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Supporting Information Appendix

Party Over Pocketbook? How Party Cues Influence Opinion When Citizens Have a Stake in Policy

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A Data Collection

This section details on our survey design and data collection. As we highlight in the main manuscript, the timing of our survey was important and we surveyed public and private employees at the height of the collective bargaining conflict. As shown in Figure S1, the survey was fielded from March 16 to April 19, 2018, and thus in the immediate wake of the dramatic lockout and strike announcements from the public employer and employee organizations, respectively. With the last interview conducted on April 19, the survey was in the field in the midst of the conflict and well-before the negotiations ended with a collective agreement on April 27.

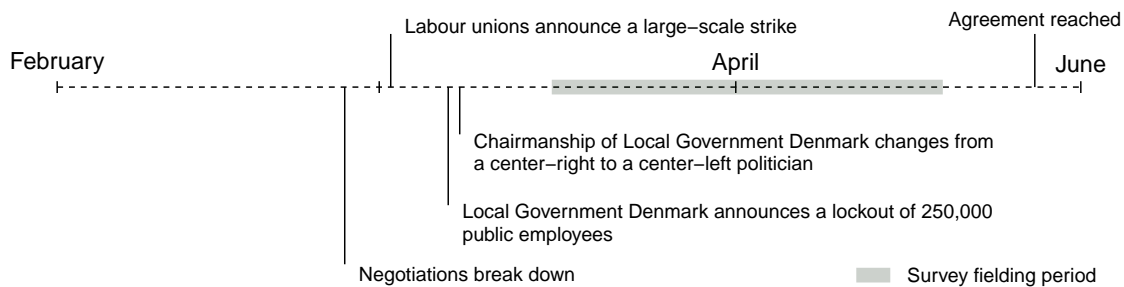


Figure S1: Timeline of events and data collection.

Data collection was administered by the private polling company Epinion, using their online panel of Danish citizens. Our sampling design reflected that the purpose of our study was to experimentally test the influence of party cues on policy opinion among public employees at the height of the collective bargaining conflict. Therefore, we aimed at interviewing a roughly balanced number of supporters of the two parties used in our party cue treatments—the Social Democrats and the Liberals—among public employees.

Although our population of interest is public employees, we included privately employed in our sample to be able to also describe policy opinion and perceptions among this group. Thus, we specifically sampled and screened respondents based on whether they were employees and whether they were employed in either the private or public sector using the questions “What is your current occupation?” and “In which sector do you work?” asked in the beginning of the survey. Moreover, in the beginning of the questionnaire we measured party affiliation using the question “If a national election was held tomorrow, who would you vote for?” and the follow-up question “Even though you are in doubt, is there a political party that you lean more towards than others?” where respondents could choose from a list of the eleven political parties that were eligible to run in a national election at the time. We used the question on party affiliation to screen respondents to obtain a balanced number of center-left and center-right voters within each occupational sector.

Because we were running against time in securing a sufficiently large and balanced sample before the collective bargaining conflict ended, we supplemented the sample from Epinion’s pool of respondents with respondents from YouGov’s online panel in Denmark. In the YouGov sample, using the same questionnaire as with the Epinion sample, we focused on public and private employees who intended to vote for either the Social Democrats or

the Liberals—the two major political parties on the center-left and center-right, and the parties which we use in the experimental treatments.

Table S1: Distribution of respondents on partisanship and occupation.

	Center-right	Center-left
Private employee	823 (48.8%)	863 (51.2%)
Public employee	706 (43.4%)	922 (56.6%)

Note: Center-Right voters include participants who intend to vote for Liberals, Liberal Alliance, Conservatives, Danish People’s Party, New Center-Right. Center-Left voters include Social Democrats, Social Liberals, Socialist People’s Party, Unity List and the Alternative. The table excludes respondents who do not intend to vote for any political party.

