

Legislative Parties in Volatile, Nonprogrammable Party Systems: The Peruvian Case in Comparative Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This article extends the analysis of political parties in electorally volatile and organizationally weak party systems by evaluating two implications centered on legislative voting behavior. First, it examines whether disunity prevails where weakness of programmatic and electoral commonalities abound. Second, it analyzes whether inchoate party systems weaken the ability of government parties to control the congressional agenda. The empirical analysis centers on Peru, a classic example of a weakly institutionalized party system, and how its legislative parties compare to those of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and the United States. The results lend support to the view that lower unity characterizes weakly institutionalized settings. The agenda-setting power of government parties, however, appears to be influenced more by the majority status of the government than by the level of party system institutionalization.

An important body of work on party systems has focused on their levels of institutionalization.¹ Mainwaring and Scully (1995) make a strong case for considering party system institutionalization as a third relevant dimension when comparing party systems, along with the number of parties and ideological polarization (Sartori 1976). More recently, Mainwaring and Torcal (2007) have argued that the most important differences between party systems in less-developed countries and the advanced industrial democracies are captured by differences in this dimension. Several works have therefore centered on identifying and categorizing organizational and electoral variables to measure and compare levels of party system institutionalization across countries (Bielasiak 2002; Jones 2007; Kuenzi and Lambright 2001; Mainwaring and Scully 1995; Payne et al. 2002).

The literature has examined how electorally volatile and organizationally weak party systems erode the linkage between citizens and political parties, thereby hurting electoral accountability; but the conse-

quences for the behavior of legislative parties have not been sufficiently scrutinized. This article extends the analysis of party system institutionalization by focusing on legislative parties and their voting behavior. More specifically, it evaluates the implications of institutionalization for two central aspects of legislative decisionmaking: the unity of parties and the ability of government legislators to win congressional votes.

The empirical analysis focuses on the Peruvian Congress and how it compares to four presidential legislatures in the Americas (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and the United States). According to at least two cross-national studies, Peru's party system ranks as the least institutionalized in Latin America (Mainwaring and Scully 1995; Payne et al. 2002). Peru has also experienced very high levels of electoral volatility, and its congressional membership has been categorized as "clearly nonideological" (Rosas 2005; Coppedge 1998). These characteristics make the Peruvian Congress an appropriate setting—a most likely case—to evaluate the legislative implications associated with weakly institutionalized party systems.

The results lend support to the view that lower levels of party unity characterize weakly institutionalized settings. The agenda-setting power of government parties, however, appears to be influenced more by the majority status of the government than by the level of party system institutionalization. This study proceeds to discuss the dilemmas present in weakly institutionalized party systems and the implications for legislative behavior. Exploring the Peruvian case, it concentrates on the empirical analysis of roll call votes.

LEGISLATIVE DILEMMAS AMID VOLATILITY AND WEAK PARTISAN ORGANIZATION

Weakly institutionalized party systems are characterized by high levels of electoral volatility and feeble partisan organizations. Political parties winning representation tend to have weak roots in society and are short-lived and subordinated to the interests of a few leaders (Mainwaring and Torcal 2006). Such parties do not play a prominent role in the political recruitment process (Jones 2007), tend to lack elaborate formal structures and established patterns of internal behavior (Panebianco 1988), and are usually unable to provide substantial resources to aid in their legislators' re-election bids (Mainwaring 1999).

According to the literature on party systems, in countries lacking institutionalized parties, candidate competition is more likely to be based on personal characteristics or short-term populist policy proposals than on programmatic appeals (Mainwaring 1998; Mainwaring and Zoco 2007). Voters, in turn, are less likely to identify what parties stand for and less able to reward or punish elected representatives for past behavior (Mainwaring and Scully 1995; Mainwaring and Torcal 2006;

Jones 2007). If we consider legislators the agents of voters, we may reasonably conclude that weakly institutionalized party systems are conducive to agency problems, such as those of hidden information, when voters are uncertain about the preferences of candidates; and adverse selection, when voters systematically select flawed and unrepresentative candidates. In a context of high volatility and short-lived parties, electoral sanctioning mechanisms do not work well.

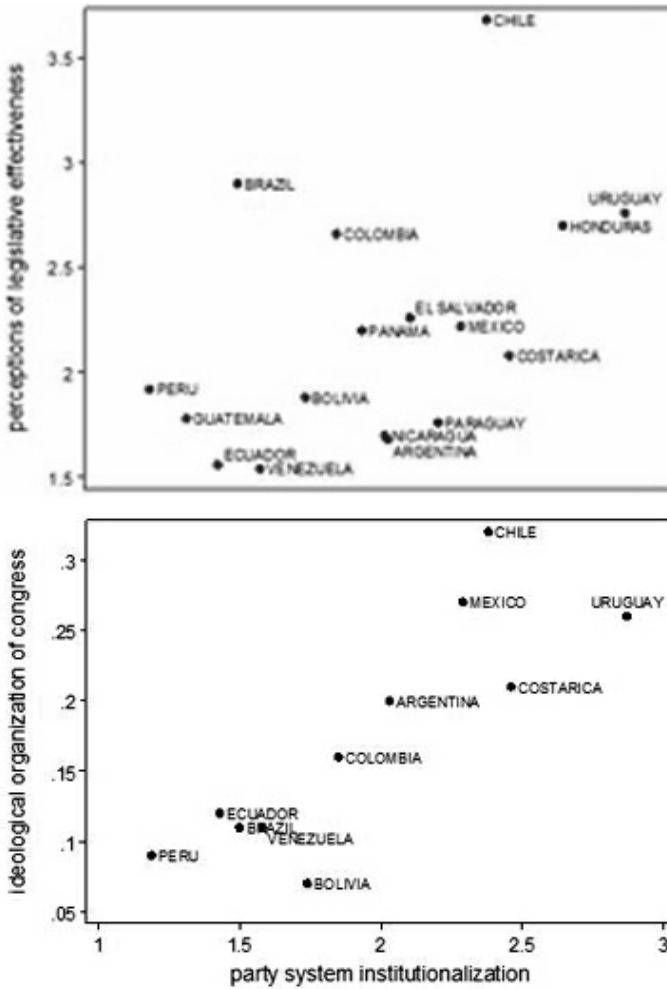
Payne et al. (2002, 128) argue that electoral instability and short-termism among elected officials have a negative impact on government effectiveness. Evidence suggests that in countries with weakly institutionalized party systems, both the perception of legislative effectiveness and the programmatic coherence of legislative parties tend to be lower than in more institutionalized party systems. These associations are illustrated in figure 1. The horizontal axis captures the positions of 17 Latin American countries according to the index of party system institutionalization created by Payne et al. (2002).² The vertical axes reflect, first, the index of legislative effectiveness created by the World Economic Forum's *Global Competitiveness Report*, and second, the index of ideological organization of legislatures built by Rosas (2005). The legislative effectiveness measure was derived from surveys of business executives, which asked about the effectiveness of the national congress as a law-making and oversight institution. Utilizing data from surveys of Latin American legislators, Rosas (2005) bases his index of ideological legislative parties on the association between the issue stances of politicians and partisan membership.

