WHEN ARE BIPARTISAN SENATORS MORE EFFECTIVE?

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By

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This research explores the legislative incentives for bipartisanship in the United States Senate using the Lugar Center’s bipartisan index and the Center for Effective Lawmaking’s legislative effectiveness score. I accept Volden and Wiseman’s 2019 conclusion that legislative effectiveness does, in fact, give incumbents an electoral advantage. That being the case, this study effectively explores the electoral incentives for bipartisanship and whether those incentives differ across gender and stature. Key findings show that bipartisanship is most likely to enhance effectiveness for women when they belong to the Senate minority party, and for men when they govern the majority.
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1: Introduction

MOTIVATION: Legislative Decline

The modern-day United States Congress is defined by over-the-top ideological polarization,\(^1\) bipartisanship on its last legs,\(^2\) and gummed up productivity.\(^3\) The American government has allowed a fifty-year increase in gridlock at a time when the problems it faces—climate change, automation, global pandemics—threaten the core of the nation and the world it professes to lead.\(^4\) Unsurprisingly, Congress is less popular among Americans than ever—Gallup’s congressional net approval rating has been below -30% for over a decade.\(^5\)

Unfortunately for senators, their chamber has not been spared for being “the greatest deliberative body on Earth.” At the Edward M. Kennedy Institute’s last check in 2018, 72% of Americans were dissatisfied with the Senate.\(^6\) The fact that they generally receive less severe net approval ratings when graded individually is no great comfort—it is also a fact that half of American voters cannot name their senators (i.e. more “don’t know” rating responses).\(^7\) An individual senator’s job performance review from voters en masse (i.e. election), therefore, could be easily swayed by what those voters think of the Senate’s job performance.

Luckily for those senators, voters have come to a consensus on specific qualities they are looking for in job candidates. Forty-one percent of American voters told the Kennedy Institute that above all else, they base their vote on whether the senator is “effective” and “gets things done in the Senate.” In keeping with those deal-breaker qualities, most voters want a senator who is also “willing to make compromises to get things done.” Three in five of those voters also feel

\(^1\) Voteview and UCLA Social Sciences Division, *Roll-Call Votes, “All Senate Members and Parties”* (Howard Rosenthal and Keith Poole, 2020).

\(^2\) The Lugar Center and the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University, *Bipartisan Index, “103rd-115th Congresses: Senate Scores”* (Mark Rom, 2019).

\(^3\) The Center for Effective Lawmaking, *Legislative Effectiveness Scores, “All Senate Data from 1973-2018”* (Craig Volden and Alan Wiseman, February 27, 2019).


\(^7\) “Senator Approval Rankings,” Morning Consult, 2019.
it is important to elect more women. In other words, most voters are keen on sending more effectiveness, more bipartisanship, and more women to the United States Senate.

**QUESTION**: Bipartisanship Bump

Thanks to Craig Volden and Alan Wiseman, whose 2016 study “Are Bipartisan Lawmakers More Effective?” found bipartisan representatives to be about ten percent more effective at passing laws on average than their partisan counterparts, bipartisanship is known to facilitate effectiveness in the House of Representatives. Women, too, are known to facilitate effectiveness in the House, and just as bipartisan representatives, women have been found to be around ten percent more effective than their counterparts at passing laws in the House. In first demonstrating the effect in their 2010 paper “When Are Women More Effective Lawmakers Than Men?,” Volden, Wiseman, and Dana Wittmer found that, all else equal, women are especially more effective than men at legislating whilst relegated to the House minority party.

Volden, Wiseman, and Wittmer’s work connects bipartisanship to effective legislators and women to effective lawmaking within one chamber of Congress—the House of Representatives. Those same relationships between bipartisanship, women, and effectiveness have not been studied or established within the other chamber—the Senate.

This study uses industry-leading indexing data on the legislative effectiveness and bipartisanship of post-1992 senators to build on the existing analysis of the House in two key ways. The central objective is to ascertain whether bipartisanship estimates effectiveness among senators as it does among representatives in the House, which will be done by surveying the movement of each senator’s behaviors and accomplishments over time via fixed effects analysis. The auxiliary objective is to deduce whether the relationship between bipartisanship and effectiveness plays out differently among men and women in the Senate by analyzing senators separately based on gender. In short, this study will answer the question: when are bipartisan senators more effective?

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2: Context

PRIOR STUDIES: Effectiveness

Article I, Section I of the Constitution—“All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.” The first and foremost purpose of a senator quite literally is to legislate. Until the last decade, that senator’s job fulfillment was measured either by counting the number of her sponsored bills that successfully became law or by counting the number of her sponsored bills that advanced forward, regardless of its ultimate success.

Beginning in 1960 with Donald Matthews, political scientists generally defined a senator’s legislative success as the number of successful bills (i.e. bills enacted into law) sponsored by the senator relative to the total number of bills that senator introduced. While a “rate” is satisfyingly simple to compare, the approach effectively implies that “one hit wonders” are preferable to sustained shots on goal. Four decades later, Anderson et al. instead used a “count” of the bills sponsored by a senator that were enacted into law to measure success, and a separate count of the total bills sponsored by the senator to measure legislative productivity. Their methodology is certainly less biased toward a “one hit wonder,” but fails to simultaneously measure the value of shots and goals. Neither Matthews nor Anderson et al. consider the relative importance of a piece of legislation (e.g. a landmark civil rights bill and a bill to name a bridge are valued equally). While their methodological simplicity and precision are appealing, legislative success and legislative productivity variables fail to capture the whole picture of the senator fulfilling the job.

At the Center for Effective Lawmaking in 2008, the two approaches—legislative success rates and legislative productivity counts—were combined and expanded by Volden and Wiseman, who together created a third way to measure the senator’s job fulfillment—the legislative

effectiveness score.\textsuperscript{14} Volden and Wiseman’s methodology overcame the limited scopes of legislative success and legislative productivity counts, by capturing legislative action at all stages. The legislative effectiveness score gauges a senator’s job fulfillment by tracking her sponsored bills and computing a score based on each bill’s introduction, action in committee, action beyond committee, chamber passage, and law implementation, weighting for progressively difficult levels. Sponsored legislation is also weighted between three tiers of significance based on reporting by the Congressional Quarterly Almanac. Finally, each score is relative to Congress-wide totals, allowing for comparison across time.\textsuperscript{15} To date, Volden and Wiseman’s legislative effectiveness score is the most substantive measure of lawmakers’ job fulfillment.

PRIOR STUDIES : Bipartisanship

In 1989, Howard Rosenthal and Keith Poole began developing a tool, called Voteview “to view every congressional roll call vote in American history on a map of the United States and on a liberal-conservative ideological map.”\textsuperscript{16} According to Voteview, partisanship in Congress has been steadily rising for decades and is at a century-high.\textsuperscript{17} Similar studies and additional experts, such as Sean Theriault of the University of Texas, have further concluded that Congress is overwhelmingly partisan.\textsuperscript{18} However, relying on roll call voting records overlooks the majority of the lawmaking process. While partisanship is increasing within roll call voting, bipartisan activities may be taking place well before a vote is called.

