the organizational incentives of their agencies and can lead bureaucrats to define their task to reflect their training and the norms and standards of their profession. These arguments are no less applicable to legislators.

⁷ Carnes (2013) codes the proportion of pre-congressional careers spent in nine occupational categories. This approach works well given the primary distinction of interest is between legislators with working-class and white-collar backgrounds. Here the main distinction is between lawyers and non-lawyers.

⁸ This avoids cases where professionals straddle employment categories—for example, a physician in solo practice is both a professional and a small business owner.

as a campaign or legislative staffer. The second controls for having previously held elected office. Third, as a robustness check, I re-estimated the models with a separate category included for candidates with law degrees but never practiced law. Lastly, I replicated the results using an alternative coding scheme based on employment history similar to that of Carnes (2013) for the subset of candidates with corresponding entries in Project Vote Smart. In both cases, the results are qualitatively identical.⁹

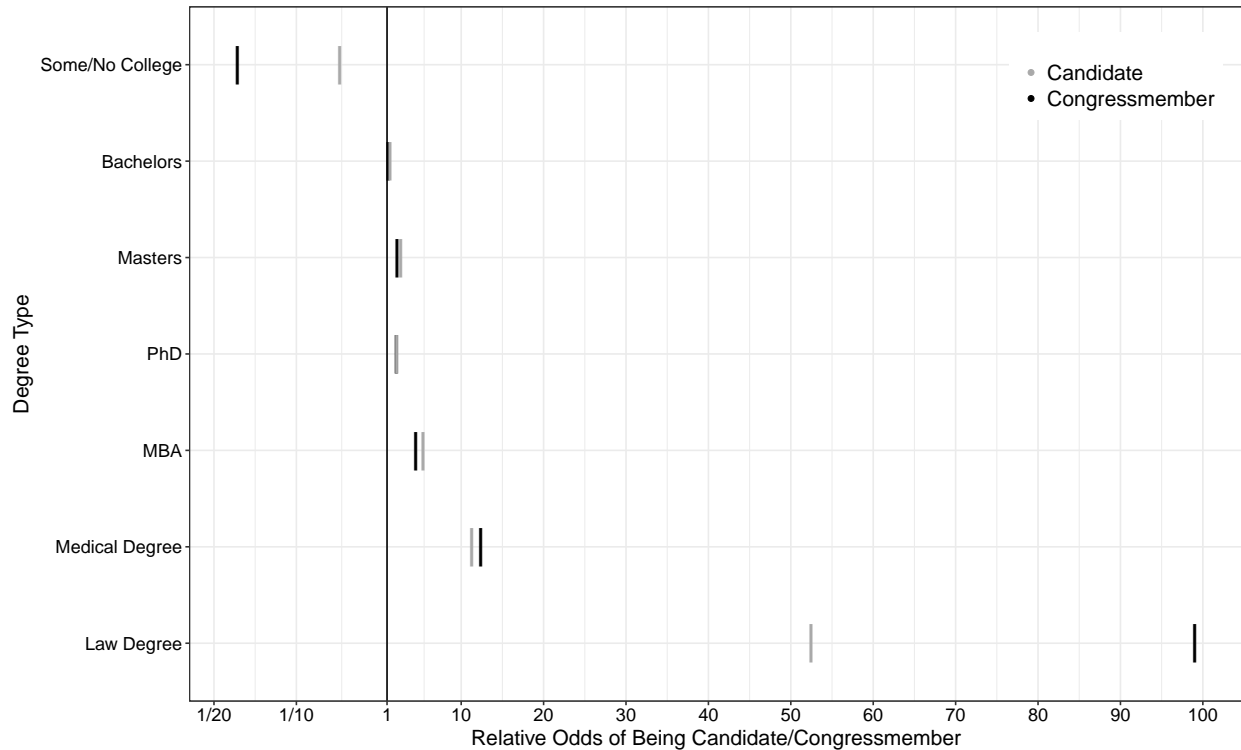
6 Who Runs For Office? Who Wins?

The *Rational Model of Candidate Entry* posits that candidate entry is conditioned on a simple cost-benefit analysis adjusting for risk. As the costs of running for office fall so does the threshold for beliefs about the likelihood of success needed to justify entry. If the costs are sufficiently low and the benefits sufficiently large, entry might be rational even if the candidate is unlikely to win. At the other extreme, if running for office would incur significant costs on one's personal finances or career, a candidate must be more confident they will succeed for entry to be rational. As such, if membership in the legal profession makes running for office less costly and holding office more rewarding, as supply-side accounts suggest, the model predicts that lawyers should be more likely to run for office *but less likely to win when they do*.

Figure 3 compares rates of representation in the candidate pool and Congress by degree-type. To construct the figure, I calculate the shares of candidates and officeholders from each group and divide them by the corresponding share of the voting-age population (VAP). I then divide these shares by the respective shares of the voting-age population (VAP) with each type of degree. A value of one on the x-axis indicates that a group makes up the same share of Congress as they do

⁹ Another possible concern is that the coding scheme might fail to capture some meaningful variation within professions. On this point, I note that the same would be true of other coding schemes. Moreover, the coefficients on profession reported in Tables 1 and 2—and main results reported below—suggests that broad professional categories capture much of the variation of interest. Although exploring within-profession variation in greater detail is feasible, doing so remains beyond the scope of this study.

Figure 3: Proportion of Degree types of Candidates and Member of Congress Relative to Proportion of Voting-Age Population (2010-2014)



Sources: Author’s calculations. Data on degree attainment are from U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2014 Annual Social and Economic Supplement.

the general population. A value of ten indicates that a group of degree-holders are ten times more likely to serve in Congress than the average citizen.

As the figure shows, lawyers are overrepresented in the candidate population and even more so among members of Congress. Lawyers are 54 times more likely to be a candidate and 99 times more likely to serve in Congress. No other group exhibits a similar pattern of representation. Physicians are the second most overrepresented professional group but, unlike lawyers, account for similar shares of candidates and Congress.

This pattern persists when narrowing the sample to nonincumbents. Table 3 breaks down success rates by incumbency status and degree type. Lawyers running as nonincumbents win at over twice the rate of non-lawyers and are nearly three times as likely to win when mounting primary

Table 3: Win Rates by Degree type and Incumbency Status

Degree Type	Nonincumbents	Open Seat	Challengers	Primary Challengers	Incumbents
Law Degree	0.132	0.193	0.108	0.085	0.893
No Law Degree	0.064	0.122	0.052	0.030	0.896
Medical Degree	0.098	0.105	0.096	0.094	0.953
MBA	0.069	0.096	0.060	0.062	0.907
PhD	0.075	0.132	0.055	0.043	0.904
MA	0.084	0.135	0.072	0.053	0.883
BA/BS	0.090	0.155	0.073	0.045	0.896
Some/No College	0.027	0.053	0.022	0.016	0.891

Note: Win rates are defined as the proportion of candidates elected to Congress.

challenges against same-party incumbents.¹⁰ This pattern does not carry over into incumbency, with lawyers retaining their seats at a slightly lower rate than non-lawyers.

7 The Puzzle: Why Elect Lawyers?

I consider two hypotheses consistent with the observation that lawyers enter *and* win at higher rates. Each proposes a distinct mechanism that could act to increase the probability of success conditional on running. Each asserts that lawyers benefit from a distinct type of shared competitive advantage.

The first hypothesis draws from demand-side accounts that argue that lawyers benefit from the “high-status” brand of the legal profession and the specialized skills honed by legal training.

H₁: Electoral Advantage Hypothesis: Competitive advantages linked to the legal profession cause lawyers to outperform at the polls, leading to increased rates of electoral success.

¹⁰ To further complicate matters, the raw win rates are likely to understate the success of lawyer-candidates. Owing to their high rates of entry, lawyers are far more likely to compete directly against other lawyers. For example, in 2014 the California 33rd Congressional District drew eight candidates, six of whom were lawyers. Since only one candidate can win, the five others will necessarily be unsuccessful. Clustering of this sort will inevitably deflate the win rates for lawyers.

If their status and special skills make lawyers uniquely appealing to voters or otherwise help them compete for votes, we should observe a positive effect on vote shares after controlling for relevant candidate and race characteristics.

The second hypothesis considers the role of professional networks in providing financial resources during the early stages of candidacy.

H₂: Early Fundraising Advantage Hypothesis: Lawyers have a competitive advantage in early fundraising. The resulting resource advantage, in turn, increases win rates.

On a practical level, early fundraising plays a fundamental role during the early stages of candidacy. Straight out of the gates candidates are expected to raise large sums of money to get their campaign up and running. Candidates, like anyone else, are subject to budget constraints. Important decisions regarding hiring, outreach, and how best to allocate time and effort often depend on the candidate's ability to fundraise early on. Financial constraints can limit the types of strategies and talent available to a campaign. They can also be a matter of survival. Bankrupt campaigns are rarely viable, and a lack of campaign funds is a common reason campaigns falter.

A fundraising advantage is one of the few plausible explanations consistent with lawyers both running and winning at higher rates. I test this hypothesis using data on itemized contributions raised during the initial months of candidacy.

