Biasing Their Bosses

Staff Ideology, Motivated Reasoning, and the Distortion of Information in Congress *

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Abstract

The central representational duties of Congress require acquiring and assessing widely dispersed information. In this paper, I present a theory of congressional information processing in which staffers act as information gate-keepers whose own ideological preferences shape the picture of the world they present to their bosses. I present the first systematic empirical test of three competing perspectives on congressional staffer behavior: staffers as faithful agents, staffers as independent agents and staffers as motivated reasoners. I adjudicate between these perspectives using original survey data from the 2017 Congressional Capacity Survey and an experiment embedded in the 2019 Congressional Capacity Survey. I find strong evidence that 1) rather than simply selecting sources that are attitudinally aligned with their bosses, staffers' own attitudes shape how they evaluate and use information, 2) staffers trust and use attitudinally aligned information sources at far higher rates than attitude incongruent sources, 3) this relationship is more pronounced among more ideologically extreme staffers, 4) there is considerable asymmetry in the relationship between ideological extremism and evaluations of internal sources for conservatives and liberals, 5) at least some of these effects appear to be driven by cognitive biases rather than strategic action intended to advance staffers' positions. Together, these results show substantial support for the proposition that staffers act as largely independent agents, exercising considerable leeway to present a biased selection of information to their bosses.

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Appendix A: Full Models and Additional Tests

Table 1: Second stage of two stage ordinal logistic regression models
DV: Trust of information sources

	Right TT	**Left TT**	**Univ**	**CRS**	**CBO**	**GAO**
	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**	**Model 6**
Not at all|Somewhat	-0.488	-1.064	-3.821	-5.457	-5.453	-4.052
	(2.517)	(2.243)	(2.298)	(2.355)	(2.358)	(2.291)
Somewhat|Mostly	2.598	1.656	-1.115	-3.999	-3.994	-1.722
	(2.513)	(2.246)	(2.283)	(2.322)	(2.325)	(2.257)
Mostly|Completely	7.05	6.313	2.211	-1.321	-1.317	0.829
	(2.568)	(2.326)	(2.284)	(2.311)	(2.314)	(2.254)
Staffer Ideology	0.603	-0.817	-0.649	-0.52	-0.52	-0.589
	(0.195)	(0.185)	(0.181)	(0.191)	(0.191)	(0.172)
Boss Ideology	0.722	-0.239	-0.339	-0.303	-0.303	-0.053
	(0.203)	(0.184)	(0.184)	(0.187)	(0.186)	(0.173)
Log(Salary)	0.21	0.095	0.028	-0.19	-0.189	0.001
	(0.244)	(0.222)	(0.226)	(0.231)	(0.231)	(0.224)
Mid-Level Staffer	-0.012	0.041	-0.718	0.242	0.233	0.629
	(0.372)	(0.358)	(0.376)	(0.391)	(0.389)	(0.359)
Senior Staffer	0.37	-0.518	-1.327	-0.097	-0.106	0.457
	(0.521)	(0.484)	(0.511)	(0.504)	(0.502)	(0.474)
Health Issue	0.613	0.521	0.657	0.164	0.162	-0.019
	(0.315)	(0.304)	(0.312)	(0.311)	(0.311)	(0.296)
Nat Sec Issue	0.504	0.672	0.144	0.649	0.647	0.189
	(0.282)	(0.277)	(0.281)	(0.294)	(0.294)	(0.272)
IssueKnowledge	0.279	-0.04	0.722	1.581	1.582	0.717
	(0.474)	(0.463)	(0.468)	(0.500)	(0.500)	(0.456)
Committee Office	-0.767	-0.07	-0.073	-0.052	-0.051	0.103
	(0.341)	(0.312)	(0.320)	(0.325)	(0.325)	(0.307)
Party Office	-1.176	-0.01	-0.543	-0.492	-0.492	-1.717
	(0.639)	(0.580)	(0.558)	(0.544)	(0.544)	(0.557)
Senate	0.261	0.049	-0.242	0.031	0.031	0.24
	(0.263)	(0.241)	(0.250)	(0.255)	(0.254)	(0.237)
IMR	-1.387	-0.584	-0.778	-0.043	-0.044	-0.721
	(0.791)	(0.617)	(0.624)	(0.519)	(0.519)	(0.511)
Nobs	317.73	318.53	315.00	328.94	328.94	327.26
logLik	-277.08	-292.73	-301.52	-256.27	-256.27	-312.44
AIC	584.16	615.45	633.05	542.54	542.54	654.88

Table 2: Second stage of two stage ordinal logistic regression models
DV: Use of information sources

	Right TT	**Left TT**	**Univ**	**CRS**	**CBO**	**GAO**
	Model 7	**Model 8**	**Model 9**	**Model 10**	**Model 11**	**Model 12**
Never|Occasionally	-0.356	-1.689	-2.294	-2.623	-2.354	1.237
	(2.271)	(2.334)	(2.232)	(2.121)	(2.264)	(2.147)
Occasionally|Frequently	2.605	1.612	0.793	-0.279	-0.527	3.466
	(2.277)	(2.331)	(2.231)	(2.115)	(2.261)	(2.154)
Staffer Ideology	0.046	-0.829	-0.622	0.017	-0.051	-0.102
	(0.179)	(0.185)	(0.175)	(0.160)	(0.170)	(0.163)
Boss Ideology	1.092	-0.229	0.255	0.057	0.084	0.14
	(0.194)	(0.183)	(0.179)	(0.164)	(0.173)	(0.165)
Log(Salary)	-0.02	-0.043	-0.033	-0.16	-0.033	0.152
	(0.223)	(0.230)	(0.222)	(0.213)	(0.226)	(0.215)
Mid-Level Staffer	0.639	0.559	0.591	0.454	0.24	0.987
	(0.358)	(0.377)	(0.374)	(0.354)	(0.390)	(0.352)
Senior Staffer	0.857	0.655	0.342	0.937	0.035	1.039
	(0.475)	(0.506)	(0.489)	(0.465)	(0.502)	(0.461)
Health Issue	0.521	0.158	0.184	-0.336	-0.455	-0.372
	(0.310)	(0.311)	(0.308)	(0.284)	(0.307)	(0.289)
Nat Sec Issue	0.417	0.087	-0.302	-0.85	0.062	-0.227
	(0.276)	(0.281)	(0.276)	(0.260)	(0.289)	(0.257)
IssueKnowledge	0.396	-0.334	-0.372	0.997	0.72	0.66
	(0.471)	(0.480)	(0.485)	(0.434)	(0.474)	(0.437)
Committee Office	-0.228	-0.103	-0.615	0.411	-0.524	0.937
	(0.314)	(0.331)	(0.320)	(0.295)	(0.312)	(0.306)
Party Office	-2.365	-0.852	-1.772	-0.988	-1.599	-0.882
	(0.633)	(0.572)	(0.556)	(0.499)	(0.491)	(0.493)
Senate	-0.015	0.113	0.291	-0.187	-0.466	0.027
	(0.242)	(0.250)	(0.245)	(0.227)	(0.242)	(0.226)
IMR	-0.321	-0.892	-0.759	0.207	0.45	-0.316
	(0.574)	(0.730)	(0.510)	(0.441)	(0.504)	(0.443)
Nobs	326.16	326.16	326.16	338.78	337.92	337.92
logLik	-276.16	-264.92	-285.26	-330.79	-281.07	-332.60
AIC	580.32	557.83	598.51	689.58	590.14	693.19

Table 3: Second stage of two-stage ordinal logistic regression models with interactions
DV: Trust in information sources