In 2015, two separate measures of bipartisanship were published that do not rely on roll call voting records—one by Laurel Harbridge of Northwestern University and another by the Lugar Center along with the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University. Harbridge’s measure plainly counts the bills that a member cosponsors for which minimum 20% of cosponsors belong to the party opposite the bill’s sponsor. The measure does not capture the member’s ability to attract

\textsuperscript{14} Craig Volden and Alan Wiseman, “Legislative Effectiveness in Congress” (working paper, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, 2009).
\textsuperscript{15} Volden and Wiseman, “Legislative Effectiveness in Congress” (2009).
\textsuperscript{17} Voteview and UCLA Social Sciences Division, Roll-Call Votes, “All Senate Members and Parties” (Howard Rosenthal and Keith Poole, 2020)
bipartisan support for her own bills. In contrast, the bipartisan index created by the Lugar Center in partnership with the McCourt School uses sponsorship and cosponsorship. As Senator Lugar explained at the index’s outset, those behaviors “construct a highly objective measure…sponsorship and cosponsorship behavior is especially revealing of partisan tendencies. Members’ voting decisions are often contextual and can be influenced by parliamentary circumstances. Sponsorships and cosponsorships, in contrast, exist as very carefully considered declarations of where a legislator stands on an issue.” The bipartisan index reveals who initiates and builds bipartisanship.

PRIOR STUDIES: Bipartisanship and Effectiveness

Volden and Wiseman have since considered potential associations, implications, and identifiers of their legislative effectiveness score. Just a sampling of the work published by Volden and Wiseman’s Center for Effective Lawmaking includes reports that associate veterans with effectiveness, imply that effectiveness boosts electoral success, and identify experienced legislative staff as a facilitator of effectiveness.

In 2016, Volden and Wiseman answered their question, “Are Bipartisan Lawmakers More Effective?,” using the bipartisan index created by the Lugar Center and the McCourt School. Volden and Wiseman’s study found a positive relationship between legislative effectiveness score and bipartisan index in the House of Representatives. Furthermore, they found that the relationship is qualified by a number of conditions. For example, the relationship is more pronounced for members of the minority party—unsurprising, given that minority members depend

22 Danielle Thomsen, Sarah Treul, Craig Volden, and Alan Wiseman, “Turning Legislative Effectiveness into Electoral Success” (CEL Working Paper 2019, The Center for Effective Lawmaking, University of Virginia and Vanderbilt University, Charlottesville, VA, 2019).
on majority party cooperation. On the other hand, their study did not find that bipartisanship matters more for ideologically centrist lawmakers than extremist lawmakers—in other words, the boons of bipartisanship are not limited to the middle of the road in the House.

**PRIOR STUDIES : Gender**

Since the U.S. Congress convened in 1789, a total of 1,984 individuals have served in the Senate, 1,927 of whom have been men. To date, 57 women have served in the Senate, with 37 serving between 1992 and 2018 (i.e. the period of this study) and 26 serving at this time. The lack of gender representation in the Senate makes capturing significant behavioral differences between men and women lawmakers very difficult, and significant differences among subgroups of women nearly impossible. Nonetheless, differences are evident.

The most clearly meaningful subgroup dynamic among women senators pertains to partisanship. Of the 57 women in history who have served in the Senate, 36 have been Democrats; and of the 26 serving today, Democrats account for 17. There are about two Democratic women in the Senate for every Republican woman. Expressed differently, only around one-third of the Senate’s women are Republicans. This means that Democratic partisanship is relatively over-pronounced among women senators, and to a lesser extent, Republican among men senators.

Numerous studies have shown that women introduce more policy (i.e. bills) focused on civil rights, education, health, labor and employment, immigration, criminal justice, and childcare than do men. Agriculture, energy, and macroeconomics are the only policy areas in which men

26 This includes 18 women who served less than two years as well as 17 women who were appointed, 7 of whom were appointed by “widow’s succession” to temporarily fill a deceased husband’s seat.
28 As well as in the House of Representatives and state legislatures, not to mention far worse among governors and executive-office-holders.
out-produce women.\textsuperscript{30} Be that as it may, other studies have shown that women’s bills experience no more success than men’s across the policy board, with the exception of transportation.\textsuperscript{31}

Women’s bills’ lower success rates are often attributed, at least in part, to the Senate’s seniority rules, which awards preferred committee assignments and chairmanships to whichever senators have been around the longest. Historically, this puts women at a disadvantage when it comes to wielding power and setting agendas in the Senate, given that their low and only very recently increasing number translates into a three-year minimum deficit between women’s and men’s average length of service. According to Michelle Swers’ book, \textit{Women in the Club}, only in the last few Congresses have a handful of women gained enough seniority to begin holding leadership position in Senate committees.\textsuperscript{32}

The donor networks of women are different than those of men, as shown by Danielle Thomsen and Michelle Swers in 2018. Women lawmakers (i.e. Democratic women) earn support from more individual donors and contributions from more small dollar donations (i.e. less than $200) than do men. This relative success with grassroots fundraising has often been attributed to EMILY’s List and other such PACs that organize donor networks for women candidates.\textsuperscript{33}


There are some scholars\textsuperscript{34} who dismiss the notion that women experience unique electoral environments based on evidence that, when they run for office, women win general elections at rates equal to men\textsuperscript{35} and raise equal funds.\textsuperscript{36} The mass body of scholarship, however, demonstrates that women in and beyond the Senate face significantly more challenging electoral paths—women receive less party support,\textsuperscript{37} have more difficulty fundraising,\textsuperscript{38} attract more primary election competitors,\textsuperscript{39} and contend with higher-quality general election challengers.\textsuperscript{40} Women who do achieve electoral success are identifiable by their meaningful past experience in government—qualifications of equal caliber are not similarly distinct among men who are elected.\textsuperscript{41} Also, while it is true that women on the whole raise as much money as men, women actually tend to raise more money than men in Democratic primaries, which in effect hides worthwhile evidence that viable Republican candidates raise less money when they are women.\textsuperscript{42}


\textsuperscript{36} Burrell, A Woman’s Place is in the House (1994); Fox, “Congressional Elections: Where Are We on the Road to Gender Parity?” (2006); Carole Jean Uhlman and Kay Lehman Schlozman, “Candidate Gender and Congressional Campaign Receipts,” The Journal of Politics 48, no. 1 (1986): 30-50.


Furthermore, a notable body of literature indicates that men and women tend to differ in general political leadership style. An analysis of mayoral behaviors reveal that women are more consensus-oriented, while men are more top-down.\textsuperscript{43} Surveys of state lawmakers found that women spend more time than men coalition-building by negotiating with their peers.\textsuperscript{44} On the whole, the literature indeed surmises that gender differences exist among lawmakers.

\textbf{PRIOR STUDIES : Gender and Bipartisanship}

In 2018, Jennifer Lawless, Sean Theriault, and Samantha Gunthrie showed that women in the Senate are more likely than men to engage in bipartisan relationship-building activities, including the Senate’s Secret Santa Gift Exchange, Seersucker Thursday in the Senate, and the Congressional Baseball Game.\textsuperscript{45} Do these bipartisan social efforts translate into bipartisan lawmaking? Perhaps women leaders’ penchant for collaboration and relationship-building foretells bipartisan tendencies, but then again, their marginal numbers in the Senate may pressure women, ultimately, to toe the party line.\textsuperscript{46} Lawless et al. found the latter when analyzing gender differences within fact-finding abroad (i.e. congressional delegations), bill cosponsorship, and legislative engagement—in their words, “women’s presence in Congress promotes democratic legitimacy, but it does little to reduce gridlock and stalemate on Capitol Hill.”\textsuperscript{47} In regards to the former, \textit{bipartisan index} data from the Lugar Center show that Senate women actually may be slightly more likely than Senate men to sponsor or cosponsor bipartisan legislation.\textsuperscript{48}


\textsuperscript{48} The Lugar Center and the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University, \textit{Bipartisan Index}, “103rd-115th Congresses: Senate Scores” (Mark Rom, 2019).
When it comes to the performance of women lawmakers, there is conflicting literature on whether women are more or less effective than men. Jeffrey Lazarus and Amy Steigerwalt’s 2018 book, *Gendered Vulnerability: How Women Work Harder to Stay in Office*, suggests that women’s lawmaking effectiveness is handicapped not by a lack of talent, but by the disproportionate time and effort required of women to campaign for reelection.Earlier scholars have argued that women are less effective because their compassionate working styles are not well-suited for the competitive political environment, or because they simply get shut out by sexist or territorial colleagues.

