

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
SCHREYER HONORS COLLEGE

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

EXAMINING THE EFFECT OF SUBCONSTITUENCIES ON  
LEGISLATIVE OUTCOMES

ANTHONY STEM  
FALL 2019

A thesis  
submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements  
for a baccalaureate degree  
in Political Science  
with honors in Political Science

Reviewed and approved\* by the following:

Marie Hojnacki  
Acting Head, Department of Political Science  
Thesis Supervisor

Gretchen Casper  
Associate Professor of Political Science and Asian Studies  
Honors Adviser

\* Signatures are on file in the Schreyer Honors College.

## ABSTRACT

This analysis examines the influence of agricultural subconstituencies on agricultural roll call votes from the 113th and 114th Congresses. By running models with data on each district's agricultural subconstituency size, district partisanship, the ideology of representatives, and whether the representative is running for reelection, I found a significant relationship between the size of the agricultural subconstituency and votes on H.R 2642 (the 2014 US Farm Bill). However, subconstituency size did not have a significant effect on votes for any other bill. Most bills were significantly affected by district partisanship and the ideology of representatives, which is not surprising given the polarized nature of recent Congresses. My research helps to mend a gap in the literature on subconstituencies by utilizing a direct population measure (the percentage of employees in a congressional district) rather than an indirect measure (such as the number of cows per district) to approximate the size of the agricultural subconstituency.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES .....	iii
LIST OF TABLES .....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	v
Chapter 1 Introduction .....	1
Chapter 2 Literature Review .....	5
Subconstituencies .....	5
Roll Call Voting .....	6
Size and Population Density .....	7
Influence of Political Parties .....	8
Homogeneous Interests .....	8
Ideology of Representatives .....	9
Running for Reelection .....	10
Implications .....	11
Chapter 3 Theory .....	12
Hypothesis One: Effect of Agricultural Employment .....	12
Hypothesis Two: Threshold .....	13
Hypothesis Three: Running for Reelection .....	13
Chapter 4 Methodology and Data .....	15
Methodology .....	15
Data .....	22
Chapter 5 Results .....	27
Chapter 6 Conclusion .....	34
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	37

**LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1: Agricultural Employment Per Congressional District (114th Congress).....	23
Figure 2: Lawmaker Ideology Per Congressional District (114th Congress).....	24
Figure 3: District Partisanship (114 <sup>th</sup> Congress).....	25

**LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: Regression of Agricultural Employment in Each Congressional District .....	28
Table 2: Regression of Categorical Variable for Agricultural Employment in Each Congressional District (Model 1) .....	29
Table 3: Regression of Dummy Variables for Different Levels of Agricultural Employment in Each Congressional District (Model 2).....	30
Table 4. Regression of Dichotomous Comparison of Agricultural Employment in Each Congressional District (Model 3) .....	31
Table 5: Regression of Agricultural Employment for Representatives Running for Reelection .....	32
Table 6: Regression of Agricultural Employment for Representatives Not Running for Reelection .....	33

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank Dr. Marie Hojnacki for her unwavering support throughout this endeavor. At the same time, I would like to thank Dr. Gretchen Casper for her role as my honors advisor, Dr. Douglas Kriner for encouraging me to pursue this line of research, and Dr. Anne M. Whitesell, Mr. Stephen Woods, and Ms. Lizhao Ge for helping bring this thesis to fruition. Further, I would like to thank my family, friends, and colleagues for providing me with an exceptional support system throughout my time at Penn State. Completion of this thesis would never have been possible without you.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

To much of the general public, a representative's voting behavior is primarily determined by their party affiliation. However, stakeholders and political analysts are attuned to other factors that hold major influence on these votes. Particular votes by members of Congress are often explained by the large populations within their congressional districts. These large populations form subgroups known as subconstituencies. Subconstituencies can be industrial (such as coal and agriculture) as well as ethnic and social (such as Hispanic and Catholic). The size of these subgroups across districts is colloquially used to explain the voting behavior of members of Congress. Phrases such as "it's a big agricultural district" or "there are a lot of coal voters in that district" are regularly used by staffers, political pundits, and the business community when discussing a representative's roll call votes. From this perspective, voting records are one of the best indicators of how a politician views their constituency. Often, industrial subconstituencies are represented by advocacy groups (such as the American Farm Bureau for agriculture) that claim to represent the policy preferences of that group and carry the weight of that subconstituency's voters.

Subconstituency influence on the behavior of members of Congress has featured prominently in recent headlines. When senators from pro Trump states (such as Nebraska and Iowa) expressed skepticism towards the President's tariffs on China, the senators cited the tariff's adverse effect on the large agricultural subconstituency within their state as their reasoning for this stance. Subconstituency effect was used to explain why some liberal

politicians (such as former Senator Joe Biden of Delaware) have not favored regulations that would adversely affect corporations in their home states that employ a sizable percentage of their reelection constituency. Senator Joe Manchin of West Virginia is often cited for his pro coal stances that are at odds with the national Democratic Party but in line with his constituency. Senator Manchin's stances towards the coal industry are typical of members of Congress from both parties in West Virginia, showcasing the influence of the coal constituency in that state.

Even in an era of highly polarized politics, constituencies force regional nuance and magnify local interests. How do congressional constituencies affect a representative's roll call voting behavior? Is there a direct relationship between constituency size and a representative's votes on policies important to that constituency? How do other factors such as district partisanship and ideology of representatives impact the influence of constituencies on roll call voting behavior?

To answer these questions, I examine the relationship between the constituencies in a congressional district and the voting records of members of Congress on policies important to that constituency. Particularly, I focus on the agricultural constituency and how its presence in districts affects votes on bills deemed important to the agriculture industry: H.R 2642 (The 2014 US Farm Bill), H.R 2146 (Trade Promotion Authority), H.R 1599 (The Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act of 2015), and S.J Res 22 (repealing the Clean Water Rule). Further, I examine the impact of the representative's party, ideology, district partisanship, and whether they are running for reelection on the constituency's ability to influence roll call votes.

Based off the existing literature, I form a series of hypotheses A legislator's vote is more likely to be affected when s/he has agricultural employment within their congressional district (regardless of party, district partisanship, and lawmaker ideology) than when there is not



agricultural employment within his/her congressional district. A legislator's vote is more likely to be affected by the size of the subconstituency in her/his district when the subconstituency is above a threshold population density than when the subconstituency is below that threshold population density. Further, a legislator's vote is more likely to be affected by the size of the subconstituency in her/his district when s/he is running for reelection than when s/he is not running for reelection.

My study helps to bridge a current gap in the literature by using a direct measure of population (the percentage of persons employed in agriculture per district) as opposed to one of the many indirect measures (such as the number of cows per district) used by other studies to approximate the size of subconstituencies. Admittedly, some other studies have utilized direct measures of subconstituency size with mixed results. However, in an era of heightened partisanship and political polarization, it is worth taking a new look at the subconstituency phenomenon. Given the current environment, it is possible that subconstituencies play a lesser role in influencing the behavior of members of Congress than they did previously. In an era of increasingly homogenized policy preferences and polarized politics, it will be informative to see how the conventional wisdom on subconstituencies holds up.

Rather than use one measure of the size of agricultural subconstituencies, as is common with many studies, this analysis uses four different measures for the independent variable: the raw percentage of agricultural employment, a measure utilizing individual indicators for each level, a measure considering the separate effect of each level of employment from smallest to largest, and a measure judging the size of the subconstituency as simply “low” or “high.” This enables us to compare if the significant effect of subconstituency size on votes is consistent and robust across measures. By including district partisanship and the ideology of representatives as

dependent variables in each of the models, we can compare the extent to which these variables have a significant effect on the vote with the extent to which subconstituency size has a significant effect on the vote.

