Does The Congressional Revolving Door Feed a Lobbying Black Market?

A Thesis
submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
of Georgetown University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of
Master of Public Policy

By

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Washington, DC
April 17, 2013
ABSTRACT

Lobbying is an activity with tremendous influence on the function of the federal government; however, it is only understood and studied through the limited lens of registered lobbyists. This thesis takes a more holistic look at the political influence efforts of private firms by studying the revolving door of senior congressional staffers not only to registered lobbying positions but also to unregistered political influence positions at for-profit enterprises. The unique dataset used in this analysis demonstrates that over half of all senior congressional staffers take private political influence positions when they leave Congress.

In addition, it was theorized that unregistered political influence positions are very similar in function to registered lobbying positions, and that the choice to not register is based on legal, political, and administrative disincentives. There have been notable instances where high profile political actors have been accused of acting as lobbyists without registration. Stable lobbying revenue and falling lobbying registration also suggests that fewer members of the political influence industry are disclosing their activities. This hypothesis—that there is a “black market” of unregistered lobbyists—has not previously been tested in academic research. Multinomial logit regressions show that the characteristics of senior congressional staff do have statistically significant effects on their next job. I find that the characteristics of staffers who take unregistered political influence jobs are substantially different from those who take registered lobbying jobs. This implies
that the nature of these unregistered positions differs significantly from registered
lobbyists and perhaps there is no black market for unregistered lobbyists at all.

INDEX WORDS: Lobbying, Lobbying Disclosure Act, Lobbying Registration,
Congress, Congressional Staff, Senate, House of Representatives,
Political Influence, Revolving Door.
To my parents — Janet Cahill & Rick Engler —
for their unwavering support of my aspirations
and their civic guidance of my ambitions.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to first thank Lee Drutman for his early guidance in determining how I might make a valuable contribution to political science. In addition, this thesis would have not been possible without Dr. Drutman’s and Dr. Bruce Cain’s generous donation of the core congressional staffer dataset.

Next, I am greatly indebted to my thesis advisor, Gurkan Ay. Without his patient and steady-handed assistance, I am certain this project would not have been completed. I am also grateful to my peer reviewer, Ashley Begley, for her thoughtful and incisive comments.

My friends and family deserve my sincerest thanks as well, not only for their helpful intellectual contributions, but also for their tolerance of my monomaniacal focus on the completion of this work.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Lobbying, especially by for-profit interests, is widely considered to have great influence on the function of the federal government and, as a result, it has received substantial attention from political scientists. Still, in relation to its growing importance, lobbying is very poorly understood. The range of academic research, although it has come to some very valuable conclusions, has been limited to only studying lobbying in terms of registered lobbyists.

This is a notable limitation because individuals in positions that involve lobbying activities could potentially not register, creating what I have termed a ‘lobbying black market.’ There is substantial evidence to suggest that this non-registration is exactly what is happening.

According to the Center for Responsive Politics\(^1\), although the total amount spent on lobbying was 500 million dollars higher in 2012 than it was in 2007, there were almost 2,500 fewer registered lobbyists (Figure 1.1). This is hardly conclusive, but it raises the question whether individuals are resisting registration despite continued demand for lobbying services.

Media accounts of high profile individuals appearing to perform substantial lobbying activities without registration lends further credence to this theory. Former Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle is a Senior Policy Advisor at DLA Piper’s

Government Affairs Division. Before that, Alston & Bird, another multimillion-dollar lobbying shop, employed him as a Special Policy Advisor. Yet the South Dakotan has never registered as a lobbyist himself. Newt Gingrich never registered either, despite being paid more than $1.6 million in consulting fees by Freddie Mac and admitting that he met with representatives in order to promote legislation on Freddie Mac’s behalf. When asked about his role working for Freddie Mac, Mr. Gingrich described it as that of a “historian.”

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4Glenn Kessler, “Newt Gingrich and Freddie Mac: Is he being misleading?,” The Washington Post, November 17, 2011,
Although Mr. Gingrich’s nomenclature is unique, there does appear to be a consistent lexicon used within the nebulous industry of unregistered political influence. The word cloud (Figure 1) gives a first look at what terms are commonly found in the titles of former congressional staff who take unregistered positions at politically active for-profit firms. Jobs such as ‘Legislative Strategies Consultant,’ ‘Vice Presidents for Congressional Affairs,’ and ‘Director of Federal Communications’ are abundant in Washington DC.

The conspicuous titles and anecdotal media stories, taken with the context of the decline of total lobbying registration, only serve to raise questions. Why might individuals be adverse to registration? And is not registering as a lobbyist a feasible option? A detailed examination of the current state of federal lobbying will answer these two questions. Current law and the political zeitgeist create disincentives to registering as a lobbyist, and there are few reasons to fear any repercussions from this abdication. This leads to a third question: Is non-registration hiding an extensive portion of the political influence industry?

This thesis provides a first examination of the magnitude of the unregistered political influence industry through an analysis of the revolving door of senior congressional staff to these previously undocumented positions. Multinomial logit regression analysis is used to gain some insight into the types of staffers that leave congress for political influence positions as either unregistered or registered lobbyists). This thesis also discusses the factors that affect the tenure of congressional staffers.

Figure 1.2: *Word Cloud of Unregistered Political Influence Job Titles*
This word cloud shows the most common words in the titles of former senior congressional staffers who took unregistered political influence positions. Larger font size of each word indicates higher frequencies of that word appearing in titles.
Chapter 2

Background and Literature Review

2.1 Lobbying Efficacy

Lobbying, in this thesis, is defined as an attempt by for-profit companies to influence federal lawmakers through direct contact with them or their staff. There are high returns to lobbying expenditures in individual instances of congressional action, such as a return of over $220 for every $1 in lobbying investment leading up the passage of the American Jobs Creation Act of 2004.\(^1\) In addition, Richter et al. (2009) found that a one percent increase in a firm’s lobbying expenditures coincided with a 0.5 to 1.6 percentage point reduction in the following year’s effective tax rates.\(^2\) Alternatively, Strategas, an investment research firm, constructed a stock index of the fifty companies that invested the most in lobbying as a percentage of assets. On average, this group of firms outperformed the S&P 500 by 11 percent per year from 2001 to 2011.\(^3\)

The ostensible importance of lobbying in federal policymaking is infused in the press and general population. Still, Bertrand, Bombardini, and Trebbi are correct to argue that “notwithstanding its perceived fundamental role in affecting economic policy, very little systemic empirical research about the lobbying industry is...

available to economists and political scientists."\textsuperscript{4} Even though lobbying appears to have powerful repercussions to policy, the academic substantiation for this assertion is limited.

