

Descended from Immigrants and Revolutionists: How Immigrant Experience Shapes Congressional Decisionmaking on Immigration Votes

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Abstract

How does personal experience with immigration affect voting patterns on immigration bills in Congress? We use micro-level ancestry data from the census to identify the familial immigration history of members of Congress, observing countries of birth for all members, their parents, and their grandparents. We examine the relationship between immigrant background and roll call voting on a series of major immigration and naturalization bills from the 1910s through the 1960s. We find that family immigration history predicts an increased probability of casting pro-immigration votes. These results persist when controlling for district-level foreign born population and when comparing roll call vote choices by MCs from districts that narrowly elected candidates with recent immigrant backgrounds to districts that narrowly failed to elect such candidates. Our findings highlight the role of personal experience and background in legislative position-taking and help illuminate the legislative dynamics of present-day immigration policy.

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Introduction

Since the First Congress, legislators have grappled with immigration and citizenship policies. The Naturalization Act of 1790 marked the first comprehensive immigration policy set forth by Congress and, as did later acts of Congress, balanced naturalization of some citizens—free Whites who met certain residence and character requirements—with exclusion of others—American Indians and slaves to name but a few. In the two centuries since, immigration policy has not moved linearly towards more openness. Rather, as articulated in Daniel Tichenor’s *Dividing Lines: The politics of immigration control in America*, U.S. immigration policy can best be characterized as a sequence of restrictive and expansive policy regimes, responding to changes in the political environment over time (Tichenor 2002). In this framework, institutional “veto points” and “opportunity points” help structure the processes from which immigration policies emerge. Changes in party systems may yield structural advantages (or disadvantages) for political actors; coalitions spanning party and ideology may develop in response to existing government institutions and policies; and, international events may influence the opportunities for policy change available to domestic actors. Yet, while this historical-institutionalist approach does well to examine the fundamental *institutional* conditions that help shape policy opportunities and obstacles, it has less to say about the characteristics that determine political preferences of key decision-makers in the first place. For example, the largely restrictive and exclusionary immigration policies coming out of Congress in the first half of the 20th century, capping all immigration and favoring immigrants from Northern Europe, can be explained in part by veto and opportunity points but are also in part a function of a restrictionist *ideology* that emerged among certain political actors.

In this paper we posit that one key determinant of political actors’ views on immigration is their own immigrant background. That is, we hypothesize that the members of Congress (MCs) whose family immigration histories are more recent are more likely to vote in favor of less restrictive immigration policies than those who have more distance from the immigrant experience. To test this notion, we explore the relationship between the immigrant backgrounds of members of Congress and their votes on major immigration legislation during the first half of the twentieth century, combining roll call votes with new sources of MC biographical data. We find that MC

family immigration histories do matter in determining political positions on immigration.

Do legislator characteristics determine vote choices generally? A substantial literature suggests that demographics and personal characteristics are an important factor in political decision making, and help explain differences in vote choice between legislators with similar measures of political ideology. Burden (2007) argues that the backgrounds and experiences of legislators play an important role in their vote choices. Race (Canon 1999), gender (Fridkin and Kenney 2014a,b), economic class (Carnes 2012, 2013), and children's gender (Washington 2009) all play a significant role in legislator vote choice and behavior. Keena and Knight-Finley (2017) finds that Senators with prior political experience as governors are less partisan than those without such experience. The role of personal background in decision making extends beyond just legislators. For example, Glynn and Sen (2015) finds that a judge having a daughter affects voting on cases involving women's issues.

Immigration represents a policy area where personal background may be especially salient to lawmakers. As "a nation of immigrants" (Kennedy, 1959), a large majority of Americans have their own personal or family story of immigration. MCs often cite their own familial immigration history when discussing the issue (Swarns 2006; Burden 2007, p.18). Like gender, race, class, and the gender of one's children, personal or family immigration background likely shapes personal and political identity. While a relatively low share of MCs are immigrants themselves (see Figure 1), a significant number have foreign born parents or grandparents. For example, in the 115th Congress, only 11 representatives (2.5%) and zero senators are immigrants.¹ However, 12% of representatives and 16% of senators have at least one foreign born parent. In earlier time periods, the number of members of Congress who were immigrants or (more frequently) had immigrant parents was much larger.

We utilize a new data source that sheds light on the personal backgrounds of MCs: individual-level census data from the decennial U.S. Censuses conducted between 1910 and 1940. Micro-level census data, which consist of the individual-level enumeration records for each person in each census, provide a trove of demographic information. Unlike the modern census, where relatively

¹Countries of origin are Mexico (3), Cuba (2), India (2), Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Taiwan, and Vietnam.

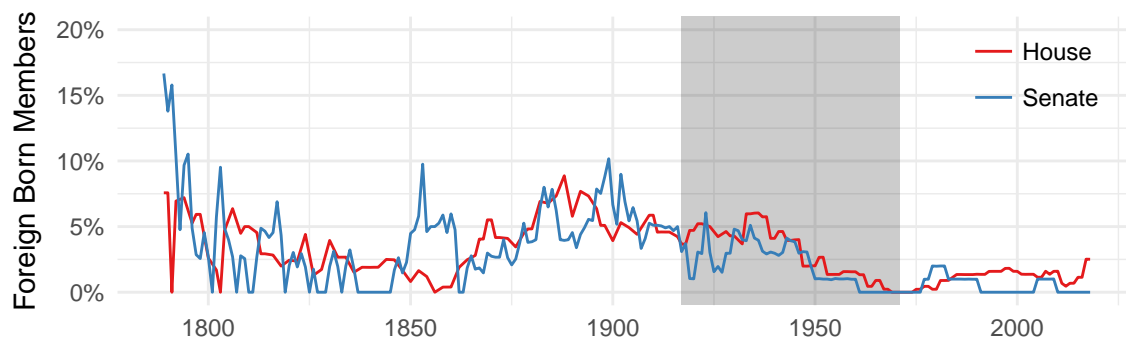


Figure 1: **Foreign Born MCs Over Time.** The gray box highlights the main period of our analysis.

little data is collected on each person (name, age, gender, race, and ethnicity), the censuses of the early 20th century included questions on birthplace, parents' birthplace, occupation, industry, literacy, immigration status, and—in 1940—earnings and education. However, the absence of unique identification codes like social security numbers makes linking these historical individual-level records with Congressional data difficult. Names can be shortened or misspelled, years of birth heaped or misrecorded, and other data mistranscribed when the original handwritten records were digitized. To enable us to link this potentially noisy historical data, we use the machine learning algorithm developed in Feigenbaum (2016), which learns from the links made by hand by carefully trained census linkers to produce links at scale that are replicable. We match each member of Congress to their census records from this period and we identify key elements of their immigrant background.

We use this new data to examine the effect of family immigration background on votes for immigration legislation in the first half of the twentieth century in two different ways. First, we show that members of Congress are more likely to cast pro-immigrant votes—against restrictive bills or in favor of expanding immigration—when they are themselves foreign born or have more foreign born parents or grandparents. We also find that family immigration predicts when MCs deviate from the immigration vote predicted by their estimated political ideology; that is, additional foreign both parents and grandparents reduce the probability that a member predicted to vote for a more expansive immigration policy will actually vote against it, and they increase the probability that a member predicted to vote against an expansive immigration policy will actually

vote for it. Second, we use a regression discontinuity design to estimate the effect of electing an MC with a recent immigrant background on voting on immigration bills. This approach avoids endogeneity concerns over why certain districts elect representatives with or without immigrant family histories or voting behavior—particularly, the immigrant composition of a district. The RDD results confirm our main finding, suggesting that districts “randomly” assigned MCs with a family history of immigration were more likely to vote in favor of expansive immigration policy.

Immigration Legislation

We focus on immigration legislation from 1915 to 1971, roughly corresponding to the congresses where we can match most members back to the 1910 through 1940 censuses and collect family immigration histories. In this section, we describe the history of immigration legislation during this period and the specific bills we will analyze.

The size and scope of immigration to the U.S. has been determined by three main factors historically: the costs of migration, the benefits to the migrants, and American policy (Abramitzky and Boustan 2017). As these three factors have changed over time, total flows and the selection of immigrants has changed. The Age of Mass Migration—dating from the late nineteenth century to the immigration restriction acts of 1917, 1921, and 1924—was made possible by falling costs of trans-Atlantic transportation, relatively open border policies, and the industrializing and urbanizing American economy (Abramitzky and Boustan 2017). The Age of Mass Migration was not just an increase in the number of immigrants, but a significant shift in their source countries. As Abramitzky and Boustan (2017) document, in 1850, more than 90% of the foreign-born in the U.S. came from Northern and Western Europe, mostly Great Britain, Ireland, and Germany. 70 years later, the foreign-born in the U.S. was split between old and new Europe, 45% from “old” sending countries and 41% from “new”.

We identified key immigration bills in the 1915–1971 period (the 64th through 91st Congresses) using Stathis’ (2014) compilation of landmark legislation and key bills identified by Tichenor (2002). We selected this time period for two reasons: (1) this period spans the major immigration bills of the 20th century; and, (2) members serving in this period were likely to be identifiable

in the 1910–1940 censuses.² We then identified the final roll call vote in each chamber for each bill — either the vote on final passage or the vote on the conference vote — using the VoteView database (Lewis et al. 2017). Several bills were dropped because final votes on the bill were not recorded. Table 1 lists the eight bills that we included in our analysis. These bills represent major changes to U.S. immigration policy during the mid-20th century. Five of the bills restricted immigration, and three increased immigration or reduced restrictions.³

The Immigration Act of 1917 was the first major bill designed to restrict European immigration into the United States that ultimately went into law. Passed by Congress over Woodrow Wilson’s veto at the end of the 64th Congress, the act imposed a literacy test on European immigrants, and barred immigrants from Asian countries. The Immigration Quota Act (also called the Emergency Immigration Act of 1921 or Immigration Act of 1921) capped the number of immigrants and set quotas for immigration based on the number of people of each nationality already residing in the United States. The Immigration Act of 1924 (the Johnson-Reed Act), further lowered the number of immigrants allowed each year and heavily favored Northern European immigrants over those from Southern or Western Europe.⁴ All three bills passed each chamber by large margins; only small minorities of legislators voted against restricting immigration.