	Right TT	**Left TT**	**Univ**	**CRS**	**CBO**	**GAO**
	Model 13	**Model 14**	**Model 15**	**Model 16**	**Model 17**	**Model 18**
Not at all|Somewhat	-0.998	-1.228	-3.668	-7.148	-7.129	-4.708
	(2.691)	(2.377)	(2.412)	(2.524)	(2.528)	(2.378)
Somewhat|Mostly	2.161	1.504	-0.97	-5.626	-5.607	-2.328
	(2.674)	(2.377)	(2.394)	(2.483)	(2.487)	(2.340)
Mostly|Completely	6.513	6.188	2.402	-2.84	-2.822	0.271
	(2.733)	(2.454)	(2.400)	(2.460)	(2.463)	(2.334)
StaffLeft	-0.945	-0.637	-0.225	-0.367	-0.365	0.45
	(0.584)	(0.546)	(0.548)	(0.599)	(0.598)	(0.532)
StafferExtremism	0.166	-1.019	-0.611	-1.03	-1.03	-0.924
	(0.328)	(0.316)	(0.309)	(0.298)	(0.298)	(0.276)
BossLeft	0.454	-0.212	-0.67	-0.24	-0.237	-0.163
	(0.993)	(0.914)	(0.920)	(1.031)	(1.032)	(0.898)
BossExtremism	0.686	-0.275	-0.317	-0.818	-0.818	-0.133
	(0.524)	(0.482)	(0.477)	(0.475)	(0.475)	(0.462)
Log(Salary)	0.214	0.105	0.039	-0.234	-0.232	-0.015
	(0.247)	(0.225)	(0.230)	(0.235)	(0.236)	(0.225)
Mid-Level Staffer	0.006	0.068	-0.695	0.325	0.32	0.604
	(0.383)	(0.370)	(0.382)	(0.406)	(0.407)	(0.365)
Senior Staffer	0.415	-0.514	-1.343	0.085	0.081	0.538
	(0.539)	(0.504)	(0.521)	(0.521)	(0.521)	(0.486)
Health Issue	0.568	0.492	0.644	0.166	0.168	0.006
	(0.319)	(0.309)	(0.316)	(0.317)	(0.317)	(0.302)
Nat Sec Issue	0.499	0.647	0.111	0.671	0.672	0.241
	(0.285)	(0.279)	(0.282)	(0.297)	(0.297)	(0.275)
IssueKnowledge	0.268	-0.037	0.719	1.72	1.719	0.78
	(0.476)	(0.465)	(0.470)	(0.510)	(0.510)	(0.459)
Committee Office	-0.786	-0.084	-0.074	-0.154	-0.155	0.058
	(0.356)	(0.322)	(0.329)	(0.336)	(0.336)	(0.317)
Party Office	-1.149	0.063	-0.476	-0.451	-0.452	-1.788
	(0.655)	(0.588)	(0.563)	(0.554)	(0.554)	(0.563)
Senate	0.265	0.105	-0.169	0.021	0.021	0.221
	(0.274)	(0.252)	(0.259)	(0.263)	(0.263)	(0.245)
IMR	-1.487	-0.635	-0.786	-0.312	-0.314	-0.832
	(0.857)	(0.673)	(0.667)	(0.567)	(0.567)	(0.545)
StaffLeft:StafferExtremism	-0.743	1.951	1.418	1.179	1.18	0.908
	(0.472)	(0.477)	(0.463)	(0.482)	(0.482)	(0.429)
BossLeft:BossExtremism	-1.473	0.978	1.426	0.94	0.934	0.069
	(0.911)	(0.858)	(0.862)	(0.952)	(0.954)	(0.824)
Nobs	317.73	318.53	315.00	328.94	328.94	327.26
logLik	-275.07	-291.46	-300.35	-252.36	-252.37	-309.36
AIC	588.145	620.92	638.70	542.71	542.75	656.72

Table 4: Second stage of two-stage ordinal logistic regression models with interactions
DV: Use of information sources

	Right TT	**Left TT**	**Univ**	**CRS**	**CBO**	**GAO**
	Model 19	**Model 20**	**Model 21**	**Model 22**	**Model 23**	**Model 24**
Never|Occasionally	-0.607	-1.463	-2.02	-3.167	-4.013	0.522
	(2.398)	(2.447)	(2.324)	(2.178)	(2.361)	(2.223)
Occasionally|Frequently	2.353	1.885	1.073	-0.811	-2.15	2.764
	(2.403)	(2.449)	(2.325)	(2.170)	(2.354)	(2.227)
StaffLeft	0.193	0.514	0.036	-0.504	-0.31	-0.084
	(0.538)	(0.521)	(0.524)	(0.490)	(0.516)	(0.486)
StafferExtremism	-0.158	-0.533	-0.533	-0.096	-0.648	-0.169
	(0.302)	(0.294)	(0.288)	(0.270)	(0.285)	(0.266)
BossLeft	0.672	0.151	0.458	-0.008	-0.501	-0.687
	(0.924)	(0.959)	(0.915)	(0.830)	(0.917)	(0.851)
BossExtremism	1.234	-0.328	0.421	-0.302	-0.418	-0.448
	(0.484)	(0.493)	(0.486)	(0.434)	(0.497)	(0.443)
Log(Salary)	-0.043	-0.039	-0.034	-0.165	-0.082	0.148
	(0.226)	(0.231)	(0.223)	(0.212)	(0.228)	(0.217)
Mid-Level Staffer	0.601	0.557	0.561	0.516	0.304	1.083
	(0.369)	(0.387)	(0.382)	(0.359)	(0.406)	(0.360)
Senior Staffer	0.911	0.644	0.303	1.006	0.267	1.159
	(0.494)	(0.520)	(0.499)	(0.470)	(0.517)	(0.471)
Health Issue	0.526	0.202	0.175	-0.346	-0.478	-0.327
	(0.314)	(0.316)	(0.312)	(0.287)	(0.314)	(0.295)
Nat Sec Issue	0.459	0.115	-0.295	-0.879	0.076	-0.239
	(0.279)	(0.283)	(0.278)	(0.262)	(0.296)	(0.260)
IssueKnowledge	0.407	-0.359	-0.395	1.038	0.872	0.74
	(0.473)	(0.480)	(0.486)	(0.436)	(0.485)	(0.441)
Committee Office	-0.208	-0.084	-0.574	0.37	-0.607	0.852
	(0.322)	(0.343)	(0.326)	(0.302)	(0.321)	(0.313)
Party Office	-2.351	-0.795	-1.756	-1.021	-1.717	-0.92
	(0.631)	(0.571)	(0.555)	(0.501)	(0.501)	(0.500)
Senate	-0.076	0.051	0.267	-0.199	-0.476	0.028
	(0.254)	(0.260)	(0.254)	(0.235)	(0.255)	(0.236)
IMR	-0.34	-0.88	-0.696	0.139	0.215	-0.477
	(0.598)	(0.762)	(0.527)	(0.455)	(0.527)	(0.466)
StaffLeft:StafferExtremism	-0.228	1.347	1.195	0.218	0.291	0.281
	(0.455)	(0.458)	(0.448)	(0.409)	(0.434)	(0.419)
BossLeft:BossExtremism	-2.869	0.187	-0.904	0.101	0.355	0.352
	(0.877)	(0.887)	(0.848)	(0.774)	(0.857)	(0.792)
Nobs	326.16	326.16	326.16	338.778	337.92	337.92
logLik	-275.14	-263.60	-285.01	-329.71	-276.11	-331.33
AIC	586.27	563.19	606.03	695.42	588.23	698.66

Table 5: Second stage of two-stage mixed effects ordinal logistic regression models of trust and use, repeated measures dataset