When data collection was closed on April 19, 2018, 3,718 respondents had participated in the survey out of which 412 were recruited from YouGov’s panel. Table S1 shows the distribution of respondents based on their vote intention and occupation. As can be seen, we obtained a reasonably balanced sample with respect to these two characteristics. In the main analysis, we focus on respondents employed in the public sector and who intend to vote for either the Social Democrats or the Liberals—the two party sponsors used in the experimental treatments. Among the 1,814 public employees in our sample, 433 (23.9%) intended to vote for the Social Democrats, and 325 for the Liberals (17.9%).

Ethical Considerations

In our research, we comply with current standards for research transparency and ethics, including the American Political Science Association’s “Principles and Guidance for Human Subjects Research” as approved by the APSA Council in April, 2020.

In particular, we ensured that our survey respondents participated in our study on an informed and voluntary basis. Respondents were sampled from standing opt-in panels established and maintained by two private polling companies, Epinion and YouGov, and they were explicitly invited to a social science research project conducted by researchers from [university name omitted for anonymous peer review] “interested in your opinion about various current issues in society.” Respondents were informed that it was voluntary to participate and the researchers could exercise no power over potential participants.

The voluntary nature of the study was further emphasized by the fact that participants had no financial incentive to participate as the only financial compensation was that they participated in a draw to win one of ten gift cards worth 300 DKK (50 USD). Given the structure of Danish society, including high minimum wages and a welfare state offering relatively generous universal coverage, it would be very unlikely that any of our respondents would consider participation in our study as work or a source of income.

Furthermore, we protect the privacy of our participants. As researchers we did not receive information from the polling companies that would enable us to identify personally

any of the individuals participating our survey. Thus, our analysis, and later sharing of data in the interest of maximizing research transparency, will in no way compromise the privacy of individual research participants.

As we explain in the article, a major strength of our research design is the rare combination of context and experimental design, which offers a unique opportunity for investigating whether self-interest limits the influence of party cues on citizens' policy opinion. Our experiment exploits a naturally occurring, sharp variation in party cues during a contentious collective bargaining conflict. The naturally occurring variation in partisanship of the chairman of Local Government Denmark made it possible to realistically, and truthfully, vary party cues in our experiment. Consequently, our experiment did not involve deception of research participants. Rather, we presented information and asked survey questions about a current political issues that was already well known from media coverage and public discussion at the time. In this sense, our research involved minimal harm to participants as they were asked standard survey questions about an actual policy issue highly salient in the news media and public debate. We consider it unlikely that our study had any impact on political processes or outcomes.

In sum, we believe we have conducted our research in full compliance with current guidelines and principles for ethical and transparent research in our field.

B Overview of Measures and Experimental Treatments

In our party cue experiment, we created experimental treatments by varying the wordings of four policy opinion questions. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of three experimental conditions: no party cue, Social Democrats cue, or Liberals cue, always receiving four questions within the same condition.

Question wordings in the (no party cue) control group:

Lockout: “Collective agreements for public employees are currently being negotiated. The public employees’ unions have issued a strike notice, and the public employers have issued a notice of lockout that will send employees home without pay. The employers in Local Government Denmark have issued a lockout notice to 250,000 municipal employees to put pressure on the employees in the collective agreement negotiations. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the decision to issue a lockout notice to municipal employees?”

Salary: “The public employees and employers disagree on the employees’ salary development, among other things. The employers want to put a cap on the public employees’ salary increases. Local Government Denmark has issued a lockout notice to 250,000 municipal employees to pressure employees to accept lower salary increases. To what extent do you agree or disagree that public employees’ salary increases should be capped?”

Lunch: “The public employees and employers also disagree on whether public employees’ right to a paid lunch break should be included in the collective agreement. The employers want that public employees’ right to a paid lunch break should not be included in the collective agreement. Local Government Denmark has issued a lockout notice to 250,000 municipal employees to pressure employees to accept that their right to a paid lunch break is not included in the collective agreement. To what extent do you agree or disagree that public employees’ right to a paid lunch break should be included in the collective agreement?”

