Political Careerism, Ambitions, and Regional Interests in Senatorial Behavior: The Argentine Case

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Abstract

How do senators in a federation behave in office? Institutional theories on legislative behavior underscore the role played by the electoral system and candidate nomination rules in structuring legislators' policy preferences. But no systematic analysis has yet linked how political careerism, office ambitions, and institutional incentives to engage in regional or national vote-seeking interactively influence legislators' choices. We fill this vital oversight by studying roll-call votes in the Argentine Senate. Our analysis reveals that the stage of a senator's political career, provincial relations, and certain types of ambitions affect the likelihood of senatorial voting along national party lines.

Introduction

How do incumbent legislators in a federation behave in office? Do national, subnational (provincial), or partisan factors influence their decisions about policy? Are legislators' career pathways to power or future ambitions what motivate their actions in the chamber? Institutional theories on legislative behavior underscore the role played by the electoral system and candidate nomination rules in structuring legislators' policy preferences and choices. It is argued that these institutions affect legislators' behavior by determining whether parties or individual politicians control political careers. No systematic analysis, however, has yet linked how legislators' prior careerism, office ambitions, and institutional incentives to engage in personal or party vote-seeking interactively influence their legislative behavior.

We aim to fill such a vital oversight in the literature by studying the Argentine Senate. In marked contrast to a growing and elegant literature on the Chamber of Deputies, research on the senatorial house in Latin American countries is limited.[1] The absence of scholarly studies on this

institution is striking for several reasons. First, bicameralism has a long political tradition in the region and exists today in almost half the presidential democracies of the continent. Second, the Latin American Senates are far from being mere revisionary chambers. In several countries, they enjoy extensive constitutional prerogatives (and areas of exclusive lawmaking) that allow them to block a democratic majority. Third, an institutional mixture of strong bicameralism and presidentialism is only found in the United States' constitution. This feature makes the Latin American Senates promising cases to utilize theories originally developed to explain U.S. congressional organization and legislative activity. Forth, as this study demonstrates, Senates are especially suitable institutions for combining quantitative and qualitative research techniques. Fortunately, their number of members is large enough to estimate multivariate models and small enough to conduct in-depth biographic research.

Both practical and substantial concerns motivate this study about the functioning of senatorial politics in Argentina. The country's institutional arrangement is regarded as a textbook example of federalized (multi-level) democracies in which subnational party leaders, not the individual legislators or the national party leadership, control the structure of political careers (De Luca, Jones, and Tula 2002; Jones 1997; Jones 2001; Jones 2008; Jones and Hwang 2005; Jones, Saiegh, Spiller, and Tommasi 2002). Based on this premise we would expect to observe legislatures dominated by provincial party bosses' preferences. This outcome should be especially noticeable in the upper chamber, which represents territorial instead of citizens' interests. A second motivation to study the Argentine Senate is that its diverse composition provides considerable variation in terms of incumbents' political career paths and ambitions. Finally, understanding the functioning of senatorial behavior is also an important challenge for Argentina today. Since the return to democracy, the Senate has been an important actor in the

policy process. During the nineties, it blatantly passed market-oriented legislation thus paving the road for the implementation of drastic structural reforms. In 2000, public revelations of vote-buying activities involving several senators and gubernatorial officials led to the vice-president's resignation and the beginning of the worst crisis in Argentina's contemporary history. In 2008, a bitter and long-lasting conflict between the Peronist (PJ) government of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner and the agricultural sector for an increment in export taxes was defined in the Senate. After reaching an unexpected tied vote, current Vice-president Julio Cobos from a sector of the Radical party (UCR) allied with the government, decided not to support the president's project thus triggering deep fractures in the gubernatorial coalition and increasing fragmentation within the two historically dominant political parties.[2]

We study the legislative behavior of Argentine senators calculating their ideal points on a single dimension. Ideal points provide indicators of how close or how far each senator stood from his/her national party leader in the chamber. If a senator frequently voted with his/her party leader, their positions are considered to be "close" in a policy space. We limit our analysis to the 2001 senatorial class. That year is a turning point in the history of the Argentine Senate due to the implementation of institutional reforms designed to recast the chamber's social and political makeup.

Our roll-call analysis uncovers the effect of previous political careerism and future ambitions on senatorial behavior, and highlights the powerful effect of provincial-based politics in the upper chamber. First, we show that the stage of a senator's political career affects his/her likelihood of voting along national party lines. We document that provincial party bosses (either from the incumbent gubernatorial party or the opposition) who occupy a seat in the Senate are more likely to cast dissident votes against their national party leaders than do other senators.

Second, as research on Argentine politics has recently argued but not demonstrated, we find that provincial party relations are important for understanding senatorial behavior. In effect, senators belonging to provinces ruled by powerful governors, as measured by their ability to retain power, are more likely to vote against national parties' recommendations. As one would expect, the influence of provincial governors on legislative behavior is stronger among their co-partisan delegations. Third, results also show that under certain conditions senators moving downward to low-ranking positions (i.e., regressive ambition) vote significantly far away from their national parties. The impact of static ambition is elusive partially due to a cross-pressure dilemma that conditions Argentine legislators.

The structure of this article proceeds as follows. The second section introduces the Argentine Senate with a focus on its provincial-centric nature. The third section provides descriptive evidence of senatorial careerism and ambitions used to build a classification of senators. The forth section discusses the scholarly literature on legislative behavior and proposes a model that investigates the effect of senators' profiles and provincial (gubernatorial) factors. The fifth section tests the applicability of the model drawing upon a novel dataset on senatorial roll-call votes. The last section concludes with a discussion of our principal findings and some avenues for further research.

