Getting Support from your Colleagues: Bill Reintroduction in the U.S. House

Fred Gui[*] Yu Ouyang[†] Leo Yang Yang[‡]

August, 2024

Preliminary Draft. Comments are welcome.

Abstract

What happens to bills that do not become laws in a given Congress? Which of these bills are reintroduced in the next Congress, and why? Answering these questions is increasingly important, as it becomes ever more difficult for a bill to advance through all legislative stages and become law. In this paper, we propose a theory of bill reintroduction from a utility perspective. Building on the premise that most Members of Congress (MCs) have policy incentives and seek to be cost-efficient, we posit that MCs value both the extent and intensity of external support when making the reintroduction decisions. Specifically, MCs are more likely to reintroduce bills with a higher number of cosponsors. In addition, they prioritize support from copartisans and members of the bill's referred committee, viewing it as more intense and valuable. Using a text reuse

[*]Assistant Professor, Louisiana State University

[†]Associate Professor, Purdue University Northwest

[‡]Research Assistant Professor, Hong Kong Baptist University

approach, we analyze all bills introduced in the House of Representatives from 2003 to 2019 and find strong evidence to support these arguments. Our findings deepen the understanding of the dynamics behind legislation and provide insights into the internal workings of the U.S. House.

Keywords: bill reintroduction, cosponsorship, co-partisan support, referred committee

Introduction

In recent years, it's become common to see news articles labeling a particular Congress as the latest "do-nothing" Congress.[1] During the 116th Congress, only 214 bills, or 2.36%, were enacted into law, and this rate dropped further to 2.05% in the 117th Congress. When the legislative productivity of the past two decades is compared to that of the historically do-nothing Congress (the 80th), it's clear that no Congress in the 21st century has achieved even half the rate of the 80th. These bills will be considered "dead" by the end of the Congress, but many MCs will reintroduce the failed bills in the new Congress. For example, Rep. John Conyers, Jr. (D-Michigan) introduced the *Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act* back-to-back for nearly thirty years, beginning in the 101st Congress (1989-1991) and continuing until his retirement in the 115th Congress (2017-2019). And, the practice of reintroducing bills is no exception to this particular bill, with many other bills such as the *Voter Empowerment Act* (now as the *John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act*) and the *Redistricting Reform Act* also being reintroduced multiple times in different Congresses.

Despite the growing trend of more bills becoming "dead" and the common practice of bill reintroduction among Members of Congress (hereafter MCs), we know relatively little about whether and which "dead" bills will be reintroduced by re-elected MCs in a new Congress.[2] Our argument begins with the utility perspective, positing that bills that already have some support from other MCs are more likely to be reintroduced.[3] MCs value their

[1]For example, see Desilver (2021) about the 117th Congress at Pew Research, and Lehmann (2024) about the 118th Congress at *the Nation*.

[2]See Gelman (2024) for one notable exception. In this paper, he uncovers how MCs' internal characters such as issue expertise and agenda-setting powers impact the fate of bills.

[3]An important assumption here is that MCs introduce bills primarily for policymaking purposes. We acknowledge, however, that a significant number of bills today are introduced for position-taking purposes (Lee, 2016; Gelman, 2020, 2024).

legislative accomplishments and must prioritize their limited legislative agenda space. Bills that have garnered some level of support or interest from colleagues are more likely to navigate the legislative process successfully, providing MCs with an incentive to include them again on their agendas. Furthermore, we emphasize the need to incorporate intensity into our analyses. We argue that MCs will differentiate between the support they receive from copartisans and out-partisans. In an era of increasing polarization, support from out-partisans can be unpredictable and less reliable. Risk-averse MCs, therefore, place greater value on the support of their copartisans. Additionally, we contend that MCs value the level of support coming from the relevant committee, as most bills fail to advance beyond the committee stage. A high level of committee support signals a greater likelihood of a bill reaching the floor, making it a valuable indicator of potential legislative success.

We test our theory by analyzing the official titles of all bills introduced in the House between 2003 and 2019 (108th through the 115th Congresses). We construct a matrix containing nearly 280,000 pairs of bills and calculate the Jaccard similarity score for these pairs. In total, we identify 35,081 bills that could belong to the universe of reintroduced bills, and of these, 9,576 (or 27.3%) are actually reintroduced in the next Congress.[4] Using a two-way fixed effects model (with Congress and MC fixed effects), we find that bills with more cosponsors are positively associated with the likelihood of being reintroduced. A one standard deviation increase in the value of cosponsors (34.2) corresponds to a 3.4% increase in the probability of bills being reintroduced. Furthermore, we find that not all cosponsors are equally important, with the impact of co-partisan cosponsors more obvious than that of the out-partisan cosponsors. Having more co-partisan cosponsors produces positive impact on the likelihood of bill reintroduction, while the number of out-partisan cosponsors has no

