

# How Words and Money Cultivate a Personal Vote: The Effect of Legislator Credit Claiming on Constituent Credit Allocation, Supplementary Information

Justin Grimmer \*      Solomon Messing †      Sean Westwood ‡

August 29, 2012

## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Measuring Legislators' Credit Claiming Propensity</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1	Categories and Examples . . . . .	2
1.2	Establishing Validity of Supervised Learning Method . . . . .	4
<b>2</b>	<b>Our Treatments and Their Ecological Validity</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1	Treatments Deployed in Experiment and Their Properties . . . . .	6
2.1.1	Study 1: Message Type via Facebook Manipulation . . . . .	6
2.1.2	Study 2: Frequency and Amount via Email Messages . . . . .	10
2.2	Examples of Social Media Credit Claiming . . . . .	12
2.3	Press Releases in Newspapers: Examples . . . . .	17
<b>3</b>	<b>Models with Covariates + Random Effects</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Properties of MTurk Samples: Useful Recruiting Device for Diverse Populations</b>	<b>24</b>
4.1	MTurk Correlations Are Similar to Survey Correlations . . . . .	27
<b>5</b>	<b>Mechanisms: Context or Recollection?</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Credit for the President</b>	<b>30</b>

---

\* Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Stanford University; Encina Hall West 616 Serra St., Palo Alto, CA, 94305

† Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Communication, Stanford University; 450 Serra Mall, Building 120, Room 110, Stanford, CA, 94305

‡ Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Communication, Stanford University; 450 Serra Mall, Building 120, Room 110, Stanford, CA, 94305

# 1 Measuring Legislators' Credit Claiming Propensity

## 1.1 Categories and Examples

We randomly selected 500 press releases and coded them into six categories to create our training set. Our categories—along with examples—are provided in this section.

**Credit Claiming, Appropriations** Our first category contains press releases that claim credit for money allocated during the appropriations process. A press release only counts in this category if the author makes explicit that they are claiming credit for money that was allocated in an appropriations bill.

Examples:

- “Weeks of hard work by Rep. Randy Neugebauer to restore funding for important rural health initiatives and Texas Tech University paid off Wednesday as the House passed legislation to fund health and education-related programs in 2006.

The funding is included in the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for FY06 - H.R. 3010 - which the House approved 215-213.” (Neugebauer, 2005)

- “Two defense projects planned in the North Country have been funded in the Conference Report for Fiscal Year 2006 Defense Appropriations, Rep. John M. McHugh (R-NY) announced today. Rep. McHugh worked to see them included as part of the final legislation, and today praised the qualifications of the funding recipients.” (McHugh, 2005)

**Credit Claiming, Grants** Our second category contains press releases that claim credit for money that executive agencies allocate outside of the Congressional appropriations process.

Examples:

- “Rep. Harold ”Hal” Rogers (KY-05) announced today that Kentucky is slated to receive \$962,500 to protect critical infrastructure- power plants, chemical facilities, stadiums, and other high-risk assets, through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s buffer zone protection program.” (Rogers, 2007)

- “A federal grant will help keep the Brainerd Lakes Airport operating in winter weather. Today, Congressman Jim Oberstar announced that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will award \$528,873 to the Brainerd airport. The funding will be used to purchase new snow removal and deicing equipment.” (Oberstar, 2008)

**Credit Claiming, Grants + Appropriations** Our third category contains press releases that claim credit for money allocated both by executive agencies and during the appropriations process. We found no examples of this kind of press release in our 500 document training set.

**Advertising Statements** Our fourth category contains press releases that advertise a legislator’s name—they are devoid of political content, either reporting an occurrence in Washington (a staff member retiring), commemorate a national holiday, or broadcast news about constituents.

Examples:

- “Rep. Alan B. Mollohan, D-W.Va., will be the luncheon speaker next week at a Morgantown conference focusing on the Upper Monongahela River.” (Mollohan, 2006)
- “Rep. Darlene Hooley (OR-5) met with John Calhoun, CFO of AcryMed, Inc., last week in her Washington office to congratulate him on AcryMed’s 2006 Tibbetts Award from the Small Business Innovation Research program administered by the Small Business Administration. AcryMed received the national award on Tuesday in recognition of their success in moving their unique nanotechnology from basic research to commercialization.” (Hooley, 2006)

**Position Taking/Other non-money related** Our fifth category contains press releases that articulate a position, or do not fit well into the previous five categories. These primarily are commentaries on the political occurrences in Washington.

Examples:

- “The House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence last night passed an amendment authored by U.S. Rep. David Price (D-NC) to H.R. 2701, the fiscal year 2010 Intelligence Authorization bill. The amendment was offered during the committee mark up of H.R. 2701 by Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA), chair of the House Intelligence Subcommittee on Terrorism/HUMINT, Analysis, and Counterintelligence. Rep. Price has taken a leading role in Congress to reform and improve our human intelligence capabilities and to prohibit the conduct of interrogations from being contracted out to private firms.” (Price, 2009)
- “Missouri Congressman Roy Blunt, chairman of the House Health Care Solutions Group, released the following statement after House and Senate Democrats unveiled a draft for their health care restructuring legislation: ”The legislative blueprint the Democrats unveiled today is no surprise. It’s more of the same go-it-alone approach they’ve used to lock Republicans out of the process from the start. This draft embraces the same policies that have led to delayed and denied care for patients in countries with government-controlled health care systems. ”Republicans are committed to working in a bipartisan fashion and still hope the Democrats allow us an opportunity to work with them to improve health care for all Americans by bringing our common-sense proposals to the table.” (Blunt, 2009)

**Critiques of Spending** Our final category contains press releases that critique other legislators’ spending. These are primarily issued by Jeff Flake (R-AZ).

Examples:

- “Republican Congressman Jeff Flake, who represents Arizona’s Sixth District, today highlighted a pork project contained in the Omnibus Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2008. This week’s egregious earmark: \$984,000 for abandoned mines reclamation in California. ”With this earmark, taxpayers are quite literally getting the shaft,” said Flake.” (Flake, 2008)
- “This week’s egregious earmark: \$10,000,000 for the Alaska Fisheries Marketing Board. The Board used the earmark to issue a \$500,000 grant to Alaska Airlines to custom paint the image of a huge king salmon onto one of their 737 passenger planes. ”I would have thought I’d see pigs fly before Congress would pay \$500,000 for a flying fish,” said Flake.” (Flake, 2005)

## 1.2 Establishing Validity of Supervised Learning Method

We use our coded press releases and ReadMe (Hopkins and King, 2010) to measure the proportion of press releases each legislator, in each Congress, allocates to each of the categories. Before applying the supervised learning algorithm, we validate that the supervised learning method is able to credibly measure the proportion of press releases in each category using our training documents. To do this, we perform five-fold cross validation on the 500 training documents (Hastie, Tibshirani and Friedman, 2001). That is, we replicate the conditions of the supervised learning method, training the model with 400 press releases and measuring the proportion in each category in the remaining 100. Because we know the correct labels for the remaining 100 press releases, we can evaluate the model's performance.