Consistent with the existing literature, figure 1 shows that low levels of party system institutionalization appear to be associated with perceptions of legislative ineffectiveness and nonprogrammatic parties. Rosas (2005) argues that his indicator of ideological organization is a good proxy for the average amount of information carried by party labels in a legislature, since it captures both intraparty issue cohesion and interparty distinctiveness. Thus, the figure provides some evidence that high electoral volatility and weak party organizations are associated with low-value party labels. While there is consensus in the literature that the linkage between parties and voters is rather poor in weakly institutionalized party systems, the implications for legislative politics have been less scrutinized. It is worth examining how weak institutionalization affects the unity of legislative parties and the winning rates of government legislators.

The Unity of Legislative Parties

The literature presents two alternative views regarding the relationship between party system institutionalization and party unity in congress-

Figure 1. Party System Institutionalization, Legislative Effectiveness, and Ideology



sional votes. The first perspective, which emphasizes organizational capacity and party reputation as the main determinants of congressional behavior, suggests a positive association between institutionalization and voting unity. The second perspective, which stresses the role of party leaders and policy goals as the main driving forces of congressional behavior, casts doubt on the impact of party system institutionalization on voting unity.

According to the first view, the unifying goal of enhancing the value of the party label is not a powerful motivator for legislators in weakly

institutionalized party systems, where party brand names lack consistent policy connotations with voters. In this context, parties do not have the organizational capacity to systematically control who runs under the party label, and the leadership's ability to whip rebel legislators by seriously influencing their re-election prospects is less effective than in institutionalized party systems (Mainwaring 1999). So, from the perspective that sees unity in the legislature as the consequence of the party's usefulness in the electoral arena (Carey and Shugart 1995; Manwaring and Shugart 1997), weak electoral parties should be conducive to weak legislative parties, restricted in their ability to deliver unity in voting decisions. According to the party cartel model, which was developed for the U.S. context, legislators from the majority party empower party leaders and support proposals that reflect the preferences of the median member of their party because these actions enhance the value of the party label, which is considered very important for the advancement of legislators' political careers (Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005). The motivation for forming the party cartel, however, is unlikely to be common in a context of inchoate party systems, where party reputations are not considered very valuable.

The second perspective has emphasized the incentives that emerge inside the legislature as the driving force behind partisan unity. From this viewpoint, the usefulness of legislative parties to individual representatives is relatively unaffected by changes in the electoral arena because there are still strong incentives within the legislature to keep parties as the central actors (Bowler 2000; Figueiredo and Limongi 2000; Thies 2000). In addition to electoral concerns, legislators are typically motivated by policy goals and the desire to attain powerful institutional positions, including more mundane perks. Legislative parties can help individual representatives attain these goals.

Any legislator interested in passing a bill needs to seek out supporters, and, in the process, is likely to promise support for others' proposals in return (Thies 2000). Schwartz (1989) and Aldrich (1995, 30–37) examine the case of a partyless assembly in which legislators have to vote on a series of distributive policies (e.g., porkbarrel projects). They show how joining a party allows legislators to win more often than acting independently, and to receive greater benefits than they would under binding unanimity.³ This type of exchange (i.e., logroll) is always difficult to sustain without some form of enforcement mechanism. Party leaders, therefore, act as the enforcers of the long-term logroll represented by party affiliation (Poole and Rosenthal 1997, 116). National legislatures typically give political parties procedural prerogatives that undermine the effectiveness of independent legislators and enhance the role of partisan leaders. Committee appointments are typically allocated by chamber leaders and distributed according to party size. In addition,

the presidencies of committees, office staff, and other perks of office are also allocated by party leaders.

In addition to the unifying effects derived from the internal organization of legislative business, it can be argued that the lack of ideological commitments and voter linkages that characterizes weakly institutionalized party systems creates opportunities for strong political leaders to gain legislative support. In a context of inchoate parties, legislators may be more easily transformed into obedient backbenchers by resourceful political bosses than in an institutionalized partisan context. Consequently, the relatively low baseline level of unity expected for weakly institutionalized party systems may be temporarily augmented by the whipping and vote-buying abilities of a strong leader, such as a popular majority president.

Some studies suggest that decreases in discipline due to lack of institutionalization might be moderate, at least in regard to voting behavior on the plenary floor.⁴ Relatively high levels of unity have been reported for electorally volatile countries with weakly institutionalized party systems, such as Brazil, Russia, and Peru. According to Figueiredo and Limongi (2000), despite all the weaknesses Brazilian parties display in the electoral arena, the distribution of rights inside Congress leads legislative parties to behave in a unified fashion. This perspective is echoed by Cheibub (2007, 129), who highlights the relevant role played by parties in obtaining the resources Brazilian legislators need for survival: policy influence and patronage (see also Zucco 2009). In the case of Russia, Chaisty (2005) examines patterns of legislative voting and concludes that volatility in the electoral sphere has not had a direct impact on the cohesiveness of Russian legislative parties.⁵ Particularly relevant for this analysis is Carey's 2003 examination of the Peruvian Congress at the end of Alberto Fujimori's presidency. His study finds rather high levels of party unity in recorded roll call votes. According to the author, Fujimori's supporters acted as a cohesive and dominant bloc until the 2000 election, but as soon as their leader became involved in a major corruption scandal, the unity of the government party crumbled.

Thus, in weakly institutionalized party systems, elected members may come to the legislature with few reasons to act in a partisan manner, but a strong president and the internal functioning of legislatures can structure business in a way that promotes partisan behavior, thereby counteracting, at least partly, some of the exogenous disruptive tendencies.

