

## **Campaign Appeals and Legislative Action**

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## **Campaign Appeals and Legislative Action**

### **ABSTRACT**

I explore the extent to which the campaign appeals made by congressional candidates serve as credible signals about the issues they will pursue in office. My analyses focus on the televised advertisements of 391 House candidates in the 1998, 2000, and 2002 elections and the content of their subsequent legislative activity in the 106th-108th Congresses. I track candidates' and legislators' attention to a set of 18 different issues and show that legislators do indeed follow through on the appeals they make in campaigns. However, the strength of the linkages between campaign appeals and legislative activity varies in a systematic fashion with features of candidates' rhetoric. These findings illustrate the value of extending the study of campaigns to include phenomena that occur after Election Day and of conceiving of the linkages between electoral and legislative politics as a locus for representation.

Modern electoral campaigns are the target of numerous critiques, but among the most common is the lament that candidates' appeals are merely "cheap talk," designed to sway voters and maximize vote shares on Election Day, but with little connection to what they actually plan to do once in office. In public opinion polls, large majorities of respondents endorse this view, agreeing that "to win elections, most members of Congress make campaign promises they have no intention of fulfilling" and that it is rare for candidates to even "try to keep their promises."<sup>1</sup> Although scholars have tended to be more sanguine about the prospect that elections can successfully fulfill their role as a linking mechanism between the public and its representatives, some of the most hotly contested debates in the field in recent years have focused on campaigns and their effects.

Assessments of campaigns typically invoke one of two basic standards--the extent to which candidates' discourse approximates normative ideals about elections as a locus of deliberation and debate, and the degree to which exposure to campaigns has positive vs. negative effects on voters. Research on the first standard has asked whether candidates devote more time to discussion of substantive issues or character traits (Kahn and Kenney 1999; Sides 2006); whether they offer specifics about their issue priorities or limit themselves to vague valence claims (Geer 2006; Stokes 1992; Sides 2006); whether competing candidates engage in a back-

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<sup>1</sup> In the 2004 National Annenberg Election Study, only 1/3 of respondents said they thought candidates try to keep their promises "always" or "most of the time," and in a 1999 survey by The Project on Campaign Conduct, nearly 3/4 of respondents reported that they were "very" concerned about candidates saying one thing and doing another once elected (Spiliotes and Vavreck 2002). The belief that candidates are insincere is not a new development--in a 1988 ABC/*Washington Post* poll, 71% agreed that "most members of Congress make campaign promises that they have no intention of fulfilling," (Ringquist and Dasse 2004) down from 81% who agreed with a similar statement in a 1971 Harris Survey.

and-forth dialogue on issues or “talk past one another” (Kaplan, Park and Ridout 2006; Sigelman and Buell 2004; Simon 2002); and whether critiques of opponents are fair and factually accurate or unfounded and misleading (Geer 2006). Analyses of campaign effects on voters have explored the influence of media coverage and candidate advertising on citizens’ knowledge about politics, evaluations of candidates, turnout decisions, and attitudes toward government (for a summary, see Brady and Johnston 2006). Most notably, research has focused on the impact of negative ads, investigating whether negativity leads voters to be informed and interested or cynical and disengaged (see, for example, Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1995; Brooks 2006; Brooks and Geer 2007; Goldstein and Freedman 2002; Lau and Pomper 2004; Wattenberg and Briens 1999).

Perhaps surprisingly, there has been almost no systematic empirical attention to a third, equally important standard--the level of correspondence between winning candidates’ appeals in campaigns and their activity in office. In other words, are campaign appeals meaningful? Does the choice to discuss a particular issue indicate to voters that a candidate views it as a priority and will be more active on it in Congress than one who did not raise it? Relatedly, does the *type* of appeal matter? Do candidates who advocate specific solutions to policy problems pursue those issues more intently than those who talk about them in a general fashion? Are claims candidates make about their own interests in an issue better or worse predictors of their subsequent activity than claims that criticize the opponent on it?

The answers to these questions are important for a number of reasons. Most directly, levels of follow-through from campaigning to governing have important bearing on the quality of representational linkages. Campaigns are, as Fenno put it, “the *place* where our representative form of government begins and ends” (1996, 9), and the degree to which elected officials keep their promises has long been central to normative conceptions of democratic legitimacy and

accountability.<sup>2</sup> Due to a variety of conceptual and methodological constraints, however, promise-keeping has been largely peripheral to empirical research on legislative representation and responsiveness, which has instead focused almost solely on the congruence of issue positions between legislators and constituents. By placing campaigns at the center of the study of representation, we gain a broader view of their importance in the representative process, as well as a more nuanced conception of how legislators negotiate the dual demands of campaigning and lawmaking.

Understanding the nature of the relationships between candidates' issue appeals and their policymaking activity also helps to put critiques about campaign discourse derived from other normative standards into context. Laments about the vague and general nature of campaign appeals are rooted in the assumption that such appeals are uninformative and insincere, and a common argument in the debates about negativity in campaigns is that time candidates spend attacking their opponents is time taken away from serious attention to policy problems (but see Geer 2006). However, these intuitions have never been tested, so we do not actually know whether negative appeals provide less information about legislators' priorities than positive appeals or whether vague claims are indeed less sincere than those that are specific. A rigorous investigation of these questions may provide empirical support for the conventional wisdom, but it may also call into question some of the critiques often leveled at candidates.

To study promise-keeping, I assess the linkages between campaign appeals (candidates' televised ads) and subsequent legislative activity (the issue content of bill and resolution

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<sup>2</sup> Mansbridge (2003), for example, identifies *promissory representation*, focused on “the idea that during campaigns representatives made promises to constituents, which they then kept or failed to keep” as the “traditional” model of representation (515).

introductions and cosponsorships) for a sample of 391 winning House candidates in the 1998-2002 elections. I discuss why legislators' campaigns should serve as accurate signals about their governing behavior, explore the relationships between the issues candidates raise in their campaigns and those they pursue in office, investigate whether the signaling power of appeals varies with the type of rhetoric used, and establish why these differences exist.

### **Campaign Appeals and Legislative Action**

Given the normative and theoretical importance of the linkages between electoral politics and governing, why have scholars of campaigns and Congress devoted so little attention to them? Within legislative studies, it can be attributed in large part to the traditional division of labor between work on congressional elections and work on legislative behavior and organization, such that any single study typically addresses one area or the other, but not both. Thus, although the idea of the "electoral connection" (Mayhew 1974) is central to theorizing about Congress, it is usually conceived of prospectively, as how legislators speculate about the effects of their policy decisions on their future electoral prospects, rather than retrospectively, as how features of past campaigns manifest themselves in later behavior (but see Sulkin 2005).

The development of a literature on promise-keeping and related phenomena has been further hampered by the disjuncture between most normative and formal theories of the elections-policy linkage and the realities of congressional politics. Textbook models of representative democracy presume that during campaigns, parties make promises about policies they will pursue if voted into office; on Election Day, voters select candidates from the party whose policy positions and priorities most closely approximate their own; in office, winners do or do not implement their promises; and, in the next election, voters decide whether or not to re-elect them (see, for example, Harrington 1993; Schattschneider 1942; Schedler 1998). This

perspective may provide a fairly accurate depiction of parliamentary systems where parties are the central focus but it captures less adequately the dynamics of most U.S. congressional elections. In a candidate-centered system without strong parties, individual representatives and senators cannot meaningfully promise to bring about a particular outcome, nor can they be blamed if their preferred policies fail to become law. As such, most analyses of the relationship between elections and policy in the U.S. have focused not on legislative behavior, but on presidential promise-keeping (Fishel 1985; Jamieson 2000; Krukones 1984) or on more macro-level phenomena like congressional responses to mandates (Grossback, Peterson, and Stimson 2006), parties' abilities to implement their platforms (Budge and Hofferbert 1990; Pomper 1968), and the role of electoral realignments in producing policy change (Brady 1988; Sinclair 1977).

Finally, the small literature that does exist on promise-keeping by individual legislators has been limited by its sole focus on their issue *positions* as the target of responsiveness. These studies define promise-keeping as the level of congruence between the positions legislators take on an issue in office and their stated positions on that issue from the campaign (e.g., Ringquist and Dasse 2004). This conceptualization is undoubtedly meaningful and useful, but it applies in only a narrow set of situations. One constraint is that we can only determine whether a promise on an issue is kept if that issue comes up for a vote in the next Congress (and, equally important, if the framing of the choice in the roll call corresponds to the framing from the campaign). However, whether or not this occurs is largely outside of the control of individual legislators.

The more notable constraint, though, is that candidates rarely stake out the kind of positions that would enable one to connect a campaign appeal to a later roll call. Instead, when discussing issues, they more often make claims along the lines that they are “champions for education” or are “tough on crime” (Sides 2006; Stokes 1992; Sulkin, Moriarty, and Hefner

2007). Because there can be considerable disagreement about what types of policies would best support these goals (i.e., both a yeay vote OR a nay vote on a policy like "No Child Left Behind" could be framed as pro-education), it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to assess legislators' follow-through on their vague appeals by examining their roll call voting decisions.

As such, I argue that to fully understand the linkages between the electoral and legislative arenas, we need to take a broader view, considering the entirety of candidates' issue appeals in campaigns and extending analyses to include governing activities beyond roll call voting. We can do so by shifting from a sole focus on candidates' and representatives' issue *positions* to include their issue *priorities*, as reflected in the content of their campaign agendas and of the legislation they introduce and cosponsor.<sup>3</sup> From this agenda-based perspective, promise-keeping occurs when legislators actively pursue in office those issues they prioritized in their campaigns.