Figure 1: Cross-validation of the Supervised Learning Method

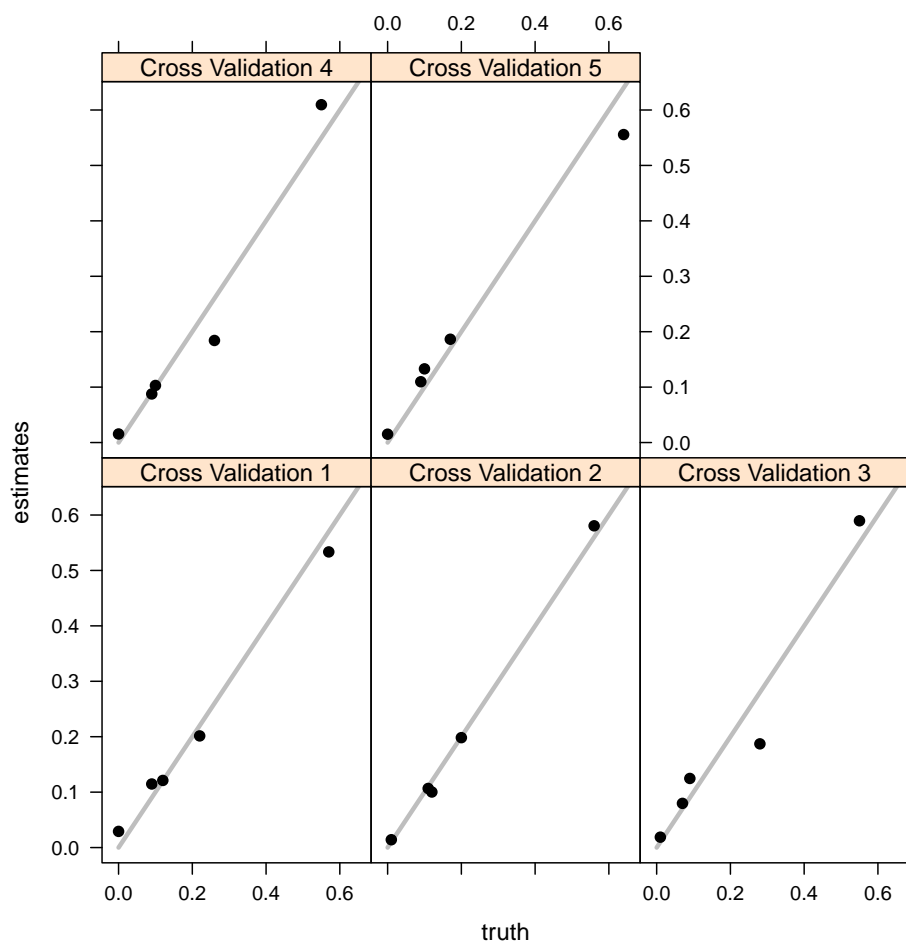


Figure 1 shows that the supervised learning is able to accurately measure the proportion in each category. The horizontal axis contains the true proportion, the vertical contains the estimated

proportion, and the gray 45-degree line is complete agreement between the estimated proportions and the truth. Figure 1 clearly shows that the model is able to accurately measure the proportion in each category.

## 2 Our Treatments and Their Ecological Validity

The treatments that we administered to the participants in our study all are based on modified press releases that legislators actually issued. To modify the press releases, we first removed legislator and locale specific information from the press release. For our treatments, we inserted information about the participant’s actual legislator. And we created language that was sufficiently ambiguous to make clear that the grant was to the participant’s area, without using an actual description of a town in the district (see the examples).

In this section we describe our treatments, then show examples from social media that show similar credit claiming statements. Finally, we provide examples from newspapers to show that credit claiming stories in newspapers are quite similar to credit claiming press releases that we base our treatments on. Together, this provides strong evidence for the ecological validity of our treatments.

### 2.1 Treatments Deployed in Experiment and Their Properties

#### 2.1.1 Study 1: Message Type via Facebook Manipulation

For study 1 the following variables were placed in each stimuli message before posting to a subject’s Facebook wall.

\$LNAME	The representative’s last name
\$FNAME	The representative’s first name
\$PARTY	The representative’s party
\$STATE	The representative’s state

#### Advertising Messages Stimuli:

1 **Headline:** Rep. \$LNAME Announces Congressional Office Hours for at Local Public Libraries Throughout Congressional District

**Summary:** Representative \$FNAME \$LNAME, \$PARTY-\$STATE will be holding Congressional Office Hours for constituents at local libraries. Members of the public are invited to meet with \$LNAME’s Congressional staff on a range of federal issues

**Full text:** Representative \$LNAME will be holding Congressional Office Hours for constituents at local libraries. Members of the public are invited to meet with \$LNAME’s Congressional staff on a range of federal issues, including:

- Assistance with federal agencies
- Questions regarding Social Security and Medicare
- Legislative information services
- Sharing constituent opinions on federal legislation.

”My office is here to serve the people of our Congressional district, and these office hours allow residents to meet with members of my staff in a convenient location,” said \$LNAME. ”I hope people who need assistance with a federal issue will take full advantage of this opportunity.”

## 2 **Headline:** Rep \$LNAME Visits Local Food Depository

**Summary:** On Wednesday, Representative \$FNAME \$LNAME, \$PARTY-\$STATE visited a local food depository. Rep. \$LNAME urged everyone to remember the less-fortunate throughout the year by aiding your local food pantry with a donation of food, a monetary contribution, or by spending time sorting, packaging, and stocking shelves at your local food bank.

**Full text:** On Wednesday, Representative \$FNAME \$LNAME visited a local food depository. Rep. \$LNAME urged everyone to remember the less-fortunate by aiding your local food pantry with a donation of food, a monetary contribution, or by spending time sorting, packaging, and stocking shelves at your local food bank.

”It is great to see the impressive operations of this local food pantry, which does a tremendous job and is always in need of contributions and volunteers.”

This past week, a staffer from Representative \$FNAME \$LNAME’s office organized a food drive for the sixteenth consecutive year. Baskets were delivered by a small army of volunteers. Over 400 food baskets each containing non-perishable food, a loaf of bread, and a frozen ham were provided to needy families throughout the area.

## 3 **Headline:** Rep. \$LNAME: Local Student Wins Art Contest

**Summary:** Rep. \$FNAME \$LNAME, \$PARTY-\$STATE, announced that 17-year-old Sara Fischer won first place in the annual congressional district art competition.

**Full text:** Rep. \$FNAME \$LNAME, (\$PARTY-\$STATE), announced that 17-year-old Sara Fischer won first place in the annual congressional district art competition.

Sara’s winning art, ”Medals,” was created using colored pencils. \$LNAME said Sara’s artwork will be displayed in the U.S. Capitol with other winning entries from districts nationwide.

Sara is a senior in high school, and will study art and political science at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C., beginning this fall.

”Sara is a very talented young person,” \$LNAME said. ”The congressional art competition is vigorous, and Sara should be very proud of her talents and efforts.”

Each year, \$LNAME hosts the competition for all local high school students and enlists the help of local art leaders to serve as judges for the special event.

More than 20 students participated in this year’s art competition.

## 4 **Headline:** Representative \$LNAME Offers Help, Issues Challenge At Virtual Town Hall

**Summary:** Representative \$FNAME \$LNAME, appearing on a panel of experts at a virtual town hall meeting, urged constituents to call \$LNAME’s office if they need help with financial issues such as unemployment, Social Security and home foreclosures.

**Full text:** Representative \$FNAME \$LNAME, appearing on a panel of experts at a virtual town hall meeting, urged constituents to call \$LNAME’s office if they need help with financial issues such as unemployment, Social Security and home foreclosures.

\$LNAME also repeated her challenge to local residents to plant ”victory gardens” this summer and donate a portion of the crop to local food banks. ”We are challenging people to plant victory gardens,” \$LNAME said.

5 **Headline:** Representative \$LNAME Honors Congressional Service Awardees for "Strengthening America Community by Community"

**Summary:** Rep. \$FNAME \$LNAME (\$PARTY-\$STATE) recognized area high school seniors today with a special Congressional Service Award for exemplary volunteerism throughout their school tenure.

**Full text:** Rep. \$FNAME \$LNAME (\$PARTY-\$STATE) recognized area high school seniors today with a special Congressional Service Award for exemplary volunteerism throughout their school tenure.

"I am very pleased to honor these students from eleven of the high schools in our area," said \$LNAME. "To be a person for others is a high calling that is inspired at a young age. We thank these students for their willingness to assume a broader leadership role that strengthens America, community by community."

\$LNAME asked school administrators and teachers to identify students who best exemplified the spirit of volunteerism and to select the students to receive the award. "Students are often honored for their academic and athletic skills, but it is just as important to develop public service skills."

"Each student has already proven themselves to be a leader who understands the value of serving the community and the world beyond it," continued \$LNAME. "These young leaders, and others who follow in their suit, are vital to the future of our country."

#### **Credit Claiming Messages Stimuli:**

1 **Headline:** Representative \$LNAME Brings Local Fire Departments \$680,000 for Firefighter Safety

**Summary:** A total of \$680,000 in grants for operations and safety programs were awarded to local fire departments from the Department of Homeland Security, Rep. \$FNAME \$LNAME (\$PARTY- \$STATE) announced.

**Full text:** A total of \$680,000 in grants for operations and safety programs was awarded to local fire departments from the Department of Homeland Security, Rep. \$FNAME \$LNAME (\$PARTY- \$STATE) announced.

\$FNAME \$LNAME (\$PARTY-\$STATE) announced the grants today. Specifically, the grant will be used to improve training, equipment, and make modifications to fire stations and facilities in local fire departments.

"This is great news for our local community," said Representative \$LNAME. "With these funds, our local fire departments will continue to train and operate with the latest in firefighter technology.

