

Understanding the Resume:
The Impact of Occupation on Policy Entrepreneurship in
the North Carolina State Legislature

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Abstract

This thesis examines the impact occupation has on policy entrepreneurship in the North Carolina State Legislature. This study examines the frequency at which legislators with different occupational backgrounds sponsor bills in their corresponding occupational policy fields. Policy categories are broken down into four female, four male, and one gender neutral category to ascertain whether the “gender effect” often seen in legislatures is in fact an “occupation effect.” This study finds that the difference in bill sponsorship was statistically significant only for the four female policy groups but not the male and control groups. Workers coming from female policy categories tended to sponsor more bills than non-workers. Legislators from the “female” occupations also tended to sponsor more bills in the other three female policy categories. This pattern was not true of legislators from the “male” occupations. The study concludes that the gender effect is in fact an occupation effect in female policy categories and that legislators coming from female professions behave like “women” regardless of gender.

Introduction

There is burgeoning literature on how gender, race, religion, political party, occupation, and socioeconomic status affect whether a candidate gets elected to public office. Yet there is very little systematic examination of how these indicators predict legislative behavior once in office. The little research that has been done focuses on how men and women differ in policy initiatives. Issues that are traditionally thought of as “masculine” issues include taxes, the economy, defense and security. The general consensus is that women focus on education, welfare, healthcare, and family issues (Dodson and Carroll 1991, Carroll 1994, Carroll 2001). This division accounts for the difference in legislative behavior seen between men and women and helps us begin to understand why such a difference exists. Women, it is argued, tend to be more in-tune with the needs of women and feel a special sense of responsibility to their female constituents. Because women are a minority in state legislatures, female representatives feel that it is their duty to represent the interests of women (given the assumption that women’s interests vary from men’s). Very little consideration has been given to the idea that there might be a more dominant variable that explains why legislators pursue certain policy initiatives.

I offer a different explanation for why women more commonly pursue these “women’s issues” and why some men are described as “acting like women.” The occupations associated with these policy areas are overwhelmingly dominated by female workers. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 71% of all teachers, 92% of all nurses, and 75% of all social workers are women. Occupation, more than duty to female constituents may explain why women are more likely to sponsor and advocate for bills concerning education, welfare, health, and families. A natural interest in these issues may have driven these women to work in these fields, and that interest stayed with them as they moved into public office. Men, though the minority in the

fields, also work in “female” occupations and thus, these men might also have a natural interest in these issues. When these men get elected and serve in the state legislature, they too may be more likely to sponsor and advocate for bills concerning education, welfare, health, and families proving occupation is a driving factor in legislative interests.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, in 2007, 74% of state legislators in North Carolina were male, and 26% were female. Of these state legislators, 33.1% were in business (owners, executives, managers, etc), 19.4% were attorneys, 9.4% were in agriculture, 3.6% were in the medical or science related profession (including engineering), 3.3% were educators, and 3% were employed by the government in various bureaucratic positions (both local and state). Because the North Carolina General Assembly is only part time, the remaining 28.2% of the state legislators were retired and thus could have been in any of these fields. This paper examines whether the legislators who have been involved in each respective occupation pursue policy initiatives in the same field once elected into the legislature. The correlation between a legislator’s occupation and the type of policy proposals he sponsors, endorses, and advocates, offers a new explanation for legislative behavior.

Theory and Literature

Public policy making can be conceptualized as a set of processes: (1) setting the agenda; (2) specifying alternatives; (3) an authoritative choosing among alternatives, expressed through legislative enactment or executive decisions; and (4) implementing the decision or law (Kingdon 1984). Nathan Polsby adds an additional process prior to agenda setting called “initiation” (Polsby 1984). Initiation is “the politics of inventing, winnowing, and finding and gaining adherents for policy alternatives before they are made a part of the program.” Both Kingdon and

Polsby identify actors as an essential factor in public policy making. So then, it begs the question, what drives the actors' policy choices?

Motivations for Policy Initiatives

Policy making actors are commonly referred to as “policy entrepreneurs” (Roberts & King 1991, Weissart 1991, Carter 2004). There are three major explanations for why a politician pursues a particular policy: use and access to avenues to influence policy, exogenous motivations, such as partisan or constituency pressures and endogenous motivations, such as personal belief patterns (Carter 2004). Use and access to avenues to influence policy plays a key role in determining the ability of a politician to pursue a particular policy agenda. Institutional variables account for how legislators' positions within the institution, specifically their committee positions and seniority status, facilitate or constrain their ability to pursue initiatives of interest (Swers 2000). The committee system structures the policy making process in the North Carolina General Assembly. Therefore, those who sit on relevant committees and subcommittees gain important advantages in their areas of jurisdiction.

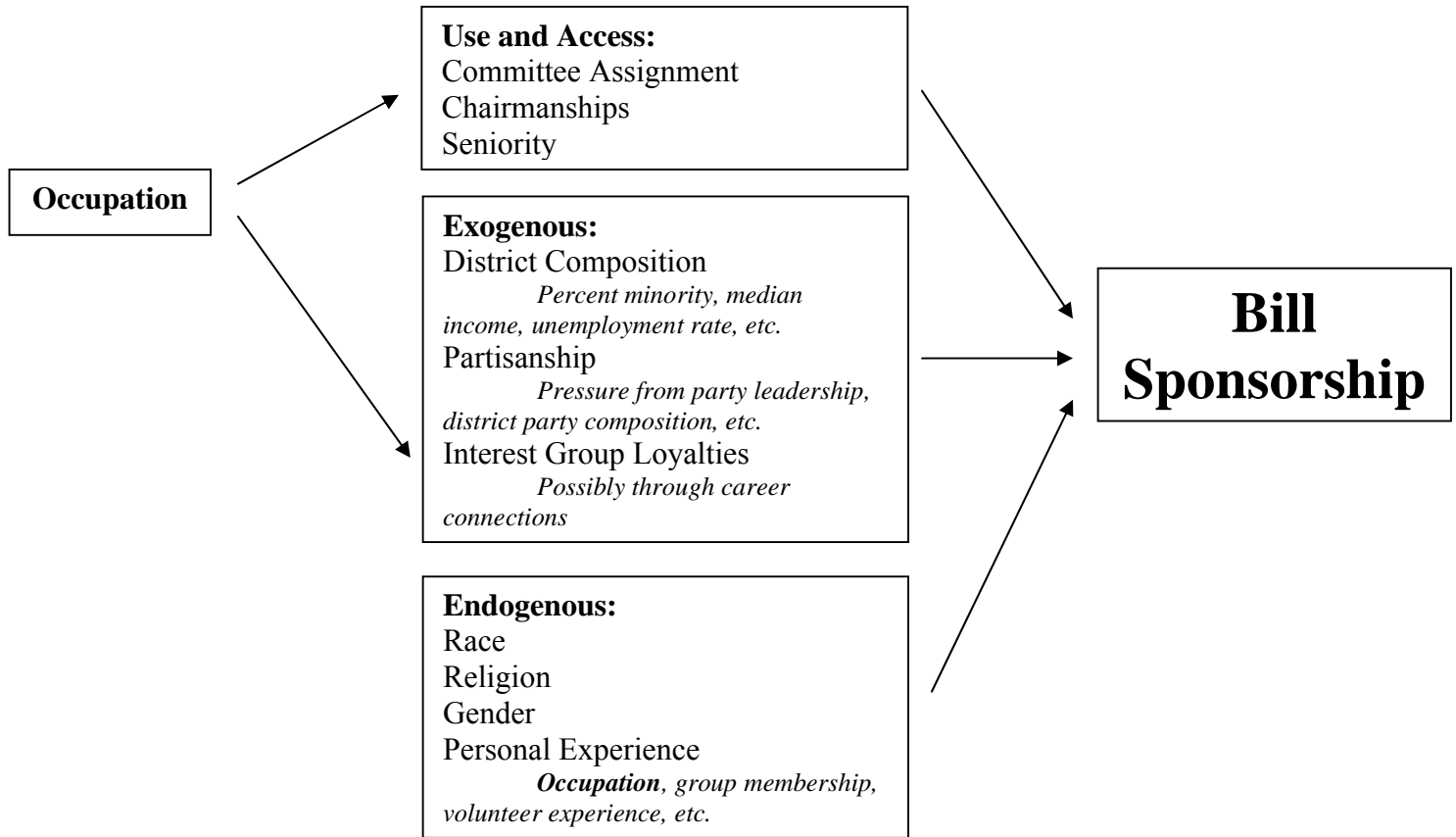
Exogenous motivations such as partisanship, interest group loyalties, and district composition (median household income, the percentage of African-Americans in the district, the percentage of Hispanics, etc.) in the district are generally used to represent district characteristics in studies of legislative behavior (Poole 1988). District composition is relevant because politicians may feel pressure from the constituents to pursue policy issues that benefit them. Members could sponsor bills to demonstrate that they are working for their constituents' interests. Additionally, members may also sponsor bills to appeal to a specific group of voters during an election year, or to immunize themselves against criticism from an opponent.

Therefore, examining these characteristics is crucial whenever trying to say something about legislative behavior.

Endogenous motivations may include race, religion, gender, or personal experience with an issue. A public official's exposure and familiarity with a topic (which could stem from volunteer work, a full-time career, etc.) may motivate him or her to pursue policy initiatives related to that topic. For example, U.S. Senator Christopher Dodd (D-CT) fervently pursued policies aimed at promoting Democratic rule in Latin America in part because of his experience in the Peace Corps in the Dominican Republic (Carter 2004). Occupation is a major form of personal experience and I assume that people choose a career primarily based on their interests.