8 Are Lawyers Favored at the Polls?

Demand-side explanations offer a set of claims about why lawyers excel as candidates. Despite the lack of evidence that voters view a legal background, *per se*, as a selling point, lawyers might still possess personal traits, such as charisma, that are difficult to measure but make for compelling political candidates or effective campaigners. Regardless of the reason, demand-side explanations all predict that lawyers will outperform candidates from other backgrounds. I test this prediction using data on vote shares in the primary and general elections.

I begin by examining candidate performance in general elections. Table 4 models two-party vote shares in general elections as a function of degree-type, incumbency status, district parti-

Table 4: Determinants of Vote Shares in General Election Contests (House, 2010-2014): OLS

	(1)	(2)
Constant	44.52 (0.59)	41.55 (0.55)
Law Degree	0.42 (0.44)	
Medical Degree	0.95 (1.03)	
MBA	-0.40 (0.74)	
PhD	-0.31 (0.89)	
Incumbent	8.74 (0.87)	14.03 (0.75)
Open Seat	1.00 (0.94)	3.71 (0.96)
Candidate Midpoint (CFscore)	1.47 (0.31)	
Held Elected Office	0.58 (0.45)	
Political Staffer	1.19 (0.60)	
ln(Dem. Spending) - ln(Rep. Spending)	1.17 (0.16)	
District Pres. Vote Share (Dem)	68.89 (2.70)	77.31 (2.54)
2010	-5.66 (0.64)	-6.32 (0.67)
2014	-1.97 (0.64)	-2.55 (0.67)
R^2	0.79	0.77
N. Obs	1,050	1,050

Dependent Variable: Democratic candidate's share of the two-party vote.

Note: Degree attainment and *Held Elected Office* and *Political Experience* are operationalized as signed dummy variables. Candidate ideology is operationalized as the midpoint between the candidates' CFscores (Bonica, 2014).

sanship, candidate ideology, campaign spending, whether candidates have previously held elected office, and prior political experience as a legislative or campaign staffer. Degree-type enters as signed indicator variables that take on a value of +1 if the Democratic candidate is a degree-holder, a value of -1 if the Republican candidate is a degree-holder, and a value of 0 if neither or both candidates are degree-holders.

The results provide no evidence that lawyers are advantaged at the polls. The estimated coefficient for *Law Degree* is small and statistically insignificant, indicating that lawyers perform no

better than candidates from other backgrounds.

General election contests are largely determined by factors that are beyond a candidate's control, such as incumbency status, district partisanship, and national partisan moods, as shown in Model 2. Primary elections, by comparison, depend more on the individual talents and characteristics of the candidates.

Modeling outcomes of primary contests introduces additional complexity. Unlike general elections, where two candidates compete for vote share, the numbers of candidates competing in primary contests can vary. When favorable electoral conditions in a district all but assures the party's nominee will be victorious in November, primaries often become very crowded. To adjust for this, I normalize vote shares and fundraising totals relative to contest-level averages. For candidate i in primary contest j , let v_{ij} be the candidate's total number of primary votes, f_{ij} be the candidate's fundraising total during the primaries, and n_j be the total number of candidates competing in the primary contest. Adjusted vote shares are calculated such that $\widehat{Vote\ Share} = \frac{v_{ij}}{(\sum v_j/n_j)}$ and adjusted fundraising shares are calculated such that $\widehat{Fundraising\ Share} = \frac{f_{ij}}{(\sum f_j/n_j)}$. This specification enables House and Senate races to be pooled.

I narrow the sample to nonincumbents in contested primaries where two or more candidates had filed with the FEC and met the minimum requirements to be designated an active candidate. I also exclude blanket (or "Top Two") primaries in Louisiana, Washington, and California. An indicator variable is included for primary challengers. This leaves a total of 2,596 candidates competing across 966 primary contests.

One potential concern is that the observed characteristics of lawyers and non-lawyers might differ in important ways. To adjust for potential imbalances, I use matching to pre-process the data. Covariate balance is achieved using the genetic matching algorithm from the Matching package in R (Sekhon, 2011). (See supplemental appendix for balance statistics.)

The results reported in Table 5 are largely inconsistent demand-side accounts. Model 1, which regresses normalized vote shares directly on *Law Degree*, shows that lawyers, on average, receive a larger share of votes in primary elections. However, the sign on the coefficient reverses when the full set of controls are included in Model 2. The post-matching results, reported in Models 3 and 4, similarly indicate the effect of *Law Degree* is negative, suggesting that, if anything, lawyers

Table 5: Normalized Vote Shares in Competitive Primary Elections: OLS

	Pre-Matching		Post-Matching	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Constant	0.859 (0.019)	0.483 (0.046)	1.048 (0.042)	0.437 (0.083)
Law Degree	0.125 (0.039)	-0.062 (0.031)	-0.065 (0.057)	-0.132 (0.043)
$\widehat{\text{Fundraising Share}}$		0.512 (0.014)		0.538 (0.020)
Primary Challenger		-0.091 (0.040)		-0.070 (0.069)
Competitive Seat		-0.048 (0.037)		0.039 (0.069)
Safe Seat		-0.077 (0.046)		0.057 (0.082)
Political Staffer		-0.006 (0.056)		0.018 (0.079)
Female		0.069 (0.035)		0.091 (0.059)
Prev. Held Office		0.156 (0.028)		0.148 (0.045)
Republican		0.001 (0.029)		0.018 (0.046)
Open Seat		-0.044 (0.030)		-0.057 (0.048)
Senate		-0.036 (0.035)		0.001 (0.053)
2012		-0.008 (0.031)		-0.050 (0.052)
2014		0.010 (0.034)		-0.002 (0.057)
\bar{R}^2	0.004	0.400	0.001	0.442
Num. obs.	2,596	2,596	1,086	1,086

Dependent Variable: Normalized vote shares in primary elections ($\widehat{\text{Vote Share}}$).

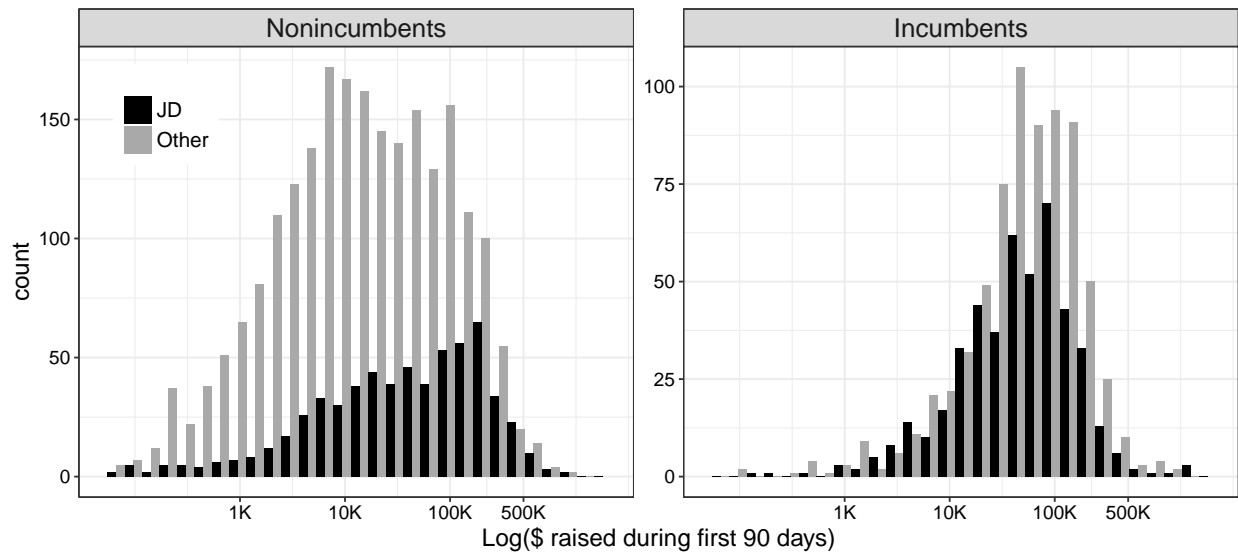
underperform in primary elections after adjusting for relevant covariates.¹¹

¹¹ The results are robust to excluding primary challengers. They are also robust to limiting the sample to candidates running in winnable districts where their party's presidential nominee won at least 40 percent of the two-party vote. This helps to rule out that lawyers win more often because they are better able to tell when conditions in a district are favorable. The results are also robust to controlling for candidate ideology. Lastly, results are similar for alternative specification with a binary dependent variable corresponding to whether a candidate won their primary contest. See supplemental appendix for results from these robustness checks.

9 Do Lawyers Have an Early Fundraising Advantage?

This section examines how professional background relates to early fundraising. I focus on fundraising by nonincumbents during the first 90 days of candidacy. Itemized contribution records include transaction dates, which can be used to track early fundraising during the initial months of a candidate's campaign, both in terms of amounts raised and the sources of funding. The start dates for campaigns are assigned based on the dates reported in the FEC statement of candidacy filings. Non-itemized contributions can be tracked using quarterly FEC filings where total amounts raised from unitemized donors appear as a line item.¹²

Figure 4: Fundraising from Individual Donors During First 90 Days in House Contests (logarithmic-scaling)



Note: Observations are at the candidate-cycle level. Sample includes 2010-2014 election cycles.

