Fighting for the Speakership: An Update

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Abstract

We update our book, *Fighting for the Speakership*, ten years after its publication, and discuss how the politics of the past decade have affected the organizational cartel. We first review the speakership election in the 118th Congress — why it took 15 ballots, how it was eventually resolved, and how the organization of the House was affected by the outcome of the speakership race, especially on the Republican side. We then explore the factors that led to the organizational cartel breaking down, focusing on the changing environmental conditions inside and outside of Congress. Finally, we conclude by speculating on what the breakdown of the organizational cartel in the 118th Congress might mean for the institution in succeeding years.

On January 3, 2023, at the opening of the 118th Congress, the House of Representatives found itself embroiled in a multi-ballot speakership election, a situation not experienced for almost 100 years. The last time such a House floor fight for Speaker occurred was on December 3 – 5, 1923, at the convening of the 65th Congress, when the majority Republicans — facing an intra-party insurgency by progressive members who sought to loosen up the restrictive procedural arrangements employed by the Old Guard — needed nine ballots over three days to coalesce around the reelection of Frederick H. Gillett (R.-Mass.). Before then, the last multi-ballot speakership election took place before the Civil War, during the 36th Congress (1859 – 61), when the Republicans — the plurality party in the House — needed 40 ballots over nearly two months to produce a majority winner.[1]

The members of the 118th House thus found themselves on exceedingly rare terrain, ground not seen but once in more than 160 years. And before Kevin McCarthy (R.-Calif.) was declared the majority-winner of the contest, four days and 15 ballots would be needed. The dynamics of the speakership election were covered extensively in the press and the blog-o-sphere,[2] and intra-party twists and turns were speculated about and scrutinized endlessly even as scholars, reporters, and other interested observers were following the drama on C-SPAN in real time. Ultimately, a story emerged, whereby a group of twenty-or-so Republicans, who

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[1] The speakership election in the 36th Congress spanned December 5, 1859 to February 1, 1860, when freshman William Pennington (R-N.J.) was elected by a bare majority on the 40th ballot.
[2] We contributed to this coverage through three posts at Broadstreet.blog: https://broadstreet.blog/2023/01/03/back-to-the-future-battling-over-the-speakership-on-the-house-floor/, https://broadstreet.blog/2023/01/04/back-to-the-future-day-2/, https://broadstreet.blog/2023/01/05/back-to-the-future-day-3/.

were among the most conservative and "anti-establishment" GOP members, banded together to signal their displeasure with McCarthy. After reaching out to the dissidents, hearing their concerns, and cutting a series of deals with individuals and groups of them, McCarthy eliminated enough opposition to eventually achieve a grind-it-out victory after 15 ballots.

A decade ago, we published a book entitled, *Fighting for the Speakership: The House and the Rise of Party Government*. In that book, we argued that speakership elections were often highly uncertain events during the Antebellum era, when regional interests — typically preferences on slavery — cut across party interests and made it difficult to produce a majority winner. As we wrote: "Nearly one-third of all speakership contests from the founding of the Republic until the outbreak of the Civil War (13 of 41) took more than one ballot to resolve" (Jenkins and Stewart 2013, p. 2). Moreover, at least twice the minority party was able to elect their Speaker candidate, twice a plurality rule was adopted to settle a lengthy speakership contest, and many times the subordinate officer elections in the House (notably for Clerk and Printer) extended beyond a single ballot.

But during the Civil War and early Reconstruction era, all of that uncertainty in House officer elections disappeared, only returning once between then and now. We argue this was because the majority party in the House developed into an *organizational cartel*, whereby co-partisans agreed to pull disagreements off the floor, hash them out in caucus prior to the convening of a new

Congress, and thus eliminate the uncertainty that had plagued speakership and other officer elections.

How did the organizational cartel work? Once a set of caucus elections established a House officer slate — with the party nominee for Speaker being the headliner — all members were expected to fall in line on the floor. To soften the blow to the majority party "losers" — those co-partisans who supported a different candidate for Speaker in caucus — structural power within the party was distributed via standing committee assignments and chairs. Majority-party losers were thus compensated with important committee spots for voting for the party's speakership nominee (who was not their most-preferred party candidate) on the floor. The building of the organizational cartel, we argue, was a necessary condition for the development of the *procedural cartel* (see Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005) — whereby co-partisans agree to control and share agenda-setting power — a quarter-century later under the leadership of Speaker Thomas B. Reed (R.-Maine).

In this paper, we set out to update *Fighting for the Speakership*, and discuss how the politics of the past decade have impacted the organizational cartel. At first blush, a lot seems to have changed since we published our book ten years ago. A 15-ballot speakership election — the first multi-ballot election in almost 100 years — certainly would suggest it!

We will argue that the seeds of the floor instability at the opening of the 118th Congress were present when we were writing and that the political and institutional environments of the House have allowed those seeds to take root. For

example, we took note of the Tea Party — and how it was creating difficulties for Speaker John Boehner (R.-Ohio), which has since then developed into a more persistent challenge to Republican leaders in the form of the House Freedom Caucus (HFC). Since 2013, power in the House has become even more centralized. Committees have grown weaker, as more key policies are hammered out by a small group of party leaders. Over the past decade, members on both sides of the aisle have become more adept at social media, and more attention has been spent on "messaging" positions to constituents rather than developing policy and building enacting coalitions (Lee 2016; Curry and Lee 2020). At the same time, party leaders have fewer carrots and sticks to keep their co-partisans in line; as noted, one key carrot/stick (committee assignments) has become less valuable in a Congress where party leaders design policy and members focus more on messaging, even as members (notably on the Republican side) have more avenues to build electoral reputations and raise campaign money — like through ideological caucus affiliations — independent of party.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. In Section I we briefly discuss speakership elections prior to 2023, review in detail the speakership election in the 118th Congress — how it took 15 ballots and how it was eventually resolved — and then examine how the organization of the House was affected by the outcome of the speakership race, especially on the Republican side. In Section II we revisit the idea of the organizational cartel and note various environmental factors

inside and outside of Congress that led to it breaking down in the 118th Congress. Section III lays out further research to be conducted on the subject.

I. The Speakership Election in the 118th Congress

As was widely reported, the election of Kevin McCarthy was the first multi-ballot speakership election in a century. The underlying turmoil within the Republican Party that led to the drama had been brewing for some time, however. Indeed, one could argue that the seeds for McCarthy's travails were planted in the last days of the Gringrich speakership. Therefore, before jumping onto the path that led to McCarthy's election as Speaker, we first review speakership elections over the past century, then, over the past decade and a half.

Speakership elections prior to 2023

To appreciate McCarthy's struggles and the events that preceded it, it is helpful to start by stepping back in time and summarizing speakership elections from 1923 forward. As has already been noted, 1923 was the last time it took multiple ballots to elect a Speaker. The Republican rift in the 68th Congress was caused by the refusal of the Republican leadership, most notably, Majority Leader Nicholas Longworth (R.-Ohio), to acquiesce to the consideration of rules changes demanded by progressives in the party. The result was the nine-ballot affair that led to the election of Frederick Gillett (R.-Mass.). Because Gillett's procedural majority hinged on support from the dissident progressives, he meted out no punishment as a result of this insurrection.

The 69th Congress was a different story. It convened following the 1924 landslide election of Calvin Coolidge, which added 22 additional Republicans to the House, creating a more comfortable House majority. The new majority was large enough that the mainstream Republicans could organize the House without the help of their progressive co-partisans. To tighten control over the nomination proceedings, leadership excluded from the caucus thirteen Republicans who had supported Progressive Party candidate Robert La Follette for president. But this did not eliminate divisions among House Republicans over organizing the House. The caucus was still divided over who should be Speaker — indeed, more divided than in the previous Congress. However, with the larger chamber majority, Longworth was able to parlay his nomination into the speakership on the first ballot.

In the caucus balloting, Longworth, who was seeking a promotion from the post of Majority Leader, received 140 votes to Martin B. Marden's (Ill.) 85. When the election as Speaker went to the floor, Longworth was able to hold onto all but 18 votes from the caucus (13 for Henry Cooper [Wisconsin] and 5 "present"). Longworth and colleagues then went about punishing the progressives who refused to support him for Speaker by stripping them of favored committee assignments.[3]

With this housecleaning, the smooth functioning of the organizational cartel was restored. Starting with the 70th Congress, nomination votes on the majority

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[3] The Republicans who refused to vote for Longworth were allowed to remain in the caucus and receive committee assignments from the party. However, every single one of them received a clear demotion, compared to the assignments they had enjoyed in the 68th Congress.

side began regularly to be characterized in the press as "by acclamation" or

"unanimous," if they were noted at all. (See Jenkins and Stewart 2013, Appendix

6).

Starting with the 72nd Congress (1931 – 1933), Democrats dominated House

majorities for decades. During this period of hegemonic control, up to 1995, caucus

divisions — typically regional and ideological — were dealt with internally.

During this period, the story on the minority party side — usually Republican —

was similar to that of the majority. Internal dissent that erupted in the caucus was

resolved before it became a majority organizational issue on the floor. During its

long period in the minority desert, the Republican Party saw two major internal

power struggles, in 1959 (86th Congress) and 1965 (89th Congress), in which the

incumbent narrowly was ousted by a "Young Turk" (Peabody 1967). But in each

case, the losing faction ended up rallying unanimously behind the winner in their

quixotic quest for the speakership.

As far as minority party organizational unity is concerned, we summarized

the period starting roughly with the 1940s this way:

> No additional minority party caucus violations occurred until 2001, when
> James A. Traficant Jr. (D-Ohio) rebuffed the Democratic speakership
> nominee, Richard Gephardt (Mo.), and voted instead for the Republican
> nominee, Dennis Hastert (Ill.) As a result, Traficant was expelled from the
> Democratic caucus and had his committee assignments stripped." (p. 295)

We went on to note that other scattering departures from the unanimity norm in

the minority party occurred in the 2000s on the Democratic side, but these defecting

Democrats never voted for a Republican. (Sometimes they voted "present.") None was ever sanctioned.

Even though the organizational cartel reigned supreme from 1925 to the first decade of the 21st Century, there were signs that cracks in this arrangement were growing. In *Fighting for the Speakership,* we noted that at the opening of the 112th Congress in 2011, Nancy Pelosi endured the most extensive set of minority party defections that had appeared in decades (p. 296). The Democratic caucus vote confirmed that Pelosi retained the party's speakership nomination, but only on a 150 — 43 vote. When the vote came on the floor, 19 Democrats registered some form of protest in the vote for Speaker, either voting for another Democrat or voting present. This was the most significant defection of either party in the speakership vote on the floor since the 1920s. And it was only two fewer defections than McCarthy endured, on the 4th to 11th ballots, in 2023.

Returning to the speakership and the majority party, Figure 1 illustrates the degree of majority-party defections in the vote for Speaker from the 89th Congress (1967 – 68) to the 118th.[4] This figure shows a graph of the percentage of seats held by the majority party in the House during this period (solid line and circles) and the percentage of votes received by the victorious Speaker candidate (dashed line and squares).

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[4] The time period is chosen so that there are fifteen Congresses with speakership elections before the Republican takeover in the 104th Congress and fifteen after.

Figure 1. Percentage of the House held by the majority party and percentage of the votes for the victorious Speaker candidate, 102nd – 118th Congress (1991 – 2023)
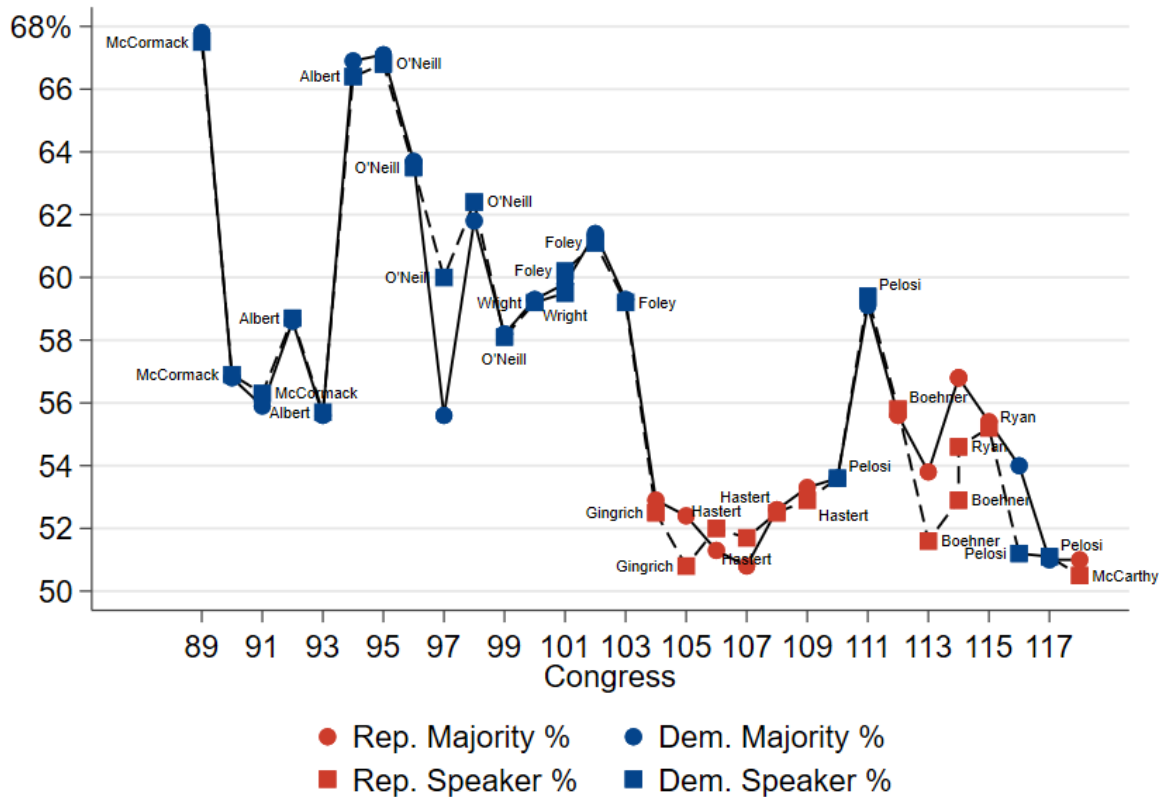
Data source: Jenkins and Stewart 2013, Appendix 1, updated by data reported in Appendix A of this paper.