A second cluster of immigration acts followed World War II. The Displaced Persons Act of 1948 and Refugee Relief Act of 1953 temporarily increased the number of immigrants admitted due to the vast number of refugees in Europe after the war.⁵ The McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Act, passed by Congress in 1952 over the veto of Harry Truman, reorganized and consolidated immigration laws while preserving strict nationality quotas limiting immigration.

²Goldin (1994) studies the political economy of immigration restriction in a slightly earlier period, focusing in particular on the anti immigrant literacy test bills passed out of the House 5 times from 1897 to 1917 and out of the Senate 4 times. These bills were vetoed by presidents of both parties. Goldin also explores the votes in the House and Senate to override the presidential vetoes. She finds important district level economic and demographic variables at play: districts with slower wage growth or fewer immigrants were more likely to vote against immigration. Goldin’s analysis, however, does not extend to the characteristics of the MCs. In future work, we will expand our census linking back to the 1900 and 1880 censuses and examine these earlier, ultimately failed, attempts to restrict immigration.

³In future work, we plan to examine additional relevant votes, including some on Prohibition as well as key immigration votes that did not result in landmark legislation. However, given that some of the landmark legislation is pro immigration and some anti immigration, we do not view the fact that we are selecting legislation that actually passed as an important source of selection bias.

⁴For a detailed account of the politics of immigration reform, see Tichenor (2002).

⁵The House of Representatives did not hold a final roll call vote on the Displace Persons Act of 1948; we only include the Senate vote in our analysis.

Table 1: Immigration Bills

Congress	Bill	Roll Call #	Pro Immigrant	Yea*	Nay*	
64	HR10384	Immigration Act of 1917				
		House	121	Nay	309	117
		Senate	324	Nay	65	22
67	HR4075	Immigration Quota Act				
		House	21	Nay	285	41
		Senate	21	Nay	90	2
68	HR7995	Immigration Act of 1924 (Johnson-Reed Act)				
		House	90	Nay	319	72
		Senate	126	Nay	72	11
80	S2242	Displaced Persons Act of 1948				
		House	N/A (no final roll call vote)			
		Senate	198	Yea	75	17
81	S4037	McCarran Internal Security Act				
		House	264	Nay	302	56
		Senate	444	Nay	77	12
82	HR5678	McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Act				
		House	165	Nay	284	116
		Senate	298	Nay	60	31
83	HR6481	Refugee Relief Act of 1953				
		House	64	Yea	225	189
		Senate	82	Yea	63	30
89	HR2580	Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965				
		House	177	Yea	330	79
		Senate	232	Yea	80	20

*Yeas and Nays include announced votes and paired votes.

Finally, the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 overhauled the immigration system once again, eliminating the nationality-based quota system and replacing it with a multi-category system that prioritized special skills or having relatives already residing in the United States. The long-term effect of the bill was to end the preference for Northern European immigrants and al-

low for increased immigration from the rest of the world. Abramitzky and Boustan (2017) suggest that the 1965 bill led to a new era of Mass Migration, albeit with very different source countries than the previous one.

Identifying Immigration Background

To estimate the effects of family immigration background on MC vote choice, we use individual-level data from the 1910 through 1940 U.S. Censuses. We begin by constructing a new linked sample, locating MCs in the 1910, 1920, 1930, and 1940 Federal censuses, based on the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) complete counts censuses (Ruggles et al. 2010). In this section, we detail the complete count census data and the congressional data we use, we document the machine learning approach to census linking, and we summarize what the census data says about MCs.

To start, we identify all MCs, serving between 1915 and 1971 (the 64th through 91st Congresses). To link these MCs back to the census, we extract their full names, dates of birth, and states of birth from the *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*.⁶ For members who were born abroad (and are consequently very difficult to match to census records), we search for their family backgrounds manually and record the citizenship status of their parents (and grandparents when possible) directly. Members born abroad to at least one U.S. citizen parent are not considered immigrants, as they are citizens from birth.

The complete 1910, 1920, 1930, and 1940 Federal Censuses have recently been digitized by a joint effort of Ancestry.com and the Minnesota Population Center. The restricted-access version of the data, managed by IPUMS (Ruggles et al. 2010) and housed at the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), includes transcribed names that enable us to link to external data sources at the individual-level. We search for each member in each of the decennial Federal Censuses from 1910 to 1940.

Though census questions vary a bit year to year, they nonetheless provide a wealth of information for each person we can link. For studying family immigration history, we focus on two questions asked. First, every person enumerated in 1910, 1920, and 1930 was asked their place of

⁶<http://bioguide.congress.gov/biosearch/biosearch.asp>

birth and their mother and father’s places of birth.⁷ More, because members of the same households are linked in the enumeration, when we observe members of Congress as children, we can also observe the place of birth of all their grandparents, using their mothers and fathers’ answers to their own parents’ places of birth question. Second, we draw on the language question, asked only in 1910 and 1930, of what language is spoken at home.⁸

We link all members to themselves in 1910, 1920, 1930, or 1940 with the link approach described in Feigenbaum (2016). Linking historical records is complicated by the lack of a unique identifier. Instead, we rely on variables like name, place of birth, and date of birth, which should not change over time.⁹ Still, noise in our data makes exact matching—requiring an MC to report his or her first and last name, year of birth, and state of birth exactly the same in the census as in our congressional data—impractical and potentially biased.¹⁰ Hand linking records is likely the method most able to distinguish between subtle errors in two records identifying the same person or distinguishing two different people. But it is not practical to apply hand linking to large samples and—even with clear instructions on how to make links—not replicable. Instead, we apply a machine learning approach, training an algorithm to learn to make matches based on a smaller sample of carefully linked data. The algorithm learns from the human how to trade off errors in first names or last names or how large a penalty to apply to potential matches with one or two years off in the year of birth.¹¹ A priori, the costs of such errors are unknown, so the approach makes the implicit rules used by a human linker explicit. The algorithm makes use of a wide range

⁷In 1940, the mother and father’s places of birth question was only a sample line question, asked only of 2 people on each 40 person census page.

⁸In 1910, the question was phrased as “Whether able to speak English; or, if not, give language spoken.” In 1930, the question was “Mother Tongue (or native language) of Foreign Born.” For more details, see https://usa.ipums.org/usa-action/variables/LANGUAGE#questionnaire_text_section.

⁹Our use of last names in the linking of course complicates matching women who might be expected—particularly in the early 20th century—to change names upon marriage. However, during this time period, very few women served in Congress. Only 2% of the MCs in our sample were women.

¹⁰The set of people who report all their information exactly the same census to census is *not* a random sample of the enumerated people or congress members.

¹¹Errors in years of birth may be surprising, but they are very common. For one, censuses record age, not date or even year of birth. Because censuses are taken on different days in each wave (April 15 in 1910, January 1 in 1920, and April 1 in 1930 and 1940), these ages are noisy. With our data on MCs, we observe birthdate exactly, so we can calculate expected age as of the census. However, censuses were taken by enumerators asking questions of one respondent per household, and ages were often estimated or heaped on the nearest round number or simply misstated. In addition, the transcription process for age may be especially noisy because, unlike names or places of birth, there are no context clues to help a transcriber determine between a poorly written 2 or 3, for example.

of record linkage features to build predictions for matches including Jaro-Winkler string distance in first and last name, absolute difference in year of birth, Soundex agreement on first and last name, agreement on first and last characters of first and last names, as well as name commonness and state of birth.

Overall, we are able to link 96% of the MCs in our study sample to at least one of the four decennial censuses. Our match rates into each of the four censuses are all above 66%, peaking at 75% matching into the 1910 census.¹² The true positive rate is 91% in cross-validation: this suggests that the linking algorithm is very efficient, able to identify nearly all of the matches that a human trainer would have made, but doing so at scale and with clearly defined linking rules. In addition, our cross-validation implies that the linking algorithm makes the same choice as a careful and well-trained hand linker more than 85% of the time, as our precision or positive predictive value is 85.2%.

We also use surnames as a proxy for family immigration history. By using the full records of the 100 million people enumerated in each, we calculate—for each surname—the share foreign born, the share with foreign born parents, and the share with foreign born grandparents. We match surnames from the nearest census year that precedes the year of an MC casting a key immigration vote. This approach provides a snapshot of the immigrant background of the entire population with the same surname as the MC. Table A2 in the Appendix displays some examples based on surnames for different MCs. For instance, in the 1910 Census the average person with the surname WATKINS had 0.18 foreign born parents and 0.49 foreign born grandparents—though some WATKINS's have a recent family history of immigration, most do not. On the other end of the spectrum, we would consider someone with the surname BLATNIK, with 1.89 foreign born parents and 3.95 foreign born grandparents on average based on the 1940 Census, to be much more likely to have a recent family history of immigration. This measure based solely on surnames is particularly useful for individuals for whom we have less available information. In particular, when we analyze not just MCs but failed challengers who run but are not elected to Congress, we rarely observe either year of birth or place of birth, two variables key to census linking. These

¹²Consistent with the machine learning procedure, these match rates also replicate the match rates of our human trainer in each census.

surname scores allow us to proxy for immigration histories of these challengers.

