Online Appendix for Do Citizens Vote Against Incumbents Who Permit Local Immigration?

Contents

A.1 Support for Admitting Refugees, Reagan vs Carter Supporters

In 1979 and 1980, Gallup asked a sample of US voters their views on admitting more refugees and which candidate they planned to support in the 1980 presidential election. The 1979 refugee question asked whether each voter would favor legal changes to welcome more refugees from Vietnam and other countries in the region. In 1980, Gallup asked a very similar question about Cuban refugees. The 1980 survey asked whether voters would supporting halting all immigration until the unemployment rate went below an unspecified number.

Voters favorable to welcoming more Cuban refugees to the US were more likely to vote for Carter by 7 percentage points or approximately 15%. Voters favorable to admitting more Vietnamese refugees were more likely to support Carter by 4 percentage points, but this difference is not statistically distinguishable from 0. Voters who supported halting immigration were only marginally more likely to favor Reagan.

Table A.1: **Reagan Supporters Modestly Less Supportive of Permitting Refugees than Carter Supporters.**

	Reagan Support [0,1]		
Admit Cubans	-0.07		
	(0.03)		
Admit Vietnamese		-0.04	
		(0.03)	
Halt Immigration			0.01
			(0.04)
Constant	0.46	0.48	0.42
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)
# of Voters	1,014	1,209	1,036

Robust standard errors reported in parentheses below each estimate. Voters weighted using Gallup's provided survey weights.

Put together, these surveys suggest that, however Reagan's public stances were intended, voters did not generally see him as the pro-refugee candidate. Or, if voters did understood him as the more pro-refugee candidate, this did not meaningfully change their support for Reagan (or Carter).

A.2 Formal Synthetic Control Estimates

I report the formal synthetic control estimates in Table A.2. As I discuss in the main text, the synthetic control is a weighted average of similar counties. In the first two columns of Table A.2, I construct the synthetic control as a weighted average of counties with similar populations to Miami-Dade, using the 250 and 555 counties with the most similar populations as of 1980.[14] In the third column, I construct the synthetic control using Florida counties only. This approach is much noisier because Miami-Dade is quite different from other counties in Florida and not well-approximated by a weighted average of them.

The estimates suggest that Miami shifted toward Reagan in 1980 much more than similar counties and to a degree that was unusual among similar counties. In columns 1 and 2, I report an increased support for Reagan of approximately 7 percentage points compared to counties with similar populations. I report a 3 percentage point effect when compared to a weighted average of other Florida counties.[15]

[14] In practice, these are the 250 and 555 most populous counties since Miami-Dade was one of the largest counties in 1980. As I discuss in the main text and detail in Section A.2, I choose the top 555 counties as a control pool because it minimized absolute out-of-sample forward prediction error.

[15] In re-running the analysis across systems, I found that the optimization routine the synth package uses can produce slightly different results across machines. This does not appear to affect the point estimates I estimate for Miami's shift toward Republican presidential candidates. It only affects which counties are included in the control pool for the purposes of computing Miami's location in the placebo distribution. Across machines, Miami's location in placebo distribution in columns 1 and 2 changes by no more than one tenth of one percentage point. The difference in estimates across systems has no bearing on the substantive conclusions I draw.

Table A.2: **Increase in Republican Presidential Vote Share After the Mariel Boatlift, Synthetic Control.**

	Counties in Control Pool		
	250	555	Florida
All Years	0.07	0.05	0.03
	[96.27]	[90.43]	[79.41]
1980	0.07	0.07	0.05
	[96.27]	[95.21]	[91.18]
1984	0.08	0.06	-0.01
	[96.27]	[92.55]	[27.94]
1988	0.09	0.07	0.00
	[96.27]	[95.21]	[51.47]
1992	0.09	0.08	0.11
	[97.76]	[97.34]	[94.12]
1996	0.04	0.01	0.02
	[72.39]	[62.77]	[60.29]
2000	0.08	0.00	0.03
	[81.34]	[54.79]	[67.65]

All estimates calculated holding out counties that border Miami-Dade. The 250 or 555 counties most similar to Miami-Dade in terms of 1978 population are included in the control pool. The percentile of the placebo distribution where Miami-Dade lands is reported in square brackets. The placebo distribution is found using the procedure discribed in Abadie et al (2010).

