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THE ROLE OF STATE POLITICAL PARTIES
IN CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Women Running the Party and Women Running for Congress: An Examination of State Party Diversity and Candidate Emergence in the 2018 Midterm Elections	5
2.1	Introduction	5
2.2	The Underrepresentation of Women in Politics	7
2.2.1	The Role of Parties and Elites	8
2.3	Theory	9
2.4	Methodology	11
2.4.1	Representation of Women in State Political Parties	13
2.5	Results	18
2.6	Discussion	22
2.7	Appendix	24
3	Engaging the Next Generation: An Exploration of State Party Membership and Youth Participation	28
3.1	Introduction	28
3.2	Youth Political Participation	30
3.2.1	Political Parties and Youth Political Participation	32
3.3	Theory	33
3.4	Methodology	36
3.4.1	Youth Engagement in State Political Party Organizations	38
3.5	Results	42
3.6	Discussion	47
3.7	Appendix	49
4	Do Party Rules Matter?: An Examination of State Party Bylaws and Congressional Nominations	52
4.1	Introduction	52
4.2	Political Parties and Primary Elections	54
4.2.1	The Role of State Party Organizations	55
4.3	Theory	56
4.4	Data and Methodology	60
4.4.1	Party Rules and Party Power	61

4.4.2	Measuring Party Influence in the 2018 Midterm Elections	63
4.5	Results	66
4.6	Discussion	74
4.7	Appendix	77
5	Conclusion	79

Abstract

Using an original dataset of state party bylaws, this dissertation examines the institutional role of state political parties in congressional primaries. Specifically, I consider how representative state political parties are of the general public, whether the varying levels of representation found in each state party influence who runs for Congress, and whether state political parties are able to influence levels of electoral competition through provisions of their bylaws. Overall, I find both state Democratic and Republican parties vary in the extent to which they prioritize gender representation and youth representation in their state central committees through their party rules. However, these rules only seem to influence the candidate emergence process during Democratic primaries. Specifically, in 2018, Democratic women were more likely to run for the House of Representatives when representing a state party chaired by a woman and when representing a state party which granted party committee membership to an allied women's group. Similarly, state Democratic parties were more likely to nominate younger candidates for the House of Representatives as the number of youth party members in their state central committee increased. Beyond candidate emergence, I find state party rules also influenced levels of electoral competition during the 2018 congressional primary elections, albeit differently for each party. State Democratic parties were less likely to see divisive primaries when they avoided policies that required the party to remain neutral during contested primaries. In comparison, state Republican parties were less likely to see divisive primaries, and also saw fewer primary candidates in general, when they guaranteed ex-officio party membership to their co-partisan elected officials.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Despite the vast amount of research dedicated to political parties in the U.S., there is still much to be learned about the maneuverings of political parties during congressional primary elections. Two recent books make the argument political parties should be viewed as networks that are able to control nominations for state legislatures and Congress. This is in contrast to popular conventional wisdom which argues direct primaries have made elections candidate-centered. First, Masket (2009) argues informal party organizations, which are made up of officeholders, activists, donors, and other political brokers, are able to control nominations to the California Legislature. He shows from 1910 to the early 1950s, political parties were powerless in California due to the progressive reforms of allowing candidate cross-filings and forbidding party labels on ballots. During this time period, incumbents were able to win reelection with minimal competition by winning both the Democratic and Republican primaries (Masket 2009). However, once party labels were returned to ballots in 1954, incumbents were no longer able to win multiple primaries, and informal party organizations, like those run by Maxine Waters and Bill Thomas, were able to emerge and control nominations to the state legislature by recruiting, endorsing, and funding their preferred candidates (Masket 2009). More broadly, Hassell (2018) argues political parties can use their political resources to clear the primary field for their preferred candidates in congressional

elections, particularly in Senate races and the most competitive House races. Specifically, he finds congressional candidates with the highest level of party support, measured as the number of donations received from a donor who also gave to the party’s congressional campaign fund, are less likely to drop out of their primary and more likely to win their primary (Hassell 2018).

There are several commonalities between these two accounts of political parties manipulating legislative primary elections. First, both view political parties as broad, diverse networks similar to Cohen et al. (2008; 6), who define a political party as a “coalition of interest groups, social groups, activists, policy demanders working to gain control of government for their goals.” Second, it seems like a lot of the types of party activities highlighted by both Masket (2009) and Hassell (2018) are occurring behind the scenes, sometimes completely unseen by the voting public.

Ultimately, this leads to the question, what role do parties in their institutional form, a political party’s formal organization and rules, play in shaping elections? This is an important question that has mostly been addressed at the national level. While there is research on the implications of national party rules, such as how the organization of presidential primaries influences presidential elections (Norrande 2006, Norrande & Wendland 2016) and representation at national party conventions (Kirkpatrick 1975), with some exceptions, less is known about the rules that govern state and local political parties. This is despite the fact state and local parties govern more elections and manage many of the day to day activities of the Democratic and Republican Party. For example, state party bylaws govern among other things, how individuals are elected to party office, when state party organization are allowed to endorse candidates, and how party resources can be spent.

In order to learn more about the role of state political parties in congressional elections, I collected and coded the party bylaws in place during the lead up to the 2018 midterm elections for all state Democratic and Republican parties. I combined this data with biographical information about each state party chair. Overall this new dataset of party rules

and leaders contains information on the structure of each state party organization, the formal membership of each state central committee, whether each party can endorse candidates during contested primaries, and when these rules can be changed, among other things.¹ In the forthcoming chapters, I use this original dataset to answer several research questions related to state political parties and their institutional role in shaping congressional elections.

First, I examine levels of representation in state political parties and I consider whether these varying levels of diversity in state parties influences who runs for Congress. Specifically, in Chapter 2, I consider these questions in the context of gender representation. Using my new dataset of state political party bylaws and demographics of state party chairs, I construct three measures of gender diversity in each state political party, whether each party was chaired by a woman, granted committee membership to an allied women's group, and required gender parity among their committee members. I find Democratic parties are more likely to be chaired by a woman and to require gender parity among their members, but Republican parties are more likely to grant membership to allied women's groups. Considering the implications of these rules, I find Democratic women are more likely to run for Congress representing parties that grant membership to an allied women's group and parties chaired by a woman.

In Chapter 3, I consider the same questions about representation in state political parties and its implications on who runs for Congress in the context of age. I operationalize youth representation within each party by counting the number of formal party members associated with either the state's College Democrats/Republicans, Young Democrats/Republicans, Teenage Republicans/High School Democrats, or otherwise identified as youth members by the party's bylaws and predict state parties with higher levels of formal youth representation will lead to higher levels of youth political participation and younger candidates for Congress. I find state Democratic parties are more likely to grant voting party committee membership to the Young Democrats than state Republican parties are to grant voting party membership

¹My new dataset of state political party bylaws is available at <http://matthewgeras.com/data/>.

to the Young Republicans. However, the opposite is true of youth political organizations organized around college students and teenagers. While there is no evidence that variation in youth party membership influences levels of youth voter registration or voter turnout, I find state Democratic parties are more likely to have youth nominees for the House of Representatives as they increase the degree of youth representation in their state central committees.

In Chapter 4, I consider whether state party rules influence a state party's ability to control levels of competition in congressional primaries. Specifically, I theorize political parties will have an easier time achieving their preferred outcome of less competitive primary elections when they have bylaws that centralize power within the state central committee. To test this expectation, I operationalize party centralization and power as whether or not elected officials are represented within each party's formal membership and whether or not each party has a neutrality policy when it comes to contested primaries. I find party power correlates with party control, but this trend varies by political party. State Democratic parties are less likely to see divisive primaries when they have rules in place allowing the state central committee to endorse their preferred candidates. State Republican parties are less likely to see divisive primaries, and also see fewer primary candidates in general, when they guarantee ex-officio party membership to their co-partisan elected officials. Finally, Chapter 5 summarizes my findings and places my dissertation in the broader context of what we know about the role of political parties in congressional primary elections.

Chapter 2

Women Running the Party and Women Running for Congress: An Examination of State Party Diversity and Candidate Emergence in the 2018 Midterm Elections

2.1 Introduction

In February 2019, Jessica Patterson was elected chair of the California Republican Party, making her the first woman to hold the position (Mai-Duc, Ulloa & Chabria 2019).¹ While campaigning for party chair, Patterson emphasized the need for inclusivity and made the argument anyone who identifies as a Republican should be welcomed to the party (Mai-Duc, Ulloa & Chabria 2019). Similarly, after being elected chair of the Missouri Democratic Party in 2018, incoming party chair Jean Peters Baker pronounced the party was welcoming of all

¹This chapter has been published at *Party Politics*. See (Geras 2020)

Missourians (Thomas 2018). Shortly after Peters Baker’s election, Kay Hoflander was elected chair of the Missouri Republican Party marking the first time both major state parties were led by women at the same time (Dial 2019).

Despite these recent examples of women advancing to the top-level leadership positions of state political parties, like most levels of government in the United States, women remain underrepresented among the leaders of state political parties. Moreover, the lack of descriptive representation among state party chairs is particularly concerning because past research finds the underrepresentation of women in party leadership positions contributes to fewer women running for elected office (Lawless & Fox 2010).

This paper evaluates the theory that greater gender diversity among political parties and elites increases the number of women willing to run for elected office. Using a new dataset of provisions in state political party bylaws and demographics of state party chairs in the lead up to the 2018 midterm elections, I evaluate whether women are more likely to run for Congress representing state political parties with higher levels of gender diversity among their state central committee membership and leadership.² I find during the 2018 midterms, Democratic women were more likely to run for the House of Representatives in states where the state Democratic party granted committee membership to an allied women’s organization and in states where the state party was chaired by a women. In contrast, the emergence of Republican women was not influenced by the degree of gender diversity among the committee membership and leadership of state Republican parties. Ultimately, this paper contributes to our knowledge of political parties, representation, and candidate emergence. First, it provides a new dataset which can be used to measure levels of descriptive representation among the committee membership and leadership of state political parties. Moreover, this paper provides additional evidence that the demographic makeup of political parties can have significant implications on who runs for office.

²Whenever I refer to party committee membership, I am referring to the individuals elected or appointed to a state political party as outlined in their rules, not party voters or self-identifiers.

2.2 The Underrepresentation of Women in Politics

The discipline is divided over whether electoral discrimination is a primary cause of women being underrepresented in government. Empirically, women are no less likely than similarly qualified men to win elections (Burrell 1994, Darcy, Welch & Clark 1994, Lawless & Pearson 2008). Moreover, men and women run similar campaigns and in many cases have similar electoral resources available to them (Dabelko & Herrnson 1997, Burrell 2014, Hayes & Lawless 2016).³ However, others argue these assessments do not show a complete picture. Since bias and discrimination may not appear in vote totals and not all women who run for office are the same, it has been suggested existing empirical research has not fully considered variations in candidate and incumbent quality (Fulton 2012, Murray 2015).⁴ As a result, many successful women candidates are more qualified than traditional measures suggest. Just as not all women candidates are the same, some states and districts are more accepting of women candidates than others (Windett 2011, Palmer & Simon 2012) meaning some women face tougher electoral challenges. Additionally, women candidates, even incumbents, are often seen as vulnerable and face more competition than men in both primary and general elections (Palmer & Simon 2005, Lawless & Pearson 2008). Republican women are particularly disadvantaged by the recent trend of fewer moderates running for Congress (Thomsen 2017) and the perception they are too liberal (King & Matland 2003).

Beyond the electoral hurdles women face, a lack of women candidates contributes to the underrepresentation of women. Women are less likely than similarly qualified men to express interest in running for elected office (Lawless & Fox 2010) and this gender gap in political ambition develops at an early age (Fox & Lawless 2014, Shames 2017). Overall, women are more sensitive to the potential costs associated with running for office (Fulton, Maestas, Maisel & Stone 2006, Carroll & Sanbonmatsu 2013) and are more likely to consider their own qualifications and experiences, as well as others' opinions, when deciding whether to

³But also see (Kitchens & Swers 2016)

⁴In fact, the perception that voters hold gender stereotypes influences many aspects of campaigning including campaign strategy (Dittmar 2015).

run (Bledsoe & Herring 1990, Carroll & Sanbonmatsu 2013).⁵

2.2.1 The Role of Parties and Elites

The gender gap in political ambition is directly linked to candidate recruitment. A growing consensus finds one reason women remain underrepresented in government is they are less likely to be recruited to run for office (Niven 1998, Lawless & Fox 2010, Carroll & Sanbonmatsu 2013). This is especially true when political parties and elites recruit candidates from traditional party networks and local offices (Lawless & Fox 2010, Crowder-Meyer 2013) where women are underrepresented and seen as being part of the out-group (Niven 1998). This problem hurts Republican women disproportionately because there are many more women in the pool of potential Democratic candidates compared to the pool of potential Republican candidates (Crowder-Meyer & Lauderdale 2014). Moreover, Democratic women have greater access to successful candidate training programs and PACs than do Republican women (Kreitzer & Osborn 2019). Beyond recruitment, elites can also partake in gatekeeping by dissuading certain candidates from running and when they do, men are normally advantaged over women (Sanbonmatsu 2006). While this bias may be implicit, opposed to explicit, it is still influential because political elites prioritize candidate recruitment efforts for most levels of government (Broockman 2014).

Even when women, especially Republican women, are recruited to run for office, they are less likely than men to respond positively (Preece & Stoddard 2015, Preece, Stoddard & Fisher 2016). Driven by the perception party elites will offer greater assistance to men (Niven 1998, Butler & Preece 2016) and the fact women are more likely than men to be discouraged to run for office, some women may not run even if asked (Carroll & Sanbonmatsu 2013).

⁵Experimental evidence suggests many women are election averse regardless of their qualifications (Kanthak & Woon 2015).

2.3 Theory

The theory that diverse political parties will be represented by more diverse candidates is well supported. In fact, promoting women to positions of power within political parties has been offered as a potential solution to the problem of women being underrepresented in government (Niven 1998). The argument behind this relationship is threefold. First, when political parties and elites become more diverse, they will be less likely to discriminate against historically non-traditional candidates. Second, diverse parties are more likely to recruit women to run for office and are more successful in doing so. Finally, women in positions of power, such as party leadership, may inspire future generations of women to become involved in politics.

As stated previously, women are less likely to be recruited to run for office because they are often seen as belonging to an out-group (Niven 1998). However, as political parties become more diverse, this bias should be weakened, if not eliminated, because it will become more difficult to distinguish out-group members from in-group members. In the context of this study, this means political parties with diverse committee memberships should be less likely to bias their recruitment efforts against women and more likely to recruit women to run for office. Existing research supports this notion. First, women are more likely to recruit other women to run for office (Niven 1998, Crowder-Meyer 2013). In one particular study with a similar research design to the one utilized here, Cheng and Tavits (2011) find during the 2004 and 2006 Canadian national elections, women were more likely to be nominated for office from major parties when the local party president was a woman.⁶ Moreover, recent research finds women are more likely to respond to recruitment efforts made by other women opposed to men (Pruysers & Blais 2019). This means not only are parties comprised

⁶More broadly, comparative politics research strongly supports the theory presented here. For example, Fortin-Rittberger and Rittberger (2015) reveal inclusiveness at the early stages of a party's candidate recruitment process increases the number of women candidates in elections for parliament. Similarly, Caul (1999) finds both high levels of women working at internal party offices and party rules intended to increase the number of women in national parliaments contribute to better representation for women. However, the influence of women serving in party leadership on women's representation varies between proportional and non-proportional representation systems (Kunovich & Paxton 2005).

of women, and led by women, more likely to recruit women candidates, they are more likely to be successful in their efforts.

It should be acknowledged not all candidates are recruited to run for office. However, even if state parties are not actively recruiting candidates in every district, this does not mean the composition of a party's state central committee has no influence on the candidate emergence process. First, when party organizations, at both the national and local level, do actively recruit candidates, they are often successful in their efforts (Maisel & Stone 2014). Moreover, many self-starters having existing contacts with party organizations, or at least have some form of contact with a party organization prior to deciding to run (Kazee & Thornberry 1990). Overall, since party organizations can also dissuade candidates, and there is a perception men will receive greater assistance from elites than women, gender diverse parties will positively influence the electoral calculations of potential women candidates even if they are not actively recruiting women.

Finally, diverse political parties should inspire more women to run for office. A growing body of literature argues women in positions of power can inspire other women to become politically active (Campbell & Wolbrecht 2006, Bonneau & Kanthak 2018). For example, Ladam, Harden, and Windett (2018) examine whether women governors and senators have the ability to encourage more women to run for the state legislature either by acting as symbolic role models and/or by recruiting more women to run for office from their positions of power. They find better support for the symbolic representation argument. Specifically, they find women with no ability to recruit other candidates, senators and governors from neighboring states, and women with a limited ability to recruit other women, losing women candidates for U.S. Senate and governor, both have positive effects on more women running for the state legislature. If losing women candidates for governor and senator, and women governors and senators in neighboring states, can motivate more women to run for office, the same is probably true of women serving on state party committees, particularly women

in leadership positions.⁷ What is more, in comparison to governors and senators, who may lack the opportunity to directly recruit more women (Ladam, Harden & Windett 2018), past research acknowledges political parties play an important role in candidate recruitment. Overall, diverse political parties are more likely to be represented by women candidates because they limit the potential for biased recruitment, actually recruit more women, and inspire more women to run for political office.

2.4 Methodology

Having explained why diverse political parties should lead to more diverse candidates, I now outline my methodology for testing this theory. The dependent variable is the number of non-incumbent women candidates running for the House of Representatives in each Democratic and Republican primary.⁸ Figure 2.1 displays the number of non-incumbent women candidates in all 2018 primary elections for the House of Representatives. Despite 2018 being dubbed a second “Year of the Woman”, a majority of both party’s primary elections saw no women candidates. Overall, 350 out of 435 Republican primaries, 80.5%, and 240 out of 435 Democratic primaries, 55.2%, had no non-incumbent women candidates. Not

⁷It could be argued party chairs are less visible than candidates for governor or senator and may not symbolically inspire women to run for office. It is not clear this is the case. One of the ways I identified state party chairs is through news articles. If the media cover party conventions and the election of party chairs, some are made aware of the members and leaders of state parties. Without using a survey to ask voters, it is unclear voters are significantly less aware of party leaders compared to losing candidates or the leaders of neighboring states. After all, Delli Carpini and Ketner (1996) find only 35% of respondents knew the names of both of their U.S. Senators (pg. 74-75). Nonetheless, it is possible state party chairs are not visible enough to symbolically motivate others to run for office in which case, the relationship between diverse parties and diverse candidates found in this paper is likely driven by more traditional candidate recruitment efforts.