Prior to the 104th Congress, there was a tight correspondence between the Democratic share of seats in the House and the votes received by the Democratic Speaker. Since then, the correspondence has not been so great. Gingrich himself, under the cloud of an ethics investigation, was able to gain election with less than a majority of members in the chamber in the 105th Congress, because six Republicans answered "present" to the roll call. This allowed him to be elected with a majority of votes cast "by name" (216 of 425), even if it was not a majority of a quorum.

However, John Boehner's tenure, which largely unfolded after *Fighting for the Speakership* was finished, is where speakership elections became regularly rocky. Boehner was first elected Speaker with unified Republican support in the 112th Congress, when the party was flush from the shellacking they had inflicted on the Democrats in the 2010 election. His nomination by acclamation papered over divisions within the party, however, as Boehner's troubles holding onto control of his caucus soon began. Twelve Republicans defected from Boehner in the speakership election of the 113th Congress, as did ten in the 114th Congress. Rather than face a vote to "vacate the chair," Boehner announced his resignation from the House before the 114th Congress was half over. Boehner's departure was delayed by the inability of the Republican Party to find a successor. Paul Ryan (R-Wisc.) emerged as something of a consensus candidate, at least in concept. Ryan's negotiation with various factions over the conditions of his taking the job dragged on until he was able to cobble together enough votes to reach a chamber majority. Still, he had to endure the indignity of nine defections when time came to vote on his ascent to the Speaker's chair.

Democrats had their own troubles, which lay dormant during the four-Congress run (112th – 115th, 2011 – 2018) in which Republicans ruled the chamber (Debonis and Costa 2018). Once Democrats gained control of the House following the 2018 election (116th Congress), Pelosi faced a fight even to get nominated. She spent two full months picking off dissenters in her caucus on a retail basis, finally sealing the deal with a promise that she would not serve more than four more years

as Speaker (McPherson 2018). The Californian received the caucus nomination on an up-or-down vote, in which she received 203 "yes" votes, with 32 "no" votes and three blanks cast. Pelosi converted seventeen of the "no" votes in caucus to win the speakership. Even so, twelve Democrats voted for another candidate (Aldrich and Rohde 2021). Pelosi's final election as the leader of the Democratic Party — this time as minority leader — came with her confirming that this would be her last Congress leading the party (McPherson 2020).

McCarthy's travails fit firmly within this recent history of leadership fights. One major difference with McCarthy's woes is the razor-thin majority held by the Republicans in the 118th Congress. The narrow majority meant that McCarthy would have had a daunting challenge to win the speakership even if he had had only the thirteen defectors that faced Boehner in the 113th Congress, rather than the 19 who voted against him on the first ballot.

Throughout this period, these leadership struggles have been framed in terms of one predominant and two secondary narratives. The predominant story is ideological, in which a small number of right-leaning members in each party has been seen as opposing a more numerous mainstream that is to the ideological "left." The two secondary narratives are generational — newer members against older members — and institutional — insiders against renegades.

We can explore two of these narratives with the assistance of Nokken-Poole NOMINATE scores (Nokken and Poole 2004),[5] where the main first dimension can

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[5] The Nokken-Poole NOMINATE scores are also known as One-Congress-at-a-Time DW-NOMINATE scores, as the scaling allows for the maximum amount of movement (in either a left or

be interpreted as a standard left-right ideological scale and the second dimension can be interpreted as distinguishing between members who tend to "go along" with leadership and those who are inclined to buck leadership, even when ideological birds of a feather otherwise flock together.[6]

In Figure 2, we have plotted the first two Nokken-Poole dimensions for the entire House in gray, with defectors in the speakership election depicted in black.[7] The left-hand figure uses scores from the preceding Congress, so that we do not contaminate the analysis with a measure that is based on later roll call votes.[8] However, doing this requires us to omit first-year members. For that reason, the right-hand figure uses scores from the current Congress, to allow us to plot rookies.

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right dimension) from Congress to Congress. For more information, see
https://legacy.voteview.com/Nokken-Poole.htm.

[6] Considerable controversy has arisen over the years in interpreting NOMINATE and NOMINATE-like scores, especially the second dimension. (See McCarty 2016). We base our claim that the second-dimension taps into a pro-leader [or pro-party] sentiment on an informal examination of the roll call votes in which the second dimension dominates over the first dimension since the 112th Congress.

[7] For the 118th Congress, we have coded anyone who voted against McCarthy on any ballot a defector.

[8] There is evidence that being among defectors pushes returning members toward the extremes of the second dimension. This evidence is based on regressing the second-dimension score from the current Congress on the second-dimension score from the previous Congress, plus an indicator for being a defector. See Appendix B.

Figure 2. Nokken-Poole NOMINATE scores of defectors in speakership votes, 112th – 118th Congress
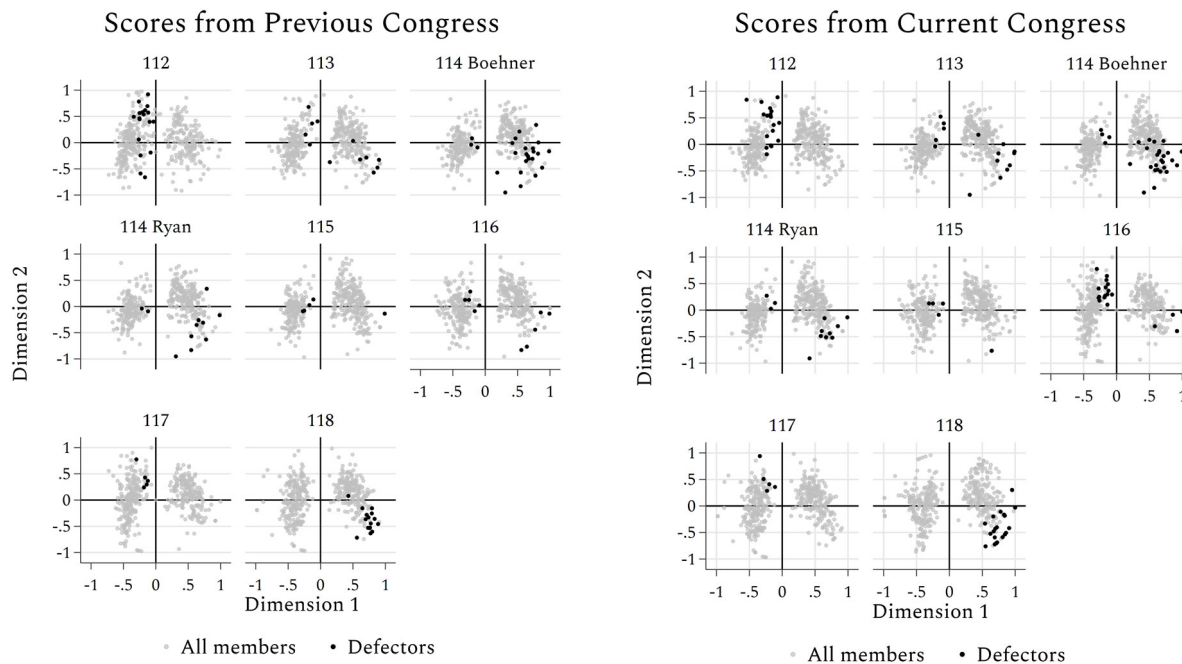
Note: For the 118th Congress, defectors are Republicans who voted against McCarthy on any ballot.

As a general matter, defectors have tended to come from the "right" of the two parties, but they have come from opposite sides of the second dimension: Democrats from the "top" and Republicans from the "bottom."

This dimensional analysis is consistent with scholarly and journalistic accounts that have narrated internal leadership struggles within the parties. On the Democratic side, Pelosi's problems in the 112th Congress were pinned on the Blue Dogs, who blamed Pelosi and the rest of the Democratic leadership on Democrats' problems in the 2010 election (CNN 2010). Blue Dog opposition was detected in the 113th Congress, as well (Steinhauer 2012; Lillis and Hooper 2013).

By the 116th Congress, electoral defeat and retirements had rendered the Blue Dogs relatively toothless; instead, the generational explanation came into play, as it was noted that most of the opposition to Pelosi came from first-year members who had campaigned against reelected Pelosi as Democratic leader (McPherson 2019).

How did the period of occasional defection from the party in speakership contests prior to the 118th Congress affect the organization of the House? On the Democratic side, there were no reports of retaliation against dissident members from the 112th Congress forward. On the Republican side, there was at least one report of significant retaliation based on opposition to leadership, although it was not based on defection from the caucus choice for Speaker. This retaliation was the removal of David Schweikert (Ariz.) and Walter Jones (N.C.) from Financial Services and Justin Amash (Mich.) and Tim Huelskamp (Kans.) from Budget when committee assignments were made at the start of the 113th Congress. This punishment was for not being a "team player" in the prior Congress and in particular, for failing to support a leadership-supported budget bill that, in the view of the renegades, did not go far enough (Thorp 2012). Rather than whip these four back into line, the sanctioning of Schweikert, Jones, Amash, and Huelskamp became a rallying cry of dissident Republicans as they moved to challenge Boehner's reelection as Speaker, and later, to depose him (Lillis and Hooper 2013).

Kevin McCarthy is Elected Speaker

The strategic landscape for Kevin McCarthy's campaign for the speakership was set in the days following November 8, 2022, once all the votes were counted and the

remaining close contests were settled   Despite many pundits' predictions of a major

landslide for Republican House candidates (Carlson 2022; Cillizza 2022 Fineout

2022; Goodwin 2022; Jamerson 2022; King 2022; Krauschaar 2022), the GOP had

only a narrow 222 – 212 majority when the House convened on January 3, 2023.[9]

McCarthy, the minority leader in the 117th Congress, was the only credible

Republican candidate for the Speaker's gavel, yet, his path to election was unclear

in the aftermath of November 8. The same members, or their progeny, who had

vexed Speakers Boehner and Ryan and Leader McCarthy for the past decade stood

in the way (Mascardo and Jalonick 2022). After it became clear that Republicans

would hold a majority in the House, but before the size of that majority became

known, word came from the House Freedom Caucus (HFC) that its former chair,

Andy Biggs (R-Ariz.) would mount a challenge to McCarthy (Alic 2022; Zanona, Orr,

Rogers, and Grayer 2022). While there were several ways of expressing the core

dissatisfaction with McCarthy, the principal aim of anti-McCarthy forces was to

loosen centralized agenda control so that the HFC would have more opportunities to

offer amendments and make speeches on matters favored by the HFC but that had

little chance of passage in the House.

With between two- and three-dozen members in the HFC,[10] it was clear that

any organized opposition to McCarthy from this front would imperil his ability to

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[9] One seat was vacant, owing to the death of Donald McEachin (D-Va.). The vacancy was not filled until his successor, Jennifer McClellan (D-Va.) was sworn in on March 7.

[10] The precise identity of HFC members is always a bit unclear. Blanco, Sotomajor, and Dormido (2023) put the number at 33 as of May 2023.

win the election. However, McCarthy also had nearly two months to negotiate his way to victory.

McCarthy's tactics to win over all but a handful of his caucus prior to January 3 was two-fold. The first was the enlistment of former President Trump as a supporter, in hopes that his endorsement would win over this most MAGA of House Republican factions. By all accounts, this came with limited success. The second line of attack was more private, and involved a series of closed-door meetings with dissident leaders, listening to their concerns and hoping to find common ground.

Despite all of this, Biggs declared himself a candidate for Speaker ahead of the mid-November caucus where the Republican nominee would be chosen (Solender 2022). When the vote came, McCarthy received the speakership nomination on a secret 188 – 33 ballot (Solender and Treene 2022; Walsh and Shapitl 2022; Edmonson, Haberman and Karni 2022). It was clear McCarthy had a lot more work to do over the next eight weeks if he was going to be elected Speaker.

McCarthy and his surrogates continued working behind closed doors to secure votes, despite Grigg's announcement that he would carry the fight to the floor, with the support of at least five other members. Unlike the 1923 speakership deadlock, there did not appear to be a single leader of the dissident movement, despite Grigg's announced candidacy, nor a single set of demands to be met to win over the dissidents. For instance, despite the fact that one of the main bones of contention between HFC members and House Republican leadership was a set of

rules changes intended to open up deliberation on the floor, few HFC members were in favor of making support for these rules changes a condition of gaining their vote for Speaker (McPherson 2022). McCarthy kept negotiating, but he failed to move the dissidents as the convening of the 118th Congress came into sight (Fox and Zanona 2022).