Other personal belief patterns could be motivated by race, religion, or gender. A public official's race can help explain what drives their policy interests in that a public official with a minority race is more likely to pursue policy initiatives in line with the "minority's interests" (Hero and Tolbert 1996). Religion seems to play a similar role in the electorate's voting behavior (Layman 1997), but few studies have focused on how the policy entrepreneur's religion drives his or her policy initiatives. Gender, however, has been a major focus of several studies in determining which policy issues public officials champion. Figure 1 shows the various explanations for policy initiatives, their relation to occupation, and how they might affect bill sponsorship.

Figure 1: Policy Initiative Motivations



Gender and policy preferences

Many scholars have posited that with the increase in women elected to public office, there will be a greater focus on typical “women’s issues,” (health, education, and welfare). In fact, a number of studies have presented evidence that shows a strong relationship between the numerical representation of women and the attention to women’s issues within legislative bodies (Dodson and Carroll 1991, Carroll 1994, Carroll 2001). Women legislators are more likely to list among their top priority bills legislation relating to education, health, children, the family, or women. Thirty-eight percent of women had at least one bill dealing with these issues compared to only thirteen percent of men. Additionally, ten percent of women had at least one bill on women’s issues among their priorities compared with just three percent of men. Women were

also found to be more likely to act on these issues because women are more likely to serve on committees dealing with health, welfare, and other human services (thirty-nine percent of women serve on these committees vs. twenty-two percent of men). Furthermore, the women sampled are more likely than men to be chairs of these particular committees (ten percent vs. two percent). Women, however, are somewhat less likely than men to give priority to bills primarily concerning business (forty-three percent vs. fifty-nine percent) (Thomas and Welch 1991).

Women are also more likely to be clustered in occupations that correspond to the female policy topics. The overwhelming majority of teachers, nurses, social workers, nursing home attendants, and daycare employees are women (United States Census Bureau). A reasonable assumption therefore is that the majority of legislators who come from these fields will also be women.

Why women pursue “women’s issues”

As women increase their numbers in state the legislature, they are more willing to pursue policy preferences based on gender (Saint-Germain 1989). As more women enter the legislature, women feel a greater sense of belonging and community and are thus more willing to sponsor and champion women’s issues legislation. Before, women felt that they needed to act like the men and were more hesitant to be seen as a legislator focused on women’s issues. A related explanation for women’s increase in willingness to come out in support of “women’s issues,” can be attributed to the role women’s organizations and social networks play in connecting and influencing women legislators (Carroll 2003). Women who belonged to women’s organization or received campaign funds from them were much more likely to work on bills relating to women’s rights.

Alternatively, many scholars have posited that women are more naturally inclined to list a “women’s issue” among their top priorities. The reasons women are attitudinally more predisposed to represent women’s concerns than are their male colleagues are (1) when women were asked about their roles as representatives of groups, the female legislators were more likely to express some sort of commitment to representing women and/or women’s concerns, (2) female officials were more likely than males to perceive strong support from their female constituents and to consider such support a very important—if not more important—re-election constituency, and (3) because of gender, the women feel uniquely qualified to handle the concerns of female constituents (Reingold 1992).

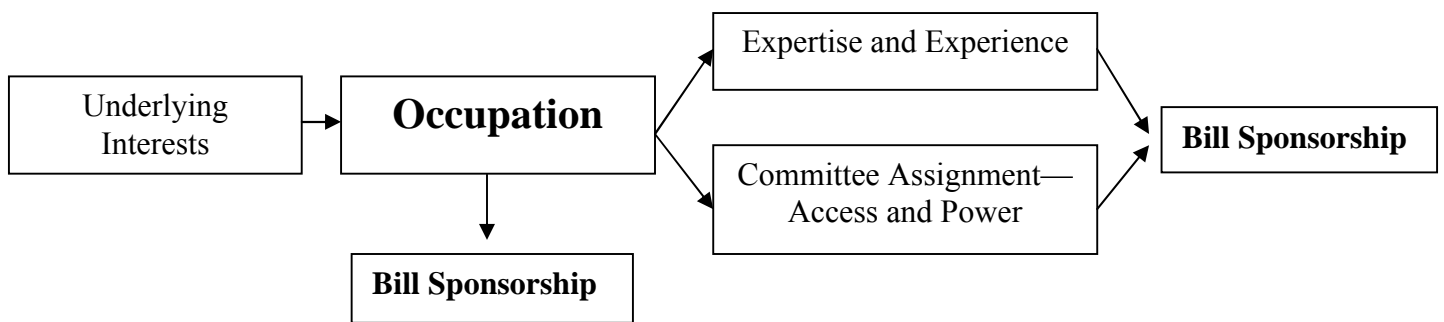
An Alternative Hypothesis

Very little has been written on what constitutes “masculine” issues in legislatures. It stands to reason, however, that if “women’s issues” are health, education, welfare, children, and anything concerning the family, “men’s issues,” are everything else (taxes, economy, defense and security, crime, agriculture, transportation, etc) save for a few policies that might be considered neutral such as the environment. Congresswomen are more likely to vote for women’s issue bills than their male colleagues even when one controls for ideological, partisan, and district factors (Swers 1998). And yet, some of these women’s issue bills pass and so must elicit some male support. Furthermore, we find men both serving on and chairing committees that focus on the typical “women’s issue.” There must be some other factor that helps determine why men choose to sponsor bills in the issue areas now generally defined as “women’s issues.”

I offer that a legislator’s occupation is an explanation for legislative behavior in state legislatures. Women are clustered in female occupations which is why the gender effect comes

forth as an explanation for legislative behavior. Women overwhelmingly dominate the education, healthcare, and social work professions. Thus, the legislators coming from these occupations are more likely to be women. If women are naturally inclined to pursue “women’s issues” and are clustered in “female occupations” than it is possible that the interests are not gendered but are divided by occupation type. Women’s issues can more broadly be defined as issues that deal with social welfare and female occupations also deal with social welfare issues. Thus, it is possible that in determining why legislators pursue certain policies, gender falls into the background and occupation becomes the predominant explanatory variable. Figure 2 illustrates the possible pathways for which occupation may lead to bill sponsorship. Occupation may be the main determinate factor that affects bill sponsorship or it could be the main characteristic that leads to other reasons for policy entrepreneurship such as expertise and committee assignment.

Figure 2: Pathways between legislating and occupation



Occupation may play a number of roles in a legislator’s motivations to sponsor a bill. Career might be the product of the legislator’s underlying interests and the policy initiatives he takes may reflect these interests. For example, if the legislator has always been interested in education issues, he may become an educator or work as an education policy consultant. His

interest in education would have driven his career decisions and then when elected to office, would continue to drive his interest in education policy issues.

Alternatively, legislative interests might be intertwined with career if the legislator developed experience and an expertise in the policy field as he was working. Suppose a legislator developed a great deal of expertise in a particular political issue because he has spent so many years working in that field, he may continue to pursue policy initiatives in that field because it is what he knows best. He may be most inclined to focus on these issues because he knows them best and can speak with a certain degree of authority on what should be done. A legislator's career may have given him a more detailed and exhaustive knowledge of the complexities of the issue, so the legislator decides to continue to focus on that issue once elected to office.

Career might also help determine which committees a legislator is assigned to, which gives the legislator the access to write and influence policy in that field. When handing out committee assignments, the party leadership may take the legislator's career background into account and assume that a legislator will have a greater expertise and interest in a policy issue if his occupation was in the same field. The position on the committee gives the legislator more of an opportunity to become an expert on the topic, write policy, and influence his colleagues. Furthermore, other legislators may defer the writing of legislation in a particular field to those serving on the committee, giving committee members even greater influence in the initiatives taken in the corresponding political issue. Career history may play different roles in different legislators' motivations, but career would still be a strong predictor of legislative behavior. It is my intention to examine the affect career has on the policy initiatives taken by both the male and female state legislators in North Carolina and whether career can explain why some men are "acting" like women in the policy initiatives they take.

Data & Methodology

To examine the connection between career and legislative initiative, I first compiled a list of the State Senators and Representatives in the North Carolina State General Assembly in 2007. I chose North Carolina because its state legislature had more members than most other legislatures and because I live and study in North Carolina. I only examined one state to control for differences between legislatures such as varying number of committees, types of committees, term limits, part time versus full time legislatures, number of constituents per legislator, and other factors that could affect bill sponsorship. By only examining one state, I avoid these issues. I examined policy entrepreneurship on the state level rather than the federal level because a larger variety of occupations filter into state legislatures than into Congress and diversity is necessary to test whether occupation plays a role in policy entrepreneurship. I also chose 2007 because it was the most recent year where district information was available.

There were 174 legislators in total—120 representatives and 50 senators and 4 legislators who served only part of a term due to the death or resignation of a different legislator. The names of all the legislators are listed on the official General Assembly website. I did my analysis using data from all the senators and representatives.

For each legislator, I determined their gender, party, committee assignments, and occupation. I ultimately was trying to determine whether career affects the policy initiatives legislators take, so I assumed that the legislators chose a career in a field that interests them (Farmer 1976, Nauta 2004). I also assumed that legislators pursue policies that interest them. Their careers thus might indicate an interest in that subject and an interest in pursuing policy proposals relating to that field. I coded the legislator's career according the U.S. Census Bureau's occupation coding system (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). If the legislator had several

(more than one) jobs that are unrelated to each other before serving in office, I choose his current occupation or the one he was doing most previous to getting elected. Because the North Carolina State Legislature is only part-time, many legislators are either still working or are retired. Each legislator's career information as well as other biographical information such as gender, party, and committee assignments, is available through their official government website. For any information not listed, I gathered the data by looking through their campaign website or newspaper articles written about the legislator.