This focus on agendas and on the campaigns-policy linkage marks a departure from most empirical work on legislative representation (but see Burden 2007; Jones, Price, and Wilkerson 2009; Sulkin 2005). It also reflects a change in perspective from the standard approach to analyzing campaigns. Scholars of electoral politics have understandably focused on the dynamics of campaigns themselves, which means that the search for effects typically ends when campaigns end--on Election Day. Along the same lines, most models of how candidates select campaign issues focus not on their post-election policy goals, but on the more immediate aim of

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<sup>3</sup> Some view introductions and cosponsorships as less policy-relevant and more "symbolic" than roll calls. However, much recent research has demonstrated that they are an important avenue for expressing policy commitments (e.g., Burden 2007; Hall 1996; Koger 2003; Schiller 1995; Sulkin 2005) and that the factors that shape them "are not significantly different from the factors that account for more explicitly outcome-relevant legislative behavior such as roll call voting." (Krehbiel 1995, 922)

maximizing vote share by highlighting issues on which they hold the advantage vis a vis their opponents.<sup>4</sup> Sometimes this advantage is theorized to stem from a legislator's own record (Sellers 1998; Sides 2006), but more often it is thought to relate to general factors like ideology or party. Thus, spatial models suggest that candidates should highlight an issue if their position on it is closer than the opponent's to the median voter (Downs 1957; Hammond and Humes 1993) and issue ownership models suggest that candidates should highlight issues that their party is thought most competent to handle (Ansolabehere and Iyenger 1994; Brasher 2003; Petrocik 1996; Spiliotes and Vavreck 2002). While such strategies are not necessarily inconsistent with linkages between campaign appeals and policy activity, neither do they lead us to expect that campaign and legislative priorities will be strongly interrelated.

### **Expectations about the Linkages between Campaigns and Legislative Priorities**

Although the public has been cynical and political scientists largely silent about the potential of congressional campaign appeals to serve as signals about later behavior, I predict that linkages between the campaign and legislative arenas will be common because legislators have clear incentives to make sincere appeals in campaigns and to follow through on them once in office. Many of these incentives are electoral; for example, research shows that candidates do better at the polls when they highlight issues for which they have a background (Sellers 1998). And, even if voters rarely monitor their representatives' activity in Congress, critics of the incumbent are always on the lookout for weaknesses they can exploit (Arnold 1990, 2004; Sulkin 2005). Evidence of forgotten promises makes a particularly compelling narrative for

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<sup>4</sup> In the classic formulation, Downs (1957) asserts that candidates "never seek office as a means of carrying out particular policies; their only goal is to reap the rewards of holding office *per se*... Upon this reasoning rests the fundamental hypothesis of our model: parties formulate policies in order to win elections, rather than win elections in order to formulate policies" (28).

challengers, so savvy incumbents should seek to avoid such behavior. Moreover, even if in reality there was no punishment for failing to follow through, we know that legislators are risk averse about their reelection prospects and so may behave *as though* it matters.

Second, and equally important, I assume that reelection is not legislators' sole goal; many also have strong policy interests and, when given the opportunity, will pursue them. When designing their campaign agendas, their own priorities should therefore be an important criterion in selecting among the larger set of issues for which they enjoy some sort of advantage. As Fenno (2007) argues, for those with particular policy interests, a consistent focus on these issues at home in their districts, on the campaign trail, and in Washington, DC contributes to the aura of authenticity for which successful legislators strive. From the perspective of legislators, then, the distinction between campaign behavior and governing behavior may be largely artificial.

As such, there are both pre- and post-election factors that encourage strong linkages between appeals and activity. Candidates benefit from focusing their campaigns on issues they have interest in and records on, and, once having raised them in their campaigns, there are further advantages to following through. However, this endogeneity does not pose a conceptual problem, and is actually fundamental to the causal story. In short, to the extent that campaign appeals are sincere, linked to legislators' preexisting interests and priorities, they should also serve as good signals about future legislative activity, and we should therefore observe high levels of promise-keeping.

This logic also points to a reason why the strength of the relationship between appeals and activity may vary with the nature of candidates' claims about an issue (e.g., how prominently it is featured, whether the discussion is positive or negative, and whether it is specific or vague). If the choices candidates make about how to discuss an issue are reflections of the intensity of

their interest in it, then these features should be related to subsequent activity levels. However, if these choices are driven by strategic considerations (e.g, the closeness of the race) that are not connected to policy intentions, then variation in rhetoric should be unrelated to follow-through. Although arguments could be made for a variety of effects, the most obvious a priori expectations are that legislators' subsequent attentiveness to a campaign issue should be higher when that issue was featured prominently in the campaign, when the discussion focused on the candidate's own interest in it (rather than just attacking the opponent), and when specific claims were made.

My approach to testing these expectations includes two steps. The first is to investigate whether the issue content of candidates' campaigns indeed serves as an accurate indicator of their priorities as legislators and whether certain types of appeals serve as stronger signals about these priorities. Importantly, demonstrating that a high level of correspondence exists between the issues candidates prioritize in campaigns and those they pursue in office is enough to answer the normative question about whether promise-keeping occurs. It is *not* necessary to establish that appeals are somehow exogenous, *causing* this behavior.<sup>5</sup> Thus, simple bivariate analyses are all that is required, and, indeed, more complicated models with many controls obscure the basic question--whether a voter, observing the campaign and knowing little else about the candidate's predispositions, can make an inference about the likely content of his or her activities in office.

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<sup>5</sup> The same logic holds true for other models of legislative representation. In policy congruence-based conceptions, strong representational linkages exist when legislators' votes align closely with their constituents' preferences. If voters elect representatives who share their views, congruence is high, and we would not accuse those legislators of failing to represent their districts' interests because they did not have to *change* their issue positions to bring this alignment into being.

Having established that promise-keeping occurs (or not), the second step of the analysis is then to explain *how* any linkages between appeals and activity arise and why we observe the patterns that we do. This entails directly modeling the endogeneity inherent in promise-keeping, using an instrumental variables framework to explore how legislators' past records and constituency composition shape both their decisions to discuss issues in their campaigns and to act on them in office.

## **Data and Methods**

Both of these steps require detailed information on the campaign appeals and subsequent legislative activity of a large sample of candidates/legislators across a number of issues. My source of data about appeals is the televised advertisements produced and run by winning House candidates in the 1998, 2000, and 2002 elections, and my source of data about the legislative activity of these winners is the content of their bill and resolution introductions and cosponsorships in their next terms (the 106th-108th Congresses).

Campaign advertisements are particularly well-suited to my investigation because, compared to secondary sources, they enable me to assess what a candidate said or did not say about issues during the course of the campaign.<sup>6</sup> In addition, because ads present candidates with a limited amount of time in which to make their appeals, they force them to make choices, and therefore should provide good indicators of their priorities (see also Sides 2006). Finally, voters are more likely to be exposed to a candidate through television advertising than through watching news coverage, attending a speech, or accessing a website, so ads are the best source for identifying how candidates present their priorities to their potential constituents.

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<sup>6</sup> If candidates' issue priorities vary by venue, it will be more difficult to uncover links between their ad appeals and their activity. My results thus provide conservative estimates of the extent of these linkages.

In the 1998 and 2000 elections, the Campaign Media Analysis Group (CMAG) and the Wisconsin Advertising Project collected and archived all advertisements run by candidates in the top 75 media markets in the U.S., expanding their efforts in 2002 to include the top 100. These markets comprise the vast majority (>80%) of congressional districts and so, while races in a handful of the smallest states are excluded, the sample very closely approximates the population of candidates who ran ads during these elections. Of course, not all candidates advertise, so the analyses are limited to the 391 winners who did so.<sup>7</sup> If my goal were to explore the behavior of a random sample of legislators, including those who did and did not actively campaign, this approach would raise concerns about representativeness. However, because the goal is to assess whether appeals made in advertisements serve as predictors of subsequent activity, the true population of interest is not all legislators, but all legislators who launched a campaign and advertised in the previous election, and the CMAG/Wisconsin Advertising Project archives come very close to capturing this. Moreover, the sample displays considerable variation on a number of variables of interest. Forty-two percent of the candidates are Democrats and 77% are incumbents, and representatives from 43 states are included, with seniority in office ranging from 0-26 years and vote shares ranging from 50-100%.

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<sup>7</sup> I have full advertising data for 365 and partial advertising data for 26 (i.e., some of these candidates' storyboards were missing). The candidates for whom I have partial data are included in the analyses when appropriate. For example, if a candidate produced two ads and I have the storyboard for one where he or she discussed agriculture, I can confidently say that the candidate raised that issue. However, I cannot say anything about discussion of other issues because I do not know the content of the missing storyboard. As such, that candidate would be included in analyses of agriculture, but excluded in analyses of other issues.

I make use of two features of the CMAG/Wisconsin Advertising Project data collection efforts: the actual storyboards for each of the advertisements (which include screenshots of the visuals and the text of the audio) and the figures on how often each ad was aired by each candidate. The 391 winning candidates in the sample ran a total of 1468 unique ads representing 209,221 ad airings. The first step of the coding process was to read each of these storyboards and note all of the substantive issues discussed.<sup>8</sup> The coding scheme is adapted from those of the Policy Agendas Project (see Baumgartner and Jones 2002), the Wisconsin Advertising Project (see Goldstein and Freedman 2002), and Sulkin's (2005) analysis of winning legislators' attention to their challengers' themes. It includes 18 categories, which are presented in Table 1. As measures of relative attention to issues, Table 1 also presents data on the number of candidates who raised the issue, the average percentage of "advertising time" (defined in more detail below) devoted to each issue by the group of candidates who raised it, and the mean number of activities (introductions and cosponsorships) undertaken by members of the sample on the issue.

