Appendix A

Analysis Using Stathis

The tables below replicate our primary analysis using counts of total legislation from Stathis (2014).

Table A1: Significant Legislation in Divided/Unified Government

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | All Congresses | | | | 1st-79th Congresses | | | |
|  | **(1)** | **(2)** | **(3)** | **(4)** | **(5)** | **(6)** | **(7)** | **(8)** |
| Unified Gov | -1.22 | 1.47 | 1.82 | 2.24\*\* | 3.21\*\*\* | 3.13\*\*\* | 2.29 | 3.58\*\*\* |
|  | (1.57) | (0.96) | (1.25) | (0.91) | (0.99) | (0.93) | (1.48) | (0.96) |
| 37th-55th Congress |  | 2.97\*\* | 6.50 | 1.31 |  | 3.38\*\*\* | 6.50 | -4.17\*\* |
|  |  | (1.15) | (4.16) | (3.88) |  | (1.08) | (4.22) | (1.68) |
| 56th-79th Congress |  | 4.89\*\*\* | 2.50 | 2.69 |  | 4.71\*\*\* | 2.50 | -3.46 |
|  |  | (1.29) | (4.16) | (3.45) |  | (1.30) | (4.22) | (2.23) |
| 80th-111th Congress |  | 14.74\*\*\* | 3.77 | 6.65\*\* |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | (1.24) | (4.90) | (3.14) |  |  |  |  |
| Pres. FEs | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | No |
| Decade FEs | No | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes |
| Observations | 111 | 111 | 111 | 111 | 79 | 79 | 79 | 79 |
| R-squared | 0.006 | 0.600 | 0.806 | 0.808 | 0.088 | 0.268 | 0.579 | 0.631 |

Note: Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

∗ p<0.10,∗∗ p<0.05,∗∗∗ p<0.01

Table A2: ∆ Significant Legislation

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | All Congresses | | | 1st-55th Cong. | | | 56th-111th Cong. | | |
|  | **(1)** | **(2)** | **(3)** | **(4)** | **(5)** | **(6)** | **(7)** | **(8)** | **(9)** |
| Δ Unified Gov. | 3.14\*\*\* | 2.47\*\*\* | 3.13\*\*\* | 3.96\*\*\* | 3.36\*\*\* | 3.94\*\*\* | 2.06 | 1.44 | 2.06 |
|  | (0.85) | (0.85) | (0.85) | (0.79) | (0.78) | (0.77) | (1.66) | (1.63) | (1.67) |
| Lagged DV | No | Yes | No | No | Yes | No | No | Yes | No |
| Time Period Controls | No | No | Yes | No | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Obs. | 110 | 109 | 110 | 54 | 53 | 54 | 56 | 56 | 56 |
| R-squared | 0.107 | 0.345 | 0.108 | 0.252 | 0.430 | 0.254 | 0.032 | 0.319 | 0.032 |

Note: Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

∗ p<0.10,∗∗ p<0.05,∗∗∗ p<0.01

Appendix B

Data Collection Procedure and Sources

The data was assembled using a team of student coders. To ensure reliability in assembling the database, each decade was assigned to multiple coders. We anticipated some decades would be especially difficult, such as the 1930s or 1960s, so we assigned additional coders to those decades. Creating a database in this way is a complex task, as coders could approach their decades differently. We worked with the coders to standardize coding methods and databases across decades. We developed a common template, agreed on a common definition of “significant legislation” (which we describe in the body of this paper), and collected data from the same set of initial sources. The key variables in the database template are bill names, descriptions, categories, outcomes, and roll call votes and dates. We also asked coders to collect information on committees and primary sponsors in each chamber when the data was available.