Using the Almanac of State Legislative Elections (2007), I gathered information on each district's characteristics. I measured the percentage of the district that is urban, the median household income, and the percentage of the district that is black and Hispanic. I also used a more general percent minority variable. Other factors such as the unemployment rate¹, the percent of the population below the poverty rate, the percent of the population that is school age and over sixty-five, and the percent of the population with at least a bachelor's degree were measured. These variables are controlled because they can influence bill sponsorship. The goal is to measure the significance of career on bill sponsorship, so I must make sure other factors are not influencing legislative behavior. By controlling for all these variables, I can isolate the effect of career choice on the number of bills sponsored.

Each variable adds significance in this analysis because many scholars maintain that differences attributed to gender can be entirely explained by the tendency of women to be elected in districts that are more urban, have a higher percentage of African Americans, and have a lower median household income (Vega 1995). The median household income, the percent of the

¹ The unemployment rate by each state legislative district is not available through the U.S. Census or the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. I approximated this rate by taking the average of all the counties the legislator serves. Though not a perfect estimate, it is the closest possible approximation.

district that is black or Hispanic, unemployment rate, and percent below the poverty rate all can play a role in determining a legislator’s motivations for sponsoring a children and family, aging health, and law and crime bill if the legislator is trying to please his constituents. Additionally, the percent of the population that is school age, the percent of the population over sixty-five, and the percent with at least a bachelor’s degree might also play a role in legislator’s decision to sponsor an education bill so it is important to control for these factors. The independent variables are expected to be different across different models. The variables included are only those that showed a significant correlation with the number of bills sponsored in each policy category. Table 1 delineates each independent variable that was tested for correlation with the dependent variable, the number of bills sponsored.

Table 1: Dependent and Independent Variables

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	
Number of Bills Sponsored	Gender	Committee Assignment
	Party	Leadership Position
	Hispanic (%)	Urban (%)
	African American (%)	Rural (%)
	Over 65 (%)	Below Poverty (%)
	Minority (%)	School Age (%)
	Unemployment Rate	4-Years Degree (%)
	Median Household Income	

The dependent variable, the outcome of interest, is a breakdown of the number of bills each legislator has sponsored in each policy category. Bill sponsorship is an important tool that legislators use in their quest to gain attention to issues and ultimately to see their proposals incorporated into law. Therefore, analysis of bill sponsorships provides important insights about policy interests and goals. In contrast to other legislative activities like floor amending in which restrictive rules governing floor debate can prevent members from offering women’s issue

proposals, representatives have complete control over the number and content of the bills they sponsor (Swers 2000).

There are nine policy categories: education, children and families, health, aging and information technology, law and crime, government operations, transportation, and energy and environment. Using the Policy Agendas Project (2006) hearings codebook, I determined whether the bills each legislator has sponsored falls under one of the nine above categories. Based on cultural stereotypes and gross generalizations presumably shared by most voters (Shames 2003), “women’s” political issues include education, children and families, health, and aging bills.² Information technology, law and crime, government operations, and transportation are considered to be “masculine” issues.³ Energy and environment bills are more ambiguous and do not always have a specific gender association. Each category had a separate column and I indicated how many bills each legislator has sponsored that falls under that category. The dependent variable is the number of bills in each category the legislator sponsored. The explanatory variable is thus the legislator’s occupation, a binary variable indicating whether the legislator’s occupation falls under the policy category. Table 2 lists examples of occupations that would fit in each policy category. These are only a few of the potential occupations, but illustrate how each occupation might correspond to a policy.

² A category on civil rights and liberties was omitted because neither the North Carolina State Senate nor House of Representatives have a committee dedicated to the protection of these issues. Therefore, it would have been impossible to test for whether being on the committee had an effect on bill sponsorship.

³ Though a clear choice might be including a category on macroeconomics or finance, in doing my analysis I found that each legislator was on either the appropriations committee or a finance committee and therefore, there would be insufficient variability to complete a meaningful analysis of bill sponsorship.

Table 2: Potential occupations corresponding to each policy category

Education		Healthcare		Children and Families		Aging	
Teacher School Administrator University Professor University Dean School Board Member		Nurse Doctor Hospital Administrator		Counselor Social Worker Community Service		Counselor Social Worker Community Service	
Information-Technology	Law & Crime	Government Operations	Transportation	Energy & Environment			
Engineer Scientist Data Specialist	Police Officer Military Officer Criminal Lawyer Prison Warden	Public Official (state or local level) Bureaucrat (state or local level) Political Consultant	Engineer Urban Planner Architect Contractor Construction Worker	Environmental Lawyer Environmental Activist Energy Consultant Environmental Engineer			

I would expect legislators in these roles to sponsor more bills in their own policy field than legislators in other professions. I expect legislators, both men and women, in each career fields to sponsor bills related to the corresponding policy areas. The gender of neither the legislator nor the policy topic should be a significant factor.

There are some definite grey areas when determining under which category a particular occupation should fall. When the legislator worked for a nonprofit or served as a community organizer, I looked at the goal of the organization to determine under which policy category the occupation falls. Other issues arise when an occupation could be seen as two very different policy categories. For instance—a doctor who owns his own practice could be classified as health related, or business related because he owns a small business. Similarly, a social worker employed by the government can also be classified as a local or state bureaucrat. Given these sorts of complications, I decided which category the sponsor falls under by determining which policy area the job is related to. So, in the case of the doctor who owns his practice, I categorized him under health because though he may be a small business owner, the policy area of his field

of work is health related. Similarly, the social worker falls under children and families, not government operations because the social worker is dealing with children and families policy topics in work even though he is employed by the government. An example of a government employee who falls under government operations would be an employee of the North Carolina Secretary of State or Office of State Personnel who focuses on administration issues.

I have hypothesized that occupation will have a significant impact on legislation sponsorship in the North Carolina General Assembly. To discern the varying impact occupation had on policy entrepreneurship, I first performed a difference of means test comparing the number of bills sponsored by all legislators in corresponding career to the number of bills sponsored by legislators not from the corresponding careers. I then looked only at legislators on the committee comparing workers and non workers who serve on the committee relating to the policy category. Because committee assignment and occupation are highly correlated, it's important to measure whether legislators on the committee are sponsoring at different rates as well. The last difference of means test was between workers and non workers who did not serve on the committee.

Committee assignment can be an important predictor of legislator behavior. Legislators often concentrate their efforts where they can be the most effective and being on the committee gives them a large point of access to influence. Committee members have more control over bills assigned to that committee so they concentrate their efforts on these policy categories and sponsor more bills that would be assigned to the committees on which they serve. Also, legislators are meant to have more expertise about the policy issues that arise in their committees.

Collinearity is a concern because legislators are often placed on committees that correspond with their occupation for this very reason. A legislator with background knowledge and experience in a particular field is a natural fit for the committee. It is thus complicated to pinpoint the exact reason the legislator is sponsoring the bill—it could be because he is on the committee or because he previously worked in the policy field, or both. By looking at those legislators on the committee and not on the committee separately and breaking it down by whether their career corresponds with the policy topic, the collinearity issue can be avoided. For example, in examining whether a worker sponsored corresponding policy bills at a higher rate than non-workers, I examined whether the workers on the committee sponsored corresponding policy bills more frequently than a non-workers on the same committees and whether workers not on the committee sponsored bills at different rates than non-workers not on the corresponding policy committee.

I then performed a generalized linear model (GLM) regression analysis which is a type of analysis employed to predict the variance in a dependent variable (the number of bills sponsored in each category) based on combinations of the independent variables (occupation, committee, chairmanship, etc.). This type of analysis allows me to establish whether a legislator's occupation can explain the variance in the average number of bills sponsored in each policy category by a legislator. I performed a regression analysis on each policy topic separately. The GLM is the appropriate model because it allows the dependent variable to be tested against the independent variable (occupation) while controlling for the other independent variables (committee assignment, district characteristics, etc). In doing a linear regression, I can establish the relative predictive importance of occupation in sponsoring bills in the same policy field. This

ultimately helps me examine whether men who are sponsoring “women’s issues” bills have “women’s careers” and whether women sponsoring “men’s issue” bills have “men’s careers.”

Doing a regression of each variable separately shows the impact of each variable on the number of education bills sponsored. The standard for statistical significance is a p-value of less than .05. However, it is necessary to use the Bonferroni Correction⁴, and so the appropriate threshold value is .041. Any p-value between .10 and .041 will be considered moderately significant, and any p-value below .041 will be considered strongly significant.

A more perfect model would incorporate only the independent variables with a theoretical justification for inclusion. For example, a district with a high school aged population might be more interested in education bills than one with a larger population of residents over sixty-five. The variables I included in the model were only those that held any substantial correlation with the number of bills sponsored. The literature is not well built up on what affects bill sponsorship. Constituency and personal characteristics are important, but it’s not clear how much of a role each plays. Also, because I am working with state legislative districts, the district information is not perfect and some information I would ideally use is not available. Therefore, the independent variables included in the model were those which showed a significant enough correlation in the correlation matrix to the dependent variable.