[4]The total number is smaller than the sum of all bills introduced because bills introduced by last-term MCs or those that become law cannot enter the universe of potential reintroduced bills. This number is also comparable to the findings of Gelman (2024), whose study, using different cutpoints, found a range of reintroduction rate of 23 to 41 percent.

impact on the chance of reintroduction (sometimes even a negative impact). A one standard deviation increase in the number of co-partisan cosponsors is associated with a 4% increase in the likelihood of reintroduction. **Haven't got time to collect the committee infor, and will add this part later on**

We make a number of contributions to the research literature. First, We contribute to the understanding of

Theoretical Expectations

With respect to the importance of colleague support on the likelihood of bill reintroduction, our theoretical expectations are based on the likelihood that (a) MCs aim to be cost-effective in legislating, (b) cosponsorship serves as a credible signal of support, and (c) the intensity of that support can vary.

One major assumption driving such expectations is that MCs are tasked with managing multiple responsibilities, each demanding considerable effort and often involving difficult trade-offs (Mayhew, 2004; Guenther and Searle, 2019). MCs, especially those not in the leadership, have very limited time and resources on lawmaking (Curry, 2015; Gelman, 2024). In addition, increasingly so, MCs need to allocate more of their time to fundraising (Lee, 2016), as the average cost of a congressional election has nearly tripled from 2000 to 2020 (OpenSecrets, 2024). Detailed guidance provided to new MCs by the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee contextualize this point: on a typical day, MCs should spend more than five hours calling and contacting donors, leaving less than four hours left for committee activities, lawmaking, and constituent services (Grim and Siddiqui, 2013; Master, 2016).

Despite facing competing demands on their time, MCs still aim to maintain a minimum level of legislative productivity (Adler and Wilkerson, 2013; Volden and Wiseman, 2014).[5]

[5] As Adler and Wilkerson (2013) find, these competing demands have led to a significant number of bills being introduced during the first session of Congress, suggesting a strategic front-loading of legislative

https://doi.org/10.33774/apsa-2025-f67st ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3716-6974

Specifically, they seek to have at least some of their introduced bills become law, or at the very least, advance to later stages of the legislative process.[6] This pursuit of effective lawmaking is driven not only by MCs' personal goals but also by the demands of their constituents. Constituents are interested in their MC's legislative performance, as perceived by the MC, particularly when they have access to information about these activities (Butler et al., 2023).[7] As Fenno aptly puts it: "To the extent possible, even if it requires a bit of imagination, members will picture themselves as effective users of insider power" (Fenno, 1978). Therefore, although the exact impact of an MC's lawmaking performance on electoral success is not entirely clear-cut, nearly every MC dedicates some effort to legislating.[8]"

Another important premise is that legislating is costly, whereas bill reintroduction is relatively inexpensive. As suggested by Schiller (1995), lawmaking involves three types of costs: resource, opportunity, and political costs. As neatly categorized by Gelman (2024), MCs bear two forms of costs in bill introduction: policy and political. Policy costs are associated with an MC's effort to develop ideas and translate those into legislative text, while political costs refer to an MC's efforts to build coalitions and engage with constituents. Consequently, a typical MC will have a legislative portfolio of only a low double-digit number of bills. For example, in the 117th Congress, the median number of bills sponsored was 19, with a mean of 21. Hence, an MC's decision about what type of bills to draft and which bills to include (and maintain) in their legislative agenda often reflects careful deliberation behind closed doors. An MC cannot develop a portfolio covering all subjects, and now approximately

initiatives to navigate the constraints of reduced lawmaking time. Another trend is that MCs are increasingly relying on congressional staff for assistance in lawmaking (Gui, 2021; Ommundsen, 2023).

[6]Although Speakers of the House sometimes do not sponsor bills, they can influence the legislative process through other means.

[7]Constituents also help define or limit the scope of an MC's potential legislative agenda (Bernhard and Sulkin, 2018). For instance, an MC representing a majority-Black district would not support bills that restrict civil rights, as this would contradict their representative role.

[8]Approximately 1% of MCs are inactive in terms of lawmaking and do not sponsor any bills.

one-third of MCs are policy specialists—those who have highly focused agendas and have developed expertise in specific issue areas (Bernhard and Sulkin, 2018).[9] Additionally, it takes time for an MC to cultivate such expertise, and that expertise must be recognized by other MCs to be effective (Volden and Wiseman, 2014).[10] In contrast, reintroducing a bill is relatively inexpensive, as MCs do not need to incur the same policy and political costs again; they may only need to make minor modifications.[11]

Cosponsorship and Bill Reintroduction

As it is common for bills not to be enacted during the Congress in which they are proposed, a significant number of bills on the MC's current legislative agenda may not be purely "original".[12] As defined by the Library of Congress, these bills that fail to pass before the conclusion of a congressional term are considered "dead" at the end of the Congress. MCs can determine and reintroduce some of these "dead" bills in the new Congress.