Government Victories in Congressional Votes

In addition to delivering unity in floor votes, leaders from government parties must exercise influence over the legislative agenda to change the

status quo in the direction they want. While the impact of party institutionalization on voting unity has been discussed by several authors, its influence over the management of legislative business remains to be fully scrutinized. One relevant question is whether party leaders in weakly institutionalized party systems are sufficiently empowered to effectively control the congressional agenda.

Positions of authority inside the legislature are usually dominated by party leaders, often from the majority party or, in its absence (a common scenario in weakly institutionalized party systems), from the plurality party or coalition. Individual members of Congress tend to delegate authority to their leaders if they believe that this will improve their own electoral careers. This might mean enhancing the value of the party label for re-election-minded legislators in the United States or the chances of a successful political career at the provincial level in Argentina; or it might be their ability to achieve policy goals, such as reducing the transaction costs of building a floor coalition for every contest on the floor of Congress. Elected party leaders in positions of authority would then use that authority to structure legislators' voting choices so as to prevent divisive partisan issues from reaching the floor and to promote core ones. If they succeed, these activities translate into a voting record that favors the legislative contingent of the ruling coalition over that of the opposition.

Agenda control and party unity are particularly important for achieving the government's legislative goals. For government parties, the ability to win congressional votes is crucial to advancing the executive's policy program. Presidents are often judged on their ability to accomplish their legislative programs, and government legislators often benefit from the legislative achievements of their presidents.

Not long ago, scholars of presidentialism would argue that the legislative success of the government had an impact on regime stability (Linz 1990; Shugart and Carey 1992). Mainwaring and Scully (1995, 26), for example, affirm that inchoate party systems promote not only undisciplined legislative parties but policy paralysis and conflicts between the executive and the party, hindering the functioning of legislatures. But does weak institutionalization hinder the ability of congressional party leaders to control the agenda?

There are reasons to expect agenda control to be less effective in a context of inchoate parties. Weak institutionalization usually implies that congressional leaders are less experienced or that there is more uncertainty about legislators' preferences. Organizational weakness, hollow party labels, and electoral volatility exacerbate coordination problems and make the collective dilemmas associated with building a leadership structure inside the legislature more difficult to resolve. Weak discipline also increases the number of legislative players required for negotiation

to secure floor approval. One influential legislative theory developed with the United States in mind, the conditional party government model (Aldrich 1995; Aldrich et al. 2002), argues that legislators are more likely to empower party leaders when parties are internally cohesive and when interparty polarization is high. As noted before, these twin conditions are less likely to be present when short-lived, nonprogrammatic parties predominate. Thus, from this perspective, weak institutionalization implies lower leadership effectiveness in structuring the voting choices of legislators. In terms of being on the winning side of floor votes, the expected “premium” for belonging to the governing coalition should be comparatively low.

On the other hand, there are reasons to expect that government agenda control will not suffer as a consequence of a weakly institutionalized party system. Several authors have argued that disciplined parties can actually exacerbate the potential sources of executive-legislative conflict. According to Linz (1994, 35), presidents benefit from the possibility of persuading individual legislators, producing schisms within parties, distributing pork, and forming clientelistic alliances. Tsebelis (2002) argues that the lack of internal party cohesion enables the president to make use of the most beneficial coalition on each bill, while internally cohesive parties reduce the win set of the status quo in Congress, making it difficult for whichever branch controlling the agenda to make proposals acceptable to the other.

Thus, weak institutionalization may entail lower discipline; but from this perspective, it does not necessarily lead to greater impediments for governing parties. Carey’s 2003 examination of congressional voting at the end of the Fujimori era lends some support to this view. The majority party built around the president dominated Congress and acted as a rubber stamp for the government. While the semidemocratic character of the Fujimori administration, widespread illegal vote buying in Congress, and the relatively short period of recorded votes from this era raise some questions about the representativeness of this period, the results of Carey’s study suggest that strong majority presidents in inchoate party systems can still build unified legislative support.

THE CASE OF THE PERUVIAN CONGRESS

The empirical analysis focuses on the Peruvian Congress during the presidency of Alejandro Toledo (2001–6). Peru’s party system clearly fits the category of volatile, nonideological party systems and presents a highly appropriate setting to examine the questions of legislative behavior discussed here.

Peru’s congress has experienced extreme electoral volatility, and, according to the literature, it lacks programmatic or highly ideological

parties. In Mainwaring and Scully's seminal work on Latin American parties, Peru is positioned at the bottom of the ranking of party system institutionalization (1995, 17). The country is also last in the institutionalization ranking provided by Payne et al. (2002). And in a more recent work, Jones (2007) updates and extends Mainwaring and Scully's ranking, which is based on party organization, roots in society, legitimacy, and volatility. Here Peru again appears at the bottom of the party institutionalization list, now slightly above Guatemala and Ecuador.

Since the restoration of democratic politics in 1980, the Peruvian party system has undergone substantial transformations, which are reflected in the highest seat and vote volatility figures for all Latin American countries (Jones 2007). The effective number of parties grew from 2.5 in 1980 to 4.4 in the election of 2001. In 1980, the two traditional parties, the center-left Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA, formed in 1924) and the center-right Acción Popular (AP, formed in 1956), together captured 86 percent of seats in the Chamber of Deputies. AP won the presidency with Fernando Belaúnde Terry (1980–85) and 54.4 percent of seats in the Chamber of Deputies. But its share of lower-chamber seats sank to 5.6 percent in the subsequent election of 1985.