"The Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program awards one-year grants in support of our nation's firefighters and the services they deliver. The program provides direct assistance to improve the effectiveness of firefighter operations, health and safety programs, and fire prevention programs throughout the country. The Department of Homeland Security's Office for Domestic Preparedness administers the program, in cooperation with the U.S. Fire Administration.



2 **Headline:** Representative \$LNAME Secures Over \$3.4 Million for Local Transportation Projects

**Summary:**Rep. \$FNAME \$LNAME (\$PARTY-\$STATE) works with conference committee to secure \$3.4 million for a wide variety of vital projects for local communities and facilities.

**Full text:** This week the Conference Committee, made up of Members of both the House and Senate, reported the final version of the Transportation, Treasury, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill.

After working with conferees during the process, Rep. \$FNAME \$LNAME (\$PARTY-\$STATE) was able to secure \$3.4 million for a wide variety of vital projects for local communities and facilities.

"I'm pleased that so many important local transportation projects were included in this bill," \$LNAME said. "From funding for facility expansions to new bus and rail crossing upgrades, our communities will benefit from these greatly needed improvements."

3 **Headline:** Rep. \$LNAME Obtains \$9.5 Million for Local Businesses in Defense Appropriation Bill

**Summary:** Rep. \$FNAME \$LNAME has secured \$9.5 million in federal funds for area businesses to promote research and development. The funds were included in the Defense Appropriations bill.

**Full text:** Rep. \$FNAME \$LNAME has secured \$9.5 million in federal funds for area businesses to promote research and development. The funds were included in the Defense Appropriations bill.

"I am extremely pleased to have secured these appropriations," \$LNAME said. "Extraordinary and significant research and development is being conducted in our communities. These funds will allow small companies to expand their research in such areas as development of alternative fuels, detection of toxic agents, enhanced laser technology, and advanced fire suppression. The applications for this research are very broad," \$LNAME said.

Among the funded projects, \$LNAME secured \$3 million for the development of liquid crystal based sensor technology that will not only save the lives of troops in the field, but could also be used in homes, businesses, medical facilities, factories, transportation and other public areas to detect the presence of harmful agents in the environment.

\$LNAME also secured \$1 million to develop a very high energy density portable power system, using recycled antifreeze and glycerol byproduct from biodiesel. "This is an exciting project that will not only develop new power sources, but also provide for the recycling of waste," \$LNAME said.

In addition, \$LNAME secured \$1 million for the development of magnetic refrigeration technology. This technology offers significant potential for high efficiency, low weight, compact size, and reduced maintenance refrigeration.

4 **Headline:** Rep. \$LNAME Secures \$1.3 Million for Local Transportation and Infrastructure Projects

**Summary:** Representative \$FNAME \$LNAME (\$PARTY- \$STATE) announced that the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill includes \$1.3 million for two local projects.

**Full text:** Representative \$FNAME \$LNAME (\$PARTY- \$STATE) announced that the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill includes \$1.3 million for two local projects.

The bill provides funding for the U.S. Departments of Transportation and Housing and Urban Development. "The Transportation appropriations bill invests in two important local projects," \$LNAME said. "Improvements in transportation and community infrastructure build on the already substantial investments in our community."

5 **Headline:** Rep. \$LNAME Announces \$300,000 in Federal Funding for Local YMCA Day Care Centers

**Summary:** Rep. \$FNAME \$LNAME (\$PARTY- \$STATE) today announced that local YMCAs will receive \$300,000 in federal funding to help with the renovation and expansion of their facilities. Rep. \$LNAME also announced \$160,000 in appropriations for a study to look at ways to reduce traffic congestion and improve pedestrian access in local communities.

**Full text:** Rep. \$FNAME \$LNAME (\$PARTY- \$STATE) today announced that local YMCAs will receive \$300,000 in federal funding to help with the renovation and expansion of their facilities. Rep. \$LNAME also announced \$160,000 in appropriations for a study to look at ways to reduce traffic congestion and improve pedestrian access in local communities.

Local YMCA day care centers provides licensed, quality day care and pre-school for numerous families in the area.

"The traffic study will focus on alleviating some of the areas most congested roads and intersections," Representative \$LNAME said.

### 2.1.2 Study 2: Frequency and Amount via Email Messages

For study 2 the following variables were placed in each stimuli message before it was emailed to each subject.

\$LNAME	The representative's last name
\$FNAME	The representative's first name
\$PARTY	The representative's party
\$STATE	The representative's state
\$ST	The representative's state abbreviation
\$DIST	The representative's numerical district
\$AMOUNT	The assigned manipulation amount

**Minimizing Anchoring** Because we presented different amounts in different press releases, we now address the question of whether an anchoring effect could confound the finding that frequency matters more than amount. Anchoring can occur when people attempt to judge/estimate amounts by adjusting from an initial starting value (Tversky and Kahneman, 1974). Hence, if participants first saw a large grant that anchored their perceptions about what constitutes a normal

sized award and then saw smaller grants, participants might discount the latter grants as comparatively smaller and less significant, serving to de-emphasize the effect of amount in these conditions. However, in our design, participants were exposed to the smallest award first, which if anything should have served to anchor participants' perceptions of what constitutes a normal award at a small initial baseline, causing their perceptions of later awards to increase. The order of the dollar amounts presented to respondents in the conditions for which participants received multiple credit claiming messages is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Order of Presentation of Amount Claimed in Experiment 2

Small Award	Large Award
Day 1: \$15,000	Day 1: \$1,500,000
Day 2: \$19,000	Day 2: \$1,900,000
Day 3: \$85,000	Day 3: \$8,500,000
Day 4: \$21,000	Day 4: \$2,100,000
Day 5: \$36,000	Day 5: \$3,600,000

Stimuli:

- 1 **Headline:** Representative \$LNAME (\$PARTY, \$ST-\$DIST) Brings Local Fire Departments \$AMOUNT for Firefighter Safety

**Full text:** A total of \$AMOUNT in grants for operations and safety programs was awarded to local fire departments from the Department of Homeland Security, Rep. \$LNAME announced. \$FNAME \$LNAME (\$PARTY, \$ST-\$DIST) announced the grants today. Specifically, the grant will be used to improve training, equipment, and make modifications to fire stations and facilities in local fire departments.

"This is great news for our local community," said Representative \$LNAME. "With these funds, our local fire departments will continue to train and operate with the latest in firefighter technology."

- 2 **Headline:** Representative \$LNAME (\$PARTY, \$ST-\$DIST) Secures Over \$AMOUNT for Local Transportation Projects

**Full text:** This week the Conference Committee, made up of Members of both the House and Senate, reported the final version of the Transportation, Treasury, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill.

After working with conferees during the process, Rep. \$FNAME \$LNAME (\$PARTY, \$ST-\$DIST) was able to secure \$AMOUNT for a wide variety of vital projects for local communities and facilities.

"I'm pleased that so many important local transportation projects were included in this bill," \$LNAME said. "From funding for facility expansions to new bus and rail crossing upgrades, our communities will benefit from these greatly needed improvements."

- 3 **Headline:** Rep. \$LNAME (\$PARTY, \$ST-\$DIST) Obtains \$AMOUNT for Local Businesses in Defense Appropriation Bill

**Full text:** Rep. \$FNAME \$LNAME (\$PARTY, \$ST-\$DIST) has secured \$AMOUNT in federal funds for area businesses to promote research and development. The funds were included in the Defense Appropriations bill.

”Extraordinary research and development is being conducted in our communities. These funds will allow small companies to expand their research in such areas as development of alternative fuels, detection of toxic agents, enhanced laser technology, and advanced fire suppression,” \$LNAME said.

\$LNAME also secured funds to develop a high energy density portable power system, using recycled antifreeze and glycerol byproduct from biodiesel. ”This is an exciting project that will not only develop new power sources, but also provide for the recycling of waste,” \$LNAME said.

4 **Headline:** Rep. \$LNAME (\$PARTY, \$ST-\$DIST) Secures \$AMOUNT for Local Transportation and Infrastructure Projects

**Full text:** Representative \$FNAME \$LNAME (\$PARTY, \$ST-\$DIST) announced that the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill includes \$AMOUNT for two local projects.

The bill provides funding for the U.S. Departments of Transportation and Housing and Urban Development. ”The Transportation appropriations bill invests in two important local projects,” \$LNAME said. ”Improvements in transportation and community infrastructure build on the already substantial investments in our community.”