When the House convened on January 3, 2023, nineteen Republicans broke ranks with their party and voted for someone other than McCarthy. This left the Democratic nominee, Hakeem Jeffries the leader in the balloting, with 212 votes, McCarthy in second place with 203, and dissident Republican scattered across votes for Biggs (10), Jim Jordan (6), Jim Banks (1), Lee Zeldin (1), and Bryon Donalds (1). On the second ballot, dissident votes rallied around Jordan, despite the fact that Jordan was supporting McCarthy.

The House adjourned after three ballots on the first day. When it returned to balloting on January 4, dissident votes had shifted to Byron Donalds, but the dissident faction had not grown in size. On the third day of balloting, coordination among the dissidents around Donalds frayed, but McCormick's support held steady. That night, a deal was apparently reached on fiscal matters for the upcoming Congress, pertaining to the debt limit increase and domestic spending, but other issues were said to still be pending (Barrett et al 2023). This deal was sufficient to shift 13 votes in McCarthy's favor, so that he now received 213 votes out of 431 total cast. (The number of votes necessary for a majority was 216 at this point.) However, one Freedom Caucus member who supported McCarthy also reported that

this was the "maximum reachable" number McCarthy could get (Millman 2023). As a consequence, the new object of persuasion among McCarthy's team was to get a sufficient number of the remaining defectors to vote "present," so that the number of votes needed for McCarthy's victory would be lowered.[11] After a bit of drama, six McCarthy opponents finally voted "present" on the 15th ballot, allowing him to be elected.

If we step back and view the sequence of roll call votes abstractly, we can see that as voting progressed, McCarthy was able to push his opposition back until only the most anti-leadership members remained in the end. We can illustrate this by using Nokken-Poole scores from the 117th Congress in Figure 3a to show the spatial location of loyal Republicans (shown with gray circles) and Republicans who opposed McCarthy in each roll call vote. (Letters indicate the candidates the dissidents supported on each ballot.) We use scores from the 117th Congress because we wanted to use spatial locations that were measured before the speakership contest. (Using scores from the 118th Congress produce identical substantive results while including first-year members in the analysis.[12])

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[11] Under House precedent, McCarthy only needed to get a majority of votes cast for Speaker "by surname," which meant that "present" votes would be treated as an absence, for the sake of establishing the number of votes necessary to effect an election.

[12] As we show in Appendix C, from the 112th to 118th Congresses, both first and second dimension Nokken-Poole scores in Congress c, compared to Congress c-1 are influenced by being a dissident in Congress c. In the case of the 118th Congress thus far, Republican dissidents (defined as having ever voted against McCarthy in the 118th Congress) who also served in the 117th Congress are located 0.297 points "down" on the second dimension and 0.93 points to the right on the first dimension. This finding concerning the relative shift on the second dimension among dissidents holds for every Congress except one, where the effect is insignificant.

For the first eleven ballots (which occurred over the first three days of voting), opposition to McCarthy came from the "southeast" portion of the spatial configuration, that is, from a combination of *both* the most conservative *and* the most anti-leadership members. The one notable exception was the appearance of Victoria Spartz (R-Ind.) among the dissenters on the 4th through 11th ballots.[13] The twelfth ballot was the first cast on January 6, the last day of voting, which followed on a series of negotiations that brought the remaining moveable dissidents on board the McCarthy bandwagon. The spatial consequence was to pick off a few conservatives who were not especially anti-leadership, but most importantly, to pick off all but the most extreme on the anti-leadership dimension. The remainder of the balloting for the day amounted to trench warfare to achieve the final victory, by switching votes for Republicans who were not McCarthy to "present."[14]

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[13] Spartz explained her shift to "present" as a spur to get Republicans back to deliberating as a caucus over how to resolve the speakership contest. (See Shapero 2023.)

[14] This point can be confirmed with three simple probit analyses, predicting being disloyal as a function of the two Nokken-Poole dimensions (117th scores) on the 11th, 12th, and 15th (final) ballots. (Standard errors in parentheses.)

	Congress		
	11	12	15
Dimension 1	6.10	-0.68	-1.44
	(0.77)	(3.03)	(5.29)
Dimension 2	-3.65	-7.75	-12.2
	(0.77)	(2.46)	(4.53)
Intercept	-5.92	-4.46	-6.95
	(1.23)	(2.26)	(4.80)
N	225	225	225
Llf	-28.3	-9.61	-5.82
Pseudo R^2	.59	.69	.79

Figure 3a. Spatial location of Republican dissidents, using Nokken-Poole scores from the 117th Congress
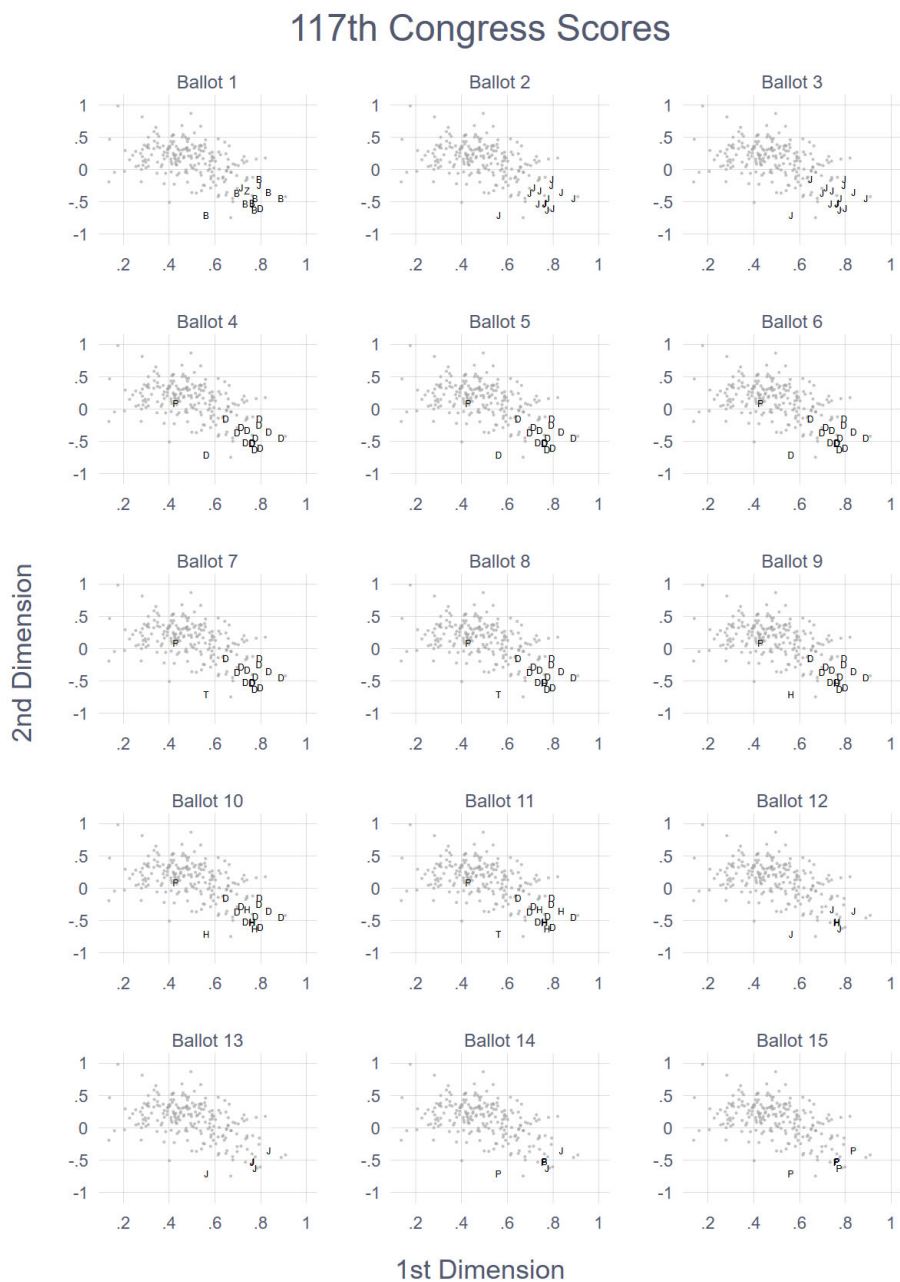
Tokens: A, Jim Banks; B, Andy Biggs; D, Byron Donalds; H, Kevin Hern; J, Jim Jordan; P, Present; T, Donald Trump; Z, Lee Zeldin

Figure 3b. Spatial location of Republican dissidents, using Nokken-Poole scores from the 118th Congress
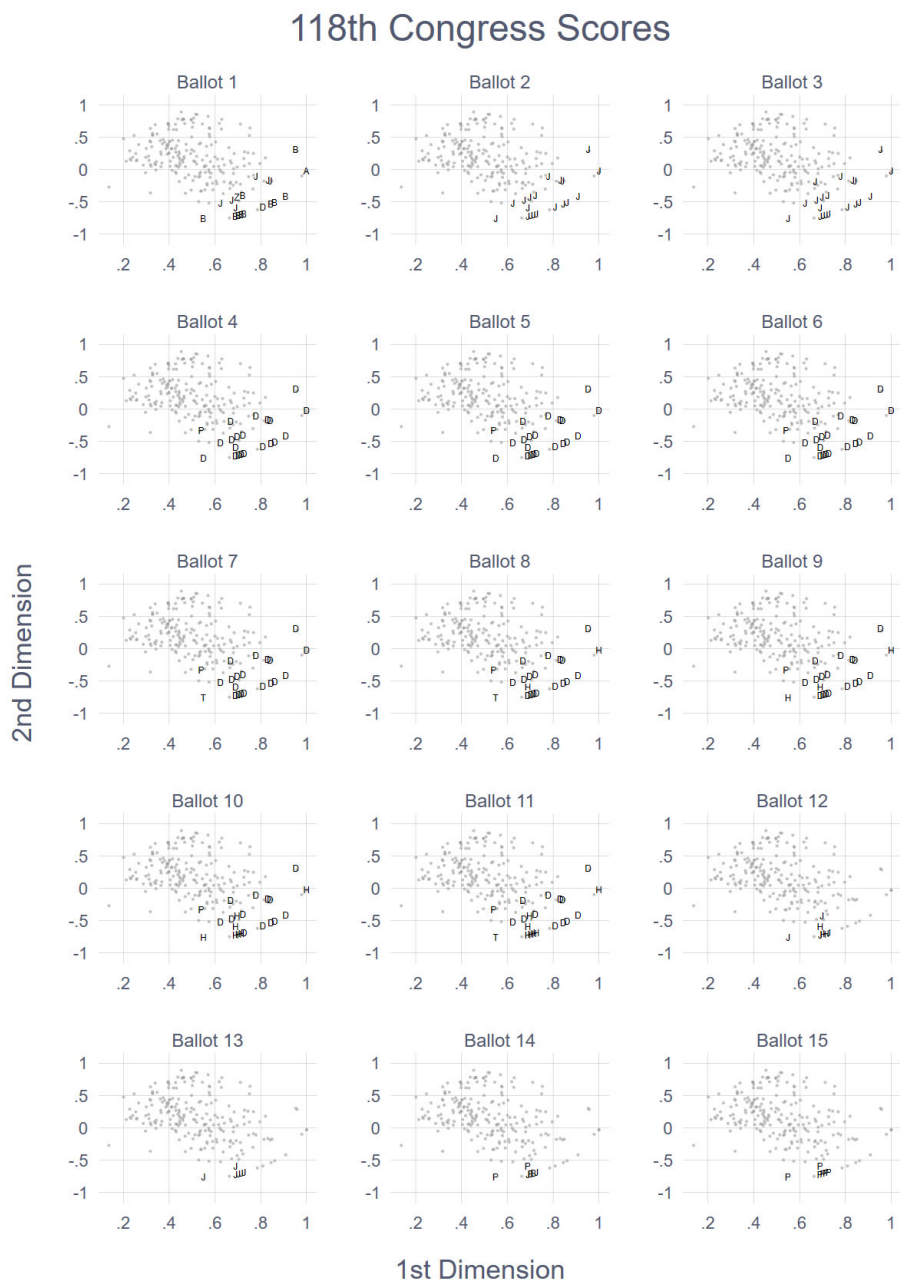
Tokens: A, Jim Banks; B, Andy Biggs; D, Byron Donalds; H, Kevin Hern; J, Jim Jordan; P, Present; T, Donald Trump; Z, Lee Zeldin

Accounts of the two-month-long negotiation between the dissident faction and McCarthy loyalists suggested that the dissidents were holding out, at least in part, to get certain concessions out of McCarthy. Among these concessions were rules changes to loosen up access to the floor (for amendments and votes on particular issues), to lower the barrier to allow the motion to "vacate the chair," and to grant the anti-leadership faction greater membership to desirable committees. How did they do?

Because the negotiations were held behind closed doors and prominent players on both sides have been ambiguous over what exactly was exchanged to get McCarthy in the Speaker's chair, it is not at all clear what the dissident faction gained by the Speakership drama. As Baer (2023, p. 185) notes, the HFC campaign to transform the House through rules changes largely failed. Among rules changes that were adopted, almost all were non-controversial within the Republican caucus. Access to the floor has not been significantly eased, as the use of closed rules on legislation continues on a pace consistent with the Democratic-controlled 117th Congress.

On the matter of committee assignments, some have claimed that HFC members have gained significant toeholds into important committees, although a systematic analysis of committee assignment patterns casts this into doubt.