A.3 Formal Matrix Completion Estimates

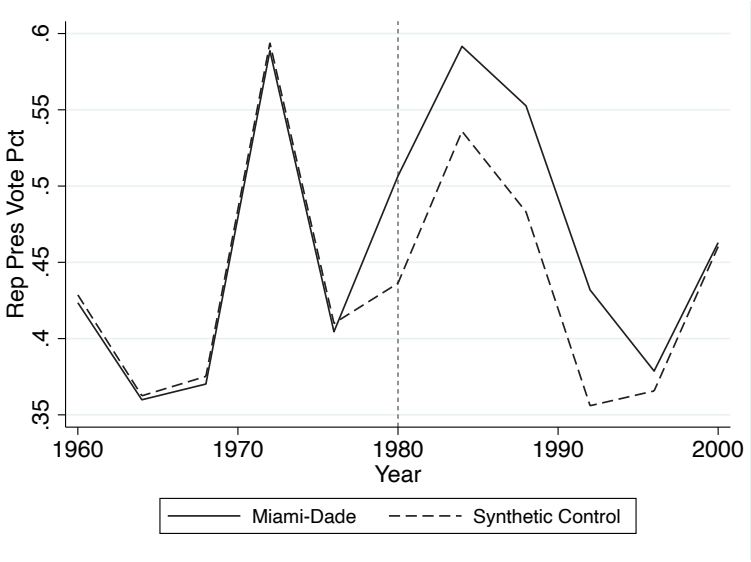
I report the formal matrix completion-based estimates in Table A.3 following Athey et al. (2018). I plot the treated unit and the matrix completion-based conterfactual in Figure A.1. The estimates and plot are remarkably similar to those I find using the synthetic control method for 1980. I find that Miami-Dade shifted toward Reagan in 1980 by approximately six percentage points more than the average county with similar pre-1980 presidential voting patterns. After 1980, the matrix completion-estimate effect continues to be relatively similar to the synthetic control estimates that I report in Table A.2.

Table A.3: **Increase in Republican Presidential Vote Share After the Mariel Boatlift, Matrix Completion.**

	Counties in Control Pool	
	250	555
1980	0.06	0.06
1984	0.07	0.05
1988	0.08	0.07
1992	0.11	0.11
1996	0.04	0.02
2000	0.07	0.03

All estimates calculated holding out counties that border Miami-Dade. The 250 or 555 counties most similar to Miami-Dade in terms of 1978 population are included in the control pool.

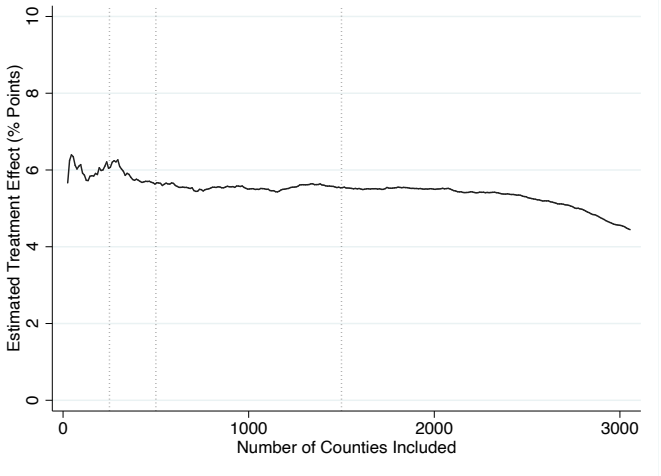
Figure A.1: **Matrix Completion-Based Estimate of Mariel Boatlift Impact on Republican Presidential Vote Share**