The Argentine Senate and Provincial Politics

Argentina is a federal republic composed of 23 provinces and an autonomous capital. The country has a presidential form of government and a national bicameral legislature. As in almost all federal countries, the lower chamber represents individual citizens and the upper chamber represents territorial subunits (provinces). Representatives to the Chamber of Deputies are

elected for four-year staggered terms in province-wide multimember districts from closed-lists using the D'Hont proportional representation (PR) method. Provinces receive a number of term unlimited deputies (five minimum) proportional to their population. One-half of the Chamber is renewed every two years, with each province renewing one-half (or closer approximation) of its congressional delegation. Representatives to the Argentine Senate, on the other hand, are directly elected for six-year terms in provincial electoral districts using the closed-list PR system. Each province receives three senators. One-third of the Senate is renewed every two years by a fixed majority-minority formula in which two seats are allocated to the plurality party and one seat to the first runner-up.[3]

Although the Senate is not necessarily the final career goal for Argentine politicians, it is a highly attractive office. First, it has equivalent legislative powers to the Chamber of Deputies as it is required to approve all significant legislation. Second, it offers longer terms and greater individual influence (veto power) over legislative process because of its comparatively smaller size. Third, the Senate enjoys exclusive competence to confirm or deny all major judicial and administrative appointments (including members to the Supreme Court), authorize the executive power to declare the state of siege in case of international conflict, and vote on impeachment cases. Forth, Argentine senators' wages are higher than those of federal deputies, the whole infrastructure that supports their legislative work is better, and the resources available to develop politically rewarding activities outside the chamber are sizeable.[4]

Given these institutional and material advantages, prominent politicians like ex-presidents, former provincial governors, and opposition party leaders seek to obtain a senatorial seat. Many sitting senators also attempt, with varied degree of success, to become governors and presidential candidates once their tenures end. But the Argentine Senate is not only (neither primarily) an

institution composed of first-tier politicians. Indeed, on average senators do not have higher seniority and social status than federal deputies (Llanos and Sánchez 2006). As we will see in greater detail below, the upper chamber is actually composed of different types of legislators including provincial bosses, agents of local party leaders, relatives of regional political elites, former national and provincial executives, and members of subnational intraparty factions. This wide variety in the Senate's composition constitutes a nearly ideal laboratory to empirically investigate the extent to which variations in prior political careers, personal ambitions, party relations, and regional factors shape senatorial legislative behavior.

Extant literature on contemporary Argentine politics has claimed that regional factors have a powerful effect on legislative behavior. The reason is that provincial party bosses (especially governors) exert a great deal of influence over both national and subnational political careers (De Luca, Jones, and Tula 2002; Jones 1997; Jones 2001; Jones 2008; Jones and Hwang 2005; Jones, Saiegh, Spiller, and Tommasi 2002; Lodola forthcoming). In marked contrast to the U.S. institutional arrangement, Argentina's closed-list proportional representation (PR) system places politicians' fate in the hands of regional party leaderships and away from individual candidates and ordinary voters. The base of political support for politicians and parties in the country is concentrated at the provincial –not at the national– level. Both candidate nomination and the formation of party lists (i.e., who runs for election and in what position) is organized in the provinces by district-level party organizations according to their own statuses.[5] In most provinces, politics is dominated by a single person or a small group of influential politicians who control party life based on the extensive use of resources gained from patronage and pork-ridden activities (Auyero 2000; Brusco, Nazareno, and Stokes 2004; Calvo and Murillo 2004; Gibson 2006; Levitsky 2003; Remmer 2007; Remmer and Wibbels 2000; Stokes 2005). With rare

exceptions, the sitting governor is the dominant political figure of the incumbent party. Although his power is sometimes undisputed, there is also a considerable amount of space for intraparty factions and opponents.[6] In any case, the base of political support for politicians and parties in the country is concentrated at the provincial –not at the national– level. Because regional party leaders strictly control the election and future of their co-partisans legislators, we should expect the latter to possess limited political autonomy in the chamber and to behave in accordance with the preferences of their provincial bosses.

As compelling as it sounds, the argument sketched above is grounded on the questionable assumption that all legislators are equally and strongly dependent on their provincial patrons. This assumption neglects the possibility that different types of legislators could respond to their regional party leaders in different (and even contentious) ways. In the words of a former senator with a long legislative trajectory: "I was candidate in six opportunities…Of course, I owe to the guy who built the list. But he also looked at the pools to see who were the best candidates. And my votes counted. Then, I'm not going to do stupid things here because someone tells me what to do [*me lleva de las narices*]. Before doing that, I'm going to sit down and discuss it with the governor, the president or whoever else." [7]

To address this major deficit, the next section examines biographic information on senatorial career pathways. We aim at observing variations in terms of senators' careerism (prior political experience) and ambitions (future office goals). Drawing upon these data, we then elaborate a classification of senators and applied it to the 2001 Argentine senatorial class. The fundamental idea of this exercise is simple. Contrary to extant research that erroneously clusters congressional legislators into an undistinguishable group and imputes the same anticipated pattern of legislative behavior to all of them, we claim that senators behave differently depending on *who they are* and

who they want to be. Senators' preceding careers and prospective ambitions affect their political autonomy vis-à-vis provincial and national party leaders thus promoting alternative patterns of behavior in the chamber.

A Classification of Argentine Senators

The federal structure of government offers many different paths professional politicians can follow to reach the Senate. Table 1 displays information on the previous political posts held by Argentine senators of the 2001 class. The table distinguishes between positions held *immediately before* these individuals assumed a senatorial seat, positions held *at some point* of their previous political careers, and their *highest* position held before reaching the Senate. Thirteen different positions are considered thus covering the gamut of posts occupied by the 76 senators included in our dataset. [8] Data was obtained from careful reading of national and local newspapers, and the *Directorio Legislativo* (CIPPEC 2002; CIPPEC 2009).

Table 1 about here

The first important thing to notice is the considerable number of senators (7.9%) who did not have any political experience before arriving at the upper chamber.[9] Second, a high proportion of the senators included in our sample are politicians with provincial-based careers. Around 40% of them disembarked in the Senate directly from a provincial post, and more than a half occupied their highest career position in their home provinces. Part of the reason for these pathways has to do with the complete senatorial renewal occurred in 2001 which, as some scholars before us have noticed, permitted the promotion of junior and amateur politicians.[10] Indeed, close to 50% of the senators with provincial-oriented careers had only served in low-ranking positions such as local director, council, and provincial deputy. Moreover, the table shows that approximately 38% of

the incoming senators had experience as federal deputies, while a marginal 14.4% had previously occupied a senatorial seat. It is finally worth noting that close to 18% of the senators in the period under analysis had been nominated in the federal bureaucracy, and a considerable 10% arrived directly from a party position.