Although perhaps not due to the academic literature, something has convinced private industry that lobbying is effective. Total lobbying spending averaged $3.4 billion dollars annually between 2008 and 2011 (Figure 1.1). Firms that engage in lobbying encounter more information about political developments and better understand the benefits of lobbying. This can lead to a feedback effect resulting in more lobbying.\textsuperscript{5} Lobbying may also be associated with different firm behavior. Igan, Mishra, and Tressel found higher lobbying spending to be associated with firms that engaged in more risk-taking from 2000 to 2007 and enjoyed higher than average stock returns when the Troubled Asset Relief Program was passed.\textsuperscript{6}

Companies turn to federal government employees and the revolving door to satiate their demand for lobbyists. The “revolving door” in the political sphere refers to both the practice of government officials leaving their public positions for lobbying jobs and to career moves in the reverse direction. The existence of the revolving door between congressional staff and lobbyists has been well established. Eggers notes that, in 2009, “lobbying reports accounting for 64.7 percent of the total value of all lobbying listed at least one former staffer or Member of Congress.”\textsuperscript{7} Similarly, between 1998 and 2008, lobbyists with federal government experience brought in 56 percent of all private lobbying revenue.\textsuperscript{8} Former congressional staffers accounted for 61 percent of that revenue, or 34 percent of the total lobbying firm

\textsuperscript{5} Drutman, \textit{The Business of America}, 2011.
\textsuperscript{6} Igan, Mishra, and Tressel. \textit{A Fistful of Dollars}, 2011.
\textsuperscript{7} Eggers, \textit{The Partisan Revolving Door}, 2010.
revenue. A 2007 analysis of Washington’s top 50 lobbyists found that 34 of them were former federal employees.

The revolving door receives this attention in part due to concerns over undue influence, malfeasance, and corruption of public officials. This focus has intensified in the years since the Jack Abramoff scandal—Abramoff was notorious for promising congressional staffers jobs in order to influence their decision-making.

Without a doubt, former government employees, including a healthy dosage of congressional staffers, are the one of the largest pools from which firms pick up lobbyists (Figure 4.1). Examinations of the lobbying process help to edify as to why these staffers are in such high demand. The predominant theories of lobbying influence indicate that the effect of this practice is manifested in three distinct ways: quid pro quo exchange, informational biases, and legislative subsidy. Political scientists have weighed in at length on these topics, but the academic evidence does not heavily favor one over the other so much as it suggests a conflation. However, understanding these processes does demonstrate why staffers make for favored lobbyists.

First, the theory of quid pro quo exchanges suggest that lobbyists are making direct, though not explicit, trades with elected officials: campaign contributions, independent expenditures during elections, and the promise of future employment are given in return for official actions. This type of lobbying is fundamentally equivalent to corruption, which is why it is more likely to happen through

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9Ibid.
12Stark, Beyond Quid Pro Quo, 108.
acquaintances like former staffers—for obvious reasons these exchanges must be made on trust alone, rather than written documentation.

Secondly, lobbyists can influence political decision making through providing information that can be accurate or alternatively incomplete or misleading in a targeted manner.\textsuperscript{13} In this scenario, staffers again make trusted sources who are not only more likely to be listened to, but also have far more access to policy makers in order to convey this information.

Legislative subsidy is the third common understanding of lobbying as a mechanism of influence. This hypothesis suggests that the goal of lobbying is "not to change the legislators’ minds but to assist natural allies in achieving their own, coincident objectives."\textsuperscript{14} Here again, it is easy to understand how congressional staffers familiar with legislators’ policy preferences would be well suited for this type of influence.

The various channels through which lobbyists work are benefited by the connections and experience of congressional staffers. This drives up wages for lobbyists—which have at times started as high as $300,000\textsuperscript{15}—but there are many other reasons that staffers leave for the private sector. In addition, there are many factors that drive staffers away from work in Congress.

2.2 Congressional Staff

DC Congressional staffers work very long hours—averaging 53 hours per week when Congress is in session. They are generally underpaid when compared to private

\textsuperscript{13}Feldman and Bennedsen, \textit{Informational Lobbying}, 633

\textsuperscript{14}Hall and Deardorff, \textit{Lobbying as Legislative Subsidy}, 69-71.

counterparts and are aware of the disparity between their pay and what their services are worth. In addition, only one in four (26 percent) are satisfied with their ability to manage work-life balance.\textsuperscript{16} Congressional staffers generally work in cramped conditions with little to no privacy, and staffers are often viewed as extensions of their member of Congress.\textsuperscript{17} Perhaps as a result, they also generally receive less credit for accomplishments than the Member of Congress that they work for, though they are not likewise shielded from blame.\textsuperscript{18}

Congressional staffers tend to be young and staffers have “short career ladders and can achieve positions of responsibility fairly quickly.”\textsuperscript{19} A survey of House Congressional staff prepared for the Chief Administrative Officer found that 76.9 percent of House Chiefs of Staff were under 50, and 53.7 percent were under 40 years of age. The same study found that 86.2 percent of Legislative Directors were under 40, and 26.8 percent were under 30 years of age. The youth of these staffers is most apparent in the Legislative Aides, of whom 82.4 percent are under 30 and 97.9 percent are under 40. In part, this is due to a collective view that this work is seen as a job rather than a lifelong career.\textsuperscript{20}

Part of the reason that Congressional staffers tolerate these conditions is that their tenures in Congress lead to many lucrative career options. Many are elected to Congress themselves: although former staffers made up only 4.1 percent of the candidate pool, roughly 15 percent of the members of the House of Representatives in the 101st Congress were former staffers.\textsuperscript{21} Furthermore, Congressional staffers are

\textsuperscript{16}CMF, \textit{Life in Congress}, 2012.  
\textsuperscript{17}Degregorio, \textit{Usurpation and Delegation}, 1992.  
\textsuperscript{18}Romzek, \textit{Accountability of Congressional Staff}, 2000.  
\textsuperscript{19}Romzek and Utter, \textit{Career Dynamics}, 1996.  
\textsuperscript{20}ICF, \textit{House Compensation Study}, 2009.  
\textsuperscript{21}Herrnson, \textit{Congress’s Other Farm Team}, 1994.
often able to move into senior jobs in executive branch agencies that are pertinent to their legislative policy experience (Figure 4.1).