5 **Headline:** Rep. \$LNAME (\$PARTY, \$ST-\$DIST) Announces Initial Approval of Funding for Road Improvements

**Full text:** Today, Rep. \$FNAME \$LNAME (\$PARTY, \$ST-\$DIST) announced \$AMOUNT in planning and design funds for improvements to local roads was approved by the House of Representatives, based on a request made by Rep. \$LNAME. Funding was included in the recent Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill. ”Local roads serve as the gateway to our communities, but there are many bottlenecks for drivers where lanes narrow from four lanes to two,” Rep. \$LNAME said. ”This money will fund the first step in improving the roads and relieving traffic congestion in those areas.”

Funding for the project is subject to approval by the Senate and the President. The appropriations process is expected to be complete by the start of the next fiscal year.

## 2.2 Examples of Social Media Credit Claiming

A virtue of our design is that we send credit claiming statements in settings where constituents could plausibly receive those statements. This, we believe, makes our treatment less artificial than if we administered the messages in the context of a survey experiment (of course, there is a great deal of value to survey experiments—including a level of external validity we’re unable to replicate here). In this section, we demonstrate that legislators use social media to claim credit for funds or to broadcast advertising messages. To do this, we present example tweets (from twitter), facebook posts, and press releases from legislators.

Figure 2: Press Release Examples

## GRANGER, PRICE, JORDAN ANNOUNCE FUNDING FOR TRINITY UPTOWN BRIDGES

Oct 20, 2011

---

*\$15 Million from Regional Transportation Council will allow completion of Henderson and Main Street Bridges*

**Fort Worth, TX-** Congresswoman Granger today announced that \$15 million has been secured from the Regional Transportation Council of the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) for the Henderson and Main Street bridges in Trinity Uptown. The new funding will enable both bridges to be constructed on schedule.

Granger has delivered \$23 million in federal funding for the bridges and coordinated with the NCTCOG, which secured \$15 million in Surface Transportation Program Metropolitan Mobility funds for this effort. The local match of \$24.8 million is already in place. With the combined federal and local funding, these bridges are now fully funded. This has been a partnership between local governments, the RTC and the Texas Transportation Commission.

### Congressman Cole Requests Included in Defense Authorization

May 20, 2005 12:00 AM

WASHINGTON, D.C. -Congressman Cole announced today that **\$3.15 million** for Ft. Sill to build a fire station was included in the Defense Authorization bill reported out of the Armed Services Committee Wednesday evening. Congressman Cole requested this project in a letter and in a meeting with Chairman Duncan Hunter.

Figure 3: Twitter Examples



**Rep. Anna G. Eshoo (@RepAnnaEshoo)**

**8/22/11 9:38 AM**

I'm thrilled Santa Cruz got grant to restore Felton Bridge. Speaks volumes abt historic bridge & efforts to restore it  
[goo.gl/5wWJX](http://goo.gl/5wWJX)



**Tom Harkin @SenatorHarkin**

3 Jan

Harkin Announces Nearly \$6.5 Million in FEMA Funding for University of Iowa  
[1.usa.gov/xYE3wK](http://1.usa.gov/xYE3wK)



**Daniel Inouye (@Daniel\_Inouye)**

**9/6/11 3:59 PM**

Hawaii to receive more than \$5 million for airport repairs. [1.usa.gov/pFe4ct](http://1.usa.gov/pFe4ct) [@SenatorAkaka](https://twitter.com/SenatorAkaka) [@maziehirono](https://twitter.com/maziehirono)  
[@RepHanabusa](https://twitter.com/RepHanabusa) #FAA



**Ben Ray Lujan (@repbenraylujan)**

**9/19/11 8:35 AM**

News: Luján Announces \$500,000 Grant for Northern New Mexico College to Encourage Continued Education  
<http://t.co/ARJuNfvn>

Figure 4: Facebook Examples



**Congresswoman Anna Eshoo**

December 10, 2009

---

**Rep. Eshoo Secures \$2.8 Million in Funding for the 14th Congressional District**

December 10, 2009

Washington, D.C. – Rep. Anna G. Eshoo (D – Palo Alto) voted today for H.R. 3288, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2010, legislation which contains \$2.8 million in funding for critical undertakings in the 14th Congr...



**Ben Ray Lujan** shared a link.

September 26, 2011

**Luján Announces Nearly \$400,000 for San Juan College Through a Federal Grant**

[lujan.house.gov](http://lujan.house.gov)

Santa Fe, NM – Congressman Luján announced today that San Juan College is receiving a federal grant for nearly \$400,000 through the Native American–Serving Nontribal Institutions

Like · Comment · Share

5



**Ben Nelson** shared a link.

January 18


"Many of Nebraska's agricultural producers took major hits last summer, as more than 100,000 acres of land for growing and grazing were under water in our state. The assistance made available today will help our agricultural communities move forward and plan for a brighter future"

**Nebraska Farmers To Receive USDA Disaster Assistance**

[1.usa.gov](http://1.usa.gov)

Figure 5: Advertising Examples

 **Rep. Erik Paulsen** @RepErikPaulsen 16h  
Congratulations to Evelina Knodel of Maple Grove who is grand prize winner of **congressional** arts award. Look forward to seeing her **art** in DC  
Expand

 **Joe Barton (@RepJoeBarton)**  
3/13/12 11:31 AM  
Stopped by Pizza Hut in Ennis to congratulate manager Dinah Gilbreath. Recently named DFW region Manger of the Year.  
[on.fb.me/479mtc](http://on.fb.me/479mtc)

 **Sen. Patrick Leahy** @SenatorLeahy 23 Ma  
#VT #maplesyrup is simply the best – good for people as well as birds. [audubonmagazine.org/articles/livin...](http://audubonmagazine.org/articles/livin...) #Audubon

 **Bill Owens (@BillOwensNY)**  
1/18/12 7:40 AM  
Owens Seeks High School Bands to Represent NY [owens.house.gov/News/DocumentS...](http://owens.house.gov/News/DocumentS...)

 **Richard Shelby** shared a link.  
July 7, 2011

Please find the dates and loactions of the upcoming Housing and Recovery Expo events on Sen. Shelby's website here:  
<http://shelby.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/emergency-management-agency>

 **Congresswoman Anna Eshoo** June 10, 2011

This past week, I hosted the annual Congressional Art Competition Reception for the 14th Congressional District at the Pacific Art League. We all can appreciate the value of art and how important it is to the growth of our children. I wanted to share a photo with you from the event with the winner, Saloni.

**Emergency Management Agency – Alabama Tornado Disaster – United States Senator Richard Shelby, Alaba**  
[shelby.senate.gov](http://shelby.senate.gov)

Time: 12:30 PM – 5:00 PM July 9th Walker County – Walker County High School (Gymnasium), 1601 Highland Avenue, Jasper, AL  
35501 DeKalb County – Northeast Alabama Community College –



Figure 6: Example 1: Post-Tribune of Northwest Indiana and Pete Visclosky (D-IN)

Post-Tribune

## Grant will mean new building for Valpo health care organization

Post-Tribune Staff report May 2, 2012 5:02PM

+1 0 Like 0 Tweet 2 Share Reprints

Updated: May 3, 2012 4:24PM

HealthLinc will soon get a new building in Valparaiso thanks to a \$5 million federal grant, according to a release from U.S. Rep. Peter Visclosky's office.

The not-for-profit organization is also receiving another \$275,930 in federal money to make improvements to its current site in Valparaiso.

Visclosky Press Release

## VISCLOSKY ANNOUNCES TWO GRANTS TO HEALTHLINC

May 2, 2012 11:12 AM

PRINT |  EMAIL |  TWITTER |  FACEBOOK

**Valparaiso, IN** – Congressman Pete Visclosky announced today that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration has awarded two grants to HealthLinc, of Valparaiso. Both awards were granted under the Affordable Care Act for Capital Development in Health Centers program, one for Immediate Facility Improvement, the other for Building Capacity.

### 2.3 Press Releases in Newspapers: Examples

Our experiments administer stories directly from representatives—participants are told they are reading press releases directly from their representative. This, we believe, biases the experiments away from finding any effect: we expect that respondents will be more suspicious of statements from legislators than statements from newspapers. A concern when using press statements is that they might offer a more concentrated attribution to legislators than newspaper stories about the same appropriation or grant.

In this section we present qualitative evidence that this is not a problem for press releases. We will use a series of examples to show that press coverage of expenditures often closely follow the content of press releases. This has been pointed out previously: Grimmer (2010) presents examples of newspaper stories following Senate press releases closely. Here, we provide a series of additional examples from newspapers.