With regards to political ambitions, we infer them from the posts (including primaries) that senators actually sought to win. Of course, our measure is impure because we cannot infer pure preferences from observable choices.[11] We simply assume that senators chose to compete for the best job available, given the constraints and risks associated with that post. Data on senators' political ambitions can be roughly divided into four quarters. A first quarter (22%) exhibited progressive ambition. That is, they aspired to win a higher elected office: president, vice-president, governor, or vice-governor. Of these progressively oriented senators, only 47% were successful in their election bids. A second quarter (22%) pursued static ambition and 82% of them managed to achieve reelection. Moreover, 12 senators decided to run for lower offices at the end of their terms.[12] Along with five additional senators who were appointed to second-level bureaucratic positions, they closely comprised a third quarter of senators who showed a regressive path of ambition. Broadly speaking, half of the senators that formed this group were politicians with little experience. Senators with long trajectories will obviously not take most of these jobs, as they would be considered too menial and not paid well enough. A former governor, a federal deputy, or even a mayor will not be pleased to become Under-Secretary of Tourism (of a non tourist province such as La Pampa) or President of the Education Council, two examples of provincial jobs that senators in our sample took after the end of their tenures. A fourth quarter (22%) is composed of senators who went back to their provinces in order to occupy a position linked to their party machines. Two-thirds of these cases are renowned politicians in their

districts, while one-third are electorally inexpressive but diligent militants highly dependent on their parties' portfolio of jobs. Finally, eight senators quit politics either because they got involved in political scandals, voluntarily retired to private life, or died.[13]

Drawing upon these data and additional qualitative information, we build a classification of senators. We regard a senator as *boss* if at least one of the following two conditions holds: (a) at the time of being elected senator he/she had already occupied or run for president or governor; (b) he/she competed for the presidency or the governorship immediately after leaving the senatorial house.[14] The idea behind this classification is simple: politicians who run for governor *de facto* enjoy the status of a provincial party boss, which tends to persist as the time passes. We consider a senator as *subordinate* if before arriving at the upper chamber: (a) he/she lacked a previous political career; or (b) he/she had occupied an elected and/or nominated position at the national and/or provincial level linked to his/her party militancy or personal connections. A few senators are neither bosses nor subordinates. We regard as *factional* those senators who, after gaining a senatorial seat, led an intraparty faction in their provinces that expressively sought to challenge and defeat the local leadership. Summary statistics for these categories are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 about here

Political Ambitions, Party Leaders, and Previous Careerism

Extant studies on legislative behavior have focused on roll-call voting and other non-voting legislative activity such as the number of bill introductions and amendments. Variations across these indicators have been attributed to incumbents' prior political careers and patterns of

electoral support, their prospective ambitions, and institutional incentives to engage in personal or party vote-seeking.

Our first hypothesis explores the critical role that career paths play on shaping legislators' voting decisions. Unfortunately, extant literature on American politics is fruitless in predicting a clear relationship between legislators' backgrounds and voting behavior. There are some works which link legislators' seniority and their previous political positions with congressional organization and activity. For example, Matthews (1960) and Canon and Stewart (2002) find that former congressmen "socialize" more rapidly (i.e., receive more committee assignments, have more chances to reach leadership positions, and show a more active committee performance) than former governors. In the same vein, Fenno (1986) indicates that freshmen senators with some prior legislative experience have shorter adjustment periods in the chamber than freshmen without any political expertise. Many other studies in the field, however, report that professional and social backgrounds do not predict roll-call behavior (Derge 1959; Derge 1962; Eulau and Sprague 1964; Mezey 1978). According to Schlesinger (1966), this failure is primarily due to the lack of a political theory that links legislators' personality types with their behavioral patterns. The classification developed in the previous section contributes to solve this deficit. By linking senators' pathways to power with the degree of political autonomy they have from their party leaders, we "politicize" questions concerning legislators' social and political backgrounds.

Both the electoral system and party nomination rules make Argentine politicians beholden to parties. But the use of closed party lists in multimember districts and a decentralized nomination process magnify the control that provincial –not national– party leaders exert over politicians' future. Ambitious individuals thus need to pay greater attention to regional interests and discount the centrality of national forces in assessing their career options. If legislators' strategies and

voting behavior express loyalty to the *locus* that conditions their future careers (Pennings and Hazan 2001), Argentine legislators should primarily behave as provincial party loyalists (Jones 2008). We argue that within this general tendency, different types of senators have different incentives to express a more (or less) national-oriented legislative behavior. Specifically, provincial bosses who posses their own political reward networks enjoy a high level of autonomy from their national party leadership and vote consequently in the chamber. On the other hand, factional senators who attempt to challenge dominant political machines in their home districts seek to approximate their national parties in search for much-needed resources to fulfill that goal. Thus, taking the category of subordinate as our baseline, we hypothesize that:

H1: Provincial party bosses (either from the gubernatorial party or the opposition) occupying a seat in the Senate are more likely to vote against their national party leaders in the chamber than do other senators.

H2: Senators leading an intraparty faction in their provinces while sitting in the chamber are more likely to vote in accordance with their national party leaders than do other senators.

Given their greater economic and institutional resources, regional party leaders who are also sitting governors have more latitude to influence the behavior of their legislative delegations. The critical importance of provincial governors in Argentina's political system is undeniable. Even centralizing efforts pursued by the military were unable to reduce the territorial control and national influence of subnational elites. Recent decentralization processes may have temporarily decreased the power of provinces vis-à-vis the federal government (Falleti 2005). But governors continue to be the most important political actors in their provinces and as such they have the ability to translate their interests into the national arena. Moreover, the institutional arrangements show a propensity to centralize authority in the governors' hands. The institutions of fiscal

federalism concentrate gubernatorial –rather than presidential– discretionality over the use of many federal transfers (Bonvecchi and Lodola 2009). Provincial budgetary rules tend to internalize in the subnational executives the elaboration and execution of the budget (Jones, Sanguinetti, and Tommassi 2000), while permissive legislation allows governors to manage hiring and firing in the public sector without major restrictions. By monopolizing access to economic resources and controlling political and bureaucratic careers, governors are then able to build enduring political networks (machines) based on patronage and pork-barrel activities. This portfolio of resources constitutes vital assets that all politicians within the party need for their political survival. Gubernatorial power, however, varies across Argentine provinces and through time. Long-standing governors from provinces where gubernatorial reelection was unlimited, such as Adolfo Rodríguez Saá (PJ-San Luis), Rubén Marín (PJ-La Pampa), or Gildo Insfrán (PJ-Formosa), have more solid political networks than do freshman governors. On these bases, our third hypothesis states:

H3: Senators belonging to provinces governed by powerful governors are more likely to cast dissident votes against their party leaders in the chamber than do other senators.