	Trust All Offices	**Use All Offices**	**Trust Non-Competitive**	**Use Non-Competitive**
1|2	-7.339	-2.677	-8.451	-3.419
	(2.079)	(1.865)	(2.205)	(2.233)
2|3	-3.927	0.482	-5.154	-0.338
	(2.059)	(1.844)	(2.188)	(2.215)
3|4	-0.353		-1.792	
	(2.041)		(2.175)	
StaffAligned	-4.734	-2.501	-4.523	-2.348
	(0.818)	(1.732)	(0.813)	(1.732)
StaffNonAligned	-5.058	-2.77	-4.865	-2.607
	(0.226)	(0.813)	(0.206)	(0.813)
StafferExtremism	-0.709	-0.339	-0.565	-0.189
	(0.770)	(0.205)	(0.770)	(0.206)
BossAligned	-0.673	0.126	-0.886	-0.406
	(0.373)	(0.771)	(0.362)	(0.770)
BossNonAligned	0.037	0.53	-0.174	0.022
	(0.828)	(0.364)	(0.823)	(0.362)
BossExtremism	-0.291	-0.208	-0.425	-0.286
	(0.780)	(0.831)	(0.788)	(0.835)
Log(Salary)	0.042	-0.013	-0.069	-0.076
	(0.247)	(0.780)	(0.193)	(0.786)
Mid-Level Staffer	0.011	0.614	0.16	0.708
	(0.393)	(0.165)	(0.347)	(0.174)
Senior Staffer	-0.19	0.728	0.095	0.708
	(0.473)	(0.329)	(0.465)	(0.351)
Health Issue	0.29	-0.093	0.498	0.067
	(0.272)	(0.387)	(0.272)	(0.386)
Nat Sec Issue	0.603	-0.127	0.5	-0.046
	(0.248)	(0.268)	(0.247)	(0.270)
IssueKnowledge	0.912	0.911	0.814	0.704
	(0.438)	(0.248)	(0.429)	(0.260)
Committee Office	-0.294	0.203	-0.168	0.354
	(0.271)	(0.429)	(0.269)	(0.436)
Leadership Office	-1.246	-1.193	-0.803	-1.226
	(0.565)	(0.277)	(0.696)	(0.347)
Senate	0.144	-0.338	0.135	-0.31
	(0.236)	(0.565)	(0.236)	(0.563)
IMR	-0.89	-0.349	-1.162	-0.542
	(1.036)	(0.380)	(0.521)	(0.383)
StaffAligned:StafferExtremism	1.221	0.618	1.05	0.604
	(0.259)	(0.454)	(0.259)	(0.454)
StaffNonAligned:StafferExtremism	-0.373	-0.309	-0.53	-0.508
	(0.433)	(0.259)	(0.433)	(0.259)
BossAligned:BossExtremism	1.084	1.107	1.253	1.441
	(0.281)	(0.434)	(0.281)	(0.436)
BossNonAligned:BossExtremism	-0.296	-0.499	0.029	0.009
	(0.450)	(0.284)	(0.450)	(0.284)
Nobs	1621.38	1666.93	1351.93	1390.52
logLik	-1405.20	-1460.24	-1188.61	-1220.60
AIC	2860.41	2968.47	2427.23	2489.19

Table 6: Example Stage 1 Selection model results

	Responded to Survey {0,1}
Tenure	−0.008
	(0.014)
Gap in work	0.137
	(0.130)
Female	−0.429***
	(0.093)
Boss Ideology (Nominate Dim1)	0.734**
	(0.314)
Number of Issues Worked on	0.010
	(0.013)
Number of Job Titles	0.028
	(0.029)
Number of Committees Worked for	0.024
	(0.054)
Senate	0.030
	(0.131)
Log(Salary)	−0.178*
	(0.101)
Democrat	−0.762***
	(0.280)
Committee Office	0.349**
	(0.166)
Party Office	0.027
	(0.250)
Number of Employers in Congress	−0.009
	(0.010)
NonWhite	−0.176
	(0.137)
Highest Level of Education	0.110**
	(0.053)
Legislative(Job Title)	−0.227
	(0.510)
Political Management(Job Title)	−0.070
	(0.546)
Communications(Job Title)	−0.644
	(0.550)
Office Management(Job Title)	−0.260
	(0.506)
Constituency Service(Job Title)	−0.591
	(0.866)
Institutional(Job Title)	−0.051
	(0.572)
Fellow	0.863***
	(0.274)
Seniority	0.011
	(0.046)
Constant	2.240*
	(1.211)
N	838
Log Likelihood	−540.928
AIC	1129.857

***p < .01; **p < .05; *p < .1

Appendix B: Question Wording

Respondents were asked whether they work on a list of issues “never," “occasionally" or “daily."[24] If respondents answered “daily" to one and only one of the follow: 1) “Budget & Appropriations", 2) “Health", or 3) “Defense" and/or “International Affairs" they were directed to a specific question block corresponding to Budget & Appropriations, Health Policy or National Security Policy respectively. All other respondents were randomly distributed among the three issue blocks.

The analyses in this paper use two types of scales which were constructed from respondents' answers: 1) issue specific knowledge scales, and 2) an ideology scale. Each issue block contained a battery of 4 or 5 knowledge questions designed in coordination with issue expert consultants. Issue specific knowledge scales were constructed by taking the standardized sum of the number of knowledge questions that the respondents answered correctly.

The staffer ideology scale was is constructed using a PCM Rasch model (a form of IRT) on the likert-type response items (1-5) of respondents' answers to a five question ideology battery designed and validated in Esterling (2016).

[24]The survey used a list of 24 policy domains adapted from the Comparative Agendas Project Master Codebook (http://www.comparativeagendas.net/pages/mastercodebook). We replaced “National Budget" with “Budget and Appropriations" but all other issues were identical.

Figure 9: Staffer party identification and ideology. Respondents that declined to answer the party identification question are shown as “Party Q NA".

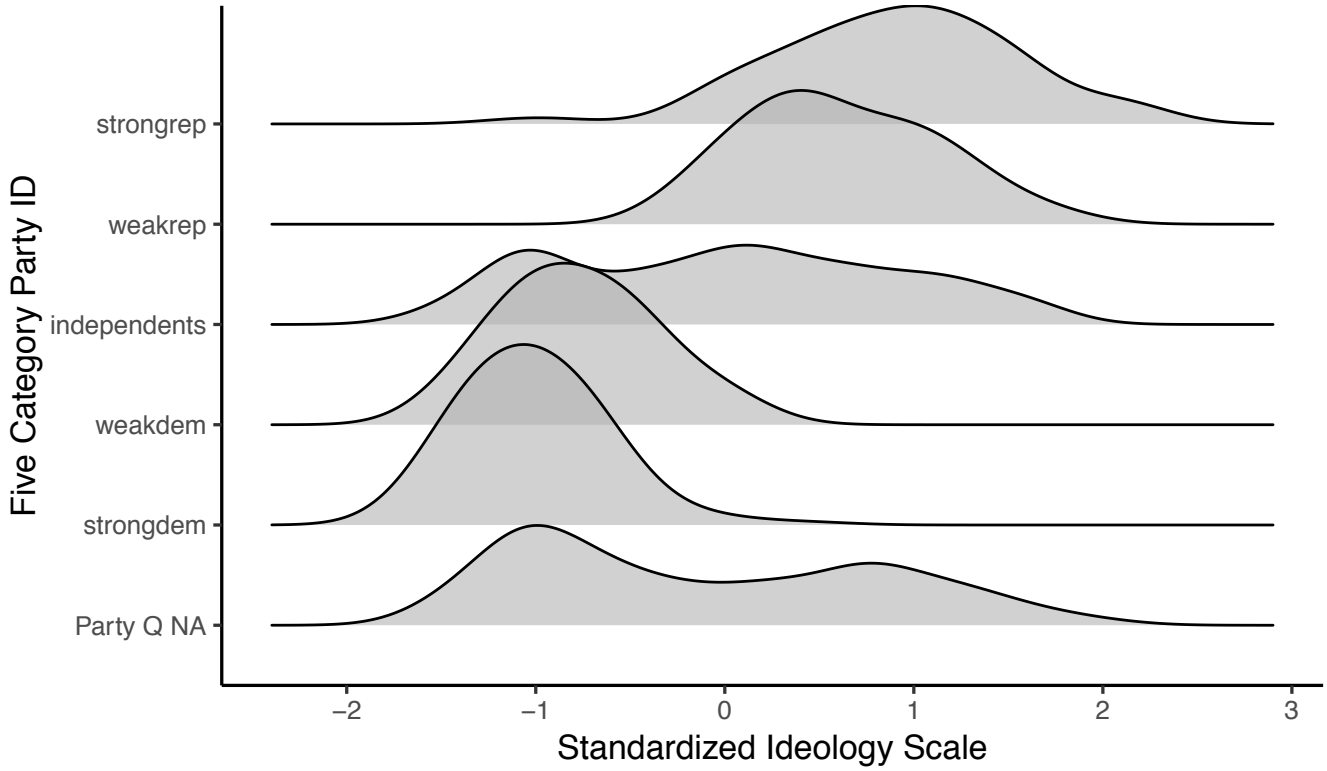

Figure 9 shows the distribution of ideology scores for staffers that responded to the 2017 Congressional Capacity Survey by their party identification. Democratic staffers tend to be ideologically left-of-center, while Republican staffers tend to be ideologically right-of-center. Strong partisans tend to be more extreme ideologically than weak partisans, and Independents and staffers that did not answer the party ID question have ideologies across the spectrum. It is useful here to note that this is consistent with the notion that partisans in congress think in schematic, sophisticated and ideologically coherent terms. The absolute value of this ideological measure is used to capture staffer extremism.