In 2001, AP did even worse, receiving only 2.5 percent of seats. This was less than the minimum 5 percent needed for an independent legislative bloc, which led AP to join a multiparty bloc (SAU) with two small parties formed in the mid-1990s, Somos Perú and Unión por Perú.⁶ APRA, the other major party, held 59.4 percent of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies in 1985, when its candidate, Alan García (1985–90), was first elected to the presidency. Its share of seats in the Chamber of Deputies shrank to 29.4 percent in the election of 1990 and then to 6.7 percent in 1995, with the new unicameral congress. APRA recovered a share of 23.3 percent of congressional seats in the 2001 election, becoming the largest opposition party.⁷

Several parties serving as personalist vehicles behind individual candidacies have also captured a substantial proportion of seats, only to weaken drastically afterward. Presidents Alberto Fujimori (1990–2000) and Alejandro Toledo (2001–6), for example, were backed by such parties. According to Coppedge (2001), Fujimori's Cambio 90–Nueva Mayoría (C90-NM) reacted against the legacies of the previous AP and APRA governments by trying not to be a party at all.⁸ It won 17.8 percent of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 23.3 percent in the Senate in the 1990 election and then 55.8 percent of congressional seats in 1995, but by 2001 its share of seats had shrunk to 2.5 percent.⁹

Toledo's Perú Posible (PP) was formed before the 2000 election, having evolved from an earlier organization he had formed in 1994 (País Posible). In the 2001 election, PP won 29.2 percent of the congressional

seats and formed a governing alliance with a smaller party, the Frente Independiente Moralizador (FIM), which contributed an additional 9.2 percent of the seats. As Levitsky and Cameron (2003) note, PP had no *raison d'être* other than Toledo's presidential candidacy.¹⁰ Its ally in government, FIM, was itself a personalist party formed around the candidacy of a formerly independent politician, Luis Fernando Olivera Vega. Both PP and FIM virtually vanished in the following election.¹¹ Unidad Nacional (UN), which was formed in 2000 by four small parties that coalesced to support the candidacy of the Popular Christian politician Lourdes Flores Nano, became the third-largest party after the 2001 election, with 14.1 percent of seats.¹²

In addition to this high level of electoral volatility, the electoral system in place, a combination of small district magnitude and "open" party lists, is typically considered to weaken the value of party labels in comparison to the closed-list, high-district-magnitude variety of proportional representation (Carey and Shugart 1995).¹³ Legislators are elected under proportional representation in 25 electoral districts. Twenty-four districts have an average district magnitude of 3.5 and elect three-fourths of the membership of the Peruvian Congress, while the rest comes from one electoral district (Lima) with magnitude 35. Voters are also able to signal a preference for up to two candidates in a party's list.

The literature on Latin American parties has remarked on the weak programmatic tendencies of Peruvian parties. Rosas (2005), for example, argues that the Peruvian legislative party system is only "minimally organized along substantive dimensions" and that it lacks a clear partisan dimension aside from the rather weak "economic cum regime divide" that separates the government parties from those of the opposition (2005, 836).¹⁴ He goes on to characterize the Peruvian party system as clearly nonideological, as Coppedge (1998) has done before him. Similarly, Jones' 2007 classification of Latin American countries according to their levels of programmatic politics places Peru (along with six other countries) in the lowest category.

With regard to voters' perspectives, Peruvian voters have ranked among the most dissatisfied in the entire Western Hemisphere when it comes to the functioning of democracy; citizens also exhibit very little confidence in political parties (see *Economist* 2008). But preliminary evidence on the behavior of legislative parties is inconclusive.

Thus, Peru's party system appears as a textbook case of weak institutionalization. In addition, the Peruvian Congress offers the opportunity to analyze this relationship in a setting in which internal rules promote partisan behavior, as in most legislatures. In principle, the internal organization of the Peruvian Congress should enhance the role of parties. The steering committee in charge of setting the agenda is composed of the chamber's directorate and the leaders of the partisan blocs.

The former are nominated by parties and elected by the plenary under majority runoff rule, and the latter are elected by parties. On this steering committee, partisan leaders have voting power determined by the size of the respective partisan blocs.¹⁵

Parties have other privileges in terms of debate time and bill introduction. For instance, legislators who want to introduce bills must do so through their party bloc (*grupo parlamentario*), and their proposals must have the sponsorship of at least six additional party members. According to congressional rules, the minimum number of legislators required to formally establish a party bloc is six.¹⁶ While legislators from the same party are forbidden from forming competing blocs, multiparty alliances are allowed.

During the five-year presidency of Alejandro Toledo, no single party had a majority of seats. The governing coalition, PP plus FIM, held a total of 46.6 percent of the congressional seats and therefore lacked monopoly control over the legislative agenda. The government not only had to bargain with opposition legislators to get its policy program enacted, but also had to be mindful of the previously fragmented opposition coalescing on the floor, since the Peruvian Congress does not need a qualified majority to override a presidential veto. This situation generated high uncertainty about the type of alliances that would emerge on the congressional floor after Toledo's election, and contrasted with the single-party government context enjoyed by President Fujimori until the 2000 election.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF LEGISLATIVE BEHAVIOR

Legislative voting behavior conveys important information about partisan positions and the salient dimensions of political conflict. Congressional scholars have used voting data to evaluate party unity for decades (Rice 1925; Aydelotte 1963) and more recently have developed sophisticated statistical techniques to map the positions of individual legislators and assess the dimensionality of the policy space (Poole and Rosenthal 1997; Londregan 2000; Clinton et al. 2004; Poole 2005). This study makes use of scaling techniques and aggregate partisan indices to evaluate the implications previously discussed.

While focusing on the Peruvian case, the analysis also introduces comparable data from the lower chambers of Argentina (2005–7), Brazil (2003–6), Chile (2002–6), and the United States (2003–5). The data come from similar time periods, and the party systems of these countries vary in their levels of institutionalization. Chile and the United States are considered to have well-institutionalized party systems, Argentina is typically ranked in the middle, and Brazil is usually characterized as having a weakly institutionalized party system, but one somewhat stronger than

that of Peru. Brazil and Chile, like Peru, had coalition governments during the time period analyzed, while Argentina and the United States had single-party governments. When analyzing wins by government legislators, the data set also presents the available data from the Fujimori presidency, which was a period of majority government.

Although plenary votes are not habitually recorded in many developing countries, they are used with very high frequency in the Peruvian Congress. During the five-year congressional period 2001–6, a total of 3,286 legislative votes were recorded, a number that, on a per year basis, is similar to the amount of roll calls recorded in the U.S. House of Representatives and the Chilean Chamber of Deputies.