A basic and empirically valid premise undergirding most theories of electoral behavior is that elected officials prospectively think about their own future. Legislators aim at assembling a winning electoral coalition to earn another term in office will exhibit different behavioral patterns from those performed by incumbents who voluntarily decide to retire from political life. The reason is that the necessity for election constrains office holders. If an incumbent plans to compete for an elected position, he/she needs to build and maintain an electoral constituency. Although the strategies for marshalling such support largely vary with institutions and electorates, ambitious politicians will often attempt to identify voters' preferences and benefit their cohorts

when initiating and passing legislation. Empirical evidence on departing legislators' behavior in the U.S. indicates that they behave differently from their continuing counterparts. Indeed, it has been documented that the former participate less in roll-call votes, have a more focused and successful legislative agenda, and change their ideological or partisan position substantially more than the latter (Herrick, Moore, and Hibbing 1994; Rothenberg and Sanders 2000).

Legislators will often seek to please their constituents enough to win an office. To do that, they need resources. The ability of congressional legislators to receive the benefits of key committees, a chair position, or a party directorate appointment largely depends on behaving in ways that demonstrate their commitment to the party. According to U.S. literature, incumbents seeking legislative reelection have stronger incentives to behave in accordance with party leaders' policy recommendations because their power-building activities continue to be played out under constraints imposed by their comrades in the assembly. Legislators planning to reach other office, in contrast, have weaker incentives to behave in a disciplined fashion because their political networks of activity are defined outside the legislature. These propositions seem to find empirical credit in the American case. In exploring roll-call scores for U.S. senators, for example, Van Der Silk and Pernacciaro (1979) report that incumbent legislators who pursue progressive (presidential) aspirations move toward the electorate median, while those seeking an elective position in the Senate (chairperson, floor leader, or whip) change their voting behavior to approximate the decisions of their party colleagues. Similarly, Herrick and Moore (1993; see also Hibbing 1986) claim that members of the House with ambitions beyond their current position do not accommodate themselves to the voting behavior of their parties, but those holding static and "intra-institutional" ambition (i.e., members' desire for leadership positions) adopt the typical voting patterns of their co-partisans.

United States-based literature on the ambition-behavior link draws heavily upon two questionable and non-generalized assumptions: legislators' proximate goal of reelection (Mayhew 1974), and constituency control of political careers (Miller and Stokes 1963). As for the first basic assumption, several analysts have shown that legislative reelection rates are relatively low in many Latin American democracies.[15] In regards to the second assumption, it takes for granted the electoral system and party nomination rules. It is erroneously assumed that candidates compete under plurality rule in single-member districts and are unconcerned about intraparty competition and recruitment processes. The utilization of single-member districts, open nominations, and lack of term limits makes U.S. legislators unique in the level of control they exercise over their political destiny. But in the vast majority of Latin American countries including Argentina, electoral and candidate nomination rules allow party leaders –not individual legislators– to manage the contours of political careerism (Siavelis and Morgenstern 2008).

Thus, Argentine legislators pursuing static ambition face a cross-pressure political dilemma. They need to stand in good relations with their comrades in the assembly but they also need (provincial) renomination. The national party leaders in the chamber have an important deal of influence on the allocation of valuable resources. Critically, they have leverage over committee, chairmanship, and party directorate assignments thus becoming chief arbitrators in the battle for money and public visibility among party members in the chamber (Jones 2002).[16] On average, however, statically ambitious senators primarily value security in renomination and would only adhere to their national party leaders once that condition is guaranteed. The reason for this preference is obvious: to be elected senators need nomination in the first place. Unfortunately, we are unable to determine with precision when this happened for each senator. So we do not make any expectation about the likelihood of finding statically ambitious senators more inclined

to cast close or distant votes. If the static ambition variable proves to be positive and significant, senators vote far from their party leaders in the chamber. If, in contrast, this variable is negative and significant, senators factor their national parties' recommendations in casting their votes.

H4: Senators pursuing static ambition face contradictory pressures to vote along with their party leaders in the chamber.

Senators who have their eyes on capturing a lower (elected or nominated) position tied to their provincial party organizations do not face this cross-pressure political dilemma. As most of these individuals heavily depend on provincial patrons to survive politically and climb up (or down) their career ladders, they will not feel an obligation to support the national party in the chamber. The consequences of regressive ambition on legislative behavior lead us to our fifth hypotheses.

H5: Senators seeking regressive ambition are more likely to cast dissident votes against their party leaders in the chamber.

Statistical Analysis

In order to test the arguments discussed in the previous section, we conducted a statistical analysis based on ideal point estimations. Although recent scholarship on political careers and legislative behavior tends to focus on non-voting legislative actions such as the number of bill introductions and amendments (e.g., Herrick and Moore 1993; Herrick, Moore, and Hibbing 1994), we use roll-call votes as an indicator of legislative behavior given the comparatively low approval rate of legislators' bills in Argentina (Alemán and Calvo 2006). We collected novel data on 29 roll-call votes held in the Argentine Senate between 2001 and 2003 using the official *Diario de Sesiones de la Cámara de Senadores* (Congressional Record).[17]

The dependent variable is the distance between a senator's ideal point and his/her party leader's ideal point. Our basic assumption is that the behavior of each party leader in the Senate represents the position held by their respective political parties at the national level. Ideal point estimation is a common way for analyzing roll-call votes. The claim of this technique is twofold. First, it is assumed that each legislator's policy preference (ideal point) can be drawn in a low-dimensional Euclidean space. Second, it is claimed that each legislator's utility declines as the distance between his/her ideal point and a given policy outcome increases (Clinton, Jackman, and Rivers 2004). Among several ideal point estimation techniques available in the political science literature, we rely upon a Bayesian estimation method because the number of votes and senators in our sample are relatively small.[18] Bayesian estimation approaches use Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) methods, which generate large number of samples for inference.

Figure 1 below provides estimates of the ideal points of each senator along a unidimensional issue space.[19] As Jones and Hwang's (2005) study on the Argentine Chamber of Deputies has demonstrated a one dimensional model is appropriate for explaining roll-call votes in the country. This single dimension can be considered a partisan dimension: the governing national party (the PJ) is at the one end of the dimension, while the opposition (the UCR) is at the other end. After computing all senators' ideal points, we calculated the distance between each senator and his/her corresponding party leader.[20] Party leaders are excluded from our statistical tests for the obvious reason that the distance between them and their parties is zero. The exclusion of party leaders reduces the number of observations to 68. The value of the DISTANCE variable ranges from 0 (Jorge Pardal, PJ-Mendoza) to 2.04 (Mario Colazo, UCR-Tierra del Fuego) with a mean and a standard deviation of .48.

Figure 1 about here

The first set of independent variables draws upon our classification of Argentine senators and serves to empirically test the argument that different legislators exhibit distinctive patterns of legislative behavior. Thus, the BOSS and FACTIONAL variables are coded 1 if a senator is a provincial party leader (as defined above) or led a provincial intraparty faction during his/her term in the chamber respectively. SUBORDINATE is our baseline category. In addition, all models include a dummy variable to account for the potential effect of provincial governors on senator voting.