**Insert Table 1 about here**

After identifying all of the ads that discussed a particular issue, I conducted a second round of coding, this time noting particular features of how the issue was discussed. In this round, then, the unit of analysis is not the ad, but each of the ~3000 issue claims in the ads. The measures include dummy variables for whether or not the candidate referenced him- or herself,

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<sup>8</sup> Each storyboard was coded by three coders, working independently. Most differences that existed between them were the result of one coder missing an issue that the others identified, rather than disagreements about the appropriate category for a claim. Findings about the relative prominence of various issues and the frequency of specific vs. vague appeals in the 1998-2002 elections correspond closely to Sides' (2006) results, offering a confirmation of the validity of the coding procedures.

whether or not the opponent was mentioned with reference to the issue (either by name or by a term like "my opponent"), and whether the claim about the issue was vague or specific. Vague claims are those that merely state that an issue is important or that the candidate cares about it, and specific claims are those that take a position, offer a plan for dealing with the issue, or discuss a contribution the candidate has made. For example, in the "environment" category in the 2000 elections, vague claims include those like "We want to conserve the environment" (Johnny Isakson, R-GA) and "[Hoeffel wants to]...invest in the environment" (Joseph Hoeffel, D-PA), while specific claims include those like "In Congress I'm working to set aside more land as wilderness and limit development by keeping open space open" (Mark Udall, D-CO) and "I brought two million dollars to the town of Epping to help keep the river clean and brought funding to UNH to study better ways to clean up hazardous waste..." (John Sununu, R-NH). Each issue appeal was coded by four coders, with levels of agreement ranging from 80% to 90%, depending on the issue.

With the ad storyboards coded and the results aggregated to the level of individual legislators, I have indicators of all of the issues in a candidate's agenda and the manner in which each was discussed. The average candidate discusses between 4 and 5 of the 18 issues in the scheme (the range is 0-10), about 40% reference their opponent on at least one of the issues they raise, and, depending on the issue, between about one-quarter and one-half make only vague appeals. To measure how prominently each issue was featured, I calculate an "advertising time" figure for each candidate for each issue. These figures take into account both how many times

ads that featured a particular issue ran, as well as how many other issues were discussed. They sum to one for each candidate, allowing for comparisons across candidates and issues.<sup>9</sup>

Legislative activities, the second component of the analysis, were coded using the same issue scheme. I began by compiling lists of all of the bills and resolutions introduced and cosponsored by each sampled representative in the term preceding and following the campaign. I obtained lists of bill introductions from Adler and Wilkerson's Congressional Bills Project and lists of joint resolutions and cosponsorships from the Library of Congress's THOMAS site.<sup>10</sup> In all, those in the sample made a total of 4,412 introductions and 87,644 cosponsorships. As the first step of the content analysis of these activities, I assigned an issue code to each of the 21,780 measures introduced in the 105th-108th Congresses.<sup>11</sup> The categories provided by the Congressional Bills Project were the starting point for these codes, but all measures were individually recoded into the new scheme. The code for the "parent" introduction was then assigned to the corresponding cosponsorships made by each of the sampled representatives. Finally, I aggregated up to the level of the individual legislator to determine how many activities each undertook on each issue.

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<sup>9</sup> For example, imagine that a candidate ran two ads. The first, which discussed taxes, aired 100 times. The second, which discussed Medicare and taxes, aired 200 times. The size of the "agenda space" for this candidate would be 500 issue airings and the advertising time would be 60% for taxes (300 airings) and 40% for Medicare (200 airings).

<sup>10</sup> The analysis is limited to bills and joint resolutions because they are the only types of measures that, if passed, have the force of law.

<sup>11</sup> In addition to the 18 substantive issue categories, there is an additional category for "government operations" measures--those related to topics like congressional procedures, naming post offices, etc. As shown in Table 1, these comprise about 17% of introduced measures.

## Assessing the Linkages between Campaign Appeals and Legislative Activity

I begin my analysis of the linkages between campaign appeals and legislative activity with the most fundamental question--are candidates who discuss an issue in their campaigns subsequently more active on it in Congress than those who do not? As discussed above, a bivariate approach maps most directly on to this question, so I conduct a series of t-tests. The feature of interest is the proportion of legislators' policy agendas devoted to a particular issue, and I compare legislators who had and had not raised it in the previous campaign. Figure 1 shows that, in accordance with my expectations, there are widespread linkages between appeals and activity--for only 4 of the 18 issues (campaign finance, crime, jobs & infrastructure, and welfare) is campaign discussion *not* associated with higher subsequent activity. For all others, including some that were very popular and salient (e.g., education, Social Security, Medicare, health) and some that were mentioned only rarely (e.g., children's issues, civil rights, consumer issues), those who discussed the issue were significantly more active on it.

### Insert Figure 1 about here

These linkages between appeals and activity are very robust<sup>12</sup> and the effects are often substantial in magnitude. Although the percentage differences may seem small at first glance, they typically translate to a handful of activities, and since the average volume of activity on any given issue (presented in Table 1 and in parentheses next to the issue categories in the figure) is low, small shifts reflect a meaningful difference. For example, the average representative introduces or cosponsors about 15 measures dealing with taxes, but those who had discussed

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<sup>12</sup> The patterns hold when I consider differences in the raw volume of activity on an issue rather than proportions of agendas and when I control for election year, party, and that some legislators appear in the sample in multiple years.

taxes in their campaigns engage in about 4 more activities than those who had not. Similarly, candidates who discuss health, the environment, and civil rights undertake about 5-7 more activities on these issues than their colleagues who did not raise them.

It is important to underscore as well that these results are *not* just a function of partisan differences in issue priorities. When I split the sample by party and conduct separate t-tests for Democrats and Republicans, I find 11 significant ( $p < .10$ ) linkages for Democrats and 11 for Republicans. Legislators from both parties who raise agriculture, children's issues, corporate regulation, defense & foreign policy, the environment, and moral issues devote more attention to these issues in Congress than their copartisans who did not raise them, as do Republicans who talk about the budget, education, and Medicare, and Democrats who discuss health, taxes, and welfare. Thus, there is no discernible issue ownership or trespassing pattern to promise-keeping, and instead the relationship seems to be a general one. In fact, the raw differences for all issues for both parties indicate higher proportions of activity for candidates who raised them, with many of the non-significant linkages approaching conventional levels of statistical significance.

Finally, although cosponsorships are undertaken more frequently than introductions, combining them does not present a problem because the patterns hold for both categories of activities. When I compare the number of introductions/cosponsorships on an issue for candidates who did and did not raise it, I find significant ( $p < .10$ ) linkages for 15 of the 18 issues. For 7 of them (agriculture, civil rights, children's issues, consumer issues, crime, environment, and taxes), there are differences for both introductions and cosponsorships, for 4 (budget, campaign finance, corporate regulation, and health) there are links for cosponsorships but not introductions, and for 4 more (education, Medicare, moral issues, and Social Security) there are links for introductions but not cosponsorships. And, as was the case with the analyses

comparing Democrats and Republicans, nearly all of the raw differences are in the positive direction. Thus, we see promise-keeping occurring both on the comparatively easy activity of cosponsorship and on more effort-intensive introductions and, indeed, because activity levels on many issues tends to be low, the linkages are stronger when introductions and cosponsorships are combined than when we consider either of them separately.

### **Variation in Appeals-Policy Linkages by Type of Appeal**

The next question to be addressed is whether the linkages between appeals and activity vary with the nature of candidates' discussion of an issue. In particular, does taking into account the relative amount of attention a candidate devotes to it add additional predictive power about subsequent activity? Do claims legislators make about themselves have the same relationship to later behavior as claims about their opponents? Does the specificity of the appeal matter? To answer these questions, I use the same approach as above, but vary the comparison groups of interest. The results are presented in Table 2.

In the prominence analysis, summarized in the first column, I limit the analyses to the group of legislators who raised each of the 18 issues and assess whether there is a significant correlation between the advertising time devoted to it and the amount of legislative activity on it. As shown, although the effects are generally in the positive direction, for only three issues is the amount of campaign attention a significant predictor of variation in activity, and for one (crime), the relationship is actually negative. Contrary to expectations, then, for some issues more campaign attention signals greater legislative attention, but for most just having raised the issue is the important feature.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Including controls for the total number of ads a candidate produced and/or the number of ad airings yields no change in the findings.

## **Insert Table 2 about here**

The analyses for the referent of appeals (i.e., positive about the sponsoring candidate or negative about the opponent) are presented in Columns 2 and 3. Since candidates are more likely to mention themselves than their opponents, overall comparisons of candidates who do and do not raise an issue are driven largely by the effects of mentioning oneself. To determine whether differences exist in the signaling power of positive and negative appeals, I conduct two analyses, one comparing candidates who mentioned both themselves AND their opponents in reference to an issue to those who only mentioned themselves, and a second that compares those who only critiqued their opponents to those who did not raise the issue at all. As demonstrated in Column 2, for the first test, there is only one significant positive relationship (for corporate regulation), and for two more (health and welfare) the relationship is inverse, with candidates who both critiqued their opponents and talked about their own interests in an issue less active on it in Congress than those who only talked about themselves. For the second test, presented in Column 3, there is once again only a single significant relationship--legislators who attacked their opponents on jobs & infrastructure engage in more activity than those who did not mention it at all. For all other issues, only attacking the opponent is akin to not discussing the issue at all; in short, it does not serve as a signal that the legislator him- or herself views the issue as a priority.