The private political influence industry is another lucrative career avenue for congressional staffers. The combination of short career ladders, tough working conditions, and lucrative opportunities outside of Congress creates a steady flow of staffers leaving through the revolving door. When staffers do choose to leave for private political influence, they may be presented with a choice concerning registration as a lobbyist. Some firms, especially firms that explicitly and exclusively engage in lobbying, are likely to require their employees to register as lobbyists. However, staffers may choose to avoid these positions and instead take jobs that allow for more flexibility. In conjunction with vague legal criteria and a near-complete lack of enforcement, there is a substantial set of disincentives to registering as a lobbyist that could affect this decision.

2.3 LOBBYING IN FEDERAL LAW

The Honest Leadership and Open Government Act (HLOGA) of 2007 and the reforms implemented by newly elected President Barack Obama in 2009\textsuperscript{22} added to an already existing succession of reasons (Figure 2.1) not to register as a lobbyist. Registration imposes an administrative burden of filing reports with the Clerk of the House and the Secretary of the Senate four times every year. This disclosure is public, and includes the amount that was paid to the lobbyist. These are disclosures that some politically minded individuals may not want to make, especially if they aspire to public office or political appointments in which their lobbying careers may be counted as a strike against them.

Registration affects lobbyists in immediate ways as well. Registered lobbyists are subject to special restrictions that prevent them from giving gifts to or paying for the travel of covered officials.\textsuperscript{23} These rules, which even bar lobbyists from buying meals for staffers,\textsuperscript{24} likely open lobbyists up to more liability than ignoring the requirement to register would.

Figure 2.1: Disincentives to Registration and Non-Registration as a Federal Lobbyist

Some decisions to forego registration—like Messrs Gingrich’s and Daschle’s—seem more suspect than others. More recently, the New York Times reported that former White House Communications Director Anita Dunn has been playing the role of campaign adviser and corporate liaison simultaneously. According to the Times, Dunn has been advocating for clients of her communications firm, SKDKnickerbocker, and has visited the White House over 100 times since leaving her communications post in November 2009.\textsuperscript{25}


Even these claims, however, have not been met by any official enforcement action, and in fact there has not once been an enforcement action against an individual for not registering as a lobbyist. Over the past two years, three firms have been fined for failing to abide by registration requirements; however these fines resulted from consistent and blatant violations of disclosure (as opposed to registration) requirements.\textsuperscript{26} There is the possibility that some clients may prefer lobbyist registration in order to avoid any impression of subversive activities, but it is just as likely that there are clients whom prefer anonymity and a lack of registration, which would offset this effect.

The criteria for triggering lobbying registration under the Lobbying Disclosure Act (LDA) are vague and plagued by loopholes. The guidance offered by the Office of the Clerk of the House of Representatives explains that the LDA defines a lobbyist as: “Any individual (1) who is either employed or retained by a client for financial or other compensation (2) whose services include more than one lobbying contact; and (3) whose lobbying activities constitute 20 percent or more of his or her services’ time on behalf of that client during any three month period.”\textsuperscript{27} All three of these criteria must be met to trigger the disclosure requirement under the LDA. The third requirement, known as the 20 percent criteria, is the most susceptible to abuse and evasion. Lisa Rosenberg of the Sunlight Foundation called it a “cavernous loophole.”\textsuperscript{28} The New York Times Editorial Board asserted that

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{27}Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, 2 U.S.C. §1603.
\end{itemize}
there are “thousands of people in Washington’s influence industry who skirt the common-sense definition of lobbying by taking advantage of the law’s loopholes.”

The possibility of this oversight is best illustrated through a 2012 paper which found that HLOGA appears to have slowed the revolving door in terms of registered lobbyists. Given the high financial incentives to take positions in the political influence position and the disincentives to lobbying registration, it is possible that this reduction in the revolving door was accompanied by an increase in staffers taking unregistered political influence positions. The authors, Drutman and Cain, explicitly acknowledge “it is possible that we are observing merely a decline in registered lobbying, and a subset of retiring congressional staff who would have previously registered are now not doing so.”

There is notable evidence to suggest that fewer members of the political influence industry are registering as lobbyists. Since 2007 the number of registered lobbyists has declined from its peak of 14,849 to 12,714 in 2011 (Figure 1.1). Yet there is otherwise little evidence to indicate a drop off in lobbying.

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30 Drutman and Cain, *Congressional Staff and the Revolving Door*, 2012.
31 Ibid.
This paper analyzes the effects of employment characteristics of congressional staff on the future career choices of these staff. This model follows the archetype of typical career path choice models. Notably, in this model there are distinctions between different categorizations of career path outcomes based on decisions that involve registration and bring into play regulated activities.

3.1 Career Path Options

The career decisions of senior congressional staffers can be placed into five distinct categories: (1) The staffer may remain in Congress; (2) The staffer may pursue a position in a different federal government office; (3) The staffer may leave for any position outside the federal government that does not involve private political influence as defined by categories 4 and 5. This category is used as a catchall for positions not otherwise accounted for in the model, and will often be referred to as the ‘other’ category. (4) The staffer may leave to become a registered lobbyist through the official registration process as defined by the Lobbying Disclosure Act; (5) The staffer may opt to pursue an unregistered private political influence position. These options, and the decisions that each staffer makes that differentiate these options, are illustrated in Figure 3.1.