Figure 4 compares early fundraising for House candidates grouped by incumbency status. Among nonincumbents, there is a noticeable rightward-skew in the fundraising distributions of lawyers. Lawyers raised an average of \$105,861, more than double the \$52,360 raised on average

¹² Since candidates enter the race in a staggered fashion, the period covered by the first reporting deadline usually does not match up with a candidate's first 90 days in the race. This is adjusted for by interpolating the total unitemized amounts reported by a candidate's campaign in its first two quarterly filings.

by non-lawyers. A similar pattern is observed for senate candidates, with lawyers raising an average of \$363,291, compared with an average of \$186,937 for non-lawyers. These differences are sizable. *Even when campaigning as nonincumbents, lawyers fundraise on par with incumbents.* On the other hand, the fundraising advantage for lawyers vanishes after entering Congress. For incumbents, the fundraising distributions for lawyers and non-lawyers are statistically indistinguishable.¹³

I model early fundraising outcomes in Table 6. Profession enters as a set of indicator variables.¹⁴ As before, I control for prior political experience. I additionally control for entry delays, measured as the number of days since the start of the cycle that a candidate officially filed with the FEC. At the contest-level, I control for seat status, district partisanship, the number of candidates competing in the primary, and median household income.¹⁵ A second specification, reported in columns 2 and 4, instead includes fixed effects for primary contests grouped by party, cycle, and district.¹⁶

The sample covers nonincumbents running for the House and Senate during the 2010-2014 election cycles.¹⁷ The unit of observation is a candidate-cycle pair. The basic model specification is Tobit. Censoring is rare in Table 6 but is much more common in Table 7 which breaks down fundraising by source.

Table 6 provides strong support for the *Early Fundraising Advantage Hypothesis*. Even with controls included, the estimated effect of *Law Degree* on early fundraising is substantial. During their first 90 days on the campaign trail, lawyers are estimated to raise an additional \$44,840 in

¹³ A *t*-test confirms that the difference between groups is not statistically significant ($t = 0.49$).

¹⁴ If a candidate holds more than one professional degree, both indicator variables are set active. The reference category is a candidate without a professional degree.

¹⁵ Estimates of median household income for congressional districts are from Census.gov and are measured in \$000's. For Senate contests, median household income is measured at the state-level.

¹⁶ This necessitates dropping observations where candidates ran unopposed in the primaries.

¹⁷ Current or former House members running for Senate seats are excluded.

Table 6: Early Fundraising by Nonincumbents from Individuals and PACs during First 90 Days: Tobit

	House		Senate	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Constant	23.10 (9.81)	-2.43 (62.22)	-29.09 (106.00)	2626.35 (348.35)
Law Degree	44.84 (5.88)	39.00 (6.93)	202.36 (62.91)	221.77 (66.00)
Medical Degree	13.25 (12.34)	-9.33 (14.02)	-64.96 (120.11)	-30.90 (132.46)
MBA	20.98 (8.76)	20.82 (10.69)	-20.21 (95.63)	-96.73 (95.22)
PhD	-16.57 (12.82)	-35.48 (16.87)	-46.13 (135.41)	30.88 (136.01)
Held Elected Office	35.34 (5.00)	49.04 (6.00)	201.77 (58.03)	211.21 (60.46)
Filing Delay (Days)	0.01 (0.02)	0.04 (0.03)	-0.03 (0.19)	0.17 (0.23)
Female	11.48 (6.26)	9.96 (7.48)	219.59 (78.86)	220.78 (78.16)
Political Staffer	38.24 (11.00)	37.57 (12.96)	-6.15 (147.68)	-61.24 (144.03)
N Prim. Opponents ⁻¹	-4.39 (9.17)		29.70 (125.79)	
Open Seat	44.13 (6.06)		43.51 (64.28)	
Primary Challenger	-27.88 (8.75)		-67.46 (92.29)	
District Partisanship	15.89 (3.23)		49.38 (32.61)	
Median Household Income	0.77 (0.16)		1.87 (2.38)	
Republican	-1.72 (5.53)		-59.07 (63.75)	
2010	1.41 (5.65)		121.65 (68.80)	
2014	6.98 (6.01)		33.79 (69.24)	
Law Degree ($dE[Y]/dx$)	30.60 (4.01)	28.76 (5.11)	122.89 (38.20)	138.96 (41.36)
Contest Fixed Effects		✓		✓
AIC	35455	26810	6266	5643
Log Likelihood	-17709	-12684	-3115	-2703
N. Censored	195	116	51	46
Num. obs.	3,001	2,189	448	399

Dependent Variable: Total amounts raised from individuals and PACs during the first 90 days (000's of \$).

Note: District Partisanship is the share of two-party presidential vote won by the candidate's party.

House elections and an additional \$202,360 in Senate elections.¹⁸ To compare, the estimated effects for *Law Degree* and *Held Elected Office*—the standard proxy measure for candidate quality—are of similar magnitude.

The findings are robust to alternative modeling assumptions. The results are similar when using a log-linear specification. The results are also insensitive to varying the early fundraising window. Whether narrowed to the first 30 days or extended to the first 180 days, the ratio at which lawyer out-fundraise other candidates scales accordingly. Lastly, I report results are robust to controlling for candidates ideology. (See supplemental appendix for results.)

10 Professional Networks and Early Fundraising

Advice given to first-time candidates is unambiguous about the need to tap into the one's personal networks to raise funds early on (EMILY's List, 2001). Candidates depend almost exclusively on personal acquaintances to raise the funds needed to jump-start their campaigns. An implication of this is that candidate's ability to fundraise early depends more on her personal connections rather than her talent and appeal as a politician. A candidate who is surrounded by affluent friends and colleagues—especially ones who are seasoned donors or are accustomed to attending fundraising events—should have little trouble fundraising early on. On the other hand, even the most compelling candidates will struggle to keep pace if their personal

Perhaps the single most important determinant of a candidate's personal network is profession. Lawyers, as a group, are extremely active political donors and tend to have deep pockets. Moreover, the legal industry is well connected with the business community, which can bring wealthy clients into the fold. This suggests that lawyers' early fundraising premium owes in large part to their professional networks.

¹⁸ Note that the correct interpretation of the Tobit coefficients is the effect on the uncensored latent variable, not the outcome. Marginal effects for Law Degree are included in the tables as *Law Degree* ($dE[Y]/dx$).

Table 7 reports regression results for early fundraising from four professional groups.¹⁹ Again, the models are estimated separately for House and Senate candidates.

The results show that candidates rely disproportionately on other members of their profession for financial support. Lawyers running for the House and Senate are estimated to raise an additional \$23,330 and \$95,540, respectively, from other lawyers during their first 90 days. Physicians enjoy a similarly sized fundraising boost from other doctors.

Money raised from fellow lawyers accounts for about half lawyers early fundraising premium. The donations from corporate executives account for much of the remainder. This is consistent with the claim that lawyers professional networks might also encompass their clients. It also reflects the significant overlap between legal and corporate communities. Most law firms are primarily set up to provide services for corporate clients. Moreover, a significant percentage of lawyers are employed by corporations as in-house counsel. Lawyers also account for a surprising share of corporate executives. As of 2012, 46 CEOs at Fortune 500 firms had law degrees.²⁰

11 Does Early Fundraising Really Explain Electoral Success?

The general finding in the academic literature is that money does matter in elections but only to a degree (Jacobson, 1983, 1985; Gerber, 1998). In recent elections, between 80 and 90 percent of congressional races have either been uncontested or in districts that strongly favor one or the other party. A strong fundraising performance may improve a candidate's vote share in by a few

¹⁹ Donors are required by the FEC to report their occupation and employer on itemized contributions. This makes it possible to calculate the amounts raised from each profession. The mapping from self-reported occupational/employment information onto professional groups relied on an initial set of select terms associated with a given profession. For example, donors listing their occupation as "lawyer" or "attorney" were coded as legal professionals.

²⁰ Curiously, MBAs do not enjoy a fundraising premium of quite the same size from corporate executives. This might reflect the greater number and variety of MBA programs. Degree-granting institutions with MBA programs vastly outnumber those that offer legal or medical degrees. Moreover, many MBA programs offer classes online, which likely curtails alumni-network effects.