Teachers: “Another point of contention between public employees and employers is whether teachers should be allowed to negotiate a new work-hour agreement. The employers are against letting the teachers negotiate a new work-hour agreement. Local Government Denmark has issued a lockout notice to 250,000 municipal employees to pressure employees to accept a new collective agreement without allowing the teachers to negotiate a new work-hour agreement. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the teachers should be allowed to negotiate a new work-hour agreement?”

Question wordings in the two party cue treatment groups (with variation in party cues in brackets):

Lockout: “Collective agreements for public employees are currently being negotiated. The public employees’ unions have issued a strike notice, and the public employers have issued a notice of lockout that will send employees home without pay. [The Social Democrats / The Liberals] support the municipal employers’ cause. As chairman of Local Government Denmark, [Jacob Bundsgaard from the Social Democrats / Martin Damm from the Liberals] has issued a lockout notice to 250,000 municipal employees to put pressure on the employees in the collective agreement negotiations. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the decision to issue a lockout notice to municipal employees?”

Salary: “The public employees and employers disagree on the employees’ salary development, among other things. [The Social Democrats / The Liberals] support the employers’

wish to put a cap on public employees' salary increases. As chairman of Local Government Denmark, [Jacob Bundsgaard from the Social Democrats / Martin Damm from the Liberals] has issued a lockout notice to 250,000 municipal employees to pressure employees to accept lower salary increases. To what extent do you agree or disagree that public employees' salary increases should be capped?"

Lunch: "The public employees and employers also disagree on whether public employees' right to a paid lunch break should be included in the collective agreement. [The Social Democrats / The Liberals] support the employers' view that public employees' right to a paid lunch break should not be included in the collective agreement. As chairman of Local Government Denmark, [Jacob Bundsgaard from the Social Democrats / Martin Damm from the Liberals] has issued a lockout notice to 250,000 municipal employees to pressure employees to accept that their right to a paid lunch break is not included in the collective agreement. To what extent do you agree or disagree that public employees' right to a paid lunch break should be included in the collective agreement?"

Teachers: "Another point of contention between public employees and employers is whether teachers should be allowed to negotiate a new work-hour agreement. [The Social Democrats / The Liberals] support the employers against letting the teachers negotiate a new work-hour agreement. As chairman of Local Government Denmark, [Jacob Bundsgaard from the Social Democrats / Martin Damm from the Liberals] has issued a lockout notice to 250,000 municipal employees to pressure employees to accept a new collective agreement without allowing the teachers to negotiate a new work-hour agreement. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the teachers should be allowed to negotiate a new work-hour agreement?"

Other measures as well as the coding of variables are shown in the following table.

Table S2: Description of survey measures.