As noted above, MCs need to legislate strategically to achieve effective lawmaking.[13] When dealing with multiple bills from the last Congress, MCs often rely on cues from their

[9]For instance, Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY), whose husband was killed and son injured in a mass shooting, focused her legislative efforts on gun control after taking office, earning her the reputation of being Congress's "fiercest gun control advocate."

[10]See Volden and Wiseman (2014) for a detailed discussion on Rep. Mark Udall (D-CO) and his reputation in environmental protection and conservation issues.

[11]Gelman (2024) points out that bill reintroduction is not entirely cost-free, as MCs still need to cover maintenance costs, such as demonstrating that the policy in the bill remains relevant or increasing its support base.

[12]We classify a bill as original if the MC has never raised an identical version of that bill in the previous Congress or Congresses. See Data section for more information on how we define original and reintroduced bills.

[13]It is worth noting that some bills are introduced primarily for messaging purposes (Lee, 2016; Gelman, 2020), but many are introduced with genuine policymaking intentions.

peers to gauge the likelihood of a bill progressing through the legislative process. The number of cosponsors serves as a critical indicator of the support base for a bill.[14]

Cosponsorship signals a strong level of commitment and support for a bill (Canon, 1999; Koger, 2003; Harward and Moffett, 2010). As (Canon, 1999, p. 191) puts it: "A member...who sponsors or cosponsors the legislation cares more intensely about the bill than does a member who only supports it through their vote."[15] Consequently, other MCs are unlikely to change their position on an identical bill they have already supported through cosponsorship. Equally important, cosponsorship provides agenda-setters (often party leaders) with low-cost information about the political viability of a bill (Koger, 2003). Party leaders, seeking to avoid wasting precious agenda space and time, use the number of cosponsors as a quick indicator of a bill's potential transaction costs. Moreover, the number of cosponsors also reflects the bill's significance to the sponsor, who often must actively solicit support from peers to garner cosponsorship.[16] Therefore, if an MC introduces a bill primarily to send a message, knowing it is likely to fail, they will typically make less effort to lobby their peers for support, and such bills will likely have fewer cosponsors. This discussion leads to our first hypothesis:

Consponsorship Hypothesis: *MCs are more likely to reintroduce bills associated with more cosponsors than bills with fewer cosponsors.*

---

[14]This statement is supported by the high re-election rates of MCs, which have consistently remained around 85% or higher, often exceeding 90%, in recent elections (OpenSecrets, 2024).

[15]Curry and Roberts (2023) underscores the impact of interpersonal relationships between MCs and their staff on cosponsorship decisions, highlighting the deeply ingrained nature of these dynamics.

[16](Koger, 2003, p. 229) mentions that MCs often make presentations to their colleagues in relevant subcommittees to encourage them to become cosponsors.

Cosponsorship Intensity: Partisanship and Committee

With the increasing level of polarization, the divergence between the Democratic and Republican MCs are widening (Druckman, Peterson and Slothuus, 2013). While Koger (2003) notes that bills with bipartisan cosponsors are more likely to gain agenda space, the reality reflects a more skewed distribution in cosponsor composition and tightened agenda control along partisan lines (Cox and McCubbins, 2005; Harbridge, 2015; Ballard, 2022). As Bindner (2023) observes, most cosponsors tend to be from the same party as the bill's sponsor. For those bills that do garner bipartisan support, MCs generally feel more secure with backing from their own party members compared to support from the opposing party. This disparity stems from the significant ideological divides, especially at the elite level, highlighted by McCarty (2019). Cross-party cosponsorship may not necessarily indicate genuine policy alignment but rather reflect external pressures, such as constituent demands or the prevailing political climate. These external motivators, unlike intrinsic policy preferences, are often variable, introducing risk and unpredictability.[17] Additionally, as Gelman (2024) suggests, decisions regarding bill reintroduction are linked not only to the perceived benefits but also to the maintenance costs, particularly those related to coalition maintenance, which are typically lower when cosponsors are co-partisans. Consequently, from a risk-averse standpoint, MCs are inclined to approach out-party support with skepticism, preferring the stability and ideological consistency of their own party members.