We make this point in two ways. The first is to use the Nokken-Poole scores to summarize the ideological and anti-leadership composition of each House committee in the 118th Congress compared to the 117th. (We confine the analysis

to Republican members). In Figure 4, we plot the average Nokken-Poole scores for each committee, drawing attention to seven committees — the three "exclusive" committees (Appropriations, Energy and Commerce, and Ways and Means) and four other committees that have been at the center of attention in Republican factional politics — Budget, Judiciary, Oversight and Accountability, and Rules. Finally, because Nokken-Poole scores are calculated independently for each Congress, we indicate average scores in each Congress with black horizontal and vertical lines.

Figure 4. Average Nokken-Poole scores for Republican contingents on House standing committees, 117th and 118th Congresses.
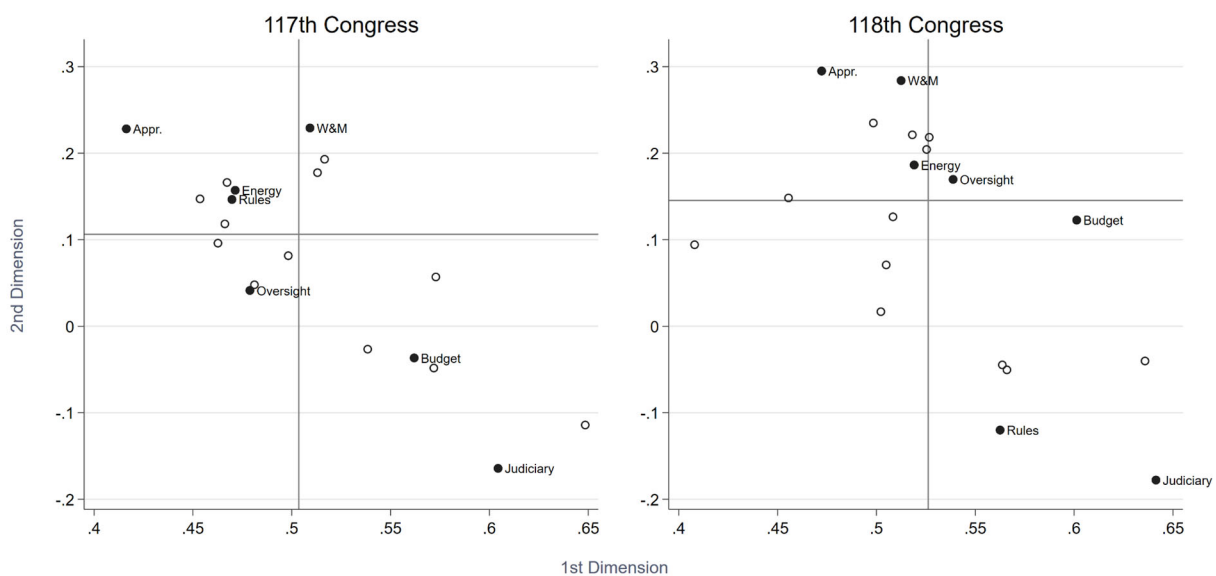
Before commenting on the specific politics of organizing the 118th Congress, one pattern that jumps out in Figure 4 is the overall configuration of committee Nokken-Poole scores in the 117th versus 118th Congress. In the 117th Congress, most committees were either composed of "moderate" pro-leadership members (committees in the northwest quadrant) or "extreme" anti-leadership members

(committees in the southeast quadrant). The "power" committees (the exclusive committees plus Rules) were notably in the former group. (We include Ways and Means, even though it barely misses being in the northwest quadrant.) This pattern of committee configurations was broken somewhat in the 118th Congress, although it is *how* this pattern was broken that is most important.[15]

The most membership-significant shift — and the one often documented in public accounts — was the movement of the Rules Committee from having a moderate pro-leadership majority to an extreme anti-leadership majority. However, as the dust-up over approving the rule that brought the debt-limit bill to the floor indicates, when leadership really needs a bill the HFC opposes to come to the floor, it may be able to sway enough Republicans on Rules to overcome that opposition (Hulse and Edmondson 2023; Lerman and McPherson 2023).[16]

Finally, it is notable that as a general matter, the Republican contingents on the other power committees were moved to become a bit more conservative *and* a bit more pro-leadership, compared to the rest of the caucus. Thus, while the shifting composition of the Rules Committee is significant, if anything, leadership shored up its influence on most other committees of consequence.

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[15] The correlation between the average scores on the two dimensions was -.79 in the 117th Congress and -.58 in the 118th.

[16] The location of the Judiciary Committee in each Congress bears some comment. It was the most anti-leadership committee in both Congresses and either the most or second-most conservative committee. For members interested in pushing the issues of abortion restrictions and investigations against the Bidens, this is a critical committee. It suggests that McCarthy is willing to give this committee over to the most extreme voices in his caucus, on both dimensions, to provide a loud megaphone for activists on each of these issues. Giving over this megaphone to a minority faction of the party provides opportunities to message to the most extreme base; whether this messaging is electorally advantageous is, of course, up for debate.

The overall composition of the Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government provides another example of a committee of interest to dissidents nonetheless being held closely by leadership. True, its chair, Jim Jordan, is one of the most extreme members on both Nokken-Poole dimensions. However, the overall average scores of Republicans on the subcommittee (0.618 on the first dimension and -0.153 on the second) place it approximately where the Budget Committee is located — more conservative than the average of the caucus, but balanced between pro- and anti-leadership factions.

Summary

The organizational cartel established in the aftermath of the Civil War and Reconstruction channeled, but did not eliminate, conflict over leadership of the congressional parties, and thus the organization of the House. It channeled this conflict in a predictable way. The travails of McCarthy at the start of the 118th Congress were presaged in the struggles over leadership in the Republican Party Boehner and Ryan had to endure before him. Nor were these types of struggles confined just to the Republican Party. Despite being less visible and intense, Nancy Pelosi had to fend off two major challenges to her leadership during roughly the same time Republicans were engaging in a more visible conflict. In the next section, we take on the question of whether these struggles portend the demise of the organizational cartel, and even the procedural cartel.

II.   Whither the Organizational Cartel

In the Conclusion of our book, we considered the future of the organizational cartel and speculated about challenges it might face in succeeding years:

> Because the organizational cartel is an endogenous institution, it is natural to ask where it is most vulnerable to attack. It is also natural to ask whether such an attack would be successful and thereby thrust the House back into a terra incognita of organizational politics not seen in Washington since the Civil War. In short, what are the chances that the House could find itself once again deadlocked in organizing? (p. 318)

We offered two conditions under which the House might find itself deadlocked. The least likely condition would be if a new, third party emerged — we suggested "a party like Ross Perot's Reform Party or the Libertarian Party" — and elected enough members to prevent either major party from holding a majority by itself. This might lead to an extended speakership balloting like in 1855 – 56, and (as in that case) could require a plurality rule be adopted to settle the contest.[17] This was not what happened in the 118th Congress.

The second, and more likely, condition would be "when a faction of the majority party has sympathies with the minority, and thus finds it advantageous to hold the election of a Speaker in order to extract centrist concessions from the leadership of the majority party." We believed at the time that this condition would more likely affect the Democrats if they were in the majority, because their dissident faction (the Blue Dogs) was more conservative than most of the party and could plausibly join with the Republicans on some coalitional arrangement.

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[17] The speakership election in 1855 – 56 required 133 ballots over two months, and it was only settled after the House adopted a plurality rule. See Jenkins and Stewart (2013).

We did not think the centrist-concessions condition fit the Republican Party nearly as well:

> Republicans seem considerably less vulnerable to fracturing over organizational matters due to left-right ideological divisions because their most cohesive dissidents, the Tea Party sympathizers, are on the right wing of the party, far from the center of the chamber. Thus, defection to the Democratic Party is not a credible threat. (p. 319)

Still, we followed up that prediction with an addendum that proved to be more prescient: "The most Tea Party sympathizers can do is withhold support for the Republican nominee and lobby for a more conservative Speaker, the alternative being the inability of the House to conduct business at all. Under this scenario, the Tea Party faction would become like the Impracticables of 1849."[18] This is, in fact, what occurred in the 118th Congress. The twenty-or-so Republican dissidents sought a more conservative Speaker (e.g., Biggs, Jordan, and Donalds) and ultimately settled for a set of procedural and personal concessions from McCarthy before concluding the contest after four days. (In this sense, none of their concerns were as deeply ingrained as those of the Impracticables, who kept the speakership contest going — and the House unorganized — for six weeks.)

*   *   *

But this leaves open the question of *why* the organizational cartel broke down in the 118th Congress. Yes, there were members of the majority party who were unhappy with their speakership nominee. But that has been true *many* times since the

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[18] The Impracticables were a set of five or six Southern Whigs – led by Rep. Robert Toombs (W-Ga.) – who felt that Congress should not pass any law prohibiting slavery in the newly acquired (from Mexico) territories of California or New Mexico or abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia. See Jenkins and Stewart (2013).

organizational cartel firmly took hold a century and a half ago. And aside from the one case in 1923, intra-party unhappiness by itself has not been sufficient for majority party members to defect from the caucus bond, thus allowing an extended floor battle for Speaker to emerge.[19]

In the remainder of this section, we consider several changes to the political environment inside and outside of the House over the past few decades — and which have accelerated over the last ten years — to create a recipe for sufficient majority-party speakership defections to transport the chamber back to the uncertain organizational world prior to the Civil War.

Diminishing Committees

As noted, committees have been the bulwark of the organizational cartel arrangement. In the 1860s and 1870s, as majority party leaders sought to eliminate the uncertainty in House speakership elections that was somewhat routine in the Antebellum era, they could only convince their members to adopt the caucus nominations *as binding* by providing concessions to those co-partisans who backed a different caucus candidate for Speaker. Stated differently, co-partisan losers in caucus were compensated with something of value — positions on important

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[19] The 1923 case was the dog that *did* bark. The organizational cartel also survived several meaningful challenges that did *not* spill over onto the House floor. Two divisive intra-party battles over Speaker nominees occurred in the late-19th century, one among the majority Republicans in 1881 and the other among the majority Democrats in 1891, that tested the boundaries of the caucus bond on organizational matters. Both times, though, the bond held and the warring factions came together on the floor without incident. And in the 20th century, the Conservative Coalition – the informal partnership of Republicans and Southern Democrats – was a perpetual threat to the organizational cartel. But it never proved to be an *actual* threat. See Chapter 9 of our book for more details.

committees and sometimes committee chairmanships — to paper over any unhappiness in the majority party. The new Speaker would in fact be the linchpin in this caucus-induced organizational arrangement, handling the distribution of committee assignments (and, thus, policy power) immediately after securing his election.[20]

During much of the post-Civil War period, committees proved to be the "glue" to hold the organizational cartel together. As long as power (in the form of seats on committee) was available — and shared — the caucus-induced organizational arrangement held. Indeed, our understanding of how politics worked during the "Textbook Congress" era of the mid-20th century was that policy was largely determined in the House by the relevant standing committees. New policies required the assent of committee chairs and underlying committee backbenchers, and these individuals could also be important gatekeepers when policy change was pushed from outside the committee (Shepsle 1989; Jenkins and Monroe 2014).

Our theories of congressional organization in political science, from the 1970s through the mid-2000s, also placed committees in a privileged policy position in the House. Distributive theories largely followed the Textbook Congress perspective, with power in the House wielded exclusively by committees (Mayhew 1974; Shepsle and Weingast 1987; Weingast and Marshall 1988). Informational theories —

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[20] In our book, we speak more specifically to the Speaker being the linchpin: "his was the first and most important office to be filled, as it controlled the means (committee assignments) to disperse power within the chamber and fulfill the power-sharing agreement underlying the explicit party bond in caucus. Should a Speaker renege on the agreement, he (as agent of the underlying majority) would lose his authority and put his position (at that point, and certainly in terms of possible reelection in the future) at risk" (273).

distinct from distributive predecessors in prioritizing the collective benefits of specialization over the individual benefits of gaining and trading influence — also designated committees as the key structures in the House (Gilligan and Krehbiel 1987; Krehbiel 1991). Partisan theories, which allowed for party influence to be a significant factor in House organization — something that neither distributive nor informational theories did — still placed a significant premium on committee power in the House, but simply moved the locus from the median of the committee (distributive models) and the median of the chamber (informational models) to the median of the majority party (Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005).

By the end of this period, though, the actual position of committees in the House had changed. They had grown considerably weaker, with their influence transferred to the party leadership. This was routinely noted by reporters and congressional observers in Washington (see, e.g., Wolfensberger 2011; Willis and Kane 2018), even as House members who held or were up for committee chairmanships — both Democrats and Republicans — decided instead to retire (Cillizza 2014; Bresnahan 2018; Ackley 2018). Any number of individual cases could provide a compelling story, but Rodney Frelinghusen (R-N.J.), who in 2018 was in his first term as Chair of the powerful House Appropriations Committee, is telling. Rather than continue in Congress, he chose to retire. As Bresnahan (2018) notes:

> Relinquishing the chairmanship of the House Appropriations Committee once would have been an unthinkable surrender of congressional power. Rodney Frelinghuysen, with his decision this week to do exactly that, showed just how much cachet the role of committee chair has lost.

This view of weakening committees, relative to party leadership, is now the conventional wisdom in Congress textbooks. For example, Adler, Jenkins, and Shipan (2021, p. 145) note: "the era of authoritarian committee chairs and committee domination of the policy-making process has given way to one that is controlled more tightly by party leadership." And while our theories of Congress have not been updated to incorporate this new reality, the evidence for it abounds (Jenkins and Patashnik 2016). Supporting the anecdotal accounts of reporters and congressional observers, a wealth of data exists.