⁸It is worth discussing my procedures for handling elections held in California, Louisiana, and Washington, due to their use of top-two/blanket primaries and elections held in Connecticut, Utah, and Virginia due to their occasional practice of selecting nominees through party conventions. The results presented in the paper include all observations and I treat blanket primary states as if each party held separate primaries. This means I have one observation for each political party in each district as I do for all other states. This is necessary because my dependent variable varies at the primary level. I already control for primary type in my models. In order to include convention states, I include a new independent variable called convention state for observations from these three states. Two alternative model specifications, which produce the same results, can be seen in the Appendix; they include removing individual observations from the convention states if a convention was held in place of a primary in a particular district and restricting my analysis to the 44 states that hold traditional partisan primaries.

surprisingly, when women did run for the House of Representatives, they were more likely to run in Democratic primaries. Of the 85 Republican primaries that featured at least one non-incumbent woman, only 13 primaries had more than one woman and 9 of these primaries saw only two women. On the Democratic side, out of the 195 primaries with at least one non-incumbent woman, 71 primaries featured more than one woman. Since less than 10% of all primaries in 2018 saw more than one non-incumbent woman candidate, I use a binary measure of candidate emergence where each primary is coded 0 if no non-incumbent women candidates ran for the House of Representatives and 1 if at least one non-incumbent women candidate emerged. I use the candidate file in Brooking’s 2018 primary election dataset to determine the number of candidates, and their gender, running in each primary (Kamarck & Podkul 2018).⁹

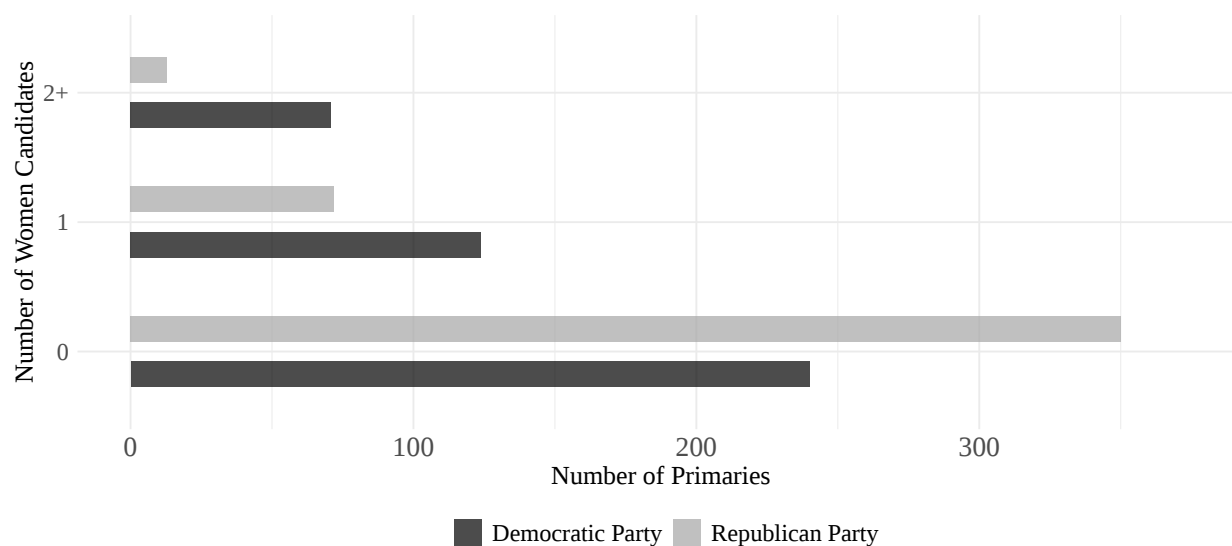


Figure 2.1: Women Primary Candidates

Note: This figure displays the number of non-incumbent women candidates in 2018 primary elections for the House of Representatives.

My main independent variables of interest, which will be discussed in the next section, are measures of gender diversity in the membership of each party’s state central committee, but

⁹I would like to thank Sarina Rhinehart for her assistance in aggregating this data to the primary level.

it is also necessary to consider other variables that influence whether women run for office. First, I use Trump’s 2016 district-level voteshare in order to account for the ideological leanings of each district (Nir 2012). Next, I consider whether an incumbent is seeking reelection in each primary due to the sizable advantages incumbents hold over their opponents and the fact women are more likely to run for open seats (Ondercin & Welch 2009). For each primary, I code whether there is a party incumbent in the district, an opponent party incumbent in the district, or whether the district has an open seat. I also control for the type of primary being held in each state according to the National Conference on State Legislatures since candidates likely consider which voters are eligible to vote before deciding to run (National Conference of State Legislatures 2016). In order to control for a pool of women potentially willing to run for Congress in each state, I include the percentage of women serving in each state legislature in 2018 (Center for American Women and Politics 2018). Additionally, I control for the degree of legislative professionalism in each state (Squire 2017).

2.4.1 Representation of Women in State Political Parties

There are several ways to measure gender diversity in state party committees. The most obvious way is to compare the proportion of party committee members who are women to the proportion of committee members who are men. Beyond considering the number of women holding formal membership in each state party committee, it is also necessary to consider if women hold party leadership positions. Finally, it is possible a party aligns itself with a women’s group or organization, such as the Arizona Federation of Democratic Women, whose goals among other things, may be to represent specific group(s) of women or to work towards the advancement of women in politics, by granting them party committee membership.

These three constructs of gender diversity are theoretically straight forward, but measurement is not. Similar to how there is a lack of consistent data on women’s representation in local politics (Holman 2017), it is difficult to collect data on the committee membership

of state and local political parties. While some parties provide a membership roster on their website, many do not. My solution is to collect membership information from the bylaws of each state party. Unlike committee membership rosters, with only a few exceptions, almost all parties provide a copy of their bylaws on their website. Overall, I was able to collect the bylaws governing each state Democratic and Republican party at the time of each state’s filing deadline for 2018. By reading and coding each party’s bylaws, I was able to measure all three of my constructs of gender diversity and thus create three independent variables.¹⁰ First, I differentiate whether each political party grants committee membership to an allied women’s group.¹¹ Second, I create a binary variable that differentiates whether each party was chaired by a woman or man at the time of the state’s filing deadline.¹² Lastly, I create a binary variable that differentiates between parties that require gender parity among their committee members and parties that do not.¹³

Figure 2.2 displays descriptive representation of women in state Democratic and Republican parties in the lead up to the 2018 midterm elections along the three dimensions just discussed. First, it displays the number of parties that grant committee membership to an allied women’s group. This is the most common form of representation guaranteed to women in Republican parties and the only form of women’s representation more common

¹⁰Since the degree of gender diversity in each state party committee, is a latent variable that cannot be directly observed and I construct three variables that measure different dimensions of the underlying concept of diversity, there is potential for multicollinearity. As a result, I replicate my findings by both creating an additive index and by only using one measure of gender diversity at a time and these results, shown in the Appendix, are stable. Additionally, to account for the potential state party gender diversity correlates with specific state or district characteristics, the Appendix replicates my analysis when controlling for geographic region, political culture, the degree of women friendliness in each district, and varying levels of state party strength and the results are consistent to what is presented here. Though this is not a perfect research design, these additional models should help to minimize the possibility that some underlying state or district characteristic(s) is driving my results.

¹¹This most commonly takes the form of the group’s president receiving membership to the state central committee.

¹²This variable did not come from party bylaws and was instead collected from each party’s website, news articles, and Google searches.

¹³This variable is probably better described as identifying parties that at least make an attempt to maintain gender parity among their committee members according to their bylaws. In some cases, a party requires gender parity among their elected members, but also grants ex-officio membership to elected officials, chairman appointments, etc., which can sometimes mean gender parity is not perfectly maintained. Nonetheless, this variable, at the very least, identifies parties that strive towards gender parity.

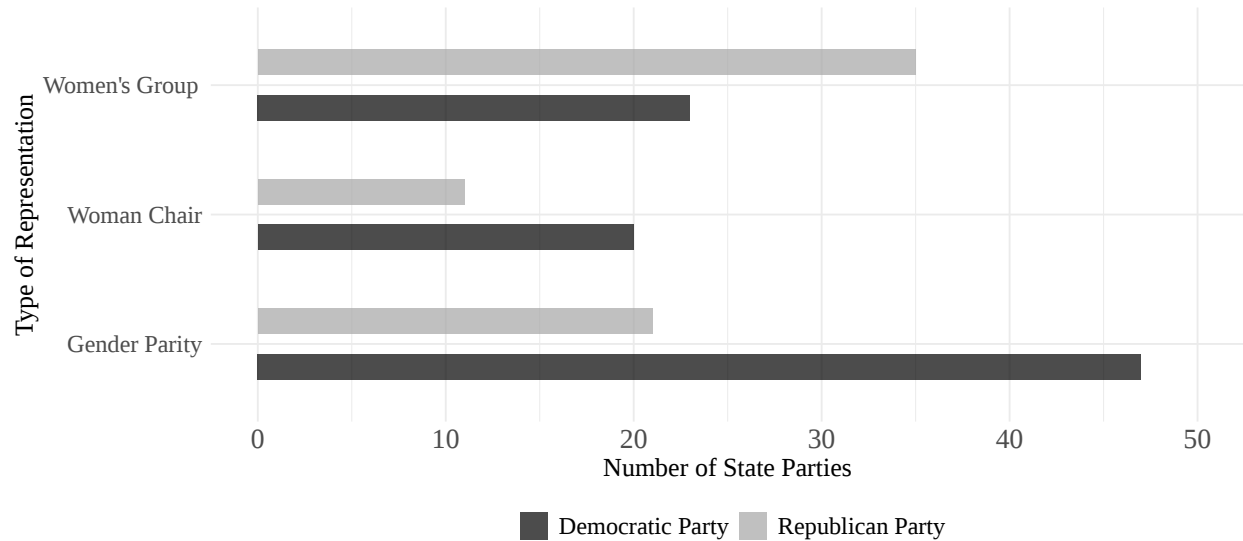


Figure 2.2: Representation of Women in State Political Parties

Note: This figure displays three measures of women's representation in state party committees: whether a women's group is granted representation in the party committee, whether the party is led by a woman, and whether the party requires gender parity among its committee members. Among the parties granting committee membership to a women's group, one Democratic party and four Republican parties only grant nonvoting membership to these organizations.

in Republican parties compared to Democratic parties. Overall, 35 state Republican parties and 23 state Democratic parties grant some form of party committee representation to an aligned women's group. A partnership with an allied women's group should help state parties to recruit more women to run for office by helping them to identify a larger pool of potential women candidates. First, members of these groups may personally have political ambitions. In this case, the formal alliance between their organization and the state party would help them to make connections with elites and to potentially become a visible member of the larger party network. Additionally, through the course of their work, women's organizations are likely better able to identify potential women candidates than are party organizations, since they might be less reliant on traditional party networks, where women remain underrepresented (Crowder-Meyer 2013).

It should be noted not all women's groups have the same aims and goals since the Democratic and Republican Parties view their relationship with these groups differently.

The Democratic Party views their constituency groups as a way to exercise power, with constituency groups advocating for their interests within the party; while the Republican Party views their affiliated groups as extensions of the party, who work towards party goals (Freeman 1986). These competing views of constituency groups likely means the influence of granting party committee membership to an allied women’s group on the number of women running for Congress varies across party.

Next, Figure 2.2 displays the number of state parties chaired by a woman. In the lead up to the 2018 midterm elections, only 31 of the 100 state-level Democratic or Republican parties were led by women. Women were more likely to hold the position of chair in Democratic parties. Specifically, 20 state Democratic parties were led by a woman, but only 11 state Republican parties were led by a woman. Since party leaders are more visible than other party members, parties chaired by a woman probably have the best opportunity to symbolically inspire more women to run for office.

Finally, Figure 2.2 displays the number of state parties with rules in place attempting to ensure gender parity in party committee membership.¹⁴ While it is more common for both Democratic and Republican parties to require gender parity in their party committee membership than it is for either party to have a woman serve in the position of chair, state Democratic parties are more than twice as likely as state Republican parties to have provisions in their bylaws requiring gender parity. Specifically, 47 state Democrat parties, compared to only 21 state Republican parties, make a clear attempt to achieve gender parity through provisions in their bylaws.¹⁵ Requiring gender parity will lead to more women

¹⁴For gender parity, I was able to compare my coding to data previously collected. In comparison to Freeman (2008), I found only two differences in regard to gender parity which is likely the result of these two parties changing their bylaws over the past 15 years.

¹⁵Beyond the fact women tend to affiliate with the Democratic Party, this trend is likely explained by the decision of the Democratic National Committee to address the issue of gender representation at the national level. The 2018 Democratic National Committee’s bylaws state, “the membership of the Democratic National Committee, ... state central committees, and all national official Party Conventions, committees, commissions, and like bodies shall be as equally divided as practicable between men and women... the variance between men and women in the group cannot exceed one” (The Democratic National Committee 2018, 8). As a result, it is not surprising nearly all state Democratic parties attempt to require gender parity among their committee members in their bylaws. Even the three parties that do not explicitly call for gender parity in their bylaws are likely seen by the DNC as doing enough to work towards the party’s goal of gender

running for office since it is likely the best way to mitigate the out-group bias against potential women candidates since by definition women will have equal representation within the party.¹⁶

Using bylaws to collect measures of gender diversity is not without potential drawbacks. One drawback is it restricts my analysis to one election cycle, since historical state party bylaws are not easily accessible, but this can be remedied by maintaining my dataset of bylaws into the future. Second, there is potential a party's bylaws could differ from their actual practices. For example, a party may not have a formal rule requiring that each county is represented by one man and one woman, but may have a norm or tradition of doing so. This drawback is without a clear solution; however, I argue formal rules are more important than traditions or norms because they are harder to amend or eliminate. Within their bylaws, each party has requirements and procedures for amending party rules, but this is not the case for traditions or norms.¹⁷ Despite these potential drawbacks, I believe party bylaws are the best source of data for measuring a party's commitment to gender diversity since not all parties maintain publicly available membership rosters and using bylaws does not require the use of elite surveys.

diversity to satisfy the national party; although, even if these parties are not complying with the national bylaws, the DNC does not have much of an incentive to penalize their state parties as doing so may hurt the party. Nonetheless, in my forthcoming analysis, my measure of gender parity in state party committees will be of greater theoretical interest in Republican primaries where there is more variation.

¹⁶While theory suggests parties requiring gender parity should be represented by more women candidates, there could be unintended consequences to these policies. For example, see (Bos 2015).

¹⁷Alternatively, a party may be regulated by state law. In the case of gender parity, I can again compare my data collection to previous work. Freeman (2008) identifies states with laws mandating state parties to require gender parity among their committee memberships as of 2004. Based on this data, I found only one party, the New Jersey Democrats, that requires gender parity due to law, but does not mention doing so in their bylaws. As a result, I coded them as requiring gender parity because this law is still in place. All other states mandated by law to require gender parity, as of 2004, was already coded correctly based solely on my reading of their bylaws. If additional states have passed similar laws since 2004, and a state party does not explicitly mention the law or address the issue in their bylaws, it would not be reflected in my data. However this is unlikely because the number of states with laws pertaining to gender representation in party committees has decreased over time (Freeman 2008).

2.5 Results

Table 2.1 displays the results of six logistic regression models estimating the influence of state political party gender diversity on the emergence of women in primary elections for the House of Representatives during the 2018 midterm elections. The first model analyzes all primary elections, with a variable that differentiates between Democratic and Republican primaries, and the second and third models consider Democratic and Republican primaries independently. This is necessary because women face different paths to elected office in each party (Sanbonmatsu 2002). Models three through six replicate this analysis, but remove primary elections for open seats to better consider variations in any potential incumbency advantage. In these three models, I consider two factors that might influence the emergence of women in congressional elections. First, I control for the gender of each incumbent since women are more likely to run against other women, which means they typically face more primary competition (Palmer & Simon 2005, Lawless & Pearson 2008). Second, I control for each incumbent’s cash on hand at the beginning of the FEC’s two-year reporting period for 2017/2018 since women are more likely than men to cite the need to raise money as a reason not to run (Lawless & Fox 2010).

In terms of the influence of state party gender diversity, there are stark differences between Democratic and Republican primaries. The degree of gender representation in Republican state party committees appears to have no significant influence on the emergence of non-incumbent women candidates in congressional elections. Specifically, non-incumbent Republican women were no more likely to run for office when their party granted committee membership to an allied woman’s group, when their party required gender parity among their committee membership, or when their party was chaired by a woman. In contrast, non-incumbent Democratic women were more likely to run for the House of Representatives when their party granted committee membership to an allied women’s group and when their party was chaired by a woman. Moreover, these relationships were present regardless of whether primaries for open seats were included in the analysis.

Beyond gender diversity in state party committees, non-incumbent women were more likely to run in open seat elections compared to elections where an incumbent was seeking reelection. Additionally, when an incumbent was seeking reelection, Democratic women were more likely to run when the incumbent represented the opposing party compared to their own party. From a theoretical perspective, these findings are unsurprising. Most potential candidates view open seats as more winnable since none of the candidates benefit from incumbency and if a candidate was going to challenge an incumbent, they have greater incentives to defeat someone from the opposing party than someone from their own party. None of the other variables significantly influenced the emergence of non-incumbent Republican women. However, non-incumbent Democratic women were more likely to run in states utilizing partially open primaries opposed to closed primaries and in states with higher levels of legislative professionalism, but were less likely to run in districts where Trump performed well in 2016. Additionally, in incumbent races, non-incumbent Democratic women were more likely to run in states where unaffiliated voters were allowed to participate in the Democratic primary, but were less likely to run in states using blanket primaries. Finally, elements of the incumbency advantage seemed to have little influence on non-incumbent women running for Congress. Women incumbents did not face additional women challengers and non-incumbent women were not deterred from running for Congress when incumbents had large campaign war chests.

Figure 2.3 displays predicted probabilities of at least one non-incumbent woman running for the House of Representatives broken down by political party and varying levels of gender diversity in a state party committee. The top panel displays predictions for Democratic primaries. In 2018, just under 45% of Democratic primaries had at least one non-incumbent woman candidate, but Figure 2.3 shows state Democratic parties can potentially increase the number of women in congressional primaries by granting an allied women's group party committee membership and by electing a woman chair. A state Democratic party that requires gender parity among their elected members, as mandated by the DNC, but does

Table 2.1: Non-Incumbent Women Candidates in Primary Elections

	All Primaries			Incumbent Primaries		
	All	Democratic	Republican	All	Democratic	Republican
Women's Group	0.37 [†] (0.20)	1.24*** (0.32)	-0.12 (0.33)	0.49* (0.23)	1.70*** (0.39)	-0.15 (0.39)
Gender Parity	-0.33 (0.27)	-0.58 (0.81)	-0.24 (0.31)	-0.23 (0.32)	-0.35 (1.09)	-0.20 (0.36)
Woman Chair	0.13 (0.22)	0.56 [†] (0.33)	-0.14 (0.44)	0.28 (0.24)	0.96* (0.38)	0.12 (0.54)
Democratic Primary	1.58*** (0.23)			1.51*** (0.27)		
Trump Vote	0.04 (0.62)	-6.20*** (1.38)	-0.18 (1.18)	0.01 (0.69)	-7.77*** (1.60)	-0.52 (1.42)
Opponent Incumbent	1.80*** (0.21)	4.30*** (0.52)	0.90* (0.43)	1.80*** (0.21)	4.91*** (0.62)	0.77 (0.48)
Open Seat	3.00*** (0.28)	5.10*** (0.60)	2.44*** (0.37)			
Partially Closed	-0.22 (0.40)	-0.28 (0.54)	-0.00 (0.65)	-0.43 (0.46)	-0.34 (0.60)	-0.78 (0.84)
Partially Open	0.50 (0.32)	1.26* (0.49)	0.16 (0.51)	0.59 [†] (0.35)	1.67** (0.56)	0.03 (0.56)
Unaffiliated Voters	0.05 (0.32)	0.55 (0.50)	-0.04 (0.51)	0.19 (0.36)	1.18* (0.59)	-0.20 (0.60)
Open	0.04 (0.27)	0.20 (0.40)	0.18 (0.42)	-0.12 (0.30)	0.46 (0.45)	-0.35 (0.50)
Blanket	-0.21 (0.35)	-0.77 (0.52)	0.39 (0.57)	-0.39 (0.39)	-1.03 [†] (0.57)	0.07 (0.67)
Women in Legislature	-1.00 (1.63)	-2.13 (2.36)	-0.23 (2.48)	-1.81 (1.83)	-3.32 (2.61)	-0.66 (2.95)
Professionalism	0.24 (0.91)	4.00** (1.52)	-1.51 (1.35)	0.71 (1.03)	5.83** (1.80)	-1.34 (1.55)
Convention State	0.30 (0.44)	-0.39 (0.68)	0.40 (0.62)	0.29 (0.50)	-1.06 (0.77)	0.86 (0.72)
Incumbent Cash				-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Woman Incumbent				-0.05 (0.25)	0.04 (0.39)	0.19 (0.38)
Constant	-2.89*** (0.77)	-1.28 (1.40)	-1.65 (1.27)	-2.79** (0.85)	-2.01 (1.75)	-1.01 (1.41)
<i>N</i>	870	435	435	748	374	374
AIC	870.24	438.42	407.12	725.74	373.17	324.34
BIC	1175.42	682.94	651.64	1039.73	624.33	575.50
log <i>L</i>	-371.12	-159.21	-143.56	-294.87	-122.59	-98.17

[†] $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Reference Categories = Party Incumbent, Closed Primary