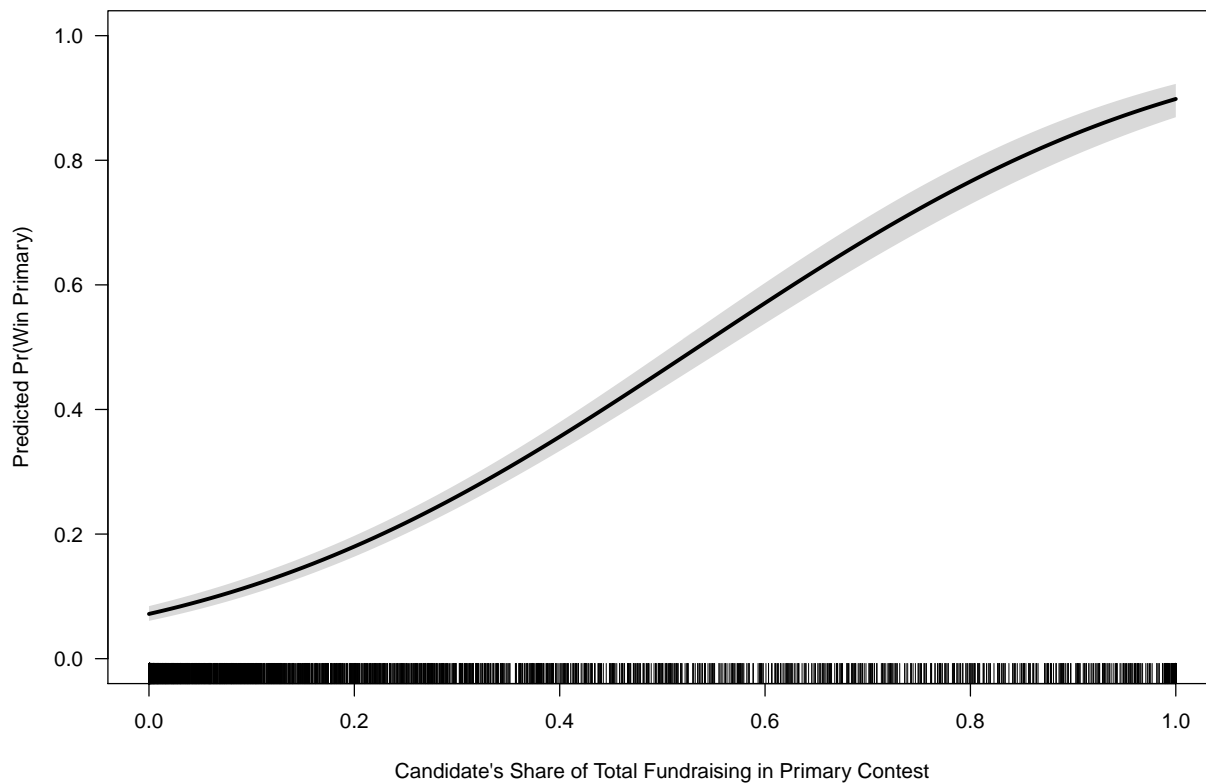
Table 7: Early Fundraising from Professional Groups by Nonincumbents: Tobit

	House				Senate			
	\$000's from Lawyers	\$000's from Doctors	\$000's from Corp. Execs	\$000's from Aca- demics	\$000's from Lawyers	\$000's from Doctors	\$000's from Corp. Execs	\$000's from Aca- demics
Constant	-6.59 (2.96)	-5.43 (1.28)	-16.97 (3.73)	-3.72 (0.98)	-55.54 (32.21)	-19.20 (8.71)	-81.47 (33.48)	-34.24 (13.38)
Law Degree	23.33 (1.70)	4.44 (0.74)	15.27 (2.17)	3.41 (0.56)	95.54 (18.70)	17.77 (5.11)	62.31 (19.53)	22.81 (7.75)
Medical Degree	1.75 (3.64)	22.61 (1.47)	-1.30 (4.63)	5.84 (1.15)	-46.64 (38.57)	20.20 (9.55)	-24.42 (38.63)	5.00 (14.75)
MBA	4.32 (2.63)	2.44 (1.12)	9.07 (3.26)	2.08 (0.87)	-6.06 (28.71)	-1.12 (7.81)	17.39 (29.42)	-0.62 (11.90)
PhD	-3.39 (3.87)	0.63 (1.63)	-2.01 (4.85)	1.67 (1.21)	-0.41 (41.51)	6.26 (11.02)	-19.99 (42.83)	4.55 (16.37)
Held Elected Office	10.96 (1.49)	4.25 (0.64)	14.34 (1.87)	3.23 (0.49)	61.81 (17.46)	19.80 (4.74)	73.47 (18.08)	26.67 (7.26)
Filing Delay (Days)	-0.00 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.10 (0.06)	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.05 (0.06)	-0.00 (0.02)
Female	4.98 (1.86)	1.17 (0.80)	5.37 (2.33)	2.37 (0.61)	76.75 (23.17)	13.71 (6.31)	47.21 (24.21)	31.05 (9.35)
Political Staffer	10.55 (3.15)	3.64 (1.35)	12.50 (3.96)	2.97 (1.00)	21.40 (42.15)	-3.56 (11.95)	5.43 (45.21)	10.26 (16.84)
N Prim. Opponents ⁻¹	-3.54 (2.80)	0.42 (1.19)	-5.96 (3.50)	0.74 (0.92)	33.49 (37.39)	0.99 (10.06)	29.19 (38.73)	-2.06 (15.64)
Open Seat	10.76 (1.79)	3.79 (0.76)	13.89 (2.25)	2.46 (0.59)	14.84 (19.20)	1.96 (5.20)	0.52 (19.96)	7.26 (7.89)
Primary Challenger	-11.91 (2.73)	-5.57 (1.16)	-12.18 (3.36)	-5.17 (0.92)	-55.49 (28.53)	-1.90 (7.51)	-61.81 (28.78)	-1.86 (11.56)
District Partisanship	3.81 (0.98)	2.56 (0.42)	6.65 (1.23)	1.53 (0.33)	14.54 (9.82)	2.67 (2.63)	24.59 (10.06)	7.17 (3.98)
Median Household Income	0.23 (0.05)	0.05 (0.02)	0.37 (0.06)	0.07 (0.02)	0.81 (0.71)	-0.27 (0.20)	0.37 (0.74)	0.11 (0.30)
Republican	-9.52 (1.66)	-0.69 (0.71)	6.49 (2.10)	-5.60 (0.55)	-30.83 (19.17)	-2.37 (5.17)	24.82 (20.01)	-26.42 (7.81)
2010	1.07 (1.71)	0.88 (0.73)	3.08 (2.15)	1.06 (0.58)	39.75 (20.73)	7.75 (5.61)	32.03 (21.43)	7.49 (8.55)
2014	1.92 (1.81)	0.88 (0.77)	5.15 (2.27)	1.75 (0.60)	14.59 (21.07)	2.70 (5.69)	20.41 (21.60)	2.48 (8.68)
Law Degree ($dE[Y]/dx$)	11.08 (0.81)	2.02 (0.34)	7.45 (1.06)	1.18 (0.19)	44.01 (8.61)	8.14 (2.34)	30.07 (9.42)	7.93 (2.69)
AIC	19674	15541	20789	11757	3918	3033	3955	2694
Log Likelihood	-9819	-7753	-10377	-5860	-1941	-1498	-1959	-1329
N. Censored	1165	1307	1145	1669	163	179	163	228
Num. obs.	3001	3001	3001	3001	448	448	448	448

Dependent Variable: Total contributions from professional groups during candidate's first 90 days (in 000's of \$).

Note: Only itemized contributions are included in the totals. Standard errors are in parentheses.

Figure 5: Predicted Probability of Winning Contested Primary Elections Conditional on Normalized Share of Total Fundraising



Note: The response curve is fit from a bivariate probit model. Shaded areas indicate the 95 percent confidence intervals.

percentage points but is seldom in a position to prove decisive.

By narrowly focusing on general elections the literature has tended to downplay money’s influence on elections. The two factors that make general election outcomes so predictable, party and incumbency, generally do not apply to primary contests. In their place, fundraising is easily the most reliable indicator of success. The bivariate relationship between fundraising and primary election outcomes is shown in Figure 5, which plots the predicted probability of winning contested primaries conditional on a candidate’s fundraising share. It reveals a tight relationship between fundraising and primary election outcomes.

One challenge in estimating campaign spending effects is that fundraising might be endogenous to the probability of winning. That is, the relationship shown in Figure 5 could be driven by investment-oriented donors who stand to benefit only if candidates they support end up winning. As a result, investment-oriented donors have incentives to seek out candidates that are likely to

win.

There are reasons to doubt that endogeneity bias of this sort is as much of a concern for primary elections as it does for general elections. Identifying likely winners in the general elections is mostly straightforward. Supporting incumbents in safe seats is generally a safe bet. The same types of informational cues make general election so predictable are of little use in most primary contests. District partisanship, the single most important predictor in general elections, does not discriminate between candidates in partisan primaries. Incumbency status is only informative in the subset of primary contests where a sitting incumbent faces primary challengers. Meanwhile, polling data for competitive primaries is extremely scarce, and when available, is subject to difficult to predict variation in turnout among the primary electorate. This gives investment-minded donors out to pick winners very little to go on. For these donors, investing early on is an unnecessarily risky prospect, especially when most other races offer a candidate who is a sure bet. This is consistent with corporations and trade PACs accounting for a tiny fraction of early money raised by nonincumbents.²¹

For this study, what matters is that early fundraising influences the outcomes of primary elections. Investment-oriented donors, insofar as they are active during the early fundraising stage, might bias the estimated effect of early fundraising upwards. But its highly unlikely such a dynamic is driving the observed relationship. There are practical reasons why early fundraising (or lack thereof) is likely to influence election outcomes. First, the funds raised early on provide vital resources for candidates to reinvest in their campaigns. Even the most talented candidates will struggle without the ability to hire competent campaign staffers. Second, campaigns cannot operate at full capacity absent sufficient funding. Fundraising difficulties are commonly cited by can-

²¹ This does not preclude that less access-oriented donors might still condition on viability to avoid “wasting” their contributions. Hall and Snyder (2015) find that donors tend to clump their contributions on the candidates who are the top two vote getters. This suggests that donors do behave strategically by choosing whether to support candidates in the primaries based on their chances of success. But this pattern could also be consistent with early fundraising being essential to establishing a campaign’s viability in the eyes of donors and party leaders.

didates as a reason for ending their campaigns. Early fundraising is a strong predictor of whether a candidate drops out before election day (Bonica, 2017; Hassell, 2016). Direct evidence of a causal relationship between early fundraising and primary outcomes comes from a recent study that uses an instrumental variable design to estimate the effect of early fundraising on vote shares in primary elections (Bonica, 2017).²²

Estimating Professional Fundraising Effects with Probability of Success Held Constant. Additional evidence can be had by showing that the early fundraising advantage for lawyers holds even for candidates contesting seats they are certain to lose. I group nonincumbent House candidates with respect to competitiveness. One group includes candidates running in seats that their party’s presidential candidate lost by a margin of 20 or more points. The probability of winning these seats is vanishingly small. During the period of study, not one candidate out of the 647 who tried succeeded in overcoming a margin of 20 points or more. As such, any contribution made to these candidates is effectively “wasted” if the objective is to help the candidate get elected. I further limit the sample to candidates who had not previously held political office to better isolate the effects of professional networks. Focusing on candidates in hopeless contests should isolate the effect of professional networks from assessments of candidate viability. The regression results are reported in Table 8.