Remaining in the federal government distinguishes options 1 and 2 from 3, 4, and 5. For staffers who do leave the federal government, option 3 represents a move...
away from all private political influence. This makes the third category, which will be referred to as the ‘Other’ category, the most diverse. It includes wide ranging positions like those in state and local governance, working for non-profits and think tanks, and working in private firms in a non-political capacity.

![Career Options Flowchart](image)

**Figure 3.1: Career Options Flowchart**

For those staffers who do leave the federal government and do choose to pursue a position in private political influence, there is a crucial choice to be made concerning registration as a federal lobbyist. Being a lobbyist is only a binary condition in terms of registration (one either does or does not register). Undeniably, there is a spectrum of political activity that ranges from what is clearly that of a lobbyist all the way to what might be commonly understood as political consulting. Pure political consulting is defined for the purposes of this paper as assisting in a firm’s political strategy and decisions in any way that does not involve directly advocating
to members of Congress or covered congressional staff on behalf of a company. At
the other extreme, pure lobbying would be comprised only of activities that aim to
influence legislators and their staffs through direct communication.

Of course, very few political occupations are likely to wholly embrace just one of
these two extremes. Most positions involve some combination of the two, and where
an individual falls on that spectrum is very important to this thesis. Specifically,
some individuals may be in a gray area in which they are near, but decisively on one
side or the other of, the twenty percent lobbying disclosure criteria. Other
individuals may be clearly within the legal qualifications that require lobbying
registration and disclosure, but may chose not to regardless.

3.2 EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE PREFERENCES

This paper assumes that the next job of congressional staffers is influenced by
choices of both employers and employees. Thus, these influences differ between the
employer and employee sides of the job decision. In this paper, the characteristics of
staffers will be considered both in terms of how they affect the staffers and what
they signal to employers.

3.3 EXTERNAL FACTORS

It is crucial to consider that any individual person does not make career decisions
unilaterally. Both employer preferences and other external factors can be expected
to contribute significantly to the next job outcome. For instance, staffers whose
bosses left Congress (e.g. if a staffer’s member lost his or her bid for reelection or
the staffer’s committee switched party control and the staffer was laid off) certainly
have less control over their next job decision. The dataset analyzed in this thesis
does not allow for significant control for external factors such as termination. Still, it is reasonable to assume that on the aggregate, individual preferences will drive career decisions like whether or not to remain in the federal government, and if not, whether to go into a private political influence position.
This thesis is based on the 110th Congressional Staff Dataset (hereafter: the dataset). The dataset covers the 1,283 senior congressional staffers who were working in the 110th Congress at the end of 2007. “Senior congressional staffers” refers specifically to the highest ranking staff in any personal or committee office in the House of Representatives or Senate. Specifically, this includes Chiefs of Staff, Deputy Chiefs of Staff and Legislative Directors from personal offices. In committee offices, Staff Directors, Deputy Staff Directors, and Senior Counsels qualify for inclusion in the dataset. This dataset is unique and has not been used in other academic literature. The following sections detail the data collection process, the categorization of the dependent variable, and the key descriptive statistics found in this dataset.

4.1 Data Collection

This dataset is not publicly available in a single location. It was collected and amalgamated by Dr. Lee Drutman, Dr. Bruce Cain, and myself from several publicly available online sources. The list of congressional staff names, in addition to salary information, was collected using Legistorm—a free and publicly available
database of congressional staff information. Legistorm collects this data from published reports produced by the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Representatives. Numerous checks were made to ensure accurate merging of these databases.

One variable of the dataset was constructed differently than the rest of the data. The variable next_job describes the next job taken by the congressional staffer if that staffer left Congress between 2007 and 2011. If the staffer took a different position in Congress or remained in their previous job until the end of 2011, the next job information was available through Legistorm. If the staffer became a registered lobbyist, the next job information was found through the Lobbying Database provided by the Center for Responsive Politics’ OpenSecrets.org and the Sunlight Foundation’s Lobbying Tracker. An online search process was implemented for staffers who left Congress but for which no information on their next job was available through the aforementioned sources. This research relied on search engine results and professional networking websites (primarily LinkedIn) to determine, when possible, the next position held by the staffer.

4.2 Dependent Variable Categorization

This thesis analyzes the next job of congressional staffers as a categorically distributed dependent variable. This dependent variable is composed of six categories, each represented by nominal, in that the set of numbers is unordered and there is no hierarchy, numbers. Those six job outcome classifications are:

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1. Remained in Congress – this value indicates that as of December 31, 2011 the staffer has continued to work in Congress, though not necessarily in the same position or the same office.

2. Other Federal Government – this value indicates that the staffer has left Congress for a position elsewhere within the federal government.

3. Other – the staffer has taken a position that does not fit into any of the other categories. Notable positions with this category include retirement, non-lobbying positions at think tanks, jobs in state or local government, or private sector jobs that do not qualify as unregistered political influence positions (category five).


5. Unregistered Political Influence Position – this value indicates that the staffer has left Congress for a position in which they worked for a private for-profit firm in Washington D.C. AND is in a position related to government affairs but did not register as a federal lobbyist. The criteria for being a position related to government affairs is satisfied if the title of the staffer is expressly political OR if the firm has exerted demonstrable (through campaign donations or lobbying efforts) political influence.

6. Could not find – It was not possible to find the next job of this staffer. This category does strongly suggest that the staffer did leave Congress and did not register to lobby, since otherwise it is very likely that the staffer would have
been found in the congressional staffer or lobbying disclosure databases, although errors in these sources are possible.

4.3 Descriptive Statistics

As pictured in Figure 4.1, 562 of the 1,217 (46 percent) seniors staffers left Congress during the five-year period observed. Of those who left, 226 became registered lobbyists and another 96 took unregistered political influence positions. This means that over half (57.3 percent) of senior congressional staffers took private political influence positions after leaving Congress.