A correlation matrix shows the correlation between the dependent variable (the number of bills sponsored) with each independent variable [This included binary variables indicating

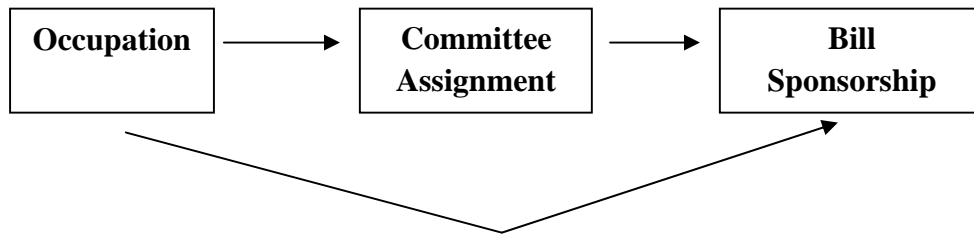
⁴ The Bonferroni Correction is a method used to address the problem of multiple comparisons. The correction is based on the idea that if an experimenter is testing n dependent or independent hypotheses on a set of data, then each individual hypothesis must be tested at a statistical significance level of $1/n$ times what it would be if only one hypothesis were tested. There is more than one hypothesis being tested so if you want the significance level for the whole family of tests, then the Bonferroni correction would be to test each of the individual tests at a significance level of β/n . Because there are nine policy categories, n equals nine and β equals $1 - (1 - \alpha)^{1/n}$.

whether the legislator was a worker, on the committee, or a leader on the committee. Also, gender, party, average household income, percent with college degree, percent below poverty, percent minority (African American and Hispanic), percent urban, percent rural, percent unemployed, percent of school age, and percent over 65]. Any independent variable with no correlation was excluded from the model. These variables were excluded because no correlation indicates that there is no relation or pattern between the two variables and thus should have no impact on the number of bills sponsored.

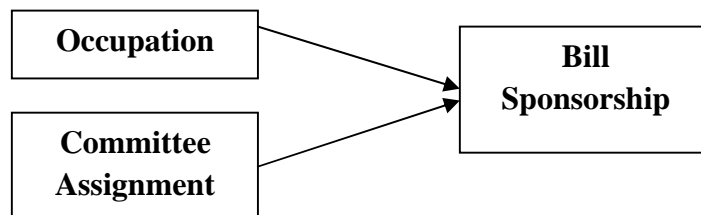
I performed each regression twice—once with committee included in the model and once without committee. Because occupation and committee are so highly correlated, it is important to perform the regression not including committee assignment to determine which variable is “doing the work” in the models. Figure 3 illustrates the different roles occupation and committee assignment could be playing in bill sponsorship. Option one describes a scenario where occupation leads to the committee assignment which leads to bill sponsorship. If occupation directly leads to committee assignment, than including committee assignment in the model is redundant and I can “cut out the middle man” by excluding it from the GLM regressions. Option two describes a scenario where occupation and committee assignment are separate variables that can each independently affect bill sponsorship. If option two is true, than committee assignment must be included in the GLM model.

Figure 3: Occupation and committee interaction models

Option 1:



Option 2:



It could be that occupation is the leading driver in committee assignment and bill sponsorship, or that committee assignment and occupation affects sponsorship separately. If the former statement is true, it is not necessary to include committee assignment in the model. However, if the latter is true, than in order to avoid any collinearity issues with committee assignment and occupation, committee assignment must be controlled for in model.

Analysis of the Legislature

As a legislator attaches his name to a bill by sponsoring it, he is publicly declaring his support for the measure. A legislator may decide to be selective and choose to sponsor very few bills or he may put his name on many bills but regardless of the number of bills he sponsors, he is showing he has an interest in the policy issue and believes it is important. Legislators sponsored anywhere from 0 to 213 bills in 2007—the average was 54 bills per legislator. By

analyzing the number of bills each legislator sponsored in each policy category, a pattern of policy interests emerge.

The North Carolina State Legislature has 170 legislators—50 Senators and 120 Representatives. My data set is composed of information on the 174 members who served in 2007 and their respective districts. The reason for the discrepancy is that there were four legislators who resigned part-way through the 2007 legislative session and were replaced by other legislators who went on to sponsor bills. These legislators are included in the analysis even though they were not present during the entire duration of the legislative session. No legislator had fewer than three months to sponsor bills, and therefore, was in office long enough to sponsor the bills he or she felt were most important.

As demonstrated in tables 3 and 4, the legislature was predominately male and Democratic.

Table 3: Male & Female Breakdown

	Legislators	Percent
Male	128	74%
Female	46	26%

Table 4: Democrat & Republican Breakdown⁵

	Legislators	Percent
Democrats	106	61%
Republicans	68	39%

⁵ While I am not testing for ideology, whether a policy topic is more right or left, party is an important indicator. Some policy topics can certainly be considered more liberal or conservative and this can have an impact on the number of bills sponsored. Children and family and aging policies are certainly considered more “liberal” (Poole 1985) and party affiliation may impact how many bills each legislator sponsored in these categories [A Democratic legislator would be more interested in sponsoring bills in “liberal” categories than his Republican counterpart].

Using the North Carolina General Assembly webpage, each legislator’s occupation was coded according to the U.S. Census occupation coding system. These occupations were then assigned to the corresponding policy categories. There is some overlap because some occupations are directly connected to more than one policy topic (example: a social worker corresponds to both the children and families and aging categories). Table 5 lists all the occupations that fit into the nine policy categories in the North Carolina State Legislature in 2007.

Table 5: Occupations for each policy category

Education (25)	Children & Families (10)	Healthcare (9)	Aging (10)
Teacher (15)	Homemaker (3)	Doctor (4)	Homemaker (3)
Principal (7)	Church (4)	Nurse (1)	Church (4)
University Professor (2)	Social Worker (2)	Dentist (2)	Social Worker (2)
University President (1)	Day Care (1)	Hospital Administrator (3)	Nursing Home (1)

Info-Tech (8)	Law & Crime (46)	Govt. Operations (14)	Transportation (9)	Energy & Environment (8)
Scientist (1)	Police (4)	Bureaucrat (7)	Architect (1)	Farmer (5)
Data Analyst (3)	Military (2)	Judicial System (5)	Civil Engineer (1)	Energy Consultant (2)
Media (3)	Attorney (33)	Mayor (2)	Construction (3)	Energy Engineer (1)
Engineer (1)	Judicial System (5)		Contractor (4)	
	Social Worker (2)			

Each committee in the House and Senate was assigned to one of the nine policy categories. They were assigned according to the type of bills the committee reviews. (For full breakdown of committees, see appendix A). Committee assignment is an important indicator of bill sponsorship. Though the committee is not entirely made up of people from the corresponding

occupation, the majority of the legislators from the corresponding occupations are on the committee. Table 6 breaks down the composition of each committee. The total size of the committees appears large because it is the combination of all corresponding committees in both the State Senate and the General Assembly.

Table 6: Committee makeup by policy category and corresponding occupations

Committee Categories	Corresponding occupations on committee	Other occupations on committee	Total size of committee	Corresponding occupations not on committee
Education	22	73	95	3
Children & Family	5	18	23	5
Healthcare	8	56	64	1
Aging	5	38	43	5
Info-Tech	1	21	22	7
Law & Crime	42	42	84	4
Government Operations	12	102	114	2
Transportation	4	57	61	5
Energy & Environment	3	69	72	5

Table 7 demonstrates that with the exception of information-technology, there is a strong correlation between coming from an occupation and being placed on the corresponding policy committee.

Table 7: Percent on Committee

Policy	Percent on Committee	Policy	Percent on Committee
Education	22/25 (88%)	Law & Crime	42/46 (91%)
Children & Family	5/10 (50%)	Government Operations	12/14 (86%)
Healthcare	8/9 (88%)	Transportation	4/9 (44%)
Aging	5/10 (50%)	Energy & Environment	3/8 (38%)
Info-Tech	1/8 (12%)		

Occupation and committee assignment are highly correlated, because legislators are often given committee assignments based on their experience and background. Because of this high correlation, it is hard to separate occupation and committee and the “committee effect” on bill sponsorship seen in the literature may be an occupation effect. It cannot be said with absolute certainty whether legislators are sponsoring bills because they serve on the committee or whether it’s because they have an interest as well as expertise in their career field and choose to channel it into legislative action.

Dependent Variable:

The dependent variable in the analysis is the number of bills sponsored in each policy category. The total number of bills sponsored in each policy category was determined by coding each bill sponsored during 2007 using the Policy Agendas Project (2006) hearings codebook.

Analysis of Bill Sponsorship

A common line of thinking is that female legislators focus on “female” policy topics (Wolbrecht 2002) and for this reason, female voters try to elect female candidates who will support their interests (Plutzer and Zipp 1996). But often, we see female legislators who are not championing the classic “women’s issues” and instead focus on other policies and male legislators who are the biggest proponents of “women’s” bills. If it were true that men and women sponsored and championed gendered policies, than the voters would be able to clearly predict what the candidate would do in office. This is clearly not the case. If it were, legislators such as State Senator Vernon Malone, an educator who sponsored 23 education bills and only 3

law and crime bills and Representative Karen Ray, a court reporter who sponsored 21 law and crime bills and only 5 healthcare bills would not exist.

So if it is not the legislator’s gender that is the only driving force behind policy entrepreneurship, another factor must be at work. Other explanations include committee assignment, constituency, and party affiliation. A previously unconsidered explanation is occupation.

Occupation has varying degrees of impact on bill sponsorship. For example, educators sponsor a statistically significant higher number of education bills than non-educators while government workers did not sponsor more government operation bills than non-government workers. Table 8 breaks down how significant occupation was for each policy category. Significant in this case was determined by difference of means tests (See Appendix D for all results of the difference of means tests).

