

“Don’t Go Changing to Try and Please Me”: A Preference-Consistency Analysis on Trade Policy in the U.S. House

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Abstract

Trade voting in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1993 to 2001 provides an opportunity to move beyond examining the determinants of trade voting on single bills and to focus on the consistency members of Congress demonstrate in their trade preferences. We find that while a significant percentage of House members are consistent in their trade preferences during the time period, a surprising percentage of those members serving over the entire period are inconsistent, affecting important changes in U.S. trade policy. Ideological, partisan, and constituency-based factors prove significant cross-pressures on House members’ trade preferences throughout the time period; however, we unearth differences in effects between the two parties. It is these cross-pressures that lead to inconsistent preferences among some legislators.

Since the early 1990s trade measures have been particularly controversial in the U.S. House of Representatives. As a result, scholars have focused a great deal of attention on trade voting in the U.S. House (e.g., Bardwell 2000; Conley 1999; Nokken 2003; Uslaner 1998; Wink, Livingston, and Garand 1996). Because trade policies impact jobs in local districts House members are expected to be responsive in their trade preferences to the interests of their constituents (Kingdon 1989; Mayhew 1974). As a result, legislator preferences on trade are slow to change. It logically follows that trade policy should change incrementally. The expected need for legislators to respond to constituent pressures and the slowness in transforming policy suggests House members will be consistent in their voting on trade measures. However, political scientists have demonstrated inconsistencies on trade voting among members of Congress, showing important trade policies can change abruptly (Bardwell 2000; Conley 1999; Biglaiser, Jackson, and Peake 2004).

Scholars have identified two main sources of policy change in the U.S. legislature: member turnover (through elections and retirement) and preference con-

version. Most of the early studies on policy change downplay the effects of conversion while highlighting the policy effects of turnover (Brady and Lynn 1973; Brady and Sinclair 1984). However, recently the incumbency advantage has been markedly high in House elections, and as a result, electoral turnover has been relatively low since the “Republican revolution” of 1994. Both factors suggest electoral turnover is less likely to cause major shifts in policy than during previous eras when trade policy was not as controversial. Therefore, preference conversion is a possible explanation for changes in trade voting in the U.S. House.

A review of voting records on key trade legislation from 1993 to 2001 indicates that a large number of House members are inconsistent in their trade voting preferences. Since the fight over the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1993, the politics of trade, once not particularly controversial, have become divisive on Capitol Hill, especially in the House (Bardwell 2000; Shoch 2001). While members may prefer policies that expand trade in one instance, at other times, these same representatives change their mind, preferring protectionist stances to freer trade. On the other hand, a large percentage (48%) of the members who were incumbents over the entire time period remained consistent in their positions. What leads to consistent position taking and inconsistent position taking on trade issues before the U.S. House?

We contribute to the literature on legislative trade voting and policy change by examining trade policy position taking in the House over the period 1993 to 2001. Additionally, we narrow our focus to members of the House who remain incumbents over the period. Fifty-two percent of the membership (225) remained constant from 1993 to 2001. We analyze their positions (in terms of consistency and inconsistency) on trade for the five most significant trade votes during the period, including NAFTA in 1993; General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)/ World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1994; Fast-Track Trade Negotiating Authority in 1997; Permanent Normalized Trade Relations (PNTR) with China in 2000; and Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) in 2001.¹

A cursory examination of the data shows a great deal of consistency existed in the House among members who remained during the period. Of these 225 representatives, 107 (48%) either always supported trade or always opposed it. Political party is a clear predictor here, as those members who always supported trade were overwhelmingly Republicans (86%), while those who always opposed trade were overwhelmingly Democrats (86%). Even so, a significant percentage of the constant membership changed their preferences on trade at least once (52%). These members are likely those most cross-pressured on trade because they shifted their position during a period when trade issues were highly controversial.

In a multivariate analysis pooling all members’ votes on the five key trade votes we find that House members often take cues from their constituents when voting on trade policies. However, we find significant cross-pressures between district- and individual-level factors. Additionally, we find a consistently strong correlation between the support members receive from political action committees (PACs), both labor and business, and their voting behavior on trade. Overall, we find that cross-pressured members of Congress, for example Democrats who

TABLE 1
*Distribution of Key Trade Votes in the House, 1993 to 2001,
 For All Members Over Period, and Split by Party*

No. of Times Vote Supporting Trade	All Members of the House	Constant Democrats	Constant Republicans
0	51 (22.7)	44 (36.1)	6 (5.9)
1	46 (20.4)	33 (27.0)	13 (12.7)
2	29 (12.9)	19 (15.6)	10 (9.8)
3	20 (8.9)	10 (8.2)	10 (9.8)
4	23 (10.2)	8 (6.6)	15 (14.7)
5	56 (24.9)	8 (6.6)	48 (47.1)
Total	225	122	102

Note: Column percentages are in parentheses. The correlation between the number of times a member voted for trade and political party (Republican) is .49 (Kendall's *tau-b*, $p < .01$, two-tailed).

receive large donations from business PACs, are less consistent in their opposition to trade over the time period. Party and the president also provide cross-presures on House members (Bond and Fleisher 1990), and these effects are particularly salient on trade issues. For example, in 1994, those members who switched from opposition to NAFTA to support of GATT were overwhelmingly Democrats voting to give President Clinton a legislative victory. In 2001, those members who switched from opposing Clinton on trade issues (e.g., Fast-Track or PNTR) to favoring Trade Promotion Authority (asked for by President Bush) were overwhelmingly Republicans.