We created two variables to test the impact of provincial governors on legislative behavior. The STRONG GOVERNOR variable is coded 1 if a senator belongs to a province whose incumbent governor simultaneously satisfies two conditions. First, he governed the province for two or more consecutive terms. Second, he is constitutionally allowed to run for reelection.[21] Arguably, governors who ruled for several periods are able to build tentacle-like machines that cannot be easily threatened by political opponents in the electoral market. Similarly, governors eligible to run for reelection are more powerful than their lame duck counterparts because they are more likely to continue influencing politicians' careers. In the period under analysis, six provinces (Catamarca, Formosa, La Pampa, La Rioja, Salta, and Santa Cruz) were ruled by a governor with these characteristics. The frequency of the STRONG GOVERNOR variable is then18. We also created the COPARTISAN variable coded 1 if a senator shares the governor's party affiliation. The frequency of this variable is 44.

Two additional independent variables alternatively capture the political ambitions pursued by Argentine senators of the 2001 class. STATIC AMBITION is a dummy variable coded 1 if a senator ran for reelection. REGRESSIVE AMBITION is coded 1 if he/she sought lower elected office (federal deputy, provincial deputy, mayor or council), was nominated in the federal (no

ministry) or provincial bureaucracy, or returned to occupy a position in the provincial party organization. The frequency of these variables is 17 and 23 respectively. We do not test for the impact of progressive ambition on legislative behavior because we codify senators with progressive ambition as provincial bosses. As some scholars have shown (De Luca 2008), only regional bosses may aspire to capture a governorship in the country.

With the purpose of testing the argument that the effect of partisanship and political ambition is conditional upon governors' dominance and their length of tenure, some specifications include multiplicative interactions terms of these variables. The generic version of the model measuring the effect of political careerism, gubernatorial power, and office ambitions on senatorial voting choices is specified as follows:

$$DISTANCE = b_0 + b_1\,BOSS + b_2\,FACTIONAL + b_3\,COPARTISAN/AMBITION + b_4\,STRONG\ GOVERNOR + b_5\,COPARTISAN/AMBITION*STRONG\ GOVERNOR + \mathcal{E}$$

Table 3 shows the results of OLS estimations using different specifications of this basic model. In general, the statistical results support our expectations. Roll-call voting estimations indicate that differences in senators' political careers and provincial party relations better explain the variety of legislative behavior in the Argentine Senate. The effect of political ambition is less conclusive and conditional upon gubernatorial power and senatorial tenures.

Table 3 about here

First, no matter how we estimated the models, coefficients for the BOSS variable are often positive and statistically significant at the .05 or .10 level of confidence. This result indicates that senators who are also important party leaders in their provinces are more likely to vote against their national party leaders in the chamber than do other senators. Concerned about building and maintaining their local political structures and territorial influence, provincial bosses in the

Senate do not fear to oppose their national parties. On the one hand, subnational bosses do not owe their senatorial positions and partisan authority to the national party, which exerts little –if any- influence on candidate recruitment. On the other hand, the institutions of fiscal federalism grant governors ample discretion over the execution of federal funds, and the decentralized structure of political careers make it difficult for the national government and for national party organizations with no tight local networks to do politics in the provinces. Indeed, some scholars have demonstrated that national politics are influenced by regional and gubernatorial coattails effects (Cabrera 1998; Jones 1997). And others have argued that many "authoritarian" governors monopolize regional domination in the country by avoiding federal involvement into provincial affairs (Gibson 2005). As a former Peronist governor crudely explained: "The national party does not exist…We are autonomous politicians and do politics with our own mechanisms and tools."[22] In most provinces, politics is build around personalities and connections not around party politics in the national sense. Thus, provincial bosses have no strong incentives to abandon their personal interest for those of their national parties. One may suspect that factional senators are more willing to do so. As these politicians usually belong to an intraparty minority group, they may seek to approximate the national party in exchange for economic and/or administrative resources needed to challenge incumbent local elites. Indeed, the negative coefficient on the FACTIONAL variable suggests that senators leading an intraparty faction that expressively seeks to defeat provincial party elites tend to vote closer to the national party. But these coefficients repeatedly fail to achieve statistical significance.

Second, as the literature on Argentine politics has argued but not demonstrated statistically, the preference of provincial governors is an important factor in explaining legislative behavior. In Model 1, the point estimate for the STRONG GOVERNOR variable is positive and significant

at the .05 level. This result suggests that senators belonging to provinces ruled by a powerful governor, as defined in this article, are more likely to vote against their national party leaders. But this finding does not allow us to know whether governors are able to influence members of their provincial delegations in the chamber over and above national and partisan concerns. Of course, we expect the gubernatorial effect to be stronger when the senator and the governor share the same party label. To investigate this issue, Model 2 includes a COPARTISAN dummy variable for senators sharing the governor's party label, and the interaction term between STRONG GOVERNOR and COPARTISAN. The coefficient for the former variable is not statistically significant at any reasonable level of confidence thus suggesting the lack of gubernatorial effect over senatorial voting when COPARTISAN equals zero. But, as we have expected and it is shown in Table 4, the conditional coefficient for the STRONG GOVERNOR variable when COPARTISAN equals one is statistically significant.[23] This result indicates that partisanship do indeed shapes the impact of gubernatorial power on senatorial behavior in the chamber. In short, senators from provinces ruled by strong executives and who share the gubernatorial incumbent party tend to vote farther away from their national party leaders than do senators from the same provincial delegation who belongs to the opposition.

Table 4 about here

Finally, results on the role played by political ambitions are a bit discouraging as we do not find any independent effect of these variables on legislative behavior. We only find that under certain conditions senators with regressive ambition performed as expected. Models 3 and 4 reproduce these conditions. These models include static and regressive ambitious variables for senators who left the chamber in 2003 (i.e., the most proximate renewal for our 2001-2003 roll-call data) and the interaction terms between these variables and STRONG GOVERNOR.[24] We

aim at testing if the effect of political ambitions is conditional upon the features of the sitting governor (whether or not he/she is politically powerful) and the length of senatorial tenure (whether or not incumbent senators should leave the chamber in 2003). We obviously expect senators who end their terms in 2003 and come from a province dominated by a powerful governor to care more about their future positions than do senators leaving in 2005 and 2007. As model 3 shows, we do not find any systematic relation between static ambition and senator behavior regardless of gubernatorial power. Coefficients for the STATIC AMBITION variable are negatively signed thus suggesting a tendency of statically ambitious senators to vote "close" to their national party leaders when their governors are not politically powerful. On the other hand, the conditional coefficient for this variable has a positive sign (see Table 4). That is, legislators who plan to stay in the Senate are more likely to vote against their national party leaders if their governors are strong. However, these estimates never reach statistical significance. Our explanation for this apparent disjuncture refers to the cross-pressure dilemma discussed above. Statically ambitious senators need to demonstrate commitment to their national party leaders so as to receive resources and valuable positions in the chamber. But they also need to be renominated by regional party leaders in their districts. The need to please both their comrades in the chamber and their bosses at home lead them to develop an "erratic" pattern of behavior.