![The 1,217 Senior Congressional Staff of the 110th Congress]

Figure 4.1: Next Job Pie Charts

There is one substantial caveat that must be considered, in that not all the registered lobbyists are necessarily joining a for-profit private-interest company. Lumping in the lobbyists that work for the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities with though who work for General Electric is not appropriate. However, less than ten percent of lobbyists work for non-profit organizations.\(^6\) It is possible that former

staffers are more inclined than others to join non-profit lobbying operations. Yet, even if we assume that 45 of the 226 lobbyists (approximately 20 percent, which is double CRP’s estimate) left Congress for non-profit organizations, it would still be true that half of all senior congressional staffers (49.3 percent) leave Congress in order to exert political influence on behalf of for-profit interests.

Table 1 gives some more detailed descriptive statistics of this dataset. About 34 percent of senior congressional staffers are women, and almost three out of four (73 percent) senior staffers are employed in the personal offices of members rather than committees. About ten percent of these staffers had registered as lobbyists in the past. The average number of years as a staffer was just over seven and a half (as of 2007). Figure 4.2 shows the average congressional experience by chamber and position. The average Chief of Staff for a Member’s office had been a staffer for 8.6 years in the House of Representatives and 9.3 years in the Senate. The average Staff Director for a Committee had been a staffer for nine years in the House and just over 13 years in the Senate. As these are the most senior positions of Congressional staff, the dataset reinforces the finding of Romzek and Utter concerning the relatively short career ladders of congressional staffers.\(^7\)

The average pay for these senior staffers comes out to $115,500 per year, but as figure 5 shows, pay varies significantly by position and chamber. Interestingly, although Senate staffers earn high salaries in Member’s offices, working in a committee appears to consistently pay more in the House of Representatives. This is consistent with the findings in Figure 4.3, which indicate that Senate staffers are more senior than their House counterparts in Member offices, but less senior in Committees.\(^8\)

\(^7\)Romzek and Utter, *Career Dynamics*, 2000.
\(^8\)Senior Counsels are a notable exception.
Figure 4.2: Salaries of Congressional Staff by Title and Chamber

Figure 4.3: Years in Congress of Congressional Staff by Title and Chamber
CHAPTER 5

MODEL ESTIMATION

This thesis uses logistic regression models to estimate the predictive power of certain employment characteristics of senior congressional staffer on the career choices that those staffers make.

The major findings of this thesis are based on two logistic regression models. The first, the full multinomial logit regression model, uses the staffers who remained in Congress as the base outcome and compares the four other job outcomes classifications to these staffers. This model reveals employment characteristics\(^1\) that affect propensity to leave Congress for various categorized job outcomes. The second model, a logit regression, uses only two job outcome classifications to compare the senior staffers who left Congress for private political influence positions. By using registered lobbyists (the base outcome) and unregistered political influence positions as the two discrete alternatives for this model, this model examines the employment characteristics that affect the binary choice of lobbying registration for senior staffers who leave Congress.

5.1 FULL MULTINOMIAL LOGIT REGRESSION: ALL CAREER OUTCOMES

The first model is a multinomial logistic regression model (Figure 2) that compares the five categories for the next job of the senior congressional staffers. The

\(^1\)For a full list of variables and their explanations, see Appendix 3.
population of senior Congressional staffers who remained in Congress through the observation period \( \text{next_job_code} = 1 \) is used as the base outcome for the regression. This model excludes the staffers for whom no information was found. The model attempts to illuminate what employment characteristics had a statistically significant effect on the next job of each staffer using 13 different independent variables.\(^2\)

\[
\text{next}_\text{job}_\text{code}5 = mlogit[\beta_0 + \beta_1(salary($1,000)) + \beta_2(salary($1,000))^2 + \beta_3(house) + \beta_4(female) + \\
\beta_5(lobbypre) + \beta_6(totalmembers) + \beta_7(member) + \beta_8(extremism) + \beta_9(republican) + \\
\beta_{10}(independent) + \beta_{11}(partyrank) + \beta_{12}(years0 - 4) + \beta_{13}(years5 - 8)]
\]

The full multinomial regression model reveals a number of findings that warrant discussion related to this thesis. The model is jointly significant with a LR \( \chi^2 \) value of 138.50, resulting in a p-value of 0.000 over 1,125 observations. The pseudo-R\(^2\) value is low, only 0.0473. However, this is expected given the unpredictable nature of differentiating between career choices within a fairly homogenous group. Regardless of the overall predictive power of this model, political party, length of tenure in Congress, extremism, salary,\(^3\) chamber, party seniority and office type are statistically significant in determining the next job for staffers.\(^4\) Each category of the dependent variable will be examined separately, all in relation to the base outcome in which the staffer remained in Congress over the observation period.

\(^2\)See Table 6 for full list of variables and descriptions.

\(^3\)The coefficients salary and salary\(^2\) are measured in units of $1,000 in all regressions, though not in descriptive statistics.

\(^4\)Unless otherwise stated, a statistically significant coefficient is defined as one with a p-value of 0.05 or less.
5.1.1 Federal Government \((\text{next\_job\_code}=2)\)

Looking at the staffers who went on to take jobs elsewhere in the federal government the first coefficient that warrants attention is the negative correlation between the Republican dummy variable and this career result. This can be easily explained because three of the five observed years were the first three years of the Obama presidency. Although Republicans would be more likely to be hired in 2007 and 2008 during the final years of the Bush administration, this effect seems to have been overwhelmed by the abundant staffing needs of the new Democratic administration in 2009.

In addition to party, extremism had a statistically significant impact on likelihood of moving elsewhere in the federal government. The coefficient for extremism was three times as large as the coefficient for Republican. This suggests that other federal government employers (including the judiciary, but primarily the executive branch) strongly prefer staffers who have worked for more centrist members of Congress.

This regression also shows that staffers in the House of Representatives were less likely to move to the federal government than their Senate counterparts (statistically significant at the ten-percent level). This is likely because Senate staffers are generally considered more senior than House staffers and may thus be more competitive for executive branch positions.