Along with information on a cosponsor's party affiliation, another vital piece of information pertains to the committee assignments of those cosponsors. Legislative gridlock is evident not only in the low success rate of bills becoming laws but also at earlier legislative stages. For instance, in the 117th Congress, only 11.4% of introduced bills were reported out of committee, with most bills effectively being "killed" at this stage (Ballard,

[17] Following the theory of positive agenda control, the majority party in the House can effectively manage and influence nearly all legislative actions. Therefore, we can expect the impact of copartisan cosponsors to be more pronounced when they belong to the majority party (Aldrich, 2011)

2022). Highlighting the distinction between the committee stage (pre-floor) and the floor stage showcases variations in attention and transparency between these two legislative stages (Krehbiel, 1992). Once a bill reaches the floor, the number of participants involved increases significantly, and roll-call votes at this stage attract more attention from the media and the public (Curry and Lee, 2020).[18] Therefore, there is a significant increase in potential benefits if a bill can advance beyond the committee stage. Recognizing this, MCs are more likely to support bills that have sufficient backing from the referred committee. Hence, based upon the differences in terms of support intensity, we propose our second and third hypotheses:

Partisanship Hypothesis: *MCs place greater value on the support from copartisan cosponsors compared to outpartisan cosponsors, with the positive impact of copartisan cosponsors on bill reintroduction being more pronounced.*

Committee Hypothesis: *MCs place greater value on the support from cosponsors who hold seats on the committees to which the bill is referred. The impact of committee cosponsors on the likelihood of bill reintroduction is more pronounced than non-committee cosponsors.*

Data

Using the *Congressional Bills Project*, we construct a matrix of 278,693 bill pairs covering all bills introduced between the 108th and 115th Congresses (2003 to 2019). Because we are interested in the likelihood of a bill being reintroduced by the same MC, these pairs focus on bills sponsored by the same MC in different Congresses.[19] In addition, in order to effectively reduce the size of the matrix and to facilitate the textual comparison process, we compare

[18] Additionally, for purposes of message transmission and credit claiming, party leaders and MCs emphasize their roll-call votes to the public.

[19] In very rare situations, a bill may also be reintroduced by a different MC. For example, after Rep. Lewis's death, the more recent version of the *Voter Empowerment Act* was introduced by Rep. Terri Sewell (D-AL). In this paper, we do not examine the reintroduction of bills by different MCs.

only bills that belong to the same major topics.[20] For example, Rep. Lewis first introduced the *Voter Empowerment Act of 2012* (HR5799-112) in the 112th Congress, and this bill falls under the topic of civil rights under the CAP classification. Therefore, we compare this bill to all other bills in the 113th through 115th Congresses that belong to the same topics, and we come up with 10 pairs, as in the 113th Congress there are two bills under this major topic, in the 114th Congress there are five bills under this same topic, and in the 115th Congress there are three bills under this topic.

After defining the scope of pairs, we compare the official titles of of bill A and B. When bills are introduced, there will be an official title section, which often include one sentence or a brief paragraph succinctly describing the main intent or objective of the bill, and such titles (summaries) will allow other legislators and interested parties to quickly grasp the purpose of the bill, and this summary is included in the *Congressional Bills Project*. For instance, the *Voter Empower Act of 2012* starts with the sentence: "To modernize voter registration, promote access to voting for individuals with disabilities, protect the ability of individuals to exercise the right to vote in elections for Federal office, and for other purposes." This opening sentence outlines the intent of this bill, highlighting efforts to streamline voter registration process, improve accessibility for voters with disabilities, and ensure the protection of voting rights in federal elections.

Before calculating similarity scores, the text is first pre-processed by removing all capitalization, punctuation, and numbers. This prepares the text for the tokenization process, which is the next step in preparing the data for similarity measurement. In this case, tokenization involves breaking down the official titles into sequences of words, or n-grams, to create chunks of text that will be used for comparison. The specific method of tokenization

[20] Research assistants at the *Congressional Bills Project* have read the bills and identified the major and minor topics of each bill according to the classification of the *Comparative Agenda Project* (CAP) codebook, which divides bills into 23 major topics such as civil rights, macroeconomics, health, and agriculture. More information on the CAP classification can be found at https://www.comparativeagendas.net/pages/master-codebook.

used here generates trigrams. We then compare the jaccard similarity score of bill A and B in a specific pair.[21] The Jaccard similarity is the division of the size of the intersection and the size of the union in the pair, and scores between 0 and 1, with values closer to 1 meaning higher similarity.[22]

$$J(A,B) = \frac{|A \cap B|}{|A \cup B|} \tag{1}$$

In our analysis, we adhere to a stringent criterion for bill similarity, counting a bill as reintroduced at time t+1 only if it achieves a Jaccard similarity score of 1. This rigorous standard is due to the relatively sparse information in bill summaries. Discrepancies based on this limited data suggest potential for greater inconsistencies in the full text. We have a universe of 35,081 bills introduced in the 108th through the 114th Congress.[23] Of these, 9,576 bills (27.3%) will be reintroduced in the next Congress. Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) stands out for having reintroduced the highest number of bills, totaling 147, a figure surpassing the total bill introductions by the median legislator within the same time frame. Also, bill reintroduction is a widespread strategy adopted by different MCs, with more than 96% (716/743) of MCs having employed it at least once. A notable case is Rep. Robert Menendez (D-NJ), who, despite none of his nine bills from the 108th Congress becoming

[21] Unlike methods that create overlapping sequences, this approach does not overlap. For an official title that contains six words, it results in two distinct trigrams: the first trigram comprises the first three words, and the second trigram consists of the last three words, 4-6.