The use of common sources across time periods simplified the process of determining significance, as the authors of these works had already decided what bills they thought were important based on their own criteria. While these criteria may not match ours perfectly, they at least provided consistency across time periods. For legislation from 1789 through 1945, coders began with the bills listed in Castel and Gibson’s (1975*) The Yeas and the Nays: Key Congressional Decisions, 1774-1945*. Castel and Gibson identified key legislation from each Congress and provided descriptions and vote totals for each. The American Political Science Review between 1910 and 1940 occasionally presented summaries of significant Congressional action during the term. For the 1950s through 2010s, coders began with the *CQ Almanac* for each year, and recorded all of the bills listed in the key votes section of each almanac. The 1940s were a particular challenge, as our key sources either ended in the 1940s or began in the 1950s. As a result, the coders working on the 1940s used a variety of sources, including *The Yeas and the Nays*, Mayhew’s database on congressional actions, and Charles Cameron’s database on major legislation. The coders supplemented these books with a variety of other sources that the librarians at Harvard University helped us to identify. Additional sources included histories of Congress, online resources from the Library of Congress, and the Congressional Record (and its antecedents). Galloway and Wise’s *History of the House of Representatives* and Josephy’s *The American Heritage History of the Congress of the United States* were particularly useful for many coders. Galloway also included many useful figures in appendices, including counts of total public and private legislation in each Congress. Coders collecting data from the 101st Congress through the present used *The Library of Congress: THOMAS*. The Library of Congress’ site *A Century of Lawmaking For a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates 1774–1875* was also very helpful for collecting information on the first fifty Congresses. Coders looking for more detail on particular bills used the Congressional Record to collect information and understand the debates surrounding major bills. We spent substantial time working with the Congressional Record (as well as the *Annals of Congress*, *Register of Debates*, and *Congressional Globe*). The websites for the House, Senate, National Archives, and govtrack.us were also useful. We encouraged all of the coders to make a pass through the Congressional Record for their given decade. They were asked to find the laws identified by *CQ Almanac* or *Yeas and Nays* or other sources as significant legislation in the Congressional Record. They were also asked to identify subjects on which there was much debate or activity in the index of the Record. The next step in assembling the database was to compile the individual databases from each coder into one comprehensive database and review the coders’ work for consistency. We reviewed the database to remove duplicate entries (some decades were assigned to more than one coder) and any legislation that did not meet our significance criteria or was missing critical information. We then used keywords in the coders’ categories and descriptions to categorize the bills into 46 categories. We also included counts of total public and private bills passed in each Congress. For the Congresses between 1789 and 1976 we used Appendix F of Galloway and Wise (1976), and for the remaining years we used counts from the Library of Congress.

Key Sources:

* *The Yeas and the Nays: Key Congressional Decisions, 1774-1945* by Albert Castel  and Scott L. Gibson (1975).
* *The American Political Science Review*: between 1910 and 1940 occasionally presented summaries of significant Congressional action during the term.
* *Congressional Quarterly Almanacs*: 1948–2010.
* *History of the House of Representatives*, by George B. Galloway and Sidney Wise  (1976). Includes counts of total public and private legislation in each Congress.
* *The American Heritage History of the Congress of the United States* by Alvin M. Josephy (1975).
* The Library of Congress
  + “A Century of Lawmaking For a New Nation.” http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lawhome.html.
  + THOMAS. http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.php.

Appendix C

Robustness Checks

Table C1: Divided/Unified Government and log(Legislative Output)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | log(Total Legislation) | | | | log(Significant Legislation) | | | |
|  | **(1)** | **(2)** | **(3)** | **(4)** | **(5)** | **(6)** | **(7)** | **(8)** |
| Unified Government | -0.10 | 0.10\* | 0.05 | 0.09\* | -0.04 | 0.18 | 0.38\*\* | 0.31\*\*\* |
|  | (0.15) | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.05) | (0.14) | (0.12) | (0.15) | (0.11) |
| 37th-55th Congress |  | 1.11\*\*\* | 0.61\*\*\* | 1.81\*\*\* |  | 0.11 | -0.63 | 0.14 |
|  |  | (0.07) | (0.02) | (0.14) |  | (0.18) | (0.69) | (0.29) |
| 56th-79th Congress |  | 1.58\*\*\* | 0.45\*\*\* | 1.77\*\*\* |  | 0.17 | -0.53 | 0.13 |
|  |  | (0.09) | (0.02) | (0.13) |  | (0.19) | (0.69) | (0.29) |
| 80th-111th Congress |  | 1.71\*\*\* | 0.54\*\*\* | 2.07\*\*\* |  | 1.05\*\*\* | -0.89 | 0.46\*\*\* |
|  |  | (0.07) | (0.17) | (0.06) |  | (0.14) | (0.72) | (0.08) |
| President FEs | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | No |
| Decade FEs | No | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes |
| Observations | 111 | 111 | 111 | 111 | 111 | 111 | 111 | 111 |
| R-squared | 0.004 | 0.863 | 0.954 | 0.935 | 0.001 | 0.342 | 0.697 | 0.629 |

Note: Robust standard errors are in parentheses. We transformed the outcome variable for log(Significant Legislation) by adding one to address the one instance where a Congress produced no significant legislation.