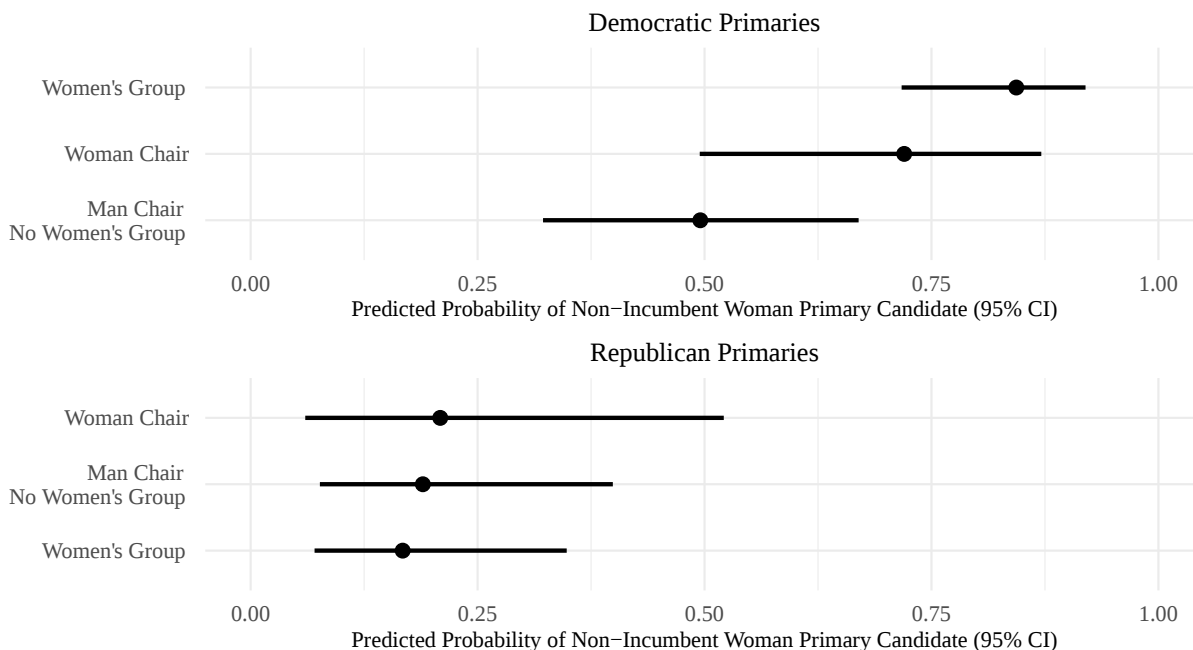


Figure 2.3: Predicted Probability of a Non-Incumbent Woman Candidate by Gender Diversity in State Party Committees

Note: This figure displays the predicted probabilities and 95% confidence intervals, of at least one non-incumbent woman running for the House broken down by party and varying levels of gender diversity in a state party committee. Predictions are calculated using models 5 and 6 from Table 2.1 with all other variables set to their median or mode values corresponding to each model. The Democratic predictions are based on a state party requiring gender parity, but the Republican predictions are not since these are the modal characteristics of each party.

not grant party committee membership to an allied women's group and is chaired by a man has about a 0.50 probability (0.32 to 0.67) of having at least one non-incumbent women run for the House of Representatives. In comparison, a state Democratic party that requires gender parity and grants party committee membership to an allied women's group has 0.84 probability (0.72 to 0.92) of having at least one non-incumbent woman run. Similarly, a state Democratic party that requires gender parity and is chaired by a woman has a 0.72 probability (0.49 to 0.87) of having at least one non-incumbent woman run for Congress. While the confidence intervals on the woman chair estimate overlap with the estimates of the gender parity only estimate, Table 2.1 reveals both of these relationships are statistically significant. Moreover, Figure 2.3 shows they are substantively significant since electing a

woman chair or granting party committee membership to an allied women’s group increases the probability of having at least one non-incumbent woman candidate by about 0.20 and 0.35 respectively.

The bottom panel of Figure 2.3 displays similar predictions for Republican primaries. In 2018, just under 20% of Republican primaries had at least one non-incumbent woman candidate. Since nothing other than open seats seem to influence the emergence of Republican women, the predictions in Figure 2.3 mirror the results of the 2018 elections. There is about a 0.19 probability (0.08 to 0.40) of at least one non-incumbent woman running when a state Republican party does not mandate any form of gender diversity. In comparison, when a state Republican party grants committee membership to an allied women’s group, there is a 0.17 probability (0.07 to 0.35) of having at least one non-incumbent woman run and when a state Republican party is led by a woman, there is a 0.21 probability (0.06 to 0.52) of having at least one non-incumbent woman run for the House. Overall, increased gender diversity of state Republican party committees has neither a statistically, nor substantively, significant influence on non-incumbent women running for Congress.

2.6 Discussion

In the lead up to the 2018 elections, state Democratic parties were more likely to be chaired by a woman and more likely to require gender parity among their committee members, but state Republican parties were more likely to grant party committee membership to an allied women’s group. Ultimately, these demographics of state political parties play a role in the candidate emergence process at least among Democrats. Specifically, non-incumbent Democratic women are more likely to run for the House of Representatives in states where the state Democratic party grants committee membership to an allied women’s group and in states where the Democratic party is chaired by a woman. These findings are meaningful because they reveal a potential path for increasing the number of women in Congress. If

the Democratic Party continues to commit efforts towards increasing the diversity of their state and local party committees, not only will state political parties be more reflective of the populations they represent, but in time Congress, and perhaps other political offices, will also become more diverse. However, these results also present a concerning trend, mainly that levels of gender diversity in state Republican parties had no influence on the emergence of non-incumbent Republican women. The most likely explanations for this is Republican women face a more challenging partisan environment (Thomsen 2019), Republicans are less likely than Democrats to embrace identity politics (Crowder-Meyer & Cooperman 2018), and the Republican Party views their affiliated organizations as party actors opposed to allies with independent goals (Freeman 1986). Overall, as long as only one of the two major political parties is taking steps to increase the number of women in government, true gender parity among elected officials is unlikely to be achieved.

While this project only examines one election cycle, the 2018 midterm elections provide a stringent test of the theory. A record number of women ran for Congress in 2018 (Zhou 2018). If anything, this means women were more motivated than usual to run for office and the influence of the mechanisms that traditionally influence when and why women run for office, such as political party diversity, may have been diminished in 2018. Despite this, state political party diversity was still related to women running for Congress. Nonetheless, future research should test this theory across future election cycles and other types of elections, which would add to the external validity of these findings. Overall, this research contributes to the fields of political parties, representation, and candidate emergence by providing a new test of existing theory and by providing a new dataset which can be used to measure and track levels of descriptive representation within state political parties.

2.7 Appendix

Appendix Table 2.2 replicates the results of Table 1 Model 5 (the Democratic model for incumbent primaries) with greater consideration of states using blanket primaries and conventions to select their nominees. The first model replicates the results after removing all observations where a party nominee was selected by a party convention instead of a primary. All of these observations came from either Connecticut, Utah, or Virginia. The second model replicates the results after restricting the sample to the 44 states that do not use blanket primaries or conventions to select their nominees. This means all observations from California, Connecticut, Louisiana, Utah, Virginia, and Washington were removed. Overall, Appendix Table 2.2 reveals my findings are not a result of my decision to treat states using blanket primaries or conventions as if they were holding separate partisan primaries.

Appendix Table 2.3 replicates the results of Table 1 Model 5 (the Democratic model for incumbent primaries) with greater consideration of measurement of party gender diversity. Models 1-3 replicate my findings by only using one measure of party gender diversity at a time. Model 4 replicates my findings by combining all three measure of gender diversity into an additive index. Overall, Appendix Table 2.3 reveals that neither my measurement decisions, nor potential multicollinearity, biased my findings.

Appendix Table 2.4 replicates the results of Table 1 Model 5 (the Democratic model for incumbent primaries) when controlling for district and state level characteristics that may correlate with state party gender diversity. Models 1 and 2 control for two different measures of geographic region as defined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Census respectively (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2014), model 3 controls for state political culture (Elazar 1994, pg.284), model 4 controls for Palmer and Simon's women friendly index which is their 2012-2020 calculated probability of each congressional district electing a women based upon census data (Palmer & Simon N.d.), and model 5 uses Mayhew's 1 to 5 rating of traditional party organizations in order to consider varying levels of state party strength (Mayhew 1986). While not a perfect identification strategy, Appendix Table 2.4

adds validity to my finding by considering potential confounding variables. For sake of space, only the pertinent variables are displayed in this table.

Table 2.2: Eliminating Convention States and Blanket Primaries

	Conventions Removed	Partisan Primaries
Women's Group	1.63*** (0.38)	1.43*** (0.40)
Gender Parity	-0.45 (1.07)	-0.87 (1.07)
Woman Chair	0.81* (0.36)	0.82* (0.38)
Trump Vote	-7.38***	-7.64***
Opponent Incumbent	4.79*** (0.61)	4.51*** (0.68)
Partially Closed	-0.48 (0.61)	-0.16 (0.62)
Partially Open	1.57** (0.55)	1.51** (0.55)
Unaffiliated Voters	1.14 [†] (0.59)	1.15* (0.57)
Open	0.32 (0.43)	0.41 (0.46)
Blanket	-1.01 [†] (0.56)	
Women in Legislature	-3.54 (2.60)	-6.19* (3.04)
Professionalism	5.60** (1.78)	6.21** (2.18)
Incumbent Cash	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Woman Incumbent	0.02 (0.40)	-0.11 (0.45)
Constant	-1.76 (1.72)	-0.48 (2.02)
<i>N</i>	367	291
AIC	369.51	315.78
BIC	603.83	521.48
$\log L$	-124.76	-101.89

[†] $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Reference Categories = Closed Primary

Table 2.3: Measuring Gender Diversity

	Women's Group	Gender Parity	Woman Chair	Index
Women's Group	1.68*** (0.38)			
Gender Parity		-1.14 (0.92)		
Woman Chair			0.89* (0.36)	
Index				1.34*** (0.29)
Trump Vote	-7.38*** (1.56)	-5.94*** (1.46)	-6.06*** (1.48)	-7.32*** (1.57)
Opponent Incumbent	4.74*** (0.60)	4.23*** (0.55)	4.28*** (0.56)	4.76*** (0.60)
Partially Closed	-0.64 (0.58)	-0.57 (0.57)	-0.29 (0.59)	-0.17 (0.60)
Partially Open	1.27* (0.51)	0.36 (0.45)	0.67 (0.47)	1.61** (0.56)
Unaffiliated Voters	1.10* (0.55)	0.37 (0.51)	0.59 (0.51)	1.33* (0.58)
Open	0.03 (0.41)	-0.25 (0.40)	0.12 (0.43)	0.58 (0.45)
Blanket	-0.74 (0.54)	-0.78 (0.56)	-1.03 [†] (0.57)	-1.12* (0.55)
Women in Legislature	-2.50 (2.47)	-3.74 (2.52)	-3.16 (2.42)	-2.46 (2.50)
Professionalism	3.69* (1.53)	0.59 (1.38)	2.30 (1.58)	5.82*** (1.82)
Convention State	-0.45 (0.72)	-0.14 (0.69)	-0.71 (0.74)	-1.25 [†] (0.76)
Incumbent Cash	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Woman Incumbent	0.04 (0.39)	-0.03 (0.38)	-0.02 (0.37)	0.02 (0.38)
Constant	-1.52 (1.04)	1.62 (1.48)	-0.53 (1.05)	-3.93*** (1.34)
<i>N</i>	374	374	374	374
AIC	376.02	396.82	392.08	373.89
BIC	595.78	616.58	611.84	593.65
log <i>L</i>	-132.01	-142.41	-140.04	-130.95

[†] significant at $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Reference Categories = Closed Primary

Table 2.4: Potential Confounding District and State Influences

	BLS Region	Census Region	Culture	Women Friendliness	Mayhew Score
Women's Group	1.61** (0.51)	1.99*** (0.45)	1.86*** (0.42)	1.85*** (0.41)	1.80*** (0.40)
Gender Parity	-0.08 (1.28)	-0.04 (1.16)	-0.54 (1.12)	-0.48 (1.10)	-0.55 (1.12)
Woman Chair	1.04* (0.43)	1.16** (0.43)	1.09** (0.40)	0.82* (0.40)	1.05* (0.44)
Mountain Plains	-0.49 (0.98)				
Southwest	-0.81 (0.92)				
Midwest	-1.40 (0.96)				
Southeast	-1.47 (0.91)				
Mid-Atlantic	-0.05 (1.00)				
New Jersey/York	-0.71 (1.10)				
New England	0.81 (1.36)				
Midwest		-0.93 (0.67)			
South		-0.94 (0.63)			
Northeast		0.23 (0.80)			
Individualistic			0.66 (0.52)		
Moralistic			0.12 (0.51)		
Women Friendliness				-1.11 (3.04)	
Mayhew Score					0.17 (0.13)
N	374	374	374	368	372
AIC	378.74	374.84	375.35	365.79	369.83
BIC	739.77	673.08	657.90	631.54	636.32
$\log L$	-97.37	-111.42	-115.68	-114.90	-116.92

[†] significant at $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Reference Categories = West, West, Traditionalistic

Chapter 3

Engaging the Next Generation: An Exploration of State Party Membership and Youth Participation

3.1 Introduction

It is well known that even as Congress continues to grow more diverse, it remains unrepresentative of the United States. One way in which Congress is unrepresentative of the larger U.S. population is in respect to age. While strides were made in 2018 with Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Abby Finkenauer both becoming the youngest women ever elected to Congress at the age of 29 and Congress becoming younger in general (Zhou 2019), young people remain underrepresented in Congress. At the start of the 116th Congress, the House of Representatives was composed of 53.9 percent Baby Boomers (born 1946 to 1964), 31.5 percent Generation X (born 1965-1979), and 6 percent Millennials (born 1980-1996) (Desilver 2018). However, Baby Boomers made up only 25 percent of the 2017 U.S. labor force compared to 33 percent Generation X, and 35 percent Millennials (Fry 2018). Overall only some of this discrepancy can be explained by the constitutional requirement that members of the House

of Representatives be at least 25 years of age because as of the start of the 116th Congress in 2019, most Millennials were eligible to serve in the House of Representatives.

A recent stream of research identifies a lack of political ambition among young individuals as one leading cause of this underrepresentation (Lawless & Fox 2015, Shames 2017). The purpose of this paper is to examine whether the membership requirements of state Democratic and Republican parties, mainly the lack of youth representation within these formal party organizations, also contributes to members of Congress on average being much older than the general population. Moreover, I examine whether a lack of youth participation in party organizations is also associated with lower levels of other forms of political participation among young people. Specifically, I predict state political parties with higher levels of youth representation will see higher levels of youth political participation compared to political parties who fail to prioritize youth representation within their formal party organization. Second, I expect political parties with higher levels of youth representation will have younger candidates for Congress compared to political parties who fail to prioritize youth representation within their formal party organization. To test these hypotheses, I create a new dataset of state party rules by collecting and coding provisions within the bylaws of all 100 state-level Republican and Democratic parties. I operationalize youth representation within each state party by counting the proportion of formal state central committee members associated with either the state's College Democrats/Republicans, Young Democrats/Republicans, Teenage Republicans/High School Democrats, or otherwise identified as youth members by the party's bylaws.

I find state Democratic parties are more likely to grant voting party committee membership to the Young Democrats than state Republican parties are to grant voting party committee membership to the Young Republicans. However, the opposite is true of other youth political organizations. College political organizations, the College Republicans and College Democrats, and teenage political organizations, the Teenage Republicans and the High School Democrats are more likely to be granted voting party committee membership

in state Republican parties compared to state Democratic parties. Finally, while I do not find evidence that this variation in youth party membership influences levels of youth voter registration or voter turnout, I find state Democratic parties are more likely to have youth nominees for the House of Representatives as they increase the degree of youth representation in their state central committees.

Overall, this paper adds to the discipline’s knowledge of youth representation by examining levels of youth representation in state political parties. Additionally, it shows one way to increase youth representation in Congress, at least among Democrats, is for political parties to do a better job of recruiting young individuals to take part in their formal party organizations. Ensuring better representation for young people in political institutions is important because representation, in regard to age, influences policy outcomes (Curry & Haydon 2018). Additionally, increasing youth representation will also have a spillover effect on other areas of descriptive representation because younger generations are more racially and ethnically diverse than their predecessors (Rosentiel, Keeter, Horowitz & Tyson 2008).¹

3.2 Youth Political Participation

Political participation can take many different forms. In this paper, I focus on youth engagement in two forms of political participation, voting, which is probably the most common form of political participation, and running for office, which is probably one of the least common forms of political participation. In regard to voting, it has long been acknowledged that voter turnout is correlated with age such that younger individuals are less likely than older individuals to vote (Wolfinger & Rosenstone 1980, Leighley & Nagler 2014). Many explanations have been offered as to why this age gap in voting exists. First, a recent meta-analysis of over 90 empirical studies on the individual determinants of voter turnout, identifies age and education as the two most common explanations of turnout (Smets & Van Ham 2013).

¹Descriptive representation occurs when a representative shares characteristics and/or past experiences with their constituents (Pitkin 1967).

Since education reduces the costs associated with civic engagement (Hillygus 2005), and high school and college students are still pursuing higher education, they fall into a category of individuals less likely to participate in the political process. Similarly young people often have lower levels of political knowledge (Verba, Schlozman & Brady 1995, Carpini & Keeter 1996, Carpini 2000, Milner 2010, Wattenberg 2012) which is often a skill necessary to fully participate in the political process.²

An argument could be made that young individuals are being rational in their decision not to vote (Downs 1957, Aldrich 1993). As with all voters, not only is it unlikely that their individual vote will be decisive, but their status as inconsistent or non-participators means politicians do not see them as a priority (Carpini 2000). Nor in comparison to some other groups, such as veterans and seniors, do they always have policy issues that consistently require them to become politically active (Mettler 2002, Campbell 2002).³ Finally, unless they were allowed to preregister (Holbein & Hillygus 2016, Hart & Youniss 2018), many young voters may not yet have had enough opportunities for voting to become a habit (Plutzer 2002, Gerber, Green & Shachar 2003, Denny & Doyle 2009).

Recent scholarship has discovered an even more disturbing pattern in regard to youth political participation. On the whole, younger generations have less political ambition than their predecessors. Specifically, while most high school and college students have the desire to help their communities and solve the problems facing society, they do not view politics as a good way to achieve these goals (Lawless & Fox 2015, Shames 2017). High school and college students are turned off by the idea of running for elected office because they have a negative perception of modern politics, with many young people believing politicians are untrustworthy and only in politics for themselves (Lawless & Fox 2015, Shames 2017). Moreover, they believe the costs associated with running for office, loss of privacy, the need to fund raise, etc., far outweigh the potential benefits of winning elected office (Lawless &

²Also see Condon and Holleque (2013) who find general self-efficacy, like political efficacy, increases political participation among young individuals.

³This is despite the fact that young voters often have consistent policy agendas (Tedesco, McKinney & Kaid 2007).

Fox 2015, Shames 2017). This trend exists even among graduate and law students, who would be expected to be among the youth most likely to be interested in a political career by the nature of their positions (Shames 2017).

3.2.1 Political Parties and Youth Political Participation

Youth participation in formal political party organizations, and the effect of such participation on other forms of political participation, continues to be an understudied aspect of youth political engagement. This is likely due to the fact young people rarely hold positions of power within political parties and in an international context young people are underrepresented in political parties (Cross & Young 2008, Scarrow & Gezgor 2010). While over time, most individuals have come to view themselves as being more ideologically extreme, they are also more likely to identify themselves as politically independent; this is especially true among young voters (Abramson 1976, Twenge, Honeycutt, Prislín & Sherman 2016). If young people do not wish to align themselves with a specific partisan affiliation, it is not surprising they are underrepresented in party organizations.