Table 2 displays summary statistics for the covariates used in our analysis based on census linkages. While we matched census data to all possible MCs, these summary statistics report results just for those former MCs who voted on one of our key immigration votes.¹³ For our primary specifications, We have included MCs who were foreign born non-citizens but excluded MCs who were themselves foreign born as citizens. It is considerably more difficult to match foreign born MCs to their census records. As a result, we code foreign born non-citizen MCs as having foreign born parents and grandparents. These comprise only a small proportion of the sample.

Table 2: Summary Statistics for Key Variables, Sample of Voting MCs Matched to Census Data

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Foreign Born MC	2,453	0.033	0.180	0	1
Parents Foreign Born	2,244	0.425	0.763	0	2
Grandparents Foreign Born	1,017	1.512	1.747	0	4
Immigration Index	1,017	0.684	0.948	0.000	3.000
At Least One Foreign Born Parent	2,244	0.256	0.437	0	1
At Least One Foreign Born Grandparent	1,017	0.487	0.500	0	1
All Foreign Born Parents	2,244	0.169	0.375	0	1
All Foreign Born Grandparents	1,017	0.279	0.449	0	1
Surname Foreign Born MC	2,357	0.097	0.108	0.000	1.000
Surname Parents Foreign Born	2,357	0.489	0.452	0.000	2.000
Surname Grandparents Foreign Born	2,348	1.235	1.089	0.000	4.000
Democrat	2,453	0.537	0.499	0	1
Republican	2,453	0.452	0.498	0	1
Other Party	2,453	0.011	0.102	0	1
House	2,460	0.868	0.338	0	1
Nonwhite	2,162	0.021	0.143	0	1
Northeast	2,453	0.272	0.445	0	1
Midwest	2,453	0.314	0.464	0	1
West	2,453	0.135	0.341	0	1
South	2,453	0.280	0.449	0	1
Age	2,453	50.209	9.695	26	81
Tenure	2,453	4.830	4.144	2	40

We take several approaches to measuring immigration history, our key variable of interest. In

¹³Table A1 in the Appendix reports a similar summary for all MCs matched to census records.

addition to measuring an MCs own place of birth, we also examine the number of foreign born parents an MC has, ranging naturally from 0 to 2. As Table 2 reports, the average MC in our sample had 0.425 parents born abroad. We also measure the number of foreign born grandparents (ranging from 0 to 4). On average, an MC in our sample had 1.512 foreign born grandparents. By necessity, any empirical analyses we run that includes foreign born grandparents will have a smaller sample because we could only successfully count nativity of grandparents when we observe an MC residing in the home of his or her parents.¹⁴ In the sample as a whole, 17 percent of MCs had both parents foreign born and 28 percent of MCs had all grandparents foreign born. We also constructed an “Immigration Index,” designed to summarize the immigration history of an MC with one number. This index consists of a weighted average across place of own birth, parents’ birth and grandparents’ birth.¹⁵

Overall, and perhaps surprisingly, we observe little difference in immigration histories across party in our sample of votes. Table 3 shows that in the House only marginally more Republicans than Democrats had foreign born parents and grandparents. The differences across party are even smaller in the Senate. The differences in immigration histories *across chambers* appear far more striking, with members of the House considerably more likely to have foreign born parents and grandparents than members of the Senate. We have also checked to ensure that over time variation does not mask broad differences in immigration history differences between the parties. Regressing party on our measures of immigration history as well as decade of birth dummy variables similarly yielded no significant differences between the two major parties.

Roll-Call Vote Analysis

We have hypothesized that personal immigration experiences influence roll call votes for MCs. To test this, we evaluate the relationship between an MC’s immigration history and vote choice on

¹⁴This is because the nativity of grandparents is recovered from questions about mother and father’s place of birth asked of the MCs mother and father. Also, if the nativity of one grandparent was missing, we made the assumption that the missing grandparent had the same odds as the non-missing grandparents of being foreign born.

¹⁵So, Immigration Index = $\mathbb{1} \cdot (\text{MC Foreign Born}) + \frac{1}{2} \cdot (\# \text{ Parents Foreign Born}) + \frac{1}{4} \cdot (\# \text{ Grandparents Foreign Born})$

Table 3: Foreign Born MCs/Relatives by Party and Chamber

Chamber	Party	N	MC	Parents	Grand-parents	At Least One Parent	At Least One Grand-parent	All Parents	All Grand-parents
House	Dem	1148	0.028	0.421	1.463	0.252	0.447	0.169	0.289
House	Rep	957	0.037	0.459	1.601	0.279	0.552	0.180	0.267
House	Oth	24	0.208	1.000	3.600	0.500	0.900	0.500	0.900
Senate	Dem	170	0.018	0.285	1.169	0.179	0.394	0.106	0.197
Senate	Rep	152	0.046	0.307	1.421	0.193	0.439	0.114	0.281
Senate	Oth	2	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.500	0.000	0.500	0.000

several key 20th Century immigration votes. Specifically, we employ a model of the form

$$y_{ib} = \alpha + \delta \cdot \text{Immigration History}_i + X \cdot \beta + \gamma_b + \epsilon_{ib} \quad (1)$$

where i indexes individual MCs and b indexes bills. X is a matrix of covariates including indicators for party, region, age and tenure. Our main specification pools across bills and therefore also includes γ_b , a bill fixed effect. Further, this approach allows us to take subsamples of the data by bill, chamber and expected vote choice to evaluate heterogeneity in the effects of immigration experience on vote choice.

We find a strong relationship between family immigration history—measured both by number of foreign born parents and number of foreign born grandparents—and pro immigration votes, as we report in Table 4. We use equation 1 to estimate the relationship between immigration history and vote choices on immigration policy across our range of congressional immigration votes. First, we use as the outcome variable an individual MC’s decision on whether or not to cast a “pro” immigration vote. For each of the bills listed in Table 1, we determined whether a “yea” or “nay” vote best aligned with a political position generally favoring increased or less restrictive immigration.¹⁶ We coded MCs who cast pro immigrant votes in this direction with a 1 and those who did not with a 0. We excluded MCs who abstained from voting from the sample.¹⁷

Members with more foreign born parents and foreign born grandparents are more likely to

¹⁶Yeas and Nays in the regression analyses include announced votes and paired votes.

¹⁷Especially in this era missed votes occurred frequently and were due more to travel and scheduling limitations than strategic absences.

Table 4: Immigration History and MC Vote Choice: All Bills Pooled

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Parents Foreign Born	0.154*** (0.010)	0.079*** (0.009)			-0.040*** (0.012)		0.048*** (0.010)	
Grandparents Foreign Born			0.088*** (0.006)	0.036*** (0.006)		-0.013** (0.006)		0.023*** (0.008)
Republican		-0.210*** (0.015)		-0.196*** (0.021)	0.077*** (0.022)	0.056** (0.022)	-0.090*** (0.019)	-0.099*** (0.031)
Other Party		0.114 (0.094)		0.160 (0.126)	0.139 (0.156)	0.136 (0.135)	0.310*** (0.090)	0.397*** (0.141)
Northeast		0.158*** (0.017)		0.106*** (0.025)	-0.016 (0.024)	0.002 (0.024)	0.067*** (0.020)	0.017 (0.033)
South		-0.329*** (0.019)		-0.385*** (0.028)	0.157*** (0.033)	0.117*** (0.033)	-0.141*** (0.021)	-0.149*** (0.036)
West		-0.029 (0.021)		0.058* (0.031)	-0.015 (0.029)	-0.032 (0.029)	-0.087*** (0.023)	-0.017 (0.041)
Age		-0.009* (0.006)		-0.003 (0.009)	-0.008 (0.008)	0.002 (0.010)	-0.004 (0.006)	0.011 (0.010)
Age Sq.		0.0001 (0.0001)		0.00002 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)	-0.00001 (0.0001)	0.00004 (0.0001)	-0.0001 (0.0001)
Tenure		-0.005** (0.002)		-0.005 (0.004)	-0.0002 (0.004)	0.004 (0.004)	-0.003 (0.002)	-0.001 (0.005)
Tenure Sq.		0.0001 (0.0001)		0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)	-0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)	0.00003 (0.0002)
Constant	0.783*** (0.042)	1.308*** (0.153)	0.775*** (0.055)	1.175*** (0.233)	0.133 (0.215)	-0.066 (0.256)	0.539*** (0.177)	0.211 (0.272)
Bill Dummy	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
N	3,220	3,220	1,594	1,594	1,056	744	2,074	845
R ²	0.319	0.438	0.341	0.463	0.114	0.078	0.090	0.130

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

vote pro-Immigration. Our primary explanatory variables are simply the number of foreign born parents and the number of foreign born grandparents but our results replicate using whether an MC is foreign born (See Appendix Table A3). Columns 1–4 report the effect of having foreign born parents and grandparents on casting pro immigration votes. With no controls, we find that having one foreign born parent is associated with a more than 15 percentage point increase in rates of casting a pro vote; having one foreign born grandparent is associated with a 9 percentage point increase. In each case, we can reject the null hypothesis of no effect at standard levels of statistical significance ($p < 0.01$). The advantage of such a sparse specification is that we do not have to worry about bias induced by controlling for post-treatment variables. We next include a host of control variables known to be associated with roll call vote choice including party, age, tenure and region. Including a control for party deserves particular attention. Given that party serves as a very strong predictor of vote on most roll call votes, it will be particularly interesting if immigration history explains variation in vote choice when conditioning on party. On the other hand, one concern that arises is that an individual MC's immigration history influences their choice of party. While we cannot discount that possibility entirely, we think the effect of a marginal immigrant/non-immigrant grandparent likely does not strongly influence such a choice given that we have shown that the parties have roughly even rates of parent and grandparent foreign birth.