∗ p<0.10,∗∗ p<0.05,∗∗∗ p<0.01

Table C2: Divided/Unified Government and Legislative Output with Time Trend

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Total Legislation | | | | Significant Legislation | | | |
|  | **(1)** | **(2)** | **(3)** | **(4)** | **(5)** | **(6)** | **(7)** | **(8)** |
| Unified Government | -13.28 | 75.50\*\* | 24.50 | 24.58 | 0.34 | 1.83\* | 2.30\* | 2.90\*\*\* |
|  | (51.70) | (31.93) | (35.98) | (22.16) | (1.19) | (1.00) | (1.35) | (0.86) |
| Time Trend (Polynomial) | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| President FEs | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | No |
| Decade FEs | No | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes |
| Observations | 111 | 111 | 111 | 111 | 111 | 111 | 111 | 111 |
| R-squared | 0.001 | 0.676 | 0.913 | 0.893 | 0.001 | 0.363 | 0.744 | 0.722 |

Robust standard errors are in parentheses

∗ p<0.10,∗∗ p<0.05,∗∗∗ p<0.01

Table C3: Changes in Unified Government and log(Legislative Output)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Δ log(Total Legislation) | | | | | | Δ log(Significant Legislation) | | | | | |
|  | **(1)** | | **(2)** | | **(3)** | | **(4)** | | **(5)** | | **(6)** | |
| Panel A: All Congresses | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Change to Unified Gov | | 0.11 | | 0.08 | | 0.10 | | 0.34 | | 0.22 | | 0.34 |
|  | | (0.05) | | (0.05) | | (0.05) | | (0.10) | | (0.10) | | (0.10) |
| Observations | | 110 | | 109 | | 110 | | 110 | | 109 | | 110 |
| R-squared | | 0.041 | | 0.127 | | 0.048 | | 0.077 | | 0.248 | | 0.078 |
| Panel B: 1st--55th Congress | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Change to Unified Gov | | 0.16 | | 0.13 | | 0.16 | | 0.29 | | 0.16 | | 0.30 |
|  | | (0.06) | | (0.07) | | (0.06) | | (0.15) | | (0.13) | | (0.15) |
| Observations | | 54 | | 53 | | 54 | | 54 | | 53 | | 54 |
| R-squared | | 0.086 | | 0.190 | | 0.089 | | 0.055 | | 0.271 | | 0.056 |
| Panel C: 56th--111th Congress | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Change to Unified Gov | | 0.03 | | 0.02 | | 0.03 | | 0.40 | | 0.30 | | 0.40 |
|  | | (0.06) | | (0.07) | | (0.06) | | (0.13) | | (0.14) | | (0.13) |
| Observations | | 56 | | 56 | | 56 | | 56 | | 56 | | 56 |
| R-squared | | 0.001 | | 0.031 | | 0.007 | | 0.157 | | 0.273 | | 0.158 |
| Lagged DV | | No | | Yes | | No | | No | | Yes | | No |

Note: Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

Table C4: Divided/Unified Government, Senate Supermajorities and Legislative Output, 1917-2010

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Total Legislation | | Significant Legislation | |
|  | **(1)** | **(2)** | **(3)** | **(4)** |
| Unified Government | 39.84 | 36.73 | 0.11 | 2.27 |
|  | (65.26) | (69.12) | (2.11) | (1.98) |
| Senate Supermajority | 85.32 | 87.18 | -2.50 | -3.80\* |
|  | (91.73) | (93.29) | (2.24) | (2.25) |
| Unified Government x Supermajority | 50.87 | 47.23 | 7.39 | 9.93\*\* |
|  | (108.14) | (110.70) | (4.47) | (3.69) |
| 56th-79th Congress |  | 11.82 |  | -8.21\*\*\* |
|  |  | (64.64) |  | (2.12) |
| Observations | 47 | 47 | 47 | 47 |
| R-squared | 0.098 | 0.099 | 0.076 | 0.350 |