Table 8: Breakdown of occupational significance

Strongly Significant	Moderately Significant	Not Significant
Education+	Healthcare+	Information Technology
	Children & Families	Law & Crime
	Aging	Government Operations
		Transportation
		Energy & Environment

Notes: + indicates that when only comparing committee members, the difference between workers and non-workers was significant

Using a difference of means test, only the “female” policy categories showed that occupation played a role (moderately or strongly) in bill sponsorship. In the “male” policy categories, occupation did not impact policy entrepreneurship. Table 9 shows the difference between the number of bills sponsored by all workers and non-workers in each policy category. The largest difference occurred between educators and non-educators and this difference was

strongly significant. The differences between workers and non-workers in the male policy categories are largely marginal.

Table 9: Difference in number of bills sponsored by all legislators

	Difference
Education	7.10***
Healthcare	6.86**
Children & Families	5.34*
Aging	5.24*
Energy & Environment	1.65
Law & Crime	.860
Information-Technology	.740
Transportation	0.38
Government Operations	-1.10

*Notes: Difference equals number of bills sponsored by corresponding occupation minus other occupations
*p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001*

When comparing workers against non-workers on the committee⁶, occupation has an even more limited effect. Table 10 shows that occupation continued to impact the number of bills educators and healthcare workers sponsored (meaning that, for example, educators on the education committee sponsored more education bills than non-educators on the committee). But in no other policy category was there a statistically significant difference between workers and non-workers. Interestingly, in government operations and information-technology, workers sponsored fewer bills than non-workers on the committee. This result indicates that committee

⁶ I performed a comparison of workers and non-workers who did not serve on the corresponding committees. Comparing workers against non-workers not on the committee showed that occupation does not play a large role in determining policy action among state legislators. Even in education and healthcare, categories where there was a difference between workers and non-workers over all and on the committee, there are not significant variances in bill sponsorship. I did not include this result in my analysis, however, because there were so few legislators who did not serve on the committee that corresponded with their occupation. The numbers were so small (for example, only one healthcare worker did not serve on the healthcare committee), that proving statistical significance is nearly impossible. It is possible if there were more workers in each policy category overall and not serving on the committee, a significant impact would be clear.

assignment is an important influence on legislative behavior, but that occupation remains an important motivator in certain female policy categories.

Table 10: Difference in number of bills sponsored by committee members

	Difference
Aging	7.63
Healthcare	7.13**
Education	4.86**
Energy & Environment	3.51
Transportation	0.85
Children & Families	0.35
Law & Crime	0.19
Government Operations	-0.88
Information-Technology	-0.90

*Notes: Difference equals number of bills sponsored by corresponding occupation minus other occupations
*p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001*

The GLM regressions showed that there was no consistent trend in which variables had a significant impact on bill sponsorship across the policy categories. Some categories, such as transportation and information technology had no single factor that stood out as being significant (See Appendix E and F for full breakdown of the regressions). In healthcare, for example, the percent of the district that was below the poverty line was a significant variable in examining the number of healthcare bills sponsored by each legislator. Gender and party were shown to be significant variables when examining the number of law and crime bills sponsored.

When including committee in the regression model, education and healthcare were the only policy categories where occupation was significant. When committee was left out of the regression model, the education, healthcare, and aging policy categories showed occupation as being a variable that significantly impacted the number of bills sponsored in the respective policy categories. This result is fairly consistent with the difference of means tests showing that

occupation was only significant in female policy categories. Occupation only impacted the number of bills sponsored in female bills and was found to have no impact on male bills.

Another result was that legislators in “female” occupations tended to sponsor more bills overall, but especially in other “female” categories (See Appendix B for full breakdown of the number of bills sponsored by each occupation in each policy category). Homemakers, educators, and religious leaders sponsored more healthcare bills than most legislators in other occupations—particularly the male dominated professions such as attorney and businessman. This trend held true for all four “female” policy categories but was not as true of the “male” categories. Legislators in male occupations did not sponsor more bills in other male policy categories than legislators in female occupations. This is an interesting finding because it suggests that the “gender effect” seen in the literature may after all be an occupation effect. It may be that it’s not that gender pushes legislators to sponsor certain types of legislation, but their occupational background does.

A common explanation for why we see women sponsoring “women” bills is that women are more naturally inclined to list a “women’s issue” among their top priorities. Women were more likely to be concerned about representing women and/or women’s concerns (Reingold 1992). Perhaps, though, that this effect is seen because these women are more likely to be coming from “women’s occupations.” Women make up the overwhelming majority of teachers, social workers, and nurses across the country (U.S. Census 2000). However, women did not make up the overwhelming majority of legislators in the female occupations in the North Carolina State Legislature in 2007. Table 11 shows that women did not dominate the “female” occupations in the legislature and that men made up a large percentage of the total legislators who came from these occupations.

Table 11: Gender Breakdown of Female Occupations

	Total Legislators	Male
Education	25	14
Healthcare	9	7
Children & Families	10	4
Aging	10	4

Among educators, 56% were male. Men made up 77% of the healthcare category and 40% of both the children and family and aging categories. Therefore, the results showing that legislators in women’s occupations being more likely to sponsor bills not only in their policy field, but in the other three “women’s policy” categories cannot solely be attributed to gender. Occupation can explain why some men are “acting” like women in the policy initiatives they take.

The reason we see this outcome might be that people working in these fields could have the natural inclination toward “women’s issues” that was previously attributed to only women legislators. These four policy topics are all social welfare issues. People drawn to careers in these fields are possibly not only interested in their own social welfare issue, but all social welfare issues and are thus more likely to sponsor these types of bills once in office. There might be a “sensitivity” factor that speaks to the needs of the public that are assisted by female policies and not male policies. So an interest in one social welfare issue would naturally lead to an interest in all social welfare issues.

The effect of party affiliation cannot be ignored though. Democrats, in general, are more inclined to sponsor and support these “female” policy bills than their Republican counterparts (Cohen 2003). Democrats in the North Carolina Legislature were also more likely to be in the social welfare professions than Republicans. The high correlation between party affiliation and

support for certain types of policies limits the conclusions that could be made about the effect of occupation on policy entrepreneurship. It is difficult to fully control for party given the small total number of legislators who came from the female professions. As table 12 shows, there is also limited variability. All legislators involved in children and families and aging careers were Democrats.

Table 12: Party Breakdown of Female Occupations

	Total Legislators	Democrats	Democrat & Male
Education	25	19	10
Healthcare	9	5	3
Children & Families	10	10	4
Aging	10	10	4

The literature on gender and policy entrepreneurship suggests that gender is the main driver in determining bill sponsorship in legislatures. Gender, it is argued, can be a strong predictor of a legislator’s behavior in office. However, the male legislators who were in the female careers behaved the way the literature predicted women to behave. Female legislators in male occupations, however, did not behave solely how the men are predicted to behave. The results point to there being something else at work here for the legislators in female policy categories—namely, occupation. For some male occupation groups (information technology and law and crime), the female legislators sponsored more female bills than the male legislators in the same occupation. In others (government operations), the number of bills were comparable. The results would suggest that the gender effect exists for women regardless of profession, but for men in female occupations, an occupation effect is predominant. All women care about “women’s issues” but certain men also tend to care about “women’s issue” more than others. Table 13 demonstrates that the male legislators in the male occupations sponsored fewer bills

than the average male in the female occupation group (the average number of female bills sponsored by men in women’s occupations was 42.9).

Table 13: Mean number of female bills by gender

Occupation	Average # of female bills sponsored	
	Women	Men
Education	37.8	43.4
Healthcare	76.0	33.7
Children & Families	51.6	47.2
Aging	51.6	47.2
Information Technology	39.0	34.0
Law & Crime	38.3	27.5
Government Operations	29.8	29.6
Transportation	20.0	28.3
Energy & Environment	7.0	19.2

Notes: Female bills include education, healthcare, children and families, and aging bills. Averages indicate the average number of female bills sponsored by legislators in that particular occupation.

There are a number of examples of the male legislator, from a female occupation, who legislated like a woman. Representative Larry Bell, an educator, sponsored 20 education bills compared to only 4 law and crime bills. Representative Bobby England, a doctor, sponsored 19 healthcare bills and 12 education bills compared to only 2 law and crime bills and 3 government operations bills. Representative William Wainwright, a minister before being elected to the North Carolina State Legislature, sponsored 41 education bills, 26 healthcare bills, 22 children and family bills, and 23 aging bills. He sponsored 11 energy and environment bills and only one transportation bill. Men coming from the “female” policy careers are sponsoring more female policy bills overall and fewer male policy bills. To be sure, there are male legislators from female occupations that do not fit this model, but a majority of these male legislators are “acting like women.”

Women, however, even from “male occupations” continue to sponsor female policy bills, and continue to “act like women.” An attorney, Representative Pricey Harrison sponsored 32 law and crime bills. But she sponsored 44 education bills and 41 healthcare bills. Representative Susan Fisher, a federal bureaucrat, sponsored 15 government operations bills but also sponsored 27 education bills, 21 healthcare bills and 14 children and family bills. Representative Pat Hurley, a state bureaucrat and a Republican, sponsored 6 government operations bills, 13 education, and 7 aging bills. Even women in classic “male occupations” continue to be female policy entrepreneurs.

Conclusions

Occupation did not play a consistent role in policy entrepreneurship in the North Carolina State Legislature. Among all legislators, only in “female” policy categories did occupation have any impact at all. This result is a departure from the literature that suggests that differences in policy entrepreneurship can be explained primarily by gender. Legislators from female occupations sponsored more bills in their own policy field and the other female policy categories regardless of the gender of the legislator. The findings suggest that women, regardless of professional background, tend to support issues that are classically attributed to them. This result agrees with the majority of the literature on women’s policy preferences. However, the literature delineates a divide in the interests and actions between male and female legislators and attributes this difference to gender. As shown in this study, men do not follow such strict gender roles. Male legislators coming from female occupations legislated the way women are expected to legislate.