Variable	Question wording(s)	Mean (SD)
Employer	“In which sector do you work?” was asked with the following options: Public (1); Private (0); Neither/Don’t know (coded as missing).	.49 (-)
Party affiliation	“Which party would you vote for if a national election were held tomorrow?” as well as the follow-up question “Even if you are not sure which party you would vote for, we still want to ask you if you are leaning towards one party in particular?”. We focus on those respondents who intend to vote for either the Liberals (0) or Social Democrats (1).	.55 (-)
Attention	“The collective bargaining between public employees and public employers has recently been debated. How closely have you followed the debate about public employees’ collective agreements?” with the following response options: I have followed the debate very closely (1); I have followed the debate closely (1); I have not followed the debate closely (0); I have followed the debate at all (0); Don’t know (0).	.58 (-)
Perceived consequences	“To what extent do you think the outcome of the collective agreement negotiations for public employees will affect your household economy?” with the response options: To a very large extent (1); To a large extent (1); To some extent (1); To a limited extent (0); Not at all (0); Don’t know (0).	.40 (-)
Likelihood of lockout	“Do you think you will be drawn into a possible strike or lock-out at your workplace?” with the response options: Yes (1); No (0); Don’t know (0).	.25 (-)
Lockout	“To what extent do you agree or disagree with the decision to issue a lockout notice to municipal employees?” with the response options: Completely agree; Agree; Partially agree; Neither agree nor disagree; Partially disagree; Disagree; Completely disagree; Don’t know. Item is scaled from 0 to 1 where “Completely agree” is 1 and don’t know is coded as the middle category.	.65 (.32)
Salary	“To what extent do you agree or disagree that public employees’ salary increases should be capped?” with the response options: Completely agree; Agree; Partially agree; Neither agree nor disagree; Partially disagree; Disagree; Completely disagree; Don’t know. Item is scaled from 0 to 1 where “Completely agree” is 1 and don’t know is coded as the middle category.	.71 (.29)
Lunch	“To what extent do you agree or disagree that public employees’ right to a paid lunch break should be included in the collective agreement?” with the response options: Completely agree; Agree; Partially agree; Neither agree nor disagree; Partially disagree; Disagree; Completely disagree; Don’t know. Item is scaled from 0 to 1 where “Completely agree” is 1 and don’t know is coded as the middle category.	.68 (.35)
Teachers	“To what extent do you agree or disagree that the teachers should be allowed to negotiate a new work-hour agreement?” with the response options: Completely agree; Agree; Partially agree; Neither agree nor disagree; Partially disagree; Disagree; Completely disagree; Don’t know. Item is scaled from 0 to 1 where “Completely agree” is 1 and don’t know is coded as the middle category.	.69 (.31)
Index	Additive index of all four opinion items (Lockout, Salary, Lunch and Teachers) scaled from 0 to 1 (cronbachs $\alpha = .76$).	.68 (.24)

C Validating That Public Employees Saw Their Self-Interest Was at Stake

A distinct feature of our design and a major improvement over previous work on self-interest is that we can establish empirically that citizens did see their self-interest at stake. As we mention in the main manuscript, we use two types of survey measures to validate that public employees did see their self-interest at stake in the collective bargaining conflict: perceptions of the impact of the collective bargaining on the respondent's personal financial situation as well as policy support.

As a first validation, we show that public employees much more than private employees felt personally affected by the outcome of the conflict. Specifically, we measured public employees' perceptions of the collective bargaining conflict and compared their responses to those of the private employees. We included three measures before respondents were exposed to one of the experimental conditions. First, to measure respondents' attention towards the conflict, we asked the question "Recently, there has been debate about the collective bargaining between public employees and public employers. How closely have you followed the debate on the collective bargaining?" where respondents could answer that they followed the debate "very closely," "closely," "not that closely," or "not at all" as well as a don't know option. In the analysis below, we collapse the measure to a simple binary indicator capturing whether respondents followed the debate very closely or closely as opposed to not that closely or not at all (M=58%; D/K=1%).

Next, to measure perceptions of whether collective bargaining will impact a respondents personal financial situation, we asked "To what degree do you think that the outcome of the collective bargaining for public employees will affect the financial situation of your household?" where respondents could answer on a five-point scale ranging from "To a very large extent" to "not at all" as well as a don't know option. Again, we collapsed the measure into a binary indicator of whether respondents chose "very large degree", "large degree" or "some degree" (M=40%; D/K=5%). Finally, we asked respondents "Do you expect to be involved in a potential strike or lockout at your workplace?" where respondents could choose either yes, no or don't know (Y=25%; D/K=5%).