[22] The summary for HR259-108 is "To secure the Federal voting rights of persons who have been released from incarceration." and the summary for HR1300-109 is "To ensure the Federal voting rights of persons who have been released from incarceration.", and both bills are sponsored by Rep. John Conyers Jr. (D-MI) under the topic of civil rights. After tokenization, both texts can be divided into five non-overlapping trigrams. Four out of the five tri-grams are the same, with the difference being the starting tri-grams: "to secure the" and "to ensure the". Therefore, the size of the intersection is 4 and the size of the union is 6, giving a score of 0.667.

[23] We need to compare bills at t+1 and t, so we cannot include bills in the 115th Congress.

law, reintroduced all of them in the 109th Congress.

Before turning to our model estimate, we examine our data and find a discernible pattern in the number of cosponsors between bills that were reintroduced and those that were not. Figure 1 illustrates the trend in average cosponsors for bills throughout our study period. Notably, and in alignment with the *Cosponsorship Hypothesis*, the average number of cosponsors for reintroduced bills (represented by the solid line) consistently exceeds that for bills that did not progress (indicated by the dashed line) across all Congresses. Moreover, consistent with, but by no means confirming the *Partisanship Hypothesis*, we find a positive correlation in between the number of a bill's copartisan cosponsors and its chance of getting reintroduced (see the bivariate plot in Appendix: Figure A1). No such pattern (or even a modest negative correlation) is found in between the number of a bill's outpartisan cosponsors and its chance of reintroduction (also see Appendix: Figure A1).

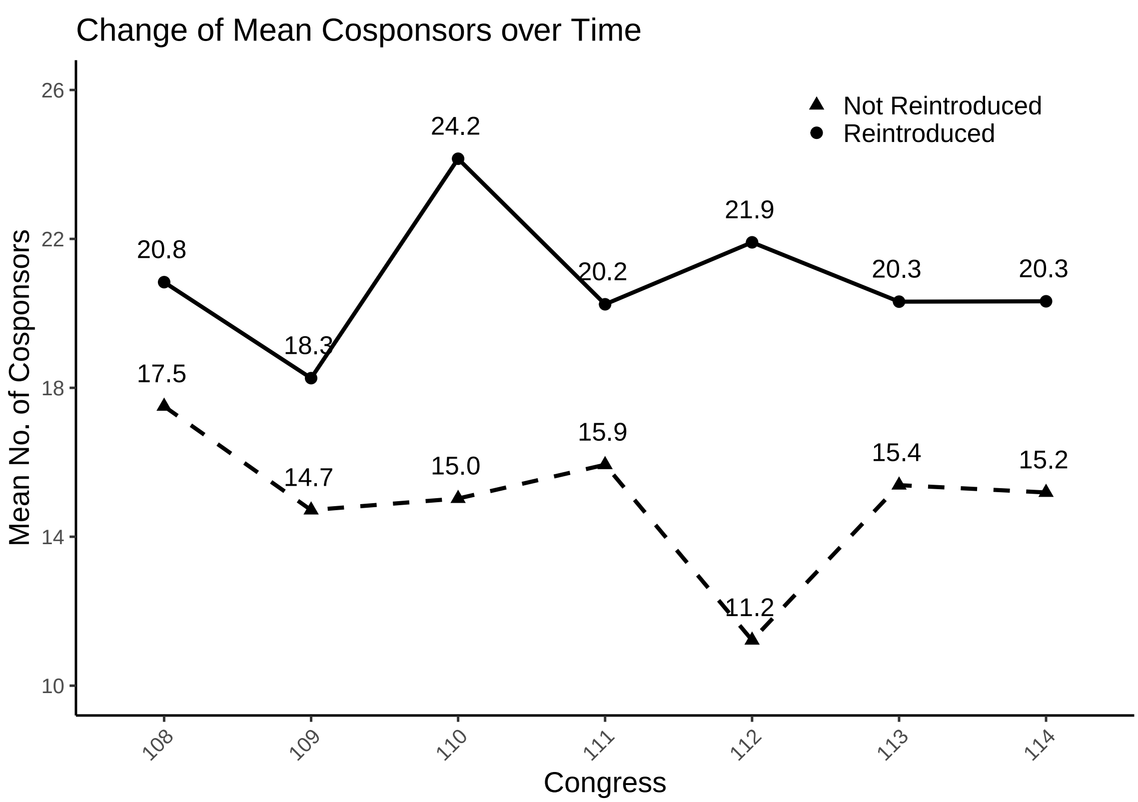

Figure 1: Change of Mean Cosponsors: 108th-114th Congress

https://doi.org/10.33774/apsa-2025-f67st ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3716-6974