Moreover, a cross-national study of 14 year-olds reveals most young people do not view joining a political party as an important aspect of civic engagement (Torney-Purta 2001). In the context of Canadian political parties, young adults were most likely to join a political party when their parents were already members and when they held the beliefs that political parties provide a path towards change and are responsive to their grassroots members (Cross & Young 2008). In the United States local party leaders acknowledge that young people are not active enough in politics and while they often have the capacity to mobilize young voters, they rarely prioritize doing so (Shea & Green 2007). In the remainder of this paper, I argue that if political parties, mainly state parties, were to commit themselves towards mobilizing young people, specifically by bringing them into their formal organizations, state central committees, there would be an increase in youth political participation.

3.3 Theory

Overall, young people, like everyone else, become engaged in politics when they have the motivation, opportunity, and availability to do so (Carpini 2000). Currently, young adults lack the motivation to become involved in politics because they have a negative opinion of, and lack of faith in, governmental institutions, they lack the opportunity to become involved in politics because parties and candidates mostly ignore them, and they lack the availability to become involved in politics because they lack the information and knowledge necessary to become involved (Carpini 2000). I argue if political parties were to grant young people formal roles in their organizations, young people would have more motivation, opportunity, and availability to become more politically active.

In regard to motivation, I argue young people would have more positive views of governmental institutions, and thus be more motivated to participate in political activities, if they were better represented within them. It has long been known that descriptive representation leads to more trust in political institutions and greater substantive representation (Mansbridge 1999, Tate 2001, Swers 2013, Broockman 2013). Moreover, recent research finds voters are less likely to vote for co-partisan candidates, or even to vote at all, as the age gap between the voter and candidate increases (Pomante & Schraufnagel 2015, Webster & Pierce 2019). Similarly, newspaper coverage of presidential elections suggests one of the reasons young voters participated at higher rates in 1992 and 2008 was because there were young candidates running for office who prioritized engaging young voters through new methods of get-out-the-vote appeals (Pomante 2017). Together these studies provide examples of increased youth participation in instances where young people felt better represented. This combined with the notion that representative institutions increase trust and substantive representation in government, lends credence to the theory that if political party organizations were more representative of the general public, in this case in regard to age, young people would be more politically active. Moreover, since negative views of political institutions are one of the reasons, young people often have low levels of political ambitions (Lawless &

Fox 2015, Shames 2017), diverse parties would likely even spur more young people to partake in even advanced forms of political participation, such as running for elected office.

In addition to motivating young voters to participate in higher levels of political participation, age diverse political party organizations would also increase the number of opportunities available for young people. First, the mere act of joining a party organization provides individuals with more opportunities, as well as the political and social capital necessary to participation in politics. There is significant evidence that participation in community groups, organizations, and institutions leads to higher levels of political participation (Putnam 2001, Flanagan 2003, Quintelier 2008, Terriquez 2015). This is especially true when young people are given leadership opportunities (Flanagan 2003, Quintelier 2008). Moreover, I expect this effect will be amplified when the organization in question is designed around a political purpose, as are political parties. Indeed, while it is a different case from the United States, at one point, as many as 41 percent of all city councilors in Belgium started their political careers in a political party's youth organization (Hooghe, Stolle & Stouthuysen 2004). That being said, political parties and elites in the U.S. prioritize candidate recruitment for elections at most levels of government (Broockman 2014) and local party committees seem like an obvious place to start. This means that if young people were better represented within party organizations, it is more likely they would be viewed as viable candidates for office and thus recruited to run.

Finally, as party organizations gain more youth members, young people will have more availability to become involved in politics because they will have the opportunity to become better informed. Party organizations with strong youth memberships will be less likely to ignore young voters. In fact, as youth representation within party organizations increases, young voters would likely become a prime target of political parties. This is significant because research finds peer to peer interaction, recruitment, and education increases political participation (Shea & Harris 2006). For example, get out the vote efforts led by young individuals increases youth voter turnout (Bennion 2005, Ulbig & Waggener 2011, Costa,

Schaffner & Prevost 2018). In fact, one of the most difficult aspects of turning out young voters is that they are much more difficult to contact than voters at-large (Nickerson 2006). However, this should be less of an issue for party organizations with a lot of youth involvement since their members would interact with other young voters on a daily basis at school, work, etc., and young people will be more receptive to the information and opportunities presented to them if they are being offered from their peers. This would include running for office since potential young candidates would be more likely to see a youth diverse party as an available resource than they would a party that does not represent them.

Ultimately, young people often lack the motivation, opportunity, and availability to become more active in politics (Carpini 2000). However, their lack of motivation, opportunity, and availability is at least in some ways a result of their current lack of political participation. In this sense, the problem of minimal youth engagement in politics seems like a self-reinforcing paradox with no end in sight. In the preceding section, I have laid the groundwork for why I believe age diverse state political party organizations are the solution to this dilemma. In the remainder of the paper, I use the varying levels of youth membership in parties' state central committees to evaluate this theory in the context of the 2018 midterm elections. Specifically, as seen in the formal hypotheses below, I first predict state political parties with higher levels of youth representation will see higher levels of youth political participation. Second, I predict state political parties with higher levels of youth representation will see younger candidates for Congress.

Hypothesis 1: State political parties with higher levels of youth representation will see higher levels of youth political participation.

Hypothesis 2: State political parties with higher levels of youth representation will see younger candidates for Congress.

3.4 Methodology

In order to evaluate my theory that state political parties with higher levels of youth representation will see higher levels of other forms of youth political participation, I use three different measures of political participation as my dependent variables. My first two dependent variables measure two common types of political participation, registering to vote and actually voting in an election. Specifically, I collect the percentage of individuals, between the ages of 18 and 34, who were registered to vote and who voted in the 2018 General Election, according to the United States Census Bureau (United States Census Bureau 2019).⁴

My final dependent variable measures a less common form of political participation, running for elected office. Ideally, I would be able to collect the age of every candidate who filed to run for Congress in 2018 and determine both the age of the youngest candidate running in each primary election as well as the average age of all the candidates in each primary election. However, while databases of declared candidates are maintained (Kamarck & Podkul 2018), each candidate's age is not as readily available. In order to collect each candidate's age, I used a variety of sources including, but not limited to Ballotpedia, Vote Smart, news articles, campaign websites, and Wikipedia. Despite using such a variety of sources, I was not able to identify the age of every candidate. Since there is a good chance there is systematic bias in this missing data, mainly that the youngest and oldest candidates are less willing to report their age out of fear of ageism, I determined the best measure of age available to me was the age of each party's nominee in each congressional district. Overall, I was able to determine the age of all but 23 major party congressional nominees in 2018.⁵

Since the benefits of incumbency often lead to careerism in Congress, it is safe to assume that on average, party nominees who are incumbent members of Congress will be older than

⁴All of these individuals would meet the age requirements for both the Young Democrats and the Young Republicans.

⁵The fact that it was difficult to find the ages of many congressional candidates means it would likely be difficult to replicate this study on more localized elections, such as elections for state legislatures, where it would be even more likely for younger candidates to run for office.

most other party nominees. During the 2018 midterm elections, this proved to be the case, especially among Democratic candidates, as seen in Figure 3.1. In both political parties, the youngest nominee was 25 years of age. In the Democratic Party, the oldest nominee was 82 and in the Republican Party, the oldest nominee was 85 years of age. Among all Democratic nominees, the average age was 54, but among incumbents it was closer to 62 and among non-incumbents it was closer to 48. Among all Republican nominees, the average age was 55, with there only being a few years difference between incumbents (57) and non-incumbents (53).

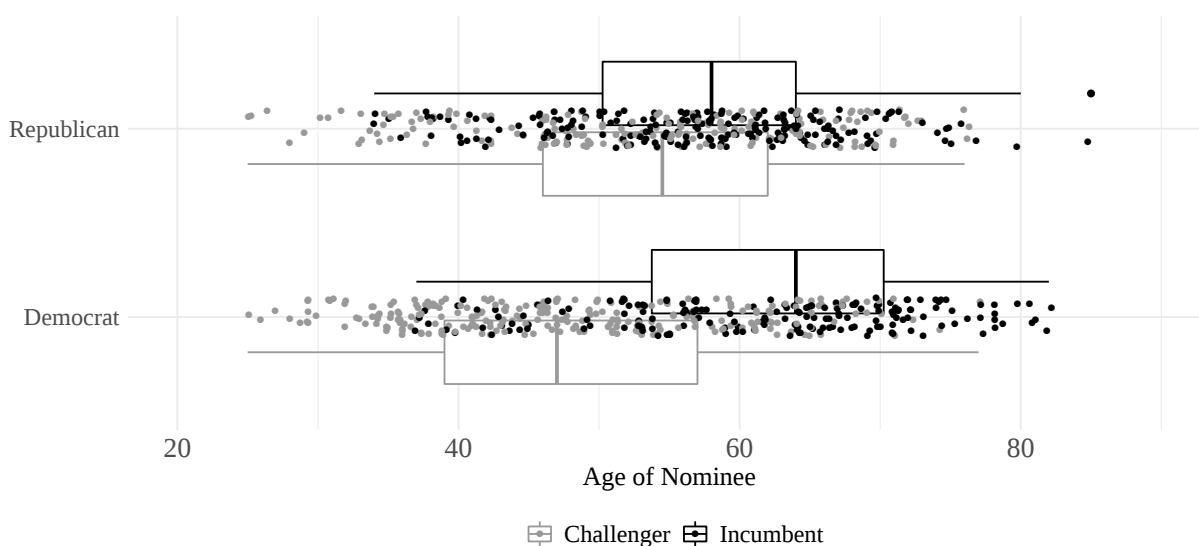


Figure 3.1: Age of Nominees for the House of Representatives

Note: This figure displays the distribution of the age of each major party nominee for the House of Representatives broken down by party and incumbency status.

Since it is doubtful that varying levels of youth party membership have a linear effect on youth candidate emergence, my final dependent variable is a binary measure of whether or not each nominee is less than or equal to 40 years of age. The selection of 40 as the cutoff point for identifying youth candidates, is not arbitrary. The Republican party identifies Young Republicans as being 18 to 40 years of age and the Democratic Party identifies Young Democrats as individuals under the age of 36. Since I needed a measure that is consistent

across both parties, and all members of the House of Representatives need to be at least 25 years of age, I selected the more conservative measure of a youth candidate. Additionally, the vast majority of youth party members and youth candidates, as defined in this paper, would be classified as a Millennial, which is the generation most underrepresented in Congress. Overall about 12 percent of all Republican nominees and about 20 percent of all Democratic nominees were 40 years of age or younger.

In order to account for other factors that may influence the age of each nominee, I control for the median age of voters in each congressional district (U.S. Census Bureau 2017). Additionally, I control for each nominee’s gender because compared to men, women tend to wait to run for elected officer later in life in order to have fewer personal or familial obligations such as young children (Lawless & Fox 2010). Next, I consider whether each primary has a party incumbent, an opponent incumbent, or is taking place in a district with an open seat. I also consider whether each nominee was chosen via a contested primary, an uncontested primary, or an convention. In order to control for the ideological leanings of each congressional district I control for Trump’s 2016 district-level vote. Finally, I control for legislative professionalism using the Squire index (Squire 2017) and the type of primary used in each state according to the National Conference of State Legislatures (National Conference of State Legislatures 2016).

3.4.1 Youth Engagement in State Political Party Organizations

There are at least six groups, whose purpose is to encourage greater political participation among young voters, aligned either formally or informally through similar goals and values, with the national Democratic Party or the national Republican Party. First, both parties have ally groups dedicated to encouraging participation among college students. The College Democrats describe themselves as the official student arm of the Democratic National Committee and meet on campuses across the country (Democrats 2018); similarly, the College Republican National Committee is an Independent 527 PAC with state federations in all 50

states and over 250,000 total members (CRNC 2019). Second, both parties have ally groups focused on activating young voters more generally. The Young Democrats of America are a non-federal 527 political organization dedicated to mobilizing individuals under the age of 36 and to elect Democrats (YDA 2018). On the conservative side of the ideological spectrum, the Young Republican National Federation, also a 527 organization, engages Republicans between the ages of 18 to 40 (YRND 2016). Finally, both parties have ally groups intended to recruit individuals who are not yet old enough to vote or who are newly registered to vote. The High School Democrats of America are currently active in 47 states and territories with a goal of providing a outlet for high school students active in politics (HSDA 2019) and the National Teen Age Republicans a political group targeted at high school students that has clubs in every state (TARS 2019).

At the state level, political parties vary in regard to whether they recognize the state-level chapters of these organizations as auxiliary groups and whether these groups are granted party committee membership within the formal party organization. Some state parties grant the organization's president, or another member, representation with the power to vote on matters before the party. Other parties allow representative(s) from these organizations to attend party meetings without granting them voting rights. Still other parties set quotas for the number of youth members, but without formally granting these positions to members of auxiliary organizations. Finally, a fourth group of state parties do not grant any form of representation to these youth political groups, nor do they require certain party members to be younger than a specified age requirement.

Figure 3.2 displays the number of state Democratic and Republican parties that grant party committee membership to their state chapter of the Young Democrats/Republicans, College Democrats/Republicans, and/or High School Democrats/Teenage Republicans. Furthermore, it differentiates between parties that grant these organizations voting membership and parties that grant these organizations nonvoting membership. Overall, state Republican parties are more likely than state Democratic parties to grant any form of committee

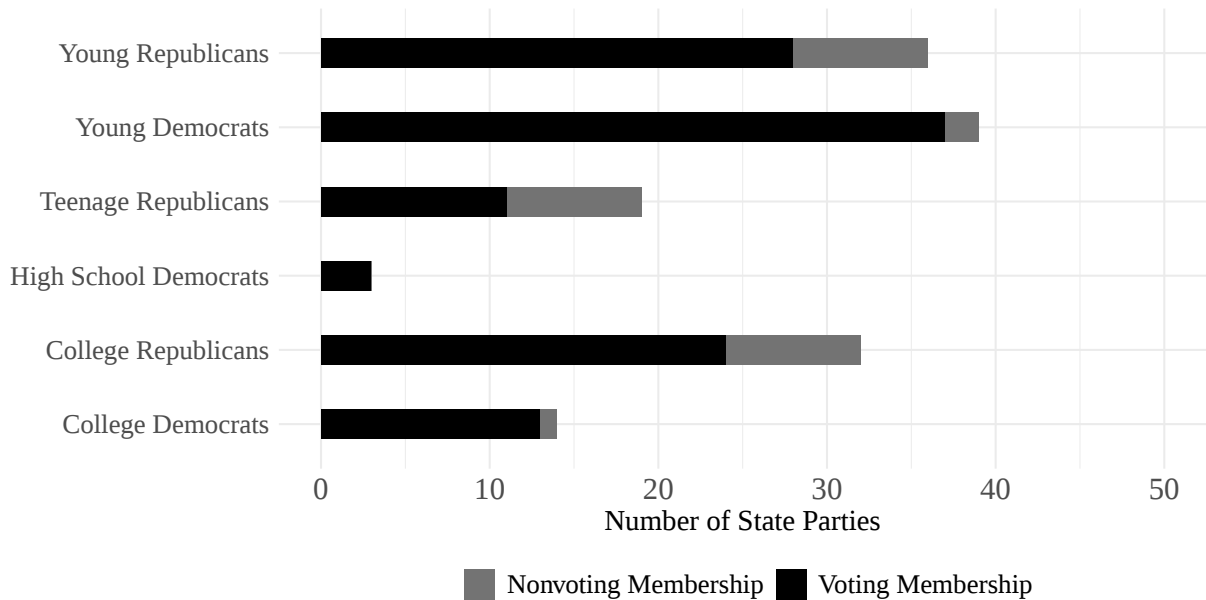


Figure 3.2: State Party Membership Status of Youth Organizations

Note: This figure displays the number of state Democratic and Republican parties that grant either voting or nonvoting party membership to their state's youth in politics organizations.

membership to a college group or a high school/teenage group, but Democratic parties are more likely to grant party membership to the young Democrats than Republican parties are to grant membership to the young Republicans. Twenty-four Republican state parties grant voting party committee membership to the appropriate state federation of the College Republicans and 8 Republican state parties grant nonvoting party committee membership to the appropriate state federation of the College Republicans. In comparison, 13 state Democratic parties grant voting committee membership the College Democrats and 1 party grants nonvoting committee membership. Eleven state Republican parties grant voting committee membership to the Teenage Republicans and another 8 parties grant nonvoting committee membership. On the Democratic side, the High School Democrats do not receive much representation in state Democratic parties with only 3 parties granting voting membership. Finally, 36 state Republican parties grant committee membership, 28 voting and 8 nonvoting, to the state federation of the Young Republicans and 39 state Democratic

parties grant committee membership, 37 voting and 2 nonvoting, to the state federation of the Young Democrats. In most cases, when one of these groups is granted formal party committee membership, either the organization president or another representative from the organization represents the organization at party meetings.

Some state political parties are so committed to increasing formal youth representation in the party that they go beyond partnering with the Young Democrats/Republicans and actually require a certain number of formal party members to be meet an age requirement. For example, not only does the Idaho Republican Party grant voting membership to both the state chapters of the Young Republicans and College Republicans, and nonvoting membership to the state chapter of the Teenage Republicans, each county elects a state youth committee member, someone between the age of 18 and 40, to represent the county on the state central committee. Similarly, in the Alaska Democratic Party, the party committee from each state house district elects a Young Democrat, can be up to the age of 36, to serve on the party's state central committee. Given this variation in how committed each party is to maintaining formal youth membership, Table 3.1 displays summary statistics for the number of youth committee members in each state political party with the power to vote on party affairs.⁶ As seen in the table, the number of voting youth members in the Idaho Republican Party (46) and the Alaska Democratic Party (42) are outliers and not the norm. The mean number of voting youth members in state Democratic parties is 2.84 and mean number of voting youth members in state Republican parties is 2.63. Moreover the median number of voting youth committee members in state political party is one, and in almost every case this lone youth member is a representative from one of the organizations outlined in Figure 3.2. In order account for outliers, when I run my analysis, my main independent variable is the number of voting youth members in each party's state central committee capped at 5. There are only 10 state parties with five or more voting youth members and

⁶I determine the number of voting youth members in each party by adding up the number of voting members from one of the organizations outlined in Figure 3.2 and any other members explicitly identified as youth members in the party's bylaws.

only 5 state parties with more than 10 voting youth members.

Table 3.1: Voting Youth Members of State Political Parties

	Mean	Median	Min	Max	SD	N
Democrats	2.84	1	0	42	6.19	50
Republicans	2.62	1	0	46	6.69	50

3.5 Results

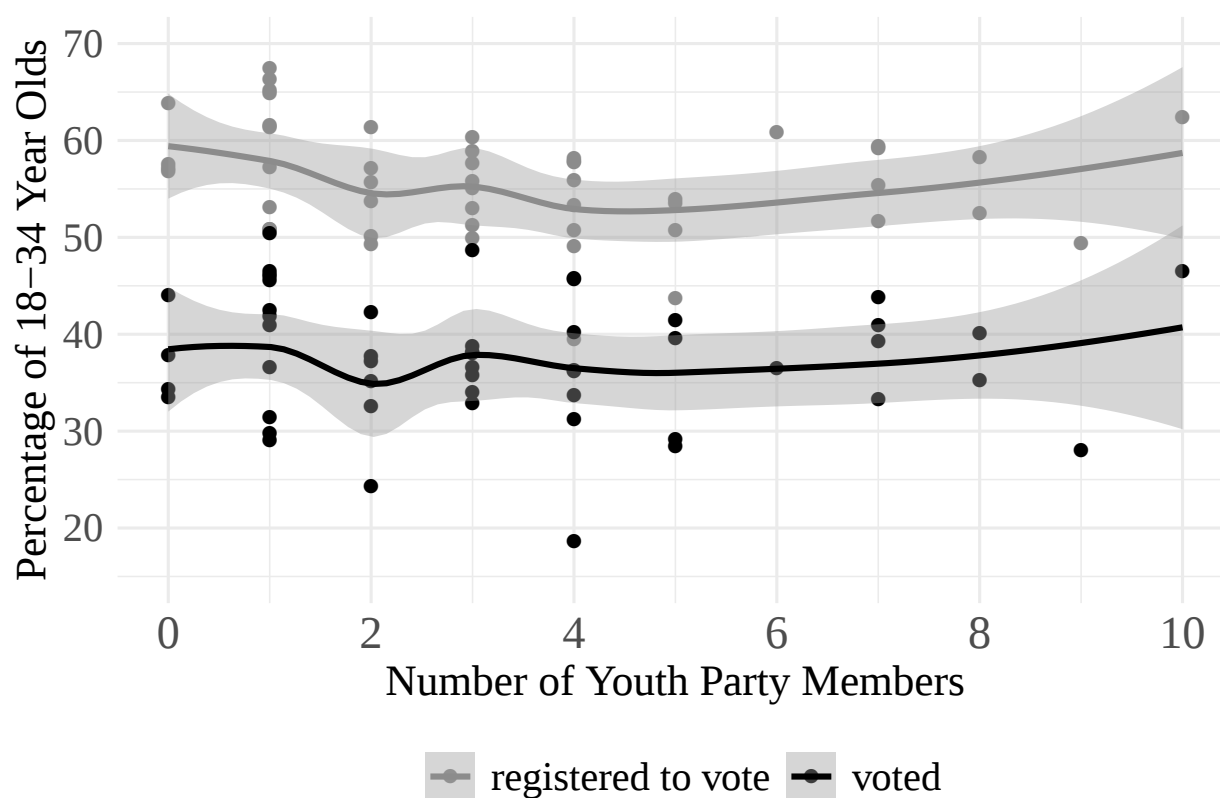


Figure 3.3: Youth Political Participation During the 2018 General Election

Note: This figure displays a scatterplot of the percentage of individuals between the ages of 18 and 34 who were registered to vote and who voted in the 2018 general election compared to the degree of youth diversity in the two major political party organizations in each state.