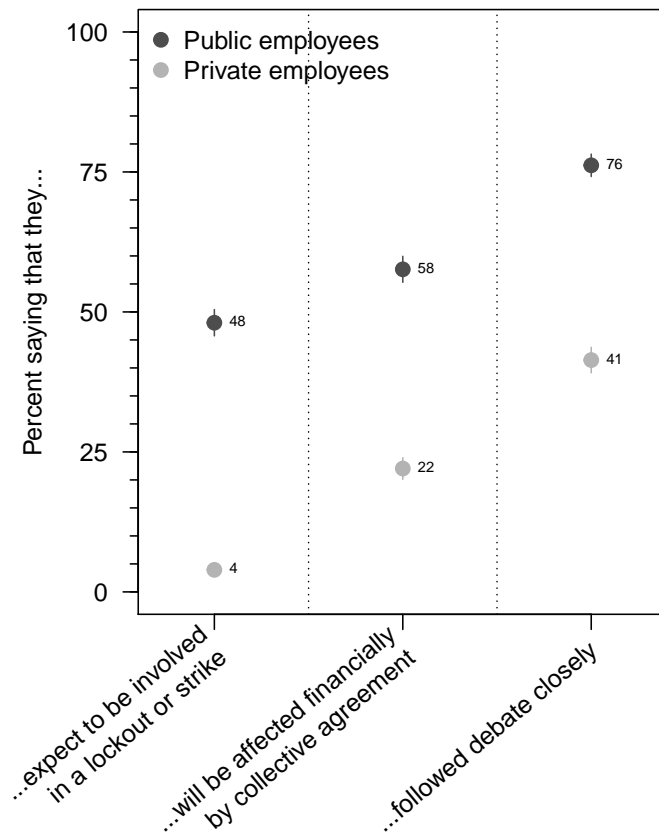


Figure S2: Differences in public and private employees’ perceptions of their stakes in the collective agreement bargaining.

Figure S2 shows that over half of the public employees (48%) expected to be personally involved in a strike or lockout, whereas virtually none of the private employees did (4%). Furthermore, 58% of public employees thought the outcome of the collective bargaining would affect them financially (to a very large/large/some degree) against only 22% of private employees. Unsurprisingly given these differences in self-interest, 76% of public employees followed the collective bargaining (very) closely whereas only 41% of private employees did. Public employees, in short, clearly saw their self-interest at stake in the collective bargaining.

As a second validation, we use measures of policy opinion to show that public employees express huge support for the unions’ demands. Specifically, we measured policy opinions on four key aspects of the conflict: the employers’ lockout of employees, how much public employees’ salaries should increase, whether public employees should have a stated right to paid lunch break, and whether teachers should be allowed to renegotiate their work hours (see question wordings in Section B). We recoded each item to range from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating support for the unions’ position (“don’t know” responses were coded 0.5). To increase reliability, we created an index averaging the four items (alpha = 0.76).

As Figure S3 shows, opinion among public employees is clearly distributed towards the

end of very high support for the unions' demands (mean = 0.78), whereas opinions among privately employed citizens were more moderate and evenly distributed (mean = 0.61). These opinion measures validate that public employees indeed did see their self-interest at stake in the collective bargaining conflict.

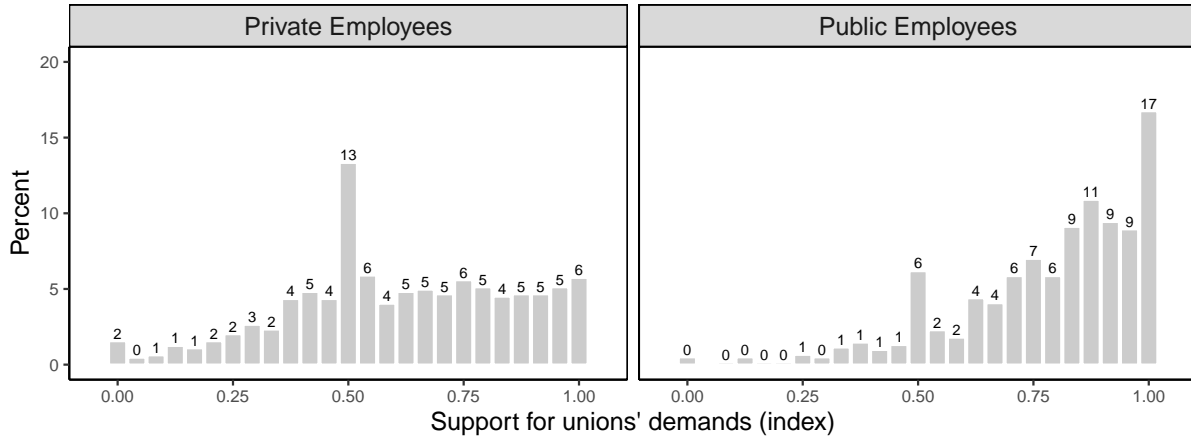


Figure S3: Policy opinion among private employees (n = 645) and public employees (n = 615). Index averaging four policy questions (respondents in control group only).