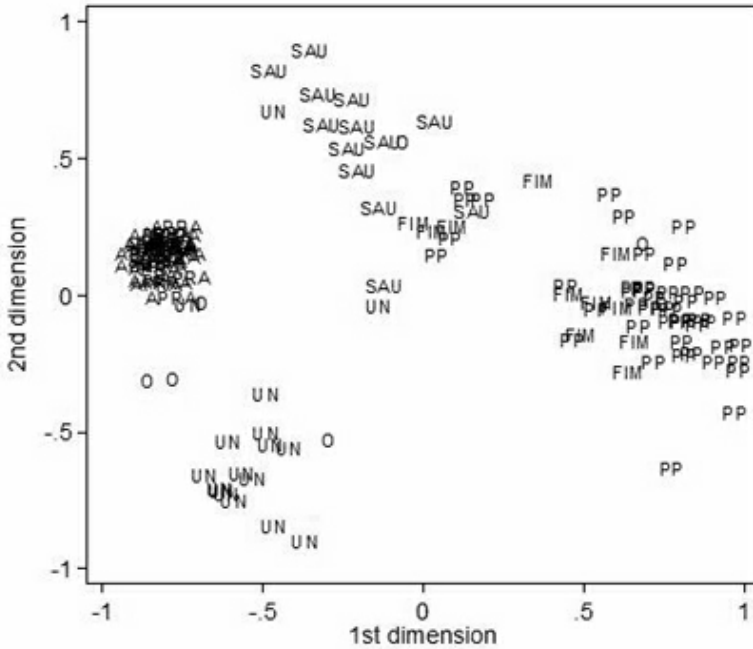
The Unity of Legislative Parties

The analysis of roll call votes begins by using WNOMINATE (Poole and Rosenthal 1997; Poole 2005), the standard technique used in the legislative literature. Starting from a matrix of legislators and roll calls, WNOMINATE produces a *k*-dimensional map of individual ideal points and roll call parameters. While other approaches to scaling roll calls have been developed in recent years (Poole 2000; Clinton et al. 2004; Londregan 2000), the results tend to be very similar with a large number of votes (Poole 2005). When applying WNOMINATE to the Peruvian data, 1,640 votes were dropped from the calculations because of lopsidedness, leaving a total of 1,646 votes to perform the analysis.¹⁷

A two-dimensional model correctly classifies 88.6 percent of voting decisions, which is an improvement of 3 percent over a one-dimensional model. Regarding the percentage of correctly classified voting choices in two dimensions, the result for Peru is slightly lower than for other legislatures but not lower than the average classification percentage for the United States for the period 1789–1985.¹⁸ Figure 2 maps Peruvian legislators according to the recovered ideal points, with labels indicating the associated party group.¹⁹

The ideal points mapped in figure 2 show legislators clustered around four groups that coincide with party affiliation. APRA members appear particularly close to each other, reflecting consistent coincidences in their voting decisions. The governing coalition, however, appears less unified, with a small group of about nine legislators positioned next to the rather dispersed members of the opposition SAU. The first dimension separates members of the government parties, located on the righthand section of the map, from members of the opposition, located on the left. On this main dimension, the median member of President Toledo's party, PP, is located farthest to the right (median = 0.7), not too far from the median of the PP's junior partner in government, FIM (median = 0.4). Legislators from the largest opposition party,

Figure 2. Ideal Points from Roll Call Votes, 2001–2006
(WNOMINATE scores)



APRA, are placed farthest to the left (median = -0.9), not too far from members of the UN (median = -0.6).

The second dimension is driven mainly by differences between opposition legislators (UN vs. SAU).²⁰ During Toledo's administration, the opposition parties UN and SAU took very different public stances. Lourdes Flores, the UN candidate in the 2006 elections, was typically characterized in the press as the moderately conservative or probusiness leader, a role she had already played in the 2001 election. In contrast, SAU's main party, UPP, was taken over by "refugees from the old Marxist left" and ended up endorsing the presidential candidacy of Ollanta Humala, a former army officer, who, according to Schmidt (2007), praised the nationalist dictatorship of Juan Velasco (1968–75), called for a stronger state role in the economy, vowed to halt coca eradication, and opposed the free trade agreement with the United States.²¹ Positions along the second dimension are influenced not only by partisan positions but also by district characteristics. Legislators from the southern region of Peru are significantly more likely to be on the top part of the map (positive scores on the second dimension) than legislators from the Center-Lima region.²²

To evaluate whether partisan unity is comparatively lower than in other presidential countries at different levels of institutionalization, the analysis compares aggregate indices from Peru with those from Brazil, Argentina, the United States, and Chile. The most common index employed in the legislative literature has been the Rice index, which captures the tendency of legislators to vote as their party members do (Rice 1925). It is a form of agreement index, measuring the proportion of legislators siding with the majority of the party. Its value ranges from 0, indicating a 50–50 split, to 100, indicating unanimity.

The measure usually reported is the average Rice score over a particular period of time. Carey (2007) has introduced a useful modification to this index, which weights votes according to how closely they were contested (WRice).²³ The intuition behind this measure is that unity is more critical the more likely it is that defection by any member will be pivotal. Desposato (2005) introduced another useful variation to the index, which adjusts Rice scores to correct for possible bias associated with party size (ARice). As employed here, this measure sheds light on the probability that two members of the same party vote together on a bill. These indicators are calculated as follows:²⁴

$$\text{Rice}_{ij} = \frac{|\text{Yea}_{ij} - \text{Nay}_{ij}|}{\text{Yea}_{ij} + \text{Nay}_{ij}} \text{ for party } i \text{ in vote } j.$$

$$\text{WRice}_i = \sum_j \left(\frac{\text{Rice}_{ij} \times \text{Close}_j}{\sum \text{Close}_j} \right) \text{ for party } i.$$

where, $\text{Close}_j = 1 - \left(2 \times \left| .50 - \left(\frac{\text{Yea}_j}{\text{Yea}_j + \text{Nay}_j} \right) \right| \right)$ for vote j .

$$\text{ARice}_i = \frac{S_i \times \text{Rice}_i^2 + S_i - 2}{2 \times (S_i - 1)} \text{ for party } i \text{ of size } S.$$

Table 1 presents mean scores for the Peruvian Congress and the other legislatures based on results for parties with more than six legislators. The 90 percent confidence intervals are shown in parentheses below the mean, and the total number of parties included in the calculations is shown in the second column. The results show that Peruvian and Brazilian legislative parties have similar scores and are the least unified, while Argentine and Chilean legislative parties have similar scores and are the most unified. The differences between these pairs are substantial, around 10 percentage points for Rice and ARice scores and more than 15 percentage points for WRice scores. U.S. legislative parties are placed in the middle, closer to those of Argentina and Chile in

Table 1. Partisan Unity in 5 Presidential Countries

	Number of Parties	Indices ^a		
		Rice	ARice	WRice
Peru (2001–6)	5	0.76 (0.76–0.77)	0.78 (0.78–0.79)	0.71 (0.70–0.72)
Brazil (2003–6)	11	0.76 (0.76–0.77)	0.79 (0.79–0.80)	0.69 (0.69–0.69)
Argentina (2005–7)	6	0.92 (0.90–0.93)	0.92 (0.90–0.94)	0.89 (0.89–0.90)
Chile (2002–6)	5	0.88 (0.88–0.89)	0.89 (0.88–0.89)	0.89 (0.89–0.90)
United States (2003–4)	2	0.81 (0.81–0.81)	0.83 (0.83–0.83)	0.84 (0.83–0.84)

^aAverage weighted by size of party, for parties with more than six legislators.