A.4 Sensitivity of Panel Estimates

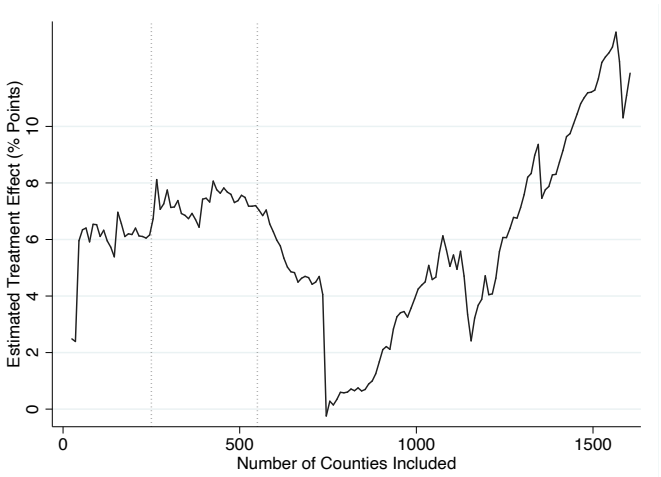
The fixed effects estimates decline as more counties are included in the analysis, up to roughly 1,000 counties. After that, the estimates stabilize and hover around 4 percentage points.

Figure A.2: **Sensitivity of Fixed Effects Estimate to Counties Included.**



The synthetic control estimates also generally decline as more counties are included in the analysis, but the estimates are less stable.

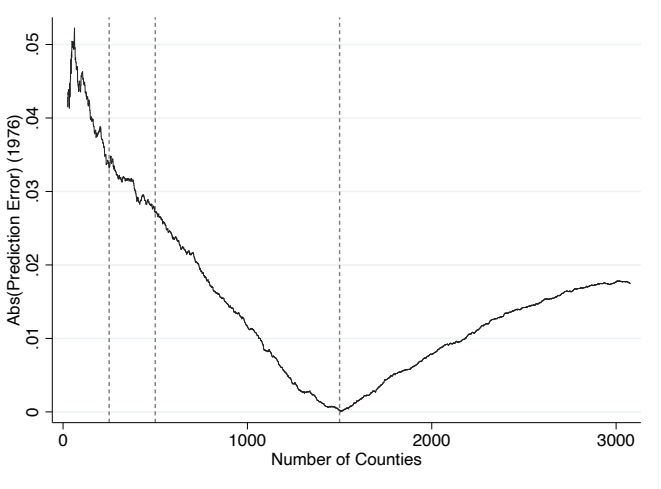
Figure A.3: **Sensitivity of Synthetic Control Estimate to the Number of Counties Included in the Control Pool.**



A.5 Procedure for Selecting Number of Counties

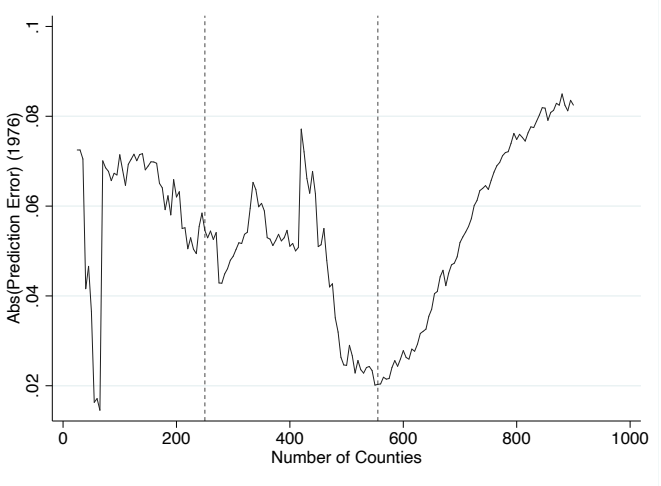
I find that the number of counties that minimizes the absolute forward prediction error for 1976 from a fixed effects regression is approximately 1,500. Given that I am predicting only one point, this may not be generally applicable to predicting other elections. This is just one rule by which to select the number of counties.