The analysis of specificity, presented in Column 4, yields a similar conclusion. Here the question is whether, among the group of candidates who raise an issue, there is a difference in activity between those who made only vague claims and those who offered at least one specific appeal. As shown, there are only two issues for which specificity serves as a predictor of activity

above and beyond mentioning the issue.<sup>14</sup> And, the two issues are children's issues and civil rights, which are among the least mentioned by candidates. For another three issues (budget, moral issues, and taxes), there is a significant but *negative* relationship, such that candidates who made specific claims about issues were less active than those who made vague appeals. As such, for virtually all issues, specific appeals do not indicate that the candidate is more sincere about the issue, or that he or she plans to pursue it more intently.

### **Mechanisms Underlying the Campaign Appeals-Legislative Activity Linkage**

The findings to this point demonstrate that there are indeed clear linkages between the issues that candidates prioritize in their campaigns and those they pursue in office. Equally important, the *way* in which candidates discuss an issue appears to matter, although not always in the manner suggested by the conventional wisdom. Positive claims serve as stronger signals than negative claims, but featuring an issue prominently or offering specifics is not linked to higher activity. What, then, produces the relationship between appeals and activity, and why do the patterns differ across types of appeals?

Based on the theory developed above and the pattern of results in Figure 1 and Table 2, my expectation is that similar factors drive legislators' choices to raise an issue in their campaign and to be active on it in office, but that these factors do *not* explain variation in how the issue is discussed. In particular, I expect that the content of appeals and activity should be a function of legislators' likely interest in the issue, as reflected by their past activity on it (the proportions of

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<sup>14</sup> The substantive conclusions about the effects of specificity remain the same when I focus the analysis on whether candidates made a claim about themselves and whether or not those claims were specific. As such, this finding cannot be attributed to the fact that specific appeals may also be more likely to be negative and, as such, less informative about subsequent activity.

their legislative agendas in the previous term that were devoted to it), and relevant constituency characteristics.<sup>15</sup> Thus, for example, legislators from districts with a high proportion of children and/or who have been active on education policy in the past should be more likely to discuss it in their campaigns and to pursue it in the next Congress. However, these variables should *not* be predictors of whether a candidate attacks the opponent on education and, among the group of candidates who discuss it, should not differentiate those who offer specific vs. vague claims or those who feature it prominently and those who mention it in passing.

To test these hypotheses and to assess the nature of the relationship between appeals and activity after taking endogeneity into account, I begin by modeling the linkages between them with an instrumental variables approach that treats campaign appeals as endogenous. In the first stage of the analysis, the campaign appeal (i.e., whether an issue was raised) is the dependent variable, and independent variables include the "interest" variables mentioned above, controls for election year, and, as an instrument, the number of issues raised by the candidate (since the larger the agenda, the higher the probability of raising any given issue).<sup>16</sup> For the second stage,

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<sup>15</sup> The inclusion of the past activity variable requires that I limit this investigation to the 304 legislators in the sample who had been in office previously. The constituency characteristic for the agriculture, crime, and environment models is the percentage of the district that is rural/urban; for the children's issues and education models, the percentage of kids under 18; for the civil rights model, the percentage of non-white residents; for the defense model, whether or not there is a military base in the district; for the Medicare and Social Security models, the percentage of the district over the age of 65; and for the budget, campaign finance, consumer issues, corporate regulation, jobs and infrastructure, corporate regulation, taxes, and welfare models, the median income of the district (in thousands of dollars).

<sup>16</sup> The total issues variable is significant predictor of mentioning the issue for 17 of the 18 issues, but has little to no relationship with subsequent attention. Because the endogenous variable (e.g., the campaign

the dependent variable is the proportion of legislators' agendas devoted to an issue. The independent variables include the same set as in the first stage, plus the instrumented appeal variable. Full results are presented in the Appendix and summarized in Table 3.

**Insert Table 3 about here**

Two important findings emerge from this table. First, in accordance with expectations, indicators of candidates' and legislators' interest in an issue are indeed good predictors of both their choice to discuss an issue in their campaigns and to pursue it in office. As shown, past activity on an issue is a significant predictor of raising it in the campaign for 12 of the 18 issue categories and a predictor of subsequent activity levels on it for 17. Similarly, constituency characteristics are significant predictors for 9 of the 17 issues for campaign appeals and 4 of 17 for legislative activity. These patterns confirm that appeals are indeed sincere and that the promise-keeping linkages we observe are produced by this sincerity, with legislators viewing their campaign priorities as reflections of their legislative priorities.

The second important finding, also in line with predictions, is that after we take into account the endogeneity of appeals, there is little independent effect of campaigns on activity. The final column in the table shows that the instrumented appeals variable is a significant predictor of activity for only one issue--Social Security. However, as discussed above, this does not detract from promise-keeping because the central question for assessing responsiveness and accountability is not whether appeals *cause* activity, but whether legislators follow through on

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appeal) is dichotomous, I use the procedures outlined in Wooldridge (2002, 623-625). I first estimated a series of probit models for appeals, calculated the predicted values, then used these (instead of a dummy for having mentioned the issue) in a 2SLS instrumental variables regression.

what they said they would do, enabling a voter observing the campaign to predict what the winner will do in Congress.

The analyses in Table 3 thus confirm that appeals serve as good signals about activity because legislators view their campaigns and their legislative agendas as interconnected expressions of their priorities. My hypothesis for the final piece of the puzzle, why candidates' decisions to attack the opponent on an issue, to speak about it specifically, or to feature it prominently are *not* good signals, is that these choices are not related to their interest in it. To test this, I replicate the first step of the analysis described above, but vary the dependent variable. In Model 1 of Table 4, which serves as the comparison, it is whether the candidate mentioned him- or herself in reference to the issue. In Model 2, it is whether the opponent was mentioned. In Model 3, it is the advertising time devoted to the issue (among the group of candidates who raised it), and, in Model 4, it is whether at least one specific appeal was made (again limiting the analyses to candidates who raised each issue).

As shown, the results support this reasoning. The findings in Model 1 indicate that candidates' volume of past legislative activity on an issue is significantly related to whether or not they make appeals about themselves on it for 11 of the 18 issues. In contrast, Model 2 shows that the same holds true for only 2 of the 18 for mentioning the opponent. Similarly, the results for Model 3 demonstrate that, among the group of candidates who discuss an issue, levels of past activity explain variation in advertising time for only 2 issues, and Model 4 reveals that the volume of past activity on an issue has no relationship with the specificity of claims.

The findings for constituency characteristics follow the same general pattern. For 10 of the issues, the corresponding district characteristic is a significant predictor of the candidate raising the issue in reference to him- or herself. However, relationships exist for only 3 issues for

mentioning the opponent, 5 issues for advertising time (but, for agriculture, the relationship is negative), and 1 issue for specificity (agriculture, for which the relationship is again negative).

#### **Insert Table 4 about here**

Overall, then, candidates with more established records on an issue or who represent a constituency where that issue should be particularly salient are more likely to discuss their own views on it, but are *not* more likely to attack their opponents on it, to offer a specific appeal, or to devote more advertising time to it. Instead, these choices seem driven more by general strategic considerations like the closeness of the race (see also Kahn and Kenney 1999; Sides 2006; Sulkin, Moriarty, and Hefner 2007). When I compare candidates in races categorized as "tossups" by the *Cook Political Report* with those in other races, I find that the former raise more issues (5.9 vs. 4.7,  $t = 3.2$ ), both in reference to themselves (5.1 vs. 4.5,  $t = 1.9$ ) and their opponents (2.8 vs. 0.9,  $t = 6.4$ ). Thus, they are more likely to attack and tend to devote less advertising time to any one issue than those with smaller agendas. The results for specificity are a bit more mixed. Although candidates in tossup races do not offer specific appeals on a greater proportion of their issues, the specificity of appeals is significantly negatively related to eventual vote share (with those who make specific appeals on a high proportion of their issues receiving lower vote shares,  $r = .10$ ,  $p < .10$ ). These patterns provide support for the argument that, while the content of appeals may be linked to candidates' individual policy interests, rhetorical features of those appeals are a function of contextual factors, and, as such, do not provide much additional insight into their likely priorities in office.

#### **Conclusions**

The overarching conclusion to be reached from the findings presented here is that campaign appeals often serve as useful and meaningful signals about the issues legislators will

pursue in Congress and, as such, are more than just "cheap talk." The common lament that candidates make appeals to win elections and then ignore them in office therefore seems rooted more in voters' cynicism about politics than in reality.

The results also confirm the utility of a criterion for evaluating campaign discourse based on the signaling power of candidates' appeals. In short, when assessing campaigns, we should think not just about whether the discourse that takes place among candidates approximates normative ideals about discussion and deliberation or whether certain features of campaigns have positive or deleterious effects on voters' attitudes, but also about whether these features serve as credible signals about legislators' policy intentions. Sometimes this perspective yields conclusions that mirror those of others (i.e., as with the findings about negativity), but, at other times, it leads to different conclusions about campaign rhetoric. Most notably, it underscores the importance of positive but vague appeals. Many view valence claims that candidates make about themselves (e.g., that they "want to improve our schools" or "ensure quality health care" or "preserve natural resources"), as valuable only because they are not negative, seeing them as relatively uninformative and potentially insincere. In contrast, my results show that they serve as strong signals about the issues that legislators will pursue in office, and, indeed, predict this behavior just as well as more specific appeals.