We do find some statistical evidence supporting the claim that regressive ambition shapes incumbent senators' policy decisions. This effect, however, is not independent but conditional on two combining factors. Model 4 shows that senators who come from a province governed by a powerful governor, and who leave the chamber in 2003 to compete for lower elected office or to occupy a position linked to their provincial party organizations are more likely to cast dissident votes against their national leaders. Concretely, the conditional coefficient for the interaction

term measuring the marginal effect of regressive ambition is statistically significant at the .10 level of confidence. Thus, regressively-minded legislators proximate to leave the Senate cultivate their loyalty to regional bosses who are able to continue influencing their political careers by reserving the right to dissent in the chamber.

Conclusion

This article addressed the relative impact of provincial influences along with more personal factors such as political careerism and ambitions on voting behavior in the Argentine Senate. In spite of a large literature highlighting the strong province-centered nature of Argentina's federal institutions, previous analyses of roll-call vote behavior in the Chamber of Deputies have failed to uncover provincial effects. We do not hold a simplistic view of a provincial-controlled Senate, but provide systematic evidence of the powerful role that provincial party elites exercise over the legislative process. Concretely, this study demonstrated that provincial bosses sitting at the Senate are significantly associated with the likelihood of casting distant votes from their national party leaders. Second, it also revealed that senators coming from a province in which the governor is a powerful politician also tend to cast more dissident votes. This effect is especially evident among gubernatorial co-partisans. Finally, this article found partial evidence indicating that depending on the sitting governor and senators' terms regressive ambition affects senatorial voting patterns. The role of static ambition is more elusive in part due to contradictory (national and provincial) pressures that affect senators seeking reelection.

This article leaves a number of significant questions open for further research. A first set of questions concerns the nature of legislators' political autonomy from their party leaderships. Analysts should therefore consider that politicians' autonomy is also a function of their electoral

security, an issue vaguely mentioned in the article. Second, to properly test whether provincial or national factors prevail over legislative behavior, it is necessary to investigate legislators' policy choices along different issue areas. Not all issues on which senators vote are of equal importance for provincial/national leaders. Hence, senators are not likely to face similar pressures originating at the federal and provincial governments when casting their votes. Ideally, one would use data on governors' and presidents' positions on each vote. But this information is simple unavailable. An indirect strategy is to identify issues that directly affect provincial interests and/or where the position of governors is likely to be at odds with that of the national government. Tax and fiscal legislation is an obvious candidate.

Table 1. Political Careerism of Argentine Senators, Class 2001

Position	Immediately Before	At Some Point Prior	Highest
President and Vice President	----	2.8	2.8
Governor and Vice Governor	3.9	9.2	13.1
Federal Cabinet	5.2	6.6	10.5
Senator	11.8	2.6	11.8
Provincial Cabinet	9.2	18.4	21.0
Federal Deputy	21.0	17.1	11.8
Municipal Mayor	7.9	13.1	7.9
Lower Tier Federal Bureaucracy	2.6	5.3	0.0
Provincial Deputy	13.1	28.9	9.2
Municipal Council	2.6	13.1	3.9
Lower Tier Provincial Bureaucracy	2.6	17.1	1.3
Party Position	9.9	no data	no data
Amateur	7.9	----	----

Note: N=76. Numbers are percentages of total. Federal/Provincial Cabinet includes national/provincial ministers and secretaries. Lower Tier Federal/Provincial Bureaucracy includes national/provincial under-secretaries and directors. The hierarchical ladder of political positions considered in this article is: President and Vice-President > Governor and Vice-Governor > Federal Cabinet > Senator > Provincial Cabinet > Federal Deputy > Municipal Mayor > Lower Tier Federal Bureaucracy > Provincial Deputy > Municipal Council > Lower Tier Provincial Bureaucracy. Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Table 2. Frequencies Argentine Senators, Class 2001

Categories	Conditions	N	Total
Boss	Run for the presidency or governorship before reaching the Senate	15	26
	Run for the presidency or governorship immediately after his/her tenure	14	
Subordinate	Amateur	6	46
	Held a position linked to his/her party militancy or personal connections	40	
Factional	Leader of an intraparty faction	4	4

Note: N=76. Numbers are raw numbers. Jorge Busti (PJ-Entre Ríos), Mario Colazo (UCR-Tierra del Fuego), and Carlos Maestro (UCR-Chubut) ran for the governorship both before and immediately after their senatorial mandates. Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Figure1. Ideal Points for Argentine Senators, 2001-2003