Note: Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

∗ p<0.10,∗∗ p<0.05,∗∗∗ p<0.01

Table C5: Divided/Unified Government, the Budget Deficit and Legislative Output, 1901- 2010

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Total Legislation | | Significant Legislation | |
|  | **(1)** | **(2)** | **(3)** | **(4)** |
| Unified Government | 39.11 | 54.57 | -0.80 | 2.70 |
|  | (67.02) | (65.79) | (2.03) | (2.02) |
| Deficit (Lagged) | -19.76 | -15.75 | -2.74 | -1.83 |
|  | (276.86) | (249.94) | (8.41) | (4.13) |
| Unified Government x Deficit (Lagged) | -49.70 | -39.70 | 10.75 | 13.01\*\* |
|  | (309.10) | (290.42) | (9.53) | (5.12) |
| 80th-111th Congress |  | 42.76 |  | 9.68\*\*\* |
|  |  | (58.91) |  | (1.80) |
| Observations | 54 | 54 | 54 | 54 |
| R-squared | 0.013 | 0.023 | 0.049 | 0.427 |

Note: Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

∗ p<0.10,∗∗ p<0.05,∗∗∗ p<0.01

Table C6: Determinants of Productivity Under Unified Government

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Total Legislation | | Significant Legislation | |
|  | **(1)** | **(2)** | **(3)** | **(4)** |
| log(Time Since Pres. Party Held Unified Control) | -28.27 | -36.62 | 1.79 | 0.65 |
|  | (47.82) | (30.14) | (1.27) | (1.12) |
| log(Time Since Party Opposing Pres. Held Unified Control) | 17.41 | 15.37 | 1.04 | -0.52 |
|  | (54.54) | (31.97) | (1.21) | (0.99) |
| log(Time Since Divided Government) | -63.79 | 6.91 | -1.35 | 0.16 |
|  | (60.30) | (28.58) | (1.20) | (0.82) |
| Time Period Controls | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Observations | 62 | 62 | 62 | 62 |
| R-squared | 0.022 | 0.731 | 0.106 | 0.526 |

Note: Robust standard errors are in parentheses.

∗ p<0.10,∗∗ p<0.05,∗∗∗ p<0.01

Table C7: Divided/Unified Government, Days in Session, Centralization, and Legislative Output

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Total Legislation | | | Significant Legislation | | |
|  | **(1)** | **(2)** | **(3)** | **(4)** | **(5)** | **(6)** |
| Unified Government | 39.95 | 62.28 | 51.64 | 2.44\*\* | 3.75\*\* | 4.33\*\*\* |
|  | (27.11) | (42.44) | (42.69) | (1.03) | (1.67) | (1.53) |
| Days in Session | -0.15 |  |  | 0.00 |  |  |
|  | (0.19) |  |  | (0.00) |  |  |
| House & Senate Leadership Centralization |  | -216.10\*\*\* |  |  | -3.78\*\*\* |  |
|  |  | (43.33) |  |  | (1.40) |  |
| House Leadership Centralization |  |  | -149.07\*\* |  |  | -6.79\*\*\* |
|  |  |  | (60.19) |  |  | (1.74) |
| House Strong Party Caucus |  |  | -115.43\* |  |  | -0.49 |
|  |  |  | (62.29) |  |  | (2.24) |
| Senate Leadership Centralization |  |  | -22.45 |  |  | 4.37\*\* |
|  |  |  | (73.15) |  |  | (2.10) |
| Time Period FEs | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Observations | 111 | 60 | 60 | 111 | 60 | 60 |
| R-squared | 0.726 | 0.334 | 0.428 | 0.422 | 0.408 | 0.471 |

Note: Robust standard errors are in parentheses; Data on Centralization covers 52nd Congress onward.

∗ p<0.10,∗∗ p<0.05,∗∗∗ p<0.01