Figure A.4: **Absolute Forward Prediction Error for Selecting Number of Counties, Fixed Effects.**



I find that the number of counties that minimizes a moving average of the squared forward prediction error for 1976 from the synthetic control method is approximately 555.

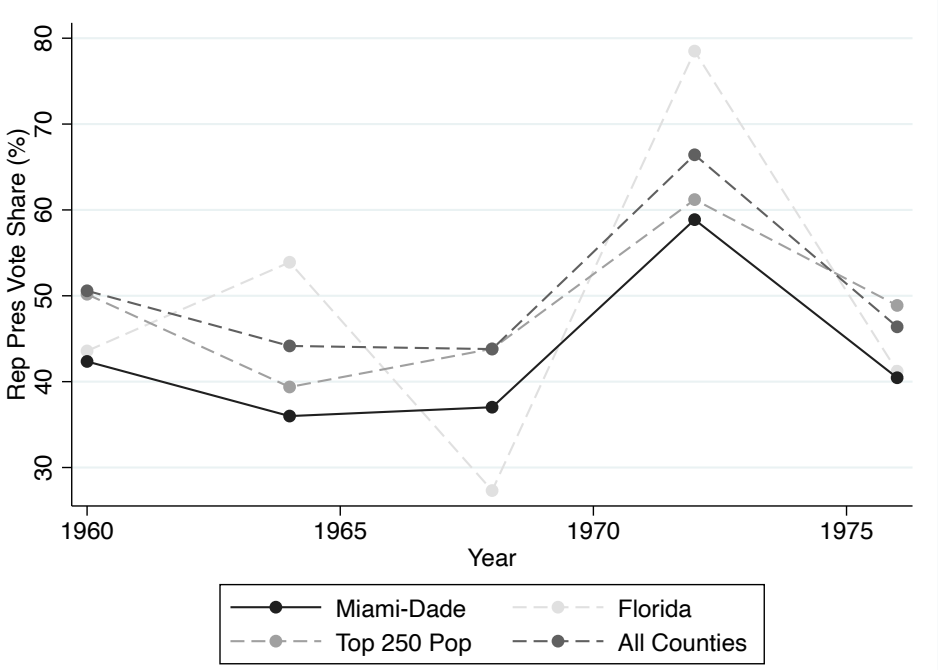
Figure A.5: **Absolute Forward Prediction Error for Selecting Number of Counties, Synthetic Control.**



A.6 Florida Counties vs Similar Population Counties as a Control Pool

While the procedure in the previous section selects a set of control counties that minimize a particular prediction error, that procedure does not look at how suitable Florida counties are as a control compared to all counties. In Figure A.6, I plot the pre-1980 trend in Republican presidential vote share for Miami-Dade and three comparison groups: Florida counties, the top 250 counties in terms of population, and all US counties. The average Florida county has much more dramatic swings in support for Republican candidates across years than does Miami-Dade or the average county in the other two control pool options. These swings make difference-in-difference or synthetic control estimates using just Florida counties as controls much noisier than other estimators.

Figure A.6: **Comparing Pre-Treatment Trends in Presidential Voting Across Control Pools.**



A.7 Data Collection Process for Hudson County, New Jersey

I gathered data for Hudson County that is similar to my data on Miami-Dade. I collected this data from a collection of historical New Jersey Department of State records in the New Jersey State Archives. Election results are reported for each district. Each district is housed in a single ward, and each ward is a mutually exclusive zone in a city. Because I have no information on the stability of the district boundaries, I only work with the ward and city boundaries.