The three examples presented here show that newspapers do attach a legislator's name when

Figure 7: Example 2: The News Herald of Northern Ohio and Steven LaTourette (R-OH) News-Herald

## LaTourette, Fudge sponsor bill to provide \$4 billion to demolish abandoned homes

Published: Monday, March 19, 2012



By John Arthur Hutchison  
JHutchison@News-Herald.com  
@newsheraldjah

U.S. Reps. Steven C. LaTourette and Marcia Fudge announced they are sponsoring legislation to provide \$4 billion in federal funding dedicated for demolition of vacant and abandoned homes across the country.

LaTourette Press Release

### Reps. LaTourette and Fudge unveil legislation to fund demolition Monday, March 19, 2012

U.S. Reps. Steven C. LaTourette (OH-14) and Marcia Fudge (OH-11) today unveiled the Restore our Neighborhoods Act of 2012. The bipartisan legislation provides \$4 billion for states and established land banks to issue 30-year demolition bonds to demolish vacant, foreclosed and abandoned homes across the country.

Figure 8: Example 3: San Benito County Today and Sam Farr (D-CA)

San Benito County Today

## Grant goes to SBC emergency food, shelter

Story **Comments** Share Print Font Size:

Tweet 0 Like

Posted: Friday, January 15, 2010 12:00 am

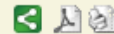
Staff Report | 0 comments

Congressman Sam Farr (D-Carmel) last week announced that San Benito County will receive **\$52,130** from the Emergency Food and Shelter Program, a portion of the more than \$700,000 doled out on the Central Coast.

Monterey County will receive \$384,153 and Santa Cruz County is getting \$247,789 in grants to support social service agencies that help feed and shelter the hungry and homeless. Funds are used to supplement food, shelter, rent, mortgage and utility assistance programs for people with non-disaster related emergencies.

Farr Press Release

### \$700,000 Headed to Local Social Service Programs



WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Sam Farr (D-Carmel) on Tuesday announced that nearly \$700,000 has been awarded to the Central Coast by the Emergency Food and Shelter Program.

The following counties will receive funds:

- Monterey County: \$384,153
- **San Benito County: \$52,130**
- Santa Cruz County: \$247,789

"California is suffering badly from the continuing economic crisis, and these EFSP funds will help many at-risk families on the Central Coast," said Rep. Farr. "As Congress continues its efforts to create jobs and revive our economy, these kinds of programs are vital to help those most harmed."

discussing the allocation of money to the district. Demonstrating this systematically across a larger sample of newspapers is outside the scope of this study. Further, it may be interesting to manipulate two characteristics related to newspaper coverage of a story. First, we could manipulate the source of information to determine if who wrote the story affects how constituents use the information. Second, we could vary how closely legislators are associated with spending in the press release.

### 3 Models with Covariates + Random Effects

The findings in our experiment study are extremely robust. To demonstrate this robustness, in this section we use a model to estimate the treatment effects. In our model we include a number of possible confounders—including a legislator’s Nominate score, whether a legislator is from the same party as the participant, and a host of participant characteristics. We also include legislator random effects because some legislators are used more than once in our analysis. As Table 2 and 3 clearly show, the findings in our paper remain essentially unchanged. This is strong evidence that the patterns we describe in our paper are robust.

Table 2: Regression Models for Study 1: Impression of Effectiveness

	Correct Name	Deliver Pork	Pass Leg.	Therm
	Bayesian Multilevel Probit Reg.	Bayesian Multilevel Linear Reg.		
Intercept	0.24 (0.09)	3.62 (0.31)	4.01 (0.32)	42.12 (5.47)
Credit	0.32 (0.05)	0.88 (0.16)	0.80 (0.17)	10.66 (2.86)
Advert.	0.30 (0.05)	0.42 (0.16)	0.33 (0.16)	6.67 (2.78)
Same Party Nom.	0.09 (0.06)	-0.14 (0.21)	0.18 (0.22)	4.78 (3.73)
Dem (Part.)	0.00 (0.03)	-0.14 (0.21)	-0.06 (0.12)	-1.64 (2.09)
Rep (Part.)	-0.02 (0.06)	-0.08 (0.23)	0.01 (0.23)	8.04 (4.00)
Male (Part.)	-0.03 (0.08)	0.03 (0.29)	0.22 (0.30)	10.61 (5.17)
White (Part.)	0.05 (0.04)	-0.18 (0.13)	-0.31 (0.14)	-3.15 (2.38)
Black (Part.)	0.13 (0.06)	0.09 (0.21)	-0.21 (0.22)	-4.06 (3.70)
Age (Part.)	0.09 (0.10)	0.33 (0.34)	-0.15 (0.35)	-2.80 (6.03)
Lib. (Part.)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	0.05 (0.10)
Cons. (Part.)	0.04 (0.05)	-0.18 (0.17)	-0.44 (0.18)	-7.84 (3.08)
Nom. × Lib.	0.02 (0.06)	-0.05 (0.22)	-0.43 (0.23)	-8.97 (3.93)
Nom. × Con.	0.04 (0.05)	-0.53 (0.17)	-0.37 (0.17)	-8.12 (2.95)
Leg. Rand. Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 3: Regression Models for Study 2: Repetition vs. Amount

	Correct Name	Deliver Pork	Pass Leg.	Therm
	Bayesian Multilevel Probit Reg.	Bayesian Multilevel	Linear Reg.	
Intercept	0.77 (0.04)	4.96 (0.18)	4.88 (0.20)	53.57 (3.47)
Large Grant	0.02 (0.02)	0.31 (0.11)	0.15 (0.12)	0.72 (2.08)
Low Freq				
Small Grant	0.04 (0.02)	0.75 (0.11)	0.51 (0.13)	7.46 (2.18)
High Freq				
Large Grant	0.07 (0.02)	0.96 (0.11)	0.61 (0.13)	8.70 (2.19)
High Freq.				
Same	0.05 (0.03)	0.42 (0.14)	0.54 (0.15)	10.42 (2.64)
Party				
Nom.	0.00 (0.02)	0.07 (0.07)	-0.03 (0.08)	-0.90 (1.38)
Dem	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.13 (0.12)	-0.20 (0.13)	-2.41 (2.26)
(Part.)				
Rep	-0.07 (0.03)	0.02 (0.16)	0.12 (0.18)	1.05 (3.17)
(Part.)				
Male	0.01 (0.02)	-0.05 (0.08)	-0.21 (0.09)	-3.07 (1.57)
(Part.)				
White	0.00 (0.02)	-0.24 (0.12)	-0.22 (0.14)	-1.24 (2.35)
(Part.)				
Black	-0.03 (0.04)	-0.03 (0.21)	-0.05 (0.23)	0.93 (4.03)
(Part.)				
Age	0.00 (0.00)	-0.01 (0.00)	-0.01 (0.00)	-0.12 (0.06)
(Part.)				
Lib	0.02 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.10)	-0.03 (0.08)	-3.22 (1.93)
(Part.)				
Cons.	0.04 (0.03)	0.02 (0.14)	-0.21 (0.16)	-1.45 (2.76)
(Part.)				
Nom. × Lib.	0.03 (0.02)	-0.20 (0.10)	-0.34 (0.11)	-7.78 (1.85)
Nom. × Con.	0.01 (0.03)	0.07 (0.13)	0.21 (0.15)	6.76 (2.60)
Leg. Rand. Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

## 4 Properties of MTurk Samples: Useful Recruiting Device for Diverse Populations

Below we provide summary statistics regarding the characteristics of our experiment participants. Table 4 compares MTurk populations to the US census population. This shows that there are clear biases in the mturk sample: they are younger, more educated, have too many women, and not enough racial diversity. But this sample has greater diversity than possible in a lab setting. This is evident in Figures 9 and 10, which show the geographic distribution of our experiment participants. This demonstrates that we draw legislators from across the country in our experiments.