When controlling for our set of covariates, we continue to find a strong relationship between immigration history (measured both by number of foreign born parents and number of foreign born grandparents) and pro immigration votes. Controlling for other factors, we find that MCs with one foreign born parent cast pro immigration votes at a rate that was 7.9 percentage points higher than those with none. Similarly, an additional foreign born grandparent increased pro immigration voting rates by 3.6 percentage points. These effect sizes are very comparable as going from no foreign born parents to two foreign born parents has a 15.8 percentage point effect while going from zero grandparents to four foreign born grandparents has a 14.4 percentage point effect. Importantly, these effect sizes obtain even when controlling for political party. Thus, we observe these findings over and above whatever extent party identification determines one's position on

immigration.

Family history of immigration also helps us explain ideologically-surprising or “miscast” votes on immigration issues, including surprising votes for and against the bills. Specifically, we examine bills where (1) an MC was predicted to vote pro immigration based on their ideological position (as measured by DW-NOMINATE) but instead voted anti immigration; and, (2) an MC was predicted to vote anti immigration but instead voted pro immigration. These “miscast” votes allow us to examine instances where immigration history led MCs to depart from what would be predicted by their overall political ideology. To implement this test, we divided our data into subsamples based on the two criteria above; we then coded all individuals with a “miscast” vote with a 1 and those who voted according to expectations with a 0. Columns 5–8 in Table 4 report the results. In all cases, the direction of the effects accords with our expectations. First, immigration history predicts a reduced rate of diverging from pre-existing ideology when an MC is predicted to vote pro immigration. We estimate that one additional foreign born parent is associated with a reduction of 4 percentage points in rates of casting an anti-immigration vote that departs from existing ideology. Similarly, we estimate a -1.3 percentage point effect for grandparents. Both of these effects achieve statistical significance at standard levels. On the other hand, we observe a positive relationship between immigration history and casting a pro vote despite having an overall political ideology that would predict casting an anti vote. Having one additional foreign born parent predicts that an MC will be 4.8 percentage points more likely to cast a pro immigration vote, despite being pre-disposed to vote anti-immigration based on observed ideology. This estimate also allows us to reject the null hypothesis of no effect at standard significance levels. Finally, the effect of foreign born grandparents on voting pro in spite of one’s ideology is also positive (i.e., in the expected direction).

We have established the relationship between an MC’s family immigration history and voting on key immigration legislation. We obtain substantively equivalent results when using an MC’s own foreign (non-citizen) birth as the primary explanatory variable as well (see Table A3). Similar results (see Table A7) obtain when using a single “index” (that weights an MC’s foreign born status as well as the number of foreign born parents and grandparents). Thus, we interpret these

findings to suggest that immigration history, even two generations back, is highly predictive of pro immigration vote choices; and this pattern holds even when accounting for one's party and, as our analysis of miscast votes shows, underlying political ideology.

Furthermore, the evidence suggests that these findings do not hinge on the composition of the district electing MCs. One might worry that districts with a large share of foreign born residents are likely both to select representatives with immigrant backgrounds and to select representatives that vote for expansive immigration policies. As a result, selection might drive the positive correlation we have observed. As one attempt to check for this possibility, we determined the number of foreign born residents of each House member's congressional district (restricting to votes before 1940). We then replicated our findings from Tables 4 and A3 but additionally included the log of foreign born population in a district. We present the results in Tables A5 and A4; they demonstrate slightly attenuated effect sizes but are otherwise unchanged and remain significant at standard levels of statistical significance.¹⁸

One question remains: to what extent is the mechanism at work extrinsic versus intrinsic? On the one hand, an MC might recall the experiences of his or her parent or grandparent and, as a result, tend to cast votes that take the part of future generations of immigrants. Such an example could be called intrinsic. On the other hand, an MC's vote choice might also be a product of how they have been treated throughout the course of their life. Someone who is readily identifiable as first generation native born may have different experiences than someone who is not identifiable as first generation native born.

To disentangle these processes, we have also gathered population level statistics on immigration history by surname. We think that, on its own, a surname proxies for an individual's immigration history as well as external perceptions of immigration history. By including this measure as a variable in our regressions along with actual immigrant history, we can better identify to what extent an observable MC characteristic (i.e., surname) predicts a pro immigration stance as compared to the potentially unobservable characteristic of whether one's parents or grandparents were foreign born. We report the results of what we term *perceived* immigration history in Table 5.

¹⁸One caveat is that when estimating effects for foreign born grandparents and also restricting the sample to earlier years, our sample sizes are greatly reduced. In one specification, we did not have enough data to estimate effect sizes.

The variable “Surname Parents Foreign Born” captures the average number of foreign born parents for an individual with a given surname; “Surname Grandparents Foreign Born” captures the average number of foreign born grandparents for an individual with a given surname.¹⁹

Decomposing the effects between actual and perceived immigration history, we find that overall both factors explain some of the variation in vote choice. When focusing on actual and perceived foreign born parents each variable predicts a similarly sized increase (6.3 and 6.6 percentage points, respectively) in pro immigration voting rates. For grandparents, actual foreign born grandparents have a stronger effect, generally registering about twice as large an effect size. Turning to miscast votes, the results appear more mixed. When controlling for the full set of covariates, neither actual nor perceived immigration history seem to matter more than the other for those predicted to vote pro immigration. On the other hand, actual immigrant history plays a larger role for those predicted to vote anti immigration but who instead vote pro. All told, the results suggest that both actual and perceived immigration history influences MCs’ vote choices, with actual immigration history playing an overall larger role when considering several generations of immigration history.²⁰

Finally, we turn to examine vote by vote effects across chambers. Rather than pool all votes together and include bill fixed effects, we instead estimate the model specified in Equation 1 but with the sample restricted by vote and by chamber. Figure 2 reports the results for the House and the Senate. For the Senate, we had to omit several votes; in some cases, we had insufficient variation in the outcome variable (i.e., HR4075 was a 90-2 vote) or insufficient data on foreign born grandparents.²¹

In the House, we observe consistently positive and significant effects; both foreign born parents and foreign born grandparents were strongly associated with casting pro immigration votes. In the Senate, the bill by bill results appear more mixed. Looking at parental immigration history, the effects register as positive for three of four bills, but in all cases we cannot reject the null

¹⁹As before, we match MC surnames to the nearest census preceding the immigration vote.

²⁰Table A6 in the Appendix replicates the results from Table 4 using only foreign born scores derived from an MCs surname and finds similar results.

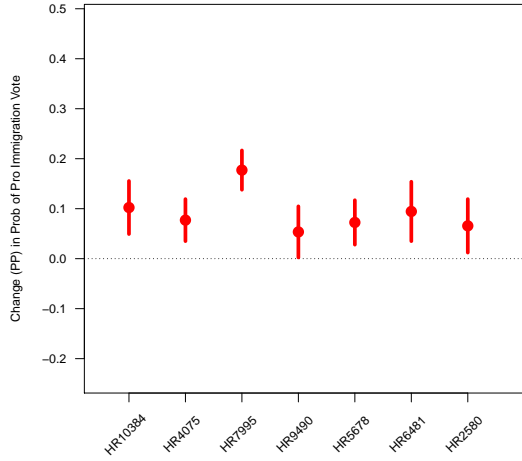
²¹HR10384, the Immigration Act of 1917, lacked enough data on foreign born grandparents. This was because most MCs voting were also adults in 1910 and not living with their parents. This made it difficult to determine the immigration histories of their grandparents.