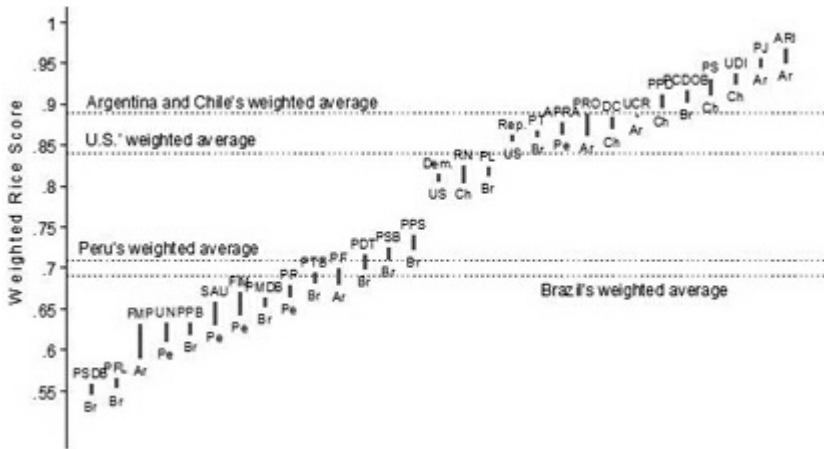
terms of the WRice score but somewhat closer to those of Brazil and Peru in terms of Rice and ARice scores.

Figure 3 shows Rice and WRice 90 percent confidence intervals for all legislative parties with more than six members. The upper label indicates the country and the lower one the party. The dashed lines mark the average WRice for these countries (weighted by membership size). In this group of 29 parties, the minimum scores are for Brazil's PFL (Rice 0.62, WRice 0.59) and PSDB (Rice 0.63, WRice 0.55), while the maximum scores are for Argentina's ARI (Rice 0.97, WRice 0.96) and PJ (Rice 0.96, WRice 0.95).

Parties in the lower quartile, which can be considered very weak in terms of discipline, have average WRice scores ≤ 0.66 and Rice scores ≤ 0.76 . Six parties fit this category under both measures; three are Peruvian (UN, SAU, and FIM) and three are Brazilian (PFL, PSDB, and PPB). Those parties in the upper quartile under both measures, which can be considered highly disciplined, include three Chilean parties (PPD, PS, and UDI), two Argentine parties (PJ and ARI), and one Brazilian party (PCdoB). President Toledo's PP in Peru fits the weakest category for Rice scores and is barely above it in terms of WRice. In contrast, the opposition party, APRA, appears unified, placing just below the strongest category.

This analysis of voting unity leads to two main conclusions. First, Peruvian legislative parties are not irrelevant in terms of influencing voting behavior. Legislators' ideal points, derived from roll call data, are clearly clustered according to party affiliation. Second, while the comparative results suggest a nontrivial cost in terms of unity at low levels of party system institutionalization, two caveats are in order: the associ-

Figure 3. Unity in Roll Call Votes, 29 Legislative Parties in Five Presidential Countries



ation between unity and institutionalization might not be linear, and some political parties can overcome the weakening tendencies of the party system. Results from the five countries show that in weakly institutionalized party systems (Peru and Brazil), partisan unity is lower than in countries with more structured party systems, particularly when votes are more tightly contested.²⁵ But the results for Argentina, which at middle levels of institutionalization exhibits the highest levels of unity (and perhaps those of the United States), cast doubt on a simple linear association between party system institutionalization and voting unity.

The evidence also shows that in weakly institutionalized party systems, a few parties are able to vote in a highly unified manner, as the records of APRA in Peru and the PT and the smaller PCdoB in Brazil show. In the case of Brazil, Mainwaring (1992, 688) suggests that party unity in the PT was primarily a function of its leftist ideology, while Samuels (1999) emphasizes internal rules of procedure and campaign strategies that make PT candidates more beholden to the party than candidates from other parties. In the case of Peru, scholars have consistently remarked—even amid all the electoral chaos—that APRA is the longest-lived and best organized of all relevant Peruvian parties (Angell 1979; Graham 1990; Roberts 2006; Dietz and Myers 2007). Like the Brazilian PT, the Peruvian APRA was originally a leftist party that spent its formative years in the opposition, finally winning the presidency 60 years after it was founded. As Graham (1990) notes, until the 1968 coup, APRA had been the only group to provide a major challenge to the entrenched elites, and during the years in which it was proscribed, it developed a highly organized and hierarchical party structure.

Government Parties

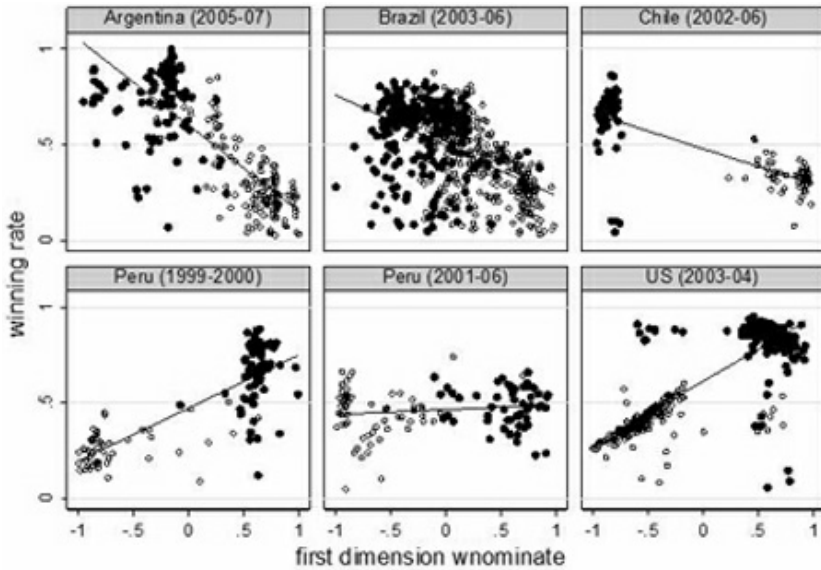
A measure of whether government parties effectively manage congressional votes is how often their legislators are systematic winners. Legislative winners can be conceptualized as those who support changes to the status quo, amendments, appointments, procedural motions, and other moves that succeed in a floor contest. To determine legislators' scores, win rates can be calculated: an individual legislator wins if he or she votes yes on a vote that passes.²⁶ This information reflects the ability of government parties to exert positive control over the congressional agenda (as opposed to negative or veto power).