Even in contests that are unwinnable, the fundraising advantage for lawyers persists. Given the dismal chances of success, one can safely rule out that the fundraising advantage is being driven by rational beliefs about candidate viability. Far more likely is that the early fundraising advantage stems from lawyers giving to fellow lawyers for reasons having to do with personal and professional relationships.

²² The first instrumental variable specification follows earlier studies in using professional degree-type to instrument for fundraising (Gerber, 1998; Lau and Pomper, 2002; Diermeier, Keane, and Merlo, 2005). The second instrumental variable specification uses average income in the zip code listed by candidates in their initial FEC filings to instrument for fundraising.

Table 8: Early Fundraising (in 000's of \$) by House Candidates in Unwinnable Contests: Tobit

	\$000's from All Donors	\$000's from Lawyers	\$000's from Doctors
Constant	15.35 (12.47)	-6.65 (3.71)	-2.01 (2.54)
Law Degree	29.65 (7.89)	13.22 (2.17)	4.43 (1.54)
Medical Degree	6.89 (11.81)	-0.92 (3.42)	14.14 (2.14)
MBA	16.29 (9.61)	4.32 (2.74)	1.14 (1.95)
PhD	-6.40 (15.04)	-3.79 (4.67)	0.04 (3.00)
Filing Delay (Days)	0.00 (0.02)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.00)
Female	6.78 (6.96)	1.01 (2.03)	0.62 (1.39)
Primary Opponents ⁻¹	4.89 (2.40)	1.65 (0.70)	-0.43 (0.48)
Open Seat	26.07 (7.30)	7.46 (2.08)	4.28 (1.41)
District Partisanship	1.07 (0.42)	0.22 (0.13)	0.21 (0.09)
Median Household Income	0.26 (0.17)	0.11 (0.05)	0.07 (0.03)
Republican	-5.49 (6.96)	-5.38 (2.01)	-0.32 (1.39)
2010	7.94 (6.24)	1.78 (1.86)	0.83 (1.28)
2014	-0.14 (6.83)	0.79 (2.03)	1.46 (1.38)
Law Degree ($dE[Y]/dx$)	18.48 (4.92)	4.75 (0.78)	1.47 (0.51)
AIC	5154	2268	1929
Log Likelihood	-2562	-1119	-950
N. Censored	55	278	300
Num. obs.	517	517	517

Dependent Variable: Total contributions raised during candidate's first 90 days (in 000's of \$).

12 Discussion

The data used here offer valuable insights into the electoral process and facilitate testing rival hypotheses about the sources of lawyers' electoral success. This section discusses potential limitations of the study as well as several alternative explanations not directly addressed above.

Candidate Recruitment by Party Elites. One alternative explanation not directly considered above is selective recruitment by party leaders. With respect to the possibility that party leaders tend to favor lawyers over other types of candidates, evidence is not particularly forthcoming. Drawing on a survey of party gate-keepers that asked respondents to rate candidate traits on a scale of (0) “not important,” (1) “somewhat important,” or (2) “very important,” Broockman et al. (2014) find that most party leaders deem being a lawyer as unimportant with an average rating of 0.45. By comparison party leaders indicated that they viewed being “able to raise money from friends and associates” to be far more important with an average rating of 1.33. Insofar as party gate-keepers do exhibit a bias towards recruiting lawyers, they might simply be cueing on assessments of fundraising potential.

Self-selection Into The Legal Profession. Another potentially confounding factor is self-selection into the legal profession. It is almost certainly the case those harboring political ambitions are actively selecting into law school, which is widely viewed as a natural stepping-stone to a career in politics. This sentiment is perhaps best captured by a quote from Woodrow Wilson who wrote that: “the profession I choose was politics; the profession I entered was the law. I entered one because I thought it would lead to the other.” (Miller 1995, 57).

On the one hand, self-selection of this sort is wholly consistent with the observation that lawyers run for office at higher rates than other professionals. On the other hand, it cannot explain why lawyers win at higher rates. Specifically, self-selection does not negate the results in Tables 3 and 4 showing that status as a lawyer is not associated with an advantage at the polls. Moreover, political ambition is partially captured by controlling for having previously held elected office or serving as a legislative aide. Attending law school may very well be a prudent choice for those interested in a career in politics—but this has more to do with the network and fundraising opportunities it provides than the skills acquired.

Historical Trends. The main question posed here is why such an extreme representational imbalance has persisted into the contemporary era. While offering some valuable insights, the results presented here are unable to directly speak to why lawyers have been so dominant for so long.

Money has always mattered in American politics, and it is plausible that lawyers have long enjoyed a fundraising advantage. However, it would be quite a stretch to presume the mechanisms described above fully generalize beyond the contemporary regulatory regime governing campaign finance.

What can be more readily inferred from the results is that the distinctively American system of financing elections has offset a decline the share of lawyers elected to Congress. If not for their fundraising advantage significantly fewer lawyers would currently be serving in Congress. This, in turn, might help to explain the overrepresentation of lawyers in Congress relative to national legislatures elsewhere in the world where fundraising tends to operate at the level of parties rather than candidates.

13 Concluding Remarks

This study rekindles one of the most enduring puzzles in the study of American politics: Why are so many lawyers elected to Congress?

Although the decision to run for office rests with the individual, campaigning is not a solitary pursuit. To channel a prominent lawyer-turned-politician, “it takes a village” to mount a successful campaign. The support provided by the legal profession is of two types. First, the structure and professional norms of the legal profession create incentives that tilt the calculus in favor of running for political office. Running for office is less costly and more rewarding in terms of career development in the legal profession than for other professions. Second, the legal community provides organizational and financial backing to lawyer-candidates. While the incentive structure of the legal profession does much to encourage its members to enter politics, the electoral success of lawyers owes in large part to the competitive advantage derived from their professional networks. It is their sizable advantage in early fundraising that has sustained the largest and most enduring representational imbalance in American politics.

This is not without consequence. Scholars and policy makers alike have arguably been far too dismissive of the outsized role of lawyers in American politics. Congress has inherited many of the demographic, organizational, and behavioral characteristics of the legal profession. Lawyer-

legislators, in both parties, are far less likely to be women or underrepresented minorities than legislators drawn from other backgrounds. Congress is less diverse as a result. Lawyers have also shaped the inner-workings of Congress. Many of the institutional norms and practices, from the emphasis on proper procedure and processes to the distinctively prosecutorial style of congressional hearings, can be traced back to the legal profession. In many respects, serving in Congress requires one to think and act like a lawyer. Along these lines, Miller has argued convincingly that in shaping American political institutions, lawyers have produced a legalistic, procedural-oriented government dominated by “lawyers’ ways, lawyers’ language, as well as lawyers’ approaches to problem-solving” (Miller 1995, 162).

Future research might expand on the results presented here on the policy implications of electing so many lawyers. Despite the legal services market’s estimated size \$437 billion (Legal Executive Institute, 2016)—which would rank it as the 15th largest state by economic output behind Washington and ahead of Indiana—the industry remains entirely self-regulated. The ABA has fiercely defended the independence of the legal profession and has successfully lobbied against, or simply exempted the legal industry from, any legislation that it claims would infringe on the profession’s self-proclaimed right to self-regulation. As shown in Table 2, the ABA’s lobbying efforts have benefited enormously from the overrepresentation of lawyers.

Given the importance of the legal system, the industry’s insistence on complete self-regulation naturally spills over into other matters of public policy. This is seen with respect to tax avoidance. Lawyers have played a central role in the development of what has been termed the “income defense industry,” which caters to high net-worth individuals looking to minimize their tax liability through less conventional means. Lawyers have been instrumental in exploiting loopholes with increasingly complex tax maneuvers. Meanwhile, the ABA has vigorously opposed subjecting lawyers to provisions in banking and financial legislation, such as the Bank Secrecy Act and Dodd-Frank, intended to prevent tax evasion and money laundering, improve regulatory compliance, and impose fair accounting standards (American Bar Association, 2016a). It has also likely contributed to an underprovision of legal services for the poor and middle class (Hadfield, 2008; Rhode, 2004, 2015). With lawyers increasingly chasing the most remunerative work for wealthy individuals and corporations, the market for more affordable legal services has been neglected.