Table 5: Immigration History and MC Vote Choice: All Bills Pooled

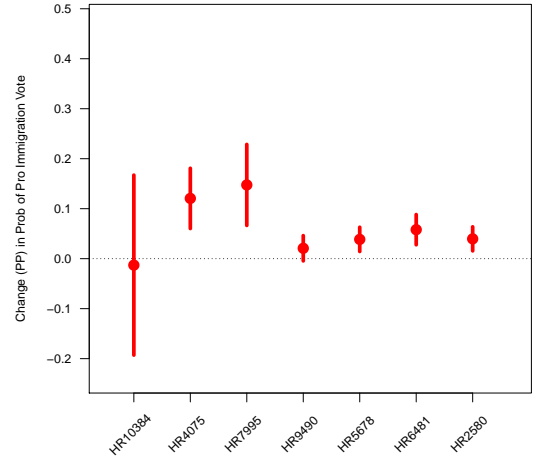
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Pro Immigration Vote			Predicted Pro but Anti		Predicted Anti but Pro		
Parents Foreign Born	0.108*** (0.012)	0.063*** (0.011)			-0.034** (0.015)		0.038*** (0.012)	
Grandparents Foreign Born			0.070*** (0.008)	0.027*** (0.008)		-0.008 (0.008)		0.022** (0.010)
Surname Parents Foreign Born	0.146*** (0.019)	0.066*** (0.018)			-0.018 (0.023)		0.048** (0.020)	
Surname Grandparents Foreign Born			0.039*** (0.012)	0.019* (0.011)		-0.006 (0.011)		0.005 (0.013)
Republican		-0.207*** (0.016)		-0.201*** (0.022)	0.073*** (0.022)	0.058** (0.023)	-0.096*** (0.019)	-0.118*** (0.033)
Other Party		0.111 (0.094)		0.157 (0.127)	0.138 (0.156)	0.143 (0.136)	0.298*** (0.090)	0.381*** (0.143)
Northeast		0.152*** (0.018)		0.112*** (0.026)	-0.014 (0.025)	0.001 (0.025)	0.059*** (0.020)	0.026 (0.034)
South		-0.315*** (0.020)		-0.379*** (0.029)	0.141*** (0.034)	0.116*** (0.034)	-0.140*** (0.022)	-0.160*** (0.038)
West		-0.015 (0.022)		0.077** (0.032)	-0.014 (0.030)	-0.031 (0.030)	-0.082*** (0.024)	-0.002 (0.044)
Age		-0.010* (0.006)		-0.001 (0.009)	-0.006 (0.008)	-0.001 (0.010)	-0.003 (0.006)	0.014 (0.010)
Age Sq.		0.0001* (0.0001)		-0.00000 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)	0.00001 (0.0001)	0.00004 (0.0001)	-0.0001 (0.0001)
Tenure		-0.005** (0.002)		-0.006 (0.004)	0.0001 (0.004)	0.005 (0.004)	-0.004 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.005)
Tenure Sq.		0.0001 (0.0001)		0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)	-0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0002)
Constant	0.744*** (0.044)	1.310*** (0.157)	0.768*** (0.058)	1.138*** (0.242)	0.097 (0.220)	-0.010 (0.268)	0.525*** (0.183)	0.171 (0.285)
Bill Dummy	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
N	3,089	3,089	1,515	1,515	1,012	704	1,993	806
R ²	0.333	0.440	0.339	0.460	0.108	0.075	0.095	0.135

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

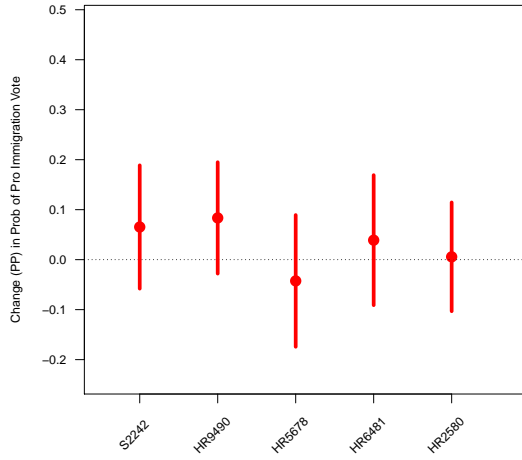
Foreign Born Parents, House



Foreign Born Grandparents, House



Foreign Born Parents, Senate



Foreign Born Grandparents, Senate

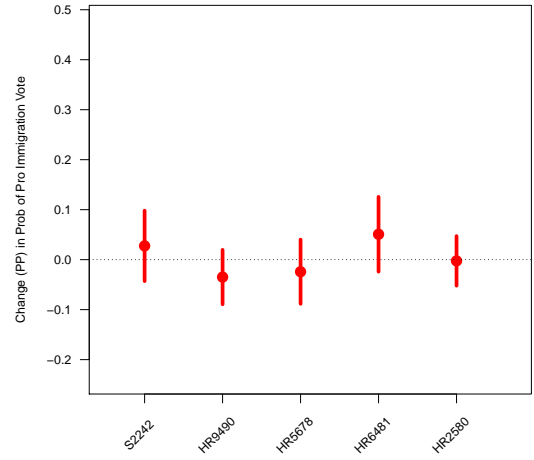


Figure 2: Effect of Foreign Born Parents and Grandparents on Pro Immigration Vote on Individual Bills

hypothesis of no effect. A similar pattern persists when examining foreign born grandparent effects in the Senate. Furthermore, when pooling across immigration bills but estimating effects separately for the House and the Senate, we observe robust positive effects for all measures of immigration history in the House. In the Senate, the effects are positive and significant without a full set of controls; however, when including the full set of controls they attenuate and no longer allow us to reject the null hypothesis of no effect at standard significance levels. One explanation for these differences between chambers is that House members are more likely to have foreign-born parents and grandparents than senators (see Table 3). There is less meaningful variation on immigration background in the upper house.

Regression Discontinuity Analysis

In the previous section, we demonstrated the strong correlation between an MC's immigration background (in terms of own place of birth as well as parent and grandparent place of birth) and vote choices on immigration policy. One possible critique of this approach is that immigration background might correlate strongly with unobserved variables, such as district characteristics, that could also be correlated with vote choice. In this interpretation, perhaps only districts with a preference for inclusive immigration policies elect candidates with immigrant backgrounds in the first place. Thus, district preferences rather than an MC's personal immigration background might be the primary determinant of votes for more permissive immigration policies.

As an additional check against such a problem, we use an approach that yields as good as random variation in the immigration background of an elected official. Specifically, we implement a regression discontinuity design in which we compare the voting records for officials from districts who narrowly elected a candidate with an immigrant background to districts who narrowly did not elect a candidate with an immigrant background.

The approach here follows the standards for employing a regression discontinuity design in an electoral setting (Lee 2008). The key assumption of this approach hinges on the notion that winning a very close election is largely due to random factors. The chances of landing narrowly on one side or the other of the 50% threshold are similar to a coin flip as we approach the thresh-

old. This approach relies on the continuity of the conditional mean function as we approach the threshold from at least one side (Lee and Lemieux 2010).

To implement this research design, we supplemented the data we gathered on MCs with additional election data, including gathering the names and vote shares for individuals who ran for office and lost.²²

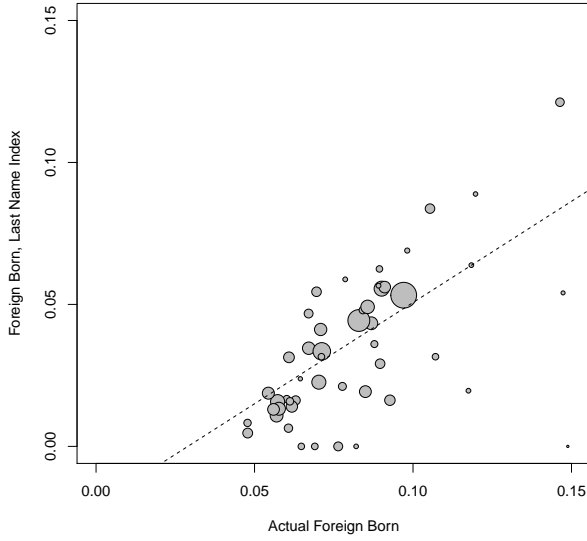
For House and Senate general elections from 1908 onwards, we identified the top two vote getters and determined the vote shares for these top two candidates. We excluded House districts that were at-large in states that also had multiple congressional districts since often these districts attracted many candidates and, in some instances, had multiple winners.

It is not possible to match the losing candidates to the census data because we lack even the most basic information on their ages and places of birth. Instead, for this regression discontinuity design, we impute all candidates' immigration histories based on surname. For the sake of consistency, we use this surname-based prediction approach for winners as well. We view immigration history based on surname as measuring actual immigration history but just with some error. We know that predicted surname immigration history correlates highly with actual immigration history. Table A6 in the Appendix replicates our main results from the previous section using only surname immigration history rather than actual immigration history. Figure 3 illustrates the correspondence between immigration histories imputed based on surname and actual immigration histories for members of the House and Senate, whose immigration histories we actually observe. Each dot in a figure represents the average outcomes for all Senators and members of the House in the sample *by state*. While not a one to one correspondence, the correlation between the two measures is very high.

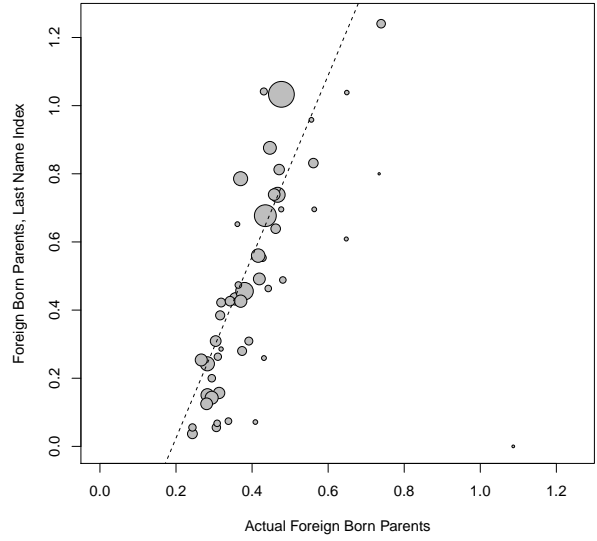
We thus use surname to impute immigration history for the candidates in our sample of elections. For each of our key immigration votes, we have found the electoral contest preceding the term in which the vote was cast. In an experimental setting, we might flip a coin to determine the family immigration history of the person casting a vote; in our case, we instead identify close elections where one candidate has a surname that denotes an immigrant background and where

²²Data for the House comes from ICPSR and data for the Senate comes from ICPSR as well as courtesy of Professor Jim Snyder.