D Treatment Effects Among Private Employees

The purpose of our study was to examine to what extent party cues influence citizens' policy opinion even when their party advocates a policy that goes against their self-interest. Using the collective bargaining conflict in Denmark during spring 2018 as a case, we can test if public employees with an obvious self-interest in opposing the position taken by public employers nevertheless, when they learn that their party sides with the public employers, follow their party's position and go against their self-interest. Hence, our population of interest was public employees.

As mentioned in Section A, our sample also included private employees. To provide a more complete picture of our experimental effects, Figure S4 shows party cue effects among privately employed Social Democrats and Liberals. Compared to the results among public employees, two observations are worth noting. First, looking at overall levels of opinion, private employees exhibit lower support for the unions' demands. On the index averaging responses to the four policy questions, the level of support among privately employed Social Democrats and Liberals in the control condition was .68 and .49, respectively (among public employees, the comparable levels of support were .80 and .70). This lower level of support for the unions' demands in the collective bargaining is not surprising as it was the public employees, not private employees, who had personal stakes in the conflict (see Section C).



Figure S4: Effects of party cues on policy opinion among privately employed Social Democrats (n=460) and Liberals (n=401).

Second, the effects of party cues are much smaller among private employees than the effects we found among public employees, in particular among privately employed Liberals (lower panels). A possible explanation of this results might be that party cues on the collective bargaining issue might have been less relevant to private employees, and even if they were, they would offer little new information to update opinion among private

employees. Thus, learning that their party advocated a position going against the demands from public employees' unions would be consistent with the more sceptical opinion that many private employees already held. In contrast to public employees, where the party cue went against their pre-existing opinion and self-interest, among private employees the party cue mostly would confirm their opinion rather than going against it.

E Treatment Effects Among Public Employees Who Think They Will be Financially Affected by Policy

As explained in the main manuscript, our population of interest is public employees because this group had its self-interest at stake in the collective bargaining conflict (also see empirical validation in Section C). Using this policy issue, our theoretical interest is to test if public employees, who have an obvious interest in opposing the position taken by public employers, follow their party's position and go against their self-interest, when they learn that their party sides with the public employers. We find that party cues move opinion by at least the same magnitude found in previous work (see Figure 1 in the main manuscript).

In this section, we report an additional analysis to see whether our party cue effects would be robust if we restricted our analysis to focus merely on those public employees who say they expect the collective bargaining would directly affect them financially (i.e., an indicator we used to validate that public employees did see that their self-interest was at stake; see Section C). Quite strikingly, we find party cue effects of virtually the same size among this subgroup, further corroborating our conclusion that party cue effects seem to generalize widely.

To illuminate this, Figure S5 builds on the same analysis as shown in Figure 1 in the main manuscript, except that Figure S5 only includes public employees who thought that their household finances would be affected to “a very large”, “a large” or to “some” extent by the outcome of the collective agreement. Although the sample size of publicly employees is reduced and thus introducing more uncertainty in the analysis (among Social Democrats the sample is reduced from 433 to 264, and among Liberals it is reduced from 325 to 157), the results are consistent with our previous findings shown in Figure 1.

Focusing on the opinion index (rightmost panel in Figure S5), publicly employed Social Democrats, who also thought that they would be financially affected by the collective agreement, lower their support for the unions' demands when they learn that their party sides the public employers. Comparing the In-Party to the Control condition, publicly employed Social Democrats become 9.5 percentage points ($p < 0.001$) less supportive of unions' demands and support drops by as much as 14 percentage points ($p < 0.001$) when comparing the In-Party and Out-Party cues. These results are virtually identical to what we find in the main analysis. Among publicly employed Liberals (bottom panels), the results are more uncertain as witnessed by the wider confidence intervals. Still, compared with the Control condition, the In-Party cue significantly and substantially moves opinion among Liberals as measured by the index (7.3 percentage points, $p < 0.040$), whereas there is only a smaller difference between the In-Party and Out-Party cues.