Models and Results

We begin by examining the *Cosponsorship Hypothesis*. To do so, we estimate a two-way fixed effects regression (equation (2)). In that equation, c indicates Congress while i indicates MC, α_c is a Congress fixed effects (FE) and α_i is the MC FE. Congress FE pick up the impact of each Congress (such as polarization level and legislative climate), while ME FE denotes the time-invariant MC characteristics that might be relevant for his or her decision on bill reintroduction, such as contrasting legislative style and issue expertise. In the equation, we clustered the standard errors at MC level. X_{ic} is a vector that includes control variables that could also affect an MC's decision to reintroduce bills, such as an MC's congressional position, committee assignment and legislative productivity. In Table A1, we provide a complete list of our control variables.

$$\text{Bill Reintroduction}_{ic} = \alpha_i + \alpha_c + \beta_1 \text{No. of Cosponsors}_{ic} + \Gamma X_{ic} + \varepsilon_{ic}, \tag{2}$$

Results are reported in table 1: Model 1. Consistent with our *Cosponsorship Hypothesis*, we find a positive relationship between the total number of cosponsors and the likelihood that a bill will be reintroduced. Using the estimate from Model 1, having one additional cosponsor on the bill increases the likelihood that the bill will be reintroduced by 0.098% (0.00098). While this effect may seem extremely small, the mean probability of bill reintroduction is 0.273, so this increase still represents a 0.36% increase from the baseline. To provide a clearer substantive interpretation of the regression results, I follow Mummolo and Peterson (2018) and consider the plausible variations in treatment when using fixed effects estimates to describe the substantive significance of the results. In Model 1, a one standard deviation increase (34.2) in the number of cosponsors is associated with a 0.035 increase in the probability that the bill will be reintroduced, and such an increase represents a 12.8% increase from the baseline.[24]

[24] As the outcome variable on bill reintroduction is binary, in Table **??**, we present the regression results

Having established the relationship between cosponsor size and the probability of bill reintroduction, we turn to the *Partisanship Hypothesis*, which examines the effect of outpartisan vs. copartisan cosponsors. To test this hypothesis empirically, we replace the number of cosponsors in equation (2) with the number of copartisan cosponsors and outpartisan cosponsors, keeping all other controls intact. As shown in Table 1: Model 2, we find a positive association between the number of copartisan cosponsors and bill reintroduction. Having one additional copartisan corresponds to a 0.0015 (0.15%) increase in the likelihood of bills being reintroduced, and a one standard deviation increase (26) corresponds to a 3.9% increase, a 14.3% increase from the baseline. Meanwhile, the coefficient on the number of outpartisans is negative (not significant at the 0.05 level).[25]

---

using the Logit estimations, and we find analogous results.

[25]In Table **??**, we replace the number of cosponsors with the logged transformed values, and similar results to Table 1 are shown in this Table.

Table 1: Cosponsoring and Bill Reintroduction: 108th-114th Congress

	Dependent variable:	
	Bill Reintroduction	
	Model 1	Model 2
No. of Cosponsors	0.001***	
	(0.0001)	
No. of Copartisan Cosponsors		0.002***
		(0.0001)
No. of Outpartisan Cosponsors		−0.0004
		(0.0003)
Pass House	0.032***	0.032***
	(0.012)	(0.012)
Majority Party Status	0.073	0.071
	(0.065)	(0.065)
No. of Sponsored Bills	0.005***	0.005***
	(0.0004)	(0.0004)
Other MC-level Controls	Yes	Yes
Congress FE	Yes	Yes
MC FE	Yes	Yes
N	35,081	35,081
Adjusted R^2	0.070	0.071

Note: Robust standard errors clustered at MC level are reported in parentheses. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.001.

Not surprisingly, we find the coefficient *Pass House* to be positive and significant in both Models 1 and 2. This finding is consistent with the logic of our theory according to which those bills that have already advanced to later legislative stages are more likely to have received some support from colleagues (and also likely to be important), and reintroducing those bills is cost-effective and risk-averse. In addition, MCs with high legislative productivity are more likely to reintroduce bills than other MCs.

In the next step, instead of bill summaries, like Gelman, we plan to compare sections, and potentially expand the dataset a little bit.

Conclusion and Implications

https://doi.org/10.33774/apsa-2025-f67st **ORCID:** https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3716-6974

References

Adler, E Scott and John D Wilkerson. 2013. *Congress and the politics of problem solving.* Boston, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Aldrich, John H. 2011. *Why Parties?: a second look.* University of Chicago Press.

Ballard, Andrew O. 2022. "Bill text and agenda control in the US congress." *The Journal of Politics* 84(1):335–350.