There are, of course, several possible critiques of these conclusions. One relates to the focus on agendas--that while appeals may tell us about the content of legislators' agendas, they do not necessarily tell us about their positions. This is undoubtedly true, and is one of the reasons why an agenda-based approach should not be the only standard for assessing the quality of campaign discourse or the strength of representational linkages. That said, the view that constituents care solely, or even mostly, about the positions their representatives take on issues is

called into question by work on citizens' knowledge about and attitudes toward their elected officials. Instead, it may be just as accurate to say that the public most often cares about solving problems, and is willing to grant substantial leeway to its representatives to pursue these problems (Arnold 1990; Bianco 1994). From this standpoint, responsiveness occurs when legislators are active in office in addressing the policy issues they prioritized in their campaigns, and my results suggest that they meet this standard fairly well.

The second potential critique relates to the finding that campaign appeals serve as good indicators of future behavior because they are linked to legislators' preexisting interests. As a result, campaigns do not often offer voters information that they could not glean from a careful examination of legislators' records. However, because most voters do not have the interest or knowledge to do so, campaigns often serve as the primary source of information and, as such, what transpires during them is important. Moreover, as discussed above, from a representational perspective, the most important criterion is the extent of the correspondence between legislators' behavior as candidates in campaigns and their activity as policymakers in Congress. The claim that campaigns matter only to the extent that they are consequential proposes a different normative standard with a different set of underlying assumptions.

In sum, exploring the linkages between campaign appeals and legislative activity offers new insight into the nature and extent of campaign effects and the effectiveness of elections at promoting representation and helps us to better understand how legislators view their dual roles as campaigners and as lawmakers. However, only by bridging the gap that divides studies of electoral and legislative politics to capture phenomena that extend beyond Election Day can we fully understand and evaluate the role that campaigns play in democratic politics.

**CAMPAIGN APPEALS AND LEGISLATIVE ACTION**  
**Appendix--Full Results for Tables 3 and 4**

TABLE 3	STAGE 1--DV = Mention Issue						STAGE 2--DV = Legislative Activity on Issue					
	Past	Constit.	Total Issues	2000	2002	Const.	Issue	Past	Constit.	2000	2002	Const.
<b>Agriculture</b>	.12***	.02***	.31***	.20	.23	-4.37	.36	.60***	.02***	-1.46***	-.98***	1.48
Stage 1 LR chi2= 55.1	(.04)	(.01)	(.06)	(.31)	(.31)	(.60)	(.94)	(.05)	(.01)	(.26)	(.27)	(.24)
Stage 2 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .51												
<b>Budget</b>	.16***	.01	.32***	-.17	-1.13***	-2.34	-.36	.63***	.003	.06	.35	.17
Stage 1 LR chi2= 97.4	(.05)	(.01)	(.04)	(.20)	(.24)	(.49)	(.36)	(.05)	(.01)	(.18)	(.22)	(.39)
Stage 2 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .35												
<b>Campaign Finance</b>	.09	.03***	.27***	.20	-.07	-4.69	-.28	.26	.003	.37***	-.67***	.58
Stage 1 LR chi2=25.2	(.09)	(.01)	(.06)	(.33)	(.36)	(.86)	(.85)	(.04)	(.01)	(.14)	(.14)	(.28)
Stage 2 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .29												
<b>Children's Issues</b>	.21*	-.07	.18**	-.38	-.25	-1.01	.17	.42***	-.02	-.53***	-.13	1.38
Stage 1 LR chi2=13.9	(.12)	(.07)	(.07)	(.37)	(.36)	(1.89)	(.67)	(.04)	(.02)	(.09)	(.09)	(.42)
Stage 2 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .33												
<b>Civil Rights</b>	.19**	.02**	.18*	---	---	-2.21	1.69	.86***	.01	---	---	1.02
Stage 1 LR chi2=14.9	(.10)	(.01)	(.10)			(.86)	(3.01)	(.05)	(.01)			(.51)
Stage 2 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .58												
<b>Consumer Issues</b>	.15**	-.0004	-.013	-.03	-.50	-2.06	-2.25	.47	-.003	-.51**	-.41	1.82
Stage 1 LR chi2=7.2	(.07)	(.02)	(.06)	(.31)	(.46)	(.76)	(19.42)	(.32)	(.01)	(.24)	(.59)	(.46)
Stage 2 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .10												
<b>Corporate Reg.</b>	.17	.06***	.26***	---	---	-4.79	-1.00	.51***	.05***	---	---	-1.09
Stage 1 LR chi2=19.2	(.12)	(.02)	(.08)			(1.17)	(.77)	(.10)	(.02)			(.75)
Stage 2 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .13												
<b>Crime</b>	.03	.02***	.31***	-.49**	-.80***	-3.33	.58	.58***	.001	1.83***	2.71***	1.06
Stage 1 LR chi2=84.6	(.03)	(.004)	(.04)	(.22)	(.23)	(.52)	(.58)	(.05)	(.01)	(.31)	(.33)	(.54)
Stage 2 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .45												
<b>Defense/Foreign Pol.</b>	.04**	.39**	.12***	-.06	1.25***	-2.41	1.24	.65***	.65	.27	-.07	6.23
Stage 1 LR chi2=84.4	(.02)	(.19)	(.04)	(.24)	(.23)	(.38)	(3.12)	(.06)	(.66)	(.61)	(1.47)	(.78)
Stage 2 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .45												
<b>Education</b>	.10***	.07*	.30***	.14	-.49**	-3.28	-.60	.65***	-.005	.19	-.47	2.59
Stage 1 LR chi2=74.9	(.03)	(.04)	(.04)	(.21)	(.21)	(.98)	(.69)	(.05)	(.06)	(.33)	(.36)	(1.51)
Stage 2 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .39												

<b>Environment</b>	.09***	-.004	.14***	.01	.12	-2.37	-1.23	.74***	-.03***	-1.33***	-1.86***	3.78
Stage 1 LR chi2=26.1	(.02)	(.004)	(.04)	(.22)	(.23)	(.38)	(2.30)	(.07)	(.01)	(.43)	(.47)	(.57)
Stage 2 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .45												
<b>Health</b>	.09***	-.0004	.24***	.73***	.44**	-2.66	.69	.69***	.02	.43	.45	2.10
Stage 1 LR chi2=67.0	(.02)	(.01)	(.04)	(.20)	(.21)	(.51)	(1.00)	(.05)	(.02)	(.49)	(.50)	(1.02)
Stage 2 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .54												
<b>Jobs/Infrastructure</b>	.04*	-.03***	.24***	-.08	.59***	-.82	-.84	.53***	-.01	-3.20***	-2.61***	9.39
Stage 1 LR chi2=68.0	(.02)	(.01)	(.04)	(.19)	(.21)	(.57)	(1.13)	(.05)	(.02)	(.50)	(.58)	(1.58)
Stage 2 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .33												
<b>Medicare</b>	.04	.15***	.35***	.94***	.72***	-4.22	-.55	.68***	.01	.56	-.75*	2.12
Stage 1 LR chi2=108.1	(.03)	(.04)	(.05)	(.21)	(.22)	(.57)	(.60)	(.05)	(.06)	(.37)	(.39)	(.75)
Stage 2 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .39												
<b>Moral Issues</b>	.12***	---	.26***	-.07	-.30	-3.19	1.45	1.16***	---	1.50***	1.91***	-.84
Stage 1 LR chi2=31.5	(.04)		(.06)	(.29)	(.31)	(.46)	(1.04)	(.04)		(.24)	(.25)	(.20)
Stage 2 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .82												
<b>Social Security</b>	.03	.05	.47***	-.54**	-.94***	-2.06	.34*	.45***	.05**	-.02	-.68***	.47
Stage 1 LR chi2=124.1	(.09)	(.03)	(.05)	(.22)	(.24)	(.52)	(.20)	(.05)	(.02)	(.14)	(.15)	(.30)
Stage 2 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .26												
<b>Taxes</b>	.07***	.01	.38***	-.35*	-.45**	-2.74	.19	.86***	-.01	1.87***	.35	.63
Stage 1 LR chi2=115.3	(.02)	(.01)	(.05)	(.21)	(.22)	(.49)	(.67)	(.04)	(.02)	(.44)	(.47)	(.90)
Stage 2 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .70												
<b>Welfare</b>	-.01	.01	.18***	-.40*	-.63**	-2.21	.27	.44***	.01	-.46***	-.40**	1.46
Stage 1 LR chi2=21.6	(.08)	(.01)	(.05)	(.24)	(.27)	(.63)	(.86)	(.05)	(.01)	(.17)	(.19)	(.38)
Stage 2 Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .22												

*Note: The table reports full results for the analyses summarized in Table 3. The dependent variable in stage 1 models is a dummy for whether or not a candidate raised a particular issue. The predicted values from this stage were then used as an independent variable ("issue") in the 2SLS instrumental variables regression analyses for stage 2, where the dependent variable is the proportion of legislators' agendas devoted to each issue. It was necessary to exclude the dummies for election year to specify the model for civil rights. The corporate regulations model is limited to 2002. \*\*\* = p < .01; \*\* = p < .05; \* = p < .10.*