This analysis adds results for Peru from roll call votes taken during Fujimori's last year in office, when the president enjoyed a single-party majority.²⁷ While the sample of votes from the Fujimori administration used is much smaller than those from the other administrations, and, as noted earlier, corruption and vote buying in the Peruvian Congress were common during this period, the sample provides relevant information about agenda control when Peru had a strong majority president. If the ability to control the agenda hinges primarily on having formal majority status in Congress, then we should observe significant differences between the Toledo and Fujimori periods.

Toledo came to power with a large plurality of nearly 47 percent of congressional seats. This level of support is above Jones' proposed "cut-point for strong legislative support" (1995, 37, 193), which considers Latin American presidents with near-majorities (i.e., ≥ 45 percent) comparable to majority presidents, due to the likelihood that the latter will find some additional support among independent legislators and legislators affiliated with small parties. But Toledo's minority coalition lacked monopoly agenda control: it did not dominate the leadership committee in charge of setting the daily agenda, and the plenary had the power to change scheduled legislative business by taking a majority vote. Nor did the governing coalition under Toledo formally enjoy negative power, since the threshold for overriding an executive veto in Peru is not a qualified majority. There is also evidence that a large plurality can still entail serious costs vis-à-vis an absolute majority, even in more institutionalized contexts. For example, Alemán (2006) finds that in Mexico during the last years of the Zedillo administration, the governing party (PRI) was unable to exercise effective agenda control despite being well institutionalized and holding a plurality of congressional seats.

Figure 4 presents the results derived from analyzing win rates. It shows individual winning rates (vertical axis) given legislators' positions as captured by WNOMINATE's first dimension (horizontal axis)—the main dimension of legislative conflict. Black circles reflect the positions of government legislators; hollow circles reflect the positions of opposi-

Figure 4. Winners in Roll Call Votes



tion legislators; and the line shows the predicted association from an OLS regression. In the three cases shown on top, legislators from government parties tend to be located on the left of the first dimension, while in the three cases shown on the bottom, legislators from the government parties tend to be located on the right of the first dimension.²⁸

The results presented in figure 4 show that in general, legislators from governing parties win significantly more often than legislators from opposition parties. There is a clear association between winning rates and ideal points derived from roll call votes. The only major exception to this trend is Peru under Toledo. In instances of single-party majority government—Peru under Fujimori, Argentina, and the United States—legislators from the majority party have individual winning rates that are about 40 percentage points higher than those of opposition legislators. In Chile, the overall advantage for government legislators is about 31 percent, while in Brazil it is a more modest 16 percent. But the average winning rates for government legislators during Toledo's minority government do not differ much from those of the opposition; they are only about three percentage points higher. The lack of a comfortable congressional majority appears to have hurt the individual win rates of government legislators, a result that is consistent with the view that a single-party majority government provides a more conducive environment than a minority coalition, even if this coalition has near-majority status.

While the results suggest that the status of the government explains the winning rates of legislators better than levels of institutionalization, we should not conclude that weak party institutionalization has no effect on agenda control. Inchoate party systems imply not only congressional victories built on clientelism, side payments, and personalistic appeals, but also a fragile structure of legislative support for the president. When Fujimori began to face a serious governmental crisis after the questionable 2000 elections, the governing bloc crumbled, and so did the winning rates for governing legislators and the unity of his party. It is worthwhile to remember that the corruption scandal that eventually brought down the Fujimori government actually began with leaked videotapes showing legislators being paid off by the country's security chief to switch to the government's side.

CONCLUSIONS

This article has discussed the link between legislative voting behavior and party system institutionalization. It has evaluated the extent to which legislators elected under the same party label take similar policy positions despite the weakness of programmatic commonalities and electoral bonds. While the party systems literature tends to expect fragile partisan unity in weakly institutionalized systems, other theoretical perspectives and empirical analyses suggest that other incentives internal to the functioning of Congress can counteract such tendencies. The analysis focused on Peru, a textbook case of weak party institutionalization.

The mapping of legislative positions showed how, in the Peruvian Congress, the main dimension of legislative conflict is the government-opposition divide, and that Peruvian parties are relevant players, coordinating the voting behavior of legislators. While these findings lend some support to the view that internal incentives are sufficient to produce rather unified legislative parties, the comparison of Peru's results to those of four other countries at different levels of institutionalization suggests that the cost in terms of unity might not be trivial. Peruvian parties appear significantly less unified than parties in Argentina, Chile, or the United States, particularly when votes are closely contested. Brazilian parties, which share a weakly institutionalized context with those of Peru, are also, on average, significantly less unified on closely contested votes, although not as much as Peruvian parties are.

However, the results also show that even in Peru and Brazil, some parties stand out for their rather cohesive behavior. While it is expected that most parties in inchoate party systems would also be characterized by a lack of institutionalization, there is often relevant variation with respect to such traits as longevity, roots in society, organizational strength, programmatic coherence, and electoral stability. The results

from Peru and Brazil suggest that a lower level of analysis, perhaps classifying individual parties in cross-national datasets, can provide much gain to future studies of institutionalization.

The analysis also shows that when presidents enjoy a single-party majority in Congress, government legislators exhibit much higher win rates than opposition legislators. This gap narrows under coalition government. The significant difference in win rates between the Fujimori and Toledo administrations, and the similarities between win rates under Fujimori and those in countries with institutionalized party systems, cast doubt on any simple association between inchoate party systems and agenda control.