In their assigned issue blocks, respondents were given batteries that asked about how much they trust and use a variety of sources. In this analysis I focus on the trust and use of three sources inside the government (CRS, CBO and GAO) and three sources outside the government (left-of-center Think Tanks, University Researchers, and right-of-center Think Tanks). Respondents were asked to rate sources on a four item likert-type trustworthiness scale (not at all, somewhat, mostly, completely trustworthy) and a three item use scale (never use, occasionally use, frequently use).

The question prompt format for these items is shown below

Ideology Battery Questions

Q19 Thinking about YOUR OWN personal opinions -- not what you think your boss believes -- what do you think about the following?

q19.1 The protection of consumer interests is best insured by a vigorous competition among sellers rather than by federal government regulation on behalf of consumers.

(1) Strongly agree (n=104)

(2) Somewhat agree (n=111)

(3) Neither agree nor disagree (n=47)

(4) Somewhat disagree (n=119)

(5) Strongly disagree (n=40)

q19.2 There is too much power concentrated in the hands of a few large companies for the good of the country.

(1) Strongly agree (n=109)

(2) Somewhat agree (n=151)

(3) Neither agree nor disagree (n=65)

(4) Somewhat disagree (n=72)

(5) Strongly disagree (n=24)

q19.3 One of the most important roles of government is to help those who cannot help themselves, such as the poor, the disadvantaged, and the unemployed.

(1) Strongly agree (n=178)

(2) Somewhat agree (n=116)

(3) Neither agree nor disagree (n=37)

(4) Somewhat disagree (n=65)

(5) Strongly disagree (n=25)

q19.4 All Americans should have access to quality medical care regardless of ability to pay.

(1) Strongly agree (n=205)

(2) Somewhat agree (n=83)

(3) Neither agree nor disagree (n=46)

(4) Somewhat disagree (n=65)

(5) Strongly disagree (n=22)

q19.5 The differences in income among occupations should be reduced.

(1) Strongly agree (n=47)

(2) Somewhat agree (n=97)

(3) Neither agree nor disagree (n=75)

(4) Somewhat disagree (n=86)

(5) Strongly disagree (n=116)

For purposes of summative scale construction q19.1 was reverse coded so that higher number always were the more conservative codes.

Source use and trust prompts

Indicate how often you use the following resources [INSIDE/OUTSIDE] THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT when you make [federal budget/health policy/national security policy] recommendations.

Indicate how trustworthy you find the following resources [INSIDE/OUTSIDE] THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT when you make [federal budget/health policy/national security policy] recommendations.

Conjoint report summary prompts

Conservative Drug Policy: "Congress should reduce regulations and address patent abuse that hinder the ability of private firms to bring cheaper generics to market."

Liberal Drug Policy: "Congress should authorize drug price-setting that will help public and private insurance providers negotiate lower prices."

Conservative Minimum Wage: "Increasing the minimum wage raises the costs of goods and services and are poorly targeted to benefit low-income families."

Liberal Minimum Wage: "Increasing the minimum wage raises the earnings of people with low incomes with little risk of significant job loss."

Appendix C: 2017 Congressional Capacity Survey Methodological Appendix

Appendix: 2017 Congressional Capacity Study

Overview

The 2017 Congressional Capacity Study is a collaborative research project conducted by a core team of political scientists: Timothy LaPira (James Madison University), Alexander Furnas (University of Michigan), Alexander Hertel-Fernandez (Columbia University), Lee Drutman (New America), and Kevin Kosar (R Street Institute). The project collected original qualitative and quantitative data collection in two stages. In Stage #1, from February through June, 2017, the team conducted in-person interviews with 52 senior staff in House and Senate personal, committee, party leadership, and chamber administrative offices in Washington, DC. In addition, the team interviewed four former members of Congress and seven former staff from the House and Senate committee offices. In Stage #2, from August through December, 2017, the research team fielded an online questionnaire targeting all congressional staff primarily located in Washington, DC in offices. The sampling frame purposely broad based on staffers' geographic location to best capture those who contribute to Congress's legislative, appropriations, oversight, or general public policy operations. Both stages of the project were monitored by the James Madison University Institutional Review Board to protect participants' confidentiality.[1] The research project was generously funded by the Hewlett Foundation's Madison Initiative, in support of the R Street-New America Legislative Branch Working Group and the collaborative research project team.

Stage #1: Former member of Congress and Senior Staff Interviews

Purpose

The interviews were meant to investigate senior staffers' and former members' perspectives on legislative office management and operations, including career backgrounds and expertise, perspectives on personnel knowledge, skills, and abilities, and views on institutional and professional goals. The objectives were to collect original narratives on opportunities and challenges of working in a characteristically polarized Congress and to probe interviewees for qualitative data to prioritize the more systematic and objective data collection in the subsequent survey stage of the study.

Interviewee Selection and Recruitment

The research team constructed a sampling frame from an institutional subscription to a legislative staff contact list distributed by LegiStorm, LLC. An initial list of senior staff in House and Senate member offices with job titles of Chief of Staff Administrative Assistant (if no Chief of Staff was listed), and Legislative Director, Communications Director were compiled. A second list of senior staff with job titles Staff Director in all permanent chamber and joint legislative committees and subcommittees were compiled. Staff were directly contacted with a request for in-person meetings in Washington offices, with an intention to vary interviewees by chamber, office type, party, gender, ethnicity, and the

[1] James Madison University IRB Protocols #17-0333 (Phase 1) and #18-0030 (Phase 2).

home state or district of the principal member and chair or ranking member. The selection was not intended to be random, but instead focused on those most willing to share their valuable time. In addition, we asked several interviewees to identify former members of Congress and staff colleagues no longer working in Congress who may be willing to share their hindsight perspectives after having worked in Congress.

When explicitly permitted, interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and anonymized. In roughly a dozen cases, transcripts were likely to reveal the interviewee's identity were not made available to the research community outside than the five co-principal investigators approved by institutional review board protocols.

Semi-structured Interview Protocol

In general, interviews were semi-structured to balance several competing goals, including establishing rapport by allowing respondents to take the conversation in the direction they felt most comfortable, to maximize the amount of novel, idiosyncratic information not otherwise available from existing sources, and to uncover information that the research team could not possibly conjecture *ex ante* (Leech 2002). The interviews varied in practice, but were intended to ask variations of the following questions:

1. Can you tell me about your background?
   PROBING QUESTIONS:
   - How did you end up in this position? What has been your career trajectory?
   - When did you start thinking about Congress as career?
   - Did you originally work on the campaign side, or did you do more policy work?
2. What skills and characteristics do people need to be effective in a position like yours?
   PROBING QUESTIONS:
   - If pay/hours were adequate, would you want to spend your whole career on the Hill?
   - If your boss was not returning after the next election (for whatever reason), would you seek another job on the Hill?
   - Do you think you'll still be working on the Hill in 5 years?
   - Has this job met your expectations?
   - What are things you like *most* about your job? *Least*?
3. What is more important, specific policy expertise or a deep understanding of how things really work on Capitol Hill?
   PROBING QUESTIONS:
   - Do you prefer working on policy details or on winning elections?
   - IF "BOTH" - In what context is one more important than the other?
4. Some people say there are three types of members – partisan, policy, and constituent service. What kind of office do you think you have?
   PROBING QUESTIONS:
   - Do you think this is valid? If so, where does your office fit? If not, is there a better typology?
   - What is your office most known for on Capitol Hill? [IF "constituency service," then: what is it most known for inside Washington?]
5. What goals are most important to your member?

- [IF GENERAL OR VAGUE, seek specifics on party/reelection and policy expertise]

6. [WRAP-UP] Are there any questions that I have not asked that you think are important for me to understand how Congress manages its legislative work?

Generally, interview times typically ranged between 30-45 minutes, with some conversations lasting 90 minutes or more.

Stage #2: Staff Survey

Purpose

The survey questionnaire sought to find out more about the backgrounds, career paths, policy views, technical knowledge, substantive expertise, and job experiences of congressional staffers, as well as the procedures and organizational structures that allow them to assist members of Congress to do their work in the most effective and democratically responsive ways. The sampling and fielding process was purposely intended to seek as broad and representative sample of congressional staff as possible.