Smith (2021) provides a comprehensive overview of the weakening of committees over the last several decades, noting a significant drop in committee meetings and markups, a reduction in legislative productivity of committee and subcommittee chairs, and a diminishing role of committee in the annual budgetary process. However, perhaps the most direct measure of declining committee relevance is the percentage of "self-executing rules" — or rules that automatically alter the content of legislation after committee action – over time. Per Smith, self-executing rules:

> provide that one or more amendments are considered adopted upon adoption of the rule—that is, without a separate debate or vote on the amendment. In many cases, these amendments represent the outcome of negotiations among majority party members just before floor action and after, or as a substitute for, committee action. When a rule includes self-executing provisions and bars other amendments, the rule effectively rewrites a bill on the floor before it receives a vote on final passage.

Figure 5 provides the frequency of special rules with self-executive provisions from the 101st Congress (1989 – 90) through the 117th Congress (2021 – 22). While there

has been some variation over time, the percentage has more than tripled since the 102nd Congress (199-92), with the last two Congresses being substantial increases. Moreover, it has become routine in recent years for majority party leadership to pull legislation out of a committee — before the committee has voted to report it to the floor — and simply have the House membership act on the measure. In the 117th Congress, 47% of total House measures were unreported by committee — up from 21% in the 110th Congress.[21]

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[21] https://bipartisanpolicy.org/download/?file=/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/BPC-House-Rules-Data-117th-current-through-June-30-2022.pdf, Table 5.

Figure 5. Frequency of special rules with self-executing provisions, 101st – 117th Congress (1989 – 2021)
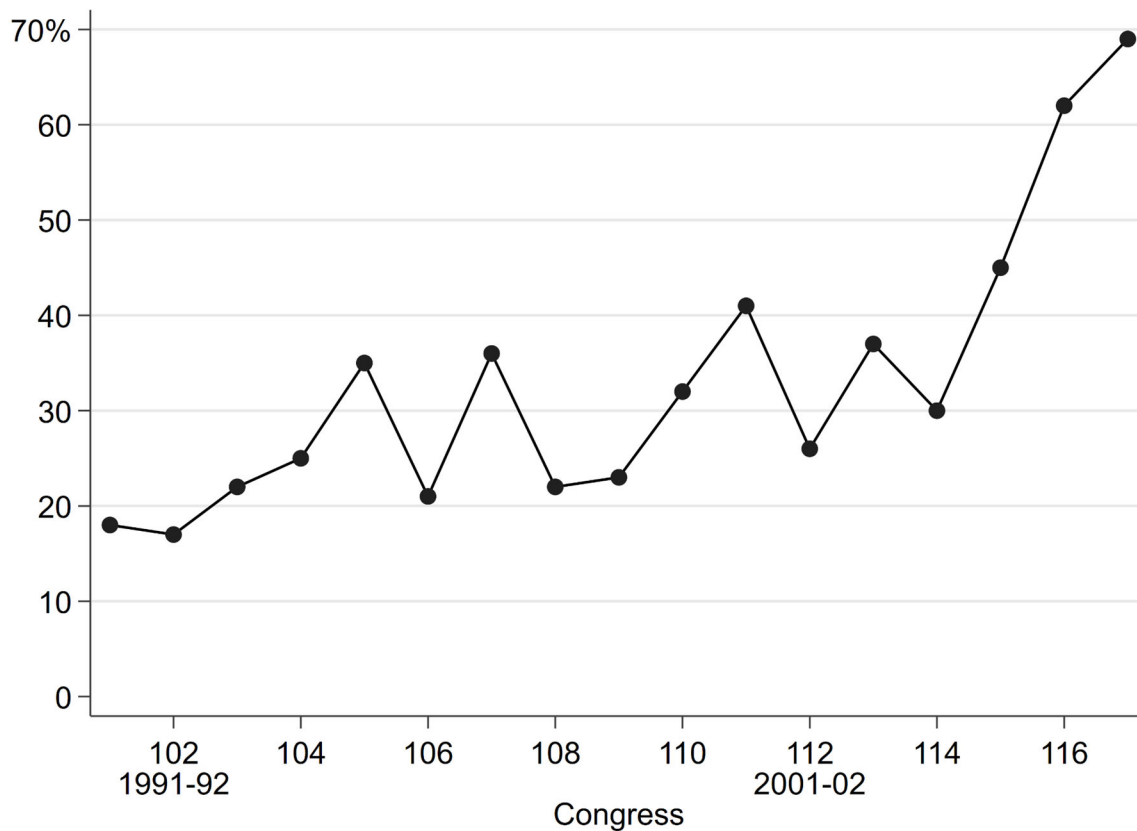
Source: Based on Smith (2021), using updated data from Don Wolfensberger: https://bipartisanpolicy.org/download/?file=/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/BPC-House-Rules-Data-117th-current-through-June-30-2022.pdf

A final example of the diminishment of committees is provided in Figure 6, which tracks the number of conference committees — more specifically, the number of completed conference agreements — in the post-World War II era. The traditional textbook way in which legislation gets produced in Congress is by contingents from the House and Senate meeting in conference to iron out differences in similar bills

passed in the respective chambers. But this traditional procedure is no longer used in the contemporary Congress. As the figure illustrates, it was once common for each Congress to have over a hundred conference committees and sometimes over two hundred — but there has been a near continuous drop since the early 1970s. In fact, since the 112th Congress (2011 – 12), conference committees have not exceeded single digits, and in the most recent Congress, the 117th, there were none at all. And, not surprisingly, the waning of conference committees has been accompanied by the waxing of party leadership. As Smith (2021) states: "In the place of conference committees have come more frequent use of informal negotiations and alternative paths to the floor… the process always conducted with the approval of, and usually supervision from, majority party leadership."

Figure 6. Congressional conference committees, 80th – 117th Congress (1947 – 2022).
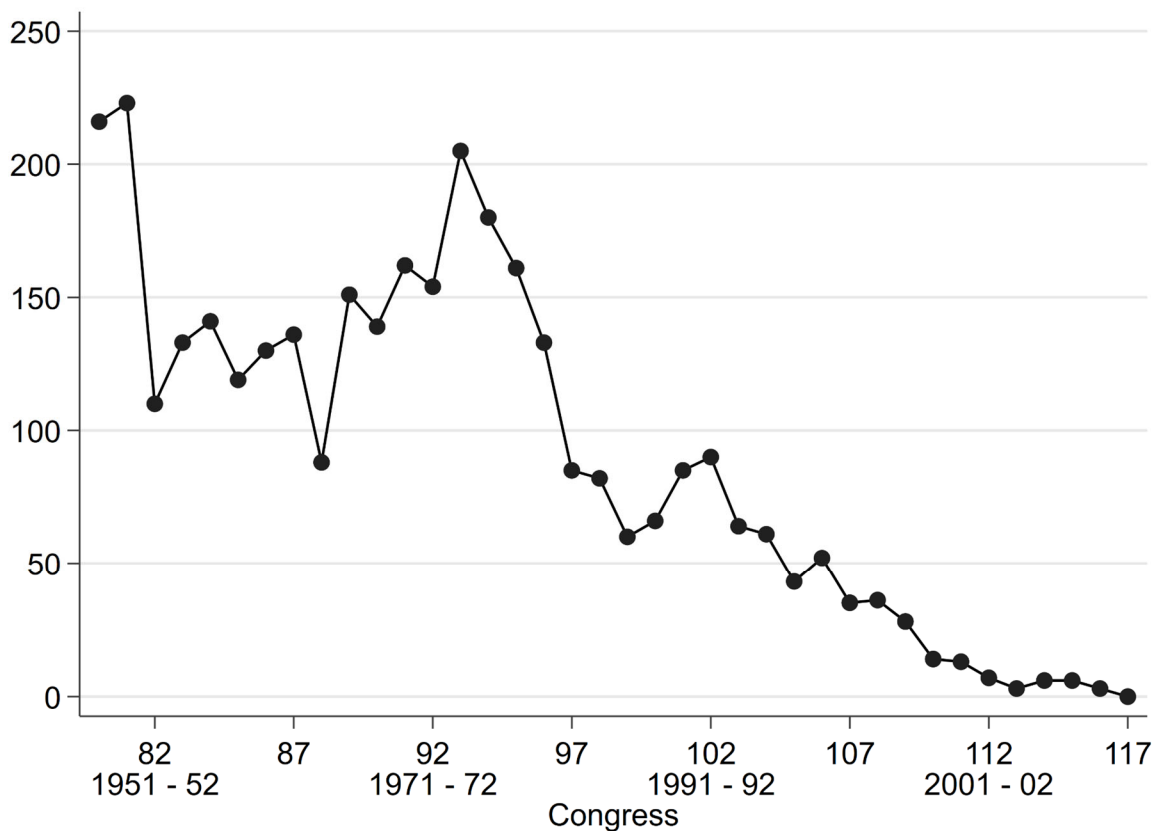
Source: Data provided by Sarah Binder.

The congressional history of the weakening of committees in the House usually starts with the reforms of the 1970s, when some changes were made to centralize power in the majority party leadership (see, e.g., Rohde 1991; Sinclair 2006).[22] However, most scholars point to the Republican takeover of the House in the mid-1990s as the critical point. When Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) became Speaker in

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[22] At the same time, other changes were made to decentralize power to subcommittees.

1995, he instituted reforms that established chair term limits and cut committee staff by a third, as a means of weakening institutional rivals to party leaders. Moreover, another set of reforms redistributed the influence lost by committees to the majority party leadership (including the Speaker). As Green and Crouch (2022, pp. 170 – 71) contend:

> Gingrich's moves hastened the decline of congressional committees and their capacity to conduct rigorous oversight and develop intelligent policy, diminished the importance of seniority, constrained the ability of rank and file members to legislate, and arguably weakened Congress as an institution.

We end this subsection with a caveat. While the general understanding among scholars is that committees have declined in power over time — with this decline especially pronounced over the last decade — there are still reasons to believe that committees hold some value. For example, Curry (2015) contends that committee chairs still possess informational advantages on matters related to policy, and should be thought of as "leaders" alongside the typical party leaders in the House. Committees — especially committee chairs — also continue to offer useful platforms to "message" constituents and hound the opposing party; one only has to look at how Rep. Jim Jordan (R-Ohio) has handled chairing the Judiciary Committee in the 118th Congress for evidence (Boguslaw 2013; Sisco and Kern 2013). Finally, committee positions are still held up as a currency to be dispensed or withdrawn based on the behavior of members. For example, in 2019, House Republicans removed Rep. Steve King (R-Ia.) from his seats on the Judiciary and Agriculture Committees in response to speech extolling White Supremacy (Gabriel, Martin, and Fandos 2019). And in 2021, the House voted to strip Rep. Marjorie

Taylor Green (R-Ga.) and Rep. Paul Gosar (R-La.), respectively, of their committee

assignments — after the Republicans refused to take action themselves — over a

series of inflammatory rhetoric and online posts (Edmondson, Fandos, and Kaplan

2021; Marcos 2021). However, these sorts of negative actions seem more in keeping

with the state of partisan warfare in the House, and the need by leaders to visibly

placate their party donors and base. Case in point: Green and Gosar were reelected

to the 118th House, despite not holding committee assignments, McCarthy provided

both with new committee assignments, and three Democrats were removed from

their committee assignments in a fairly obvious partisan tit-for-tat.[23]

Tightening the Procedural Cartel

As noted, when the majority party agrees to use its control of the legislative agenda

— defined as the set of bills considered and voted on the floor — to achieve its

desired outcomes, it acts as a *procedural cartel* (Cox and McCubbins 1993; 2005).

The Speaker serves as the leader of the majority party in the House; his/her job is to

protect (and enhance) the party's "brand" — or reputation — which has electoral

value for all members of the majority.[24] The Speaker's power over the legislative

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[23] After the Republican takeover and McCarthy's election as Speaker in the 118th Congress, Reps. Adam B. Schiff (D-Calif.) and Eric Swalwell (D-Calif.) – who played key roles in the impeachment proceedings against President Donald Trump – were unilaterally removed from the House Intelligence Committee by McCarthy, while Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) – an outspoken critic of Israel – was removed by a House vote (Edmondson and Demirjian 2023; Demirjian 2023). It was widely reported that the removals were retribution for the expulsion of Gosar and Green when Democrats held the majority in the 117th Congress.

[24] Here we hew closer to *Legislative Leviathan* (1993) than *Setting the Agenda* (2005). The former characterizes parties as firms with a single central agent (i.e., the Speaker); the latter views parties as a legal/accountancy partnership with a central authority or group of senior partners (the Speaker, as well as the committee chairs and the Rules Committee). We believe the theory envisioned in *Legislative Leviathan* better mirrors contemporary life in the House.

agenda is not exogenous; rather, it is *delegated* by the underlying majority-party membership. They instruct the Speaker to build and/or maintain a strong party brand, which is done by compiling favorable records of legislative achievement — and achieved via intra-party cooperation and team production.