Foreign Born (Self)



Foreign Born Parents



Foreign Born Grandparents

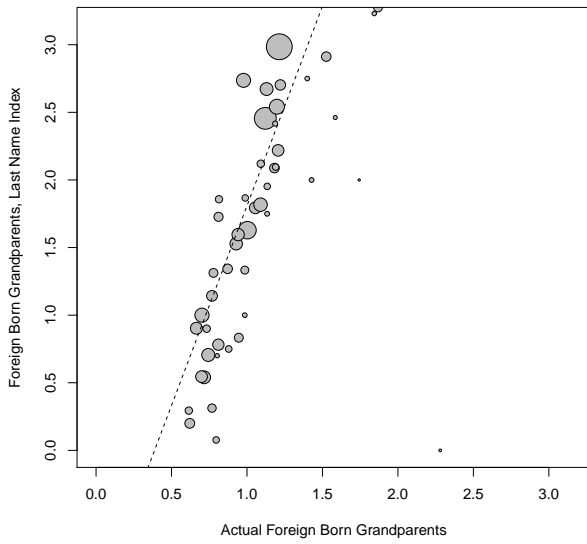


Figure 3: Comparison of Surname Foreign Born or Actual Foreign Born by State, House and Senate

one candidate does not. For each available census and for each surname, we calculated the mean number of foreign born individuals, mean number of foreign born parents, and mean number of foreign born grandparents. We then matched the candidate surnames to the most recent census preceding the relevant election year.

Determining the threshold for a surname to be likely to denote a foreign born candidate, or a candidate with foreign born parents or grandparents, is somewhat arbitrary. For our main specifications, we choose a simple rule of thumb and define a surname as denoting a foreign born candidate, parent, or grandparent if the name is ranked in the top 25% of all surnames for a given category (i.e., foreign born, foreign born parents, or foreign born grandparents). For example, for the year 1910, an individual who has a surname for which 24% or more people in the full population with that surname were foreign born is in the top quarter of the distribution. Similarly, to be in the top quarter of the distribution for foreign born parents, a surname needed to have 1.22 or more foreign born parents in the full population; and, finally, 3.21 foreign born grandparents. Based on the grandparents' criteria, someone with the surname "FEIGENBUAM," which averaged 3.924 foreign born grandparents in 1910, would have ranked in the top 25% of surnames with foreign born grandparents. Conversely, someone with the surname "PALMER," which averaged 0.775 foreign born grandparents in 1910, would not have ranked in the top 25%.

As a robustness check, we replicate the results from our main specification using alternative cutoffs for classifying individuals as having surnames that denote a high likelihood of foreign birth, foreign born parents or foreign born grandparents. Specifically, we present results for individuals with (1) surnames for which one or more parents on average were foreign born in the full population; and, (2) surnames for which two or more grandparents on average were foreign born in the full population. (See Table A10.)

We estimate an equation of the form

$$y_{ib} = \alpha + \beta \cdot \text{Immigration History Winner}_i + f(V_i) + \epsilon_{ib} \quad (2)$$

where $\text{Immigration History Winner}_i$ is an indicator variable denoting that the winner had the relevant immigration history (i.e., foreign born, foreign born parents, or foreign born grandpar-

ents depending on the specification). Thus, β is the parameter of primary interest and provides an estimate of the causal effect from the close to random assignment of an MC classified as foreign born / foreign born parents / foreign born grandparents. The outcome variable y_{ib} denotes whether or not an MC cast a “pro” immigration vote, just as in the previous section. The term $f(V_i)$ is a flexible function of the winning candidate’s vote margin, which determines who wins the election and therefore “treatment” status. One departure from the previous section is that we must restrict our data only to include House members since we did not generally have enough observations in the Senate, given the requirement of including only elections with one candidate with an immigrant background.

To estimate the RDD, we use bandwidths of ± 20 , ± 10 , and we also calculate optimal bandwidths for each regression. We estimate the treatment effects using local polynomials to model the discontinuity. These methods are similar to the approach outlined in Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014).

Estimating the effect separately using our three different measures of immigration history—self, parents, grandparents—we find a significant, positive effect of immigration history on the probability of casting pro immigration votes in all three measures. Figures 4, 5 and 6 illustrate the main findings. The figures model the discontinuity between a narrow loss and a narrow win for a candidates with immigration histories, defined as likely being foreign born (Figure 4), having foreign born parents (Figure 5), and having foreign born grandparents (Figure 6).

The specific size of the point estimate is sensitive to the bandwidth that we employ. Interestingly, narrower bandwidths appear to lead to larger estimates of the effect size, perhaps because our outcome variable is binary (i.e., 0 or 1). Table A8 reports results for bandwidths of ± 10 and ± 20 . At the narrower bandwidth, we estimate that having a surname that denotes being more likely to be foreign born leads to a close to 40 percentage point increase in the probability of casting a pro immigration vote. Similarly, we observe a 32.5 percentage point increase for those having a surname that denotes having foreign born parents and, finally, a 33 percentage point increase for those who have a surname indicating foreign born grandparents. All of these estimates allow us to reject the null hypothesis of no effect at standard levels of statistical significance. At the

Figure 4: RDD: Effect of Foreign Born MC on probability of casting Pro Immigration Vote

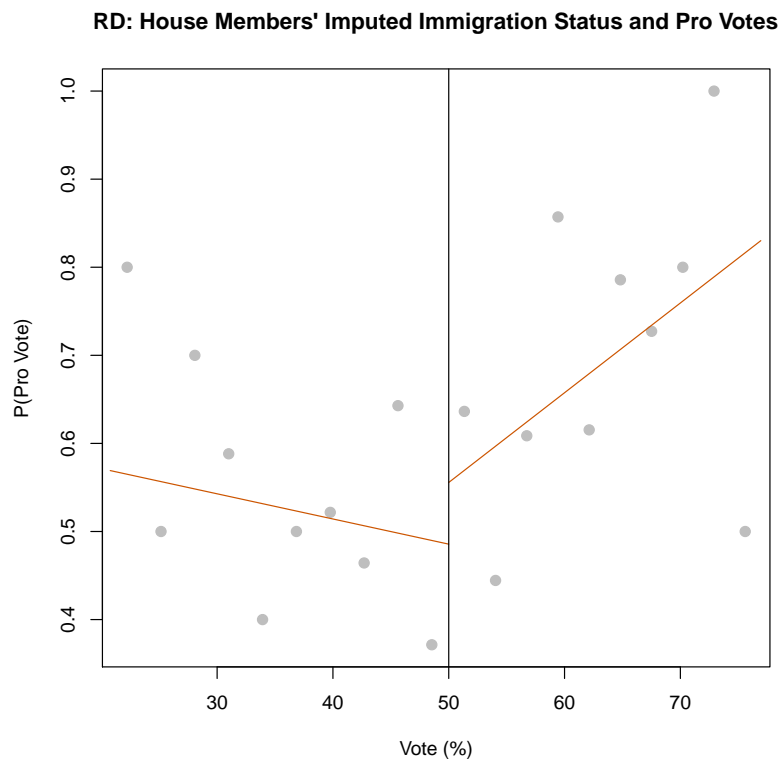


Figure 5: RDD: Effect of MC with Foreign Born Parents on probability of casting Pro Immigration Vote

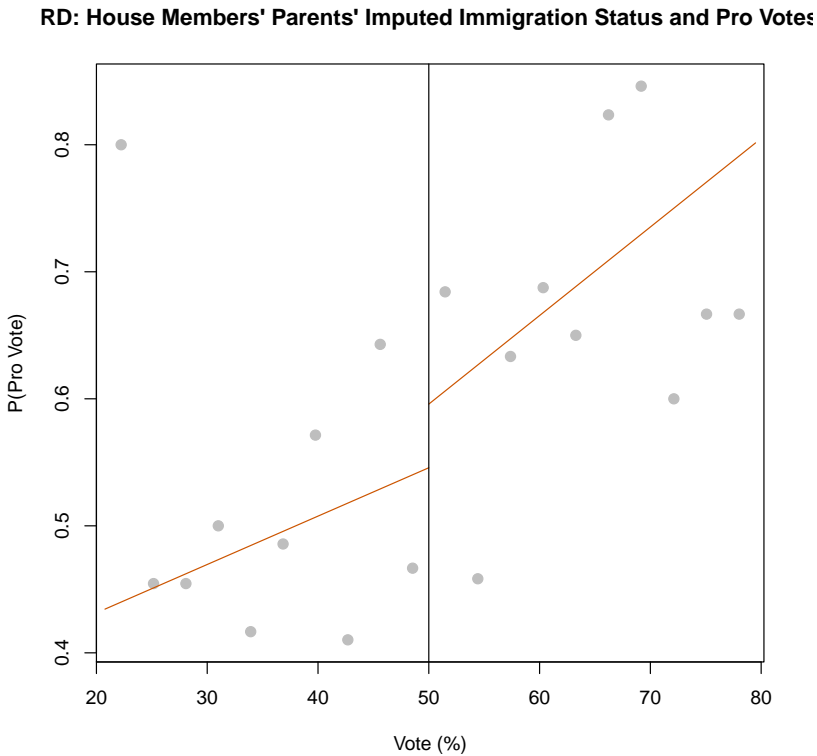
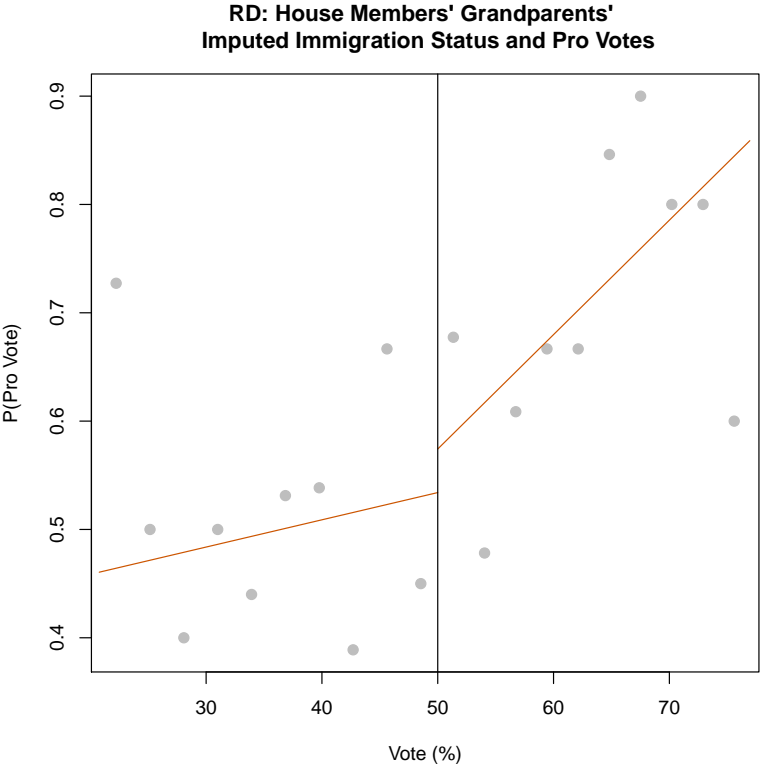