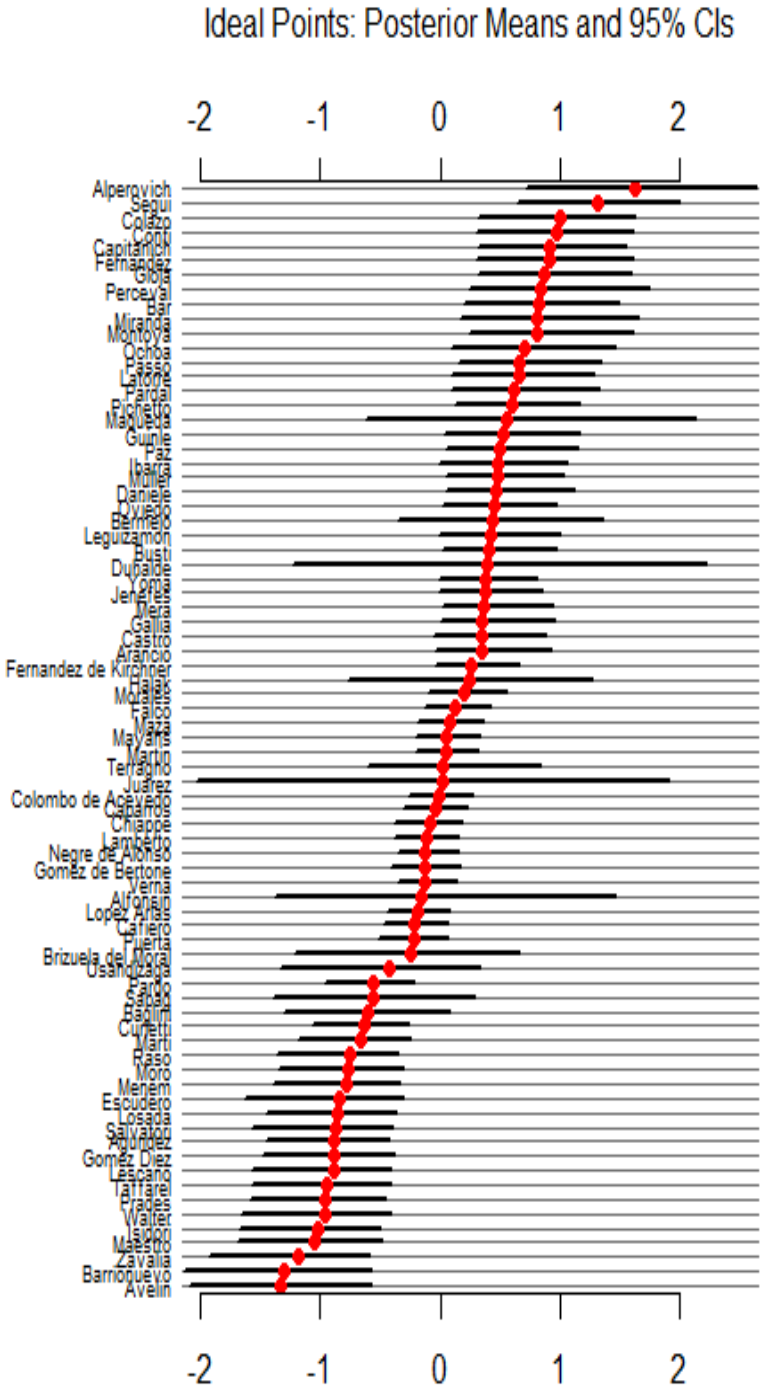

Table 3. Ideal Points Distance between Argentine Senators and their National Party Leaders

Independent Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
BOSS	.255**	.238*	.252**	.302**
	(.122)	(.131)	(.124)	(.125)
FACTIONAL SENATOR	-.145	-.128	-.094	-.102
	(.235)	(.242)	(.241)	(.235)
STRONG GOVERNOR	.278**	.290	.238*	.211
	(.127)	(.229)	(.131)	(.133)
COPARTISAN		-.054		
		(.141)		
STATIC AMBITION			-.228	
			(.243)	
REGRESSIVE AMBITION				.091
				(.198)
STRONG GOVERNOR		-.007		
× COPARTISAN		(.279)		
STATIC AMBITION			.614	
× STRONG GOVERNOR			(.527)	
REGRESSIVE AMBITION				.544
× STRONG GOVERNOR				(.387)
Constant	.400****	.437***	.416****	.374****
	(.074)	(.121)	(.077)	(.080)
R^2	.146	.148	.167	.193
F test	(3, 64) = 3.63	(5, 62) = 2.16	(5, 62) = 2.48	(5, 62) = 2.97
Prob > F	.017	.070	.041	.018

Notes: Dependent Variable: DISTANCE. N= 68. Standard errors are in parentheses. *p<.10; **p<.05; ***p<.01; ****p<.001.

Table 4. Conditional Coefficients of Independent Variables

Independent Variables	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
STRONG GOVERNOR (if COPARTISAN = 1)	.283* (.158)		
STATIC AMBITION (if STRONG GOVERNOR = 1)		.386 (.469)	
REGRESSIVE AMBITION (if STRONG GOVERNOR = 1)			.635* (.340)

Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses. *p<.10

Appendix. The Procedure of Ideal Point Estimation

With a unidemensional model, the utility function of each legislator is:

$$y^*_{ij} = U_i(\zeta_j) - U_i(\psi_j) \qquad (1)$$

where y^*_{ij} is a choice between a Yea position (ζ_j) and a Nay position (ψ_j) for each legislator $_i$'s decision on each bill $_j$. $y_{ij} = 1$ if $y^*_{ij} > 0$, $y_{ij} = 0$ otherwise. If we assume that the function is negative quadratic (i.e., a legislator maximizes his/her utility when his/her ideal point x_i completely overlaps either a Yea position or a Nay position), utilities are:

$$U_i(\zeta_j) = -(x_i - \zeta_j)^2 + \eta_{ij} \qquad (2)$$

$$U_i(\psi_j) = -(x_i - \psi_j)^2 + v_{ij} \qquad (3)$$

where η_{ij} and v_{ij} are errors. Assuming η_{ij} and v_{ij} have a joint normal distribution, Equation (1) can be rewritten as a liner regression with the ideal point x_i and unknown bill specific parameters β_j and α_j (Jackman 2001; Clinton, Jackman, and Rivers 2004; Jones and Hwang 2005):

$$\begin{aligned} y^*_{ij} &= -(x_i - \zeta_j)^2 + \eta_{ij} + (x_i - \psi_j)^2 - v_{ij} \\ &= 2(\zeta_j - \psi_j)\, x_i - (\zeta_j^2 - \psi_j^2) + (\eta_{ij} - v_{ij}) \\ &= \beta_j x_i - \alpha_j + \varepsilon_{ij} \qquad (4) \end{aligned}$$

β_j serves as a discrimination parameter: a unidimensional model perfectly fits data if β_j for all bills are distinguishable from zero (Jackman 2001). Based on the given information on y_{ij}, the Bayesian approaches seek appropriate values of parameters β_j, α_j, and x_i.

Ideal point estimations treat every vote as Yea or Nay. Other attitudes such as abstentions are treated as missing. Following Jones and Hwang (2005), however, we coded a party dissident vote if a legislator was present at the session but abstained or chose not to vote. In Argentina, "present but not voting" is regarded as an absence (not as an abstention),[25] and many legislators express their dissident opinions in a passive way because it is possible for those who clearly cast dissident votes to be punished by their respective parties (Jones 2002). Because we assume the position of a party leader as the national party's position, both abstentions and the "present but not voting" were coded as votes contrary to the party leader.