As leader of the majority party in the House, Cox and McCubbins argue that the Speaker's main goal is a negative one: he/she must guard against measures that will split the majority and weaken the brand (as an electoral signaling device). The brand is strongest when the message is clear; hence, the Speaker in the modern House has only gone forward with measures when a majority of the majority supports them (think: necessary but not sufficient condition). This is known as the "Hastert Rule," after Rep. Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.), who was Speaker from the 106th through 109th Congresses (1999 – 2006).[25]

The main problem for the Speaker in securing team production is that the majority-party members are not homogenous. While both Democrats and Republicans are more internally alike than in the past — such as the mid-20th century, when both parties were to some extent big tents — there are still differences among co-partisans. Our ability to measure these differences is difficult; the typical way — using the standard deviation of members' NOMINATE scores within party — is post-treatment, as it is based on roll-call votes (and thus is endogenous to the legislative agenda and the application of majority-party agenda control). But we *can* measure how much latitude majority-party leaders provide to

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[25] This (informal) rule traces back to the Gingrich speakership (Feehery 2011).

their majority members. This can be done by looking at the distribution of special

rules. Figure 8 tracks the percentage of open/modified open, restrictive, and closed

rules from the 103rd (1993 – 94) through 117th (2021 – 22) Congresses.[26]

Figure 8. Special rules for the original consideration of legislation, 103rd – 117th Congress (1993 – 2002).
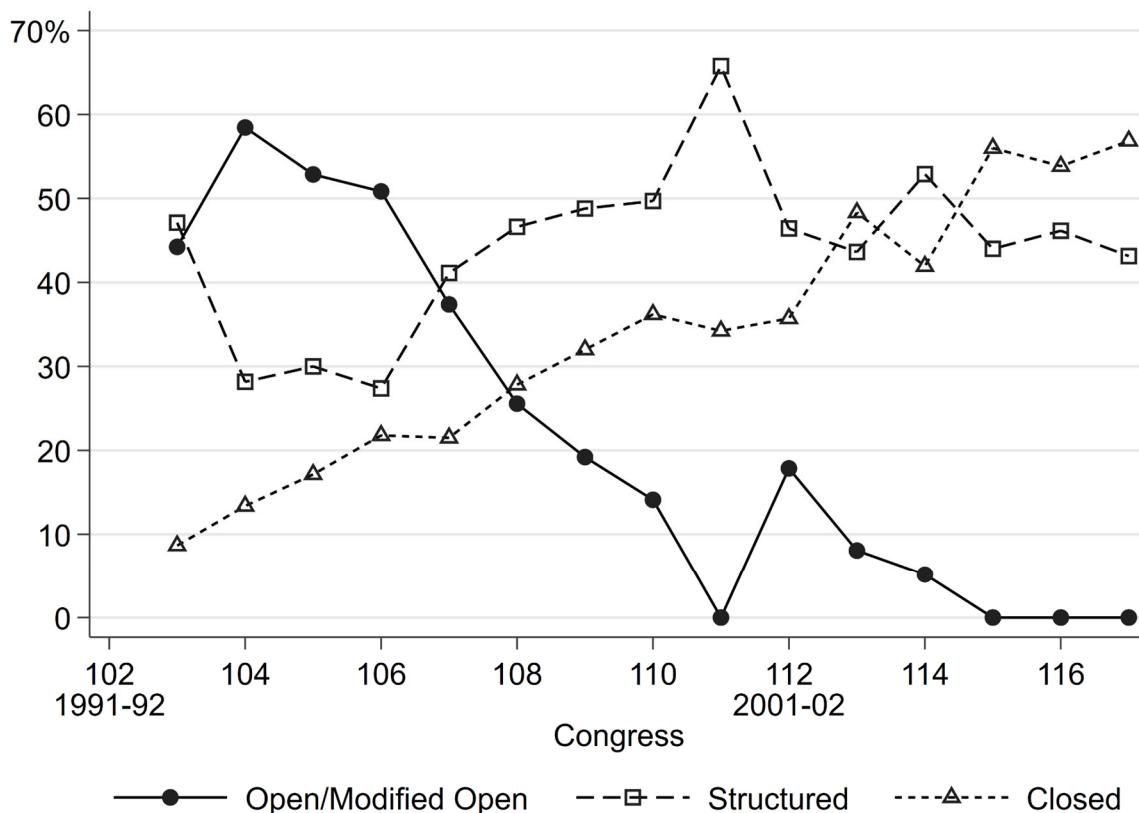
Source: https://bipartisanpolicy.org/download/?file=/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/BPC-House-Rules-Data-117th-current-through-June-30-2022.pdf, Table 1.

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[26] Open rules allow all germane amendments; modified open rules allow all germane amendments that hew to a specific time limit on the amending process; structured rules put some restrictions on amendments but do not prohibit them completely; and closed rules allow no amendments at all. See Sinclair (2017).

The data illustrate how the procedural cartel has tightened over time. In the mid-1990s, the new Republican majority asserted that it would open up the process, in response to too many closed and restrictive rules under the prior Democratic majority. And they were true to their word. But they soon realized that a more open-rule environment wasn't all it was cracked up to be. As Oleszek (2020, p. 25) notes: "Granted the opportunity to offer numerous floor amendments, the Democratic minority employed a filibuster-by-amendment strategy to foil the GOP's [ambitious Contract with America agenda]." The Republicans soon saw the error of their ways, and their willingness to continue an open-amendment environment shrank considerably when Hastert took over the speakership from Gingrich (Sinclair 2017).

Nancy Pelosi had an even firmer hand, when she became Speaker: open rules shrank to just over 14 percent in the 110th Congress and exactly zero percent in the 111th Congress. As Huder (2023, p. 151) states: "Pelosi extended the use of special rules much further than her predecessors. By 2007, open amendment floor processes were nearly extinct." While John Boehner (R-Ohio) maintained a small open-rule environment during his time as Speaker, his successor Paul Ryan (R-Wisc.) matched Pelosi's zero percent in his one full Congress as Speaker (the 115th). Pelosi's return to the speakership saw more of the same: two consecutive Congresses of zero open rules. Pelosi wanted no spontaneity on the floor — either from trollish Republicans or dissident Democratic members. Moreover, the percentage of bills with no amendments at all — i.e., those with closed rules —

jumped to an all-time high of 60 percent under Pelosi in the 117th Congress. "Even
the 'czar' Speakers Reed and Cannon," Huder (2023, p. 152) contends, "did not shut
down the amendment process to such a degree."

Thus, while it is hard to assess how much heterogeneity exists within a
congressional party — absent useful non-roll-call-based measures of preferences —
the reality is that majority-party leaders in recent years have focused intently on
building a clear brand at the cost of member independence (on both sides of the
aisle). In a world of increasingly nationalized elections, this has been perhaps a
smart, low-variance strategy — focus on a predetermined set of issues (and policy
messages) that paint the majority party as a whole in a positive light and don't
allow that message to be tainted, watered down, radicalized, or hijacked by the
minority party *or* dissenting members of the majority party. This tightening of the
procedural cartel has largely eliminated members' ability to offer amendments that
speak to their interests or those of their constituents if they do not correspond
favorably with the majority-party brand.

Weakening Party Leaders' Control over Members
Even as majority-party leaders have tightened control over their caucus, by
allowing fewer amendments (by virtue of more restrictive rules) and drawing policy-
making power away from committees, they have found it more difficult to control
the behavior of their rank and file. This has all occurred in recent years, as politics
has become increasingly nationalized. Split-ticket voting has decreased
substantially since the early 1980s, while the incumbency advantage has dropped

significantly over the same period (Erikson 2017; Adler, Jenkins, and Shipan 2021). Voters are increasingly voting for the party, not the person, and as a result party candidates tend to win or lose together — and thus face a collective fate.

Party leaders have come to realize this, which explains their obsession with building and maintaining a clear party brand. If voters are going to focus on party labels to guide their voting decisions, leaders want their particular brand to be as clear as possible — without any controversies attached to it. But this world is not useful for keeping party members in line. The typical carrot/stick that party leaders have wielded has been committee assignments — distributing them for party loyalty or (perhaps more powerfully) taking them away for party disloyalty. But with the waning power of committees in recent years, that carrot/stick has been less effective. As noted, Majorie Taylor Green and Paul Gosar both had their committee assignments stripped in the 117th Congress, but they were still reelected to the 118th House. (Steve King did lose a Republican primary battle in 2020, however, after losing his committee assignments.)

Other than committee assignments, party leaders have relied on resources — typically campaign funds and technical information and expertise — to reward or punish members. And this has been a useful avenue to keep members in line, as the reform era has forced parties to evolve to stay relevant; the modern party is thus seen as a "party in service" to its members (Aldrich 1995). But even party-leader resources have declined in importance in recent years. To be sure, party leaders still play a meaningful role in campaigns by distributing money to members in need, and

they often compete for party positions by being elite in raising money for the benefit of the party as a whole (Adler, Jenkins, and Shipan 2021). But a segment of members has emerged over the last decade who are relatively insulated from any resource pressures that party leaders can place on them. These members are affiliated with ideological factions in each party — the best known, perhaps, are the Blue Dogs (moderate Democrats) and the Freedom Caucus (conservative Republicans).

Ideological factions have become more important precisely because of the tightening of the procedural cartel in recent years. As party members who are relatively heterodox vis-a-via the median of their party have been limited in their ability to actively participate as in the past — with committees being less influential in the policy process and amendments to party-designed policies being largely eliminated — they have sought other ways to communicate their preferences and concerns. Stated differently, they have been less comfortable with the "polished" party brand in recent years, and have sought some ability to create their own brand. The ideological caucuses provide this opportunity, as they offer "sub-brands" to these heterodox party members. As Clarke (2020, p. 455) argues: "Party sub-brands are not substitutes for the party brand. Instead, they offer a complementary identity, anchored to the political party, that allows legislators to appeal to niche, possibly heterodox, markets of political supporters."

Importantly, sub-brands also provide insulation against party-leader pressure. They provide an independent political network, by targeting donors, party

activists, and the media, as a means of capturing political resources. As Clarke (2020, p. 455) notes: "By creating effective party sub-brands, ideological factions are able to market their members' partisan type and capture political resources from individuals sympathetic to their cause."[27] The result is that faction members are (largely) liberated from demands of the procedural cartel. The factions, thanks to successful sub-branding efforts, have their own resource, technology, and information streams; this allows faction members to buck the party occasionally, and sometimes block votes on issues that harm the faction.[28]

The Blue Dog Caucus, which originated in 1995 after the Republicans took control of the House, had been a growing problem for Speaker Pelosi, before they had their ranks cut in half in the 2010 midterms. They lost half of their remaining coalition again in the 2012 election. Since then, the Blue Dogs have waxed and waned in terms of members, but their overall numbers have remained fairly small — and they haven't been much of a force in the Democratic Party (Sotomayor 2023). The Freedom Caucus, which originated in 2015, has been the more consequential House faction. A small group of nine formed initially — and grew to around 40 over time — to push back against a majority-party leadership (led at the time by Speaker John Boehner) that they viewed as not conservative enough. They sought to be a disruptive force (Green 2019), and their constant, rear-guard efforts

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[27] In related work, Clarke (2023) has shown that faction affiliation alone can shift the way that political donors, activists, and leaders perceive a candidate's ideological position.

[28] And to the extent that leaders try to punish faction members by withholding campaign funds, Gaynor (2002) finds that other faction members often make up this difference through their own member-to-member donations.

eventually caused Boehner to walk away from the speakership. The Freedom

Caucus was the strongest set of supporters of President Donald Trump (Andrews

and Wise 2019), and a segment of their members — along with a few others like

Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-Fla.) — comprised the dissident faction that delayed Kevin

McCarthy from winning the speakership for four days and 15 ballots.

What did these dissident Republicans want? And what did they get from

McCarthy? Even now, we do not know all the details. But Binder (2023) notes what

seems clear: "members of the far-right, anti-establishment Freedom Caucus won

big." Some concessions are known and were put into the House rules, like a two-

thirds majority to raise taxes, a provision to require bills be on single subjects (as a

pushback against omnibus lawmaking), a stipulation that a single member could

propose a motion to vacate the chair, and a requirement that bills be released at

least 72 hours before a floor vote (so that members can be clear on the policy

specifics). The Freedom Caucus also secured three seats on the Rules Committee,

which provides the HFC with a de facto veto over bills that come to the floor.

Summing up these changes, Tully-McManus (2023) writes: "At the heart of

the rules push by rank-and-file conservatives, including many in the Freedom

Caucus, is a desire to shape a more inclusive legislative process that concentrates

less power with leadership." But what the dissidents received formally was only

part of the story, as they "secured promises from leaders that aren't formally

written down in the rules, such as allowing more amendments to be considered on

the floor and more widely distributing committee positions." These promises were

parts of handshake deals — not formally made public — that McCarthy made with Rep. Chip Roy (R-Tex.) and other HFC and non-HFC dissidents (Ferris and Beavers 2023).

In June 2023, the HFC would revisit these promises and scuttle the GOP's legislative agenda. Eleven Republicans — members of the HFC — broke with Republican leadership on a rule vote that would have allowed the chamber to move forward on a bill to block gas stove regulations and change the process for federal rulemaking. In helping to defeat the rule, the eleven GOP dissidents claimed that McCarthy betrayed them in his recent deal with President Biden to raise the debt ceiling. The dissidents asserted that the cuts in the debt-ceiling bill were not steep enough, and in agreeing to the deal McCarthy violated several promises that he made in securing the votes needed to elect him Speaker (Sotomayor et al, 2023). After shutting down the House for a week, the HFC dissidents reached a new deal with McCarthy and extracted additional concessions. One seemed to be that part of the debt-ceiling deal would be revisited, as Rep. Kay Granger (R-Tex.), the chair of the House Appropriations Committee, said she "would write funding bills at fiscal 2022 levels for new spending for both defense and nondefense discretionary spending, levels much lower than the slight increase to fiscal 2023 levels agreed to with the White House in the debt limit negotiations" (Sotomayor and Caldwell 2023). Another concession appeared to be that a censure vote against Rep. Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) — over his role in the Trump-Russia investigations — would be

introduced. Schiff would eventually be censured, the 25th such member in House of Representatives history (Wang and Alfaro 2023).