The analysis presented in this article contributes to the study of political parties in electorally volatile and organizationally weak multiparty systems by examining legislative voting behavior. The evidence appears consistent with the view that in weakly institutionalized systems, legislative parties are, on average, less unified. Further examination of legislative parties in other countries should improve our understanding of the dynamics of political conflict in electorally volatile contexts. These results also suggest that future research can gain much by studying the interaction between institutionalization and the majority status of government. Such studies would help to confirm (or reject) some of the associations identified in the empirical analysis. Greater availability of voting and other legislative data, together with methodological improvements in analyzing such information, should help this endeavor.

NOTES

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1. For example, Dix 1992; Mainwaring and Scully 1995; Mainwaring 1998; Jones 2007; Field and Hamann 2008. See also Huntington's classic statements on the importance of institutionalized parties for political stability (1965).

2. The institutionalization index was built by combining volatility measures (short and medium term) and citizens' opinions about parties (party identification, confidence, legitimacy of elections, and indispensability). This index is highly correlated with Mainwaring and Scully's 1995 index and Jones' 2007 index.

3. Parties also benefit legislators with similar policy goals by helping them coordinate their actions, which is very valuable in the time constraint setting of national chambers (Cox and McCubbins 1993).

4. Carey (2009) examined partisan unity in a sample of 19 assemblies (presidential and parliamentary) and found a modest positive effect associated with the longevity of a party, but did not find any statistically significant effects asso-

ciated with variables capturing either the age of the regime or the level of partisan fragmentation (the latter highly correlated with party system institutionalization in Latin America).

5. In the period 2002–3, seven of the nine partisan groups represented in the Duma had cohesion scores above the 90 percent mark. Chaisty (2005) shows that between 1995 and 2004, the average cohesion for all Russian parties hovered between 82 percent and 92 percent. In the first meetings of the Duma in 1994, average cohesion was a low 68 percent.

6. Unión por el Perú was founded by former U.N. Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar for his 1995 presidential bid, but according to Schmidt (2007), it was later taken over by Marxists. Somos Perú was founded in 1997 by Lima's former mayor Alberto Andrade, also in preparation for an upcoming presidential contest.

7. It subsequently won the presidential election of 2006, when it also won a total of 30 percent of the seats in the legislature.

8. As Kenney notes, "Fujimori's antiparty discourse, coupled with the very real corruption and incompetence of the 1980s parties and Fujimori's own success in stabilizing the economy, creating conditions for macroeconomic growth, and defeating the Shining Path insurgency, corroded most of what support remained for the 1980s parties after 1990" (2003, 1234).

9. It won 43.3 percent of seats in the controversial 2000 election. In the 2006 election, its numbers increased modestly to 10.8 percent.

10. Taylor characterizes the ruling party (PP) as a having "(a) personalist (as opposed to a formal bureaucratic 'machine') approach to internal decision-making; (b) no deep history of common struggle, shared political culture or lasting esprit de corps among members; (c) no coherent binding ideology, and (d) an absence of committed grassroots activism" (2007, 13).

11. PP won 1.6 percent of seats in the 2006 election, while FIM failed to win any seats.

12. Originally, the alliance included the small parties Partido Popular Cristiano, Cambio Radical, Solidaridad Nacional, and Renovación Nacional. In the 2006 election, UN again supported its leader, Lourdes Flores Nano (originally from the Partido Popular Cristiano) for the presidency. Unlike PP or FIM, this party maintained its share of the vote (about 15 percent) in the 2006 election.

13. Carey (2009) finds modest support for this hypothesis.

14. At the time of the interviews (1997), this meant separating Fujimori's parties from those of the opposition, mainly APRA.

15. See article 30 of the internal rules of the Peruvian Congress. www2.congreso.gob.pe/sicr/RelatAgenda/reglamento.nsf/regla

16. Independent legislators not in a formal partisan bloc have to form a special parliamentary group seeking the support necessary to introduce bills.

17. Considering all votes where at least 2.5 percent of legislators were on the losing side.

18. The overall fit of the two-dimensional model is good: the aggregate proportional reduction in error (APRE), measuring how well the model classifies choices beyond a random baseline, is .50, and the geometric mean probability (GMP), which assesses fit based on the log-likelihood function, is .74. Both measures are comparable across legislatures, and reflect a good statistical fit. When

APRE = 0, the model is explaining nothing, while APRE = 1 means a perfect classification. GMP varies from .5 (no better than flipping a coin) to 1. According to Poole and Rosenthal (1997, 28), the average classification percentage for the United States for the period 1789–1985 was about 84 percent for both the House and the Senate. Although the second dimension appears more relevant in Peru than in other countries, such as the United States or Chile—both with legislatures consistently characterized as one-dimensional in their voting behavior—including more than two dimensions does not provide much gain.

19. The label “O” identifies independents and members of other small parties.

20. In the second dimension, UN median = -0.48 , APRA median = 0.15 , and SAU median = 0.56 . Most legislators from the governing coalition (PP and FIM) are dispersed around the center of the second dimension (medians -0.03 and 0.06 , respectively).

21. The other two SAU parties with very small legislative contingents were AP and Somos Perú. AP’s ideological orientation has fluctuated during its history. Coppedge (1997) classifies it as a secular center-left party in 1962 and as a secular center-right party in 1995. Somos Perú is typically seen as a personalist party with social-Christian tendencies. Alberto Andrade, its founder, was originally a member of the Partido Popular Cristiano.

22. These two regions also exhibit salient disparities in terms of wealth.

23. In the case of the weighted Rice score, a simple majority threshold is assumed. In Peru, supermajority votes do not occur frequently (the override threshold for a presidential veto is half of the membership). This analysis does not assume that nonvotes (absent in a vote) are equal to no’s, as others have done in some cases.

24. As with the WNOMINATE analysis, this excludes lopsided votes (threshold > 2.5 percent on the minority side). For the measure of closeness, a majority (50 percent of votes) is used as a threshold for passage.

25. Relatively weak parties (in terms of Rice scores) tend to be more negatively affected by closely contested votes than other parties.

26. Lawrence et al. (2006), for instance, use win rates to evaluate alternative partisan theories of legislative organization in the U.S. Congress.

27. The analysis excludes votes from the short congressional period that started in August 2000.

28. The left or right position is arbitrary and does not affect results.

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