Sample Construction

We constructed the sampling frame from the full Legistorm contact list as of July 18, 2017 that included individual's names, employers, and official email addresses.[2] The contact list contained the full census of 10,512 legislative branch employees with a Washington, DC office address. The contact list included 729 House, Senate, and bicameral offices and organizational units. The list excluded legislative support agencies (such as the Congressional Research Service, Government Accountability Office, and the Congressional Budget Office) that employ personnel as federal civil servants.[3] From this list of organizational units, the research team selected 633 organizational units with names suggesting the primary mission contributed to legislative operations, as broadly as could be determined by public information about the office. Primarily, these units focus on members' personal offices, standing committees, and party leadership offices. Secondarily, we included "other" administrative offices (such as the House Parliamentarian) and institutionalized caucuses or member organizations (such as the Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control and the House Republican Study Committee). The sampling frame excluded offices with exclusively administrative, facilities, or maintenance missions (such as House Office of Logistics and Support and Senate Office of Printing, Graphics and Direct Mail).

Table A1 summarizes the 8,485 individuals in our sampling frame this process considered to be primarily employed as political appointees in the legislative branch. The table cross-tabulates prospective respondents by chamber and office type, including 540 member offices, all standing, permanent select, and joint committees, official party leadership

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[2] LegiStorm constantly updates records from House and Senate public payroll and disbursement data. As with any human resources data, individuals are constantly moving in and out of positions, and positions are continuously being created or eliminated at the discretion of individual offices. Our sampling frame is accurate as of the date of purchase.

[3] LegiStorm does not maintain payroll disbursement records from the Office of Personnel Management, even though legislative service agency personnel serve the legislative branch.

offices, and "other" institutional offices with a legislative function, such as House Legislative Counsel.

Table A1. Sampling Frame Contacts by Chamber and Type of Office

Chamber	Office Type				Total
	Other	Personal	Committee	Party	
House	141	3,511	1,185	143	4,980
Senate	52	2,459	871	123	3,505
Total	193	5,970	2,056	266	8,485

The process intentionally made no assumptions about individual staffers within an office based on common job titles to maximize the variety of staff. This sampling frame conservatively biases toward over-coverage of prospective participants that may reasonably be thought of as politically appointed staff engaged in legislative operations. The *ex ante* expectation is that response rates would be artificially deflated because we were likely asking non-legislative staff employed in "legislative offices" to participate. We expect these non-legislative staff employed in "legislative offices" to be more likely to decline to participate in survey.

Fielding Process, Pre-registration, and Timeline

The survey was offered exclusively online using the James Madison University license to the Qualtrics survey platform. The survey was offered in three sequential data collection stages between August and December. Each of the 8,485 prospective staffers were contacted directly by email with a personalized link to identify respondents with existing biographical data and to maintain strict confidentiality. In addition to direct contacts, the research team recruited senior legislative staffers in our professional networks to ask them to spread the word as much as they were willing, and partnered with external validator groups including PopVox, Congressional Management Foundation, Pew Charitable Trusts, Bipartisan Policy Center, and the Stennis Center to promote participation.

Pre-registration documentation was filed with Open Science Framework before data collection was initiated. An addendum was added to the pre-registration while data collection was ongoing, but prior to any data analysis.

The fielding process was conducted over the course of five months in 2017, including:

1. July 24-31: Professional network and external validator promote forthcoming survey.
2. August 4-15: Initial invitation emails sent in batches of 100.
3. August 9: Finalized "Congressional Capacity Staff Survey" pre-registration documentation submitted for review.
4. August 13: Pre-registration documentation approved and embargoed.

5. September 21: Email response declines and survey completions identified, dropped from first follow-up contact list.
6. September 21-October 2: First reminder email sent.
7. October 30: Second round email response declines and survey completions identified, dropped from second follow-up contact list.
8. October 30-October 31: Second and final reminder email sent.
9. November 4th: Survey closed and response data collected from Qualtrics.
10. December 7: LegiStorm delivers biographical data for in- and out-samples.
11. December 7-18: Survey response and Legistorm biographical data processing.
12. December 31: Pre-registration embargo completed.

Response Rates and Margins of Error

The overall response rate was 5.2 percent (441 of 8,485). The margin of error at the 95 percent level of confidence is 4.5 percent. In addition, survey respondents were blocked for two banks of questions.

First, staff were asked a series of questions about chamber-specific parliamentary procedures, so subsample margins of error for House staff is 5.9 percent and Senate staff is 7.7 percent at the 95 percent level.

Second, staff were selectively or randomly assigned to one of three policy domain blocks for series of questions about policy substance and information source credibility. Selections were determined by a question reading, "Please indicate how frequently you work on each of the following issues for your boss in a typical week when Congress is in session: never, occasionally, or daily," for a list of 24 policy domains adapted from the Comparative Agendas Project Master Codebook (http://www.comparativeagendas.net/pages/master-codebook).[4] Domain specialists were selected into the relevant block if they responded "daily" for "Budget and Appropriations," for "Health," or for "Defense" and/or "International Affairs." Respondents indicating specialization in more than one domain were randomly assigned to one of their specialties. All other respondents were randomly assigned to one of the three domains. The actual valid subsamples were 30.3 percent (125 of 412) in budget and appropriations (margin of error = 8.7 percent, 95 percent level), 29.1 percent (120 of 412) in health policy (margin of error = 8.9 percent, 95 percent level), and 40.5 percent (167 of 412) in national security policy (margin of error = 7.5percent, 95 percent level); 6.6 percent of the sample were missing responses to questions in these blocks. Questions for chamber and policy domain are comparable across blocks, so generally responses may to be aggregated up to the full sample to maximize statistical power.

Post-stratification Weights and Sample Balance

Post-stratification survey weights were calculated using the 'survey' package in R (Lumley 2004, 2017). For the purpose of calculating weights, respondents were counted as having taken the survey for the purpose of inclusion in the numerator if they if they agreed to Q68

[4] The subtopic code 105, "National Budget" corresponds with our "Budget and Appropriations." All other CAP Master Topic level policy domains correspond perfectly.

and responded to any other question in the survey. The provided (psweight) are the inverse probability of selection for each respondent conditioning on the joint distribution of Chamber, office type, and party in the population, using the sampling frame purchased from LegiStorm. Because of a persistent gender imbalance, we calculate a second weight variable (psweight_g) conditioned on party, chamber and gender. The results of a series of balance tests between respondent sample and a random sample of the non-respondents are shown in Table 2, for unweighted as well as both sets of post stratification weights.

Table A2. Balance tests for non-response bias

	Unweighted			PostStratification Weights by officetype, party, chamber			PostStratification Weights by party, chamber, gender		
Variable	**Respondent Mean**	**Non-respondent Mean**	**p-value**	**Respondent Mean**	**Non-respondent Mean**	**p-value**	**Respondent Mean**	**Non-respondent Mean**	***p*-value**
chamber_ls2	0.378	0.355	0.535	0.408	0.355	0.151	0.397	0.355	0.255
gapYes	0.177	0.137	0.148	0.178	0.137	0.142	0.182	0.137	0.107
genderF	0.363	0.488	0.001	0.365	0.488	0.001	0.462	0.488	0.485
ls_educ1	0.499	0.587	0.020	0.500	0.587	0.023	0.504	0.587	0.029
ls_educ2	0.165	0.166	0.986	0.168	0.166	0.927	0.165	0.166	0.975
ls_educ3	0.304	0.224	0.018	0.301	0.224	0.023	0.301	0.224	0.023
ls_educ4	0.029	0.023	0.612	0.028	0.023	0.697	0.028	0.023	0.678
ls_race_white*	0.879	0.860	0.471	0.883	0.860	0.375	0.878	0.860	0.505
num_employers*	2.330	2.340	0.902	2.307	2.340	0.892	2.261	2.340	0.896
num_members*	1.608	1.744	0.080	1.602	1.744	0.092	1.522	1.744	0.076
num_offices*	0.723	0.596	0.002	0.705	0.596	0.004	0.738	0.596	0.006
num_titles*	3.183	3.023	0.588	3.177	3.023	0.562	3.183	3.023	0.558
officetype22	0.313	0.221	0.007	0.267	0.221	0.164	0.317	0.221	0.005
officetype23	0.035	0.058	0.159	0.057	0.058	0.952	0.037	0.058	0.203
party_ls31	0.006	0.012	0.422	0.021	0.012	0.334	0.010	0.012	0.814
party_ls32	0.528	0.517	0.782	0.553	0.517	0.347	0.553	0.517	0.355
salary*	$73,533	$72,860	0.816	$73,535	$72,860	0.798	$73,390	$72,860	0.842
seniority*	0.826	0.985	0.128	0.832	0.985	0.160	0.844	0.985	0.186
tenure*	5.785	5.570	0.452	5.707	5.570	0.488	5.717	5.570	0.466
title_cat1	0.572	0.535	0.326	0.559	0.535	0.526	0.568	0.535	0.389
title_cat2	0.115	0.096	0.417	0.114	0.096	0.449	0.113	0.096	0.467
title_cat3	0.068	0.148	0.001	0.071	0.148	0.001	0.072	0.148	0.001

title_cat4	0.204	0.192	0.702	0.203	0.192	0.706	0.200	0.192	0.789
title_cat5	0.003	0.003	0.992	0.003	0.003	0.975	0.002	0.003	0.879
title_cat6	0.024	0.026	0.830	0.037	0.026	0.433	0.032	0.026	0.667

*p value for a bootstrapped KS test, all other variables p value presented is for a t test.