Bernhard, William and Tracy Sulkin. 2018. *Legislative style.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Bindner, Conor. 2023. "The Lugar Center/McCourt School Bipartisan Index.".

Butler, Daniel M, Adam G Hughes, Craig Volden and Alan E Wiseman. 2023. "Do constituents know (or care) about the lawmaking effectiveness of their representatives?" *Political Science Research and Methods* 11(2):419–428.

Canon, David T. 1999. *Race, Redistricting, and Representation: The Unintended Consequences of Black Majority Districts.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Cox, Gary W and Mathew D McCubbins. 2005. *Setting the agenda: Responsible party government in the US House of Representatives.* Cambridge University Press.

Curry, James M. 2015. *Legislating in the Dark: Information and Power in the House of Representatives.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Curry, James M and Frances E Lee. 2020. *The limits of party: Congress and lawmaking in a polarized era.* University of Chicago Press.

Curry, James M and Jason M Roberts. 2023. "Interpersonal Relationships and Legislative Collaboration in Congress." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 48(2):333–369.

Desilver, Draw. 2021. "Congress is off to a slow start in 2021, much as it has been in previous years." *Pew Research Center* .
URL: https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2021/08/13/congress-is-off-to-a-slow-start-in-2021-much-as-it-has-been-in-previous-years/

Druckman, James N, Erik Peterson and Rune Slothuus. 2013. "How elite partisan polarization affects public opinion formation." *American political science review* 107(1):57–79.

Fenno, Richard F. 1978. *Home style: House members in their districts*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company.

Gelman, Jeremy. 2020. *Losing to Win: Why Congressional Majorities Play Politics Instead of Make Laws*. University of Michigan Press.

Gelman, Jeremy. 2024. "The Deaths of Ideas in Congress." *Political Research Quarterly* p. 10659129241246003.

Grim, Ryan and Sabrina Siddiqui. 2013. "Call Time for Congress Shows How Fundraising Dominates Bleak Work Life." *Huffington Post* .
URL: https://www.huffpost.com/entry/call-time-congressional-fundraising_n_2427291#:~:text=Several%20members%20of%20Congress%20interviewed,considered%20for%20a%20Senate%20seat.

Guenther, Scott M and David M Searle. 2019. "Limited time, limited resources: trade-offs in congressional earmarking and policymaking." *American Politics Research* 47(4):832–851.

Gui, Fred. 2021. "Minority Staff and Bill Sponsorship in the US House." *Available at SSRN 3556999* .

Harbridge, Laurel. 2015. *Is bipartisanship dead?: Policy agreement and agenda-setting in the House of Representatives*. Cambridge University Press.

Harward, Brian M and Kenneth W Moffett. 2010. "The calculus of cosponsorship in the US Senate." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 35(1):117–143.

Koger, Gregory. 2003. "Position taking and cosponsorship in the US House." *Legislative studies quarterly* 28(2):225–246.

Krehbiel, Keith. 1992. *Information and legislative organization*. University of Michigan Press.

Lee, Frances E. 2016. *Insecure majorities: Congress and the perpetual campaign*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Lehmann, Chris. 2024. "The New Do-Nothing Congress." *The Nation* .
URL: *https://www.thenation.com/article/politics/do-nothing-congress/*

Master, Cyra. 2016. "Fundraising Demands Turning Lawmakers into Telemarketers." *The Hill* .
URL: *https://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/news/277462-60-minutes-fundraising-demands-turning-lawmakers-into/*

Mayhew, David R. 2004. *Congress: The electoral connection*. New Haven, CT: Yale university press.

McCarty, Nolan. 2019. *Polarization: What everyone needs to know®*. Oxford University Press.

Mummolo, Jonathan and Erik Peterson. 2018. "Improving the interpretation of fixed effects regression results." *Political Science Research and Methods* 6(4):829–835.

Ommundsen, Emily Cottle. 2023. "The Institution's Knowledge: Congressional Staff Experience and Committee Productivity." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 48(2):273–303.

OpenSecrets. 2024. "Cost of Election.".
URL: *https://www.opensecrets.org/elections-overview/cost-of-election*

Schiller, Wendy J. 1995. "Senators as political entrepreneurs: Using bill sponsorship to shape legislative agendas." *American journal of political science* pp. 186–203.

Volden, Craig and Alan E Wiseman. 2014. *Legislative effectiveness in the United States congress: The lawmakers*. Boston, MA: Cambridge university press.