Figure 3.3 displays the relationship between the degree of youth diversity in each state political party and two forms of youth political participation. Specifically, the y-axis displays

the percentage of individuals, between the ages of 18 and 34, who were registered to vote and who actually voted in the 2018 General Election, according to the United States Census Bureau. Unfortunately, since these measures are available at the state-level and are not broken down by political party, it is necessary to also aggregate my measure of youth diversity in each state political party to the state-level. As a result, the x-axis displays the number of voting youth party members in either of the two major political parties in each state. Since, as stated previously, my measure of youth diversity in each party committee ranges from zero to five, the aggregated score for each state ranges from zero to ten. While this means it is not possible to examine the theory at the party-level, Figure 3.3 should still give some indication of whether states with youth diverse parties see higher levels of youth political participation.

Overall, there appears to be no relationship between youth diversity in state party organizations and youth voter registration, displayed by the grey fit line, and youth voter turnout, displayed by the black fit line. While Virginia, which is the only state where both political parties guarantee voting committee membership to at least five youth members and thus is the only state in Figure 3.3 to receive a score of 10, ranks high in both youth voter registration, about 62 percent, and youth voter turnout, about 46 percent, there are states with less youth diverse parties that saw similar rates of youth political participation. In 2018, youth voter registration on average ranged between 50 and 65 percent and youth voter turnout ranged on average between 30 and 45 percent across each state. On average, these estimates were stable across my measure of youth party members.

While there appears to be no relationship between party diversity and youth political participation, even when only considering a bivariate relationship, it is possible that using data that has been aggregated to the state level masks any true relationship. For example, my examination of each state party's bylaws revealed the Idaho Republican Party has made a strong commitment to incorporating young voters into their party's formal membership; however, the Idaho Democratic Party's bylaws reveal they have not done the same. As

a result, theory would predict that young Republicans would be more politically active in Idaho than would be young Democrats, but examining this possibility is not possible with aggregated data. Unfortunately, data on political participation broken down by both political party and age is difficult to collect. For example, scholars have long noted the difficulties of measuring voting turnout during congressional primary elections (Boatright 2014, p. 85) and doing so does not even need to consider the factor of age. Future research needs come up with creative ways of measuring youth political participation while also considering party identification.

Table 3.2 displays three logistic regression models which estimate whether state political parties with more youth members are more likely to have younger nominees for Congress, as measured by whether the nominee is up to the age of 40.⁷ The first column displays the results of all observations in the aggregate, the second column displays the results for Democratic primaries and the third column displays the results for Republican primaries. Overall, it seems the degree of youth diversity in state political parties is only influential on the emergence of young candidates in Democratic primaries. Specifically, as state Democratic parties grant voting party committee membership to more youth members, their likelihood of seeing a youth nominee increases.⁸ Additionally, since incumbent members of Congress are on average older than other candidates for office, as expected, either party is more likely to see a youth nominee in districts where there is an open seat, or in districts where the incumbent represents the opposite party. Also in line with previous theory, I find that among

⁷Before running the analysis, I removed all observations for primaries where no candidates filed for office. Additionally, I removed observations from all districts in blanket primary states where the general election ended up being contested between two members of the same party or between a third party candidate and a major party candidate. As seen in the appendix, I run several different iterations of this analysis and across all of them, my findings are consistent. Specifically, I restrict my analysis to only states using traditional partisan primaries as opposed to blanket primaries or conventions (see Table 3.3), I restrict my analysis to only primaries where there was no party incumbent (see Table 3.4), and I restrict my analysis to remove districts with an open seat (see Table 3.5) and the substantive results in each model are consistent.

⁸This finding remains even after controlling for the potential that some states may be predisposed to seeing younger candidates for office. I replicate all of my findings three times, once while controlling for Elazar's state political cultures (Elazar 1994) and twice while controlling for each state's geographic region. Specifically, I use the geographic regions used by the Census Bureau as well as the regions used by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2014). While I do not present these results for the sake of estimating predicted probabilities later in the paper, in all three cases my findings remain consistent.

Table 3.2: House Nominees Up To 40

	All	Democratic	Republican
Party Youth Members	0.10 (0.07)	0.27* (0.10)	-0.14 (0.14)
Democratic Primary	0.36 (0.24)		
Median Voter Age	-0.04 (0.03)	-0.04 (0.04)	-0.03 (0.06)
Opponent Incumbent	1.66* (0.27)	2.29* (0.56)	1.39* (0.55)
Open Seat	1.26* (0.34)	1.73* (0.57)	1.17* (0.50)
Uncontested Primary	-0.29 (0.24)	-0.43 (0.35)	-0.10 (0.37)
Convention	1.03 (0.65)	1.23 (1.07)	1.44 (0.95)
Woman Nominee	-0.33 (0.24)	-0.71* (0.29)	0.48 (0.44)
Trump Vote	0.02* (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.02)
Professionalism	1.77 (1.18)	1.27 (1.69)	3.01 (1.79)
Partially Closed	-0.57 (0.54)	-0.76 (0.71)	-0.29 (0.94)
Partially Open	-0.07 (0.39)	0.31 (0.54)	-0.28 (0.60)
Open to Unaffiliated Voters	0.19 (0.39)	1.00* (0.50)	-0.95 (0.83)
Open	0.46 (0.33)	0.72 (0.45)	0.40 (0.51)
Blanket	-0.07 (0.53)	0.24 (0.77)	-0.20 (0.77)
Constant	-2.96* (1.34)	-2.65 (1.79)	-3.15 (2.21)
N	788	411	377
AIC	644.30	370.02	282.04
BIC	943.15	611.14	517.97
$\log L$	-258.15	-125.01	-81.02

Standard errors in parentheses

* indicates significance at $p < 0.05$

Reference Categories = Party Incumbent, Contested Primary, Closed Primary

Democratic nominees, women are less likely than men to be a youth nominee. Finally, in comparison to states that hold closed primary elections, Democratic parties in states with primaries that are open to unaffiliated voters are more likely to see youth nominees.

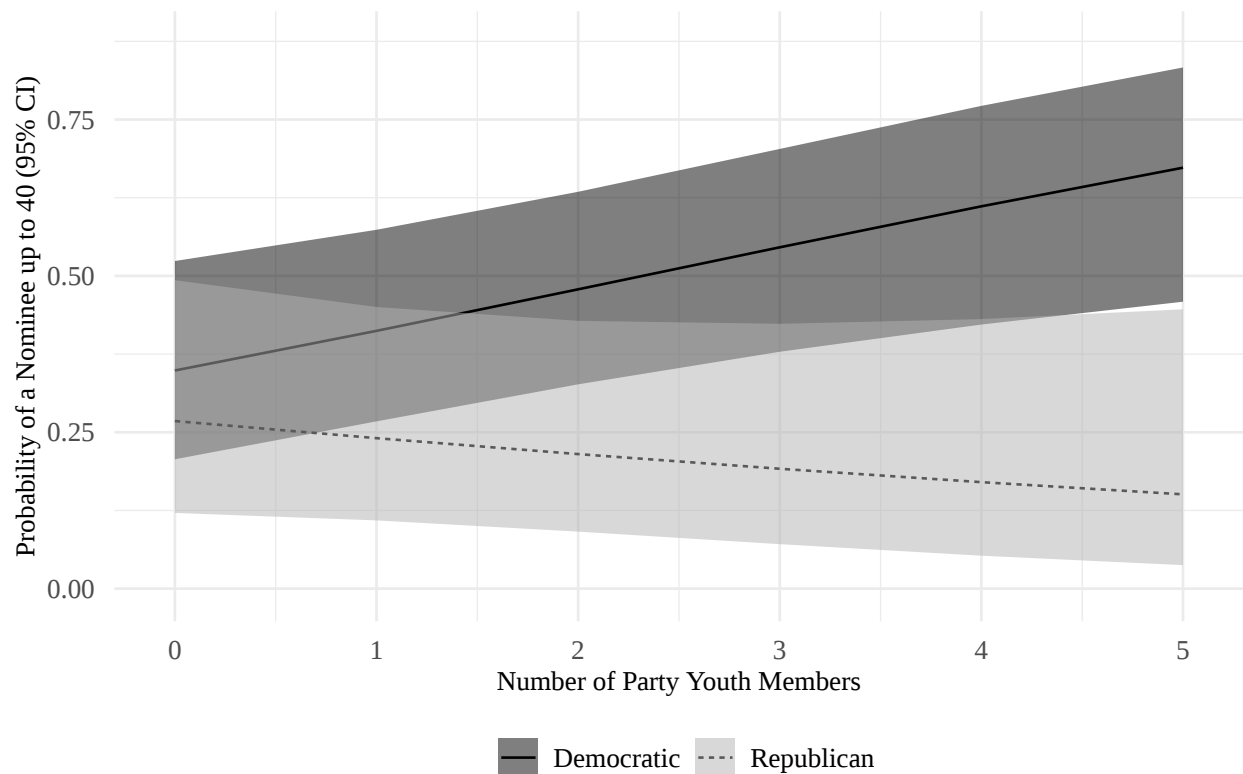


Figure 3.4: Predicted Probability of Nominee Up To 40

Note: This figure displays the predicted probabilities and corresponding 95 percent confidence intervals of a state party organization have a youth nominee broken down by party and the degree of youth diversity in the state party organization. All other variables are held at the medians or modes.

In order to get a better idea of the magnitude of this effect, Figure 3.4 displays the predicted probabilities and corresponding 95 percent confidence interval of each party having a youth nominee based upon the number of youth members given formal voting committee membership in their party. These predictions are calculated based upon models 2 and 3 in Table 3.2. Overall, when a state Democratic party does not guarantee voting committee membership to any youth members, they have about a 35 percent chance of having a youth nominee. When a state Republican party does not guarantee voting committee membership

to any youth members, they have about a 27 percent chance of having a youth nominee. However, as the number of voting youth members in a Democratic party increases, so does the probability of having a youth nominee. A state Democratic party with 5 voting youth members is predicted to have an almost 67 percent chance of having a youth nominee. This reveals that the influence of granting voting party committee membership to young individuals has the potential to be quite meaningful. While the confidence intervals on these predictions are quite large since they are based on a single election cycle, this relationship is statistically significant, as seen in Figure 3.2 and the likelihood of a Democratic youth nominee increase by about 6 to 7 percentage for each additional youth committee member in the party. In contrast, if anything, the likelihood of a state Republican party having a youth nominee slightly decreases as their number of voting youth committee members increases; although as seen in Table 3.2 this relationship is not statistically significant.

3.6 Discussion

Overall, I find state Democratic parties are more likely to grant voting party committee membership to the Young Democrats than state Republican parties are to grant voting party committee membership to the Young Republicans. However, state Republican parties are more likely to grant voting party committee membership to the College Republicans or the Teenage Republicans than state Democratic parties are to grant voting party committee membership to College Democrats or the High School Democrats. Additionally, there is no evidence that this variation in youth state party membership influences levels of youth voter registration or voter turnout.

As the onset of the paper, I hoped to determine whether a lack of diversity in state political parties contributed the under representation of young people in Congress. I found this to be the case, albeit only among Democratic parties. Specifically, I find state Democratic parties are more likely to have youth nominees for the House of Representatives as they

increase the degree of youth representation in their state central committees. This finding is meaningful because assuming these youth nominees win as often as the party's other nominees, maintaining age diversity in state Democratic party organizations can be one way to increase youth representation in Congress.

The validity of these findings can be greatly improved upon in future research. First, this analysis should be expanded to cover multiple election cycles and potentially even elections for other offices. Moreover, as stated previously, new measures of political participation that take into account both an individual's partisan identification and their age need to be examined. In this regard, the best path forward likely involves surveys and interviews of members of youth political organizations such as the Young Democrats or the College Republicans. Finally, future research should consider what drives specific state political parties to partner with youth political organizations and/or prioritize diverse memberships while other parties do not. Ultimately both Democratic and Republican parties should be making more of an effort to engage and mobilize young individuals in the hope to remain competitive in future elections.

3.7 Appendix

Table 3.3: House Nominees Up To 40 (No Blanket Primaries or Convention States)

	All	Democratic	Republican
Party Youth Members	0.12 (0.10)	0.31* (0.12)	-0.41 (0.27)
Democratic Primary	0.46 (0.27)		
Median Voter Age	-0.00 (0.04)	-0.02 (0.05)	0.03 (0.07)
Opponent Incumbent	1.47* (0.31)	2.25* (0.62)	0.95 (0.67)
Open Seat	1.28* (0.36)	1.61* (0.62)	1.51* (0.55)
Uncontested Primary	-0.09 (0.26)	-0.29 (0.36)	0.21 (0.44)
Woman Nominee	-0.35 (0.27)	-0.73* (0.32)	0.75 (0.54)
Trump Vote	0.01 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)
Professionalism	1.57 (1.46)	0.28 (1.92)	3.52 (2.38)
Partially Closed	-0.70 (0.64)	-0.92 (0.78)	0.71 (1.39)
Partially Open	0.06 (0.40)	0.41 (0.55)	-0.08 (0.62)
Open to Unaffiliated Voters	0.20 (0.39)	0.96 (0.50)	-0.63 (0.85)
Open	0.60 (0.35)	0.89 (0.47)	0.53 (0.56)
Constant	-4.16* (1.54)	-3.02 (2.00)	-5.39* (2.73)
N	641	337	304
AIC	521.17	312.85	206.74
BIC	771.10	511.50	400.02
$\log L$	-204.59	-104.43	-51.37

Standard errors in parentheses

* indicates significance at $p < 0.05$

Reference Categories = Party Incumbent, Closed Primary

Table 3.4: House Nominees Up To 40 (No Races with Party Incumbents)

	All	Democratic	Republican
Party Youth Members	0.11 (0.08)	0.24* (0.11)	-0.12 (0.18)
Democratic Primary	0.61 (0.33)		
Median Voter Age	-0.03 (0.04)	-0.01 (0.05)	-0.09 (0.08)
Open Seat	-0.30 (0.29)	-0.57 (0.40)	-0.39 (0.60)
Uncontested Primary	-0.07 (0.28)	-0.09 (0.38)	-0.03 (0.48)
Convention	1.30 (0.72)	1.37 (1.16)	1.43 (1.07)
Woman Nominee	-0.47 (0.27)	-0.80* (0.31)	0.43 (0.54)
Trump Vote	0.01 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)
Professionalism	1.74 (1.39)	0.12 (1.87)	5.10* (2.52)
Partially Closed	-0.07 (0.58)	-0.37 (0.74)	0.79 (1.05)
Partially Open	0.19 (0.47)	0.66 (0.58)	-0.41 (0.89)
Open to Unaffiliated Voters	0.46 (0.46)	1.03 (0.60)	-0.26 (0.90)
Open	0.87* (0.39)	0.99* (0.50)	1.18 (0.67)
Blanket	0.38 (0.62)	1.17 (0.86)	-0.37 (1.08)
Constant	-1.76 (1.57)	-0.92 (2.09)	-1.07 (2.79)
N	424	246	178
AIC	470.67	301.03	179.37
BIC	713.66	497.33	357.55
$\log L$	-175.34	-94.51	-33.68

Standard errors in parentheses

* indicates significance at $p < 0.05$

Reference Categories = Contested Primary, Closed Primary

Table 3.5: House Nominees Up To 40 (No Open Seat Races)

	All	Democratic	Republican
Party Youth Members	0.12 (0.08)	0.28* (0.11)	-0.01 (0.16)
Democratic Primary	0.38 (0.27)		
Median Voter Age	-0.05 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.05)	-0.06 (0.06)
Opponent Incumbent	1.69* (0.27)	2.47* (0.62)	1.43* (0.59)
Uncontested Primary	-0.26 (0.26)	-0.44 (0.37)	0.12 (0.40)
Convention	1.73* (0.75)	2.11 (1.24)	2.04 (1.13)
Woman Nominee	-0.36 (0.27)	-0.71* (0.32)	0.38 (0.52)
Trump Vote	0.02* (0.01)	0.01 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)
Professionalism	2.00 (1.35)	2.63 (1.94)	1.77 (1.98)
Partially Closed	-0.81 (0.62)	-0.85 (0.80)	-0.99 (1.12)
Partially Open	-0.22 (0.44)	0.20 (0.60)	-0.44 (0.67)
Open to Unaffiliated Voters	0.27 (0.43)	1.19* (0.56)	-0.91 (0.87)
Open	0.28 (0.38)	0.79 (0.51)	-0.21 (0.61)
Blanket	-0.21 (0.59)	-0.17 (0.86)	-0.27 (0.84)
Constant	-2.66 (1.48)	-3.04 (1.99)	-2.01 (2.44)
N	669	350	319
AIC	524.69	306.70	230.04
BIC	795.04	522.74	440.89
$\log L$	-202.35	-97.35	-59.02

Standard errors in parentheses

* indicates significance at $p < 0.05$

Reference Categories = Contested Primary, Closed Primary

Chapter 4

Do Party Rules Matter?: An Examination of State Party Bylaws and Congressional Nominations

4.1 Introduction

In 2017, the Utah Republican Party changed their nomination rules with the passage of Bylaw 8 which restricted candidates from gaining primary ballot access as a Republican by collecting signatures. The result of this rule change is that the only way to gain ballot access as a Republican is to win the support of delegates at the state party's convention (Masket 2018). Since Bylaw 8 conflicts with Utah state law, the Utah Republican Party has had to take additional action to prevent this rule from going into effect; failing to do so would have threatened their status as a Qualified Political Party and banned them from state ballots altogether. Despite this, almost two years later, the state party has not been able to fully repeal Bylaw 8, since a portion of the party's state committee members refuse to do so (Schott 2019). Ultimately, the party's goal in passing, and preserving, Bylaw 8 is to try and control which candidates will be allowed to represent the party. Though perhaps not

as extreme in nature as Bylaw 8, many other state political parties have provision in their bylaws, mostly concerning the party's ability to endorse their preferred candidates, which allow them to have a say in primary elections.

A growing wave of recent scholarship finds political parties, when defined as broad networks that include party donors and activists, are able to sway legislative nominations, at both the state level (Masket 2009) and the federal level (Hassell 2018), by recruiting, endorsing, and supporting their preferred candidates, while at the same time clearing the field of other candidates. This research makes clear that broadly defined political parties are extremely influential in primary elections even in the era of direct primaries. However, this line of research also raises the question of whether formal political party organizations can be just as powerful in shaping primary elections. This purpose of this paper is to consider this question in the context of the 2018 midterm elections. Specifically, I consider whether variations in the rules governing state political parties help to explain the outcomes of primaries for the House of Representatives.