Figure S5: Effects of party cues on policy opinion among publicly employed Social Democrats (n=264) and Liberals (n=157) who think they will be financially affected by the outcome of the collective bargaining.

F Treatment Effects Among Public Employees Using Alternative Measures of Partisanship

In the main manuscript, we report party cue effects among public employees by partisanship measured as what party a respondent intends to vote for if an election were held tomorrow (for question wording, see Section B). In this section, we probe the robustness of our main analysis by employing two alternative measures of party affiliation: party identification (see question wordings in note to Figure S6) and “stable party vote,” capturing if a respondent intends to vote for the same party now as they did in the last general election (see details in note to Figure S7). As shown in Figure S6 and S7, the results are virtually parallel to the findings presented in Figure 1 in the main manuscript.



Figure S6: Party Identification. Effects of party cues on policy opinion among publicly employed Social Democrats ($n=369$) and Liberals ($n=267$) where party affiliation is measured as identification with a party, using the question “Many see themselves as supporters of a specific party, and many do not. Do you see yourself as, for instance, a social democrat, conservative, social liberal, liberal, socialist or something else, or do you not see yourself as supporter of a specific party?” including the follow up questions “Which party do you see yourself as supporting?” and “Is there still a party you feel closer to than others?”



Figure S7: Stable Party Vote. Effects of party cues on policy opinion among publicly employed Social Democrats (n=353) and Liberals (n=269) where partisanship is measured as stable party vote, that is, a respondent is counted as a partisan if she or he intends to vote for the same party as she/he did in the previous general election.

G Model Estimates of Changes in Proportion of Extreme Policy Opinion

In the main manuscript, we analyze how party cue effects influenced the distribution of opinion, showing that party cues tempered extreme opinions (see Figures 2 and 3). In this section, we present an alternative and perhaps simpler analysis of how party cues affected the proportion of extreme policy support across experimental conditions. Obviously, the results presented in this section are consistent with what is shown in Figures 2 and 3 (i.e., we analyze the proportion in the two most extreme policy support categories in those figures).

Specifically, to get a simple estimate of how much the proportion of extreme answers changes in response to party cues, we estimated a linear regression model where the dependent variable was a binary version of the opinion index taking the value 1 if a respondent fell in the two most extreme, positive categories on the index and 0 otherwise. We estimated a regression model separately for publicly employed Social Democrats and Liberals.

Table S3 yields the results. Beginning with the publicly employed Social Democrats (first column), we clearly see the large party cue treatment effect on the proportion expressing an extreme policy support. Thus, 32.2 percent expressed extreme support for unions' demands when the Out-Party (i.e., the Liberal cue, here expressed as the Constant in the model) sided with public employers. However, this share dropped by a staggering 23.4 percentage points ($p < 0.001$) when it was their own party (i.e., Social Democratic cue) that went against the unions' position.

Turning to publicly employed Liberals (second column), 16.8 percent expressed extreme support for unions' demands when they were exposed to the Out-Party cue (i.e., the Social Democratic cue, in the model expressed as the Constant) and this share was carved in half when their own party sided with public employers (dropping 9 percentage points, $p = 0.048$).

Table S3: The estimated change in proportion of extreme policy demands (two most extreme values on the opinion index) among publicly employed Social Democrats and Liberals in response to treatment

	Among publicly employed:	
	(1)	(2)
	Social Democrats	Liberals
Treatment: Control	-0.106 (0.046)	-0.031 (0.045)
Treatment: In-Party	-0.234 (0.047)	-0.090 (0.046)
Constant	0.322 (0.033)	0.168 (0.032)
Observations	433	325
Adjusted R ²	0.049	0.006