Table 4: Comparing US and MTurk Populations

US		2010 Census	Study 1	Study 2
Age:	18-34:	31%	63%	62%
	35-54:	37%	29%	29%
	55+:	32%	8%	8%
Gender:	Male:	49%	39%	44%
	Female:	51%	61%	56%
Race:	White/Other:	72%	92%	90%
	Black:	13%	5%	5%
	Hispanic:	16%	3%	4%
Education:	HS or less:	45%	-	7%
	Some College:	28%	-	40%
	College Graduate:	18%	-	34%
	Post-graduate:	9%	-	19%



Figure 9: Study 1 (Facebook) Map of Participants

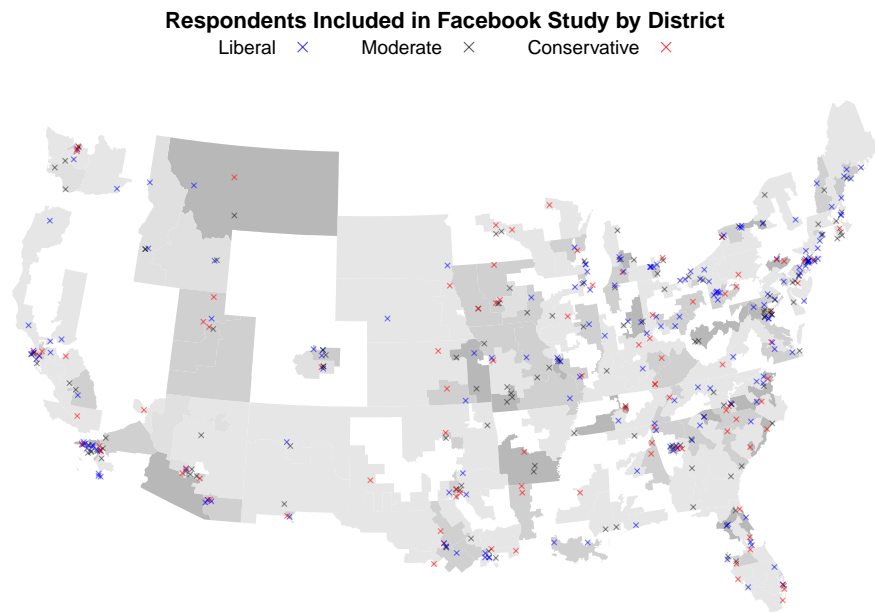
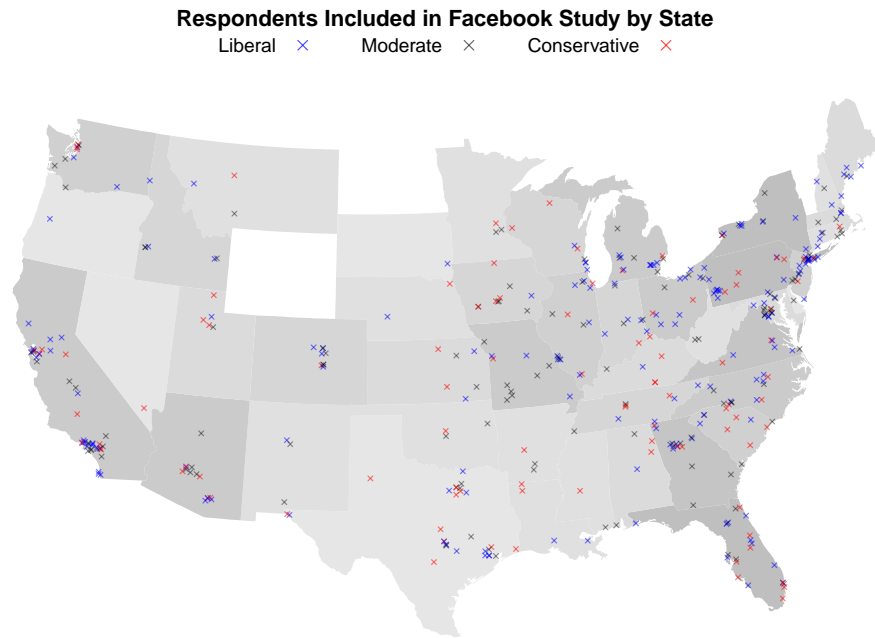
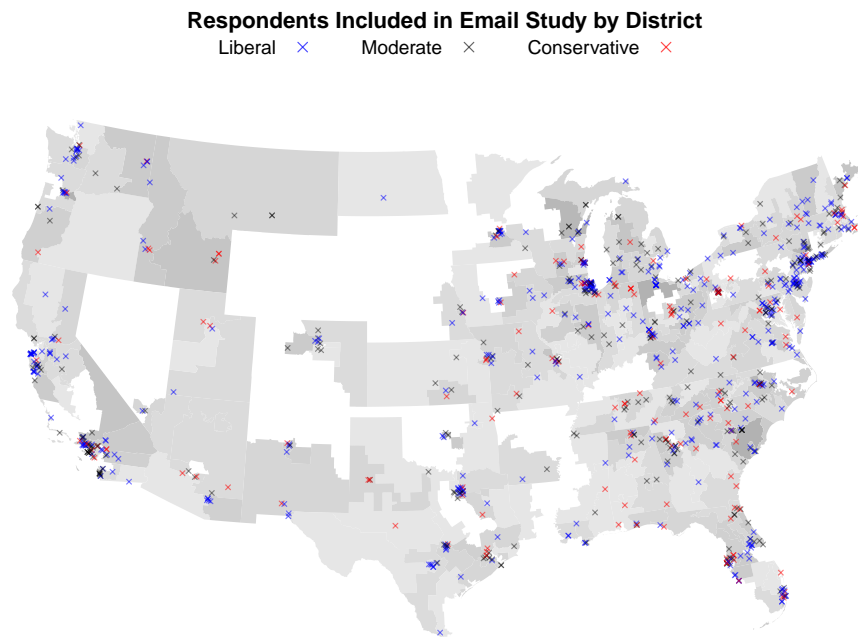
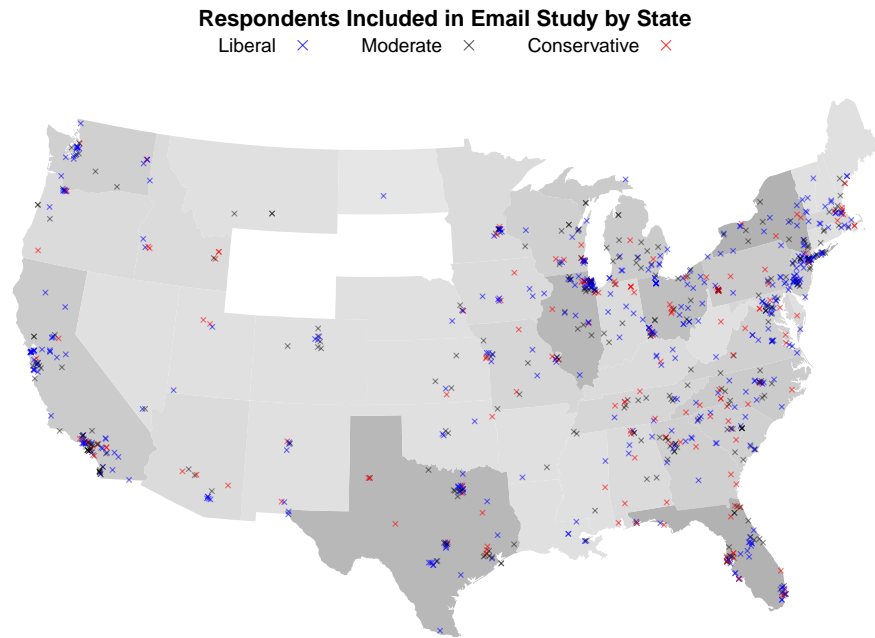


Figure 10: Study 2 (Email) Map of Participants



#### 4.1 MTurk Correlations Are Similar to Survey Correlations

To demonstrate that mturk respondents behave like survey respondents, we provide diagnostics showing our samples behave like survey respondents in the 2008 Annenberg National Election Study (NAES and NAES-ONL for the online survey) and the 2010 American National Election Study (ANES). We focus on relatively stable relationships, demonstrating similarity in the relationship between party id, ideology, and feelings about the president (Obama). As shown in Table 5, the mean level of three-part party ID is the same among liberals, moderates, and conservatives in our experiment data and in the surveys using representative samples. Furthermore, as shown in Table 6, party ID and ideology predict various measures of feelings toward president Obama similarly in the mturk and survey sample data. The dependent measure here is slightly different for each case: for our Email and Facebook (FB) studies, the dependent measure is a 0-100 feeling thermometer; for NAES and NAES-ONL it consists of 0-100 favorability ratings; while for ANES we use a 7-point like-dislike scale (ANES-like) and 7 point approval rating (ANES-aprv). In spite of the differences in dependent variable, we see essentially the same relationships. Further, the correlation across the surveys is highly similar—the  $R^2$  are highly similar across surveys. In short, MTurk respondents behave like survey respondents.