The small margin (222 – 212) the House Republicans enjoyed in the 118th Congress put McCarthy in an untenable position. Any set of five or six members switching and voting with the Democrats could grind his agenda to a halt. A group considerably larger than that stifled his hopes for a quick speakership election in January. Six months later, a group of eleven Republicans embarrassed him for a week before a new deal could be struck. The HFC dissidents showed themselves to be a group willing and able to use their leverage to force the party leadership to bend to their demands.

Summary

The idea of the organizational cartel was to provide a label to a condition that seemed to be necessary for the procedural cartel to take hold and persist. It was developed to explain how a faction-riddled majority party could nonetheless settle on a programmatic direction that would deliver something of value to every faction, even the one that failed to gain the speakership.

What is *not* unusual about the leadership struggles that have beset the Republicans from Boehner to McCarthy is a vocal minority faction within the majority party clearly wishing one of them was Speaker. That has been true of most of congressional history. What is different is that the resources at the disposal of leaders that once could be used to buy off dissidents are now either devalued (committee assignments) or no longer in monopoly control of leaders (campaign

support). In addition, the political ambitions of many dissenters are now aided precisely by the vocal opposition to leadership.

Underlying the organizational cartel arrangement are standing committees; they are used to share power and "keep the peace" in the majority party after nomination votes in the majority-party caucus. Committees remained important during most of the 20th century. But this began to change with the GOP majorities in the 1990s and the Gingrich speakership. Gingrich reduced the power of committees and diverted that influence to the party leadership. Positions on committees gradually became less important as a result, with more members retiring rather than serving as committee chairs.

More recently, other avenues for members to exert influence — like using amendment votes to take positions they and their constituents cared about — began to shrink, as Speakers more firmly controlled floor voting in order to protect the "party brand." Open rules vanished. The procedural cartel tightened.

So, over time, committees became less important and opportunities to alter policy and/or message in the voting process (via amendments) went away. And yet the majority party was *still* heterogeneous. The heterodox majority-party members — distant from the median of the party where the "brand" was designed — grew angry. This was especially true on the Republican side. Those who wanted something different than the party leadership began to rebel. It took ten years and the right conditions (a narrow partisan majority) for this to have a significant effect.

The Republican dissidents — mostly members of the HFC — drew first blood on the speakership vote. The organizational cartel was the target. They extracted benefits — in terms of procedural rights that would both influence and open up the agenda process — before they gave the party leadership (and McCarthy) enough support to close the deal on the speakership. When the Republican dissidents believed that McCarthy was reneging on aspects of the agreement they made with him — some of which was informal and done via handshake — enough of the original group sided with the Democrats on a rule vote and shut down the chamber for a week. Business only started up again when the dissidents received more concessions. In a nutshell: once dissident members took on the organizational cartel and won, they felt emboldened to take on the procedural cartel. Both institutions have now taken hits.

Why hasn't McCarthy just punished these rebels like Longworth did in 1925? First, carrots and sticks are not as powerful for leaders today as they were in the past. A key chit that can be withheld — committee assignments — does not matter as much now. Party leaders also cannot withhold resources — like money for members' reelection campaigns — because groups of members like the HFC have built effective sub-brands and have independent streams of resources. In fact, they can raise money by *opposing* the mainstream party leadership. So, more concisely, party leaders can no longer effectively control many of their co-partisans.

Would these problems matter as much if the majority was large? No. If the dissident group is not pivotal, then their intransigence can be brushed aside. But

partisan margins in Congress have been tight in recent years; there is little reason to believe this will change in the near future. Ever since the two-party competition of Democrats and Republicans began in the House in the 1850s, we are currently living in a time in which long-term partisan margins are the narrowest they have ever been. (See Figure 9.) In that sense, the weakness of the organizational and procedural cartels may be caused by an exogenous factor — the close partisan margins in the House. In prior years, majority party leaders could get through a rough patch because they could count on large margins to eventually be restored. For the moment, at least, that cannot be assumed.

Figure 9. Percentage of House seats held by majority party, 35th – 118th Congress (1857 – 2023).
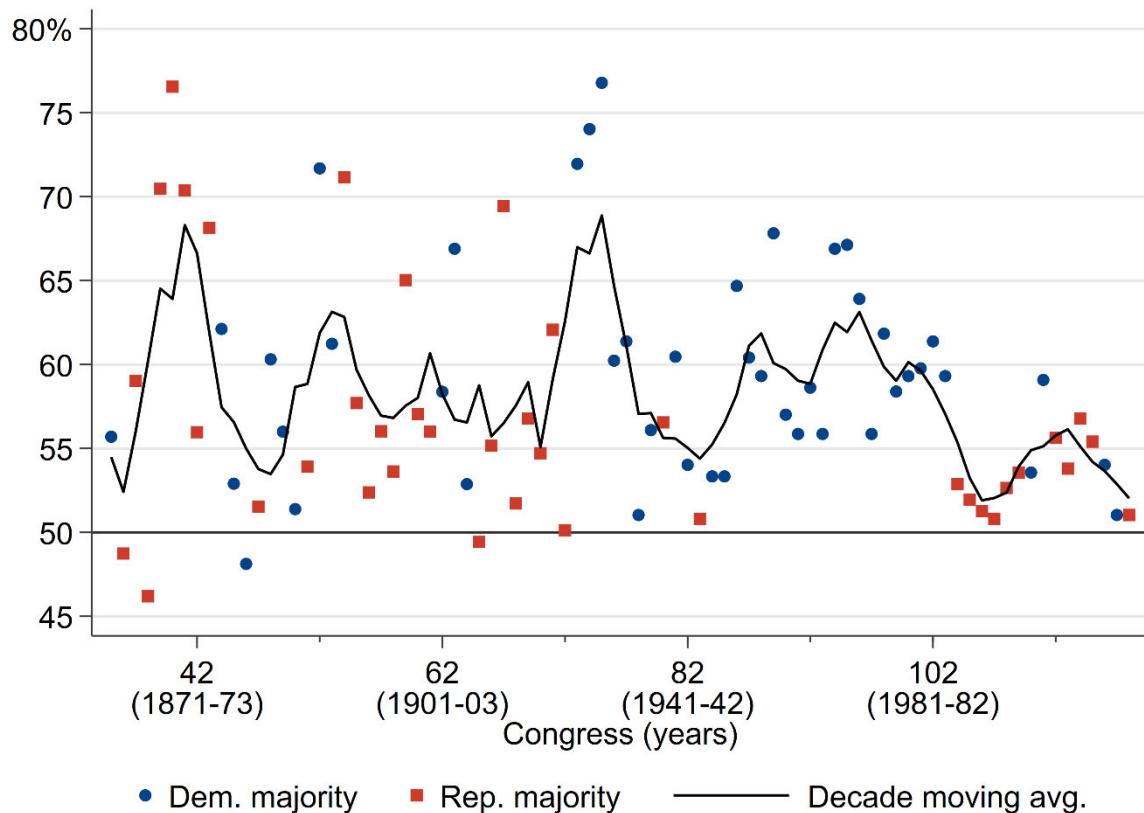
Data source: *History, Art & Archives, U.S. House of Representatives,* "Party Divisions of the House of Representatives, 1789 to Present," https://history.house.gov/Institution/Party-Divisions/Party-Divisions/ (August 27, 2023)

Data tokens indicate the percentage of seats held by the party that held the largest percentage of seats in the House. Values less than 50% indicate that neither party held a majority, due to minor party members. The moving average is calculated using the current Congress and the two preceding and two following Congresses.

To sum up this section, the changes internal and external to Congress in recent years — leading to the diminishment of committees, the tightening of the

procedural cartel, and the weakening of party leaders' control over members — were necessary conditions for the organizational cartel to crack. But they were not by themselves sufficient. The pivotal status of the dissident group was the sufficient condition. Unless (or until) the national electoral environment shifts dramatically, weaknesses of the organizational and procedural cartels will continue to be manifest

III. Discussion and Future Research

The inspiration behind writing *Fighting for the Speakership* was to understand a spectacle that was foreign to contemporary politics: a hamstrung process of organizing the House that amid deep social divisions could grind Congress to a halt at critical times in its early history. Could modern political science theories and empirical techniques help us understand this period of congressional history? Could these tools help us understand why modern congressional politics seemed so different?

The immediate answer to these questions was, "yes." The substantive response was in developing a theory of legislative organization termed the organizational cartel.

Events of the past few years have brought these answers into question. Naturally, we do not believe either the organizational or procedural cartel need to be deposited in the ashcan of political science. Still, recent events demand some form of reconsideration. We finish this paper with some thoughts about how recent

events can help to clarify and extend these theories, especially that of the organizational cartel.

The first thing to note is that, as we show in *Fighting for the Speakership,* the organizational cartel was ultimately the brainchild of Martin Van Buren. It was at least a piece of his aspiration to develop strongly disciplined congressional parties that would function much like parliamentary parties are said to function today. Van Buren did not live to see that discipline. Indeed, the congressional parties have never been as disciplined as Van Buren desired. However, the organizational cartel was a major move in that direction. One of the things Congress lacked to bring about Van Buren's vision was a complex internal institution that could produce valuable tokens that could be traded so that leaders could consolidate their hold on the chamber. The institutionalization of the House in the late nineteenth century helped to create tradeable tokens of institutional power.

Although the House has "deinstitutionalized" to some degree (Jenkins and Stewart 2018) in recent decades, all value has not been drained out of its elements, especially the committees. The "power" committees, which set both national policies and distribute tangible benefits to political supporters at a massive scale, are still valued by members.[29] News reports recounted how McCarthy used both committee assignments and licenses to committees to pursue high-profile hearings as a part of

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[29] Although not reported in this paper, as part of our research, we re-ran the Grosewart analysis on committee assignments from the 102nd to 118th Congress and found that Appropriations, Energy and Commerce, and Ways and Means were still head-and-shoulders above all other committees.

his strategy to build a winning coalition. Campaign contributions still pour into members on the "right" committees.

Yet, the organizational fight for the speakership in the 118th Congress suggests the importance of understanding how the committees are evolving as valuable institutional redoubts for the rank-and-file. For House members hoping to take the national stage even when they are junior, are they of value because of the attention their business can bring to members?

Another issue that bears further consideration is how "extreme" members of parties become pivotal. The House Freedom Caucus and its allies are not spatially pivotal in the traditional sense. The idea that they could coalesce with a faction of centrist Democrats to organize the House is unthinkable. As we have shown using Nokken-Poole NOMINATE scores, they are spatially distinguishable from other House members who could be considered just as — or even more — conservative. Perhaps they garner their strength within the Republican Party because of their willingness to shut down the federal government, either intermittently or permanently, as a matter of principle — something the majority of the party generally dislikes and only embrace periodically as a matter of tactics.

The protracted effort to put together a majority vote for McCarthy and then continuing battles between McCarthy and some HFC members raises the question of what the HFC actually wants out of being in the Republican Party and of being in government. This episode shows that simply regarding them as "extreme" gets us only so far. As with many of the antebellum episodes of deadlock we reviewed in

our book, the problem of the HFC may in fact lie in its location off the major dimension of partisan conflict. Knowing they cannot be an active partner in governing the House may mean that conflict with McCarthy — or any other Republican likely to be elected Speaker — *is* the point.

Finally, we return to the issue of the interaction of factional division within the Republican Party and the closeness of partisan control in the House. If 2022 had in fact produced the "red wave" that Republican pundits were predicting ahead of November, balloting for Speaker in 2023 might have resembled more the reelection of Gingrich in 1997 or Pelosi's election in 2019. For most of the history of the organizational cartel, parties have been able to count on margins roughly twice as large as what they have been in recent years.

The matter for future research is whether continuing close margins will lead to more episodes like this year's. If so, what will Speakers give up that they have not given up already? Will dissident factions become even more organized and demand agreements in writing, rather than relying on trust?

In the end, we can say one thing with certainty: The election of the Speaker in 2023 showed that who controls the levers of power in the House still matters. The question moving forward is, will this continue to be true and, if not, what will take the organizational cartel's place?

Appendix A

Updates of Appendices 1 and 2 from *Fighting for the Speakership*

Table A-1. Summary of House Organization, 112th – 118th Congresses (2011 – 2023) [update Appendix 1]

| Cong. | Year | Majority party | | Speaker | | | |
		Name	% seats held	Name	Party	Ballots	Winning pct.
112	2011	Rep.	55.6	Boehner	Rep.	1	55.8
113	2013	Rep.	53.8	Boehner	Rep.	1	51.6
114	2015	Rep.	56.8	Boehner	Rep.	1	52.9
	2015			Ryan		1	54.6
115	2017	Rep.	55.4	Ryan	Rep.	1	55.2
116	2019	Dem.	54.0	Pelosi	Dem.	1	51.2
117	2021	Dem.	51.0	Pelosi	Dem.	1	51.1
118	2023	Rep.	51.0	McCarthy	Rep.	15	50.5

Data source
Party divisions: https://history.house.gov/Institution/Party-Divisions/Party-Divisions/
Speaker winning percentages: Congressional Record

Table A-2. Speaker Election Details [update of Appendix 2]

112th Congress (Election Date: January 5, 2011)

John A. Boehner (R-Ohio) was elected on the first ballot. Boehner received 241
votes to 173 for Nancy Pelosi, 11 for Heath Shuler, 2 for John Lewis, 1 for Jim
Costa, 1 for Dennis Cardoza, 1 for Jim Cooper, 1 for Macy Kaptur, 1 for Steny
Hoyer, and 1 answering "present." (Total votes: 432. Necessary for a choice:
217.)
Source: Congressional Record Daily, 112-1, H3.
Note: Assertion of being "present" was *not* counted as a vote by the tellers. Tally
was based explicitly on "votes cast for a person by name."
Note: Congressional Record notes 2 members not voting.