Linking back to biographical data

In addition to the variables collected with the survey instrument, respondents were subsequently linked back to additional biographical data purchased from LegiStorm. The fully merged data set for replication and a detailed description of these variables can be found in the data codebook at <DATAVERSE OR OTHER PERMANENT REPOSITORY TO BE MADE AVAILABLE WITH PUBLICATION>.

Works Cited

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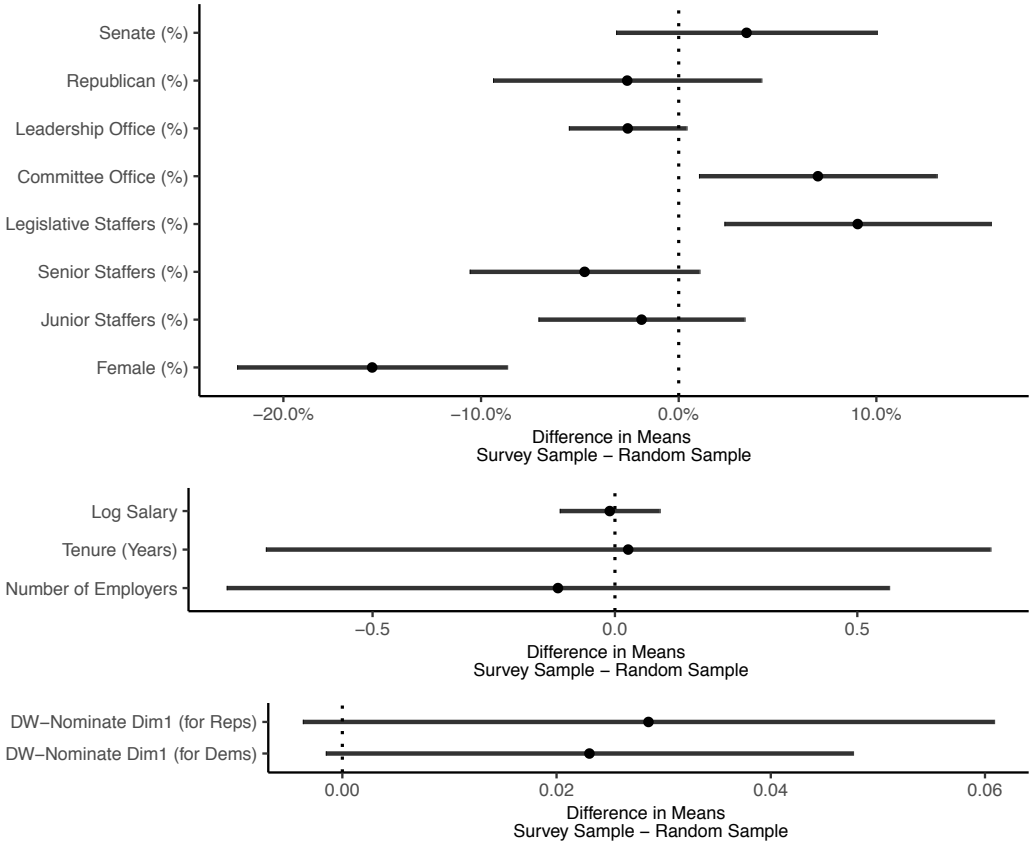
Appendix D: Additional Balance Statistics for CCS 2017

In general, unweighted balance is quite good on most covariates. The sample has approximately the same share of Senate staffers, staffers in Republican offices, leadership staffers, and staffers of different levels of seniority as a random sample of non-respondents. However, there are some significant differences. The survey oversamples committee staffers and legislative staffers, which is not-unexpected given its frame as a study of congressional capacity. The largest difference between respondents and non-respondents is in gender: according to LegiStorm's coding 34.7 % of survey respondents are women while 50.2 % of the non-respondent sample are women. To some degree, these imbalances are not independent. Men are over represented among legislative staffers and committee staffers within Congress.[25] The only roles in which women are over-represented in Congress are communication professionals and administrative positions such as staff assistants or schedulers, which were under-represented in the survey responses. This is not entirely unexpected as staffers in these roles act as gatekeepers for the rest of their offices and as such are likely to receive especially high volumes of email inquiries and be some of the most selective in who they respond to.

[25] 59 percent of legislative staffers and 54 percent of committee staffers in Congress are men.

Figure 10: Balance Between Survey Respondents and Random Sample of Staffers (with 95% Confidence Intervals)



Covariate balance between respondents and non-respondents is extremely good on several key career variables. Both groups have nearly identical mean salaries, number of years working in Congress, and a similar number of total employers during their time in Congress (a sum of the number of different members of Congress and committees for which the staffer worked).

In addition to the good partisan balance between respondents' and non-respondents' offices, the two samples work for ideologically indistinguishable sets of bosses according to their first dimension DW-Nominate scores (Poole and Rosenthal, 2000). Committee staffers are coded as working for either the committee chair or ranking member depending on whether they are majority or minority staff.[26] While respondents' bosses are slightly more conservative than the bosses of non-respondents for both Democrats and Republicans, the ~ 0.025 difference in means in their DW-Nominate scores is only about 1.5 percent of the full range $(-0.758, 0.94)$ of the variable.

[26]Committee staff that are assigned to a committee generally rather than the minority or majority are coded as working for the committee chair.

Appendix E: Motivated Reasoning Experiment

As an additional test to distinguish between the independent and motivated reasoner views, I use a conjoint survey experiment in which staffers evaluate hypothetical reports issued by think tanks to assess the relative importance of the ideology of report source and the content of the report. In the conjoint experiment staffers are provided alternatives with randomly assigned think tank sources of different ideological valences, and randomly assigned policy content, either favoring a market-based or price-control solution to a policy problem. Because motivated reasoners use ideological cues to help them make judgements, we should expect them to use the strong cue provided by the source of the information in their evaluations. On the other hand, independent agents, in the mold of Price's (1971) policy entrepreneurs should select reports with policy content that map to their ideological positions.[27] This set of expectations supplies the *Motivated Reasoner Hypothesis*[28]

Hypothesis 6 (H6): Motivated Reasoner Hypothesis

The effect of ideological alignment between a staffer and an information source will be stronger than the effect of the alignment between a staffer and the content

In this section I report preliminary results from a conjoint experiment embedded in the 2019 Congressional Capacity Survey (CCS). This experiment was designed to test the relative importance of several features on staffers' evaluations of hypothetical policy reports. In this experiment, staffers were presented with randomized information about two hypothetical reports. For each source, the respondent is shown the institution issuing the report, drawn randomly from a list of 6 organizations, three conservative and three liberal (Demos, Center for American Progress, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, R Street Institute, American Enterprise Institute and the Heritage Foundation). They are also shown a summary of content contained in the report, from one of two possible options, one a more conservative (market-oriented) policy analysis and the other a more liberal (price-setting/regulatory) policy analysis. Staffers are presented this choice in two successive vignettes, one focused on lowering the price of prescription drugs and the other on the minimum wage. Exact language of the prompts is shown in Appendix B.

The political psychology literature suggests that motivated reasoners rely heavily on ideological cues in the absence of other information, as this cue signals the likelihood that information will

[27] I expect that conservatives will favor reports with market-based content and liberals will favor price-control based content.