<b>Table 4—Model 1</b>	<b>Past</b>	<b>Constit.</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>Constant</b>
<b>DV = Mention Self?</b>	<b>Activity</b>		<b>Issues</b>	<b>Election</b>	<b>Election</b>	
<b>Agriculture</b> (N=285)	.12***	.02***	.31***	.20	.23	-4.37
LR Chi-sq=55.1, p=.00	(.04)	(.01)	(.06)	(.31)	(.31)	(.60)
<b>Budget</b> (N=285)	.15***	.01	.32***	-.14	-1.00***	-2.50
LR Chi-sq=90.4, p=.00	(.05)	(.01)	(.04)	(.20)	(.24)	(.50)
<b>Campaign Finance</b> (N=285)	.09	.04***	.26***	.19	-.21	-4.85
LR Chi-sq=25.8, p=.00	(.09)	(.01)	(.07)	(.34)	(.38)	(.88)
<b>Children's Issues</b> (N=285)	.21*	-.08	.18**	-.28	-.14	-.86
LR Chi-sq=12.4, p=.03	(.13)	(.08)	(.07)	(.38)	(.37)	(1.94)
<b>Civil Rights</b> (N=285)	.19**	.02**	.18*	---	---	-2.21
LR Chi-sq=19.0, p=.00	(.10)	(.01)	(.10)			(.86)
<b>Consumer Issues</b> (N=285)	.17**	.0004	-.02	.09	-.37	-2.23
LR Chi-sq=7.7, p=.18	(.08)	(.02)	(.07)	(.33)	(.48)	(.78)
<b>Corp. Regulations</b> (N=83)	.19	.06***	.21***	---	---	-4.73
LR Chi-sq=16.6, p=.00	(.12)	(.02)	(.08)			(1.17)
<b>Crime</b> (N=285)	.04	.02***	.25***	-.56***	-.93	-3.44
LR Chi-sq=73.2, p=.00	(.03)	(.01)	(.04)	(.22)	(.23)	(.54)
<b>Defense</b> (N=285)	.04**	.41**	.13***	-.06	1.22***	-2.42
LR Chi-sq=82.6, p=.00	(.02)	(.19)	(.04)	(.24)	(.23)	(.39)
<b>Education</b> (N=285)	.10***	.08**	.30***	.14	-.52**	-3.47
LR Chi-sq=76.4, p=.00	(.03)	(.04)	(.04)	(.21)	(.21)	(.98)
<b>Environment</b> (N=285)	.10***	-.004	.15***	-.03	.06	-2.49
LR Chi-sq=29.2, p=.00	(.02)	(.01)	(.04)	(.22)	(.24)	(.39)
<b>Health</b> (N=285)	.09***	-.001	.24***	.70***	.33	-2.61
LR Chi-sq=65.3, p=.00	(.02)	(.01)	(.04)	(.20)	(.21)	(.51)
<b>Jobs and Infrastructure</b> (N=285)	.03	-.03***	.21***	-.12	.60***	-.75
LR Chi-sq=60.1, p=.00	(.02)	(.01)	(.04)	(.19)	(.20)	(.57)
<b>Medicare</b> (N=285)	.04	.14***	.32***	.90***	.66***	-4.03
LR Chi-sq=99.2, p=.00	(.03)	(.03)	(.04)	(.21)	(.21)	(.55)
<b>Moral Issues</b> (N=285)	.13***	---	.23***	.06	-.36	-3.17
LR Chi-sq=25.3, p=.00	(.04)		(.06)	(.29)	(.34)	(.47)
<b>Social Security</b> (N=285)	.03	.05	.46***	-.50**	-.93***	-2.08
LR Chi-sq=122.7, p=.00	(.09)	(.03)	(.05)	(.22)	(.24)	(.51)
<b>Taxes</b> (N=285)	.06***	.02*	.39***	-.16	-.43*	-2.98
LR Chi-sq=110.9, p=.00	(.02)	(.01)	(.05)	(.21)	(.22)	(.50)
<b>Welfare</b> (N=285)	.02	.01	.16***	-.41*	-.81***	-2.29
LR Chi-sq=20.7, p=.00	(.08)	(.01)	(.05)	(.24)	(.29)	(.64)

*Note: The table reports probit coefficients (with standard errors in parentheses) for the results summarized in Model 1 of Table 4. The dependent variable for all models is a dummy for whether or not a candidate raised a particular issue in reference to him- or herself. It was necessary to exclude the dummies for election year to specify the model for civil rights. The corporate regulations model is limited to 2002. \*\*\* = p < .01; \*\* = p < .05; \* = p < .10*

<b>Table 4—Model 2</b>	<b>Past</b>	<b>Constit.</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>Constant</b>
<b>DV = Mention Opponent?</b>	<b>Activity</b>		<b>Issues</b>	<b>Election</b>	<b>Election</b>	
<b>Agriculture</b> (N=285)	-.11	.03	.01	---	---	-3.36
LR Chi-sq=1.9, p=.59	(.23)	(.02)	(.19)			(1.47)
<b>Budget</b> (N=285)	.03	-.004	.16**	---	---	-2.62
LR Chi-sq=6.0, p=.11	(.09)	(.02)	(.07)			(.89)
<b>Campaign Finance</b> (N=285)	-.43	-.05	.24*	-.33	-.48	-1.02
LR Chi-sq=7.6, p=.18	(.38)	(.05)	(.14)	(.69)	(.73)	(2.03)
<b>Children's Issues</b> (N=285)	-.16	-.01	.33*	---	---	-4.24
LR Chi-sq=5.8, p=.12	(.38)	(.13)	(.18)			(3.68)
<b>Civil Rights</b> (N=285)	---	---	---	---	---	---
LR Chi-sq=N/A, p=N/A						
<b>Consumer Issues</b> (N=285)	.09	.02	.07	---	---	-3.90
LR Chi-sq=1.5, p=.67	(.12)	(.03)	(.13)			(1.45)
<b>Corp. Regulations</b> (N=83)	.50	.12*	1.29*	---	---	-18.78
LR Chi-sq=16.8, p=.00	(.59)	(.07)	(.71)			(10.13)
<b>Crime</b> (N=285)	-.06	.002	.36***	-.23	-.45	-2.96
LR Chi-sq=43.1, p=.00	(.05)	(.01)	(.07)	(.29)	(.30)	(.68)
<b>Defense</b> (N=285)	.07**	-.32	.18**	-.14	.52	-4.33
LR Chi-sq=13.7, p=.02	(.03)	(.43)	(.09)	(.58)	(.49)	(.96)
<b>Education</b> (N=285)	-.01	-.02	.19***	.13	-.69**	-1.63
LR Chi-sq=19.7, p=.00	(.04)	(.05)	(.05)	(.25)	(.33)	(1.22)
<b>Environment</b> (N=285)	-.03	-.01	.15*	.54	.54	-2.87
LR Chi-sq=6.1, p=.30	(.05)	(.01)	(.08)	(.49)	(.48)	(.74)
<b>Health</b> (N=285)	.002	.003	.20***	.70**	.39	-3.15
LR Chi-sq=16.5, p=.01	(.03)	(.01)	(.06)	(.33)	(.35)	(.81)
<b>Jobs and Infrastructure</b> (N=285)	.03	-.01	.19***	.04	.47	-3.35
LR Chi-sq=12.3, p=.03	(.04)	(.02)	(.07)	(.38)	(.36)	(1.24)
<b>Medicare</b> (N=285)	.05	.12***	.27***	1.01***	.65*	-5.38
LR Chi-sq=42.4, p=.00	(.04)	(.04)	(.06)	(.34)	(.35)	(.82)
<b>Moral Issues</b> (N=285)	.11**	---	.40***	-.65	-.32	-4.35
LR Chi-sq=30.8, p=.00	(.05)		(.10)	(.45)	(.38)	(.80)
<b>Social Security</b> (N=285)	.04	.08**	.20***	-.39	-.39	-3.14
LR Chi-sq=28.1, p=.00	(.09)	(.04)	(.05)	(.25)	(.25)	(.59)
<b>Taxes</b> (N=285)	.02	-.001	.31***	-.33	-.21	-2.74
LR Chi-sq=51.3, p=.00	(.02)	(.01)	(.05)	(.25)	(.25)	(.59)
<b>Welfare</b> (N=285)	-.50	-.03	.45**	---	---	-3.16
LR Chi-sq=12.1, p=.01	(.30)	(.05)	(.22)			(2.54)

*Note: The table reports probit coefficients (with standard errors in parentheses) for the results summarized in Model 2 of Table 4. The dependent variable for all models is a dummy for whether or not a candidate mentioned the opponent on a particular issue. It was necessary to exclude the dummies for election year to specify the models for agriculture, budget, children's issues, consumer issues, and welfare. Only one candidate referenced the opponent on civil rights, so no model is estimated for that issue. The corporate regulations model is limited to 2002. \*\*\* = p < .01; \*\* = p < .05; \* = p < .10*