5.1.2 Other \((\text{next\_job\_code}=3)\)

As discussed in Chapter 4, the 'Other' category \((\text{next\_job\_code}=3)\) is a catch-all category for any job placements that do not fit into the other categories. This includes retirement, non-lobbying positions at think tanks, jobs in state or local
government, or private sector jobs that do not qualify as unregistered political influence positions. The complete lack of any statistically significant predicting variables is not discouraging, and was to be expected.

5.1.3 Registered Lobbyist (next_job_code=4)

Examining the staffers who became registered lobbyists (next_job_code = 4) reveals a wealth of information.

Table 5.1: Multinomial Logit Regression Results: Registered Lobbyists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>salary($1,000)</td>
<td>-0.0063</td>
<td>0.691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(salary($1,000))^2</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>house</td>
<td>-0.5142</td>
<td>0.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>0.0538</td>
<td>0.756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lobbypre</td>
<td>0.1978</td>
<td>0.445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>totalmembers</td>
<td>0.0784</td>
<td>0.399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>member</td>
<td>0.3278</td>
<td>0.154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extremism</td>
<td>-1.4179</td>
<td>0.014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>republican</td>
<td>0.3979</td>
<td>0.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>independent</td>
<td>-14.7268</td>
<td>0.984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partyrank</td>
<td>-0.0017</td>
<td>0.877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>years0to4</td>
<td>0.5593</td>
<td>0.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>years5to8</td>
<td>0.6181</td>
<td>0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constant</td>
<td>-1.359</td>
<td>0.122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Table 2 for full multinomial regression results.

The regression (Table 5.1) shows that registered lobbyists are, similar to federal government jobs, more likely to come from the Senate than the House of Representatives. Other papers have shown that the Senate tends to receive more lobbyists per member, which explains this statistically significant effect.

Extremism is shown to have a negative effect on likelihood of becoming a registered lobbyist. Staffers who work for more moderate members of Congress are
often seen as more credible sources of information and may appear more reasonable in terms of policy and politics. Centrist staffers are also likely to have a wider range of appeal, in that there are more members who may be willing to receive them. From an employer perspective, these factors make moderate staffers more appealing. From the employee perspective, more extreme staffers may be more likely to be ideologues who would rather work for their issues of interest rather than be an advocate for hire.

The Republican dummy is also shown to have a statistically significant positive effect on taking a registered lobbying position. It is possible that this is simply an effect of availability, since so many Democratic staffers went on to jobs in the federal government. This may have left Republicans as the only option for hiring lobbyists in some scenarios. However, Eggers asserts that lobbyists are most likely to be hired when they are ideologically similar to sitting politicians.\(^5\) Thus this speculation is not substantiated in other evidence, and no clear explanatory alternative avails itself from this dataset.

In notable contrast to previous studies, party rank is not a statistically significant coefficient. The staff of more senior (and therefore more influential) members of Congress would be in higher demand as lobbyists, yet the regression results do not support this assertion. It is possible that staffers for higher-ranking members are in higher demand across the board, such that their increased value as a lobbyist is matched by higher value in Congress and other federal government jobs.

Although salary and salary squared are also indicative of seniority of the staffer, these were not expected to be statistically significant factors concerning this next

job category. The pay for private lobbying dramatically outweighs the salary within Congress such that current pay is generally a non-factor.\(^6\)

5.1.4 Unregistered Political Influence Position (next_job_code=5)

Table 5.2: Multinomial Logit Regression Results: Unregistered Political Influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>salary($1,000)</td>
<td>-0.0594</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(salary($1,000))^2</td>
<td>0.0002</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>house</td>
<td>0.3267</td>
<td>0.284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>-0.3869</td>
<td>0.144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lobbypre</td>
<td>0.4175</td>
<td>0.239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>totalmembers</td>
<td>-0.1099</td>
<td>0.468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>member</td>
<td>-0.7886</td>
<td>0.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extremism</td>
<td>-0.3798</td>
<td>0.630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>republican</td>
<td>0.2190</td>
<td>0.415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>independent</td>
<td>-14.4894</td>
<td>0.989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partyrank</td>
<td>-0.0112</td>
<td>0.489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>years0to4</td>
<td>0.9355</td>
<td>0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>years5to8</td>
<td>0.7337</td>
<td>0.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constant</td>
<td>1.0183</td>
<td>0.273</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Table 2 for full multinomial regression results.

Salary and salary squared are statistically significant factors affecting the likelihood of leaving Congress for an unregistered political influence position. The coefficient on salary is negative, while the coefficient on salary squared is positive (both coefficients stat sig at the one percent level). This indicates that higher salaries discourage staffers from taking unregistered political influence positions, but that this effect wanes over time. Unlike in regards to registered lobbying positions, the pay offered by this category of employment may not drastically outmatch pay as a congressional staffer.

\(^6\)Vidal et al., Revolving Door Lobbyists, 2010.
Working in a Member of Congress’s personal office rather than a congressional committee has a negative effect on the likelihood of taking an unregistered political influence position. Committee positions are generally thought of to be more involved in the intricacies of policy, rather than the politics of an individual member. This suggests that committee staffers are more drawn to and/or more qualified for unregistered political influence positions.

Neither working in the House of Representatives nor the extremism of the members a staffer works for have a statistically significant effect on the likelihood of taking an unregistered political influence position. This lack of statistical power is notable in its contrast to registered lobbyists, for whom both of these coefficients were statistically significant.

5.2 Logit Regression: Unregistered v. Registered Political Influence

The second model used in this thesis acts to supplement the first by directly comparing next_job_code categories 4 and 5. Thus the population of former senior Congressional staffers who left Congress for a registered lobbying position is the base category in this logit regression. The resulting coefficients indicate the effect of the independent variables on the likelihood of these staffers taking unregistered political influence positions. Since all of the staffers in both categories left Congress for political influence, in effect, these coefficients indicate the impact on the likelihood to register as a lobbyist.

\[
UnregisteredPoliticalInfluence = logit[\beta_0 + \beta_1(salary(\$1,000)) + \beta_2(salary(\$1,000))^2 + \beta_3(house) + \beta_4(female) +
\]
\[ \beta_5(lobbypre) + \beta_6(totalmembers) + \beta_7(member) + \beta_8(extremism) + \]
\[ \beta_9(republican) + \beta_{10}(independent) + \beta_{11}(partyrank) + \beta_{12}(years0-4) + \beta_{13}(years5-8) \]

The model is jointly significant with a LR $\chi^2$ value of 39.99, resulting in a p-value of 0.000 over 296 observations. The pseudo-R$^2$ for this regression is 0.1110, which suggests that these employment characteristics explain over ten percent of the variation in the career outcome of the population.