A key factor in the success of political parties achieving their preferred electoral outcomes is their ability to manipulate levels of competition in primary elections. I argue state political parties can use their formal rules to influence levels of primary competitions and I theorize that state political parties will see lower levels of competition when they have bylaws that centralize power within the formal party organization, the state central committee. To test this expectation, I create a new dataset of state-level party rules by collecting and coding provisions within the bylaws of all 100 state-level Republican and Democratic parties. I operationalize party centralization and power as whether or not elected officials are represented within each party's formal committee membership and whether or not each party has a neutrality policy when it comes to contested primaries. Using several different indicators of electoral competition during primary elections, I find party power correlates with lower levels of electoral competition, but that this trend varies by political party. Specifically, state Democratic parties are less likely to see divisive primaries when they have rules in place al-

lowing the state central committee to endorse their preferred candidates. Additionally, state Republican parties are less likely to see divisive primaries and more likely to see fewer primary candidates in general when they guarantee ex-officio party membership to their co-partisan elected officials. Ultimately, past research reveals political parties, when defined as broad informal networks, play an important role in shaping the outcomes of legislative elections and this research shows that when political parties are viewed in their institutional form, they still play an important role in shaping the candidates who run for office and levels of electoral competition. Together these findings have important implications on representation in the United States.

4.2 Political Parties and Primary Elections

Recent research argues political parties should be viewed as networks of interest groups, social groups, activists, and policy demanders working together to win elections in order to implement their goals (Cohen, Karol, Noel & Zaller 2008, Bawn, Cohen, Karol, Masket, Noel & Zaller 2012). Moreover, recent scholarship finds when seen as networks, political parties are often quite successful at swaying primary elections towards their desired outcomes at both the state and federal level. For example, at the state level, informal party organizations, made up of officeholders, activists, donors, and other political brokers are able to control nominations to the California Legislature by recruiting, endorsing, and funding their preferred candidates (Masket 2009). National party networks can use their resources, particularly financial resources, to have similar influence in congressional primary elections. Specifically, congressional candidates are less likely to dropout out of their primary and are more likely to perform better when they are supported by their party's network of donors (Desmarais, La Raja & Kowal 2015, Hassell 2018).

There are several explanations as to why party networks are able to wield such influence in primary elections, despite the fact modern U.S. elections are often described as candidate

centered. First, political parties play an important role in candidate recruitment (Lawless & Fox 2010, Crowder-Meyer 2013, Broockman 2014, Karpowitz, Monson & Preece 2017). Second, political party networks control useful electoral resources, including campaign funds, endorsements, and political consultants, all of which are immensely beneficial when bestowed upon candidates (Jewell & Olson 1978, Kolodny & Dulio 2003, Dominguez 2011, Benjamin & Miller 2019).¹ Moreover, despite the fact party networks can be diverse with multiple goals, there is a high degree of collaboration among the different actors within each party network (Kolodny & Logan 1998, Brunell 2005, Koger, Masket & Noel 2010). With this in mind, political parties can sometimes take advantage of many voters' lack of political knowledge to nominate party loyalists over other more moderate candidates (Bawn et al. 2012). Finally, even when electoral reforms, such as campaign finance laws and nonpartisan elections, are implemented political parties are not necessarily weakened because they are capable of adapting to and working around such reforms (Masket 2016).

4.2.1 The Role of State Party Organizations

Overall, the evidence that political party networks have the ability to sway primary elections towards their desired outcomes is convincing.² Despite this, it is also necessary to consider what role individual members of a party network play in this process. When viewing political parties as networks, state central committees are just one of many actors in a party network; however, since state central committees have immense power in shaping both electoral and party rules in each state, they can also be viewed as independent institutions. As a result, it is necessary to consider what role state political parties play in shaping primary elections.

Early conventional wisdom suggested state party organizations were generally weak. In

¹It should be noted when a candidate receives one of these resources, they are more likely to receive others. For example, candidates who are endorsed by interest groups have an easier time raising money, and candidates who raise a lot of money are also more likely to be endorsed (Hannagan, Pimlott & Littvay 2010, Baker 2016).

²These arguments also align with Steve Laffey's personal account of challenging Lincoln Chafee in the 2006 Republican Primary for one of Rhode Island's U.S. Senate seats (Laffey 2007).

the 1960s, there were relatively few strong state party organizations (Mayhew 1986). Despite this, more recent research suggests these claims were overstated and if anything party organizations have been on the rebound since the 1960s and 1970s (Cotter, Gibson, Bibby & Huckshorn 1984, Kayden & Mahe Jr 1985). The resurgence of party organizations has been driven by increased resources and professionalization among party staff (Kayden & Mahe Jr 1985), and the most powerful party organizations are described as long lasting, autonomous, internally hierarchical with specialization among staff, interested in bringing about the nominations of candidates for a wide range of public offices, reliant on material incentives in carrying out their work, and resource rich (Cotter et al. 1984, Mayhew 1986). Overall, state political parties, and their local subsidiaries, are important in modern elections because among other things, they recruit candidates and provide both technical services and financial support (Freundreis, Gibson & Vertz 1990, Brox 2004, Bekafigo, Cohen, Gainous & Wagner 2013, Crowder-Meyer 2013, Preece & Stoddard 2015).³

4.3 Theory

Overall, there is good reason to believe powerful state party organizations are able to sway primary elections. This is mainly due to the fact they play an important role in shaping the electoral environment through their party rules. For the most part, state Democratic and Republican parties can control who is allowed to vote in their primaries, when the party can endorse candidates, which candidates receive financial support from the party, and when party rules can be changed. Moreover, since state and local party organizations both play an important role in candidate recruitment and often serve as a pool of potential candidates for elected office (Niven 1998, Lawless & Fox 2010, Crowder-Meyer 2013), it is likely party rules concerning party membership qualifications play a role in influencing primary elections. Ultimately, this makes state party rules an important indicator of political party strength.

³It is also worth noting that broad party networks exist at the state level as well as the national level (Reuning 2019). It is likely state party organizations can partner with their allies in these broader networks to work towards their goals.

However, with the exception of primary type, the rules of state and local political parties have received less scholarly attention than the national party rules that govern presidential primary elections (Kanthak & Morton 2001). Of course, not all of the rules governing state political parties are meaningful in regard to primary elections. However, there are several that likely go a long way in explaining state party strength and correspondingly the ability of state parties to reduce competition in an attempt to sway primary elections towards their desired outcomes.

First, many state central committees have rules pertaining to whether the party organization is allowed to take sides during contested primary elections. Some state parties allow the state central committee, or the corresponding county or local party committee, to endorse their preferred candidates in contested primary elections, but other parties require the state central committee to maintain neutrality until after a party nominee is elected in a primary election. Many times, party organizations that maintain neutrality during contested primaries also have rules forbidding party resources from being used or distributed in favor of one candidate over another, or rules stating party resources can only be used or distributed equally among primary candidates.

While having a party maintain neutrality during contested primary elections supports the notion of free and open elections and as a result, may be desirable for a healthy democracy, doing so likely inhibits a political party's ability to reduce competition and sway primary elections towards their desired outcomes. The main reason for this is endorsements, especially those from the state or local party, are beneficial to primary candidates (Jewell 1984, Morehouse 1990, Herrnson & Gimpel 1995, Jewell & Morehouse 2001, Kousser, Lucas, Masket & McGhee 2015). This is especially true in states where a party endorsement comes with other benefits such as the candidate receiving a special distinction or preferred placement on the primary ballot (Jewell & Olson 1978). In fact, most primary candidates seek the endorsement of the party organization and believe the party's endorsement will have a meaningful impact on the outcome of the primary.

Clearly the benefits associated with receiving a party endorsement are meaningful, but the implications of party rules permitting endorsements go beyond one candidate receiving the advantage of party support. If a party organization is allowed to throw their support and resources behind their preferred candidate, and have a history of doing so, some potential candidates may be less likely to run for office (Herrnson & Gimpel 1995). This is especially true if they do not anticipate receiving an endorsement and support from the party. In fact, the perceived lack of support from the party organization is one of the reasons more women do not run for elected office (Niven 1998, Butler & Preece 2016). Ultimately, the decision to run for elected office is a cost-benefit analysis and candidates decide to run for office when the potential benefits and likelihood of winning the election outweigh the potential costs of running and losing (Lazarus 2008). From this perspective, it seems like the costs associated with running for office are higher in states where parties select favorites during a primary election in comparison to state where parties maintain neutrality during contested primaries. Of course, a candidate who wins the endorsement of their party would see an improvement to their likelihood of winning, but since political parties want to win office and therefore have an incentive to endorse the candidate with the best likelihood of winning, it seems the only candidates who can be confident of receiving party support are incumbents and candidates personally recruited by the party to run. Between the advantages associated with a party endorsement and the potential that a party's lack of neutrality may scare off other candidates, endorsements seem like an ideal way for state central committees to reduce primary competition. This leads to my first hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: State political parties mandating neutrality during contested primary elections will see more competitive primary elections.

Beyond whether a state political party endorses candidates or maintains neutrality during contested primary elections, state parties also vary in regard to whether they consider their co-partisan elected officials to be automatic members of the state central committee. Some

state political parties allow their elected officials to heavily influence the decisions of the state central committee by granting them voting rights in the party and other political parties only allow their elected officials to have membership on the state central committee if they are elected to party office like any other party member. Since elected officials are already important players in informal party networks (Masket 2009), parties with rules ensuring the representation of elected officials in the formal proceedings of the state central committee are highly centralized and as a result, likely better able to control primary elections by reducing competition.

Mayhew famously identified winning reelection as the proximate goal of all members of Congress and the same could be said of other elected officials (Mayhew 1974). Moreover, many elected officials, including those who face term limits at the state level (Steen 2006), possess progressive ambition (Schlesinger 1966). Ultimately, since politicians act in a manner that coincides with their electoral goals, parties that are largely comprised of career politicians and elected officials likely also act to preserve and extend the political careers of their members. Since state central committees are the governing bodies of political parties, elected officials with voting membership in these institutions have both the motivation and means to govern party affairs in a manner which supports their own personal interests. For example the rules of the Nebraska Republican Party state incumbents are the only candidates allowed to be endorsed by the state central committee during a contested primary election.⁴ Similarly, while not a written rule, some state political parties have a tradition of allowing their co-partisan state governor to either formally or informally recommend a preferred candidate for party chair (Jewell & Olson 1978). More broadly, even if a party organization, led by elected officials, does not implement policies that explicitly advantage incumbent officeholders, they still provide the officials in question the opportunity to vote on the party platform and other matters before the party that might implicitly aid their own goals.

⁴Ironically, the Nebraska Republican Party does not grant their co-partisan elected officials ex-officio party membership.

Additionally, since as stated previously, formal party organizations often serve as a point of candidate recruitment for broader party networks (Niven 1998, Lawless & Fox 2010, Crowder-Meyer 2013), state parties that guarantee ex-officio membership to their elected officials likely make it easier for politicians serving in state or local government to act on progressive ambition. If a state party is comprised of individuals willing and eager to run for other elected offices, they may be less likely to actively recruit candidates from outside the party organization and local elected offices.⁵ In fact, politically ambitious individuals may initially run for party office in the hopes it will serve as a springboard for other public office. Overall, political parties that allow elected officials to be important players both within the formal party structure and the broader party network perfectly embody the view of political parties as endogenous institutions that are continually altered to meet the needs of ambitious politicians (Aldrich 2011). As a result, my second hypothesis is as follows.

Hypothesis 2: State political parties guaranteeing party membership to their co-partisan elected officials will see less competitive primary elections.

4.4 Data and Methodology

In order to evaluate my theory that party rules help state party organizations to sway levels of election competition in primary elections, I collected and coded the state party bylaws of all 100 state Democratic and Republican parties. Additionally, I collected data pertaining to primary competition for all primary elections for the House of Representatives during 2018 midterm elections.⁶

⁵This would be particularly harmful to potential women and minority candidates who are less likely to be found in the traditional party network (Niven 1998, Lawless & Fox 2010, Crowder-Meyer 2013).

⁶Since political parties need to follow different rules, and as a result may be driven by different incentives, primary elections taking place in states, California, Louisiana, and Washington, using blanket primaries and states, Connecticut, Utah, and Virginia, where party conventions are sometimes used are not included in this analysis.

4.4.1 Party Rules and Party Power

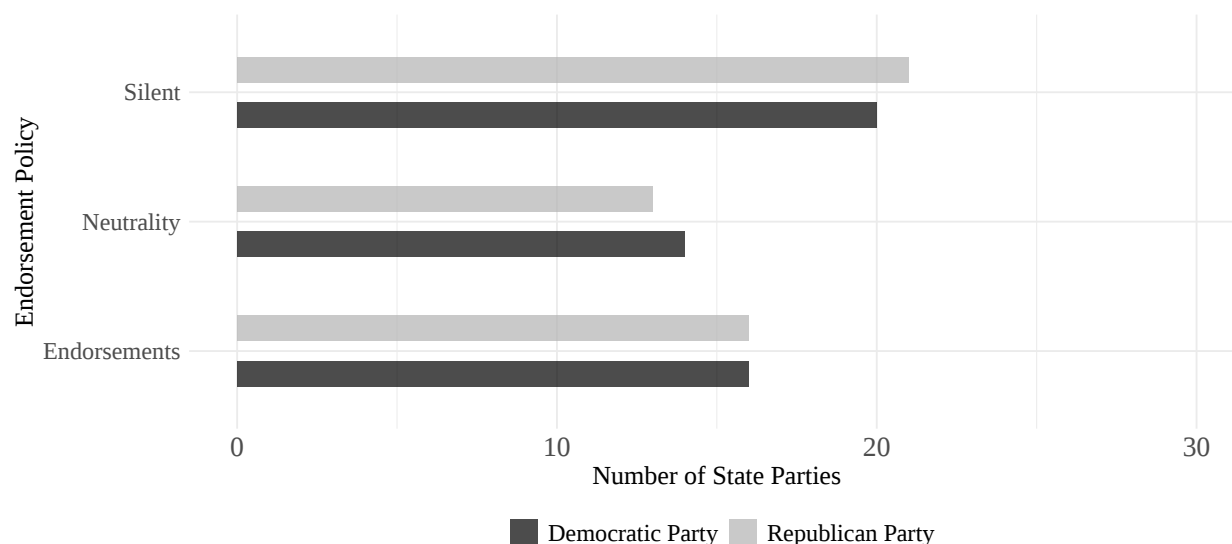


Figure 4.1: Endorsement Policies of State Political Parties

Note: This figure displays the endorsement policies of state political parties across the country according to their bylaws.

In the forthcoming analysis, I use the two party rules previously discussed, whether each state party mandates neutrality during contested primary elections and whether each state party grants ex-officio state party committee membership to their co-partisan elected officials, as my main independent variables conceptualizing party power. Figure 4.1 displays the endorsement policies of each state Democratic and Republican Party. Specifically, based upon each party's bylaws, each party was coded as either allowing pre-primary endorsements, requiring neutrality from the party organization during contested primary elections, or being silent on the manner, which means their bylaws neither outlined a policy for endorsing primary candidates, nor did they mandate neutrality during primary elections. Overall, a similar number of Democratic and Republican parties fell into each of these categories; although, there are several instances of parties within the same state having a different policy concerning pre-primary endorsements. Overall, 14 state Democratic parties and 13 state Republican parties required neutrality from the party organization during the 2018 primary

elections. In contrast, 16 Democratic state parties and 16 Republican state parties had rules that allowed for pre-primary endorsements in 2018. The remaining 20 Democratic state parties and 21 Republican state parties had bylaws in place that neither forbid endorsements nor required party neutrality. In the forthcoming analysis, I assume that if a state party does not explicitly forbid pre-primary endorsements, the party in question can endorse a primary candidate if they decide to do so. This is important because even if a party that is silent on the matter has a norm of primary neutrality, norms are easier to circumvent or overturn than are rules written into the party bylaws. As a result, I collapse these three categories in order to make the distinction between the 27 parties that mandate neutrality and the 73 parties that do not explicitly mandate neutrality.

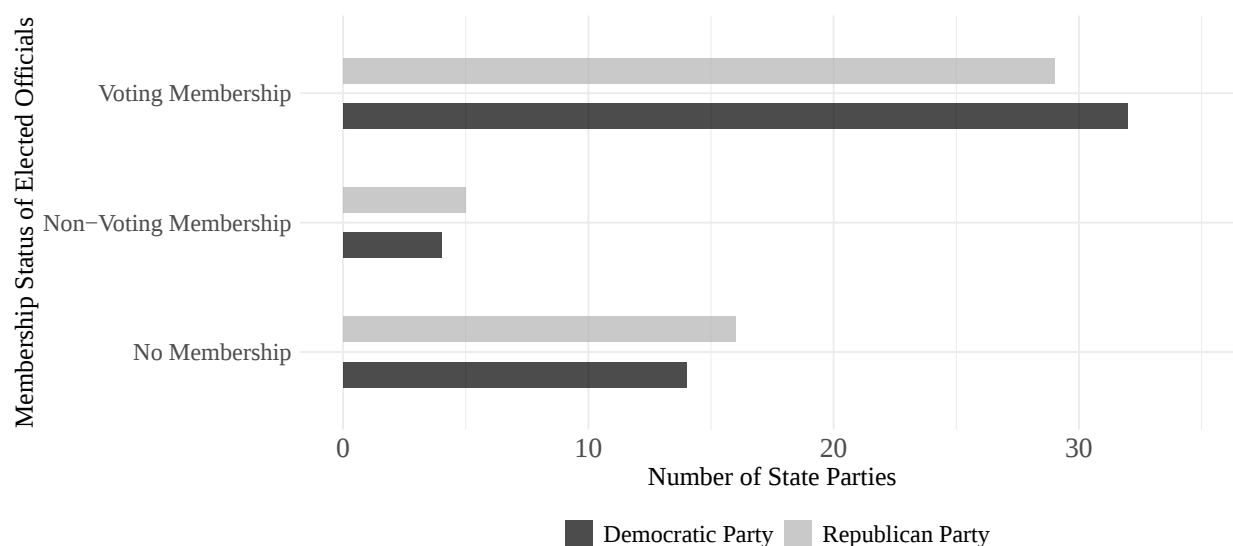


Figure 4.2: Representation of Elected Officials in State Political Parties

Note: This figure displays the membership status of co-partisan elected officials in state political parties across the country according to party bylaws.

Figure 4.2 displays the number of state parties that guarantee ex-officio party committee membership to their elected officials.⁷ As with state party primary endorsement policies,

⁷It is important to note that by ex-officio party membership I mean the officials granted party committee membership by nature of holding another office. For example, a governor being granted membership to a state party because they are the sitting governor is an ex-officio member, but a governor who won party committee membership by running for party office like any other elected party committee member is not an

Democratic and Republican parties are similar in regard to their practice of granting ex-officio committee membership to their allied officeholders. There is a slight tendency of Democratic parties being more likely to give their ex-officio members the right to vote on matters before the party. Specifically, 32 state Democratic parties guarantee voting party committee membership to their elected officials, 4 grant nonvoting committee membership, and 14 grant no form of ex-officio party committee membership. On the Republican side, 29 state parties guarantee voting committee membership to their allied elected official, 5 grant nonvoting committee membership, and 16 do not grant any form of party committee membership. In Figure 4.2, parties are classified as granting voting party committee membership to their elected officials if at least one elected official is granted voting membership, but in reality if a state political party grants party committee membership to one elected official, they are likely to grant party committee membership to several elected officials. For example, 19 state Democratic parties and 18 state Republican parties guarantee some degree of voting party committee membership to co-partisans when they hold the office of governor, state house, state senate, U.S. House, U.S. Senate, and state constitutional offices.⁸ Since this is the case, in the forthcoming analysis, I use a binary measure of whether or not each state party guarantees voting party committee membership to at least one fellow partisan elected official, as seen in Figure 4.2, to measure this dimension of party power.