Unlike most studies, this analysis goes one step further by considering the effect of running for reelection on subconstituency influence. This will help shed light on whether traditional theories on how reelection affects roll call voting still hold true in the current hyperpolarized environment. Further, this analysis uniquely focuses on the threshold of subconstituency size. If the analysis demonstrates that votes on agricultural bills are affected by subconstituency size past a certain threshold, interest groups and political analysts alike could use that approach in order to find natural allies for public policy on Capitol Hill. Any of these results would be particularly robust if they were observed across multiple measures of the independent variable (the size of the agricultural subconstituency).

In the upcoming section, I perform a literature review that details existing scholarship on subconstituencies and the various elements that impact their influence on roll call votes. Next, I discuss these data used for this analysis and the methodology used to process these data. Finally, I will analyze the results of the analysis and its implications for this area of study.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

Members of Congress can only achieve electoral success if they possess a deep understanding of their district and constituency. The development of improved survey techniques and institutionalized interest groups provide members of Congress with increasingly detailed information about the makeup and preferences of their constituencies. When comparing districts, politicians and observers alike divide electorates into subgroups known as subconstituencies. The size of these subgroups across districts is commonly used to explain the voting behavior of representatives. What explains this purported influence on voting behavior, and how do constituent preferences shape a representative's legislative decision making? Through this literature review, I hope to understand the subconstituency phenomenon and what factors (including subconstituency size) shape subconstituency influence on roll call voting behavior.

### **Subconstituencies**

Members of Congress are prone to view their constituency as a collection of groups rather than a single semi homogeneous unit. Lenses through which to view constituencies include geographical boundaries, influential persons within districts, and prominent racial, ethnic, or occupational groups within the larger population (Eulau and Karps, 1977). In *Homestyle*, Richard Fenno divides constituencies into four categories; geographical constituencies (the boundaries of districts), reelection constituencies (the large population of favorable voters), primary constituencies (a smaller group of ardent supporters), and personal

constituencies (the representative's closest political associates along with community thought leaders) (Fenno, 1977). Occupational groups (often from industries such as agriculture, mining, technology, and manufacturing) form economic based subconstituencies. Industry ties provide these economic subconstituencies with representation from lobbying groups and political action committees who attempt to speak on the behalf of that subconstituency and influence members of Congress accordingly.

Thanks to tools such as the US Census, political polling, and other scientific surveys, members of Congress (and those who try to influence them) have a strong understanding of the makeup and preferences of their constituencies. In light of this evidence, it is logical for representatives to consider the size of each subgroup within their district when performing legislative activity and weighing constituent preferences. If a subconstituency is large within a district, particularly one aligned with a powerful economic interest group, it would be natural for a member of Congress to emphasize the preferences of that group when crafting their voting record. As noted by Kristina Miler, some districts may possess multiple subconstituencies within a single policy area that hold competing views (Miler, 2007). For instance, districts home to sizable corn production may possess populations of corn growers and consumers that have clashing policy preferences and potentially fall in different subconstituencies.

### **Roll Call Voting**

Legislators believe their roll call votes and related legislative activities have major electoral impact. While researchers may be skeptical of the power of roll call votes to sway elections, they acknowledge that members of Congress strongly believe in such a relationship (Miller and Stokes, 1963). If members of Congress believe their constituents are paying close

attention to their voting record, roll call votes become a primary tool for signaling support to prominent subconstituencies. By examining a representative's voting record, observers may be able to predict which subconstituencies are prominent within a representative's district.

Members of Congress go to great lengths to hide legislative activity at odds with the preferences of their constituents. This helps to illustrate the perceived electoral importance of a representative's individual voting record. Douglas Arnold explains this through his theory of "traceability:" if a member of Congress elects to take an unfavorable position, they often go to extreme lengths to hide such actions from their voters (Arnold, 1992). The frequency of vote specific attack ads during campaigns illustrates the importance of distancing oneself from such votes. If a member of Congress supports a regulatory change at odds with one of their prominent subconstituencies, the member of Congress may work within a congressional committee to ensure the policy is considered as part of a larger package (such as an omnibus bill) rather than as a stand alone bill. Nevertheless, clever opponents will attempt to trace these votes back to the incumbent member of Congress.

### **Size and Population Density**

Research has demonstrated links between size of subconstituencies within districts and representative's voting behavior. In a study examining congressional support of agricultural producers, Bellemare and Carnes observed that "the most consistent predictor of support for agricultural protection is the proportion of a legislator's constituents who are farm owners or farm managers" (Bellemare and Carnes, 2014). When Richard A. Smith examined lobbying efforts surrounding the creation of a stand alone Department of Education, the number of residents employed as teachers (and members of pro teacher special interest groups) within a

representative's district helped to predict whether members of Congress voted for or against the initiative (Smith, 1995).

This evidence suggests the population density of a subconstituency can be used to indicate that subgroup's legislative influence within a district. According to the trends seen in these studies, subconstituencies with a large population density in a district will likely experience a favorable voting record from their representative. On the other hand, those with small population densities should not expect similar support.

### **Influence of Political Parties**

Regardless of district specific factors, a representative's political party affiliation is the most steadfast predictor of roll call voting behavior. While national political parties are losing control over some elements of the political process, the Republican National Committee (RNC) and Democratic National Committee (DNC) maintain strong influence over roll call votes. Research by Adam Ramey suggests the weight placed by members of Congress on constituent views has grown somewhat weaker over time, making it easier for both Democratic and Republican members of Congress to move away from their constituency's preferences and vote in tandem with the national party (Ramey, 2015). If this is the case, the influence of district specific subconstituencies (with localized or regional preferences) may be one of the few safeguards preventing a primarily nationalized politics.

### **Homogeneous Interests**

While some subconstituencies have historically held localized views on particular issues, preferences amongst similar subconstituencies are becoming increasingly homogeneous. Devin

Caughey, James Dunham, and Christopher Warshaw observe that “economic, racial, and social liberalism have become highly correlated across partisan subconstituencies, just as they have across members of Congress” (Caughey et al., 2018). These trends were found to be consistent across social, racial, and economic policy, helping to explain why national parties and interest groups have usurped legislative influence from local groups with minimal resistance.

Given this research, we should expect for analogous subconstituencies across different states to support similar initiatives. Further, their congressional representatives should exhibit similar voting records on these policies. For instance, members of Congress representing large coal subconstituencies in Pennsylvania should mirror the votes of their colleagues from similar districts in West Virginia, Wyoming, and Kentucky. While regional nuances may have previously limited such symmetry, the nationalization of subconstituency views has homogenized local preferences.

### **Ideology of Representatives**

While all representatives enter office with preconceived ideological views and pressure from national political parties, large subconstituencies have the power to outweigh these preferred stances. This phenomenon is evident in states dominated by specific industries but represented by members of Congress whose party is often at odds with that industry. For example, former Representative Beto O'Rourke was often at odds with his party (but in line with the numerous residents of his district who worked for the oil and gas industry) when voting on energy and environment issues.

Scholars are torn on what conditions are most conducive to members of Congress overriding or “shirking” the preferences of their constituents. Part of this divide rests on whether

members of Congress are best described as representative of the proverbial “median constituent” from their district or whether they act in concert with their personal beliefs (Poole and Rosenthal, 1996). Keith Poole and Howard Rosenthal highlight two theories: the first, “economic/principal-agent,” paints representatives as primarily bound to the views of their constituencies (Poole and Rosenthal, 1996). Based on this theory, a representative’s personal ideology is of little importance when weighed against constituent preferences. The second theory “political/ideological,” places greater emphasis on “innate policy beliefs and preferences” of the member of Congress. If this theory is correct, correlations between subconstituency population density and roll call voting patterns could be easily overridden by a representative’s personal ideology.