113th Congress (Election Date: January 3, 2013)

John A. Boehner (R-Ohio) was elected on the first ballot. Boehner received 220
votes to 192 for
Nancy Pelosi, 1 for Raul Labrador, 1 for John Lewis, 3 for Eric Cantor, 2 for
Allen West, 1 for Collin Powell, 1 for Jim Jordan, 1 for David Walker, 2 for Jim
Cooper, 1 for Justin Amash, 1 for John Singell, and 1 answering "present."
(Total votes: 426. Necessary for choice: 214.)
Source: Congressional Record Daily, 113-1, H4.
Note: Congressional Record notes 6 members not voting.

114th Congress (Election Date: January 6, 2015)

John A. Boehner (R-Ohio) was elected on the first ballot. Boehner received 216
votes to 164 for
Nancy Pelosi, 12 for Daniel Webster, 3 Louie Gohmert, 2 for Ted S. Yoho, 2 for
Jim Jordan, 1 Jim Cooper, 1 for Peter A. DeFazio, 1 for Jeff Duncan, 1 for Trey
Gowdy, 1 for John Lewis, 1 for Kevin McCarthy, 1 for Rand Paul, 1 for Jeff
Sessions, 1 for Colin Powell, and 1 answering "present." (Total votes: 408.
Necessary for choice: 205.)
Source: Congressional Record Daily, 114-1, H4.
Note: Congressional Record notes 25 members not voting.

114th Congress—Replacement Election (Election Date: October 29, 2015)

Paul D. Ryan (R-Wisconsin) was elected on the first ballot. Ryan received 236 votes
to 184 for
Nancy Pelosi, 9 for Daniel Webster, 1 for Jim Cooper, 1 for John Lewis, and 1
for Colin Powell. (Total votes: 432. Necessary for choice: 217.)
Source: Congressional Record Daily, 114-1, H7338.
Note: Congressional Record notes 3 members not voting.

115th Congress (Election Date: January 3, 2017)

> Paul D. Ryan (R-Wisconsin) was elected on the first ballot. Ryan received 239 votes to 189 for
>> Nancy Pelosi, 2 for Tim Ryan, 1 for Jim Cooper, 1 for John Lewis, and 1 for Daniel Webster. (Total votes: 433. Necessary for choice: 217.)
>
> *Source: Congressional Record Daily,* 115-1, H4.
> *Note: Congressional Record* notes 2 members not voting.

116th Congress (Election Date: January 3, 2019)

> Nancy Pelosi (D-California) was elected on the first ballot. Pelosi received 220 votes to 192 for
>> Kevin McCarthy, 5 for Jim Jordan, 4 for Cheri Bustos, 2 for Tammy Duckworth, 1 for Stacey Abrams, 1 for Joseph Biden, 1 for Marcia Fudge, 1 for Joseph P. Kennedy III, 1 for John Lewis, 1 for Thomas Massie, 1 for Stephanie Murphy, and 3 answering "present." (Total votes: 430. Necessary for choice: 216.)
>
> *Source: Congressional Record Daily,* 116-1, H4.
> *Note: Congressional Record* notes 1 member not voting.

117th Congress (Election Date: January 3, 2021)

> Nancy Pelosi (D-California) was elected on the first ballot. Pelosi received 216 votes to 209 for
>> Kevin McCarthy, 1 for Tammy Duckworth, 1 for Hakeem Jeffries, and 3 answering "present." (Total votes: 427. Necessary for choice: 214.)
>
> *Source: Congressional Record Daily,* 117-1, H4.
> *Note: Congressional Record* notes 3 members not voting.

118th Congress (Election Date: January 6, 2023)

Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) was elected on the fifteenth ballot.
Source: Congressional Record, 118-1

	January 3, 2023			January 4, 2023			January 5, 2023					January 6, 2023			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Kevin McCarthy	203	203	202	201	201	201	201	201	200	200	200	213	214	212	216
Hakeem Jeffries	212	212	212	212	212	212	212	212	212	212	212	211	212	216	212
Andy Biggs	10													2	
Jim Jordan	6	19	20									4	6	2	
Jim Banks	1														
Lee Zeldin	1														
Byron Donalds	1			20	20	20	19	17	17	13	12				
Donald Trump							1	1			1				
Kevin Hern								2	3	7	7	3			
Present	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	2	6
Not voting	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	3	2	0	0
Total votes	434	434	434	433	433	433	433	433	432	432	432	431	432	432	428
Necessary for a choice	218	218	218	217	217	217	217	217	217	217	217	216	217	217	215

Appendix B

Nokken-Poole Scores as a Function of Being a Defector and Rookie

The two tables in this appendix report results of regressions in which the dependent variable is the Nokken-Poole score from Congress c (each dimension estimated separately) and the independent and the independent variables are (1) the first and second dimensional scores from Congress c-1, (2) a dummy variable (*defector*) indicating whether the member voted against the party's nominee for speaker, and (3) a dummy variable (*rookie*) indicating whether the member is serving in the first year. For rookies, the lagged values of the Nokken-Poole scores are set to zero. (This allows us to estimate the value of the *defector* coefficient using the data of all members.)

Table B-1. Democrats (**Bold** figures significant at $p < .05$)

	First Dimension								Second Dimension							
	All*	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	All*	112	113	114	115	116	117	118
NK1$_{c-1}$	**0.651** (0.025)	**0.712** (0.064)	**0.857** (0.057)	**0.803** (0.043)	**0.907** (0.073)	**0.451** (0.050)	**0.494** (0.079)	**0.639** (0.074)	**0.484** (0.061)	0.255 (0.154	0.119 (0.119)	**0.498** (0.098)	0.110 (0.187)	**1.256** (0.017)	**0.557** (0.168)	0.264 (0.160)
NK2$_{c-1}$	**0.078** (0.009)	**0.0813** (0.018)	**0.051** (0.022)	0.002 (0.019)	**0.079** (0.029)	0.034 (0.022)	**0.076** (0.022)	**0.127** (0.027)	**0.683** (0.022)	**0.667** (0.044)	**0.850** (0.047)	**0.891** (0.043)	**0.736** (0.073)	**0.701** (0.076)	**0.705** (0.046)	**0.565** (0.058)
Defector	**0.074** (0.014)	0.024 (0.023)	0.023 (0.034)	**0.077** (0.023)	0.019 (0.048)	**0.145** (0.023)	0.026 (0.054)	—	**0.127** (0.035)	**0.139** (0.056)	-0.018 (0.072)	0.111 (0.068)	0.070 (0.122)	**0.168** (0.078)	0.092 (0.115)	—
Rookie	**-0.220** (0.012)	**-0.270** (0.033)	**-0.228** (0.026)	**-0.283** (0.022)	**-0.320** (0.034)	**-0.117** (0.023)	**-0.236** (0.040)	**-0.237** (0.038)	**-0.151** (0.029)	-0.080 (0.080)	-0.057 (0.053)	**-0.229** (0.051)	0.019 (0.087)	**-0.328** (0.079)	**-0.302** (0.086)	-0.139 (0.083)
Int.	**-0.142** (0.010)	-0.114 (0.028)	**-0.054** (0.024)	-0.081 (0.018)	-0.042 (0.030)	**-0.234** (0.021)	**-0.201** (0.032)	**-0.160** (0.031)	**0.177** (0.025)	0.079 (0.066)	0.022 (0.050)	**0.178** (0.040)	0.259 (0.076)	**0.486** (0.072)	**0.212** (0.059)	0.126 (0.068)
R²	.449	.660	.662	.702	.533	.454	.244	.337	.487	.682	.672	.747	.388	.443	.565	.326
N	1,483	200	204	190	200	241	232	216	1,483	200	204	190	200	241	232	216

*Includes Congress-specific fixed effects

Table B-2. Republicans (**Bold** figures significant at $p < .05$)

	First Dimension								Second Dimension							
	All*	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	All*	112	113	114	115	116	117	118
$NK1_{c-1}$	**0.852** **(0.020)**	**0.893** **(0.058)**	**0.871** **(0.038)**	**0.863** **(0.047)**	**0.974** **(0.052)**	**0.711** **(0.055)**	**0.835** **(0.055)**	**0.822** **(0.068)**	**-0.166** **(0.042)**	-0.142 (0.130)	0.001 (0.088)	**-0.313** **(0.086)**	-0.063 (0.107)	**-0.235** **(0.092)**	**-0.345** **(0.114)**	-0.024 (0.157)
$NK2_{c-1}$	-0.016 (0.011)	-0.018 (0.030)	-.0060 (0.021)	-0.022 (0.024)	-0.007 (0.025)	-0.010 (0.034)	-0.011 (0.032)	-0.028 (0.034)	**0.748** **(0.022)**	**0.668** **(0.069)**	**0.873** **(0.048)**	**0.837** **(0.044)**	**0.606** **(0.051)**	**0.736** **(0.057)**	**0.813** **(0.068)**	**0.808** **(0.078)**
Defector	**0.080** **(0.014)**	—	**0.164** **(0.027)**	0.034 (0.022)	**-0.334** **(0.107)**	**0.151** **(0.048)**	—	**0.093** **(0.029)**	**-0.183** **(0.030)**	—	**-0.148** **(0.062)**	**-0.103** **(0.041)**	**-0.707** **(0.222)**	0.081 (0.079)	—	**-0.274** **(0.067)**
Rookie	**0.434** **(0.012)**	**0.441** **(0.031)**	**0.490** **(0.023)**	**0.391** **(0.028)**	**0.514** **(0.032)**	**0.381** **(0.035)**	**0.432** **(0.033)**	**0.400** **(0.042)**	**-0.059** **(0.025)**	-0.089 (0.071)	0.008 (0.054)	**-0.106** **(0.052)**	-0.046 (0.067)	-0.062 (0.059)	-0.063 (0.070)	-0.011 (0.096)
Int.	0.069 (0.011)	0.0432 (0.029)	**0.0526** **(0.019)**	**0.064** **(0.025)**	0.012 (0.027)	0.137 (0.031)	**0.079** **(0.030)**	**0.100** **(0.038)**	**0.129** **(0.022)**	0.114 (0.065)	0.043 (0.045)	**0.185** **(0.045)**	0.087 (0.057)	**0.137** **(0.051**	**0.192** **(0.063)**	0.113 (0.086)
R^2	.609	.531	.765	.648	.653	.584	.570	.568	.523	.321	.647	.710	.457	.574	.507	.532
N	1,639	245	240	250	250	207	222	225	1,639	245	240	250	250	207	222	225

*Includes Congress-specific fixed effects

Appendix C

Probability of Defecting, as a Function of Nokken-Poole Scores and Rookie Status. (probit analysis)

The table in this appendix reports results of a probit analysis which the dependent variable is an indicator of whether a member voted against the party's nominee for Speaker and the independent variables are (1) lagged values of Nokken-Poole scores and (2) a dummy variable indicating that the member is a rookie. For rookies, the lagged values of the Nokken-Poole scores are set to zero.

	Democrats								Republicans							
	All*	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	All*	112	113	114	115	116	117	118
$NK1_{c-1}$	**12.6** **(1.6)**	**14.5** **(3.1)**	**18.86** **(8.08)**	**15.3** **(7.3)**	**13.2** **(4.86)**	**8.87** **(3.21)**	**23.7** **(9.2)**	—	**3.10** **(0.59)**	—	1.25 (1.10)	**2.53** **(0.92)**	—	**6.08** **(267)**	—	**5.17** **(1.88)**
$NK2_{c-1}$	0.624 (0.339)	0.403 (0.492)	-0.105 (1.19)	-0.821 (1.489)	-1.08 (1.12)	0.786 (0.953)	**6.06** **(2.88)**	—	**-2.14** **(0.32)**	—	**-2.35** **(0.91)**	**-1.74** **(0.44)**	—	**-4.49** **(1.80)**	—	**-2.80** **(0.79)**
Rookie	**-3.42** **(0.43)**	**-8.56** **(351)**	**-9.13** **(—)**	**-3.46** **(1.60)**	**-7.84** **(---)**	**-1.76** **(0.85)**	**-7.95** **(---)**	—	**1.95** **(0.41)**	—	1.33 (0.71)	1.18 (0.62)	—	1.02 (815)	—	3.69 (1.26)
Int.	—	**3.03** **(0.85)**	3.04 (1.80)	1.93 (1.52)	1.82 (1.18)	0.739 (0.833)	1.85 (1.26)	—	—	—	**-2.78** **(0.65)**	**-2.71** **(0.55)**	—	**-7.00** **(2.60)**	—	**-4.87** **(1.23)**
Pseudo R²	.468	.619	.669	.403	.461	.240	.698	—	.403	—	.201	.232	—	.591	—	.415
N	1,483	200	204	190	200	241	232	—	1,639	—	240	250	—	207	—	225

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