In 2003, Alana Jeydel and Andrew Taylor offered evidence that debunked the idea that women are ill-suited to Congress, using two measures of effectiveness—success rate of sponsored bills and federal dollars earmarked for district. According to their study, women in the House are not demonstrably less effective lawmakers than men as long as ideology, seniority, and clout (i.e. committee assignments and positions) are held equal. Such evidence notably leaves room for Lazarus and Steigerwalt’s scholarship, which does not isolate the effect of gender from other gendered effects. Conversely, the study does not find that women are more effective than men.

While the Lazarus and Steigerwalt theory suggests that a disproportionately demanding electoral path renders women less effective policymakers than men, Sarah Anzia and Christopher Berry suggested quite the opposite in their own study of bill success rate and earmark funds secured.

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After finding evidence in 2011 that women lawmakers in fact outperform men (using variables in the style of Jeydel and Taylor’s), they argued that higher electoral demands on women candidates has functionally meant that only the most capable, most resourceful—and therefore most effective—women make it to Congress, in comparison to congressional men who represent a wider talent variety.

Not only do women lawmakers rival or perhaps outpace men in legislative success rate, they also outdistance them in legislative productivity count. Individually, women introduce substantially more bills than men (40.2 versus 31.9 bills biannually in the Senate, according to this study) overall (i.e. not just those so-called “women’s issues” bills). Simple rates and counts are limited to a surface-level understanding of lawmaking, however. In 2013, Volden, Wiseman, and Dana Wittmer used the Center for Effective Lawmaking’s legislative effectiveness score to dive deeper into women’s relative lawmaking performance in the House of Representatives. This more potent measure of effectiveness found that women outperform men, especially in the House’s minority party, but have become less effective in the House majority, they say as a result of escalating partisanship. Volden, Wiseman, and Wittmer consider the electoral hurdles that concerned previous scholarship, but they argue it is women’s behavioral style that differentiates their effectiveness. Coalition-building, they say, serves women well in the minority while men are busy obstructing, but conversely sidetracks them in the majority while men are steamrolling. As obstructing and steamrolling are both partisan behaviors, women’s relative effectiveness is sensitive to polarization shifts whether in majority control or not, albeit inversely.

60 Anzia and Berry, “The Jackie (and Jill) Robinson Effect” (2011).
PRIOR STUDIES : Gender, Bipartisanship, and Effectiveness

When Volden, Wiseman, and Wittmer posited in 2013 that gender-differentiated behaviors account for gender-differentiated effectiveness, they notably did not measure, investigate, or even title those behaviors, but rather invoked conventional wisdom that women engage moreso than men in consensus-building. Their data analysis connected gender\textsuperscript{65} groups to legislative effectiveness score outcomes; but with no measure of “consensus-building” behaviors, they could not empirically connect groups to behaviors to outcomes.\textsuperscript{66} The Lugar Center released the bipartisan index in 2015, replacing the qualitative “consensus-building” conventional wisdom with a quantitative defined variable.\textsuperscript{67} In 2016, Volden and Wiseman published data analysis that connected bipartisan index behaviors to legislative effectiveness score outcomes and qualified that connection by gender groups—de facto connecting groups to behaviors to outcomes.\textsuperscript{68}

The first and only study to empirically analyze gender facilitating bipartisanship facilitating effectiveness so far, it indicates a positive correlation between bipartisan index and legislative effectiveness score that is stronger among women in the House of Representatives than men, particularly so in the majority party. In other words, women’s effectiveness outcomes are more sensitive to their bipartisanship behaviors than men’s. Why the gender disparity is wider in the House’s majority party is neither clear nor expounded upon.\textsuperscript{69} However, Volden and Wiseman fleetingly consider their 2013 observation that, “it is startling how frequently the bills introduced by women (especially majority party women) receive no attention in committees whatsoever.”\textsuperscript{70}

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\textsuperscript{65} In this section only, wherever ‘gender’ is italicized, it is referring to this study’s woman variable.


\textsuperscript{67} “Methodology,” The Lugar Center, The McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University, 2018, https://www.thelugarcenter.org/ourwork-44.html.


3 : Expectations

When are bipartisan senators more effective? Volden and Wiseman’s scholarship has established
that bipartisan members of the U.S. House of Representatives are more effective lawmakers,
particularly for bipartisan women.\textsuperscript{71} This study will explore whether the same is true for the U.S.
Senate by investigating the relationship between bipartisan index and legislative effectiveness
score for each senator (grouped by gender) in each of the 103\textsuperscript{rd}-115\textsuperscript{th} Congresses (1993-2018).\textsuperscript{72}

\textbf{ANALYSIS STRATEGY} : Conceptual Framework

Before delving into the methodology of the present study, this subsection provides the conceptual
framework that undergirds it. This framework is illustrated in Figure 3.1.

The role of gender is pervasive in politics. Men and women conceivably experience very
differently many of the interrelationships considered in this study, including effects associated with
partisanship,\textsuperscript{73} fundraising,\textsuperscript{74} platform,\textsuperscript{75} and ruling status.\textsuperscript{76} That is to say, it is plausible that in
addition to moderating the effect of bipartisanship on effectiveness, gender moderates the effect of
numerous control variables on effectiveness. The analysis must therefore be conceptually modeled
to pick up the marginal effects of any gender-related interrelationships. The analysis will account
for gendered effects before and within all other explanatory variables by essentially observing
the effect of bipartisanship on effectiveness twice—one for women and once for men. A gender
dynamic is evident when visually mapped out, as it is in Figure 3.1, by two lines pointing from
bipartisanship to effectiveness broken apart by a gap stemming from woman.

\begin{enumerate}
\item Craig Volden and Alan Wiseman, “Are Bipartisan Lawmakers More Effective?” (CSDI Working Paper 4-2016,
Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, 2016).
\item The unit of analysis is individual senator over time, where time is defined by Congress (i.e. biennial).
\item Danielle Thomsen and Michele Swers, “Which Women Can Run? Gender, Partisanship, and Candidate Donor
\item Craig Volden, Alan Wiseman, and Dana Wittmer, “Women’s Issues and Their Fates in the US Congress,” \textit{Political
\item Craig Volden, Alan Wiseman, and Dana Wittmer, “When Are Women More Effective Lawmakers Than Men?,”
\end{enumerate}
Figure 3.1: Conceptual Framework
While a case for bipartisanship’s effect on effectiveness has been made, it is certainly not the only explanatory variable that has been linked to effectiveness. The Center for Effective Lawmaking, for instance, has studied the explanatory power of centrism, extremism, committee chairs, minority members, seniority, state legislative experience, race, state delegation size, vote share, issue specialization, upcoming retirement, upcoming reelection, previous service in the House (for senators), and region, among others. Disregarding variables that do not vary over time and with the exception of issue specialization (due to feasibility constraints), this study includes all Volden & Wiseman variables. The ordering of variables differ, however, as this study seeks to isolate combined marginal effects of modified categories—the electoral backing, the political polarity, and the institutional status of each senator over time.

The first of these latent constructs, the senator’s backing, explores the possible explanatory power of landslide victories and grassroots fundraising—these are the forces that got the senator hired, according to punditry. A construct of polarity next describes the tribal and values-driven dynamics that continuously inform the senator’s behaviors and coalitions. The status construct lastly accounts for power disparities across parties, within parties, and between parties. To recap, the senator shows up with external backing, is forevermore grounded in relative polarity, and is assigned status each cycle. These three concepts, the variables that construct them, and how they play into the relationship between of bipartisanship and effectiveness are illustrated in Figure 3.1, specifically organized into systems of interplaying dynamics.