John E. Jackson and John W. Kingdon believe a representative’s personal ideology plays an important impact on roll call voting. However, they are skeptical of the accuracy of common methods for measuring the ideology of members of Congress (Jackson and Kingdon, 1992). Particularly, they oppose the use of Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) or American Conservative Union (ACU) scorecards (or other similar measures) for “serious statistical bias that overestimates the influence of personal ideology and underestimates the relationship with other variables” (Jackson and Kingdon, 1992). Poole and Rosenthal express similar concerns, instead suggesting that researchers use academic NOMINATE scores rather than partisan scorecards to compare the ideology of members of Congress (Poole and Rosenthal, 1996).

### **Running for Reelection**

Representatives who choose not to run for reelection face diminished pressure to adhere to constituent preferences. Research suggests retiring members of Congress are more likely to



deviate from their standard voting positions than their colleagues running for reelection (Rothenberg and Sanders, 2000). As a whole, representatives become more liberal in their voting records after announcing their retirement and attend fewer roll call votes (Figlio, 1995). While retirement doesn't mandate a change in one's voting positions, the costs of doing so are dramatically reduced. Some members of Congress feel positioned to shirk constituent preferences regardless of whether they are running for reelection. A study by Poole and Rosenthal demonstrated that, even in high pressure (reelection) circumstances, a representative's personal preference can overcome economic subconstituency interests in some cases (Poole and Rosenthal, 1996).

### **Implications**

Members of Congress are predisposed to view their district as a collection of distinct subconstituencies. While evidence does not conclusively show that roll call voting behavior has a major effect on electoral outcomes, representatives believe strongly in this relationship. As a subconstituency grows in size, its influence on roll call voting appears to grow along with it. While factors such as a representative's political party and whether they are running for reelection have substantial impact on roll call votes, subconstituency preferences appear to also be a primary determinant of roll call voting behavior. However, the mere presence of a subconstituency may not be enough to impact roll call voting. In order to hold significant influence, subconstituencies may need to be of a certain size in order for a member of Congress to view them as a critical piece of their reelection constituency and thereby place substantial weight on their preferences.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Theory**

The literature highlights the notable influence of subconstituencies on congressional roll call voting. Further, it describes variables such as district partisanship and ideology of representatives that simultaneously shape these decisions and affect the influence of subconstituency preferences. This analysis aims to compare how the size of agricultural subconstituencies across congressional districts impacts the voting behavior of members of Congress. Further, it examines how variables such as the ideology of representatives, district partisanship, and running for reelection shape or diminish subconstituency influence. While I believe subconstituency size has a major effect most roll call votes, some variables will have a notable effect on the extent of subconstituency influence.

#### **Hypothesis One: Effect of Agricultural Employment**

When examining a subconstituency of agricultural interests in a congressional district, the size of that subconstituency will significantly affect roll call voting behavior. Other variables may affect the extent of this effect. However, subconstituency influence is likely to present itself regardless. While district partisanship and ideology of representatives are important variables and might have a notable effect on subconstituency influence, research by Poole and Rosenthal suggests constituency makeup and preferences are greater determinants of the voting behavior of members of Congress (Poole and Rosenthal, 1996). Accordingly, my first hypothesis on the impact of the agricultural subconstituency on roll call voting is as follows;

*A legislator's vote is more likely to be affected when s/he has agricultural employment within their congressional district (regardless of party, district partisanship, and lawmaker ideology) than when there is not agricultural employment within his/her congressional district.*

### **Hypothesis Two: Threshold**

When examining the agricultural subconstituency of a congressional district, the subconstituency may need to reach a certain size before garnishing the attention of members of Congress and holding substantial influence over roll call votes. I predict a threshold can be used to predict whether the subconstituency is large enough to influence the representative's roll call votes. Given the increasing homogeneity of subconstituency preferences discussed by Caughey, Dunham, and Warshaw (Caughey et al., 2018), this threshold should be relatively consistent across the United States. While each piece of legislation is considered under a unique set of circumstances, I expect a relatively similar trend across several bills. Therefore, my hypothesis on predictable thresholds is as follows:

*A legislator's vote is more likely to be affected by the size of the subconstituency in her/his district when the subconstituency is above a threshold population density than when the subconstituency is below that threshold population density.*

### **Hypothesis Three: Running for Reelection**

Reelection will have a dramatic effect on ability of subconstituencies to impact roll call voting. As detailed by Rothenberg and Sanders, representatives who choose not to run for reelection feel less pressure to adhere to constituent preferences (Rothenberg and Sanders, 2000).

When the pressure exerted by large subconstituencies is removed, members of Congress are free to vote as they please. Therefore, my hypothesis on representatives running for reelection is as follows;

*A legislator's vote is more likely to be affected by the size of the subconstituency in her/his district when s/he is running for reelection than when s/he is not running for reelection.*

In the next section, I describe data collected for the purpose of examining the influence of agricultural subconstituencies on roll call votes from the 113th and 114th Congresses. This includes data on agricultural subconstituency size, district partisanship, and whether the representative is running for reelection. Further, I discuss the methods and measures used to test these hypotheses.

## Chapter 4

### Methodology and Data

#### Methodology

Agriculture is a strong choice for examining subconstituency influence on roll call voting. Some subconstituencies, such as coal miners, are geographically concentrated in a handful of states. On the other hand, agriculture is geographically diverse and present in all American states. Further, the availability of employment data for the subconstituency through the US Census County Business Patterns Survey was another advantage. These data enable us to determine the size of the agricultural subconstituency in each district and form the independent variable for the analysis.

The agricultural subconstituency has a diverse legislative portfolio. The most prominent stand alone piece of legislation in agricultural policy is the Farm Bill, a five to six year omnibus bill that touches nearly all forms of agriculture irrespective of the operation's size, type of ownership, and commodity produced. The Farm Bill typically receives bipartisan support (roll call "yes" votes from both Democrats and Republicans) and dominates most of the debate on agricultural policy for that Congress. Due to these factors, the effect of the agricultural subconstituency on roll call votes may exhibit itself most dramatically with the Farm Bill. However, the unique nature of the Farm Bill means it is not representative of most congressional legislation.

To develop takeaways on the effect of subconstituency size on roll call voting, other agricultural legislation must be included in the analysis. To accomplish this, I selected bills

designated as priority legislation by the American Farm Bureau (commonly referred to as the Farm Bureau). The Farm Bureau is the most prominent agricultural interest group in the United States. To many policymakers, the positions of the Farm Bureau speak for the agricultural industry and its employees writ large, helping analysts to understand what policies and positions are most important to the agricultural subconstituency. By examining press releases distributed by the Farm Bureau, I identified legislation prioritized by the interest group and subconstituency during the 114th Congress. From these bills, I selected legislation that received “aye” roll call votes from both congressional Democrats and Republicans. Party line votes would simply exhibit a relationship between the representative’s party and the vote in question. By choosing bipartisan votes for the analysis, subconstituency effect can be discerned.

To test my hypotheses, I primarily examined agricultural legislation from the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress (January 2015-January 2017). Unlike the 113<sup>th</sup> and 115th Congresses, this Congress did not work on an all encompassing “Farm Bill” and instead featured numerous pieces of stand alone agricultural legislation. During a Congress that considers a Farm Bill, most agricultural legislation is placed into the Farm Bill, minimizing the number of stand alone votes in this policy area. The 114<sup>th</sup> Congress featured numerous stand alone bills deemed important by the American Farm Bureau.