The female policy categories fundamentally are about how the government can provide for the residents. Education, children and family, aging, and healthcare all involve providing a service to the people. Government money is spent on public education, food stamps, Medicaid, community centers, etc.—all of which were classified as female policy bills. The male policy categories, on the other hand, were more about the private sector and about laws constituents would need to obey rather than services the government would provide. With the exception of certain transportation bills, which allocated funds for new roads and public transportation systems, the male policy categories were not geared toward creating programs or providing services to the public.

Legislators who came from female occupations, those that dealt with public services, were more likely to support other policies that similarly supported the role of the government. This suggests that those legislators who worked in a field where the government was the main provider support the role of the state in providing other kinds of services to its citizens as well. Alternatively, legislators who come from the private sector or who work in fields where the government plays a more minor role are less willing to embrace an increase in government programs or services. This debate, between the role of the state and the virtues of the private sector is often seen between Democrats and Republicans but this study indicates that it may also exist among different professions.

Further Research:

The limitations of this research most heavily involved the small number of legislators I analyzed. By choosing to do only one state, I was limited in my ability to make broader conclusions. There were very few legislators who fell under the health, children and family,

aging, information technology, transportation, and energy and environment policy categories. Thus, proving statistical significant is more difficult. Deeper inquiry into the effects of occupation on a grander scale would help avoid this problem. If the same study was replicated using all state legislators in the United States, than the results might be more conclusive.

Furthermore, the high correlation between party affiliation and support for certain types of policies also limits any conclusions that could be made about the effect of occupation on policy entrepreneurship. A larger study might help avoid this problem. With more subjects being studied, there will likely be more Republicans who come from the female occupations. With more variability among the legislators in each occupation, party could be more properly controlled for, and an occupation effect tested.

I faced other limitations with the North Carolina State Legislature. It does not have a civil rights and liberties committee, so a policy category with a strong research behind it indicating it was a “women’s” issue could not be included. This would have also allowed me to collapse the children and family and aging categories into one ‘social welfare’ category. The larger category would have more legislators who qualify as being social welfare workers and the total number of bills sponsored would also be larger making proving statistical significance more likely. On a similar note, because every legislator was on the finance or appropriations committee, the most obvious “male” category, macroeconomics, had to be excluded due to the lack of variability in committee assignment. If the research was done on a national level, macroeconomic policy could be included in the analysis.

Another question that could be examined with a larger study would be whether the occupation effect seen in North Carolina is true of other states. Does the same distinction between occupational effects between the genders hold in other states? Is there a difference in

the extent to which men are “acting like women” across the states? A comparison of states across the different regions in the United States or other states in the South would further answer the question of whether occupation plays a role in legislative entrepreneurship.

The literature suggests that women are more likely to sponsor more “women’s bills” as women increase their numbers and they can feel comfortable pursuing policy preferences based on gender. Given the findings of this study, it would be valuable to also examine whether there is an increase in the number of “women’s bills” being sponsored when more legislators from female occupations are serving, particularly men from female occupations.

Finally, further research could examine the effectiveness of legislators from varying occupations. Studying whether an educator is more successful at passing education bills than a police officer can help us further understand the impact career has on policies. Are legislators more effective at helping pass bills in their own occupational field than legislators from other occupational fields? Also, given the finding that men in female occupations tend to sponsor other female policies at a higher rate as well, do legislators in female occupations have more success in getting all female legislation enacted than legislators from male occupations?

Appendix A: Breakdown of Committees Assigned to Policy Categories

Committees assigned to the “female” policy categories

	Education	Children & Families	Healthcare	Aging
Senate	Education & Higher Education	Mental Health/Youth Services	Healthcare	Pensions, Retirement, Aging
	Education & Public Instruction		Select Committee on Employee Hospital & Medical Benefits	
House	Education	Children, Youth & Families	Health	Aging
	Ed Subcommittee on Universities		Mental Health Reform	Pensions & Retirement
	Ed Subcommittee on Community Colleges			
	Ed Subcommittee on Preschool, Elementary & Secondary Ed			
	University Board of Governors Nominating			

Committees assigned to “male” and control policy categories

	Info-Tech	Law & Crime	Govt. Operations	Transportation	Energy & Environment
Senate	Info-Tech	Judiciary I	State & Local Government	Transportation	Agriculture, Environment, and Natural Resources
		Judiciary II	Select Committee on Govt & Election Reform	Appropriations for Transportation	Appropriations on Natural and Economic Resources
		Appropriations on Justice and Public Safety	Rules & Operations of the Senate		
House	Science & Technology	Judiciary I	Local Govt I	Transportation	Environment & Natural Resources
		Judiciary II	Local Govt II		Energy & Energy Efficiency
		Judiciary III	Public Utilities		Wildlife Resources
			Election Law & Campaign Finance Reform		
			State Personnel		
			Appropriations Subcommittee on General Govt		
			Rules, Calendar, & Operations of the House		

Appendix B: Breakdown of Bill Sponsorship by Occupation

Education bills sponsored by different occupations

Occupation	Mean # of Ed Bills	Std. Deviation	Number of Legislators
Data	19.67	7.76	3
Church	18.75	18.39	4
Educators	18.28	9.54	25
Homemaker	16.67	8.14	3
Healthcare	15.56	9.88	9
Attorney	12.03	10.99	33
Judicial	11.00	4.24	5
Bureaucrat	10.28	8.97	7
Police	10.25	7.9	4
Business	9.38	7.21	62
Farmer	7.8	6.49	5

Healthcare bills sponsored by different occupations

Occupation	Mean # of Health Bills	Std. Deviation	Number of Legislators
Homemaker	16.00	5.19	3
Data	15.6	4.93	3
Healthcare	14.9	9.24	9
Educator	11.3	6.98	25
Church	10.0	11.4	4
Bureaucrat	9.14	6.98	7
Judicial	9.00	4.52	5
Attorney	8.85	8.23	33
Police	7.00	6.68	4
Business	6.37	4.64	62
Farmer	5.80	5.11	5

Children and Family Bills sponsored by different occupations

Occupation	Mean # of Child Bills	Std. Deviation	Number of Legislators
Homemaker	10.0	7.21	3
Healthcare	9.11	7.80	9
Church	9.00	9.59	4
Educator	6.92	5.65	25
Data	6.33	4.04	3
Attorney	4.57	5.08	33
Bureaucrat	4.28	4.82	7
Judicial	3.20	2.28	5
Police	2.50	2.52	4
Farmer	2.40	2.51	5
Business	2.32	2.26	62

Aging Bills sponsored by different occupations

Occupation	Mean # of Aging Bills	Std. Deviation	Number of Legislators
Data	9.67	2.08	3
Church	9.50	9.74	4
Homemaker	9.00	6.00	3
Judicial	7.40	2.70	5
Attorney	5.15	4.53	33
Educator	4.44	2.84	25
Healthcare	3.55	2.96	9
Police	3.25	3.20	4
Farmer	3.20	2.86	5
Business	3.08	2.72	62
Bureaucrat	2.57	2.22	7

Info-Tech Bills sponsored by different occupations

Occupation	Mean # of Info Bills	Std. Deviation	Number of Legislators
Data	9.67	2.08	3
Police	3.00	1.82	4
Church	3.00	4.08	4
Educator	2.24	2.04	25
Judicial	1.60	1.52	5
Attorney	1.57	2.12	33
Business	1.34	1.56	62
Healthcare	1.33	1.41	9
Farmer	1.20	1.09	5
Homemaker	1.00	1.73	3
Bureaucrat	.857	1.21	7

Law & Crimes Bills sponsored by different occupations

Occupation	Mean # of Law Bills	Std. Deviation	Number of Legislators
Homemaker	21.6	15.94	3
Data	17.3	7.57	3
Judicial	15.8	6.38	5
Police	11.2	3.82	4
Bureaucrat	10.1	9.06	7
Healthcare	10.0	9.29	9
Educator	8.52	5.34	25
Attorney	7.96	6.63	33
Business	7.40	5.05	62
Church	6.75	5.73	4
Farmer	4.20	3.83	5

Government Operations Bills sponsored by different occupations

Occupation	Mean # of Govt Bills	Std. Deviation	Number of Legislators
Data	10.3	3.21	3
Church	10.2	7.58	4
Homemaker	9.33	2.31	3
Attorney	9.27	5.66	33
Healthcare	8.33	5.15	9
Educator	7.04	4.60	25
Judicial	7.00	3.93	5
Business	6.73	4.96	62
Bureaucrat	6.42	4.79	7
Police	6.25	4.35	4
Farmer	5.80	4.66	5

Transportation Bills sponsored by different occupations

Occupation	Mean # of Transpt. Bills	Std. Deviation	Number of Legislators
Homemaker	4.00	1.00	3
Bureaucrat	2.85	1.57	7
Data	2.33	1.52	3
Business	2.28	1.85	62
Attorney	2.06	2.01	33
Judicial	2.00	1.87	5
Educator	1.88	1.59	25
Healthcare	1.55	1.59	9
Church	1.25	1.25	4
Police	1.00	.816	4
Farmer	1.00	1.22	5

Energy and Environment Bills sponsored by different occupations

Occupation	Mean # of Energy Bills	Std. Deviation	Number of Legislators
Data	11.67	4.04	3
Homemaker	9.00	1.73	3
Healthcare	7.11	5.66	9
Judicial	6.40	4.32	5
Church	6.25	6.13	4
Attorney	6.15	6.68	33
Bureaucrat	6.00	5.09	7
Educator	5.92	3.95	25
Farmer	5.80	4.65	5
Business	4.82	4.48	62
Police	2.00	2.16	4

Appendix C: Breakdown of Total Bill Sponsorship

Mean number of bills sponsored

	Male	Female	Democrat	Republican	Total
Avg. number of bills sponsored	50.48 (2.88)	64.89 (5.53)	58.70 (3.93)	47.41 (2.51)	54.29 (2.61)
Std. Deviation	32.69	37.5	40.47	20.69	34.51

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses

Mean number of total bills by female occupations

	Education	Healthcare	Child	Aging
Avg. # bills sponsored	66.56 (6.21)	71.44 (14.01)	84.14 (20.02)	84.14 (20.02)
Std. Dev	31.04	42.03	52.99	53.01

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses

Mean number of total bills by male and control occupations

	Info-Tech	Law & Crime	Govt. Operations	Transportation	Energy/Env
Avg. # bills sponsored	67.43 (12.63)	56.91 (6.10)	57.78 (7.50)	44.78 (4.90)	38.60 (13.78)
Std. Dev	33.40	40.46	28.06	14.72	30.81

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses

Women and Democrats sponsored more bills on average than men and Republicans.