Trade legislation continues to draw great controversy. Victories for the George W. Bush administration on trade have proven hard fought. In December 2001, the House passed Trade Promotion Authority by a single vote, requiring a great deal of lobbying by the president and side deals by Republican House leaders, even with Bush’s extremely high public approval. In July 2005, the House barely passed the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) (217-215), a pact that lifts trade barriers between the United States and Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic. The Free Trade Area of the Americas agreement (FTAA) would likely face stiff opposition in the U.S. House were it to come to the floor. Indeed, the challenges in gaining House support are one reason why the Bush administration has pursued bilateral trade agreements over hemispheric pacts. Our analysis of trade allows us to see how members of Congress react to changes in the attention given these issues by

attentive publics such as organized labor (Arnold 1990), which may help us to predict future U.S. trade policy.

Below, we briefly review the literature on congressional trade voting. We develop a pooled-vote model on the five key trade measures in the House of Representatives covering the period 1993 to 2001, examining all members of the House and then separately examining those members who remained throughout the period. We then present an ordered logit analysis on trade support consistency for those members of the House who remained during the entire period of study.

THE POLITICS OF PREFERENCE CONSISTENCY

Recent position taking in the House on five key trade bills between 1993 and 2001 provides an opportunity to examine the competing explanations for congressional preferences on trade. Until the vote on NAFTA in 1993, trade votes spurred little controversy. Since the Great Depression, when Congress shifted institutional responsibility for trade policy to the executive, legislators have routinely delegated to the executive on trade issues.² However, the growth of the U.S. trade deficit, coupled with labor unions' and other groups' increasing worries over the effects of free trade on their members in the 1980s, spurred protests against the passage of NAFTA in 1993 (Francia 2001; Engel and Jackson 1998).

Following NAFTA, trade votes continued to garner intense opposition. President Clinton was able to deliver 102 Democratic votes for the passage of NAFTA in 1993, and his efforts are often cited as the major reason for the agreement's success (Uslaner 1998). Following the passage of NAFTA, Clinton asked and received support from the House on U.S. entry into the WTO in a lopsided vote (288-146) in 1994. Yet, in 1997, Clinton could not persuade enough Democrats to support Fast-Track and the vote was cancelled, eventually failing in a floor vote in 1998 (180-243). Again, Clinton went to the House for support on a major trade issue regarding PNTR for China in 2000. This measure, divisive for many Democrats during an election year (73 supported, 138 opposed), passed in a close vote (237-197). In 2001, in an even closer vote (215-214), the House passed Trade Promotion Authority for President Bush.

This brief recent history of free trade measures in the House and the several studies that have analyzed House trade voting suggest members of Congress have been significantly cross-pressured on their trade voting, whether from interest groups (e.g., labor and business PACs), their constituents, presidents from their party, or their own ideology. Additionally, the importance of cross pressures among Democrats and Republicans appears to shift over time, based on party control of the presidency, with constituency factors proving less important for House Republicans in 2001 when Bush asked for Trade Promotion Authority (Biglaiser, Jackson, and Peake 2004). What factors explain these apparent changes in trade policy in the U.S. House? The theoretical literature has identified two explanations as important in policy change in legislatures: member turnover and preference conversion. Our analysis below focuses primarily on the latter of these two explanations.

Elections affect policy by changing the face of Congress. With new members come new preferences. While membership change tends to produce gradual changes in policy, significant turnover can have important policy effects (Brady and Lynn 1973). Although electoral turnover is the most obvious force for policy change, it is possible that, at least in the House of Representatives, it is less important in the recent era. With incumbency reelection rates exceeding 95% in recent House elections and the partisan gerrymanders that followed the 1990 and 2000 censuses, electoral turnover is a less significant force for policy change than it once was.³ As gerrymandered districts become more politically homogenous, electoral competition decreases and the likelihood of a preference shift when a legislator retires also decreases since this individual will likely be replaced by a copartisan.⁴

Second, and more theoretically interesting, representatives may change their preferences on key issues. Any number of personal, political, and constituency factors may influence the decision to change one’s preference on a critical policy (Brady and Sinclair 1984). Scholars have identified several factors which might cause a legislator to switch her vote on a piece of legislation from one year to the next. Shift of party control of the presidency has been identified as an important factor, especially when the policy relates specifically to the president as is the case for trade (Asher and Weisberg 1978; Pritchard 1987). Research (Claussen 1973; Asher and Weisberg 1978) suggests that the most abrupt changes in legislative decisions are likely to be linked to party in the context of a party shift in the presidency. On the other hand, those areas affected most by constituency should “show the greatest vote stability unless long-term policy evolution or redefinition has occurred” (Asher and Weisberg 1978, 405). Foreign trade issues, with their link to presidential preferences and their direct impact on major constituent groups, reflect the type of legislative decision that is likely to result in the greatest degree of cross-pressuring of representatives.