The first bill used for this study is H.R 2146. This House vote took place on June 18, 2015 and made Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) a rider on the Defending Public Safety Employee’s Retirement Act. TPA was designed to empower the President of the United States to negotiate international trade agreements by removing Congress’s ability to amend or filibuster an agreement. TPA was considered necessary by the Obama Administration in order to ratify the Transpacific Partnership, which would have opened new markets to American agricultural

producers. The Farm Bureau “welcomed” TPA and praised it as “the catalyst needed to advance U.S. proposals to reduce tariffs and improve market access for farmers and ranchers in trade negotiations” (“Farm Bureau Welcomes,” 2014). The final vote was 218 ayes to 208 nays. One hundred ninety Republicans and 28 Democrats voted in favor of the bill. Fifty Republicans and 158 Democrats voted against the bill. Eight total members of Congress did not vote on the bill. For this bill, I expect to observe a significant relationship between the agricultural subconstituency and votes from members of Congress. Throughout the analysis, this vote is referred to as TPA.

The second bill utilized was H.R 1599, the Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act of 2015. This House vote took place on July 23, 2015. The legislation would have allowed the FDA to create a national standard for the labeling of GMO foods, replacing a patchwork of state systems viewed as a market access barrier for many farmers. The Farm Bureau voiced its support for the Act, stating it “...would protect consumers from confusing and misleading GMO labels and create a national, voluntary labeling standard based on science and common sense... many farmers are growing more food with fewer resources, reducing their environmental impact, and keeping costs down—all thanks to advances in biotechnology” (“House Passes,” 2015). The result of the vote was 275 ayes to 150 nays. Two hundred thirty Republicans and 45 Democrats voted in favor of the bill. Twelve Republicans and 138 Democrats voted against the bill. Eight total members of Congress did not vote on the bill. For this bill, I expect to observe a significant relationship between the agricultural subconstituency and votes from representatives. Throughout the analysis, this vote is referred to as the Labeling Act.

The third bill was S.J.Res. 22, a joint resolution to overturn the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA’s) 2015 Clean Water Rule. This vote in the House took place on January 13,

2016. The Clean Water Rule had expanded the bodies of water regulatable by the EPA under the Clean Water Act of 1972 by clarifying and broadening the definition of “waters of the United States.” This impacted agriculture by increasing the number of regulations applicable to the land harvested by many farmers. The Farm Bureau encouraged repeal of the Clean Water Rule (commonly referred to as WOTUS) stating that the EPA had “...failed to listen to concerned farmers, ranchers and business owners around the country in crafting its new rule, vastly expanding EPA’s and the Corps’ regulatory authority beyond the limits approved by Congress and affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court” (“Tell EPA,” 2017). The final tally of the vote was 245 ayes to 166 nays. Two hundred forty-one Republicans and 12 Democrats voted in favor of the bill. One Republican and 165 Democrats voted against the bill. Fourteen members of Congress did not vote on the bill. For this bill, I expect to observe a significant relationship between the agricultural subconstituency and votes from representatives. Throughout the analysis, this vote is referred to as WOTUS.

Along with these agricultural votes, I collected data on H.R.4038, the American SAFE Act of 2015. This House vote on refugee policy, which took place on November 19, 2015, was effectively unrelated to agriculture and allowed me to identify if any trends observed across the previously listed bills would also appear on a nonagricultural bill. The final tally was 289 ayes to 137 nays. Two hundred forty-two Republicans and 47 Democrats voted in favor of the measure. Two Republicans and 135 Democrats voted against the bill. Eight members of Congress did not vote on the measure. For this bill, I do not expect to observe a significant relationship between the agricultural subconstituency and votes from representatives. Throughout the analysis, this vote is referred to as the SAFE Act.



In addition, I collected data on the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013 (popularly known as the 2014 Farm Bill). This bill received a vote in the House on January 29, 2014. Even though this legislation is from a different Congress than the other bills (the 113th), I thought it was worth including due to its importance to the subconstituency. The Farm Bill may be where the impact of the agricultural subconstituency is most apparent, as it touches upon nearly every form and element of agriculture in the United States. While this would force me to not include a number of congressional districts in my dataset that changed representatives between the 113<sup>th</sup> and 114th Congresses, I thought this was a worthy limitation as it was impossible to find a recent Congress that considered both a Farm Bill as well as significant stand alone agricultural legislation. One hundred and sixty-two Republicans and 89 Democrats voted in favor of the bill. Sixty-three Republicans and 103 Democrats voted against the measure. Fourteen members of Congress did not participate in the vote. For this bill, I expect to observe a particularly significant relationship between the agricultural subconstituency and votes from representatives. Throughout the analysis, this vote is referred to as the Farm Bill.

I used govtrack.us, a database that lists the ayes and ayes from congressional votes on a state by state basis, to create five direct variables, each indicating a representative's vote on the relevant bill. Govtrack sources its data from Congress.gov, the government's official online record for roll call votes. Each "aye" vote was listed in the dataset as a "1." Each "no" vote was listed as a "0." Abstentions were considered missing data.

My primary independent variable was the percentage of persons employed in agriculture across each congressional district. To obtain these data, I utilized the 2013 US Census County Business Patterns survey, which looks at each congressional district from the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress. This annual survey is sent to each district and estimates the number of persons employed in

industries such as utilities, construction, and manufacturing. Notably, agriculture is listed as “agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting” (as opposed to just agriculture). However, this is the closest direct population measure I could find for agriculture on the congressional district level, so I proceeded with this limitation. With these data, I took the number of persons employed in agriculture and divided it by the total number of persons employed in that congressional district. This provided the percentage I would use to form my independent variable.

This analysis uses four different measures of subconstituency size for the independent variable. The first measure is the “percent of agricultural employment.” As shown in Table 1, I regress the representative’s vote on the percentage of agricultural employment in each district, the partisanship of each district, the ideology of each member of Congress, and whether the member of Congress ran for reelection. The next measure replaces the percentage of agricultural employment measure with a categorical indicator that ranges from zero to three. “Zero” represents districts with the smallest agricultural employment and “3” represents districts with the largest agricultural employment. The results of this model are displayed in Table 2. The next measure considers the separate effect of each level of employment (relative to the smallest level) on the votes. Unlike the previous measure, the use of individual indicators for each level allows me to determine whether the effect of agricultural employment is dissimilar at different levels. The results of this model are displayed in Table 3. The final measure looks at the size of the subconstituency as simply “low” vs “high” agricultural employment. The lower two quartiles of the independent variable are deemed as having “low” agricultural employment while the upper two quartiles are deemed as having “high” agricultural employment. “Low” districts were scored with a zero and “high” districts were scored with a one. The results of this model are displayed in Table 4.

To measure the ideology of each member of Congress, I used NOMINATE Scores from the VoteView Project. Developed at the University of California Los Angeles, this dataset compiles the comprehensive voting records for all members of Congress in United States history and tabulates their ideology accordingly. Specifically, I utilized the `nokken_poole_dim1` score, which lists economic liberalism as a negative number and economic conservatism as a positive number. Perfectly centrist representatives would be labeled as a “0”.

To measure the partisanship of each district, I used a modified version of the Cook PVI. Compiled by the Cook Political Report, this dataset compares the results of presidential elections in each district compared to the national popular vote. Districts that outperform the national vote are given percentage points and labeled as Republican or Democratic leaning districts (such as D+2 or R+7). Districts that match the popular vote are labeled as “EVEN.” To turn this into a single variable, I converted these data into a “Cook GOP Rating” that examines the conservativeness of a district. Republican leaning districts are listed as positive numbers, EVEN districts are listed as “0,” and liberal leaning districts are listed with negative numbers.