[28] I have pre-registered four hypotheses on OSF, all of which are available https://osf.io/wvnxm.

confirm their prior expectations rather than challenge their world-views. On the other hand, Price (1971) argues that policy entrepreneur staffers (which I conceive of as independent agents) should pursue the policies they prefer, rather than ideological consistency. Because of this, the motivated reasoner hypothesis suggests that the staffers should be more likely to choose sources that are ideologically aligned with them than those that contain consonant policy recommendations. We should expect motivated reasoners to convince themselves that non-consonant policy from ideologically consonant sources is, in fact, aligned with them, while policy-motivated staffers will not.

Methods: Conjoint Experiment Analysis

There are a few caveats that I should note about these preliminary data. First, I have conducted the subsequent analyses on only a subset of the full CCS 2019 data. The 2019 CCS is still in the field, and as such I expect that there will ultimately be more responses. The analysis here was conducted on the responses received between May 15th and July 15th. As was the case with the 2017 CCS, computing balance results and post-stratification weights require purchasing an additional sample of staffer data from LegiStorm and hand coding key variables on all participants. This work will only be completed at the conclusion of the field period of the survey. Because of this I am unable to report detailed balance statistics or apply weights to this analysis. I can report that balance between chambers is good, but the survey is currently under-sampling Republican staffers. In order to insure transparency in this research process I pre-registered four hypotheses related to this conjoint experiment at the Open Science Foundation prior to looking at this data.[29]

In order to assess the impact of source ideology and report content on staffer evaluations of hypothetical reports, I follow Hainmueller et al. (2014)'s analysis protocol. I calculate the average marginal component effect (AMCE) estimator on the direct effects of ideological alignment between staffer and source, and the alignment between a staffer and the content of the report – on the assumption that conservative staffers are aligned with the pro-market content and the liberals aligned with the regulator content. I estimate the Average Component Interaction Effect (ACIE) on the interaction between these two forms of alignment.

[29] https://osf.io/wvnxm

Results: Conjoint Experiment Analysis

Table 7 reports the results of the analysis of the conjoint experiment. The analysis reported here is the simplest of the four that I pre-registered and relies simply on the binary classification of each source's attributes according to whether they are aligned with the staffer's likely ideological preconceptions.

Table 7: Conjoint experiment results from 2019 CCS

Manipulated Factor	Estimate	Estimator
Source Ideology Alignment	0.119	AMCE
	(.0297)	
Source Content Alignment	0.129	AMCE
	(.093)	
Content Alignment:Content Alignment	0.020	ACIE
	(.055)	
Observations	928	
Number of Respondents	232	

I find that both source alignment and content alignment are both determinative. I find mixed results with respect to evaluating whether staffers act as motivated reasoners. However, there is no evidence to suggest that the ideology of the source is a *more important* determinant of staffers' choices than the content of that policy, as suggested by H6. Staffers' choices are informed by these components independently, and there is no additional additive effect of a report that both comes from an ideologically aligned think tank and contains consonant policy information. This suggests that staffers' choices are driven by their preferences. Staffers' choice of report is not solely ideological signaling or cues, however, the content of a report matters as well.[30]

Appendix F: Linear Models of main results

[30]These results are substantively the same when they are estimated on just the drug price vignette or the minimum wage vignette.

Table 8: Second stage of 2SLS regression models
DV: Trust of information sources

	Right TT	**Left TT**	**Univ**	**CRS**	**CBO**	**GAO**
	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**	**Model 6**
Intercept	1.587	1.629	2.333	3.729	3.715	3.084
	(0.733)	(0.731)	(0.767)	(0.695)	(0.698)	(0.814)
Staffer Ideology	0.153	-0.247	-0.21	-0.136	-0.137	-0.191
	(0.052)	(0.055)	(0.057)	(0.052)	(0.052)	(0.058)
Boss Ideology	0.226	-0.091	-0.097	-0.092	-0.091	-0.019
	(0.056)	(0.058)	(0.060)	(0.054)	(0.055)	(0.061)
Log(Salary	0.026	0.033	0.021	-0.073	-0.072	0.016
	(0.072)	(0.071)	(0.074)	(0.068)	(0.068)	(0.080)
Junior	0.497	0.287	0.439	0.288	0.287	-0.052
	(0.303)	(0.293)	(0.301)	(0.252)	(0.252)	(0.281)
Mid-Level	0.47	0.284	0.17	0.312	0.31	0.14
	(0.306)	(0.292)	(0.300)	(0.248)	(0.248)	(0.277)
Senior	0.583	0.123	-0.012	0.254	0.251	0.069
	(0.328)	(0.311)	(0.320)	(0.267)	(0.267)	(0.300)
Health Issue	0.155	0.176	0.195	0.036	0.037	-0.045
	(0.093)	(0.098)	(0.100)	(0.092)	(0.092)	(0.102)
Nat Sec Issue	0.141	0.201	0.019	0.148	0.149	0.03
	(0.084)	(0.088)	(0.090)	(0.084)	(0.084)	(0.094)
IssueKnowledge	0.083	-0.039	0.219	0.371	0.371	0.238
	(0.143)	(0.149)	(0.153)	(0.141)	(0.141)	(0.158)
Committee Office	-0.202	-0.019	-0.036	-0.002	-0.003	0.013
	(0.099)	(0.101)	(0.105)	(0.095)	(0.096)	(0.109)
Leadership Office	-0.241	0.007	-0.175	-0.09	-0.092	-0.649
	(0.178)	(0.176)	(0.184)	(0.167)	(0.167)	(0.191)
Senate	0.088	0.012	-0.058	-0.019	-0.019	0.055
	(0.077)	(0.077)	(0.081)	(0.072)	(0.072)	(0.082)
IMR	-0.386	-0.191	-0.294	0.064	0.063	-0.246
	(0.174)	(0.171)	(0.175)	(0.153)	(0.153)	(0.172)
R Squared	0.301	0.255	0.236	0.153	0.153	0.167
F statisitc	10.13	8.10	7.33	4.412	4.409	4.853
Deg of Freedom	on 13 and 306	on 13 and 307	on 13 and 304	on 13 and 318	on 13 and 318	on 13 and 316
AIC	608.665	641.490	653.172	642.631	642.668	710.174

Table 9: Second stage of 2SLS regression models

DV: Use of information sources

	Right TT	**Left TT**	**Univ**	**CRS**	**CBO**	**GAO**
	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**	**Model 6**
Intercept	1.788	1.906	2.027	2.249	2.378	1.27
	(0.696)	(0.670)	(0.687)	(0.764)	(0.727)	(0.786)
Staffer Ideology	0.022	-0.224	-0.174	0.013	-0.015	-0.033
	(0.050)	(0.048)	(0.051)	(0.056)	(0.054)	(0.058)
Boss Ideology	0.311	-0.07	0.063	0.001	0.016	0.035
	(0.053)	(0.051)	(0.053)	(0.058)	(0.056)	(0.060)
Log(Salary)	-0.018	-0.005	-0.015	-0.087	-0.023	0.026
	(0.068)	(0.066)	(0.067)	(0.074)	(0.071)	(0.077)
Junior	0.035	0.033	0.195	0.643	0.262	0.191
	(0.263)	(0.251)	(0.265)	(0.278)	(0.268)	(0.286)
Mid-Level	0.22	0.182	0.359	0.781	0.376	0.533
	(0.261)	(0.249)	(0.263)	(0.273)	(0.263)	(0.282)
Senior	0.271	0.198	0.265	0.987	0.345	0.573
	(0.281)	(0.268)	(0.282)	(0.295)	(0.284)	(0.304)
Health Issue	0.151	0.049	0.053	-0.122	-0.134	-0.133
	(0.091)	(0.086)	(0.091)	(0.100)	(0.097)	(0.104)
Security Issue	0.137	0.02	-0.09	-0.317	0.016	-0.09
	(0.083)	(0.079)	(0.083)	(0.091)	(0.088)	(0.095)
IssueKnowledge	0.095	-0.064	-0.112	0.33	0.245	0.248
	(0.141)	(0.134)	(0.141)	(0.155)	(0.150)	(0.160)
Committee Office	-0.065	-0.04	-0.163	0.161	-0.12	0.345
	(0.096)	(0.092)	(0.096)	(0.105)	(0.101)	(0.108)
Leadership Office	-0.554	-0.219	-0.499	-0.302	-0.523	-0.278
	(0.155)	(0.153)	(0.155)	(0.169)	(0.163)	(0.175)
Senate	-0.015	0.017	0.088	-0.06	-0.151	0.02
	(0.072)	(0.070)	(0.072)	(0.079)	(0.076)	(0.082)
IMR	-0.103	-0.254	-0.138	0.082	0.098	-0.094
	(0.162)	(0.169)	(0.151)	(0.161)	(0.154)	(0.174)
R Squared	0.286	0.239	0.133	0.124	0.077	0.137
F statatistic	9.580	7.498	3.655	3.529	2.078	3.941
Deg of Freedom	on 12 and 311	on 12 and 311	on 13 and 311	on 13 and 324	on 13 and 323	on 13 and 323
AIC	614.336	581.120	619.256	720.003	692.867	737.181