Table 5: Party ID Predicted by Ideology

	MTurk Respondents		Survey Respondents		
	Email	FB	NAES	NAES-ONL	ANES
Liberal	1.332 (0.025)	1.351 (0.041)	1.445 (0.006)	1.373 (0.012)	1.298 (0.033)
Moderate	1.886 (0.033)	1.961 (0.050)	1.826 (0.005)	1.553 (0.015)	1.806 (0.027)
Conservative	2.593 (0.042)	2.710 (0.055)	2.360 (0.005)	1.954 (0.007)	2.520 (0.026)
R-squared	0.911	0.923	0.882	0.876	0.907
N	958	426	53838	14624	1570

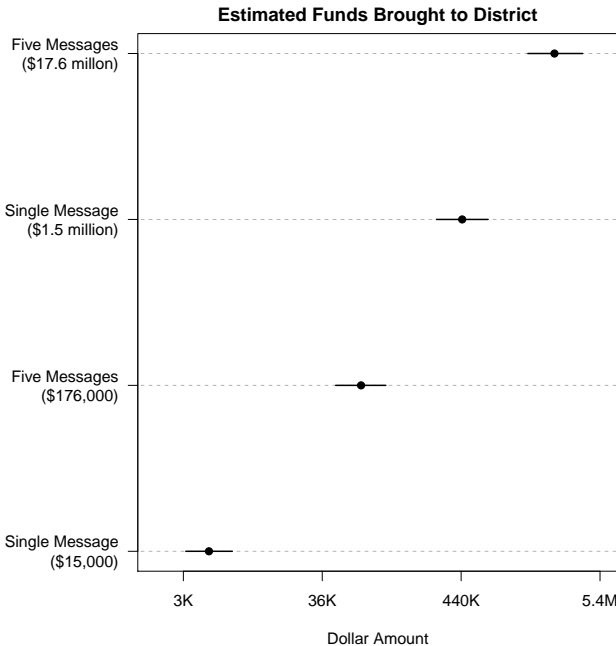
Table 6: Feelings about President Obama

	MTurk Respondents		Survey Respondents			
	Email	FB	NAES	NAES-ONL	ANES-like	ANES-apprv
(Intercept)	0.919 (0.021)	0.969 (0.029)	0.976 (0.003)	0.870 (0.005)	1.147 (0.018)	1.007 (0.017)
Party ID	-0.148 (0.014)	-0.165 (0.019)	-0.126 (0.002)	-0.094 (0.003)	-0.171 (0.011)	-0.155 (0.010)
Ideology	-0.323 (0.039)	-0.370 (0.054)	-0.303 (0.005)	-0.372 (0.009)	-0.475 (0.027)	-0.461 (0.026)
R-squared	0.335	0.450	0.272	0.260	0.491	0.479
N	945	426	52534	17124	1569	1568

## 5 Mechanisms: Context or Recollection?

We have offered two reasons that repeated credit claiming messages are more effective than increasing dollar amounts claimed. The first is that constituents are unlikely to tabulate the amount claimed in messages from legislators. The second is that constituents distinguish differences in the dollar amount allocated, but simply lack the knowledge of federal outlays to assess expenditures in a meaningful way. Adjudicating between these two explanations is difficult, but with the final question of our post-experiment survey we collected information that provides initial evidence. We asked our participants to recall the amount the legislator claimed in the emails. We made clear that we did not want them to tabulate the amount from the emails and the errors across tabulations suggest our participants did not check their emails. If constituents are able to approximate the difference in the amount claimed across conditions, then this suggests that constituents are able to approximately tabulate the amount spent, but lack the context to evaluate the expenditure. If, however, constituents have distorted recollections of the amount spent across conditions, then this is evidence that our participants could not tabulate the expenditures across conditions.

Figure 11: Context, Not Recollection



---

This figure shows that constituents can recall the dollar amount claimed. We log-transform the amounts to more compactly present our results. We exponentiated the horizontal axis to ease interpretation.

Even though participants in the large award, low frequency condition recalled their representative claiming credit for more money on average, \$2.14 million, they still evaluated her as less effective at delivering funds than participants assigned to the small award, high frequency condition who recalled, on average, their representative claiming credit for \$0.29 million. Likewise, participants in the large award, high frequency recalled their legislator claiming credit for \$9.32

million, much more money than the small award, high frequency condition participant. And yet, participants in both conditions evaluated their legislator as similarly effective at delivering funds to the district.

## 6 Credit for the President

Particularistic spending can cultivate support for other political actors as well. In a particularly novel paper, Kriner and Reeves (2012) show that expenditures boost support for incumbent presidents, or if an incumbent is not running, the nominee of the incumbent president’s party. Kriner and Reeves (2012) also show that presidents receive more credit when a county’s residents are represented by more of the president’s co-partisans in Congress. That presidents receive credit for expenditures is consistent with our explanation of how credit allocation works. In particular, constituents may fail to notice that presidents, House members, and senators are claiming credit for the same expenditures. If credit allocation occurs through an imprecise and approximate updating process related to credit claiming messages, then we expect that constituents will be able to allocate credit across several individuals—so that both presidents and legislators can receive credit for expenditures.

Legislators’ credit claiming behavior, we believe, can also help explain why presidents receive more credit when counties are represented by the president’s co-partisans. One reason that we suspect presidents receive more credit when co-partisans represent a county is that the president’s co-partisans are much less likely to explicitly undermine the credit a president receives for an expenditure. We call this contestation—when members of Congress argue they obtained an expenditure over the explicit objections of the president. If members of Congress argue that the president contested the expenditure—by decreasing funding for the program, cutting the program entirely, or vetoing a spending bill—then we would expect that the president would receive less credit for the expenditure. Further, we expect that opposing partisans will have greater incentive to undermine the credit allocated to the president: opposing partisans have a different primary constituency (Brady, Han and Pope, 2007) and do not risk losing the influx of expenditures associated with a co-partisan in the White House (Berry, Burden and Howell, 2010).

To begin assessing the possibility that presidents receive more support when co-partisans represent a county because co-partisans are less likely to undermine the president’s credit, we analyzed the collection of Senate press releases used in Grimmer (2012). As mentioned in the paper, this is a collection of all press releases, from each Senate office, from 2005 to 2007. We first used a simple key word search to identify all credit claiming press releases that mentioned the word “president.” Of the 17,745 press releases that claimed credit for federal outlays in that collection, 4,108 use the word “president.” From the 4,108 press releases, we sampled 250 and hand coded them into the following five categories:

- 1) Praise the president: thank the president for a specific budget allocation or attribute spending to a presidential initiative.
- 2) President contestation: explicit mention that (1) the president requested less funding than allocated (2) president targeted program for budget cuts, or (3) president vetoed bill in which spending was contained (then the spending occurred because of a veto override).
- 3) President as constitutional officer: stating “bill goes to president for his signature.”
- 4) Please sign: Urge the president to sign the bill

5) Not the President of the United States, rather other president.

From our initial coding of 250 press releases, we find substantially higher rates of contestation among Democrat than Republican senators, or that opposing partisans explicitly attempted to undermine the credit President Bush received for expenditures much more often than co-partisans. Democrats contested Bush's credit in 38.3% of press releases that mentioned President Bush, while Republicans only contested in 13.3% of their press releases (25 percentage point difference, 95 percent confidence interval, [0.13, 0.37]). (The primary Republican contestors were moderates, such as Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins). Republicans, on the other hand, are 7.2 percentage points more likely to praise the president's budget or role in securing the expenditure (95 percent confidence interval, [0.001, 0.14]).

Two examples of contestation show that senators often attempted to diminish President Bush's credit for expenditures from grant programs identified in Kriner and Reeves (2012). In fact, most of the Democrats' contestations came from programs that Bush attempted to cut. Consider, for example, a press release from Tim Johnson (D-SD). In it, he "announced that the Huron Regional Airport will receive \$150,000 in funding from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for airport enhancements."

Johnson went on to say that, "The President's proposed Fiscal Year 2008 Budget cuts the Airport Improvement Program by 23 percent, or \$627 million, to \$2.73 billion, as compared to the Fiscal Year 2007 budget level of \$3.35 billion. As a member of both the Senate Budget and Senate Appropriation Committees, Senator Johnson has worked to restore the proposed cuts to this important economic development and safety program" (Johnson, 2007).