4.4.2 Measuring Party Influence in the 2018 Midterm Elections

Overall, there are several ways to measure a political party's ability to sway primary elections towards lower levels of competition. Probably the most obvious indicator of party strength during primary elections is the absence of a primary election. The idea here is that a party might be able to avoid holding a true primary election by centralizing support

ex-officio member. Due to data limitations, it is not possible to determine the number of elected officials who won state party committee membership through a party election, but it is possible to use party bylaws to determine whether they guarantee ex-officio membership to their fellow partisans.

⁸In some cases, these individuals, or the party delegation in the legislative chamber collectively, name a representative to serve on the party on their behalf opposed to personally voting on party affairs, but in all cases, the co-partisans serving in these positions have some degree of voting representation in party affairs.

around a single candidate. Thus, a binary measure of whether or not each primary is uncontested will serve as my first dependent variable measuring party control, with the expectation that powerful parties will see a greater number of uncontested primaries. In contrast to uncontested primaries, one indicator that a political party has lost control of the nomination process is the occurrence of a divisive primary. Although empirical evidence surrounding the concern is mixed, political parties want to avoid divisive primaries because they fear a divisive primary will weaken the party's nominee in the general election or even the party as a whole in future election cycles (Hacker 1965, Johnson & Gibson 1974, Piereson & Smith 1975, Born 1981, Romero 2003). Since parties want to avoid divisive primaries and the occurrence of a divisive primary indicates the inability of a party to minimize primary competition, my second dependent variable is a binary measure of whether or not each primary election is divisive. Here, I consider a primary to be divisive if the primary winner's margin of victory is less than or equal to 20% (Bernstein 1977) and I expect strong political parties will see fewer divisive primaries.⁹¹⁰ Finally, since uncontested primaries and divisive primaries are the extreme ends of the spectrum in regard to levels of competition in primary elections, I use the total number of candidates in each primary as a third and final dependent variable with the expectation that strong political parties will on average see fewer candidates than weaker political parties. Table 4.1 displays summary statistics for each of my dependent variables.

Since many factors contribute to primary elections outcomes, it is also necessary to consider other factors that may influence how much control a party has over the primary

⁹It is worth noting that much of the existing research on divisive primaries struggles to clearly distinguish the differences between divisiveness and competitiveness (Djupe & Peterson 2002, Jewitt & Treul 2014). Unfortunately many of these alternative measures of divisiveness are not transferable to other election cycles due to either their theoretical underpinnings or data limitations. Nonetheless, at the very least, the measure used in this paper considers primary competition even if it is not a perfect measure of divisiveness (Jewitt & Treul 2014).

¹⁰Table 4.6 replicates my results when a primary is considered to be divisive when the winner's margin of victory was less than or equal to 30% (Piereson & Smith 1975). Using this less stringent measure of divisiveness, I find Republican parties saw fewer divisive primaries when they granted ex-officio party committee membership to their elected officials, but surprisingly were also less likely to see divisive primaries when they implemented policies requiring neutrality during contested primaries. In Democratic primaries, party power had no influence on primary divisiveness.

election process. First, in order to consider the powers associated with incumbency, I consider whether there was a party incumbent, an opponent incumbent, or an open seat, according to the perspective of each political party in each district. In order to consider the ideological leanings of each district, I control for Trump’s 2016 voteshare during the 2016 presidential election (Nir 2012). Since some districts favor Democrats and others favor Republicans, I use the Cook Report from November 7, 2017 to create a binary classification as to whether each district was expected to be competitive during the general election (The Cook Political Report 2017).¹¹ I also control for each state’s degree of legislative professionalism using the Squire Index (Squire 2017) and the type primary held in each state according to the National Conference of State Legislatures (National Conference of State Legislatures 2016). Finally, I use Elazar’s conceptualization of political culture (Elazar 1994) in order to consider whether there were any trends are driven by political culture in 2018 (Craig 2016).

Table 4.1: Dependent Variables

Table 11: Dependent Variables				
Binary DVs	Percentage			
Uncontested Primaries				
Democratic	32.1%			
Republican	48.0%			
Divisive Primaries				
Democratic	25.1%			
Republican	19.1%			
Continuous DV	Mean	Median	Min	Max
Number of Candidates				
Democratic	2.64	2	1	11
Republican	2.29	2	1	18
Democratic N = 343, Republican N = 319				

¹¹A district was coded as competitive if the Cook Report classified it as either likely, lean, or toss-up in favor of either party. I selected to make this determination based upon the November 7, 2017 report because it was the closest report to the first filing deadlines of the 2018 election cycle.

4.5 Results

Table 4.2 displays six logit models estimating uncontested primaries during the 2018 congressional midterm elections. Since my two measures of state party power are related and partially correlated, it is necessary to estimate their influence independently in separate models to avoid potential multicollinearity bias. The first three models estimate the likelihood of an uncontested primary using each state party's endorsement policy as my measure of party power and models four through six estimate the likelihood of an uncontested primary using the status of co-partisan elected officials in each state party as my measure of party power. With both sets of models, I run analysis on each political party independently and all primaries in the aggregate. Other than my two different measures of party power, all other variables in each model are the same with the exception of an additional binary variable used to indicate Democratic primaries in my two aggregate models. Analysis of my other dependent variables, the likelihood of a divisive primary and the number of primary candidates, will be presented in the same manner in additional tables.

Overall, neither state Democratic parties, nor state Republican parties, seem to be able to increase the number of uncontested primaries through their party rules. State parties that permit pre-primary endorsements are no more likely to see uncontested primaries than are state parties that mandate pre-primary neutrality. Additionally, state parties that guarantee party committee membership to their co-partisan elected officials are not more likely to see uncontested primary than are state parties that do not grant party committee membership to their elected officials.

Beyond state party power, in 2018, Democratic primaries were less likely to be uncontested than Republican primaries. This is probably the result of there being more Republican controlled seats in the House of Representatives entering 2018 and the fact that the electoral environment in 2018 was seen as favoring Democrats. In line with what is known about the power of incumbency, all primaries elections were less likely to be uncontested when they took place in a district with an open seat and Democratic primaries were less likely to be

Table 4.2: Likelihood of an Uncontested Primary

	Endorsement Policy			Elected Officials		
	All	Dem	Rep	All	Dem	Rep
Required Neutrality	0.33 (0.23)	0.32 (0.35)	0.27 (0.35)			
Officials				0.31 (0.20)	-0.11 (0.29)	0.43 (0.38)
Democratic Primary	-0.67*** (0.17)			-0.68*** (0.17)		
Opponent Incumbent	-0.59** (0.18)	-2.62*** (0.46)	-0.35 (0.42)	-0.63*** (0.19)	-2.64*** (0.46)	-0.36 (0.42)
Open Seat	-1.66*** (0.29)	-2.80*** (0.53)	-1.79*** (0.42)	-1.70*** (0.29)	-2.85*** (0.53)	-1.82*** (0.42)
Trump Vote	-0.66 (0.56)	4.42*** (1.28)	-1.14 (1.22)	-0.68 (0.56)	4.53*** (1.28)	-1.18 (1.22)
Competitive District	-0.27 (0.23)	0.03 (0.37)	-0.39 (0.32)	-0.27 (0.23)	0.01 (0.37)	-0.42 (0.32)
Professionalism	3.90** (1.23)	2.54 (1.84)	6.88*** (1.86)	3.86** (1.22)	2.01 (1.83)	6.72*** (1.82)
Partially Closed	-0.76† (0.43)	-0.53 (0.71)	-0.70 (0.56)	-0.74† (0.42)	-0.53 (0.71)	-0.63 (0.55)
Partially Open	-0.31 (0.28)	-0.02 (0.43)	-0.47 (0.40)	-0.13 (0.30)	-0.01 (0.43)	-0.03 (0.53)
Open to Unaffiliated Voters	0.31 (0.29)	0.23 (0.42)	0.49 (0.42)	0.39 (0.29)	0.28 (0.42)	0.62 (0.44)
Open	0.16 (0.25)	0.60 (0.37)	0.01 (0.36)	0.33 (0.27)	0.62 (0.38)	0.30 (0.45)
Individualistic	-0.25 (0.27)	-0.26 (0.40)	-0.43 (0.40)	-0.28 (0.27)	-0.25 (0.41)	-0.53 (0.39)
Moralistic	0.21 (0.27)	0.17 (0.39)	0.22 (0.39)	0.13 (0.27)	0.15 (0.40)	0.15 (0.40)
Constant	-0.28 (0.49)	-2.13** (0.76)	-0.72 (1.00)	-0.40 (0.51)	-1.93* (0.79)	-0.94 (1.04)
N	662	343	319	662	343	319
AIC	828.21	397.18	417.90	827.85	397.86	417.16
BIC	1079.94	596.74	613.69	1079.59	597.43	612.95
$\log L$	-358.10	-146.59	-156.95	-357.93	-146.93	-156.58

† significant at $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Reference Categories = Party Incumbent, Closed Primary, Traditionalistic

uncontested when taking place in a district with a Republican incumbent. In comparison, Republican primaries were no more likely to be uncontested in districts where there was

a Democratic incumbent compared to a Republican incumbent. Additionally, Democratic primaries were more likely to be uncontested in districts where Trump performed well in 2016 probably because these districts appeared to be unwinnable to many potential Democratic candidates. Similarly, Republican primaries were more likely to be uncontested in states with a higher level of legislative professionalism probably as a result of there being one strong candidate seeking the nomination in many districts. Finally, district competitiveness, primary type, nor state political culture had a significant influence on the frequency of uncontested primaries.

Table 4.3 displays the results of logits models estimating the likelihood of divisive primaries during the 2018 midterm elections. Unlike their inability to increase the number of uncontested primaries, powerful state political parties appear to have some ability to limit the number of divisive primaries through provisions in their bylaws. However, each party has a different strategy for doing so. State Democratic parties that permitted pre-primary endorsements were less likely to see divisive primaries than were state Democratic parties that mandated neutrality during contested primary elections, but the status of co-partisan elected officials within state Democratic parties had no influence on the likelihood of divisive primaries. In contrast, state Republican parties were less likely to see divisive primary elections when they guaranteed ex-officio party committee membership to their co-partisan elected officials, but were unable to reduce the number of divisive primaries by allowing pre-primary endorsements.¹² The trend of both political parties being able to limit the number of divisive primaries, but not increase the number of uncontested primaries is likely explained by the fact political parties have more of an incentive to avoid divisive primaries than contested primaries. First, a contested primary does not always translate to a com-

¹²The analysis presented in Table 4.3 includes all primary elections including those that were uncontested. By definition, uncontested primaries are not divisive and as a result are coded as such. Table 4.5 in the Appendix replicates this analysis when the sample is restricted to contested primary elections, thus estimating the likelihood of a divisive primary conditional on there being a contested primary. The finding that Democratic primaries are more likely to be divisive when a state party mandates neutrality holds when using this restricted sample, but the finding that Republican primaries are less likely to be divisive when a state party grants ex-officio committee membership to their elected officials does not.

Table 4.3: Likelihood of a Divisive Primary

	Endorsement Policy			Elected Officials		
	All	Dem	Rep	All	Dem	Rep
Required Neutrality	0.37 (0.28)	0.86* (0.38)	-0.65 (0.52)			
Officials				-0.50* (0.23)	0.00 (0.31)	-1.28* (0.52)
Democratic Primary	0.12 (0.22)			0.08 (0.22)		
Opponent Incumbent	2.21*** (0.31)	3.18*** (0.64)	2.46*** (0.59)	2.27*** (0.31)	2.99*** (0.62)	2.51*** (0.60)
Open Seat	2.85*** (0.34)	3.43*** (0.62)	3.22*** (0.51)	2.85*** (0.34)	3.22*** (0.59)	3.29*** (0.52)
Trump Vote	-0.29 (0.74)	-2.22 (1.42)	-0.51 (1.52)	-0.19 (0.75)	-1.78 (1.38)	-0.20 (1.55)
Competitive District	0.21 (0.26)	-0.43 (0.36)	1.11* (0.44)	0.22 (0.26)	-0.43 (0.36)	1.23** (0.45)
Professionalism	-1.52 (1.47)	0.49 (1.98)	-5.94* (2.50)	-2.48† (1.44)	-0.80 (1.97)	-5.13* (2.45)
Partially Closed	0.03 (0.46)	-0.27 (0.63)	0.90 (0.75)	0.03 (0.47)	-0.37 (0.62)	0.73 (0.76)
Partially Open	-0.09 (0.33)	-0.64 (0.47)	0.65 (0.51)	-0.30 (0.35)	-0.65 (0.47)	-0.51 (0.66)
Open to Unaffiliated Voters	-0.26 (0.35)	-0.15 (0.48)	-0.48 (0.56)	-0.35 (0.35)	-0.13 (0.48)	-0.69 (0.58)
Open	-0.20 (0.30)	-0.14 (0.40)	-0.62 (0.52)	-0.44 (0.33)	-0.02 (0.41)	-1.35* (0.63)
Individualistic	0.24 (0.31)	0.56 (0.43)	-0.35 (0.53)	0.19 (0.31)	0.64 (0.42)	-0.09 (0.51)
Moralistic	-0.33 (0.32)	0.20 (0.42)	-1.28* (0.58)	-0.24 (0.32)	0.12 (0.42)	-1.11† (0.59)
Constant	-2.57*** (0.65)	-2.78** (0.92)	-1.22 (1.30)	-1.93** (0.66)	-2.41* (0.95)	-0.83 (1.33)
N	662	343	319	662	343	319
AIC	610.32	350.55	253.11	607.40	355.52	248.36
BIC	862.06	550.12	448.90	859.13	555.08	444.15
$\log L$	-249.16	-123.28	-74.55	-247.70	-125.76	-72.18

† significant at $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Reference Categories = Party Incumbent, Closed Primary, Traditionalistic

petitive primary as many congressional candidates, especially amateur candidates, are often

seen as hopeless.¹³ Moreover, political parties may be criticized if they are seen as stifling all competition, which means their rules may only be intended to limit the most serious competition opposed to eliminating all competition. The trend of each party being able to sway nominations by using different rules is more difficult to explain, but one potential explanation is that many divisive primaries, especially on the Republican side, are driven by ideological primary challengers (Boatright 2013). As a result, elected officials voting on all party affairs may be more meaningful at deterring ideological primary challengers than the potential of an ideological challenger running against a candidate endorsed by the party organization.

Not surprisingly, during both Democratic and Republican primaries, divisive primaries were more common in districts with an open seat or an opponent incumbent than a party incumbent. Additionally, divisive Republican primaries are more likely in districts that were expected to be competitive in the general election but were less likely in Moralistic states and states with high levels of legislative professionalism. No other factors contributed to the likelihood of a divisive Democratic primary.

In order to determine the magnitude of these effects, Figure 4.3 displays the predicted probability of a divisive primary broken down by party and my two measures of party power. The top panel displays predictions based upon state parties' endorsement policies and the bottom panel displays predictions based upon the status of co-partisan elected officials in state parties. Whether a state Republican party permits party endorsement(s) or requires neutrality during contested primaries has minimal influence on the probability of a divisive primary. Specifically, state Republican parties permitting party endorsements during contested primary elections had a 0.26 probability (0.10 to 0.50) of having a divisive primary and state Republican parties requiring the state central committee to maintain neutrality during contested primary elections had a 0.15 probability (0.04 to 0.42) of having a divisive primary. In comparison, state Democratic parties permitting party endorsements had a 0.32

¹³Potential candidates with the most to lose by losing an election, are least likely to run (Kazee 1983).

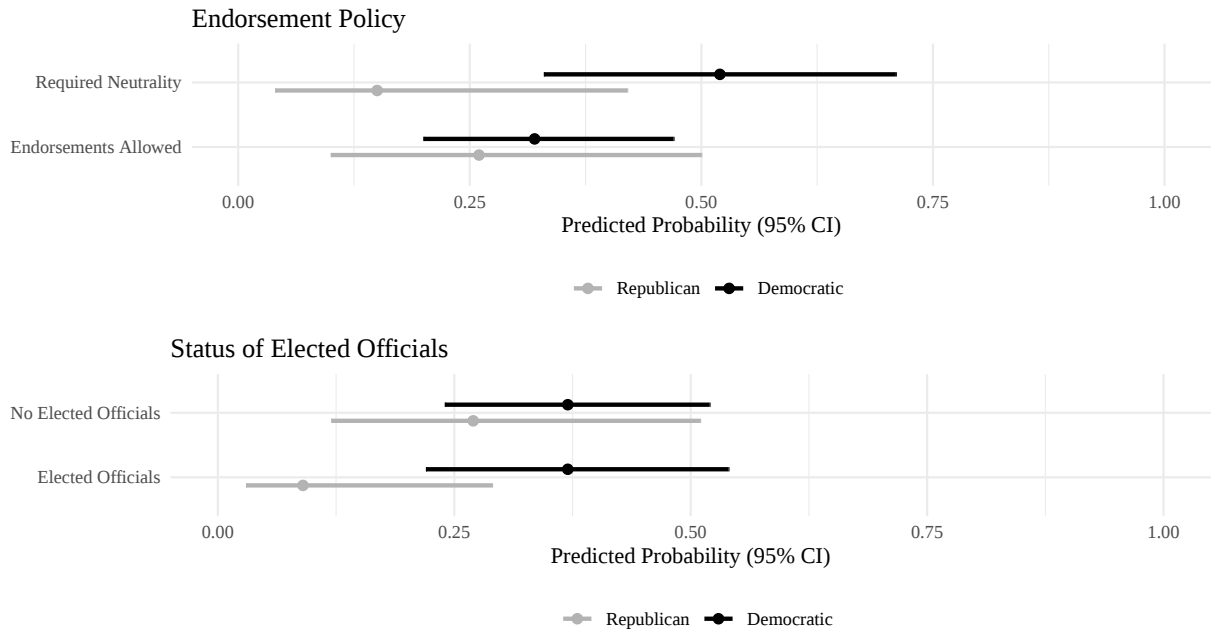


Figure 4.3: Predicted Probability of a Divisive Primary

Note: This figure displays the predicted probability of a divisive primary during 2018 midterm elections broken down by political party and my two measures of party power. The top panel displays predictions based upon state parties' endorsement policies and are calculated using models 2 and 3 in Table 4.3. The bottom panel displays predictions based upon the status of co-partisan elected officials in state parties and are calculated using models 5 and 6 in Table 4.3. In both sets of predictions, all other variables held at their median or mode.

probability (0.20 to 0.47) of having a divisive primary, but state Democratic parties requiring neutrality had a 0.52 probability (0.33 to 0.71) of having a divisive primary. Overall, in 2018, state Democratic parties requiring neutrality had a 0.20 greater probability of seeing divisive primaries than state Democratic parties permitting endorsements. Together, the evidence presented in Table 4.3 and Figure 4.3 indicates the relationship between state Democratic parties' endorsement policies and the frequency of divisive primaries is both statistically and substantively significant.

The bottom panel of Figure 4.3 shows among state Democratic parties, the probability of having a divisive primary does not change based upon the status of co-partisan elected officials in each party. State Democratic parties granting ex-officio voting party committee membership to elected officials had a 0.37 probability (0.22 to 0.54) of having a divisive pri-

mary and Democratic parties not guaranteeing party committee membership to their elected officials had a 0.37 probability (0.24 to 0.52) of having a divisive primary. During Republican primaries, state parties ensuring elected officials had party committee membership had a 0.09 probability (0.03 to 0.29) of having a divisive primary and state parties not guaranteeing party committee membership to their elected officials had a 0.27 probability (0.12 to 0.51) of having a divisive primary. These findings indicate Republican state parties could reduce the probability of having a divisive primary by about 0.18 if they were pass rules ensuring their elected officials had greater representation in party affairs.

Finally, Table 4.4 displays Poisson models estimating the number of primary candidates during the 2018 congressional midterm elections. Powerful state Democratic parties do not have the ability to limit the number of primary candidates either by permitting pre-primary endorsements or by granting ex-officio party committee membership to co-partisan elected officials. In contrast, state Republican parties guaranteeing representation of their elected official in party affairs see fewer primary candidates on average than state Republican parties that do not guarantee party representation for their elected officials.