<b>Table 4—Model 3</b>	<b>Past</b>	<b>Constit.</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>Constant</b>
<b>DV = Advertising Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>		<b>Issues</b>	<b>Election</b>	<b>Election</b>	
<b>Agriculture</b> (N=28)	-.04	-.14*	-3.57***	-2.06	4.50	43.48
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .63	(.41)	(.08)	(.57)	(2.99)	(2.92)	(7.15)
<b>Budget</b> (N=99)	1.03*	.07	-3.78***	-1.97	-2.23	35.61
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .39	(.56)	(.11)	(.53)	(2.13)	(3.00)	(6.30)
<b>Campaign Finance</b> (N=20)	-.88	-.17	-4.19***	-3.23	-2.86	52.86
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .40	(1.37)	(.17)	(1.20)	(4.78)	(4.59)	(13.53)
<b>Children's Issues</b> (N=11)	-2.42	-3.99	-2.43	12.93	-6.51	134.42
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .14	(3.48)	(4.90)	(2.91)	(17.27)	(10.35)	(124.03)
<b>Civil Rights</b> (N=1)	---	---	---	---	---	---
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = N/A						
<b>Consumer Issues</b> (N=11)	-4.08	-.46	-13.32***	---	---	124.07
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .71	(2.73)	(.47)	(2.63)			(30.75)
<b>Corp. Regulations</b> (N=22)	.25	.34*	-2.75***	---	---	17.51
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .42	(.86)	(.18)	(.71)			(9.57)
<b>Crime</b> (N=83)	-.46	-.04	-4.63***	-4.23	-.97	55.78
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .40	(.57)	(.08)	(.67)	(3.20)	(3.60)	(8.48)
<b>Defense</b> (N=79)	.13	-1.17	-5.29***	-2.51	-1.38	50.34
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .41	(.28)	(3.18)	(.71)	(5.15)	(4.29)	(6.64)
<b>Education</b> (N=181)	.26	.44	-5.08***	-.15	-.81	39.22
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .43	(.31)	(.40)	(.44)	(2.18)	(2.42)	(10.92)
<b>Environment</b> (N=50)	.17	-.08	-2.66***	3.15	.99	33.04
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .17	(.32)	(.08)	(.77)	(3.79)	(4.26)	(6.77)
<b>Health</b> (N=133)	.55**	-.18	-5.97***	-1.19	-.21	58.02
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .53	(.24)	(.12)	(.53)	(2.87)	(3.03)	(7.44)
<b>Jobs and Infrastructure</b> (N=135)	-.30	-.23**	-4.77***	.41	.35	62.48
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .43	(.25)	(.11)	(.48)	(2.60)	(2.47)	(7.30)
<b>Medicare</b> (N=156)	.01	.88***	-3.59***	7.78	3.47	26.30
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .47	(.26)	(.26)	(.38)	(1.94)	(1.96)	(4.81)
<b>Moral Issues</b> (N=24)	.11	---	-7.06***	11.97*	9.95	57.06
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .61	(.71)		(1.39)	(6.50)	(7.01)	(11.33)
<b>Social Security</b> (N=176)	-.45	.40*	-2.83***	.94	-.94	31.63
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .33	(.54)	(.21)	(.31)	(1.36)	(1.48)	(3.27)
<b>Taxes</b> (N=138)	-.10	-.07	-3.63***	-4.17**	-2.12	48.20
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .32	(.17)	(.10)	(.45)	(2.11)	(2.15)	(5.73)
<b>Welfare</b> (N=33)	1.10	-.06	-2.70***	6.29**	-.72	31.50
Adj. R <sup>2</sup> = .52	(.93)	(.13)	(.66)	(2.74)	(3.03)	(8.96)

*Note: The table reports OLS regression coefficients (with standard errors in parentheses) for the results summarized in Model 3 of Table 4. The dependent variable for all models is candidate's advertising time on a particular issue. Analyses are limited to the group of candidates who raised the issue. It was necessary to exclude the dummies for election year to specify the model for consumer issues, and, because the low N yielded perfect predictions, it was not possible to estimate a model for civil rights. The corporate regulations model is limited to 2002. \*\*\* = p < .01; \*\* = p < .05; \* = p < .10.*

<b>Table 4—Model 4</b> <b>DV = Specific Appeal?</b>	<b>Past</b> <b>Activity</b>	<b>Constit.</b>	<b>Total</b> <b>Issues</b>	<b>2000</b> <b>Election</b>	<b>2002</b> <b>Election</b>	<b>Constant</b>
<b>Agriculture</b> (N=28)	.02	-.08**	-.39	-.83	-.89	7.57
LR Chi-sq=11.0, p=.05	(.14)	(.04)	(.24)	(.94)	(.80)	(3.32)
<b>Budget</b> (N=99)	-.05	-.02	.05	-.16	-1.61***	2.24
LR Chi-sq=13.5, p=.02	(.11)	(.02)	(.10)	(.45)	(.50)	(1.21)
<b>Campaign Finance</b> (N=20)	.06	-.04	-.17	-.88	-1.16	3.70
LR Chi-sq=4.8, p=.45	(.32)	(.04)	(.25)	(1.05)	(.93)	(3.10)
<b>Children's Issues</b> (N=11)	---	---	---	---	---	---
LR Chi-sq=N/A, p=N/A						
<b>Civil Rights</b> (N=1)	---	---	---	---	---	---
LR Chi-sq=N/A, p=N/A						
<b>Consumer Issues</b> (N=11)	---	---	---	---	---	---
LR Chi-sq =N/A, p=N/A						
<b>Corp. Regulations</b> (N=22)	-.16	-.03	.08	---	---	1.74
LR Chi-sq=1.3, p=.73	(.18)	(.04)	(.16)			(2.11)
<b>Crime</b> (N=83)	-.10	.001	-.15	.11	.91	2.47
LR Chi-sq=8.7, p=.12	(.07)	(.01)	(.10)	(.41)	(.61)	(1.15)
<b>Defense</b> (N=79)	.03	-.30	.07	-.20	-.76*	-.07
LR Chi-sq=5.8, p=.33	(.03)	(.31)	(.07)	(.52)	(.43)	(.65)
<b>Education</b> (N=181)	-.002	.03	.02	.24	-.50*	.01
LR Chi-sq=8.8, p=.12	(.03)	(.04)	(.05)	(.25)	(.26)	(1.22)
<b>Environment</b> (N=50)	-.01	.01	.02	-.37	.57	.33
LR Chi-sq=4.8, p=.44	(.04)	(.01)	(.11)	(.47)	(.57)	(.88)
<b>Health</b> (N=133)	.04	-.02	.19**	.23	-.84*	.74
LR Chi-sq=14.9, p=.01	(.03)	(.01)	(.08)	(.43)	(.41)	(.94)
<b>Jobs and Infrastructure</b> (N=135)	.001	-.01	.08	-.24	-.53*	.31
LR Chi-sq=6.7, p=.24	(.03)	(.01)	(.05)	(.29)	(.28)	(.81)
<b>Medicare</b> (N=156)	.07	.02	.02	2.39***	2.38***	-1.95
LR Chi-sq=79.2, p=.00	(.05)	(.05)	(.07)	(.35)	(.35)	(.93)
<b>Moral Issues</b> (N=24)	.003	---	.29	.94	-.84	-1.14
LR Chi-sq=4.0, p=.41	(.08)		(.21)	(1.05)	(.82)	(1.62)
<b>Social Security</b> (N=176)	.10	-.01	.10**	.16	-.09	-.62
LR Chi-sq=6.1, p=.30	(.09)	(.03)	(.05)	(.22)	(.24)	(.54)
<b>Taxes</b> (N=138)	-.03	-.02	.12**	-.01	.004	.44
LR Chi-sq=10.1, p=.07	(.02)	(.01)	(.06)	(.27)	(.27)	(.72)
<b>Welfare</b> (N=33)	.15	-.01	-.07	-.04	.27	.45
LR Chi-sq=1.4, p=.93	(.19)	(.03)	(.14)	(.57)	(.62)	(1.89)

*Note: The table reports probit coefficients (with standard errors in parentheses) for the results summarized in Model 4 of Table 4. The dependent variable for all models is a dummy for whether or not a candidate made a specific claim about a particular issue. Analyses are limited to the group of candidates who raised the issue. It was necessary to exclude the dummies for election year to specify the model for consumer issues, and, because the low N yielded perfect predictions, it was not possible to estimate models for civil rights and children's issues. The corporate regulations model is limited to 2002. \*\*\* = p < .01; \*\* = p < .05; \* = p < .10*

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**Table 1. Campaign and Legislative Attention to Issues**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Number of Candidates</b>	<b>Mean % of Advertising Time</b>	<b>Mean Number of Activities</b>
Agriculture	42	14	6.2
Budget	134	16	2.7
Campaign Finance	27	14	2.0
Children's Issues	16	14	2.5
Civil Rights	6	23	5.7
Consumer Issues	17	25	5.4
Corporate Regulation	28	16	2.9
Crime	120	19	13.7
Defense & Foreign Policy	101	20	39.2
Education	254	25	12.9
Environment	73	18	16.8
Health	178	22	26.2
Jobs & Infrastructure	185	21	30.7
Medicare	207	22	13.6
Moral Issues	40	16	7.0
Social Security	237	19	4.2
Taxes	207	21	14.6
Welfare	39	17	6.0
Gov't Operations			20.0

*Note: Cell entries report relative attention to each issue in sampled candidates' campaigns in 1998, 2000, and 2002 and legislative activity on each issue in the 106th-108th Congresses.*