While minority member is included within status, Volden and Wiseman’s 2016 study raised the concern that majority status explains a senator’s bipartisanship more so than her effectiveness. Therefore, the ultimate influence of minority member status on the main relationship between bipartisan index and legislative effectiveness score can best be observed via its interaction with the key explanatory variable (i.e. minority×bipartisan). In Figure 3.1, this final interrelationship system, stature, is clarified visually by a wavy line traveling separately (i.e. outside and around the main dynamic’s black lines) from minority member to bipartisan index and flowing into a new variable minority×bipartisan that then plays into the main effect on its own via a straight line.

**HYPOTHESIS**: Bipartisanship

Across gender subgroups, *bipartisan index* and *legislative effectiveness score* are positively correlated. This effect was confirmed in the House by Volden and Wiseman, and I expect to see it mirrored in the Senate.

**HYPOTHESIS**: Gender

The effect of *bipartisan index* on *legislative effectiveness score* differs between genders and is greater for women. I expect bipartisan women in the Senate to be more effective than bipartisan men, all else held equal. Volden and Wiseman found this to be the case in the House, and while far fewer have served in the Senate, I believe the relationship will hold up.

**HYPOTHESIS**: Stature

*Bipartisan index* indicates a greater *legislative effectiveness score* for senators in the minority party than for their otherwise equal majority-party counterparts. While the minority is notably more powerful in the Senate because of the filibuster, the *legislative effectiveness score* measures only affirmative legislative action, not obstructive. Therefore, I expect the minority to benefit more greatly from bipartisanship in the Senate just as Volden and Wiseman found in the House.80

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4 : Data and Methods

Definitions for all variables included in the dataset can be found in Table 4.1.

DATA : Sample

To test the senator-level relationship between bipartisanship and effectiveness, I employ the Lugar Center’s bipartisan index variable,\(^81\), the Center for Effective Lawmaking’s legislative effectiveness score variable,\(^82\) and I aggregate data per senator per congress.\(^83\) In other words, I aggregate data for multiple panels of senator across multiple periods of congress. Mechanically, this aggregation method amounts to a longitudinal panel study where the individual dimension “\(i\)” is defined by senator and the time dimension “\(t\)” is defined by congress. I therefore refer to each unit of observation (i.e. sample) \(x_{it}\) as a sencon.\(^84\)

The study’s population is limited to senators within Congresses 103 through 115—the longest stretch of congress presently covered by both bipartisan index and legislative effectiveness score.\(^85\) The study’s sample size is further constrained to sencon observations for whom both legislative effectiveness score and bipartisan index have been measured, which most notably excludes majority and minority leaders in power.\(^86\) The resulting dataset is a collection of 1,252 sencon samples for a population of 224 senator panels.

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\(^{81}\) The Lugar Center and the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University, Bipartisan Index, “103rd-115th Congresses: Senate Scores” (Mark Rom, 2019).

\(^{82}\) The Center for Effective Lawmaking, Legislative Effectiveness Scores, “All Senate Data from 1973-2018” (Craig Volden and Alan Wiseman, February 27, 2019).

\(^{83}\) Each period congress spans two years. The 103rd Congress is the 103rd biennial group of senators.

\(^{84}\) Take for example, Senator Lincoln Chafee, a member of the 106th through 109th Congresses. Senator Chafee accounts for not one but four values of sencon.

\(^{85}\) For the House, bipartisan index data only exist for Congresses 113, 114, and 115. Meanwhile, data for legislative effectiveness score exist for Congresses 93 through 115. The Lugar Center and the McCourt School of Public Policy, Bipartisan Index; The Center for Effective Lawmaking, Legislative Effectiveness Scores.

\(^{86}\) The Lugar Center excludes senators who sponsor fewer than three qualifying bills. Majority and minority leaders are generally more focused on responsibilities other than introducing legislation. “Methodology,” The Lugar Center, McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University, 2018, https://www.thelugarcenter.org/ourwork-44.html.
DATA : Sources

I built a longitudinal panel dataset spanning years 1992 through 2018, measuring one *sencon* sample unit every two years for each senator, and pasting data together from a variety of academic, government, and civic sources. Published data tables were provided by the Federal Election Commission, the Congress Collection, Voteview, and the Center for Effective Lawmaking. Jamie Spitz from the Lugar Center generously provided tables of their *bipartisan index* variable. For any variables missing from these tables, data was manually input from public United States Congress records.

DATA : Dependent Variable

The Center for Effective Lawmaking, led by Craig Volden and Alan Wiseman, defines legislative effectiveness as the “proven ability to advance a [senator’s own] agenda items through the legislative process and into law.” Their legislative effectiveness score quantifies the success of a senator’s bills to pass five checkpoints en route to enactment, where each of those bills is coded for relative importance, and fifteen total indicators are measured.

To illustrate their methodology in detail, I will simulate Volden and Wiseman’s model to deduce Senator Susan Collins’ legislative effectiveness score from the 115th Congress. From 2017 to 2018, Senator Collins sponsored forty bills (BILL) with four receiving action in committee (AIC) and six receiving action beyond committee (ABC). Four Collins ABC bills were subsequently

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88 The Bipartisan Index is published on thelugarcenter.org, but data tables are not publicly available for direct download. I was saved hours of work by Jamie Spitz, Assistant Policy Director for Bipartisan Governance at the Lugar Center, who kindly responded to my emailed request for data tables. The Lugar Center and the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University, *Bipartisan Index*, “103rd-115th Congresses: Senate Scores” (Mark Rom, 2019).

89 “Methodology,” The Center for Effective Lawmaking, University of Virginia and Vanderbilt University, 2018, https://thelawmakers.org/methodology.

90 Republican Senator Susan Collins is the senior senator of Maine. She holds the highest lifetime *bipartisan index score* among senators currently serving and the overall second highest among senators included in this study.
passed by the Senate (PASS), three ultimately becoming law (LAW). Of her three LAW bills, one is considered substantive and significant (SS), two as substantive (S), and none as commemorative (C). The Senator’s BILL, AIC, ABC, and PASS counts are likewise subdivided into C, S, and SS categories, and in doing, express the full fifteen indicators.91

To calculate legislative effectiveness score, the Senator’s indicators are weighted by importance, summed by checkpoint, and calibrated relative to her peers. Just as all SS bills for all senators, Senator Collins’ substantive and significant bills are weighted by ten, her substantive bills by five, and had she any commemorative bills, they would maintain a weight of one. In practice therefore, SS bills are twice as important as S bills and ten times the importance of C bills, according to Volden and Wiseman. For Senator Collins’ LAW bills, weighting added the equivalent of one unweighted bill (nineteen versus twenty).92

Next, the model computes the ratio between Senator Collins’ weighted LAW and the collective weighted LAW of all senators, follows suit for each checkpoint, and sums the five ratios. Measuring Collins-sponsored bills as a relative fraction of total Congress bills, rather than an absolute value, effectively grants greater weight to less-frequented checkpoints (e.g. Senator Collins introduced 10,000% more bills than she enacted into law, yet BILL amounts to less than 33% of LAW when comparing weighted proportions) and pumps up senators, like Susan Collins, who outperform their contemporaries in the final lawmaking push.93

The very last operation of Volden and Wiseman’s model is to overlay a weight equal to one-fifth the population of Congress senators. Senator Collins’ 1.76 legislative effectiveness score is thus revealed. This overall weighting conveniently normalizes the average legislative effectiveness score to value one within each Congress. The model also normalizes the minimum legislative effectiveness score to zero for every Congress thanks to legislators who don’t introduce legislation.94

91 “Methodology,” The Center for Effective Lawmaking, University of Virginia and Vanderbilt University, 2018, https://thelawmakers.org/methodology.
The glaring methodological concern of Volden and Wiseman’s legislative effectiveness score is their own subjectivity. Designations of each bill’s import rely on weighting factor arrangements and categorization protocols that are not bias-proof. However, the bias risked is worth the increased explanatory power associated with accounting for varied importance among bills.  