Online Appendix

0.1 Full List of Control Variables

Table A1: List of Controls

Variable Names	Measurement
Population (logged)	Logged transformed value of a city's population in a given year. Data from the American Community Survey (ACS).
Median Income	Adjusted median household income in 2023 dollars. Data from the ACS.
Revenue (Logged)	Logged transformed value of a city's total revenue collected in a given year. Data from the Census of Government.
Expenditure (Logged)	Logged transformed value of a city's total expenditures spent in a given year. Data from the Census of Government.
White Residents Ratio	Ratio of white residents in a given year. Data from the ACS.
Black Residents Ratio	Ratio of black residents in a given year. Data from the ACS.
Unemployment Rate	Ratio of adult residents who are unemployed in a given year. Data from the ACS.
Poverty Ratio	Ratio of residents who live under the poverty line. Data from the ACS.
Gini Index	Measurement of a city's wealth gap. Data from the ACS.
Senior	Ratio of senior residents (age ¿ 65). Data from the ACS.
Legislative effectiveness score	LES score of the corresponding MC or MCs (average). Data from the Center for Effective Lawmaking (CEL).
DW-Nominate Score	First dimension nominate score of the corresponding MC or MCs (average).
Ideological Distance to the Floor Median	Absolute distance of the floor median nominate score and the first dimension nominate score of the corresponding MC or MCs (average).
Committee Chair	Scores 1 if an MC is a committee chair in a given year, zero otherwise. For cities associated with multiple MCs, it is the average score.
Subcommittee Chair	Scores 1 if an MC is a subcommittee chair in a given year, zero otherwise. For cities associated with multiple MCs, it is the average score.
Vote Share	MC's or MCs' (average) vote share in the preceding election.
Power Committee	Scores 1 if an MC has a seat in the influential committee as defined by **?**, zero otherwise. For cities associated with multiple MCs, it is the average score.

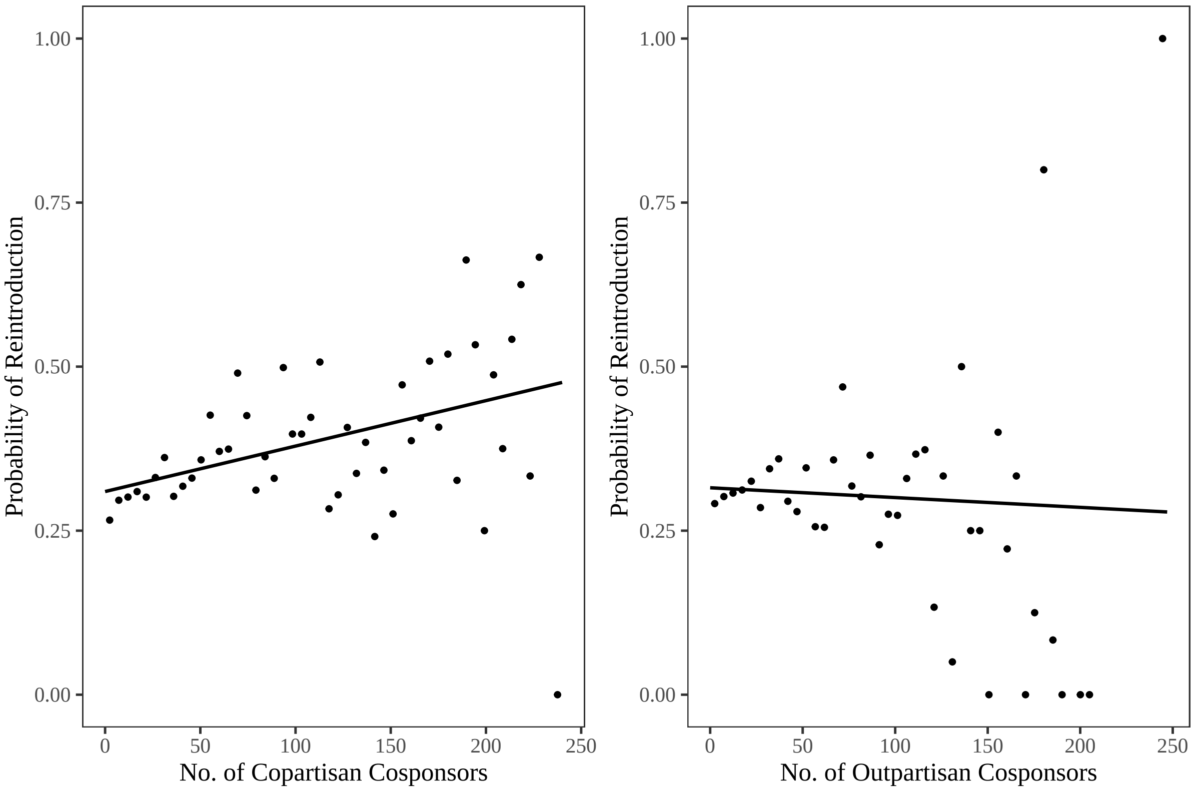

Figure A1: Bivariate Plot: No. of Cosponsors and the Chance of Reintroduction

https://doi.org/10.33774/apsa-2025-f67st **ORCID:** https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3716-6974