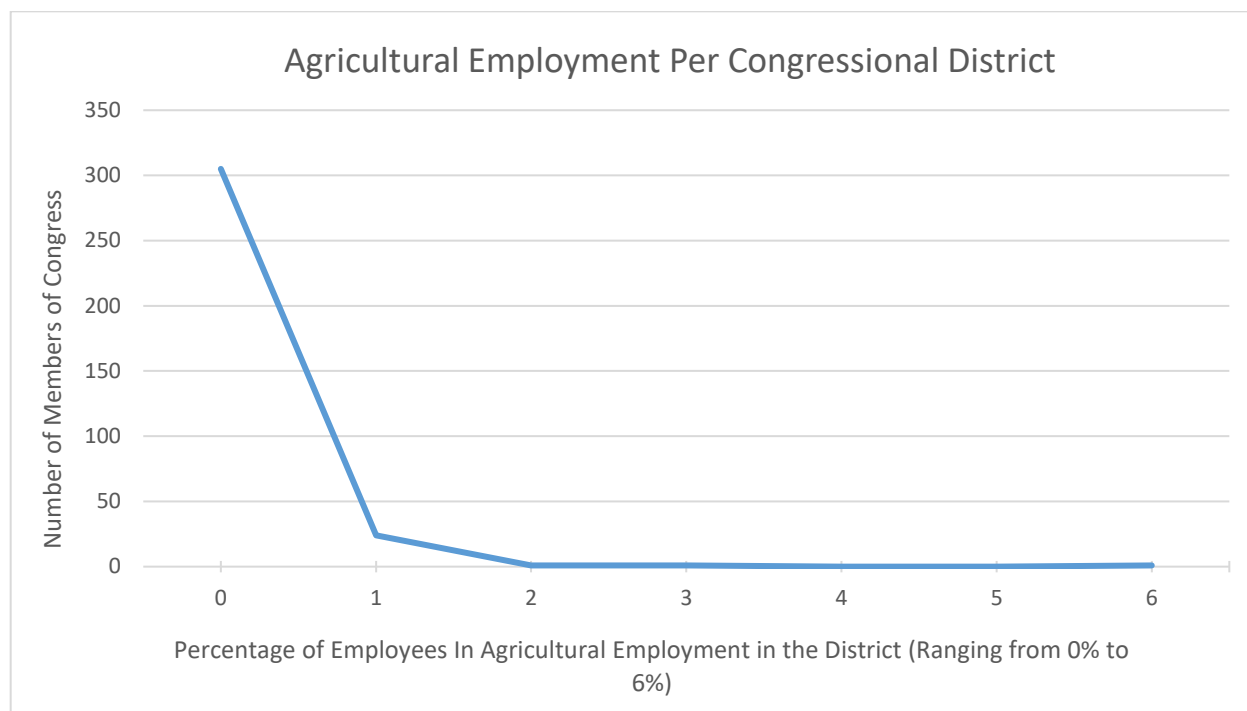
To record the party of each member of Congress, I used the party identification listed on [govtrack.us](http://govtrack.us). Republicans were coded with a “1.” Democrats were coded with a “0.” To measure whether a member of Congress ran for reelection, I used two steps. First, I temporarily added a bill from the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress to my dataset and marked all representatives appearing in both the 114<sup>th</sup> and 115<sup>th</sup> Congresses as “ran for reelection.” Second, for the members of Congress not appearing in in both Congresses, I used various news articles and databases to confirm whether they had retired or lost a reelection campaign. Those deemed to have run for reelection were scored with a “1.” Those who did not run for reelection were scored with a “0.” I removed all

districts whose member of Congress changed between the 113th and 114th Congresses. Further, I removed all districts whose representative did not vote on all five of the bills in question.

## **Data**

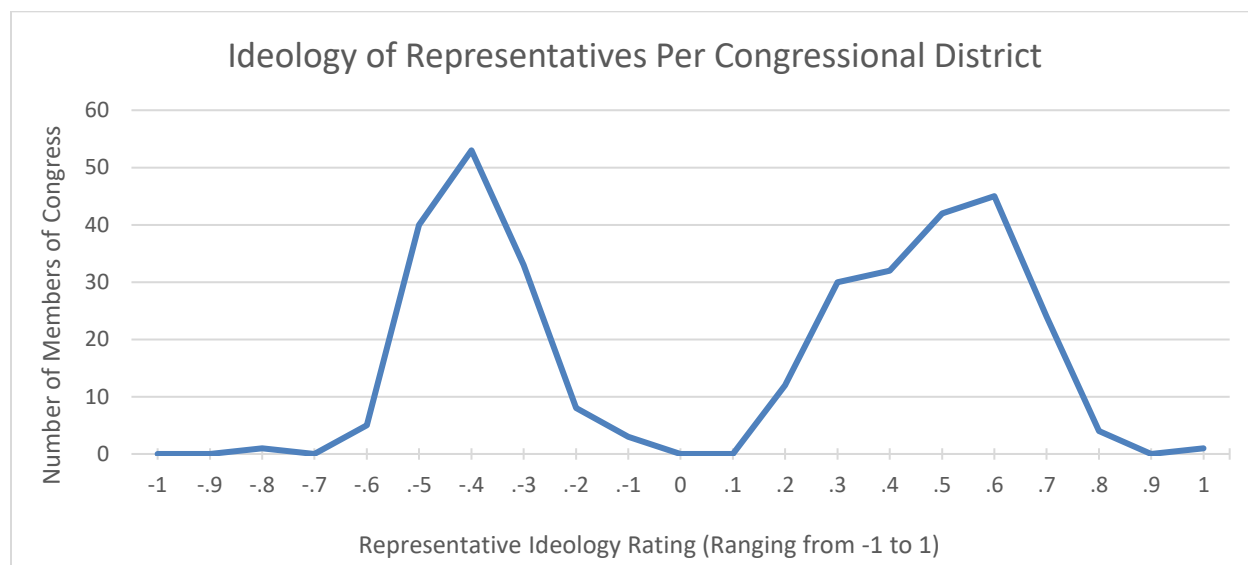
There were 332 congressional districts and members of Congress in the dataset representing 48 states. The most frequently included states were California and Texas. The least frequent states were Alaska, Delaware, Montana, Wyoming, West Virginia, Virginia, South Dakota, and North Dakota with one representative. There were 185 Democrats in the dataset and 147 Republicans.

The mean agricultural employment percentage was .0015704. With a minimum of 0 (122 districts) and a maximum of .0569371 (California's 21<sup>st</sup> Congressional District), the range was .0569371. The 25<sup>th</sup> percentile was 0, 50<sup>th</sup> percentile was .0003045, and the 75<sup>th</sup> was .001395. Overall, 122 districts were between the 0<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> percentiles, 19 districts were between the 25<sup>th</sup> and 50<sup>th</sup> percentiles, 108 districts were between the 50<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles, and 83 districts were between the 75<sup>th</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> percentiles. The subconstituency measure is highly skewed, with a vast majority of representatives falling under one percent. If my hypotheses are correct, it would entail very small changes in the size of the agricultural subconstituency having a large effect on the voting behavior of members of Congress.