For men, this study observes 1,072 values of legislative effectiveness score ranging from 0.05 to 7.73, with an average value of 1.01 and a standard deviation of 0.99. For women, 180 values are observed ranging from 0.06 to 4.42, with an average value of 1.06 (0.05 higher than the average man) and a standard deviation of 0.85.

**DATA**: Independent Variable

Like the legislative effectiveness score, the Lugar Center’s bipartisan index quantifies, combines, normalizes, and compares categories of lawmaking behaviors. The variable considers two categories of bipartisan action—opposition-sponsored bills that a senator crosses the aisle to cosponsor (ratio and absolute number of bills), as well as opposition-party colleagues that cross the aisle to cosponsor bills sponsored by the senator (bills and total cosponsors). After fixing the values onto the same unit plane, the variable is normalized relative to average scores since 1993 (relative to majority or minority). A bipartisan index value above zero indicates that the senator scores above the comparable historical average.

For men, this study observes 1,072 values of legislative effectiveness score ranging from -2.10 to 2.72, with an average value of 0.00 and a standard deviation of 0.75. For women, 180 values are observed ranging from -1.38 to 3.17, with an average value of 0.13 (0.13 higher than the average man) and a standard deviation of 0.84.

---

Table 4.1: Variable Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Definition</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>legislative effectiveness score</td>
<td>score of senator’s success in moving her sponsored bills through stages of the legislative process, accounting for each bill’s “relative substantive significance”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bipartisan index</td>
<td>score of senator’s bipartisan behavior on the basis of bill sponsorship and cosponsorship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>woman</td>
<td>dummy variable equal to 1 if senator is a woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vote share</td>
<td>percent of votes senator won in last election (in senator’s state)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appointee</td>
<td>dummy variable equal to 1 if senator appointed to temporarily hold office between elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>special elect</td>
<td>dummy variable equal to 1 if senator elected outside of normal election cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total dollars (m)</td>
<td>cash sum received by senator (via campaign committee) during that Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>small dollars %</td>
<td>percent of <em>total dollars</em> senator received from “individuals”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state split index</td>
<td>percentage point margin potus won in last election (in senator’s state) with directionality reversed when potus is member of opposing party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cuts extremism</td>
<td>distance between senator’s static <code>dwnom1</code> score and the median <code>dwnom1</code> score of the opposing party during that Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maga extremism</td>
<td>distance between senator’s static <code>dwnom2</code> score and the median <code>dwnom2</code> score of the opposing party during that Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cuts partisanship</td>
<td>distance between the two parties’ median <code>dwnom1</code> scores for each Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maga partisanship</td>
<td>distance between the two parties’ median <code>dwnom2</code> scores for each Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>party defector</td>
<td>dummy variable equal to 1 if senator switched parties since the last Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incumbency</td>
<td>number count of Congresses senator has served</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>dummy variable equal to 1 if senator’s first Congress in Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>candidate-in-action</td>
<td>dummy variable equal to 1 if senator is running in the forthcoming election</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lame duck</td>
<td>dummy variable equal to 1 if senator does not expect to serve in the next Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>committee chair</td>
<td>dummy variable equal to 1 if senator is a committee chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subcommittee chair</td>
<td>dummy variable equal to 1 if senator is a subcommittee chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>power cmte member</td>
<td>dummy variable equal to 1 if member of Appropriations, Rules, Ways and Means, or Budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state size index</td>
<td>number of members in state congressional delegation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minority member</td>
<td>dummy variable equal to 1 if senator is a member of the Senate minority party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minority × bi</td>
<td>interaction variable to test whether the effect of <code>bipartisan index</code> depends on whether or not the senator is a <code>minority member</code></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

102 Voteview and UCLA Social Sciences Division, *Roll-Call Votes*, “All Senate Members and Parties” (2020).
DATA : Limitations

The data used in this article was limited to roughly 25 years and only one chamber of Congress. This especially impacted my ability to draw meaningful conclusions about women senators because the Senate does not have a large sample to study.

In terms of data acquisition, the dataset was challenging to compile because the variables came from no fewer than eight different datasets. Twenty-six years of senators are relatively easy to keep track of; however, name inconsistencies, deaths, marriages, resignations, executive appointments, and even contemporaneous father and son senators at times created a puzzle.

METHODOLOGY : Empirical Model

A combined dataset of legislative effectiveness score and bipartisan index, from the 103rd Congress to the 115th Congress, powers this study. Taking a micro-level approach, I analyze differences in legislative effectiveness among senators every two years (i.e. individual-level unit of analysis). Technically, data are grouped together by senator, and senator grouping data are observed separately by congress. Take for example, Senator Lincoln Chafee, a member of the 106th through 109th Congresses—his name appears not once but four times in the dataset.103

One full term in the Senate spans three Congresses, so senators routinely serve during multiple Congresses. Of 252 senators sampled from the 103rd to the 115th Congress, 224 are sampled more than once. Those 224 senator groupings (i.e. senators) account for 1,252 observations. For this reason, the dataset is incompatible with basic ordinary least squares (OLS) models, which depend on serially uncorrelated observations, but it is well-suited for fixed effects models that treat multi-congress senators as panel data.104 For each fixed effects regression, senator is the panel variable and congress is the time variable. The downside of an unaltered fixed effects model is that it does not return coefficients measuring the role of gender.105 So to otherwise test my hypothesis that

103 Senator Lincoln Chafee holds the highest lifetime bipartisan score.
104 Panels are determined by senator. Periods are identified by congress.
105 Fixed effects models omit variables that do not change over time, which includes gender in this case.
legislative effectiveness plays out differently for men versus women, I regress each fixed effects model twice—once for men and once for women.

Data for the dependent variable, *legislative effectiveness score*, were gathered from the Center for Effective Lawmaking.\(^{106}\) Data for the key explanatory variable, *bipartisan index*, were provided by the Lugar Center.\(^{107}\) Data for the key fixed effect, *woman*, were also collected from the Center for Effective Lawmaking.\(^{108}\) All three variables are summarized on the next page in Table 4.2, along with control variables: *vote share*, *appointee*, *special elect*, *total dollars (millions)*, *small dollars (percent)*, *state split index*, *cuts extremism*, *maga extremism*, *cuts partisanship*, *maga partisanship*, *defector*, *incumbency*, *freshman*, *candidate-in-action*, *lame duck*, *committee chair*, *subcommittee chair*, *power committee member*, *state size index*, *minority member*, and *minority×bipartisan*.

As discussed in the last section, majority and minority leaders are excluded from the analyses as they did not receive *bipartisan index* scores from the Lugar Center, as well as non-voting members and senators sponsoring fewer than three qualifying bills (i.e. Jeff Sessions during the 113th Congress). Independents are coded with the party with which they caucus.

This study explores whether bipartisan senators are more effective at advancing their legislative proposals into law, whether the relationship between bipartisanship and effectiveness plays out differently for male senators versus female senators, and the external factors that play into those relationships. To test my hypotheses, I run two bivariate and eight multivariate fixed effects regressions to test the relationship between *bipartisan index* and *legislative effectiveness score* for men and for women against control variables.