Also, legislators in “female” occupations tended to sponsor more bills overall. Educators not only sponsored more education bills, but they sponsored more bills in each policy category on average. More “female” bills were sponsored than “male” bills indicating that legislators follow the trend of their occupation rather than of their gender.

Difference in number of bills sponsored by gender

	Difference
Education	-2.50
Healthcare	-3.71**
Children & Families	-2.19**
Aging	-0.67
Information-Technology	-0.06
Law & Crime	-3.93***
Government Operations	-1.65
Transportation	0.13
Energy & Environment	-1.63

Notes: Difference equals number of bills sponsored by men minus women
 *p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001

This table indicates that women sponsor more bills in all categories.

Difference in number of bills sponsored by gender and occupation

	Difference
Education	2.09
Healthcare	-12.0
Children & Families	0.66
Aging	1.66
Information-Technology	-0.66
Law & Crime	-7.80**
Government Operations	1.00
Transportation	2.00
Energy & Environment	7.20+

Notes: Difference equals number of bills sponsored by men in the corresponding occupation minus women in that occupation
 +There were no female energy and environment workers
 *p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001

This table indicates that male workers tend to sponsor more bills than female workers with notable exceptions in healthcare and law and crime.

Appendix D: Difference of Means Tests

Education:

The average number of education bills sponsored by all legislators is 12.20.

Mean number of education bills sponsored by committee

	Educators	Non-Educators	SE of difference
Avg. # education bills sponsored overall	18.28 (.721)	11.18 (1.91)	2.04***
Avg. # education bills sponsored on education committee	18.77 (1.94)	13.91 (1.02)	4.29**
Avg. # education bills sponsored not on education committee	14.67+ (8.11)	9.37 (.976)	1.21

*Notes: +There were three educators not on an education committee
*p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001*

Healthcare:

The average number of healthcare bills sponsored by all legislators was 8.61.

Mean number of healthcare bills sponsored by committee

	Healthcare Workers	Non-Healthcare Workers	SE of difference
Avg. # healthcare bills sponsored overall	15.12 (3.48)	8.26 (.505)	5.00**
Avg. # healthcare bills sponsored on healthcare committee	16.75 (2.78)	9.62 (.948)	6.06**
Avg. # healthcare bills sponsored not on healthcare committee	0+	7.63 (.584)	0.74

*Note: +There was only one healthcare worker who was not on the healthcare committee
*p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001*

This result suggests that among committee members, healthcare workers show a greater interest in health policies than non-healthcare workers. It should be noted that among the 64 legislators sitting on healthcare committees, only 8 of them were healthcare workers (though that

is 8 out of the total 9 healthcare workers serving in the legislature). The only legislator who was a healthcare worker but did not serve on a healthcare committee was a Republican State Senator and a dentist. His decision to not serve on a healthcare committee could be due to having no interest in health policy, or it could be that the party leadership denied his request to be on a healthcare committee. This legislator also did not sponsor any healthcare bills which would suggest the former explanation. However, explanations for why he is not on the committee and why he did not sponsor any healthcare bills could be limitless.

Healthcare is a more complicated issue area. A doctor who owns his own practice could see himself as a healthcare worker but also a small business owner. The more prevalent self-identity is impossible to determine for each legislator. To this point, I thought it would be interesting to examine a nurse's legislative behavior. Nurses are less likely to have the small-business mindset because they do not run a practice. The nursing profession is more singularly concentrated on healthcare. There was only one nurse serving in the legislature and she was the only female legislator in the healthcare field. She sponsored the third most healthcare bills among the healthcare workers, sponsoring 20 bills. The two healthcare legislators who sponsored more bills each sponsored 27.

Children & Families:

The average number of child and family bills sponsored by all legislators was 4.30.

Mean number of children and family bills sponsored by committee

	Child & Family Workers	Non-Child & Family Workers	SE of difference
Avg. # child bills sponsored overall	9.42 (3.01)	4.08 (.351)	3.57 *
Avg. # child bills sponsored on child committee	7.00 (3.00)	6.65 (1.37)	5.17
Avg. # child bills sponsored not on child committee	10.4+ (4.16)	3.76 (.344)	4.66*

Notes: +There were 5 children and family workers not on the committee

*p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001

Aging:

The average number of aging bills sponsored by all legislators was 4.22.

Mean number of aging bills sponsored by committee

	Aging Workers	Non-Aging Workers	SE of difference
Avg. # aging bills sponsored overall	9.28 (2.92)	4.04 (.265)	3.52*
Avg. # aging bills sponsored on aging committee	12.0 (3.00)	4.37 (.375)	8.51
Avg. # aging bills sponsored not on aging committee	8.20+ (3.99)	3.92 (.334)	3.68

Notes: +There were 5 aging workers not on the committee

*p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001

Information-Technology:

The average number of information-technology bills sponsored by all legislators was 1.57.

Mean number of info-tech bills sponsored by committee

	Info-Tech Workers	Non-Info-Tech Workers	SE of difference
Avg. # info-tech bills sponsored overall	2.28 (.565)	1.54 (.141)	.869
Avg. # info-tech bills sponsored on info-tech committee	1+ (--)	1.90 (.371)	1.08
Avg. # info-tech bills sponsored not on info-tech committee	2.5++ (.619)	1.49 (.153)	1.03**

Notes: +There was 1 info-tech workers on the committee, ++6 info-tech workers were not on the committee
*p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001

Law & Crime:

The average number of law & crime bills sponsored by all legislators was 8.43.

Mean number of law & crime bills sponsored by committee

	Law Workers	Non-Law Workers	SE of difference
Avg. # law & crime bills sponsored overall	9.06 (1.00)	8.20 (.569)	1.54
Avg. # law & crime bills sponsored on law committee	9.21 (1.05)	9.02 (1.19)	1.99
Avg. # law & crime bills sponsored not on law & crime committee	6+ (0)	7.91 (.614)	4.32

Notes: +There were 2 law workers not on the committee
*p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001

Government Operations:

The average number of government operations bills sponsored by all legislators was 7.26.

Mean number of government operations bills sponsored by committee

	Govt. Workers	Non-Govt. Workers	SE of difference
Avg. # govt. bills sponsored overall	6.27 (.969)	7.37 (.407)	1.97
Avg. # govt. bills sponsored on govt. committee	6.58 (1.19)	7.46 (.504)	2.04
Avg. # govt. bills sponsored not on govt. committee	10.0+ (3.00)	7.07 (.663)	7.13

Notes: +There were 2 govt. workers not on the committee
*p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001

Transportation:

The average number of transportation bills sponsored by all legislators was 2.08.

Mean number of transportation bills sponsored by committee

	Transportation Workers	Non-Transportation Workers	SE of difference
Avg. # transportation bills sponsored overall	2.44 (.626)	2.06 (.137)	.828
Avg. # transportation bills sponsored on transportation committee	3.25+ (1.37)	2.40 (.259)	1.65
Avg. # transportation bills sponsored not on transportation committee	1.8++ (0.20)	1.90 (.157)	.825

Notes: +There were 4 transportation workers on the committee ++There were 5 transportation workers not on the committee
*p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001

Energy & Environment:

The average number of energy & environment bills sponsored by all legislators was 5.60.