**Figure 1: Agricultural Employment Per Congressional District (114<sup>th</sup> Congress)**

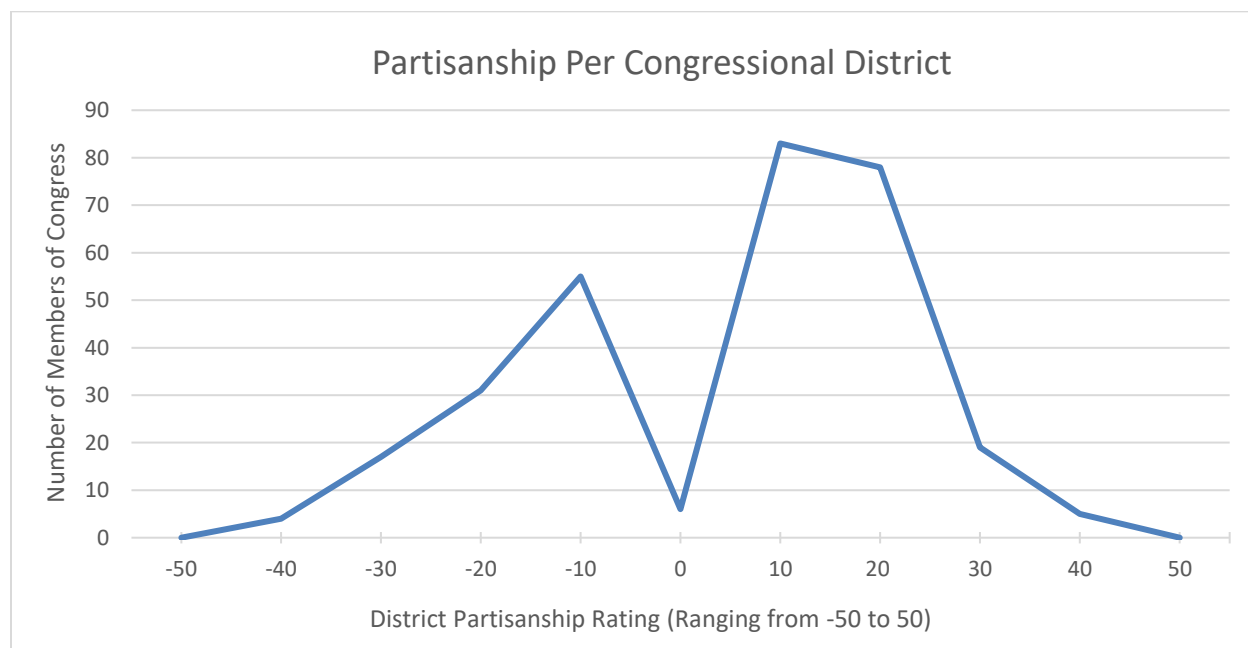
The mean lawmaker ideology (NOMINATE) score was .1119127. With a minimum of -.765 and a maximum of .991, the range was 1.756. The mean was .1119127, indicating a center right ideology for the “mean” member of Congress. A large portion of the representatives are situated on the center left and center right of the scale, with few located in the middle of the ideological spectrum. This is not surprising considering the polarized political environment in the United States. Further, it reflects the district partisanship measure depicted in Figure 3.

**Figure 2: Ideology of Representatives Per Congressional District (114th Congress)**



The mean district partisanship (Cook GOP) rating was  $-0.4698795$ , representing a center left collection of districts in the dataset. The minimum and maximum were  $-0.44$  and  $0.33$ , with a range of  $0.77$ . Like the ideology of representatives, district partisanship is largely situated to the left of center and right of center with few representatives falling in the middle. This is not surprising given the polarized political environment in the United States. Many political analysts would directly attribute the ideologies represented amongst members of Congress to the partisanship ratings represented amongst congressional districts.

**Figure 3: District Partisanship (114th Congress)**



Two hundred ninety-eight of the 332 representatives ran for reelection. This represents 164 Democrats and 134 Republicans. This is typical of most Congresses, where incumbent representatives experience favorable reelection rates.

## Models

Each of the models utilized for this analysis uses a different measure of the size of the agricultural subconstituency. Otherwise, the models feature the same dependent variables: ideology of representatives, district partisanship, and whether the representative is running for reelection. Based on my hypotheses and the existing literature, I expect all four measures to show a significant relationship between the subconstituency and the four agricultural bills. At the same time, I expect none of the measures to show a significant relationship between the subconstituency and the nonagricultural bill.

Each model was run three times with different groups of representatives. The first time, all members of Congress were included. The second time, only members of Congress running for reelection were included. The third time, only members of Congress not running for reelection were included. By running the models in this way, we can see the effect that running for reelection has on the influence of subconstituencies on congressional roll call voting behavior. These models were run utilizing a linear regression, probit, and logistical regression. Results were similar regardless of which analysis was used. For the purpose of this thesis, I will present the regression results, as they are the most straightforward to interpret. For the comparison of members of Congress running for reelection with members of Congress not running for reelection, I will only include results from one of the three measures as the results do not vary across measures.



## **Chapter 5**

### **Results**

Table 1 details the results from the model using the percent of agricultural employment measure. Based on my hypothesis, I predict that increases in subconstituency size should affect the likelihood of members of Congress voting in favor of the four agricultural bills. At the same time, increases in subconstituency size should not affect the nonagricultural bill. This should be especially apparent for the Farm Bill, as it is of particular importance to the agriculture industry. The nonagricultural SAFE Act should not exhibit any relationship with agricultural employment.

Indeed, as shown in Table 1, the size of the subconstituency has a significant impact on two agricultural votes: the Farm Bill and WOTUS. While it did not have a significant impact on the agricultural TPA and Labeling Act, it did have a significant impact on nonagricultural SAFE Act. Based on these mixed results, it is difficult to claim that increasing subconstituency size has a meaningful impact on most agricultural legislation. Notably, the partisanship of the district significantly impacted all votes. The representative's ideology significantly impacted TPA, the Labeling Act, WOTUS, and the SAFE Act.

**Table 1: Regression of Agricultural Employment in Each Congressional District**

Votes in Favor	Farm Bill	TPA	Labeling Act	WOTUS	SAFE Act
Subconstituency Size (% of Ag Employment)	20.805*	10.159	6.6182	11.524*	7.614*
Representative Ideology	-.067	.299*	.435*	.627*	.395*
District Partisanship	.010*	.009*	.009*	.008*	.012*
Whether the Representative is Running for Reelection	-.052	.024	-.008	.033	.006
Observations	332	332	332	332	332

Note: \*p<.05

Table 2 details the results from the measure that utilizes a categorical indicator ranging from zero to three. When factoring in different categories of agricultural employment, I expected a significant relationship between subconstituency size and votes on the agricultural bills. Similar to the results presented in Table 1, votes on the Farm Bill were significantly affected by subconstituency size. However, none of the other votes were significantly affected by this variable. All votes were all significantly affected by district partisanship and all votes except for the Farm Bill were significantly affected by the representative's ideology. This provides evidence that partisanship and ideology, not subconstituency, are the primary influences on the voting behavior of members of Congress.

**Table 2: Regression of Categorical Variable for Agricultural Employment in Each Congressional District (Model 1)**

Votes in Favor	Farm Bill	TPA	Labeling Act	WOTUS	SAFE Act
Subconstituency Size (Categorical Indicator)	.096*	.015	-.003	.021	.011
Representative Ideology	-.0215	.306*	.433*	.637*	.401*
District Partisanship	.008*	.009*	.009*	.008*	.012*
Whether the Representative is Running for Reelection	-.035	.026	-.010	.036	.007
Observations	332	332	332	332	332
Note: *p<.05					

Table 3 details the model using the measure that considers the separate effect of each level of employment (relative to the smallest level) on the votes. Intuitively, the higher levels of agricultural employment should exhibit statistical significance whereas the lower levels should not. For the Farm Bill, both the Second Level (50<sup>th</sup>-75<sup>th</sup> percentile of subconstituency size) and Third Level (75<sup>th</sup>-100<sup>th</sup> percentile) had a statistically significant impact on the vote. The First Level (25<sup>th</sup>-50<sup>th</sup> percentile) did not have a statistically significant effect on the vote. None of the other votes were significantly affected by the subconstituency variable at any level. These results suggest that, while subconstituency “levels” may serve as predictors for select votes (such as the Farm Bill), they are not applicable to the voting patterns of representatives for most agricultural legislation. Notably, the representative’s ideology had a significant effect on all votes except for the Farm Bill. Further, the partisanship of the district had a significant effect on all five votes.