The first set of models, Model M0 and Model W0, are bivariate regressions to serve as a baseline for the relationship between *bipartisan index* and *legislative effectiveness score* (i.e. they do not control for any other explanatory variables). The rest of the models are multivariate regressions. Models M1 and W1 test the relationship against control variables that describe senators’ backing:

\(^{106}\) The Center for Effective Lawmaking, *Legislative Effectiveness Scores*, “All Senate Data from 1973-2018” (Craig Volden and Alan Wiseman, February 27, 2019).

\(^{107}\) The Lugar Center and the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University, *Bipartisan Index*, “103rd-115th Congresses: Senate Scores” (Mark Rom, 2019).

### Table 4.2: Variable Summaries by Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>man</th>
<th>woman</th>
<th>democrat</th>
<th>republican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AVE</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>AVE</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>democrat</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>woman</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leg effectiveness score</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bipartisan index</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vote share %</td>
<td>59.61</td>
<td>10.73</td>
<td>56.57</td>
<td>9.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appointee</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>special elect</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total dollars (m)</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>6.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>small dollars %</td>
<td>51.99</td>
<td>49.16</td>
<td>58.50</td>
<td>24.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state split index</td>
<td>8.59</td>
<td>15.25</td>
<td>8.25</td>
<td>14.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cuts extremism</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maga extremism</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cuts partisanship</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maga partisanship</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>party defector</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incumbency</td>
<td>6.65</td>
<td>5.08</td>
<td>4.95</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>candidate-in-action</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lame duck</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>committee chair</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subcommittee chair</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>power cmte member</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state size index</td>
<td>7.58</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>15.52</td>
<td>16.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minority member</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minority × bipartisan</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vote share, appointee, special elect, total dollars (millions), and small dollars (percent).

Models M2 and W2 test the relationship against polarity across the board by adding control variables: state split index, cuts extremism, maga extremism, cuts partisanship, and maga partisanship. Models M3 and W3 test the relationship against status dynamics at play by adding control variables: defector, incumbency, freshman, candidate-in-action, lame duck, committee chair, subcommittee chair, power committee member, state size index, and minority member.
Finally, Models M4 and W4 account for the effect of minority member on bipartisan index by including the interaction variable minority×bipartisan. See Table 4.3 for all regression equations.

Table 4.3: Empirical Equations

models M0 & W0  \[ les = \beta_0 + \beta_1 b_i + \varepsilon \]
models M1 & W1  \[ les = \beta_0 + \beta_1 b_i + \beta_2 \text{votenshare}_i + \beta_3 \text{appointee}_i + \beta_4 \text{specialelect}_i + \beta_5 \text{totaldollars}_i + \beta_6 \text{smalldollars}_i + \varepsilon \]
models M2 & W2  \[ les = \beta_0 + \beta_1 b_i + \beta_2 \text{votenshare}_i + \beta_3 \text{appointee}_i + \beta_4 \text{specialelect}_i + \beta_5 \text{totaldollars}_i + \beta_6 \text{smalldollars}_i + \beta_7 \text{statesplit}_i + \beta_8 \text{cutsextremism}_i + \beta_9 \text{magaextremism}_i + \beta_{10} \text{cutspartisanship}_i + \beta_{11} \text{magapartisanship}_i + \varepsilon \]
models M3 & W3  \[ les = \beta_0 + \beta_1 b_i + \beta_2 \text{votenshare}_i + \beta_3 \text{appointee}_i + \beta_4 \text{specialelect}_i + \beta_5 \text{totaldollars}_i + \beta_6 \text{smalldollars}_i + \beta_7 \text{statesplit}_i + \beta_8 \text{cutsextremism}_i + \beta_9 \text{magaextremism}_i + \beta_{10} \text{cutspartisanship}_i + \beta_{11} \text{magapartisanship}_i + \beta_{12} \text{partydefector}_i + \beta_{13} \text{incumbency}_i + \beta_{14} \text{freshman}_i + \beta_{15} \text{candidate}_i + \beta_{16} \text{lameduck}_i + \beta_{17} \text{commchair}_i + \beta_{18} \text{subchair}_i + \beta_{19} \text{powercomm}_i + \beta_{20} \text{statesize}_i + \beta_{21} \text{minoritymember}_i + \varepsilon \]
models M4 & W4  \[ les = \beta_0 + \beta_1 b_i + \beta_2 \text{votenshare}_i + \beta_3 \text{appointee}_i + \beta_4 \text{specialelect}_i + \beta_5 \text{totaldollars}_i + \beta_6 \text{smalldollars}_i + \beta_7 \text{statesplit}_i + \beta_8 \text{cutsextremism}_i + \beta_9 \text{magaextremism}_i + \beta_{10} \text{cutspartisanship}_i + \beta_{11} \text{magapartisanship}_i + \beta_{12} \text{partydefector}_i + \beta_{13} \text{incumbency}_i + \beta_{14} \text{freshman}_i + \beta_{15} \text{candidate}_i + \beta_{16} \text{lameduck}_i + \beta_{17} \text{commchair}_i + \beta_{18} \text{subchair}_i + \beta_{19} \text{powercomm}_i + \beta_{20} \text{statesize}_i + \beta_{21} \text{minoritymember}_i + \beta_{22} \text{minority×bipartisan}_i + \varepsilon \]

METHODOLOGY: Limitations

By nature of the fixed effects methodology used, this study is limited to only those variables that vary from session to session. While the study is sound, it does not measure the relationship between legislative effectiveness score and demographic variables (e.g. race, faith, region, generation) or experience variables (e.g. lawyer, doctor). To test my hypothesis regarding gender, men and women have to be studied separately to specifically overcome this limitation.

Moreover, this methodology cannot establish a causal relationship. In reality, establishing causality would require the ability to manipulate the bipartisan index of senators. The study also does not rule out reverse causality—it is also possible that effective democrats are more often propositioned by republican cosponsors and vice versa, in which case effectiveness begets bipartisanship.

This study is limited to the Senate between 1992 and 2018, so additional studies are necessary to establish whether these relationships exist in legislative bodies outside of those constraints (e.g. state legislative bodies or the House of Representatives). Volden and Wiseman established similar relationships in their 2016 study of the House; however, that study employs a different methodology and controls for a different, though similar, set of variables.
5 : Results

The following results are detailed in Table 5.1.\textsuperscript{109}

LATENT CONSTRUCTS : Gender

The positive and highly significant coefficient on bipartisan index in Model M0 offers some indication that bipartisan senators are more effective, at least for men. Model W0 does not establish that bipartisan women have the same type of positive relationship with effectiveness—the coefficient on bipartisan index is not significant, but neither is Model W0 itself. Additional models may still find that bipartisan women are even more effective than bipartisan men.

LATENT CONSTRUCTS : Backing, Polarity, Status

The addition of backing, polarity, and status variables in Models M1, W1, M2, W2, M3, and W3 seek to isolate the relationship between bipartisan index and legislative effectiveness score by accounting for other variables that might explain a senator’s effectiveness. Neither backing nor polarity, itself, seems to have strong explanatory power for men, given that models M1 and M2 do not elicit much difference in the measured bipartisan index coefficient. Despite the fact that the coefficient on the key explanatory variable remains strong in models M1 and M2, the possibility remains that there is no direct relationship between bipartisan men and effectiveness in reality, but rather endogenous factors are at play in the model (i.e. omitted variable bias).

To address this possibility, I add a comprehensive catalog of control variables that describe relevant status dynamics. These include many of Volden and Wiseman’s commonly-used controls, including committee chair, subcommittee chair, power committee member, state size index, and minority member.\textsuperscript{110} I follow their example too in controlling for incumbency and freshman, but I add a pair of less-common senator statuses, including party defector and lame duck.