Another example of contestation occurred in a joint press release from Paul Sarbanes (D-MD) and Barbara Mikulski (D-MD). In the press releases they "announced the Goodwill Fire Department in Queen Anne's County has been awarded \$39,425 in federal funding through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program." After explaining what the money would be used for, the two senators took aim at the Bush administration, explaining:

"Senators Mikulski and Sarbanes recently criticized the lack of support for America's firefighters in President Bush's FY 2007 budget, which cuts \$244 million in federal support for the AFG program. In addition, the President's budget eliminates funding for firefighter staffing (SAFER) grants, which received \$105.8 million in FY 2006. 'How can the President support Homeland Security when he has cut the most valuable funding source for America's firefighters? We need to support our first responders with more than just words,' said Senator Mikulski (Mikulski, 2006).

To establish that this contestation has an effect on credit allocation, we ran a supplementary experiment. We use the joint press release from Senators Mikulski and Sarbanes as the basis for our experimental manipulation involving House members. For this experiment, we used 665 respondents sampled from the survey firm SSI's national representative panel. We then randomly assigned participants to two conditions. The first is a no contestation condition, where the respondent's representative claims credit for a fire department award to local fire departments. The second is a contestation condition, where the same credit claiming message is accompanied with an attack on President Obama. The content of the conditions are contained in Table 7 below.

After exposing participants to the credit claiming message, we asked them "Thinking about the announced program, how much credit, if any, would you say that President Obama deserves?" and provided the respondents with an 11 point scale to rate the president's credit. The results are presented in Table 8 for the overall credit allocation across conditions, and then differences in credit allocation by the respondent's party identification.

The first column shows that contestation reduces the credit allocated to Obama, although not a statistically significant reduction at standard levels of confidence. Overall, respondents in the contestation condition decreased the credit allocated to Obama 0.29 (95 percent confidence interval, [-0.79, 0.22]). There is important variation among voters of different partisan identification. As the control condition in Table 8 shows, Democrats allocate much more credit to Obama than independents in absence of other information, while Republicans allocate much less credit to Obama than independents. The effect of contestation also varies, depending on the participants' partisan identification. Independents are particularly responsive to the attack on Obama—contestation caused independents to reduce the credit allocated to Obama 0.76 units—a difference that is substantively and statistically significant (95 percent confidence interval, [-1.49, -0.02]). Democrats also reduce the credit allocated to Obama, although less sharply than independents. Republicans, on the other hand, *increase* the credit allocated to Obama after the contestation 0.23 units, although we fail to reject the null of no difference (95 percent confidence interval, [-0.62, 1.07]).

Our experimental results provide a mechanism to explain why presidents receive more credit when counties are represented by co-partisans in Congress. First, we have shown that co-partisan senators are less likely to explicitly undermine the credit presidents receive for expenditures than opposing partisans. Second, we show experimentally that contesting the president's credit undermines the credit allocated to the president, particularly among independents. Together, this provides an explanation for Kriner and Reeve's (2012) finding that presidents receive increased support from expenditures when counties are represented by co-partisans in Congress. As Kriner and Reeves (2012) suggest, the attribution to the president's party is clear when represented co-partisans. We show this clarity occurs, in part, because co-partisans avoid diminishing the president's credit, while opposing partisans attempt to undermine the president's connection to the spending.

## References

- Berry, Christopher R., Barry C. Burden and William G. Howell. 2010. "The President and the Distribution of Federal Spending." *American Political Science Review* 104:783–799.
- Blunt, Rep. Roy. 2009. "Rep. Blunt Issues Statement on Democrats' Health Care Blueprint."
- Brady, David, Hahrie Han and Jeremy Pope. 2007. "Primary Elections and Candidate Ideology: Out of Step with the Primary Electorate?" *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 32(1):79–105.
- Flake, Rep. Jeff. 2005. "Rep. Flake Spotlights Egregious Earmark of the Week."
- Flake, Rep. Jeff. 2008. "Rep. Flake Spotlights Egregious Earmark of the Week."
- Grimmer, Justin. 2010. "A Bayesian Hierarchical Topic Model for Political Texts: Measuring Expressed Agendas in Senate Press Releases." *Political Analysis* 18(1):1–35.
- Grimmer, Justin. 2012. "Appropriators Not Position Takers: The Distorting Effects of Electoral Incentives on Congressional Representation." *American Journal of Political Science*. Forthcoming.
- Hastie, Trevor, Robert Tibshirani and Jerome Friedman. 2001. *The Elements of Statistical Learning*. Springer.
- Hooley, Rep. Darlene. 2006. "Rep. Hooley Congratulates Oregon Nanotechnology Company on Winning Prestigious Tibbetts Award from SBA."



- Hopkins, Daniel J. and Gary King. 2010. "A Method of Automated Nonparametric Content Analysis for Social Science." *American Journal of Political Science* 54(1):229–247.
- Johnson, Tim. 2007. "Sen. Johnson Announces \$150,000 in Funding for Huron Airport."
- Kriner, Douglas L. and Andrew Reeves. 2012. "The Influence of Federal Spending on Presidential Elections." *American Political Science Review* 106(2):348–366.
- McHugh, Rep. John. 2005. "Rep. McHugh Secures \$2.6 Million for Upstate Defense Projects."
- Mikulski, Barbara. 2006. "Senators Mikulski, Sarbanes Announce Federal Funding for Queen Anne's County Firefighters."
- Mollohan, Rep. Alan. 2006. "Mon River Summit to Focus on Development Opportunities."
- Neugebauer, Rep. Randy. 2005. "Rep. Neugebauer Works for Funding for Texas Tech University Health Services Center, Rural Health Initiatives."
- Oberstar, Rep. James. 2008. "Brainerd Airport Receives Federal Grant."
- Price, Rep. David. 2009. "Rep. Price Amendment on Interrogation Attached to Intelligence Reauthorization."
- Rogers, Rep. Harold. 2007. "Rep. Rogers Announces \$1Million to Protect Kentucky's Critical Infrastructure."
- Tversky, Amos and Daniel Kahneman. 1974. "Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases." *Science* 185(4157):1124–1131.

Table 7: Treatments in Contested Credit Claiming Experiment

No Contestation	Contestation
<p><b>Headline:</b> Representative  firstName  lastName ( party-  state) Announces Federal Funding for Local Firefighters</p> <p><b>Body:</b> Representative firstName  lastName ( party-  state) today announced that local fire departments have been awarded \$394,000 in federal funding through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program. Representative  lastName works in Congress to defend and increase funding to the AFG each year.</p> <p>“I’m so proud of our firefighters, risking their lives to protect others,” said  lastName. “I will keep fighting for federal investment in the safety of our first responders. Congratulations to the departments for being awarded this well-deserved money.” ”These hard-working firefighters deserve the most-up-to-date equipment, and I am pleased that this funding is being awarded to assist them in their efforts to protect their communities” said Representative  lastName. The departments will use the \$394,000 to purchase new equipment.</p>	<p><b>Headline:</b> Representative firstName  lastName ( party-  state) Announces Federal Funding for Local Firefighters; <i>Overcomes Obama’s Opposition</i></p> <p><b>Body:</b> Representative firstName  lastName ( party-  state) today announced that local fire departments have been awarded \$394,000 in federal funding through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program. Representative  lastName works in Congress to defend and increase funding to the AFG each year.</p> <p>“I’m so proud of our firefighters, risking their lives to protect others,” said  lastName. “I will keep fighting for federal investment in the safety of our first responders. Congratulations to the departments for being awarded this well-deserved money.” ”These hard-working firefighters deserve the most-up-to-date equipment, and I am pleased that this funding is being awarded to assist them in their efforts to protect their communities” said Representative  lastName. The departments will use the \$394,000 to purchase new equipment.</p> <p><i>Representative  lastName recently criticized the lack of support for America’s firefighters in President Obama’s budget, which cuts \$244 million in federal support for the AFG program. In addition, the President’s budget eliminates funding for firefighter staffing (SAFER) grants. “How can the President support Homeland Security when he has cut the most valuable funding source for America’s firefighters? We need to support our first responders with more than just words,” said Representative  lastName.</i></p>
<p>Key</p> <p> lastName: The representative’s last name</p> <p> firstName: The representative’s first name</p> <p> party: The representative’s party</p> <p> state: The representative’s state</p>	

Table 8: Contestation Diminishes the President’s Credit, Particularly Among Independents

	Overall	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
No Contestation	5.20	7.12	4.90	3.11
	[4.85, 5.55]	[6.56, 7.66]	[4.43, 5.38]	[2.51, 3.71]
Contestation	4.92	6.61	4.15	3.34
	[4.55, 5.28]	[6.09, 7.14]	[3.59, 4.70]	[2.74, 3.93]