**Table 3: Regression of Dummy Variables for Different Levels of Agricultural Employment in Each Congressional District (Model 2)**

Votes in Favor	Farm Bill	TPA	Labeling Act	WOTUS	SAFE Act
Subconstituency Size (Separate Effect of Each Level)					
Level One:	-.125	-.050	1.020	.012	-.009
Level Two:	.198*	.080	-.025	.028	.035
Level Three:	.283*	.027	-.005	.071	.030
Representative Ideology	-.013	.307*	.435*	.638*	.401
District Partisanship	.007*	.009*	.009*	.008*	.012*
Whether the Representative is Running for Reelection	-.021	.030	-.009	.037	.012
Observations	332	332	332	332	332
Note: *p<.05					

Table 4 details the results from the model using a measure that labels the size of the subconstituency as simply “low” or “high” agricultural employment. Intuitively, members of Congress from districts with “high” agricultural employment should be more likely to vote in favor of pro agriculture bills than members of Congress from “low” agricultural employment districts.

Only the Farm Bill was significantly impacted by “high” subconstituency size. These results indicate that judging a district on whether it possesses “low” or “high” agricultural employment is not enough to determine whether a member of Congress votes in favor of pro agriculture bills. Likely, other factors are affecting these decisions. As seen with the previous models, the representative’s ideology had a significant impact on all votes apart from the Farm Bill. Further, the partisanship of the district had a significant impact on all five votes.

**Table 4: Regression of Dichotomous Comparison of Agricultural Employment in Each Congressional District (Model 3)**

Votes in Favor	Farm Bill	TPA	Labeling Act	WOTUS	SAFE Act
Subconstituency Size ("Low" vs "High")	.250*	.064	-.014	.045	.034
Representative Ideology	-.023	.310*	.432*	.635*	.402*
District Partisanship	.007*	.009*	.009*	.008*	.012*
Whether the Representative is Running for Reelection	-.031	.029	-.011	.036	.008
Observations	332	332	332	332	332
Note: *p<.05					

Table 5 repeats the model utilizing the percent of agricultural employment measure while only including representatives running for reelection. Intuitively, we should expect these representatives to exhibit a stronger relationship between the subconstituency in their districts and roll call voting than their colleagues who are not running for reelection. While representatives running for reelection feel great pressure from subconstituencies to vote according to certain preferences, representatives not running for reelection do not experience this same pressure.

The agricultural subconstituency measure had a significant effect on the Farm Bill, WOTUS, and the SAFE Act. With the exception of the Farm Bill, all votes were significantly affected by both district partisanship and the representative's ideology. These results are important when compared to the same model run for members of Congress not running for

reelection, as that model did not showcase any statistically significant effect by the agricultural subconstituency on voting behavior by members of Congress.

**Table 5: Regression of Agricultural Employment for Representatives Running for Reelection**

Votes in Favor	Farm Bill	TPA	Labeling Act	WOTUS	SAFE Act
Subconstituency Size (% of Ag Employment)	22.290*	9.945	7.633	11.836*	8.519*
Representative Ideology	-.0285	.326*	.485*	.653*	.386*
District Partisanship	.0092*	.009*	.008*	.008*	.619*
Observations	298	298	298	298	298

Note: \*p<.05

Table 6 repeats the model utilizing the percent of agricultural employment measure while only including representatives not running for reelection. Because these representatives do not feel the same pressure to vote in line with subconstituency preferences, the relationship between subconstituency size and votes on bills should be diminished. This prediction is supported by the fact that none of the votes were significantly affected by the agricultural subconstituency variable, including the Farm Bill. When compared to their counterparts running for reelection, the lack of significance provides evidence that choosing not to run for reelection diminishes any existing relationship between subconstituencies and roll call voting (irrespective of how small that relationship may be). While many of the votes were still significantly affected by district partisanship and ideology of representatives, it was not as ubiquitous as it was for the previous models. This suggests that, along with subconstituency, the influence of district partisanship

and the representative's ideology are also diminished by a representative's decision not to run for reelection.

**Table 6: Regression of Agricultural Employment for Representatives Not Running for Reelection**

Votes in Favor	Farm Bill	TPA	Labeling Act	WOTUS	SAFE Act
Subconstituency Size (% of Ag Employment)	-12.832	15.39	-17.47	3.904	-22.025
Representative Ideology	-.372	.127	-.001	.3918*	.461*
District Partisanship	.022*	.012	.019*	.016*	.009
Observations	34	34	34	34	34

Note: \*p<.05

Irrespective of the measure of agricultural subconstituency and whether a member of Congress was running for reelection, district partisanship and the ideology of representatives repeatedly had a significant effect on representative's voting behavior. While agricultural employment may not independently predict the voting behavior of a member of Congress, district partisanship and the ideology of representatives appear to have that ability. This is not particularly surprising given the politically polarized nature of recent Congresses as well as the strong influence national political parties exert over roll call votes. At the same time, a high correlation exists in the dataset between agricultural employment and district partisanship (.0950). These variables may be difficult to disintegrate, complicating any relationship between the size of an agricultural subconstituency and the voting behavior of members of Congress.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Conclusion**

This analysis examines the effect of subconstituencies on how members of Congress vote on agricultural and nonagricultural bills. This was accomplished by creating a dataset of members of Congress from the 113<sup>th</sup> and 114<sup>th</sup> Congresses. My hypothesis was that agricultural employment in a district would significantly affect a representative's vote. This effect would be predictable based on a threshold subconstituency size in the district. Further, running for reelection would have a major effect on the significance between subconstituency and roll call votes.

In each of the models that included all members of Congress, my hypothesis on the effect of subconstituencies on roll call voting was put into question. While the model using the percentage of agricultural employment measure showcased a significant relationship between subconstiency size and the Farm Bill, WOTUS, and SAFE Act, none of the other measures demonstrated a significant relationship between these two variables and votes outside the Farm Bill. The fact that the nonagricultural SAFE Act had a significant relationship with the subconstituency variable for the percent of agricultural employment measure further weakens my hypothesis. If anything, the consistent significance of district partisanship and the ideology of representatives with the voting behavior of members of Congress suggests that factors outside of subconstituency are the primary determinates of these decisions. While the most important of agricultural bills (such as the Farm Bill) may be influenced by subconstituency preferences, other bills seem to be affected by inseparable factors that make it difficult to claim that



subconstituency alone has significant effect. Based on these concerns, my hypothesis is not supported.

Next, my hypothesis on the threshold of subconstituency size for voting behavior is also brought into question. This is according to the results of the model that utilized a measure considering the separate effect of each level of employment. While the Farm Bill was significantly affected by subconstituency size at the upper two levels, none of the other votes were significantly influenced at any level. Based off these results, it is impossible to discern a consistent or generalizable threshold for which to predict support (or at least significance) with the agricultural bills. Accordingly, my hypothesis is not supported.