\textsuperscript{109} The results reported here are outcomes of the estimation equations expressed in Table 4.3, which were based on the empirical model diagrammed in Figure 3.1.

My final addition, *candidate-in-action*, controls for behavioral changes specific to senators in the run-up to an election. With these variables, M3 shows that status has the biggest impact on the measured relationship between *bipartisan index* and *legislative effectiveness score* for men, with a 0.08 point drop on the *bipartisan index* coefficient.

There is no significant relationship between *bipartisan index* and *legislative effectiveness score* for women in Models W1, W2, and W3, so the marginal effects of backing, polarity, and status are not possible to measure for women. However, the addition of backing variables does edge the overall model into the realm of significance. Given their overall significance, these models infer that there is no meaningful relationship for Senate women between *bipartisan index* and *legislative effectiveness score*.

This is not conclusive for women, however, as it is possible that bipartisanship is positively correlated with effectiveness for women in reality, but the relatively small sample size prevents its detection in the model (i.e. outliers are masking the relationship).

**LATENT CONSTRUCTS** : Stature

Models M4 and W4 address the concern that *minority member* stature moderates the effect of *bipartisan index* on *legislative effectiveness score* by introducing the interaction variable *minority*bipartisan. The variable makes a difference for men and especially for women.

In Model M4, the effect of *minority*bipartisan is not significant on its own, meaning that any difference in the effect of *bipartisan index* on *legislative effectiveness score* is negligible on average for majority party men versus minority party men. Its introduction does, however, increase the magnitude of the *bipartisan index* main effect on *legislative effectiveness score*.

For women, the addition of *minority*bipartisan in Model W4 does not reveal significance in the main effect of *bipartisan index*, but is significant on its own. On average, bipartisan women in the minority are shown to be more effective than partisan women in the minority.

All else held equal, Models M4 and W4 indicate that women in the minority benefit most from bipartisanship, men benefit regardless of stature, and women in the majority do not benefit.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M0</th>
<th>M1</th>
<th>M2</th>
<th>M3</th>
<th>M4</th>
<th>W0</th>
<th>W1</th>
<th>W2</th>
<th>W3</th>
<th>W4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.24***</td>
<td>0.20**</td>
<td>0.21**</td>
<td>0.11*</td>
<td>0.14*</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.01†</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.03</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.46***</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>-0.28**</td>
<td>-0.27**</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.95</td>
<td>-0.36</td>
<td>-0.62*</td>
<td>-0.65*</td>
<td>-0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.00*</td>
<td>0.00**</td>
<td>0.00***</td>
<td>0.00***</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.72*</td>
<td>14.08*</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.15*</td>
<td>1.15*</td>
<td>1.15*</td>
<td>1.15*</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.72*</td>
<td>14.08*</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.86</td>
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<td>-3.84†</td>
<td>-3.84†</td>
<td>-3.84†</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.72*</td>
<td>14.08*</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.72*</td>
<td>14.08*</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.82†</td>
<td>0.82†</td>
<td>0.82†</td>
<td>0.82†</td>
<td>0.82†</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.72*</td>
<td>14.08*</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.13</td>
</tr>
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<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.72*</td>
<td>14.08*</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.30***</td>
<td>-0.30***</td>
<td>-0.30***</td>
<td>-0.30***</td>
<td>-0.30***</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.72*</td>
<td>14.08*</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.10†</td>
<td>0.10†</td>
<td>0.10†</td>
<td>0.10†</td>
<td>0.10†</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.72*</td>
<td>14.08*</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.72*</td>
<td>14.08*</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.16***</td>
<td>1.15***</td>
<td>1.15***</td>
<td>1.15***</td>
<td>1.15***</td>
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<td>12.72*</td>
<td>14.08*</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.29*</td>
<td>0.29*</td>
<td>0.29*</td>
<td>0.29*</td>
<td>0.29*</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.72*</td>
<td>14.08*</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.72*</td>
<td>14.08*</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.72*</td>
<td>14.08*</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.19†</td>
<td>-0.19†</td>
<td>-0.19†</td>
<td>-0.19†</td>
<td>-0.19†</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.72*</td>
<td>14.08*</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.72*</td>
<td>14.08*</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>12.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.01***</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>-2.93**</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>1.01***</td>
<td>-0.40</td>
<td>-6.19**</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>-1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.00**</td>
<td>0.00**</td>
<td>0.00***</td>
<td>0.00***</td>
<td>0.00***</td>
<td>0.00**</td>
<td>0.00**</td>
<td>0.00***</td>
<td>0.00***</td>
<td>0.00***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above presents the marginal effects among men and women. The table includes various variables such as bipartisan index, vote share, appointee, special elect, total dollars, small dollars, state split index, cuts extremism, maga extremism, cuts partisanship, maga partisanship, party defector, incumbency, freshman, candidate-in-action, lame duck, committee chair, subcmte chair, power cmte member, state size index, minority member, minority × bipartisan, constant, prob > F.
I began with the question, when are bipartisan senators more effective? My analysis found that bipartisanship is positively correlated with effectiveness for most senators, as evidenced by the sign attached to each subgroup’s coefficient in Table 5.2. Furthermore, the signs, sizes, and significance levels of the coefficients show that all three of my original hypotheses were off—each was partly true, but none was entirely true. First, \textit{bipartisan index} and \textit{legislative effectiveness score} are positively correlated—but in the majority only for men and in the minority only for women. Second, the effect of \textit{bipartisan index} on \textit{legislative effectiveness score} does differ between senators’ genders—but is only greater for women when in the minority. Third, \textit{bipartisan index} does indicate a greater \textit{legislative effectiveness score} for senators in the minority party than for their otherwise-equal majority-party counterpart—but only for women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>man</th>
<th>woman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( \mu )</td>
<td>0.14*</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \beta(BI) )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textbf{majority}</td>
<td>+0.14*</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textbf{minority}</td>
<td>+0.08</td>
<td>+0.22*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strictly speaking, those coefficients represent the value increase of \textit{legislative effectiveness score} that an average senator will accrue for each additional \textit{bipartisan index} point. Interpreting these values is less straightforward. For what it’s worth, I compare the average \textit{legislative effectiveness score} values of bipartisan and partisan \textit{sencons} to roughly illustrate the benefit of bipartisanship for the two significant subgroups.\textsuperscript{111} As Table 5.3 outlines, this exercise guesses that bipartisan women in the minority are 38\% more effective on average than partisan women in the minority. In the majority, bipartisan men are 31\% more effective on average than partisan men. Bipartisanship does not appear to significantly anticipate the effectiveness of women in the majority.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|}
\hline
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>( \mu ) (LES)</th>
<th>( \beta(BI) )</th>
<th>( \Delta \mu ) (LES)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>\textbf{man}</td>
<td>+0.14*</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>when ( \text{bi} &lt; 0 ) 1.20 0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textbf{woman}</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>when ( \text{bi} &gt; 0 ) 1.57 0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textbf{majority}</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>\textbf{bi increase} 31% 38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textbf{minority}</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Coefficients of LES on BI}
\end{table}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|}
\hline
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>( \mu ) (LES)</th>
<th>( \beta(BI) )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>\textbf{man}</td>
<td>0.14*</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textbf{woman}</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Coefficients, Interpreted}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{111} Bipartisan refers to values of \textit{bipartisan index} greater than zero, partisan refers to all others.
So, why is bipartisanship correlated with effectiveness for women in the House majority, but not for women in the Senate majority? Volden and Wiseman offer the possibility that, “the types of issues that women sponsor in Congress, which tend to not be broadly supported by men and thus suffer from policy gridlock without substantial coalition-building efforts,” account for the extra bump among majority women in the House. Women serving in the House, however, do not contend with the Senate filibuster. Women are disproportionately elected by the Democratic party (72% of sencons since 1992), and therefore disproportionately face Republican minority members who are nearly always men (92% since 1992). Therefore, it is plausible that bipartisanship does not benefit women in the Senate majority because men in the Senate minority filibuster women-led legislation, despite the leading women’s coalition-building efforts. After all, women are more bipartisan than men in the Senate majority, yet remain less effective (see Tables 5.4 and 5.5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>μ(BI)</th>
<th>man</th>
<th>woman</th>
<th>μ(LES)</th>
<th>man</th>
<th>woman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>majority</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>majority</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minority</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>minority</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>collective</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>collective</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This explanation might also account for the unexpectedly weak connection between bipartisanship and effectiveness among men occupying the minority. Men in the Senate, who seem to show less natural affinity for bipartisanship on the whole, have little incentive to work across the aisle towards uncertain ends when the filibuster offers a means of obstruction that can prevent undesirable legislation with relative certainty (see Table 5.4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>n</th>
<th>man</th>
<th>woman</th>
<th>nSENCON</th>
<th>man</th>
<th>woman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>senators</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>majority</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sencons</td>
<td>1,072</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>minority</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONTROL VARIABLES: Mandate, Funding, Clout, Tenure