Figure 6: RDD: Effect of MC with Foreign Born Grandparents on probability of casting Pro Immigration Vote



wider bandwidth, the point estimates range between 10 and 12 percentage point increases, and the estimates themselves are noisier.

When we calculate optimal bandwidths, we estimate even larger effect sizes from the RDD approach. Table A9 reports specifications using optimal bandwidths as well as specifications where we include dummy variables for each specific bill. These effect sizes all surpass 50 percentage points.

Conclusion

We have demonstrated a strong relationship between personal immigration history and vote choice among members of Congress in the mid-20th century. Members of Congress with parents or grandparents born abroad were more likely to vote in favor of pro-immigration policies than those whose family immigrated to the United States in earlier generations. This voting behavior is not just the result of pro-immigrant electorates selecting members of Congress with recent family immigration background, but, as shown by the regression discontinuity design, is observed independently of district characteristics. Recent immigration experience, either by the individual or by their family, is a strong predictor of voting on these issues, even when a member's estimated ideal point would predict otherwise.

There are many possible mechanisms for this behavior which we are not able to evaluate. Recent immigrant experience may make a member of Congress more sympathetic to other immigrants, increase their preference for larger immigrant communities (potentially of their own country of origin), and less concerned about potential costs of immigration. Similarly, a long distance from the immigrant experience may make a member of Congress emphasize less with the plight of immigrants, opposed to the growth of immigrant communities, and more concerned with costs of immigration, such as financial and economic effects. We cannot separate the effects of having a recent immigration experience from the effects of having one's family immigrate several generations prior, but our results show that these two backgrounds move voting on immigration bills in opposite directions.

Our findings suggest several avenues for fruitful extensions and future research. First, immi-

gration policy in the 20th century is littered with failed bills or bills passed by Congress but vetoed by the president (Tichenor 2002). These votes may provide additional evidence of the effect of immigration background on roll call voting.²³ Second, Tichenor suggests that many potential pro-immigration bills were stymied by congressional committees dominated by the conservative coalition of southern Democrats and western Republicans, who represented fewer immigrants and were less likely to be immigrants themselves. A preliminary analysis of relevant committee assignments shows that House Democrats (the majority party for most of this period) on these committees were significantly less likely to have a recent immigration background than those not on the committees (Tables A11 and A12). Further examination of committee assignments and the distribution of members of Congress with recent immigrant backgrounds may help illuminate the role of these committees as roadblocks.

Third, we have thus far coded all immigration bills simply as pro- or anti-immigrant, but not distinguished between which immigrant groups are favored or discriminated against. Similarly, we have measured immigrant background simply by the number of foreign-born parents or grandparents, but not by their countries of origin. However, the census data we are working with asks not just whether an MC—or his or her parents or grandparents—were born abroad; we have data on birthplace at the country level and we can distinguish between immigration family histories for all over the globe. Do members of Congress whose parents or grandparents immigrated from northern Europe vote differently than those with roots in southern or western Europe? Does geographically-detailed immigration history interact with position taking on the bills that would restrict southern or western Europe immigration or immigration from Latin America or Asia?

Finally, the micro-level census data used here is not confined just to measuring personal immigration background, but to many other areas as well. The census data includes questions in earnings, education and literacy, and occupation and industry. This data has the potential to illuminate the role of personal factors in voting across a variety of topics, as well as generate new measures of district-level demographics for this period.

²³Goldin (1994) analyzes some of these bills in the late 19th and early 20th century, focusing on district-level or state-level explanations of policy preference.

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Appendix

Table A1: Summary Statistics for Key Variables, Sample of MCs Matched to Census Data

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Foreign Born MC	12,181	0.035	0.184	0	1
Parents Foreign Born	3,430	0.559	0.852	0	2
Grandparents Foreign Born	1,813	1.939	1.848	0	4
At Least One Foreign Born Parent	3,430	0.319	0.466	0	1
At Least One Foreign Born Grandparent	1,813	0.571	0.495	0	1
All Foreign Born Parents	3,430	0.240	0.427	0	1
All Foreign Born Grandparents	1,813	0.402	0.490	0	1
Surname Foreign Born MC	8,769	0.079	0.080	0.000	1.000
Surname Parents Foreign Born	8,769	0.397	0.350	0.000	2.000
Surname Grandparents Foreign Born	8,753	1.018	0.857	0.000	4.000
Democrat	12,181	0.412	0.492	0	1
Republican	12,181	0.349	0.477	0	1
Other Party	12,181	0.239	0.427	0	1
House	12,181	0.890	0.312	0	1
Nonwhite	3,002	0.021	0.144	0	1
Northeast	12,181	0.344	0.475	0	1
Midwest	12,181	0.255	0.436	0	1
West	12,181	0.086	0.281	0	1
South	12,181	0.315	0.464	0	1
Age (1st term)	12,108	45.223	9.323	22	87
Tenure (last term)	12,181	7.667	7.186	2	60

Table A2: Examples of Surname Foreign Born Relatives in US Population

Surname	Surname Parents Foreign Born	Surname Grandparents Foreign Born
SPARKMAN	0.02	0.07
CLAIBORNE	0.03	0.06
NEELY	0.04	0.15
RAINS	0.07	0.16
MAYS	0.08	0.18
WATKINS	0.18	0.49
DAVIS	0.19	0.50
TOBEY	0.21	0.57
MAYBANK	0.23	0.50
BROOMFIELD	0.25	0.55
ROBERTSON	0.27	0.62
CAIN	0.28	0.82
SMITH	0.31	0.79
BUTLER	0.31	0.83
THOMPSON	0.32	0.82
JOHNSTON	0.37	0.91
SPROUL	0.44	1.26
LODGE	0.53	1.44
WIGGLESWORTH	0.62	1.67
GRANAHAN	0.76	0.94
KILDAY	0.98	2.68
O'BRIEN	1.26	3.31
PHILBIN	1.42	3.42
SWANSON	1.66	3.54
MAGNUSON	1.83	3.89
BLATNIK	1.89	3.95

Table A3: MC Birth Place and MC Vote Choice: All Bills Pooled

	Pro Immigration Vote		Predicted Pro but Anti	Predicted Anti but Pro
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
MC Foreign Born	0.256*** (0.046)	0.161*** (0.041)	-0.115* (0.060)	0.156*** (0.043)
Republican		-0.225*** (0.015)	0.083*** (0.020)	-0.096*** (0.018)
Other Party		0.098 (0.087)	0.039 (0.127)	0.228** (0.089)
Northeast		0.182*** (0.017)	-0.029 (0.023)	0.073*** (0.019)
South		-0.359*** (0.018)	0.174*** (0.031)	-0.161*** (0.020)
West		-0.028 (0.021)	0.006 (0.028)	-0.073*** (0.023)
Age		-0.011* (0.005)	-0.006 (0.008)	-0.007 (0.006)
Age Sq.		0.0001* (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)
Tenure		-0.004 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.002)
Tenure Sq.		0.00002 (0.0001)	0.0002 (0.0001)	0.00005 (0.0001)
Constant	0.810*** (0.043)	1.367*** (0.151)	0.079 (0.205)	0.625*** (0.176)
Bill Dummy	yes	yes	yes	yes
N	3,448	3,448	1,149	2,205
R ²	0.270	0.430	0.103	0.090

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

Table A4: MC Birth Place and MC Vote Choice: All Bills Pooled, with State/District Foreign Born Pop. (House Only, Restricted to Pre-1940 Votes)

	Pro Immigration Vote		Predicted Pro but Anti	Predicted Anti but Pro
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Foreign Born	0.237*** (0.062)	0.228*** (0.056)	-0.140 (0.176)	0.243*** (0.054)
log(Foreign Born Pop.)	0.074*** (0.007)	0.052*** (0.009)	0.008 (0.033)	0.035*** (0.008)
Republican		-0.266*** (0.026)	0.285*** (0.075)	-0.086*** (0.027)
Other Party		0.108 (0.113)	-0.070 (0.373)	0.258** (0.105)
Northeast		0.278*** (0.027)	-0.130 (0.115)	0.111*** (0.027)
South		-0.148*** (0.034)	0.332* (0.170)	-0.054* (0.031)
West		-0.146*** (0.044)	-0.265 (0.438)	-0.134*** (0.038)
Age		-0.008 (0.010)	0.006 (0.031)	-0.008 (0.009)
Age Sq.		0.00005 (0.0001)	-0.00004 (0.0003)	0.0001 (0.0001)
Tenure		0.002 (0.004)	-0.031** (0.013)	0.001 (0.003)
Tenure Sq.		0.00002 (0.0001)	0.001** (0.0004)	0.0001 (0.0001)
Constant	-0.430*** (0.063)	0.140 (0.272)	0.0001 (0.910)	0.105 (0.254)
Bill Dummy	yes	yes	yes	yes
N	1,095	1,095	146	948
R ²	0.145	0.327	0.250	0.142