This has resulted in a U.S. legal services sector that is easily the largest and most profitable in the world but ranks a dismal 94th (out 113 countries) in terms of people's ability to access and afford of legal representation (World Justice Project, 2016).

The results presented here suggest a need to fundamentally rethink how and *when* money matters in elections. Early fundraising influences who runs for office and who wins. This has biased the electoral process and representational outcomes in favor the types of individuals who are best positioned to fundraise. Even as financial barriers to entry have contributed to representational imbalances, the candidate population is, by comparison, far more representative of the public than are members of Congress. An implication of this is that electoral success is primarily determined by personal connections rather than talent or appeal as a politician. This makes early fundraising an important area for future research.

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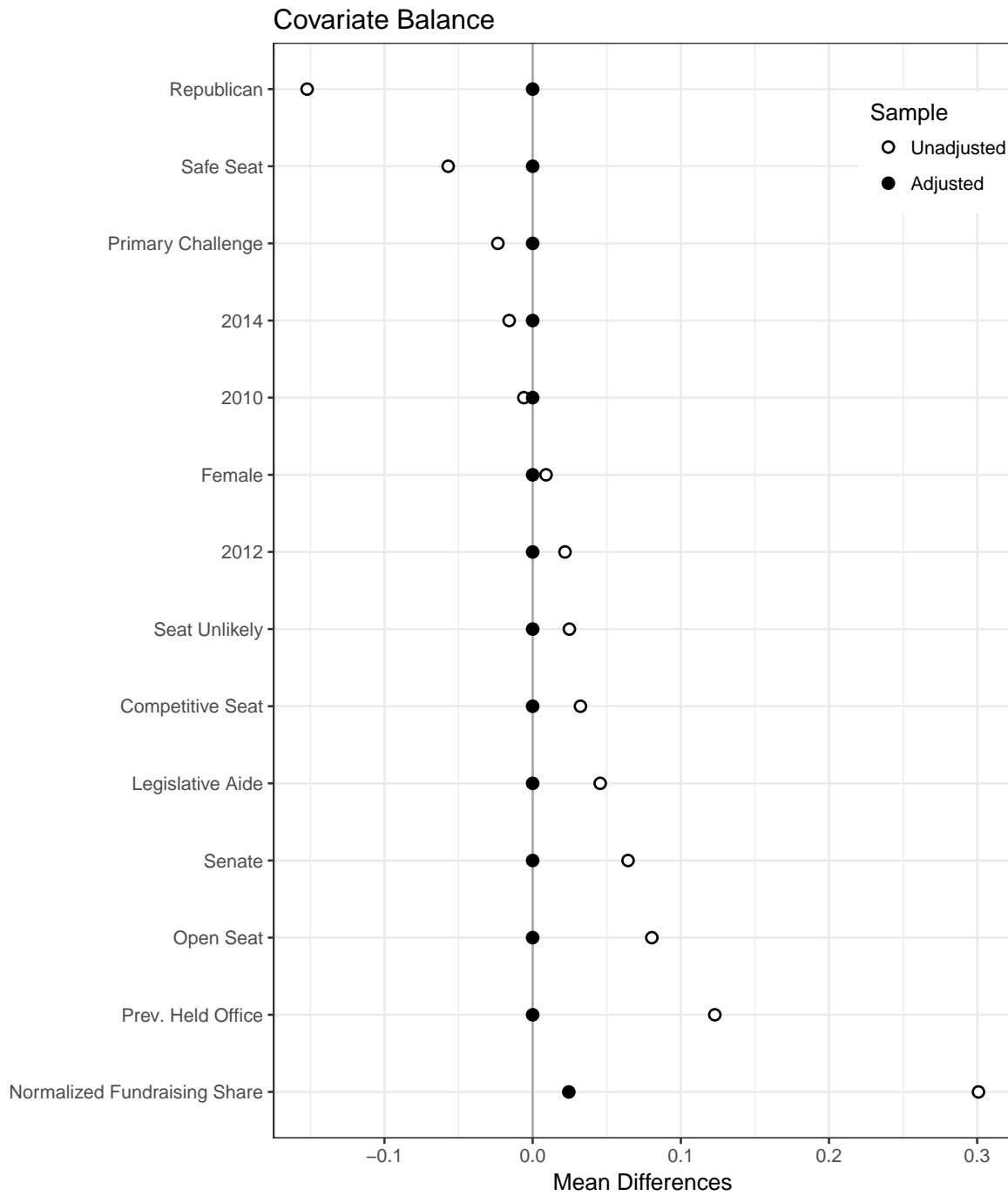
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Supplemental Appendix

A Balance Statistics

Figure A1: Covariate Balance Before and After Matching



Note: Law Degree is treatment.

B Early Fundraising Models with Logged-Dependent Variable

Table A1: Early Fundraising by Nonincumbents from Individuals and PACs during First 90 Days: Tobit, Logged-Dependent Variable

	House		Senate	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Constant	8.37 (0.24)	9.11 (1.33)	6.42 (0.74)	12.10 (2.60)
Law Degree	0.82 (0.14)	0.68 (0.15)	2.01 (0.45)	2.14 (0.49)
Medical Degree	0.27 (0.30)	-0.13 (0.30)	-0.34 (0.85)	0.50 (0.97)
MBA	0.81 (0.21)	0.83 (0.23)	-0.08 (0.67)	0.24 (0.70)
PhD	0.07 (0.31)	-0.34 (0.36)	-0.32 (0.95)	-0.14 (0.99)
Held Elected Office	0.97 (0.12)	1.12 (0.13)	1.49 (0.41)	1.46 (0.45)
Filing Delay (Days into Cycle)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Female	0.38 (0.15)	0.29 (0.16)	1.49 (0.56)	1.80 (0.58)
Political Staffer	1.02 (0.27)	0.96 (0.28)	1.92 (1.06)	0.84 (1.08)
N Prim. Opponents ⁻¹	-0.75 (0.22)		0.64 (0.89)	
Open Seat	0.64 (0.15)		0.12 (0.46)	
Primary Challenger	-0.92 (0.21)		-1.84 (0.65)	
District Partisanship	0.39 (0.08)		0.42 (0.23)	
Median Household Income	0.01 (0.00)		-0.01 (0.02)	
Republican	0.09 (0.13)		1.15 (0.45)	
2010	0.18 (0.14)		0.59 (0.49)	
2014	0.07 (0.15)		0.42 (0.49)	
Law Degree ($dE[Y]/dx$)	0.82 (0.14)	0.68 (0.15)	1.98 (0.44)	2.13 (0.48)
AIC	14928	11078	2416	2241
Log Likelihood	-7446	-4818	-1190	-1002
N. Censored	195	116	51	46
Num. obs.	2,998	2,186	448	399

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Table A2: Early Fundraising from Professional Networks: Tobit, Logged-Dependent Variable

	House				Senate			
	\$000's from Lawyers	\$000's from Doc- tors	\$000's from Corp. Execs	\$000's from Aca- demics	\$000's from Lawyers	\$000's from Doc- tors	\$000's from Corp. Execs	\$000's from Aca- demics
Constant	3.30 (0.48)	1.32 (0.51)	2.05 (0.51)	-0.04 (0.59)	1.32 (1.20)	-0.15 (1.22)	1.37 (1.28)	-1.29 (1.42)
Law Degree	3.30 (0.28)	1.50 (0.30)	1.90 (0.30)	2.19 (0.34)	4.15 (0.71)	2.67 (0.72)	2.73 (0.76)	3.31 (0.83)
Medical Degree	1.30 (0.60)	4.56 (0.61)	0.70 (0.63)	3.38 (0.70)	-1.58 (1.41)	2.03 (1.36)	-0.57 (1.47)	1.30 (1.56)
MBA	1.25 (0.43)	1.10 (0.45)	1.62 (0.45)	1.53 (0.52)	0.64 (1.07)	0.49 (1.09)	0.99 (1.14)	0.70 (1.25)
PhD	0.25 (0.63)	0.85 (0.65)	0.23 (0.66)	1.89 (0.73)	-1.08 (1.55)	-0.46 (1.56)	-1.42 (1.65)	1.36 (1.74)
Held Elected Office	2.17 (0.24)	1.92 (0.26)	2.45 (0.26)	2.54 (0.30)	2.54 (0.66)	2.84 (0.67)	3.09 (0.70)	3.26 (0.77)
Filing Delay (Days into Cycle)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Female	0.86 (0.30)	0.63 (0.32)	1.18 (0.32)	0.70 (0.37)	2.42 (0.88)	1.69 (0.90)	1.89 (0.95)	2.91 (1.01)
Political Staffer	2.07 (0.52)	1.89 (0.55)	2.02 (0.55)	2.69 (0.61)	2.86 (1.63)	0.81 (1.68)	1.77 (1.77)	3.58 (1.83)
N Prim. Opponents ⁻¹	-1.39 (0.45)	-0.40 (0.48)	-1.33 (0.47)	0.25 (0.55)	1.44 (1.41)	1.54 (1.42)	1.57 (1.50)	1.26 (1.66)
Open Seat	0.90 (0.29)	1.55 (0.31)	1.29 (0.31)	1.01 (0.36)	0.35 (0.72)	0.31 (0.73)	-0.55 (0.77)	1.02 (0.84)
Primary Challenger	-3.02 (0.44)	-2.66 (0.46)	-2.63 (0.46)	-3.91 (0.55)	-3.01 (1.06)	-2.13 (1.06)	-3.20 (1.11)	-2.22 (1.23)
District Partisanship	0.80 (0.16)	0.90 (0.17)	0.96 (0.17)	1.03 (0.20)	0.28 (0.37)	0.83 (0.37)	1.02 (0.39)	1.07 (0.42)
Median Household Income	0.03 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.03 (0.01)	0.03 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.03)	-0.04 (0.03)	-0.02 (0.03)	-0.02 (0.03)
Republican	-1.22 (0.27)	-0.40 (0.28)	0.87 (0.28)	-3.20 (0.33)	0.45 (0.72)	0.86 (0.73)	1.37 (0.77)	-1.74 (0.83)
2010	0.21 (0.28)	0.06 (0.29)	0.65 (0.29)	0.72 (0.34)	1.24 (0.78)	1.40 (0.79)	1.10 (0.83)	0.40 (0.91)
2014	0.17 (0.30)	0.30 (0.31)	0.74 (0.31)	1.01 (0.36)	0.95 (0.79)	1.01 (0.80)	0.90 (0.84)	0.65 (0.92)
Law Degree ($dE[Y]/dx$)	2.40 (0.20)	0.99 (0.20)	1.38 (0.22)	1.09 (0.17)	3.15 (0.54)	1.87 (0.51)	2.05 (0.57)	1.87 (0.47)
AIC	13726	13086	14044	10963	2166	2078	2209	1816
Log Likelihood	-6845	-6525	-7004	-5463	-1065	-1021	-1086	-890
N. Censored	1165	1307	1145	1669	163	179	163	228
Num. obs.	3000	3001	3000	3001	448	448	448	448