**Table 2. The Nature of Appeals and Follow-through in Office**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Prominence</b>	<b>Mention Self Only vs. Mention Self and Opponent</b>	<b>Mention Opponent Only vs. No Mention</b>	<b>Vague Claim vs. Specific Claim</b>
Agriculture	r =.01	4.9%/4.2%	---	5.0%/4.7%
Budget	r =.12	1.7%/1.9%	1.9%/1.4%	2.4%/1.7%
Campaign Finance	r =.33	1.2%/1.3%	1.1%/1.0%	1.0%/1.1%
Children's Issues	r =-.05	---	1.8%/1.1%	.8%/2.2%
Civil Rights	r =-.41	---	---	3.9%/7.0%
Consumer Issues	r =.17	3.5%/2.0%	---	3.7%/3.2%
Corporate Regulation	r =.24	2.1%/2.7%	---	1.8%/2.2%
Crime	r =-.17	6.9%/6.2%	7.1%/6.4%	7.0%/6.8%
Defense & Foreign Policy	r =-.07	19.2%/22.7%	21.5%/17.1%	19.6%/19.5%
Education	r =.15	6.0%/5.6%	8.3%/5.1%	6.2%/5.9%
Environment	r =.20	10.8%/9.7%	7.8%/7.3%	11.0%/10.3%
Health	r =.22	12.8%/11.4%	9.6%/10.3%	11.3%/12.6%
Jobs & Infrastructure	r =.01	15.3%/14.2%	16.8%/14.6%	14.7%/15.6%
Medicare	r =.09	6.2%/6.9%	5.4%/5.8%	6.1%/6.5%
Moral Issues	r =.15	5.9%/5.6%	4.7%/3.9%	9.3%/5.0%
Social Security	r =.02	2.1%/2.2%	2.2%/1.9%	2.1%/2.1%
Taxes	r =.08	9.7%/9.0%	7.3%/6.6%	10.1%/8.7%
Welfare	r =-.12	2.8%/1.3%	2.7%/2.7%	2.9%/2.6%

*Note: Column 1 presents Pearson correlation coefficients for the relationship between advertising time on an issue and the proportion of legislators' agendas in the next term devoted to it. Columns 2-4 present the proportion of agendas devoted to an issue by group, with differences assessed using independent samples t-tests. Dark gray shading indicates that the difference is significant ( $p < .10$ ) and in the expected direction. Light gray shading indicates significant results that go against expectations.*

**Table 3. Why Do Appeals Predict Activity?**

	Stage 1--Campaign DV = Mention Issue?		Stage 2--Legislative Activity DV = % of Agenda Devoted to Issue		
	Past	Constituency	Past	Constituency	Appeal
Agriculture	.12	.02	.02	.60	.36
Budget	.16	.01	.63	.003	-.36
Campaign Finance	.09	.03	.26	.003	-.28
Children's Issues	.21	-.07	.42	-.02	.17
Civil Rights	.19	.02	.86	.01	1.69
Consumer Issues	.15	-.0004	.47	-.003	-2.25
Corporate Regulation	.17	.06	.51	.05	-1.00
Crime	.03	.02	.58	.001	.58
Defense & Foreign Policy	.04	.39	.65	.65	1.24
Education	.10	.07	.65	-.005	-.60
Environment	.09	-.004	.74	-.03	-1.23
Health	.09	-.0004	.69	.02	.69
Jobs & Infrastructure	.04	-.03	.53	-.01	-.84
Medicare	.04	.15	.68	.01	-.55
Moral Issues	.12	---	1.16	---	1.45
Social Security	.03	.05	.45	.05	.34
Taxes	.07	.01	.86	-.01	.19
Welfare	-.01	.01	.44	.01	.27

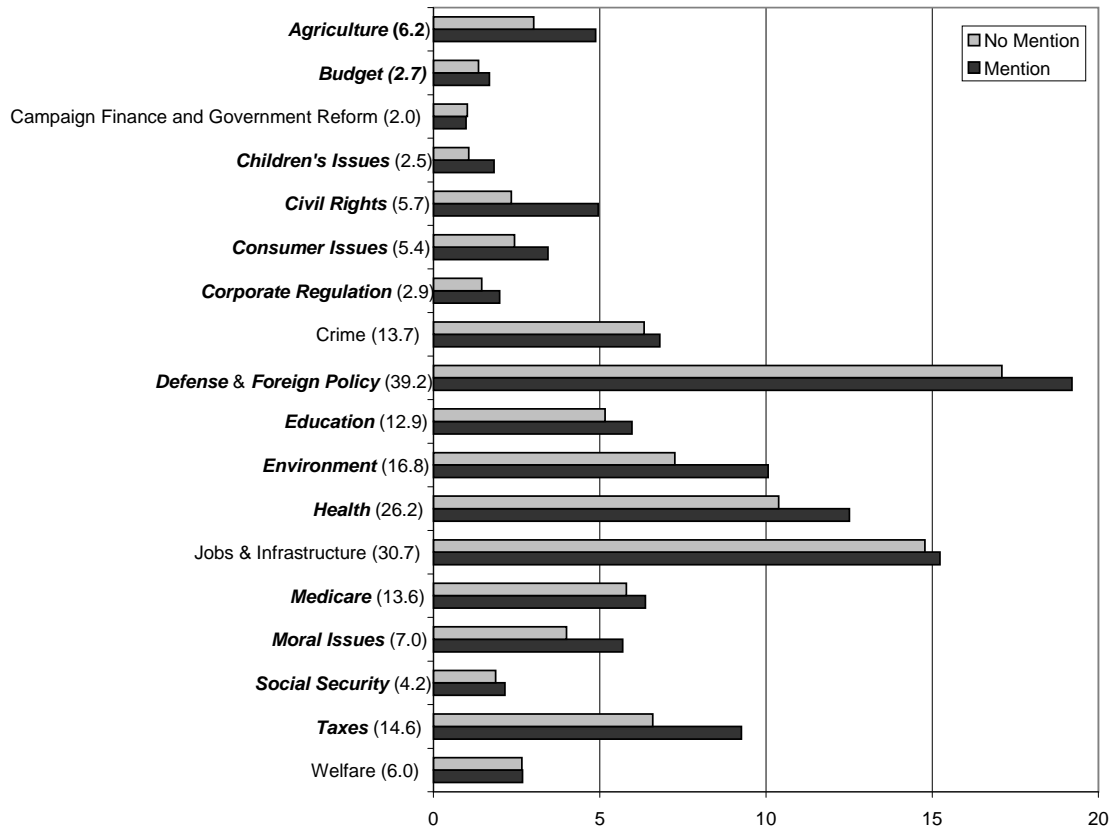
*Note: The table summarizes the results of a 2SLS instrumental variables regression (full results in the Appendix) where the dependent variable in the first stage is whether a candidate raised an issue and the dependent variable in the second stage is the proportion of their subsequent activity devoted to it. Independent variables in stage 1 include past activity, constituency characteristics, election year, and the size of the candidate's agenda. Independent variables in stage 2 include past activity, constituency, election year, and the instrumented appeals variable from stage 1. Cells present probit coefficients for stage 1 and regression coefficients for stage 2. Dark gray shading indicates that the difference is significant ( $p < .10$ ) and in the expected direction. There are no significant results that go against expectations.*

**Table 4. Past Activity, Constituency Characteristics, and Campaign Appeals**

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	Mention Self		Mention Opp.		Ad Time		Specific Claim	
	Past	Const.	Past	Const	Past	Const	Past	Const
Agriculture	.12	.02	-.11	.03	-.04	-.14	.02	-.08
Budget	.15	.01	.03	-.004	1.03	.08	-.05	-.02
Campaign Finance	.09	.04	-.43	-.05	-.88	-.17	.06	-.04
Children's Issues	.21	-.08	-.16	-.01	-2.42	-3.99	---	---
Civil Rights	.21	.02	---	---	---	---	---	---
Consumer Issues	.17	.00	.09	.02	-4.08	-.46	---	---
Corporate Regulations	.19	.06	.50	.12	.25	.34	-.16	-.03
Crime	.04	.02	-.06	.002	-.46	-.04	-.10	.001
Defense & Foreign Policy	.04	.41	.07	-.32	.13	-1.17	.02	-.30
Education	.10	.08	-.01	-.02	.26	.44	-.002	.03
Environment	.10	-.004	-.03	-.01	.17	-.08	-.01	.01
Health	.09	.001	.002	.003	.55	-.18	.04	-.02
Jobs & Infrastructure	.03	-.03	.03	-.01	-.30	-.23	.001	-.005
Medicare	.04	.14	.05	.12	.01	.88	.07	.02
Moral Issues	.13	--	.11	---	.11	---	.003	---
Social Security	.03	.05	.04	.08	-.45	.40	.10	-.01
Taxes	.06	.02	.02	-.001	-.10	-.07	-.03	-.02
Welfare	.02	.01	-.50	-.03	1.10	-.06	.15	-.01

*Note: The table summarizes the results of a series of models (presented in full in the Appendix) where the independent variables include past activity, constituency characteristics, election year, and the size of the candidate's agenda. The DV in Model 1 is whether a candidate mentioned him/herself on an issue, in Model 2, whether the opponent was mentioned, in Model 3, the advertising time on it, and in Model 4 whether a specific appeal was made (Models 3 and 4 are limited to candidates who mentioned the issue). Cells report probit coefficients on past activity/constituency for Models 1, 2, and 4 and OLS coefficients for Model 3. Dark gray shading indicates that the difference is significant ( $p < .10$ ) and in the expected direction. Light gray shading indicates significant results that go against expectations.*

**Figure 1. Are Candidates Who Raise an Issue More Active on it in Office?**



*Note: The figure presents the percentage of legislators' subsequent agendas devoted to each issue for those who did and did not mention the issue in their previous campaign. Differences between the groups were assessed using independent samples t-tests, and bold and italicized issue names indicate a significant ( $p < .10$ ) difference. The average volume of activity on each issue (i.e., introductions + cosponsorships) is presented in parentheses next to the issue names.*