A.8 Procedure for Estimating Neighborhood and Ward Demographics

I used three datasets to estimate neighborhood demographics in Miami. First, I downloaded a shapefile containing the block boundaries for the 1980 census. I then overlaid a Miami neighborhood shapefile produced by the housing data company Zillow. I identified the portion of each block that fall within a given neighborhood's boundaries and stored that share as a column in a dataset indexed by neighborhood and block. Finally, I merged on 1980 population census counts by block, multiplied that population count by the proportion of the block in each neighborhood, and summed up the population numbers for each neighborhood. I matched these neighborhoods to the neighborhoods tallied in Miami's 1981 precinct-level local election results.

I used a very similar procedure for ward demographics in Hudson County. The only change I made was to use a ward shapefile provided by the Hudson County Department of Planning. I was unable to confirm that the ward boundaries are approximately the same as in 1980. I was able to find articles referencing a change in the Jersey City boundaries in 2012. Accordingly, I re-ran all analyses dropping Jersey City, and the results did not substantively change. I also checked that every city in my analysis has the same number of wards as they had in 1980 and that the wards have similar population distributions—large ones in 2018 were also the large ones in 1980.

A.9 Shift toward Republicans in Miami by Cuban Population

In addition to the simple analysis of majority Cuban neighborhoods in the body of the letter, I present here a more formal analysis of the shift to Republicans among Cubans. I show these results in Table 2 and Figure 3. I find that, relative to other Miami residents, a hypothetical neighborhood with 10 percentage points more of the population with Cuban backgrounds swung toward Republicans by 2.5 percentage points.

A.10 Similar Shift toward Republicans among Cubans in Miami and Hudson County

As I presented in the paper, I find that, relative to other neighborhoods in their city, Cuban neighborhoods increased support for Reagan over Carter by about the same amount in Miami-Dade and Hudson County. This is evident in the parallel lines and boulstered by the fact that the lines are relatively close to one another.

Figure A.7: **Similar Shift toward Republicans among Cubans in Miami and Hudson County.**

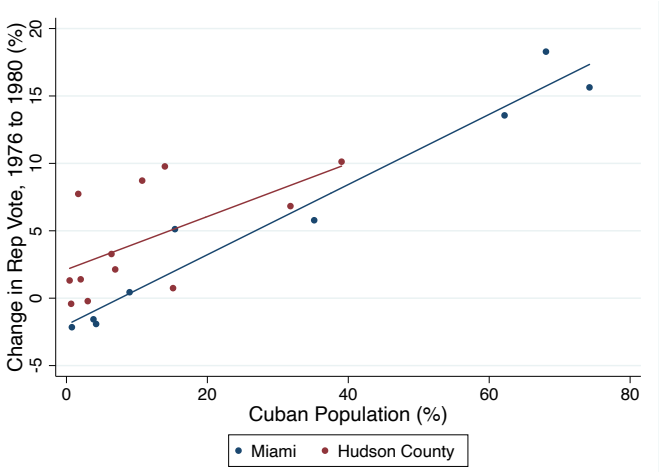


Table A.4: **No Shift toward Republican House Candidates vs Presidential Candidates among Cubans in Miami.**

	Rep Vote [0-1]	
Cuban Share × Presidential × 1980	0.32	0.33
	(0.04)	(0.03)
Cuban Share × 1980	-0.03	
	(0.06)	
Neighborhood × Office FE	Yes	Yes
Election × Office FE	Yes	No
Election × Neighborhood FE	No	Yes
Neighborhoods	9	9

Block bootstrapped standard errors from 1,000 samples are reported in parentheses below each estimate. All population share variables, including the Cuban population share, range from zero to one.

A.11 No Shift toward Republicans House Candidates among Cubans in Miami

Table A.4 presents a comparison between shift in Presidential races and House races. The first row captures how much bigger the marginal increase in Republican presidential vote share is in more Cuban neighborhoods relative to the shift in voting for Republican US House candidates. This difference is quite large and implies that this shift toward Republicans is specific to the Presidential context.