C Varying Early Fundraising Window

Table A3: Early Fundraising by Nonincumbents from Individuals and PACs during the First 30, 90, and 180 Days

	First 30 Days (\$000's)	First 90 Days (\$000's)	First 180 Days (\$000's)
Constant	-5.12 (3.98)	23.10 (9.81)	50.99 (18.95)
Law Degree	16.17 (2.36)	44.84 (5.88)	83.17 (11.70)
Medical Degree	6.88 (4.96)	13.25 (12.34)	18.40 (24.71)
MBA	7.51 (3.52)	20.98 (8.76)	38.03 (17.41)
PhD	-2.61 (5.20)	-16.57 (12.82)	-3.10 (25.57)
Held Elected Office	11.08 (2.02)	35.34 (5.00)	83.77 (9.72)
Filing Delay (Days into Cycle)	0.02 (0.01)	0.01 (0.02)	-0.04 (0.03)
Female	4.28 (2.52)	11.48 (6.26)	22.87 (11.49)
Political Staffer	12.09 (4.40)	38.24 (11.00)	75.31 (21.95)
N Prim. Opponents ⁻¹	-2.60 (3.71)	-4.39 (9.17)	34.33 (17.55)
Open Seat	16.96 (2.44)	44.13 (6.06)	73.20 (12.09)
Primary Challenger	-11.89 (3.57)	-27.88 (8.75)	-86.06 (14.87)
District Partisanship	6.15 (1.31)	15.89 (3.23)	27.95 (6.07)
Median Household Income	0.21 (0.07)	0.77 (0.16)	1.37 (0.32)
Republican	0.38 (2.23)	-1.72 (5.53)	-3.41 (11.01)
2010	1.19 (2.29)	1.41 (5.65)	10.36 (11.08)
2014	4.31 (2.43)	6.98 (6.01)	6.76 (11.84)
Law Degree ($dE[Y]/dx$)	9.73 (1.42)	30.60 (4.01)	57.36 (8.07)
AIC	27006	35455	40280
Log Likelihood	-13485	-17709	-20122
N. Censored	545	195	151
N. Obs.	3,001	3,001	3,001

D Modeling Success in Primary Elections as a Binary Outcome

Table A4: Candidate Success in Competitive Primary Elections: Probit, Marginal Effects

	Pre-Matching		Post-Matching	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Constant	-0.41 (0.02)	-0.43 (0.05)	-0.33 (0.04)	-0.44 (0.08)
Law Degree	0.07 (0.02)	-0.04 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.05 (0.03)
Primary Competitors ⁻¹	0.66 (0.06)	0.26 (0.09)	0.60 (0.10)	0.04 (0.15)
Fundraising Share		0.69 (0.04)		0.84 (0.07)
Raised \$100K in first 90 Days		0.12 (0.03)		0.14 (0.04)
Primary Challenger		-0.16 (0.02)		-0.16 (0.05)
Competitive Seat		-0.07 (0.03)		-0.04 (0.05)
Safe Seat		-0.11 (0.03)		-0.12 (0.06)
Political Staffer		0.12 (0.05)		0.11 (0.06)
Ideological Extremity		0.00 (0.01)		0.02 (0.02)
Female		0.06 (0.03)		0.05 (0.05)
Held Elected Office		0.16 (0.02)		0.16 (0.04)
Republican		-0.04 (0.02)		-0.02 (0.04)
Open Seat		-0.04 (0.02)		-0.04 (0.04)
Senate		-0.00 (0.03)		-0.01 (0.04)
2012		-0.03 (0.02)		-0.07 (0.04)
2014		0.01 (0.03)		-0.02 (0.04)
AIC	2787.32	1996.70	1264.44	882.38
Log Likelihood	-1390.66	-981.35	-629.22	-424.19
Deviance	2781.32	1962.70	1258.44	848.38
Num. obs.	2387	2387	1007	1007

Dependent Variable: Candidate won primary contest.

Note: In coding outcomes, no distinction is made between candidates who withdraw before the primary elections and those who exit after being defeated. To adjust for primary competition, *Primary Competitors*⁻¹ is calculated as $1/N_p$, where N_p is the number of candidates in primary contest p . In order to normalize fundraising across district-level primary contests, each candidate's fundraising total is divided by the total sum raised by all other candidates competing in the primary contest.

E Modelling Primary Election Outcomes Separately for Lawyers and Non-Lawyers

Table A5: Candidate Success in Competitive Primary Elections: Probit, Marginal Effects

	Non-lawyers	Lawyers
Constant	-0.48 (0.04)	-0.58 (0.09)
Fundraising Share	0.63 (0.05)	0.90 (0.09)
Raised 00K in first 90 Days	0.10 (0.03)	0.16 (0.05)
Primary Competitors ⁻¹	0.29 (0.10)	0.10 (0.19)
Primary Challenger	-0.17 (0.03)	-0.12 (0.07)
Competitive Seat	-0.02 (0.03)	-0.09 (0.06)
Safe Seat	0.09 (0.03)	0.00 (0.07)
Legislative Staffer	0.10 (0.06)	0.15 (0.09)
Ideological Extremity	-0.01 (0.01)	0.05 (0.03)
Female	0.07 (0.03)	-0.00 (0.06)
Held Elected Office	0.15 (0.02)	0.15 (0.05)
Republican	-0.07 (0.03)	0.02 (0.05)
Open Seat	-0.03 (0.03)	-0.07 (0.05)
Senate	0.01 (0.03)	0.00 (0.06)
2012	-0.02 (0.03)	-0.06 (0.05)
2014	0.02 (0.03)	-0.04 (0.06)
AIC	1518.85	490.22
Log Likelihood	-743.43	-229.11
Deviance	1486.85	458.22
Num. obs.	1,812	575

Dependent Variable: Candidate won primary contest.

F Early Fundraising Models Controlling for Ideology

Table A6: Early Fundraising by Nonincumbents during First 90 Days: Tobit

	House		Senate	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Constant	28.83 (10.30)	-8.99 (62.80)	21.20 (116.50)	2529.17 (349.02)
Law Degree	40.57 (6.16)	37.85 (7.39)	165.57 (68.72)	217.11 (70.52)
Medical Degree	11.63 (13.03)	-16.60 (15.00)	-74.57 (135.96)	-50.96 (147.70)
MBA	15.81 (9.12)	16.23 (11.37)	-51.15 (103.06)	-134.74 (102.59)
PhD	-20.08 (13.19)	-35.66 (17.60)	-54.54 (148.98)	45.89 (147.73)
Held Elected Office	27.33 (5.22)	40.31 (6.34)	169.70 (62.81)	212.85 (64.06)
Entry Delay (Days into Cycle)	0.03 (0.02)	0.07 (0.03)	0.02 (0.21)	0.62 (0.27)
Ideological Extremity	-17.67 (3.10)	-21.53 (4.02)	-0.16 (38.51)	78.59 (39.05)
Female	11.66 (6.52)	10.77 (7.93)	201.87 (83.25)	178.29 (80.59)
Former Legislative Aid	33.65 (11.24)	34.86 (13.31)	-34.91 (156.86)	-129.90 (151.64)
Primary Competitors ⁻¹	-3.93 (9.61)		74.15 (139.26)	
Open Seat	43.36 (6.34)		49.91 (69.80)	
Primary Challenger	-27.75 (9.34)		-19.75 (100.22)	
District Partisanship	18.15 (3.43)		56.46 (35.15)	
Median Household Income	0.81 (0.17)		2.02 (2.61)	
Republican	-1.05 (5.82)		-69.82 (69.51)	
2010	0.12 (5.92)		111.05 (75.06)	
2014	9.02 (6.33)		32.24 (75.51)	
Law Degree ($dE[Y]/dx$)	28.54 (4.33)	28.95 (5.65)	106.69 (44.28)	145.14 (47.14)
Contest Fixed Effects		✓		✓
AIC	33368	25144	5824	5251
Log Likelihood	-16665	-11850	-2893	-2505
N. Censored	103	56	19	19
Num. obs.	2750	1998	389	349

Dependent Variable: Total amounts raised from individuals and PACs during the first 90 days (in 000's of \$).