In addition, it is important to provide appropriate prior information because Bayesian methods require it in order to obtain a posterior density and avoid biasing the estimation of ideal points (Jackman and Meirowitz 2001). For this purpose, we assigned 1.0 to the bills initiated by the executive branch assuming that those bills will be supported by senators belonging to the presidential party. Then, we used Gibbs sampler to generate large samples from the posterior density. We generated 300000 samples using the pscl package developed by Simon Jackman.[26] The first 5000 iterations were discarded, and every 1000th sample was recorded for inference. This unidimensional model fits the data because β_j is distinguishable from zero for 24 roll-call votes among the 29 votes used in this estimation.

Notes

[1] Notable exceptions are Crisp and Desposato (2004), Crisp and Ingall (2002), Ingall and Crisp (2001), Langston (2006), Llanos and Sánchez (2006), and Londregan (2000).

[2] In Argentina, the Vice-president of the nation is also the president of the Senate. As such, he/she can only cast a tie-breaking vote.

[3] Before the 1994 Constitutional reform, senators were indirectly elected by the provincial legislatures using the plurality rule. Each province elected two senators for nine-year terms, with one third of the senatorial seats renewing every three years. After the reform, third senators were incorporated in every partial renewal taking place until 2001, when the Senate was completely renewed and other constitutional amendments such as the female quota were implemented. Since then, partial renovations of senatorial seats were implemented every two years. Thus, only one-third of the 2001 class served for their full (six-year) terms as one-third of it left the chamber in 2003 and one-third did it in 2005.

[4] A Senate election is generally riskier and more expensive than that of federal deputy. Because of different district magnitude, a candidate to the Chamber of Deputies can get elected by concentrating their votes in a municipality or region, while a senatorial candidate usually needs to campaign in the whole provincial district. Furthermore, the *political opportunity structures* (Schlesinger 1966) poses greater barriers to senatorial than to federal deputy candidates as the former are required to have more years of citizenship and a minimal income.

[5] Argentine parties have used a variety of candidate selection methods ranging from open/closed primaries, to elite arrangements, to voting at party conventions (De Luca, Jones, and Tula 2002).

[6] Nearly 55% of the governors included in our analyses were also presidents of their provincial-level parties at the time of their gubernatorial nomination. Half of these nominations result from

uncontested elite arrangements or negotiated party assemblies. The other half was chosen by some variety of district-level primaries.

[7] Interview with Oscar Lamberto, Buenos Aires, November 8, 2005.

[8] Although the number of senatorial seats is 72, four senators left office without serving their full terms. They were replaced by their substitutes thus elevating the total number of senators to 76.

[9] The partisan composition of the Senate reflected the dominance of the two traditional parties. The PJ and the UCR occupied nearly 60% and 30% of the seats, respectively. The remaining seats were held by six other political parties with presence in only one or few provinces.

[10] Indeed, Llanos and Sánchez (2006) report that the Argentine Senate constitutes the most junior and less educated chamber in comparison with the upper chambers of Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay. The female quota is an important factor to explain this outcome as five out of six cases in the amateur category are women.

[11] It is therefore impossible for us to know which position politicians actually wanted. It may be the case, for example, that a senator desired to become a governor in the next term but chose to compete for reelection knowing that her/his chance to win the governorship was low.

[12] This group includes eight senators who ran for federal deputy (six of them won the election), two who stood for mayor, one for provincial deputy, and one for municipal council (all won).

[13] One senator, Juan Carlos Maqueda (PJ-Córdoba), was named at the Supreme Court. For obvious reasons, we considered him as a political retiree.

[14] We coded the cases of Eduardo Menem (PJ-La Rioja) and Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner (PJ-Santa Cruz) as *boss* because they were traditional politicians in their provinces and relatives (brother and wife respectively) of ex-governors and presidents Carlos Menem and Néstor Kirchner. However, we did not code as *boss* the cases of Vilma Ibarra (Frente Grande-Ciudad de

Buenos Aires), Ada Maza (PJ-La Rioja), and Luz Sapag (MPN-Neuquén) despite being close relatives of former governors. The reason is that they did not have a long political career before obtaining a senatorial seat. Actually, their major political asset was their family ties.

[15] In Argentina, the average reelection rate in the Chamber of Deputies since the return of democracy in 1983 has only been around 20% (Jones 2001). In Brazil, two-thirds of the federal deputies seek reelection and nearly two-thirds of them win accounting for 50% legislative turnover (Samuels 2003). In Mexico, immediate legislative reelection is prohibited. Chile, where 80% of legislators seek reelection and some two-thirds of them achieved it, is an exception to this pattern (Navia 2008).

[16] In both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate the allocation of committee and its leadership positions (president, vice-president, and secretary) is decided by the President of the respective chamber based on the percentage of seats held by parties. But the leadership posts are always assigned in consultation with the leaders of the party blocs, who also decide how their other committee assignments are allocated. Unlike in the United States, there is no seniority system.

[17] We thank the Dirección de Comisiones of the Senate, the Dirección de la Información Parlamentaria of the Chamber of Deputies, and the Central Bank Library for technical support.

[18] See Clinton, Jackman and Rivers (2004) for a comparison of various ideal point estimation methods using political science examples.

[19] See Appendix 1 for the procedure of estimation used in this study.

[20] The PJ switched its leader in the Senate from José Luis Gioja (San Juan) to Miguel Pichetto (Río Negro) on December 30, 2002. Nonetheless, we calculated the distance between each PJ senator and Pichetto because most roll call votes used in this analysis were recorded during his

leadership, and because Pichetto always voted along national party lines under Gioja's leadership. The UCR's leadership, on the other hand, was firmly held by Carlos Maestro (Chubut).

[21] Gubernatorial reelection rules have varied across and within Argentine provinces through time. During the period covered by our roll-call voting data, 20 provinces allowed the provincial executive reelection with 16 of them limiting the incumbent to two consecutive terms.

[22] Interview with Vicente Joga, Formosa, April 10, 2006.

[23] Because both STRONG GOVERNOR and COPARTISAN are dummy variables, the coefficient for STRONG GOVERNOR when COPARTISAN equals one is calculated as the sum of the coefficient for STRONG GOVERNOR and the coefficient for the interaction term.

[24] Frequencies for these ambitious variables are 5 and 8 respectively.

[25] A vote is recorded as an abstention if a legislator was present at a session, and he/she clearly declared his/her abstention.

[26] One of the simplest diagnostics to judge the number of iterations is tracing the history of the iterations for the ideal point of each senator (Clinton, Jackman, and Rivers 2004). This diagnostic shows that the number of iterations is enough to allow the convergence between a cumulative mean and a posterior mean. The number of iterations for this study clears such a diagnostic.

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