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

Table A5: Immigration History and MC Vote Choice: All Bills Pooled, with State/District Foreign Born Pop. (House Only, Restricted to Pre-1940 Votes)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Pro Immigration Vote			Predicted Pro but Anti			Predicted Anti but Pro	
Parents Foreign Born	0.124*** (0.015)	0.104*** (0.014)			-0.078* (0.041)		0.059*** (0.014)	
Grandparents Foreign Born			0.130*** (0.029)	0.128*** (0.027)		0.000 (0.000)		0.152*** (0.032)
log(Foreign Born Pop.)	0.055*** (0.007)	0.040*** (0.009)	0.004 (0.035)	-0.088** (0.036)	0.057 (0.039)	0.000 (0.000)	0.030*** (0.008)	-0.110*** (0.038)
Republican		-0.228*** (0.027)		-0.237*** (0.090)	0.237*** (0.087)	0.000 (0.000)	-0.066** (0.028)	-0.249** (0.106)
Other Party		0.214* (0.122)		0.305 (0.211)			0.396*** (0.108)	0.284 (0.226)
Northeast		0.268*** (0.027)		0.369*** (0.097)	-0.109 (0.126)		0.118*** (0.028)	0.265** (0.115)
South		-0.105*** (0.035)		-0.300** (0.139)	0.509*** (0.193)		-0.023 (0.033)	-0.292** (0.141)
West		-0.111** (0.044)		0.842** (0.352)	-0.325 (0.418)	0.000 (0.000)	-0.116*** (0.039)	
Age		-0.013 (0.010)		-0.002 (0.037)	0.031 (0.035)	0.000 (0.000)	-0.010 (0.009)	-0.008 (0.037)
Age Sq.		0.0001 (0.0001)		-0.00003 (0.0004)	-0.0003 (0.0003)	0.000 (0.000)	0.0001 (0.0001)	0.00002 (0.0004)
Tenure		-0.001 (0.004)		-0.016 (0.019)	-0.029* (0.015)	0.000 (0.000)	-0.001 (0.003)	-0.026 (0.034)
Tenure Sq.		0.0001 (0.0001)		0.001 (0.001)	0.001** (0.001)	0.000 (0.000)	0.0001 (0.0001)	0.002 (0.003)
Constant	-0.318*** (0.064)	0.290 (0.276)	-0.027 (0.291)	1.087 (0.898)	-1.102 (1.056)	0.000 (0.000)	0.152 (0.257)	1.344 (0.885)
Bill Dummy	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
N	1,010	1,010	92	92	127	14	882	78
R ²	0.178	0.335	0.340	0.607	0.266		0.135	0.526

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

Table A6: Immigration History and MC Vote Choice: All Bills Pooled, Last Names Only

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Pro Immigration Vote			Predicted Pro but Anti			Predicted Anti but Pro	
Surname Parents Foreign Born	0.241*** (0.016)	0.113*** (0.015)			-0.036* (0.018)		0.078*** (0.018)	
Surname Grandparents Foreign Born			0.104*** (0.006)	0.050*** (0.006)		-0.018** (0.008)		0.031*** (0.007)
Republican		-0.213*** (0.015)		-0.213*** (0.015)	0.076*** (0.021)	0.076*** (0.021)	-0.102*** (0.019)	-0.102*** (0.019)
Other Party		0.134 (0.086)		0.138 (0.086)	0.030 (0.127)	0.024 (0.127)	0.264*** (0.088)	0.266*** (0.088)
Northeast		0.169*** (0.017)		0.169*** (0.017)	-0.024 (0.024)	-0.024 (0.024)	0.062*** (0.020)	0.063*** (0.020)
South		-0.330*** (0.019)		-0.325*** (0.019)	0.153*** (0.033)	0.150*** (0.033)	-0.159*** (0.021)	-0.159*** (0.021)
West		-0.016 (0.021)		-0.013 (0.021)	0.005 (0.029)	0.003 (0.029)	-0.075*** (0.023)	-0.075*** (0.023)
Age		-0.012** (0.006)		-0.012** (0.006)	-0.003 (0.008)	-0.003 (0.008)	-0.005 (0.006)	-0.006 (0.006)
Age Sq.		0.0001** (0.0001)		0.0001** (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)
Tenure		-0.004* (0.002)		-0.004* (0.002)	-0.001 (0.003)	-0.001 (0.003)	-0.002 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.002)
Tenure Sq.		0.00004 (0.0001)		0.00005 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)	0.0001 (0.0001)
Constant	0.724*** (0.044)	1.348*** (0.154)	0.717*** (0.044)	1.340*** (0.154)	0.021 (0.209)	0.032 (0.212)	0.581*** (0.181)	0.585*** (0.182)
Bill Dummy	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
N	3,311	3,311	3,303	3,303	1,103	1,096	2,120	2,119
R ²	0.314	0.437	0.316	0.437	0.097	0.098	0.093	0.093

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

Table A7: Immigration History and MC Vote Choice: All Bills Pooled, Alternate Specification

	Pro Immigration Vote		Predicted Pro but Anti	Predicted Anti but Pro
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Immigration Index	0.168*** (0.013)	0.074*** (0.013)	-0.022* (0.013)	0.051*** (0.016)
Republican		-0.196*** (0.021)	0.058*** (0.022)	-0.101*** (0.031)
Other Party		0.126 (0.126)	0.143 (0.135)	0.358** (0.142)
Northeast		0.106*** (0.025)	0.001 (0.025)	0.017 (0.033)
South		-0.395*** (0.028)	0.124*** (0.033)	-0.153*** (0.036)
West		0.057* (0.031)	-0.032 (0.029)	-0.017 (0.041)
Age		-0.001 (0.009)	0.001 (0.010)	0.012 (0.010)
Age Sq.		-0.00001 (0.0001)	-0.00001 (0.0001)	-0.0001 (0.0001)
Tenure		-0.004 (0.004)	0.004 (0.004)	-0.001 (0.005)
Tenure Sq.		0.00003 (0.0001)	-0.0001 (0.0001)	0.00004 (0.0002)
Constant	0.798*** (0.056)	1.152*** (0.234)	-0.055 (0.257)	0.194 (0.272)
Bill Dummy	yes	yes	yes	yes
N	1,594	1,594	744	845
R ²	0.327	0.463	0.076	0.131

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

Table A8: RD: Imputed (Last Name) MC Immigrant Status and Vote Choice, All Bills Pooled

	MC Immigrant Status		Parents' Immigrant Status		Grandparents' Immigrant Status	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Estimate	0.399 (0.127)	0.123 (0.105)	0.325 (0.114)	0.101 (0.09)	0.332 (0.118)	0.103 (0.095)
N	385	385	494	494	442	442
N (Effective)	186	306	254	399	225	357
BW (Optimal)	±10	±20	±10	±20	±10	±20

Table A9: RD: Imputed (Last Name) MC Immigrant Status and Vote Choice, All Bills Pooled

	MC Immigrant Status		Parents' Immigrant Status		Grandparents' Immigrant Status	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Estimate	0.939 (0.12)	0.584 (0.126)	0.847 (0.139)	0.517 (0.122)	0.911 (0.138)	0.635 (0.126)
Bill Dummy	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
N	385	385	494	494	442	442
N (Effective)	100	124	133	156	110	130
BW (Optimal)	±4.578	±6.247	±4.484	±5.515	±4.291	±4.951

Table A10: RD: Imputed (Last Name) MC Immigrant Status and Vote Choice, All Bills Pooled (Robustness Check)

	Parents' Immigrant Status		Grandparents' Immigrant Status	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Estimate	0.722 (0.13)	0.456 (0.119)	0.79 (0.146)	0.567 (0.132)
Bill Dummy	No	Yes	No	Yes
N	488	488	473	473
N (Effective)	132	169	111	129
BW (Optimal)	±4.763	±6.479	±4.126	±4.781

Table A11: Are Immigration Relevant Committee Members Outliers?: Roll Call Votes

Chamber	Party	DW-N		Share Pro Immigration Votes	
		On Committee	Off Committee	On Committee	Off Committee
House	Democratic	0.28	0.32	0.46	0.46
House	Republican	0.30	0.37	0.48	0.37
Senate	Democratic	0.27	0.34	0.53	0.49
Senate	Republican	0.32	0.36	0.44	0.39

A t-test allows us to reject the null of no differences based on committee membership for DW-N (Republicans and Democrats) and for pro-immigration votes (Republicans only).

Table A12: Are Immigration Relevant Committee Members Outliers?: Immigration Background

Chamber	Party	Foreign Born Parents		Foreign Born Grandparents	
		On Committee	Off Committee	On Committee	Off Committee
House	Democratic	0.25	0.38	0.93	1.37
House	Republican	0.24	0.38	1.22	1.38
Senate	Democratic	0.17	0.25	1.00	0.89
Senate	Republican	0.31	0.21	0.73	1.12

A t-test allows us to reject the null of no differences based on committee membership for Foreign Born Parents (Democrats only).