Note: Measures of median household income for congressional districts are from census.gov. For Senate contests, median household income is measured at the state-level. Standard errors are in parentheses.

Table A7: Early Fundraising from Professional Groups by Nonincumbents: Tobit

	House				Senate			
	\$000's from Lawyers	\$000's from Doc- tors	\$000's from Corp. Execs	\$000's from Aca- demics	\$000's from Lawyers	\$000's from Doc- tors	\$000's from Corp. Execs	\$000's from Aca- demics
Constant	-3.43 (3.01)	-4.32 (1.29)	-12.27 (3.74)	-2.78 (1.00)	-24.41 (33.67)	-10.06 (9.03)	-50.04 (34.75)	-23.19 (13.93)
Law Degree	21.17 (1.73)	3.73 (0.75)	11.98 (2.17)	2.80 (0.57)	77.73 (19.47)	12.51 (5.29)	41.72 (20.18)	15.78 (8.07)
Medical Degree	0.57 (3.72)	23.37 (1.51)	-3.19 (4.65)	5.83 (1.17)	-49.05 (40.91)	21.67 (10.16)	-32.38 (40.44)	4.55 (15.72)
MBA	2.17 (2.66)	1.72 (1.13)	6.06 (3.26)	1.56 (0.88)	-24.01 (29.86)	-4.59 (7.99)	2.41 (30.24)	-5.82 (12.25)
PhD	-4.16 (3.88)	0.19 (1.63)	-2.99 (4.81)	1.34 (1.22)	15.12 (43.67)	9.28 (11.49)	-6.45 (45.18)	5.17 (17.15)
Held Elected Office	7.80 (1.51)	2.97 (0.64)	9.68 (1.87)	2.38 (0.50)	41.32 (18.10)	14.04 (4.86)	49.10 (18.57)	19.11 (7.50)
Filing Delay (Days)	0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.00)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.09 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.02)	-0.05 (0.06)	0.01 (0.03)
Ideological Extremity	-8.59 (1.02)	-2.56 (0.42)	-11.96 (1.26)	-1.84 (0.35)	-30.84 (13.20)	-7.07 (3.36)	-48.67 (14.17)	-9.32 (5.63)
Female	5.03 (1.87)	0.94 (0.80)	5.41 (2.33)	2.36 (0.61)	74.23 (23.69)	12.78 (6.38)	44.14 (24.52)	29.39 (9.57)
Political Staffer	8.99 (3.12)	3.04 (1.34)	10.30 (3.89)	2.44 (1.00)	6.60 (43.37)	-4.40 (11.96)	5.50 (45.31)	9.53 (17.02)
Primary Competitors ⁻¹	-3.30 (2.84)	0.28 (1.20)	-6.17 (3.51)	0.66 (0.94)	51.12 (39.29)	5.60 (10.51)	41.06 (40.57)	4.80 (16.45)
Open Seat	9.94 (1.82)	3.49 (0.77)	12.82 (2.25)	2.24 (0.60)	18.25 (19.96)	2.56 (5.36)	4.94 (20.53)	8.12 (8.20)
Primary Challenger	-11.84 (2.82)	-5.22 (1.19)	-11.51 (3.42)	-5.09 (0.95)	-44.89 (29.56)	1.31 (7.73)	-55.55 (29.78)	2.76 (11.96)
District Partisanship	4.66 (1.01)	2.85 (0.43)	7.60 (1.25)	1.70 (0.34)	18.46 (10.12)	3.45 (2.69)	30.13 (10.37)	8.68 (4.12)
Median Household Income	0.25 (0.05)	0.05 (0.02)	0.38 (0.06)	0.07 (0.02)	0.84 (0.74)	-0.28 (0.20)	0.28 (0.76)	0.12 (0.31)
Republican	-9.95 (1.69)	-0.71 (0.72)	6.67 (2.11)	-5.89 (0.56)	-37.95 (19.87)	-3.91 (5.32)	30.49 (20.71)	-28.26 (8.10)
2010	0.85 (1.74)	0.87 (0.74)	2.74 (2.15)	0.97 (0.58)	34.11 (21.54)	5.43 (5.78)	23.54 (22.17)	4.07 (8.88)
2014	2.53 (1.85)	1.16 (0.79)	5.83 (2.29)	1.91 (0.61)	13.91 (21.94)	1.67 (5.87)	21.11 (22.37)	-0.41 (9.02)
Law Degree ($dE[Y]/dx$)	10.70 (0.87)	1.81 (0.36)	6.24 (1.13)	1.05 (0.21)	39.94 (10.00)	6.41 (2.71)	22.32 (10.79)	6.17 (3.16)
AIC	19161	15111	20333	11505	3822	2950	3856	2639
Log Likelihood	-9562	-7537	-10148	-5733	-1892	-1456	-1909	-1300
N. Censored	934	1073	900	1424	107	122	106	170
Num. obs.	2750	2750	2750	2750	389	389	389	389

Dependent Variable: Total contributions from professional groups during candidate's first 90 days (in 000's of \$).

Note: Measures of median household income for congressional districts are from census.gov and are measured in \$000's. For Senate contests, median household income is measured at the state-level. Only itemized contributions are included in the totals. Standard errors are in parentheses.

Table A8: Early Fundraising (in 000's of \$) by House Candidates in Unwinnable Contests: Tobit.

	\$000's from All Donors	\$000's from Lawyers	\$000's from Doctors
Constant	16.39 (12.95)	-5.56 (3.68)	-2.03 (2.57)
Law Degree	29.11 (8.37)	12.59 (2.19)	3.97 (1.60)
Medical Degree	2.60 (12.39)	-2.95 (3.46)	14.50 (2.17)
MBA	10.51 (9.76)	2.10 (2.65)	0.07 (1.93)
PhD	-10.10 (15.08)	-4.52 (4.55)	-0.05 (2.95)
Filing Delay (Days)	0.02 (0.02)	0.01 (0.01)	0.00 (0.00)
Ideology Extremity	-12.45 (4.06)	-7.13 (1.36)	-3.22 (0.92)
Female	7.87 (7.27)	1.68 (2.03)	0.21 (1.42)
Primary Competitors ⁻¹	5.57 (2.48)	1.70 (0.69)	-0.45 (0.48)
Open Seat	25.18 (7.86)	5.54 (2.13)	3.36 (1.46)
District Partisanship	1.12 (0.44)	0.23 (0.13)	0.20 (0.09)
Median Household Income	0.17 (0.18)	0.06 (0.05)	0.04 (0.04)
Republican	-5.48 (7.38)	-5.67 (2.04)	0.17 (1.44)
2010	4.66 (6.52)	0.30 (1.86)	0.41 (1.30)
2014	2.58 (7.24)	1.38 (2.04)	1.89 (1.41)
Law Degree ($dE[Y]/dx$)	19.03 (5.47)	4.79 (0.83)	1.42 (0.57)
AIC	4807	2145	1847
Log Likelihood	-2387	-1057	-907
N. Censored	27	228	248
Num. obs.	461	461	461

Dependent Variable: Total contributions raised during candidate's first 90 days (in 000's of \$).

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses.

G Women in Congress by Professional Background

Table A9: Women in Congress by Professional Background: OLS

	All	Democrats	Republicans
(Intercept)	0.21 (0.02)	0.24 (0.03)	0.08 (0.02)
Law	-0.12 (0.01)	-0.20 (0.02)	-0.05 (0.01)
Medicine	-0.03 (0.03)	-0.03 (0.06)	0.00 (0.03)
Business	-0.06 (0.01)	-0.09 (0.02)	-0.03 (0.01)
Education	0.01 (0.02)	-0.06 (0.02)	0.10 (0.02)
Republican	-0.13 (0.01)		
Independent	-0.23 (0.08)		
1994	0.02 (0.02)	0.01 (0.03)	0.01 (0.02)
1996	0.03 (0.02)	0.04 (0.03)	0.01 (0.02)
1998	0.03 (0.02)	0.04 (0.03)	0.01 (0.02)
2000	0.04 (0.02)	0.07 (0.03)	0.01 (0.02)
2002	0.05 (0.02)	0.06 (0.03)	0.03 (0.02)
2004	0.06 (0.02)	0.08 (0.03)	0.03 (0.02)
2006	0.07 (0.02)	0.10 (0.03)	0.04 (0.03)
2008	0.06 (0.02)	0.09 (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)
2010	0.08 (0.02)	0.12 (0.03)	0.04 (0.02)
2012	0.09 (0.02)	0.17 (0.03)	0.02 (0.02)
2014	0.11 (0.02)	0.19 (0.03)	0.03 (0.02)
R ²	0.06	0.06	0.02
Num. obs.	6508	3204	3285

Dependent Variable: Member is Female

Sources: Historical data on gender is from Congressional Quarterly. Professional background is coded based on entries in the Biographical Directory of the U.S. Congress.