However, there is evidence to support my hypothesis that running (or not running) for reelection affects any relationship that exists between subconstituency and representative voting behavior. As shown in Table 5, a fair number of the votes showcased a significant relationship between the agricultural employment variable and the voting behavior of members of Congress running for reelection. However, as shown on Table 6, the model run with members of Congress not running for reelection did not showcase a significant relationship between these two variables. While the rejection of Hypothesis One and Two brings into question the size (and possibly existence) of subconstituency effect in and of itself, the disparity in results between those running and not running for election showcases that any relationship that does exist is notably affected by this third variable. Accordingly, while I cannot emphatically claim this hypothesis is supported, I do not outright reject it either.

A major limitation of my analysis is the measure of agricultural employment. This measure is sourced from the US Census County Business Patterns (CBP) Survey, which is not as comprehensive as the traditional US Census. Further, the CBP Survey does not have a “pure”

agriculture measure, as it places “Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting” into one category. My analysis would have been strengthened had a category only representing agricultural employment been available. Another limitation is the use of votes from both the 113<sup>th</sup> and 114<sup>th</sup> Congresses. This was done to include the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 2014 (113<sup>th</sup> Congress), which was one of the few major pieces of agricultural legislation in that Congress. I attempted to minimize the impact of this limitation by only including members of Congress in the dataset who participated in both Congresses. The analysis would have been stronger had it only used votes from one Congress, as representatives may face unique influences and political pressures in different Congresses that affect their voting behavior.

These findings showcase the difficult nature of examining how subconstituencies affect roll call voting. The inseparability of variables such as subconstituency size and district partisanship are increasingly complicated during an era of polarized political views and homogeneous policy preferences. Overall, this study helps to mend a gap in the literature by utilizing a more direct measure of subconstituency size than previous research to judge the effect of subconstituencies on the voting behavior of members of Congress. However, additional studies of other subconstituencies are necessary to conclusively prove their influence on roll call voting behavior in the current political environment.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arnold, R. (1990). "The Logic of Congressional Action." Yale University Press.
- Bellemare, M., & Carnes, Nicholas. (2014). "Why do members of Congress support agricultural production?" *Food Policy*, 50, 20-34.
- Devin Caughey & James Dunham & Christopher Warshaw, 2018. "The ideological nationalization of partisan subconstituencies in the American States." *Public Choice*, Springer, vol. 176(1), pages 133-151, July.
- Eulau, Heinz, and Paul D. Karps. 1977. "The Puzzle of Representation: Specifying Components of Responsiveness." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 2(3): 233-254.
- Fenno, Richard F. 1978. "Home Style: House Members in Their Districts." Boston: Little, Brown.
- Figlio, D. (2000). "Political Shirking, Opponent Quality, and Electoral Support." *Public Choice*, 103(3/4), 271-284.
- Jackson, J., & Kingdon, J. (1992). "Ideology, Interest Group Scores, and Legislative Votes." *American Journal of Political Science*, 36(3), 805-823
- Miler, K. (2007). The View from the Hill: Legislative Perceptions of the District. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 32(4), 597-628.
- Miller, W., & Stokes, D. (1963). "Constituency Influence in Congress." *The American Political Science Review*, 57(1), 45-56.
- Morgenstern, S., Swindle, S., & Castagnola, A. (2009). "Party Nationalization and Institutions." *The Journal of Politics*, 71(4), 1322-1341
- n.a. (2014, January 9). "Farm Bureau Welcomes TPA Legislation." Retrieved from <https://www.fb.org/newsroom/farm-bureau-welcomes-tpa-legislation>
- n.a. (2015, July 27). "House Passes Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act of 2015." Retrieved from <https://wfbf.com/ag-newswire/house-passes-safe-and-accurate-food-labeling-act-of-2015/>

n.a. (2017, August 23). "Tell EPA to Rescind WOTUS." Retrieved from <https://www.kfb.org/Article/Tell-EPA-to-Rescind-WOTUS>

Poole, K.T. and Rosenthal, H. (1996). "Are legislators ideologues or the agents of constituents?" *European Economic Review* 40: 707–717

Ramey, A. (2015). "Weighing the Alternatives: Preferences, Parties, and Constituency in Roll-Call Voting." *The Journal of Politics*, 77(2), 421-432

Rothenberg, L., & Sanders, M. (2000). "Legislator Turnout and the Calculus of Voting: The Determinants of Abstention in the U.S. Congress." *Public Choice*, 103(3/4), 259-270

Smith, R. (1995). "Interest Group Influence in the U. S. Congress." *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 20(1), 89-139.

## ACADEMIC VITA

# Anthony Walton Stem

anthonystem97@gmail.com

### EDUCATION

#### **The Pennsylvania State University**

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science

Minor in Music

Minor in Labor & Employment Relations

Schreyer Honors College

Graduated December of 2019

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

#### **US House of Representatives: Committee on Energy and Commerce -- Intern**

*Washington, DC, June 2019 – August 2019*

- ✦ Coordinated the procurement of co-sponsors for the Stopping Bad Robocalls Act (H.R.3375)
- ✦ Produced summaries of hearings and stakeholder events for the Ranking Member and Staff
- ✦ Collaborated with the Congressional Research Service to obtain and format economic data
- ✦ Summarized Senate's robocall bill in preparation for conference negotiations

#### **Penn State Office of Government and Community Relations – Special Projects Intern**

*University Park, PA, January 2019 – April 2019*

- ✦ Analyzed higher education policy under university vice president Zack Moore
- ✦ Prepared reports comparing educational funding systems across states and performance metrics across institutions
- Briefed university president Eric J. Barron on primary findings and conclusions

#### **John Deere: Public Affairs Worldwide – Intern**

*Washington, DC, June 2018 – August 2018*

- ✦ Conducted research for trade, telecommunications, and agriculture policy
- ✦ Monitored congressional hearings and provided data for a Deere Division President's testimony
- ✦ Recommended congressional candidates to Deere's political action committee

#### **The White House: National Economic Council – White House Intern**

*Washington, DC, January 2018 – April 2018*

- ✦ Served as a research assistant for infrastructure & healthcare policy under Gary Cohn and Larry Kudlow
- ✦ Set up and attended staff meetings and policy briefings for a Special Assistant to the President
- ✦ Organized interagency and industry stakeholder events for infrastructure and energy policy

#### **US House of Representatives: Congressman Scott Perry – Congressional Intern**

*Washington, DC and York, PA, June 2017 – August 2017*

- ✦ Produced a video featuring Congressman Perry to promote a contest for entrepreneurs
- ✦ Wrote a speech for the Congressional Record commemorating the Battle of Gettysburg
- ✦ Performed IRS casework on the behalf of 4th District constituents

#### **US House of Representatives: Congressman Glenn Thompson – District Office Intern**

*Bellefonte, PA, January 2017 – April 2017*

- ✦ Managed incoming communications during period of record constituent correspondence
- ✦ Performed research to assist caseworkers
- ✦ Attended constituent meetings alongside the congressman

### LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCES

#### **Penn State Blue Band – Recruitment Chair and Mellophone Guide (Section Leader)**

*University Park, PA, August 2015 - Present*

- ✦ Created the band's first organizational chart and recommended reorganizations to the director
- ✦ Developed and launched an innovative virtual reality recruitment system
- ✦ Coordinated 300+ High School recruits at the 2018 Spring Football Game

**University Park Undergraduate Association –  
Director and At-Large Representative**

*University Park, PA, January 2018 – Present*

- ✦ Spearheaded initiatives to improve university infrastructure, services, and technologies
- ✦ Prepared weekly reports on pertinent state and federal legislation

**AWARDS AND HONORS**

- ✦ Student Marshal, Penn State College of the Liberal Arts
- ✦ Even Pugh Junior Scholar, Penn State
- ✦ Eagle Scout, Boy Scouts of America