Table 5.3: Logit Regression Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>salary($1,000)</td>
<td>-0.0757</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(salary($1,000))^2</td>
<td>0.00031</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>house</td>
<td>0.9460</td>
<td>0.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>-0.4688</td>
<td>0.132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lobbypre</td>
<td>0.1072</td>
<td>0.795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>totalmembers</td>
<td>-0.1620</td>
<td>0.366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>member</td>
<td>-1.2875</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extremism</td>
<td>0.7601</td>
<td>0.377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>republican</td>
<td>-0.0146</td>
<td>0.446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partyrank</td>
<td>-0.0146</td>
<td>0.446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>years0to4</td>
<td>0.7012</td>
<td>0.067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>years5to8</td>
<td>0.2859</td>
<td>0.469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constant</td>
<td>3.5095</td>
<td>0.006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 296 $\chi^2 = 39.99$ (p-value($\chi^2$) = 0.0001) Pseudo R$^2 = 0.1110$

This regression shows statistically significant coefficients across four employment characteristics. Positive coefficients indicate an increased likelihood to take unregistered political influence positions over a registered lobbying position. As indicated by the full multinomial regression mode, salary has a statistically significant effect negative effect on likelihood to register. Salary squared has a statistically significant positive coefficient, which would normally suggest that the effect of salary on registration diminishes as salary rises, however the coefficient on
salary squared is so small as to be negligible. Still, this tells us that as salary rises, controlling for experience, propensity to register increases.

Based on this regression, staffers who worked in the House of Representatives are more likely to take political influence positions than staffers who worked in the Senate. If, as is true for registered lobbyists, political influence positions involved significant amounts of direct lobbying, one would expect a higher demand for Senate staffers and thus there would no statistically significant difference between these two career outcomes.

The remaining employment characteristics do not seem to have a statistically significant effect on whether or not the staffer registers as a lobbyist when they join the political influence market.
Chapter 6

Conclusion

The private political influence industry is responsible for a huge part of the attrition of Congressional staffers. When accounting for the 17 percent of departing staffers who went into unregistered political influence, it appears that half of all senior congressional staffers leave Congress for the political influence industry. This is a dramatic brain drain of experienced staffers, especially considering that 46.2 percent of the observed staffers turned over during a five-year period.

Career characteristics do predict likelihood of taking a lobbying position. The chamber of Congress a staffer works in, the extremism of the members they work for, their party, and the length of their congressional experience all factor into their potential employment as registered lobbyists. The statistical significance of certain career characteristics also holds true for the staffers who joined the unregistered side of the political influence industry. However, the predictive characteristics for these staffers were substantially different from registered lobbyists such as to suggest that the function of these positions is notably different. Lobbying positions attract staffers who have characteristics demonstrably beneficial to lobbying: working in a member’s office, having been most recently in the Senate, and being less politically extreme. This was not equally true for unregistered political influence positions. This analysis does not provide sufficient evidence to suggest how these positions differs, and thus it is not possible to discern whether or not there is a systemic issue of non-registration.
This thesis has significant implications for related academic studies in political science. The prevalence of non-registration could potentially seriously distort the available information about the practice and prevalence of lobbying, and would also cripple disclosure and transparency efforts that are aimed at registered lobbyists. Given that 30 percent of staffers who join the political influence industry are unregistered, studies that aim to document the revolving door and the influence culture of Washington DC have clearly been missing a very substantial portion of the big picture.

Further study would benefit from differentiating between registered lobbyists for non-profit organizations and private organizations in order to have more accurate results. In addition, an expanded sample size such as to account for junior staffers, perhaps over several different Congresses, would dramatically expand the usefulness and statistical power of this analysis. A future study would benefit greatly by accounting for time variables—the dataset used did not accurately offer the year in which the staffer left Congress. This precluded several aspects from analysis, such as the ability to determine whether recent legislation and executive orders have affected the propensity for registration in the political influence industry.