Mirroring trends seen in the previous models, more Democrats and Republicans ran for the House of Representative in districts where there is an open seat, or an opponent incumbent compared to a party incumbent. Additionally, given the electoral environment in 2018, more Democrats than Republicans ran for Congress, but there were fewer Democratic candidates in district where Trump performed well in 2016. In both Democratic and Republican primaries, fewer candidates ran in states with high levels of legislative professionalism. In regard to state political culture, the number of Democrats running for the House was greater in individualistic states compared to traditionalistic states. Finally, primary type had no influence on the number of candidates running for the House of Representatives in primaries for either party.

Figure 4.3 displays predicted counts of the number of primary candidates broken down by political party and the status of co-partisan elected officials in state parties. The predicted

Table 4.4: Estimated Number of Primary Candidates

	Endorsement Policy			Elected Officials		
	All	Dem	Rep	All	Dem	Rep
Required Neutrality	-0.06 (0.07)	0.02 (0.11)	-0.16 (0.12)			
Officials				-0.17** (0.06)	-0.05 (0.08)	-0.26* (0.12)
Democratic Primary	0.10* (0.05)			0.10* (0.05)		
Opponent Incumbent	0.27*** (0.06)	1.81*** (0.15)	1.10*** (0.15)	0.29*** (0.06)	1.80*** (0.15)	1.11*** (0.15)
Open Seat	0.88*** (0.06)	2.06*** (0.14)	1.81*** (0.11)	0.89*** (0.06)	2.06*** (0.14)	1.82*** (0.11)
Trump Vote	0.02 (0.17)	-1.82*** (0.34)	0.66 [†] (0.39)	0.02 (0.17)	-1.80*** (0.33)	0.70 [†] (0.39)
Competitive District	0.16* (0.06)	0.13 (0.09)	0.08 (0.11)	0.17** (0.06)	0.13 (0.09)	0.11 (0.11)
Professionalism	-1.31*** (0.35)	-1.34** (0.51)	-2.59*** (0.60)	-1.40*** (0.34)	-1.44** (0.51)	-2.46*** (0.58)
Partially Closed	0.17 (0.11)	0.10 (0.16)	0.28 (0.19)	0.17 (0.11)	0.10 (0.16)	0.22 (0.20)
Partially Open	0.08 (0.08)	-0.01 (0.12)	0.16 (0.14)	-0.00 (0.09)	-0.02 (0.12)	-0.09 (0.17)
Open to Unaffiliated Voters	-0.09 (0.09)	-0.16 (0.13)	-0.04 (0.14)	-0.12 (0.09)	-0.17 (0.13)	-0.10 (0.15)
Open	0.06 (0.07)	-0.03 (0.11)	0.11 (0.13)	-0.03 (0.08)	-0.04 (0.11)	-0.02 (0.15)
Individualistic	0.15* (0.08)	0.31** (0.11)	0.04 (0.13)	0.15 [†] (0.08)	0.30** (0.11)	0.12 (0.12)
Moralistic	-0.10 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.11)	-0.23 [†] (0.13)	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.05 (0.11)	-0.19 (0.13)
Constant	0.77*** (0.15)	0.48* (0.23)	-0.03 (0.34)	0.90*** (0.16)	0.54* (0.24)	0.05 (0.34)
<i>N</i>	662	343	319	662	343	319
AIC	2321.62	1129.50	1012.06	2313.41	1129.24	1009.27
BIC	2573.35	1329.06	1207.85	2565.15	1328.80	1205.06
log <i>L</i>	-1104.81	-512.75	-454.03	-1100.71	-512.62	-452.64

[†] significant at $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Reference Categories = Party Incumbent, Closed Primary, Traditionalistic

number of primary candidates does not significantly vary regardless of whether state Democratic parties guaranteed party committee membership to their elected officials. In fact, state

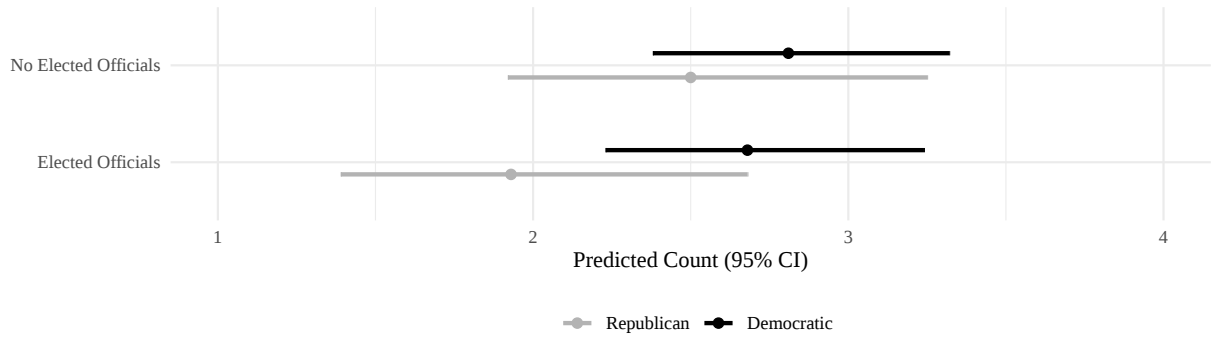


Figure 4.4: Predicted Count of Primary Candidates

Note: This figure displays the predicted count of primary candidates during 2018 midterm elections broken down by political party and status of co-partisan elected officials in state political parties. Predictions are calculated using models 5 and 6 in Table 4.4 with all other variables held at their median or mode.

Democratic parties ensuring their elected officials are represented in party affairs can expect to see about 2.7 candidates (2.2 to 3.2) in each primary and state Democratic parties not ensuring the representation of their elected officials can expect to see about 2.8 candidates (2.4 to 3.3) in each primary. On the other hand, state Republican parties can expect to see the average number of candidates in each primary decrease by a little more than half a candidate when their elected officials are granted ex-officio party committee membership. Specifically, state Republican parties granting party committee membership to their elected officials on average see 1.9 candidates (1.4 to 2.7) in each primary, while state Republican parties not granting party committee membership to their elected officials on average see 2.5 candidates (1.9 to 3.3) per primary.

4.6 Discussion

Previous scholarship argues broad political party networks are able to sway primary elections towards their desired outcomes. Building off this research, the findings presented in this paper reveal state political party organizations, key actors within broader party networks, are able to use their party rules to influence levels of competition in primary

elections. However, state Democratic parties and state Republican parties use different tactics to influence the outcomes of their primaries. Specifically, Democratic parties tend to see fewer divisive primaries when they allow the state central committee to make pre-primary endorsements; while, Republican parties tend to see fewer divisive primaries, and fewer primary candidates in general, when their elected officials are ensured representation within the formal party organization. In contrast, neither party has had much success in using their rules to increase the number of uncontested primaries. This is likely the result of state parties having greater incentive to avoid divisive primaries than to eliminate primary competition altogether.

Ultimately, when these findings are considered in conjunction with other scholarship the normative question of whether it is desirable to have strong political party organizations is raised. First, it is possible that strong state political parties are biased against non-traditional candidates in more ways than one. Strong evidence already suggests biases in the candidate recruitment process contribute to fewer women running for elected office (Niven 1998, Lawless & Fox 2010, Crowder-Meyer 2013). However, since greater party control of primary elections probably advantages incumbents and politicians in other elected offices, more so than other candidates, it seems possible that party rules are another source of bias against women and minority candidates. Similarly, party elites are more likely than voters to favor political ideologues as their nominees (Broockman, Carnes, Crowder-Meyer & Skovron 2019). This means strong state parties may indirectly contribute to political polarization.

Finally, the findings presented here also create questions for future research. First, the analysis presented in this paper should be replicated across both future election cycles and elections for other offices to increase the external validity of these findings.¹⁴ Additionally, future research should consider whether, and if so how, broader political party networks

¹⁴In particular, there may be a regional component at play in Republican primaries. When I replicate my analysis while controlling for geographic region instead of state political culture, I still find a relationship between strong state parties and party control of primary elections, but the mechanism at play was a party's endorsement policy opposed to the status of the party's co-partisan elected officials. Future longitudinal analysis will allow me to use a better identification strategy, state fixed effects, and will help me to better understand the casual mechanism at play.

act differently depending upon the party rules in place in each state. For example, if a state party organization requires the state central committee to maintain neutrality during a contested primary election, which this paper shows increases the likelihood of divisive Democratic primaries, it is possible members of the informal party network compensate by working harder behind the scenes to aid their preferred candidates and achieve party goals. Overall, coupling the research presented here with the existing research on broader political party networks will help to provide a more complete picture of the role of political parties in primary elections.

4.7 Appendix

Table 4.5: Likelihood of a Divisive Primary Conditional of Being a Contested Primary

	Endorsement Policy			Elected Officials		
	All	Dem	Rep	All	Dem	Rep
Required Neutrality	0.95** (0.33)	1.23** (0.44)	0.12 (0.59)			
Officials				-0.25 (0.26)	0.09 (0.33)	-0.81 (0.59)
Democratic Primary	-0.48† (0.26)			-0.48† (0.26)		
Opponent Incumbent	2.52*** (0.35)	2.55*** (0.70)	2.84*** (0.75)	2.39*** (0.34)	2.29*** (0.66)	2.80*** (0.75)
Open Seat	2.74*** (0.38)	2.79*** (0.67)	3.01*** (0.58)	2.56*** (0.36)	2.50*** (0.63)	2.98*** (0.57)
Trump Vote	-1.05 (0.88)	-0.57 (1.52)	-1.85 (2.02)	-0.82 (0.86)	-0.03 (1.48)	-1.79 (2.06)
Competitive District	-0.14 (0.29)	-0.55 (0.39)	0.77 (0.52)	-0.12 (0.29)	-0.50 (0.38)	0.95† (0.53)
Professionalism	1.26 (1.64)	0.91 (2.08)	-1.34 (3.03)	-0.24 (1.60)	-0.42 (2.05)	-1.37 (2.96)
Partially Closed	-0.14 (0.49)	-0.41 (0.65)	0.78 (0.84)	-0.22 (0.49)	-0.62 (0.65)	0.80 (0.86)
Partially Open	-0.34 (0.37)	-1.00* (0.51)	0.73 (0.66)	-0.38 (0.38)	-0.97† (0.50)	0.13 (0.80)
Open to Unaffiliated Voters	-0.10 (0.40)	-0.19 (0.51)	-0.33 (0.68)	-0.10 (0.40)	-0.09 (0.51)	-0.47 (0.70)
Open	-0.19 (0.34)	0.03 (0.44)	-0.75 (0.60)	-0.32 (0.35)	0.17 (0.44)	-1.21† (0.69)
Individualistic	0.23 (0.35)	0.78 (0.49)	-0.56 (0.61)	0.15 (0.35)	0.84† (0.48)	-0.56 (0.60)
Moralistic	-0.30 (0.36)	0.48 (0.47)	-1.47* (0.65)	-0.24 (0.35)	0.38 (0.47)	-1.28† (0.66)
Constant	-2.00** (0.75)	-2.89** (0.97)	-0.84 (1.70)	-1.27† (0.74)	-2.50* (0.99)	-0.23 (1.72)
<i>N</i>	399	233	166	399	233	166
AIC	461.64	288.58	175.96	469.01	296.51	174.02
BIC	685.03	468.03	337.79	692.39	475.97	335.85
log <i>L</i>	-174.82	-92.29	-35.98	-178.51	-96.26	-35.01

† significant at $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Reference Categories = Party Incumbent, Closed Primary, Traditionalistic

Table 4.6: Alternative Measure of Primary Divisiveness

	Endorsement Policy			Elected Officials		
	All	Dem	Rep	All	Dem	Rep
Required Neutrality	-0.01 (0.27)	0.58 (0.37)	-1.25* (0.50)			
Officials				-0.25 (0.22)	0.15 (0.29)	-0.83 [†] (0.48)
Democratic Primary	0.10 (0.21)			0.09 (0.21)		
Opponent Incumbent	2.38*** (0.27)	3.82*** (0.62)	2.72*** (0.54)	2.41*** (0.27)	3.70*** (0.61)	2.71*** (0.54)
Open Seat	2.98*** (0.31)	3.73*** (0.60)	3.63*** (0.49)	2.99*** (0.31)	3.61*** (0.58)	3.64*** (0.49)
Trump Vote	-0.01 (0.69)	-3.55* (1.41)	0.46 (1.41)	0.02 (0.69)	-3.27* (1.39)	0.89 (1.42)
Competitive District	0.21 (0.25)	-0.40 (0.35)	0.79 [†] (0.42)	0.22 (0.25)	-0.39 (0.34)	0.78 [†] (0.41)
Professionalism	-1.69 (1.40)	0.40 (1.93)	-5.89* (2.29)	-1.91 (1.37)	-0.27 (1.91)	-4.84* (2.24)
Partially Closed	0.14 (0.43)	-0.39 (0.57)	1.48* (0.71)	0.16 (0.43)	-0.49 (0.57)	1.14 (0.69)
Partially Open	-0.19 (0.32)	-0.39 (0.44)	0.17 (0.50)	-0.31 (0.33)	-0.38 (0.44)	-0.73 (0.64)
Open to Unaffiliated Voters	-0.34 (0.33)	-0.28 (0.46)	-0.44 (0.51)	-0.38 (0.33)	-0.25 (0.46)	-0.57 (0.52)
Open	-0.38 (0.28)	-0.41 (0.39)	-0.75 (0.49)	-0.50 [†] (0.30)	-0.29 (0.40)	-1.10 [†] (0.57)
Individualistic	-0.12 (0.30)	-0.01 (0.41)	-0.52 (0.51)	-0.13 (0.30)	0.07 (0.41)	-0.07 (0.49)
Moralistic	-0.57 [†] (0.30)	-0.56 (0.41)	-0.63 (0.52)	-0.51 [†] (0.31)	-0.64 (0.41)	-0.52 (0.51)
Constant	-1.93** (0.60)	-1.53 [†] (0.85)	-1.12 (1.19)	-1.72** (0.61)	-1.42 (0.89)	-1.30 (1.22)
<i>N</i>	662	343	319	662	343	319
AIC	670.15	379.60	280.06	668.83	381.79	283.71
BIC	921.88	579.16	475.85	920.56	581.35	479.50
log <i>L</i>	-279.07	-137.80	-88.03	-278.41	-138.90	-89.85

[†] significant at $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Reference Categories = Party Incumbent, Closed Primary, Traditionalistic

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Previous research finds political parties, when viewed as broad networks, are able to sway legislative primary elections towards their desired outcomes by acting in support of their preferred candidates. This dissertation shows the institutional aspect of state political parties, their formal organizations and rules, also play an important part in shaping primary elections, at least for the House of Representatives. First, state party rules pertaining to diversity among state central committee members are strongly connected to candidates' emergence. Chapter 2 reveals women are better represented in state Democratic parties compared to state Republican parties. While varying levels of gender diversity in state Republican parties seem to have very little influence of the emergence of Republican women, Democratic women are more likely to run for the House of Representatives representing state parties with more women members and leaders. Chapter 3 shows this trend also applies to youth representation as state Democratic parties with higher levels of youth party committee membership are more likely to nominate younger candidates for the House of Representatives. Together, these two chapters reveal that at least among Democrats, diversity among the membership and leadership of state and local political parties leads to a more diverse Congress. Moreover, these chapters show political parties have a straightforward method of promoting diversity amongst their membership, mandating it in their rules.

Beyond their influence on candidate emergence, Chapter 4 shows state party rules also have important implications for levels of electoral competition during congressional primary elections. Specifically, state Democratic parties see fewer divisive primaries when they have rules allowing the party to endorse their preferred candidates during contested primaries. In comparison, state Republican parties see fewer divisive primaries and fewer total primary candidates, when they give their co-partisan elected officials ex-officio party committee membership. Whether party actors had these specific goals in mind when implementing these rules is unclear, but what is clear is that the rules of state political parties influence levels of primary competition in addition to the candidate emergence process.

While the analyses in the preceding chapters reveal a clear link between the rules of state political parties and primary election outcomes, what is less clear is why individual party rules do not have the same effect in each party. For example, why do rules intended to promote greater diversity among the membership of state parties contribute to more diverse candidates among Democrats, but not Republicans? Similarly, why is the presence of elected officials among the members of state central committees so meaningful for Republican parties, but not Democratic parties? Although it would likely require another dissertation length project to fully consider these questions, these are questions that need to be answered in order to fully understand the role of state political parties in congressional elections. For this reason, I conclude by offering some potential explanations for these party differences as suggested by the broader literature on political parties.

One explanation for why party rules have differing effects among state Democratic parties and state Republican parties is the differences seen in who identifies with the Democratic Party compared to the Republican Party. It has long been noted that Democratic voters and identifiers are more diverse than Republican voters and identifiers and if anything, this trend has grown over time. This is especially true of the two aspects of representation, gender and age, examined in this dissertation. Since 2010, the percentage of women who identify with or leaned towards the Democratic Party increased from about 51 percent to 56 percent in 2017

(Pew Research Center 2018). Similarly, the already large generational gap in partisanship continues to grow. In 2017, 59 percent of Millennials either identified with or leaned towards the Democratic Party compared to 53 percent in 2014 (Pew Research Center 2018). At the same time, the percentage of the Silent Generation who identify with or lean towards the Republican Party has increased from about 45 percent in 1994 to 52 percent in 2017 (Pew Research Center 2018). These shifting demographic trends likely play a role in explaining why state party rules intended to diversify state central committees do not also have the effect of diversifying Republican congressional candidates. As Democratic parties become more diverse, there is a growing segment of Democratic identifiers who may become more inspired to participate in politics and maybe even run for office, but the same is not true of Republican parties. Since Republican identifiers are more likely to be men and older in age, the Republican Party has a smaller segment of the population who may be inspired by efforts to diversify their state and local parties.

The goals and values of each political party likely offer another explanation as to why state party rules have differing effects across party lines. Past research finds the Republican Party is organized around an ideological movement with members valuing ideological purity, while the Democratic Party should be viewed as a collection of social groups who seek concrete government action (Grossmann & Hopkins 2016). Similarly, as previously stated, the Republican Party has been less likely than the Democratic Party to embrace identity politics (Crowder-Meyer & Cooperman 2018), and the Republican Party is more likely than the Democratic Party to view their affiliated organizations as party actors opposed to allies with independent goals (Freeman 1986). Overall, since the Republican Party prioritizes ideology above all else, but the Democratic Party has shown a greater willingness to work towards the goals of diverse groups, it is not surprising identical party rules result in different outcomes. Once again in the case of rules designed around promoting diversity, state Democratic parties see more diverse candidates running for office because one of their goals is actually to increase diversity in government. However, the Republican Party prioritizes ideological pu-

rity over increased diversity in government which means party rules promoting diversity in the state central committee may not be enough to also attract diverse candidates for other elected offices. This is exemplified by the finding that many Republican women who do hold elected office are often as conservative as Republican men (Barnes & Cassese 2017, Osborn, Kreitzer, Schilling & Hayes Clark 2019).

The Republican Party's commitment to ideological purity also helps to explain why the presence of elected officials in state central committees reduces competition in Republican primaries, but not in Democratic primaries. If the Republican Party's top goal is being represented by candidates and elected officials who share the ideological and partisan goals of the Party, it makes sense that when incumbent elected officials are granted party membership, the party goes out of their way to preserve the positions of their elected officials. In fact, in recent years, incumbents are most likely to be primaried on ideology grounds, especially when they are seen as being too moderate (Boatright 2013). Overall, the Tea Party movement reveals the importance of ideology to the Republican Party (Grossmann & Hopkins 2016), and it is not surprising that some of most competitive Republican primaries in recent years have featured Tea Party candidates (Jewitt & Treul 2014).

Ultimately, future research should evaluate whether differences in mass partisan identification and party goals and values provide a full explanation as to why similar state party rules lead to different outcomes in Democratic and Republican primaries. Additionally, future research should examine whether there are other implications to these party rules. Finally, future research should consider what motivates state parties to change and implement new party rules. I have demonstrated the value of study party rules and highlighted some of the implications of certain rules, but a complete picture is likely more complex. It could be my dissertation has identified unknown, or even unwanted, implications of select party rules and that state parties' true intentions behind some of these rules were much different. To fully consider these lines of questions, researchers will likely need to work directly with the leaders and committee members of state and local political parties in future research.

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