Mean number of energy and environment bills sponsored by committee

	Energy Workers	Non-Energy Workers	SE of difference
Avg. # energy bills sponsored overall	7.20 (3.45)	5.55 (.380)	3.25
Avg. # energy bills sponsored on energy committee	10.0+ (5.19)	6.49 (.672)	5.82
Avg. # energy bills sponsored not on energy committee	4.96++ (.437)	3.00 (3.00)	2.18

*Notes: +There were 3energy/environment workers on the committee, ++There were only 2 energy/environment workers not on the committee
*p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001*

Appendix E: GLM Regressions with Committee

The effects on sponsoring education bills

Variable	Education Bills	Variable	Education Bills
Ed Occupation	4.58* (2.53)	Ed Occ * Ed Comm	-0.298 (5.53)
Ed Committee	2.30 (2.64)	Male	-0.211 (1.58)
Ed Chair	4.94** (2.06)	Minority (%)	0.025 (.043)
Ed Ranking Member	5.59 (3.67)	Urban (%)	0.018 (.025)

Notes: **p*-value<0.10, ***p*-value<0.05, ****p*-values<0.001
Standard errors in parentheses

The effects on sponsoring health bills

Variable	Health Bills	Variable	Health Bills
Health Occupation	-0.094 (0.329)	Below Poverty Line (%)	0.044** (0.021)
Health Committee	0.055 (0.133)	Democrat	0.135 (0.164)
Health Chair	0.470 (0.251)	Urban (%)	0.006 (0.003)
Health Ranking Member	0.491 (0.399)	Minority (%)	-0.006 (0.005)
Health Occ * Health Comm	0.402 (0.571)	College Degree (%)	0.011 (0.010)
Male	-0.159 (0.137)		

*Notes: *p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001
Standard errors in parentheses*

The effects on sponsoring children and family bills

Variable	Child Bills	Variable	Child Bills
Child Occupation	0.289 (0.306)	Below Poverty Line (%)	0.038* (0.020)
Child Committee	0.386* (0.200)	Democrat	0.345** (0.160)
Child Chair	0.088 (0.369)	Urban (%)	0.008** (0.003)
Child Ranking Member	-0.468 (0.770)	Minority (%)	-0.001 (0.005)
Child Occ * Child Comm	-0.494 (0.648)	College Degree (%)	0.007 (0.010)
Male	-0.355*** (0.135)		

*Notes: *p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001
Standard errors in parentheses*

Endogenous motivations such as gender and exogenous motivations such as party and percent of the district that is urban play a greater role in children and family policy entrepreneurship than other factors. Women, Democrats, and members representing largely urban districts sponsored more children and family bills.

The effects on sponsoring aging bills

Variable	Aging Bills	Variable	Aging Bills
Aging Occupation	0.497* (0.292)	Male	-0.139 (0.003)
Aging Committee	0.228 (0.149)	Democrat	0.140 (0.133)
Aging Chair	-0.046 (0.278)	School Age (%)	-0.034 (0.022)
Aging Ranking Member	-0.254 (0.400)	Below Poverty Line (%)	-0.016 (0.020)
Aging Occ * Aging Comm	0.606 (0.637)	Avg. Household Income	0.00001* (0.000007)

*Notes: *p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001
Standard errors in parentheses*

The effects on sponsoring information-technology bills

Variable	Info-Tech Bills	Variable	Info-Tech Bills
Info-Tech Occupation	0.353 (0.243)	Male	0.083 (0.112)
Info-Tech Committee	0.062 (0.169)	Democrat	-0.006 (0.122)
Info-Tech Chair	-0.263 (0.291)	College Degree (%)	0.005 (0.005)
Info-Tech Ranking Member	---	Minority (%)	0.0007 (0.003)
Info-Tech Occ * Info-Tech Comm	-0.587 (0.703)		

*Notes: *p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001
Standard errors in parentheses*

The effects on sponsoring law & crime bills

Variable	Law Bills	Variable	Law Bills
Law Occupation	0.082 (0.295)	Male	-0.397** (0.139)
Law Committee	0.004 (0.178)	Democrat	-0.617*** (0.182)
Law Chair	0.099 (0.237)	College Degree (%)	0.041** (0.019)
Law Ranking Member	-0.165 (0.344)	Minority (%)	-0.004 (0.005)
Law Occ * Law Comm	0.171 (0.573)	Avg. Household Income	-0.00002* (0.000001)
School Age (%)	-0.006 (0.027)	Unemployment (%)	0.185 (0.092)
Below Poverty (%)	-0.001 (0.003)	Urban (%)	0.002 (0.003)

*Notes: *p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001
Standard errors in parentheses*

The effects on sponsoring government operations bills

Variable	Govt Bills	Variable	Govt Bills
Govt Occupation	-0.114 (0.276)	Govt Occ * Govt Comm	0.425 (0.540)
Govt Committee	0.267 (0.168)	Urban (%)	0.004* (0.002)
Govt Chair	0.270 (0.216)	College Degree (%)	0.010 (0.013)
Govt Ranking Member	-0.300 (0.320)	Avg. Household Income	-0.00005 (0.000007)

*Notes: *p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001
Standard errors in parentheses*

The effects on sponsoring transportation bills

Variable	Transportation Bills	Variable	Transportation Bills
Transportation Occupation	0.121 (0.202)	Transportation Occ * Transportation Comm	0.059 (0.401)
Transportation Committee	0.134 (0.092)		

*Notes: *p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001
Standard errors in parentheses*

The effects on sponsoring energy and environment bills

Variable	Energy Bills	Variable	Energy Bills
Energy Occupation	-0.001 (0.365)	Democrat	0.342** (0.164)
Energy Committee	0.160 (0.128)	Male	-0.170 (0.135)
Energy Chair	0.499** (0.224)	College Degree (%)	0.009 (0.010)
Energy Ranking Member	-0.158 (0.325)	Urban (%)	0.007** (0.003)
Energy Occ * Energy Comm	0.705 (0.685)	Below Poverty (%)	0.044** (0.019)
Minority (%)	-0.010 (0.005)**		

*Notes: *p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001
Standard errors in parentheses*

Appendix F: GLM Regressions without Committee

The effects on sponsoring education bills

Variable	Education Bills	Variable	Education Bills
Ed Occupation	0.44** (.197)	Urban (%)	0.004* (.002)
Ed Chair	0.36* (.188)	Male	-0.11 (.154)
Ed Ranking Member	0.63* (.353)	Minority (%)	-0.005 (.004)

Notes: **p*-value<0.10, ***p*-value<0.05, ****p*-values<0.001
Standard errors in parentheses

The effects on sponsoring health bills

Variable	Health Bills	Variable	Health Bills
Health Occupation	0.032* (0.283)	Below Poverty Line (%)	0.046** (0.021)
Health Chair	0.558** (0.222)	Democrat	0.142 (0.164)
Health Ranking Member	0.498 (0.387)	Urban (%)	0.006* (0.003)
Male	-0.164 (0.136)	Minority (%)	-0.007 (0.005)
College Degree (%)	0.012 (0.010)		

*Notes: *p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001
Standard errors in parentheses*

The effects on sponsoring children and family bills

Variable	Child Bills	Variable	Child Bills
Child Occupation	0.255 (0.293)	Below Poverty Line (%)	0.038* (0.020)
Child Chair	0.395 (0.318)	Democrat	0.345** (0.161)
Child Ranking Member	-0.106 (0.753)	Urban (%)	0.009*** (0.003)
College Degree (%)	0.005 (0.010)	Minority (%)	-0.001 (0.005)
Male	-0.362*** (0.136)		

*Notes: *p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001
Standard errors in parentheses*

The effects on sponsoring aging bills

Variable	Aging Bills	Variable	Aging Bills
Aging Occupation	0.501* (0.293)	Male	-0.146 (0.130)
Aging Chair	0.166 (0.250)	Democrat	0.145 (0.133)
Aging Ranking Member	-0.090 (0.383)	School Age (%)	-0.037* (0.022)
Avg. Household Income	-0.00002* (0.000007)	Below Poverty Line (%)	-0.017 (0.020)

*Notes: *p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001
Standard errors in parentheses*

The effects on sponsoring information-technology bills

Variable	Info-Tech Bills	Variable	Info-Tech Bills
Info-Tech Occupation	0.351 (0.242)	Male	0.093 (0.110)
Info-Tech Chair	0.344 (0.241)	Democrat	0.009 (0.121)
Info-Tech Ranking Member	---	College Degree (%)	0.005 (0.005)
Minority (%)	0.0003 (0.003)		

*Notes: *p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001
Standard errors in parentheses*

The effects on sponsoring law & crime bills

Variable	Law Bills	Variable	Law Bills
Law Occupation	0.135 (0.175)	Male	-0.396*** (0.138)
Law Chair	0.105 (0.230)	Democrat	-0.609*** (0.179)
Law Ranking Member	-0.105 (0.338)	College Degree (%)	0.041** (0.019)
Urban (%)	0.003 (0.003)	Minority (%)	-0.004 (0.006)
Below Poverty (%)	-0.0006 (0.024)	Avg. Household Income	-0.00002* (0.00001)
School Age (%)	-0.005 (0.027)	Unemployment (%)	0.185** (0.092)

*Notes: *p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001
Standard errors in parentheses*

The effects on sponsoring government operations bills

Variable	Govt Bills	Variable	Govt Bills
Govt Occupation	0.090 (0.206)	Avg. Household Income	-0.000009 (0.000007)
Govt Chair	0.108 (0.161)	Urban (%)	0.004 (0.003)
Govt Ranking Member	-0.019 (0.373)	College Degree (%)	0.019 (0.013)

*Notes: *p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001
Standard errors in parentheses*

The effects on sponsoring transportation bills

Variable	Transportation Bills	Variable	Transportation Bills
Transportation Occupation	0.160 (0.199)	Transportation Ranking Member	0.252 (0.340)
Transportation Chair	0.149 (0.163)		

*Notes: *p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001
Standard errors in parentheses*

The effects on sponsoring energy and environment bills

Variable	Energy Bills	Variable	Energy Bills
Energy Occupation	0.163 (0.344)	Democrat	0.335** (0.163)
Energy Chair	0.598*** (0.203)	Male	-0.150 (0.135)
Energy Ranking Member	-0.064 (0.315)	College Degree (%)	0.009 (0.010)
Minority (%)	-0.010** (0.005)	Urban (%)	0.008** (0.003)
Below Poverty (%)	0.045** (0.019)		

*Notes: *p-value<0.10, **p-value<0.05, ***p-values<0.001
Standard errors in parentheses*

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