In isolating the effect of bipartisan index, this study necessarily tested the effects of control variables on legislative effectiveness score, as referenced in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8: Effects Compared by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>man</th>
<th>woman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bipartisan index</td>
<td>0.14 *</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vote share</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appointee</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>special elect</td>
<td>-0.27 **</td>
<td>-0.65 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total dollars (m)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>small dollars %</td>
<td>0.00 ***</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state split index</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cuts extremism</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>14.08 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maga extremism</td>
<td>1.15 *</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cuts partisanship</td>
<td>-3.84 †</td>
<td>-12.57 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maga partisanship</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>party defector</td>
<td>0.82 †</td>
<td>omitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incumbency</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.08 †</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freshman</td>
<td>-0.30 ***</td>
<td>-0.46 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>candidate-in-action</td>
<td>0.10 †</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lame duck</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>committee chair</td>
<td>1.15 ***</td>
<td>0.99 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subcmte chair</td>
<td>0.29 *</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>power cmte member</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state size index</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minority member</td>
<td>-0.19 †</td>
<td>-0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minority × bipartisan</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.31 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constant</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>-1.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

prob > F                       | 0.00 ***| 0.00 ***|

Among these findings, a few stand out. For instance, the strength of a senator’s backing appears to have no effect on that senator’s ability to advance her agenda. Indisputable voter mandates (i.e. overwhelming victory margins) do not imply greater effectiveness in the Senate—nor do mandates
Senators appear equally likely to advance their agendas whether they win in recounts or landslides. Likewise, effectiveness is equally unattached to financial backing. According to this study, formidable fundraisers are neither advantaged by their financial leverage nor disadvantaged by their donor-related distractions. Contrary, perhaps, to Senator Bernie Sanders’ modus operandi and the growing popularity of small-dollar fundraising pledges, this study uncovered no evidence that grassroots-funded senators are more or less effective than senators who accept corporate checks and super PAC support. That said, this study also found no evidence to support unlimited campaign spending, given that increased funds are not associated with more effective legislating. Senators can walk and chew gum at the same time, but good walkers aren’t identified by their gum. However, good walking could still be rewarded with gum. The neutral coefficients of Senate war chests only suggest that greater fundraising does not facilitate greater effectiveness—there is no suggestion that greater effectiveness does not facilitate greater fundraising.

Like representatives in the House, senators are more effective with status—surviving re-election and scoring a committee chairmanship both boost the likelihood that a senator is extra effective. In fact, chairing a committee has the largest cross-gender significance of any indicator tested. However, a man chairing a committee carries more clout than a woman chairing a committee on average. Subcommittee chairmanships also significantly correlate with positive effectiveness for men, while they make no significant difference for women. Finally power committees are actually associated with negative direction in a woman’s legislative effectiveness. Perhaps women receive less return on committee assignments because they are already reputable among their peers, but the next insight casts considerable doubt on any such theory.

Senators in their rookie season tend to miss out on one third of a point in their legislative effectiveness score—for women, almost a half-point. Though larger, the relationship is less significant for women because they continue to gain effectiveness as they rack up tenure, whereas men only experience a significant tenure effect just after their first term. These gender gaps sustain the narrative that men’s credentials are assumed and afford them more immediate

effectiveness, whereas institutional legitimacy is less automatic for women. Rather, years of service (i.e. firsthand evidence) eventually render women’s qualifications undeniable. The idea here is not that the Senate is overtly sexist, but rather implicitly biased; and given the relative recency and overall scarcity of women senators, the existence of an added layer of scrutiny just for women is somewhat unexceptional.

The fact that gaining committee chair status and shedding freshman status are tied for least gendered indicators tested in this study is, in my view, more striking. I would point out that gender gaps that would otherwise represent a 15% effectiveness bump for women might not qualify as monuments to gender equality.
PREVAILING IMPLICATIONS

At its outset, this study was motivated by a sense of approaching collision between Americans’ apparent yearning for effective lawmaking and Capitol Hill’s seeming abandonment of bipartisan deal-making, set in a country constitutionally designed to deadlock in the absence of consensus. The premise of this narrative begged the question, “when are bipartisan senators more effective?” Additionally motivated by the emerging zeitgeist that women are more likely to collaborate and compromise to get the job done, the question was further specified by gender—ultimately asking, “when are bipartisan women more effective senators than bipartisan men, if ever?”

In short, bipartisanship is found to most likely enhance effectiveness for women in the minority party and for majority men. There is no such evidence for majority women or minority men—neither is there evidence of bipartisanship ever inhibiting effectiveness.

The chief implication of this study is that bipartisanship is not associated with ineffective lawmaking in the Senate. When it comes to lawmaking, there is no apparent downside to bipartisanship—regardless of gender or stature in the Senate. The study also raises questions, however, in regards to gender and stature. In the House, bipartisanship is positively correlated with effectiveness across gender and stature, especially among women and in the minority. Why then are bipartisan women only more effective in the minority? Why is bipartisanship more effective in the minority for only women? The measurement used for effectiveness accounts only for constructive maneuvers, not obstructive. Therefore, the implication might be that the Senate’s “deliberation” defenses (e.g. the filibuster), rather than fostering coalition-building, are taking the place of actual lawmaking and perhaps even animating unchecked sexism. Future scholarship will hopefully provide more insight on the matter.

In taking up the question of whether or not bipartisanship estimates effectiveness among senators, this research explores the legislative incentives for bipartisanship. Unqualified,

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however, that question matters only if senators are motivated by legislative success, which is not necessarily the case. The primal motivation of most lawmakers is arguably their reelection, which this study does not directly address. Instead, I accept the Center for Effective Lawmaking’s 2019 conclusion that legislative effectiveness does, in fact, give incumbents an electoral advantage. That being the case, this study effectively explores the electoral incentives for bipartisanship in the United States Senate and whether those incentives differ across gender and stature. Given that the connection between legislative effectiveness and electoral success is found to be conditional, however, further scholarship is necessary to fully scrutinize the electoral conditions under which bipartisanship is advantageous. Future scholars may also dig into why women are not electorally rewarded with representation commensurate with their relatively ascendant bipartisanship and effectiveness.

116 Danielle Thomsen, Sarah Treul, Craig Volden, and Alan Wiseman, “Turning Legislative Effectiveness into Electoral Success” (CEL Working Paper 2019, The Center for Effective Lawmaking, University of Virginia and Vanderbilt University, Charlottesville, VA, 2019).