Table 10: Second stage of 2SLS regression models with interactions
DV: Trust in information sources

	Right TT	**Left TT**	**Univ**	**CRS**	**CBO**	**GAO**
	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**	**Model 6**
Intercept	1.796	1.634	2.226	4.166	4.173	3.345
	(0.780)	(0.772)	(0.809)	(0.724)	(0.721)	(0.859)
StaffLeft	-0.267	-0.164	-0.037	-0.188	-0.189	0.045
	(0.165)	(0.173)	(0.179)	(0.158)	(0.158)	(0.179)
Staffer Extremism	0.014	-0.296	-0.207	-0.363	-0.363	-0.346
	(0.086)	(0.090)	(0.100)	(0.084)	(0.084)	(0.094)
BossLeft	0.052	-0.098	-0.251	-0.056	-0.053	-0.062
	(0.288)	(0.295)	(0.305)	(0.268)	(0.268)	(0.306)
BossExtremism	0.192	-0.092	-0.077	-0.213	-0.214	-0.035
	(0.150)	(0.152)	(0.158)	(0.140)	(0.141)	(0.161)
Log(Salary)	0.026	0.036	0.024	-0.08	-0.081	0.004
	(0.074)	(0.072)	(0.075)	(0.068)	(0.068)	(0.081)
Junior	0.493	0.32	0.507	0.307	0.307	-0.013
	(0.311)	(0.303)	(0.312)	(0.253)	(0.253)	(0.286)
Mid-Level	0.468	0.321	0.241	0.336	0.336	0.163
	(0.313)	(0.300)	(0.309)	(0.248)	(0.248)	(0.280)
Senior	0.591	0.153	0.049	0.309	0.31	0.13
	(0.336)	(0.320)	(0.329)	(0.267)	(0.267)	(0.304)
Health Issue	0.148	0.169	0.191	0.035	0.036	-0.042
	(0.094)	(0.099)	(0.102)	(0.091)	(0.091)	(0.103)
Nat Sec Issue	0.138	0.19	0.008	0.153	0.153	0.043
	(0.084)	(0.089)	(0.091)	(0.083)	(0.083)	(0.094)
IssueKnowledge	0.094	-0.041	0.217	0.399	0.399	0.264
	(0.143)	(0.150)	(0.155)	(0.140)	(0.139)	(0.158)
Committee Office	-0.214	-0.022	-0.04	-0.031	-0.03	0.003
	(0.104)	(0.105)	(0.108)	(0.097)	(0.097)	(0.112)
Leadership Office	-0.221	0.034	-0.157	-0.056	-0.056	-0.623
	(0.183)	(0.179)	(0.188)	(0.166)	(0.166)	(0.194)
Senate	0.092	0.03	-0.03	-0.021	-0.021	0.054
	(0.080)	(0.080)	(0.084)	(0.074)	(0.074)	(0.085)
IMR	-0.437	-0.208	-0.303	-0.017	-0.016	-0.284
	(0.189)	(0.188)	(0.190)	(0.159)	(0.158)	(0.182)
StaffLeft:Staffer Extremism	-0.178	0.563	0.438	0.368	0.368	0.354
	(0.131)	(0.138)	(0.146)	(0.127)	(0.127)	(0.145)
BossLeft:Boss Extremism	-0.386	0.357	0.449	0.298	0.296	0.071
	(0.267)	(0.273)	(0.283)	(0.249)	(0.249)	(0.286)
R Squared	0.317	0.260	0.244	0.191	0.191	0.183
F Statistic	8.086	6.291	5.696	4.351	4.354	4.125
Deg of Freedom	on 17 and 302	on 17 and 303	on 17 and 300	on 17 and 314	on 17 and 314	on 17 and 312
AIC	611.211	647.077	658.904	635.465	635.421	711.338

Table 11: Second stage of 2SLS regression models with interactions
DV: Use of information sources

	Right TT	**Left TT**	**Univ**	**CRS**	**CBO**	**GAO**
	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**	**Model 6**
Intercept	1.825	1.876	1.907	2.427	2.761	1.519
	(0.727)	(0.700)	(0.719)	(0.786)	(0.744)	(0.817)
StaffLeft	0.049	0.147	-0.013	-0.212	-0.168	-0.038
	(0.154)	(0.146)	(0.156)	(0.167)	(0.160)	(0.172)
Staffer Extremism	-0.04	-0.142	-0.143	-0.053	-0.227	-0.06
	(0.083)	(0.079)	(0.084)	(0.093)	(0.089)	(0.096)
BossLeft	0.115	0.016	0.127	-0.078	-0.166	-0.333
	(0.273)	(0.268)	(0.275)	(0.293)	(0.282)	(0.303)
Boss Extremism	0.367	-0.11	0.12	-0.094	-0.088	-0.166
	(0.142)	(0.138)	(0.142)	(0.153)	(0.148)	(0.161)
Log(Salary)	-0.025	-0.003	-0.013	-0.087	-0.031	0.029
	(0.069)	(0.066)	(0.068)	(0.074)	(0.070)	(0.077)
Junior	0.058	-0.004	0.195	0.647	0.307	0.18
	(0.272)	(0.258)	(0.274)	(0.285)	(0.271)	(0.293)
Mid-Level	0.223	0.146	0.352	0.801	0.42	0.546
	(0.268)	(0.255)	(0.270)	(0.278)	(0.264)	(0.287)
Senior	0.298	0.16	0.251	1.006	0.423	0.59
	(0.288)	(0.275)	(0.290)	(0.300)	(0.285)	(0.309)
Health Issue	0.152	0.061	0.048	-0.129	-0.14	-0.124
	(0.092)	(0.088)	(0.093)	(0.101)	(0.097)	(0.106)
Nat Sec Issue	0.147	0.028	-0.09	-0.332	0.012	-0.098
	(0.084)	(0.080)	(0.084)	(0.092)	(0.089)	(0.096)
IssueKnowledge	0.109	-0.071	-0.121	0.344	0.278	0.266
	(0.142)	(0.135)	(0.143)	(0.156)	(0.149)	(0.161)
Committee Office	-0.055	-0.038	-0.15	0.146	-0.146	0.309
	(0.099)	(0.096)	(0.098)	(0.108)	(0.103)	(0.112)
Leadership Office	-0.556	-0.205	-0.502	-0.322	-0.54	-0.288
	(0.156)	(0.154)	(0.157)	(0.171)	(0.162)	(0.178)
Senate	-0.022	0.002	0.084	-0.049	-0.137	0.029
	(0.075)	(0.073)	(0.075)	(0.082)	(0.078)	(0.086)
IMR	-0.098	-0.249	-0.112	0.044	0.027	-0.168
	(0.173)	(0.181)	(0.161)	(0.170)	(0.163)	(0.183)
staff_left:staff_extremism	-0.082	0.366	0.344	0.081	0.119	0.104
	(0.129)	(0.123)	(0.131)	(0.143)	(0.136)	(0.148)
boss_left:boss_extremism	-0.735	0.077	-0.224	0.156	0.178	0.238
	(0.252)	(0.247)	(0.254)	(0.274)	(0.263)	(0.284)
R squared	0.289	0.245	0.134	0.132	0.109	0.144
F Statistic	7.356	5.869	2.798	2.858	2.302	3.154
Deg of Freedom	on 17 and 307	on 17 and 307	on 17 and 307	on 17 and 320	on 17 and 319	on 17 and 319
AIC	620.737	586.346	626.658	724.982	688.924	742.442

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