APPENDIX

TABLES

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>0.34264 (0.47479)</td>
<td>0.34351 (0.47524)</td>
<td>0.45192 (0.50009)</td>
<td>0.32352 (0.46955)</td>
<td>0.34071 (0.47500)</td>
<td>0.25 (0.43529)</td>
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<tr>
<td>salary</td>
<td>115504.6 (35688)</td>
<td>115430 (35512.66)</td>
<td>116448.9 (33681.44)</td>
<td>111860.1 (34694.05)</td>
<td>118744.4 (34695.8)</td>
<td>112522.3 (42239.1)</td>
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<td>lobypre</td>
<td>0.10353 (0.30478)</td>
<td>0.10687 (0.30918)</td>
<td>0.09165 (0.29623)</td>
<td>0.044118 (0.20612)</td>
<td>0.11947 (0.32506)</td>
<td>0.13542 (0.34387)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>house</td>
<td>0.72062 (0.44888)</td>
<td>0.751145 (0.43268)</td>
<td>0.58654 (0.4983)</td>
<td>0.74265 (0.43879)</td>
<td>0.66372 (0.47349)</td>
<td>0.76042 (0.42907)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total members</td>
<td>1.5383 (0.90279)</td>
<td>1.58015 (0.96383)</td>
<td>1.56731 (0.85632)</td>
<td>1.36765 (0.82380)</td>
<td>1.56 (0.83302)</td>
<td>1.40625 (0.74802)</td>
</tr>
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<td>member</td>
<td>0.73377 (0.442167)</td>
<td>0.75267 (0.43179)</td>
<td>0.56731 (0.49785)</td>
<td>0.75734 (0.430282)</td>
<td>0.8761 (0.40991)</td>
<td>0.625 (0.48666)</td>
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<tr>
<td>extremism</td>
<td>0.23539 (0.16657)</td>
<td>0.24950 (0.16757)</td>
<td>0.18119 (0.13138)</td>
<td>0.22022 (0.1689)</td>
<td>0.22054 (0.15280)</td>
<td>0.25511 (0.21302)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>republican</td>
<td>0.41085 (0.49218)</td>
<td>0.41679 (0.49340)</td>
<td>0.21153 (0.41038)</td>
<td>0.34559 (0.47738)</td>
<td>0.50885 (0.50103)</td>
<td>0.44792 (0.49989)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staffer years</td>
<td>7.57436 (5.78063)</td>
<td>8.11603 (6.07486)</td>
<td>6.93269 (5.76778)</td>
<td>7.02941 (5.99004)</td>
<td>7.11504 (4.94009)</td>
<td>6.42708 (4.90701)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>P-Value</td>
<td></td>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>P-Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salary($1,000)</td>
<td>0.00914</td>
<td>0.675</td>
<td>salary($1,000)</td>
<td>-0.00631</td>
<td>0.691</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(salary($1,000))^2</td>
<td>-0.0004</td>
<td>0.703</td>
<td>(salary($1,000))^2</td>
<td>0.0005</td>
<td>0.466</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>house</td>
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<td>0.058</td>
<td>house</td>
<td>-0.51420</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>0.30570</td>
<td>0.181</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>0.05380</td>
<td>0.756</td>
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<td>0.811</td>
<td>lobbypre</td>
<td>0.19783</td>
<td>0.445</td>
<td></td>
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<td>total members</td>
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<td>0.813</td>
<td>total members</td>
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<td>0.399</td>
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<td>0.064</td>
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<td>0.154</td>
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<td>-1.41787</td>
<td>0.014</td>
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<td>republican</td>
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<td>0.017</td>
<td>republican</td>
<td>0.39789</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>independent</td>
<td>-1.45587</td>
<td>0.181</td>
<td>independent</td>
<td>-14.72682</td>
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<td>party rank</td>
<td>-0.00425</td>
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<td>party rank</td>
<td>-0.00169</td>
<td>0.877</td>
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<tr>
<td>years0to4</td>
<td>0.44348</td>
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<td>years0to4</td>
<td>0.55930</td>
<td>0.012</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>years5to8</td>
<td>0.28207</td>
<td>0.355</td>
<td>years5to8</td>
<td>0.61812</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>constant</td>
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<td>constant</td>
<td>-1.35917</td>
<td>0.122</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>salary($1,000)</td>
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<td>salary($1,000)</td>
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<td>0.001</td>
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<tr>
<td>(salary($1,000))^2</td>
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<td>0.708</td>
<td>(salary($1,000))^2</td>
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<td>0.001</td>
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<td>house</td>
<td>0.03786</td>
<td>0.884</td>
<td>house</td>
<td>0.32672</td>
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<td>female</td>
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<td>lobbypre</td>
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<td>lobbypre</td>
<td>0.41754</td>
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<td>total members</td>
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<td>total members</td>
<td>-0.10988</td>
<td>0.468</td>
<td></td>
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<td>member</td>
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<td>0.013</td>
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</tr>
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<td>extremism</td>
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<td>extremism</td>
<td>-0.37979</td>
<td>0.630</td>
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<td>republican</td>
<td>0.21899</td>
<td>0.415</td>
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<tr>
<td>independent</td>
<td>0.06788</td>
<td>0.936</td>
<td>independent</td>
<td>-14.48944</td>
<td>0.989</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>party rank</td>
<td>-0.00160</td>
<td>0.901</td>
<td>party rank</td>
<td>-0.01127</td>
<td>0.489</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>years0to4</td>
<td>0.33710</td>
<td>0.193</td>
<td>years0to4</td>
<td>0.93552</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>years5to8</td>
<td>-0.05623</td>
<td>0.837</td>
<td>years5to8</td>
<td>0.73368</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constant</td>
<td>-1.30236</td>
<td>0.209</td>
<td>constant</td>
<td>1.01830</td>
<td>0.273</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 1125 \quad \chi^2 = 138.50 \ (p-value(\chi^2) = 0.0000) \quad \text{Pseudo } R^2 = 0.0473
Table 3: Variable List and Descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>salary</td>
<td>The salary of that staffer in 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salary$^2$</td>
<td>The salary of that staffer in 2007, squared.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>house</td>
<td>A dummy variable wherein a value of 1 indicates that the staffer was working in the House of Representatives in 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>A dummy variable wherein a value of 1 indicates that the staffer is female.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lobbypre</td>
<td>A dummy variable wherein a value of 1 indicates that the staffer had registered as a lobbyist before their current job in Congress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>totalmembers</td>
<td>The total number of members that the staffer has worked for as of 2011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>member</td>
<td>A dummy variable wherein a value of 1 indicates that the staffer was working in the personal office of a Member of Congress (rather than a committee office) in 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extremism</td>
<td>A measure of extremism of the offices for which that staffer has worked for between 2007 and 2011. When the staffer has worked for more than one member during this time, the extremism value for each member is averaged together. Higher values indicate more extreme Members of Congress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>republican</td>
<td>A dummy variable wherein a value of 1 indicates that the staffer worked for a Republican Member of Congress in 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>independent</td>
<td>A dummy variable wherein a value of 1 indicates that the staffer worked for an independent Member of Congress in 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partyrank</td>
<td>A metric of the seniority of the Member of Congress for which the staffer worked in 2007. Higher values indicate more senior Members of Congress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>years0to4</td>
<td>A dummy variable wherein a value of 1 indicates that the staffer had worked in Congress for between zero and four years (inclusive) as of 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>years5to8</td>
<td>A dummy variable wherein a value of 1 indicates that the staffer had worked in Congress for between five and eight years (inclusive) as of 2007.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>