Scholars find a number of cross-pressures in their analyses of trade voting. For instance, Bardwell (2000) found that constituency-based factors contributed to the majority coalition which favored trade to shift as a result of NAFTA-related job losses in members’ districts, leading to the rejection of Fast-Track in 1997. Interest groups also bring significant pressure on members of Congress regarding their trade votes (Engel and Jackson 1998; Francia 2001), as do presidents and party leaders (Livingston and Wink 1997; Uslaner 1998). Ideology has also played an important role in structuring member preferences on trade policy (Nokken 2003), confounding simple constituency-based explanations, as pointed out in recent research (Conley 1999). Moreover, a shift in party control of the presidency may confound these constituency-based explanations (Biglaiser, Jackson, and Peake 2004).

As Jones (1994) argues, a change in the political context can alter the cues on which members of Congress base their votes. Change in the political context related to trade might include a shift in party control of the White House, economic recession, increasing trade deficits, or high unemployment (nationally or within the district). However, given the degree to which members appear consistent in trade preferences, constituency and interest group factors are likely to play

an important role in explaining levels of support for trade as well as the consistency of such support.

MODEL SPECIFICATION

We first examine the determinants of trade preferences among House members from 1993 to 2001 on the five trade measures. Next, we narrow our focus on those members who retained their House seats over the entire period, focusing our analysis on individual member consistency, either in support for or opposition to all five trade measures.

Dependent Variables

Our first order of business is to build a baseline model for member preferences on the key trade votes during our time period. To do so, we pool the votes from all five key votes identified above into one logit analysis. The dependent variable is a dummy, with 1 indicating a vote in support of trade.⁵ We collect our roll call voting data from the *Congressional Quarterly Almanac* (various editions). Next, we conduct a similar logit analysis for the membership who remained throughout the time period. Finally, we conduct an ordered logit analysis to assess consistency among those members who remained throughout the time period. The dependent variable has three categories: consistently opposed to trade, inconsistent in their trade votes, and consistently supported trade.

Independent Variables

The independent variables in the analyses stem from district-level and individual-level variables that have been shown by previous research to affect legislative voting on trade. The district-level variables represent the constituency pressures members of the House face when voting on trade and do not vary from key vote to key vote. The individual-level factors, however, represent other electoral factors (like PAC support and electoral safety), a member's propensity to support the sitting president, and the member's own ideological preferences, all of which may vary between key trade votes.

District-Level Factors. Policies that promote greater trade integration hurt workers in less competitive industries. Many of the expected job losses from freer trade are blue-collar industrial positions. Conventional wisdom suggests House members from blue-collar districts will oppose freer trade in order to serve constituency interests (Kang and Greene 1999). We use Adler's (2004) congressional district data set to measure the *percent of blue-collar workers* in the district.⁶ The variable is the number of blue-collar workers in the district as a percentage of the total district population. Additionally, we use *district union density* to represent the impact of union membership in the district. These measures differ from one another because not all heavily blue-collar districts welcome union membership, and this is especially the case throughout the South. Also, unions do not only rep-

resent blue-collar industries in the United States, as teacher, government employee and service worker unions are an important segment of organized labor.⁷

Data has shown that free trade agreements have demonstrably negative employment effects on some districts and this can impact trade preferences of congresspersons. For example, Bardwell (2000) shows that NAFTA-related job losses contributed to some Republican representatives’ abandoning their leadership and voting against Fast-Track in 1997. We include Bardwell’s measure of *NAFTA job losses* in the model to account for these economic effects. The data reflect the raw number of jobs lost in the district as estimated by the Department of Labor in 1998. We also control for the effects of district wealth on trade votes. The expectation is that legislators from wealthier districts are more likely to support trade integration. *District median income* data come from Adler’s congressional district data set.

Individual-Level Electoral Factors. Interest groups have had a marked interest in the politics of foreign trade. One method of demonstrating their interest and possibly influencing (or at least rewarding) the behavior of members of Congress is through direct PAC contributions. Labor’s use of contributions as carrots or sticks, a practice noted by Engel and Jackson (1998) and Francia (2001), may affect trade votes (see also, Baldwin and Magee 2000; Bardwell 2000; Jackson and Engel 2003b; Kang and Greene 1999). Representatives receiving significant money from labor unions are expected to oppose trade openness.⁸ Alternatively, business interests that generally support freer trade also contribute to House members’ campaigns, and the opposite relationship on trade support is expected. Business PACs may also punish Republicans voting against trade (Jackson and Engel 2003a). Contribution data for labor and business PACs are obtained from the Center for Responsive Politics (www.opensecrets.org) and the Political Money Line (www.fecinfo.com).⁹ The measures of *business PAC* and *labor PAC* contributions are from the election cycle preceding the trade vote (e.g., 1992 election cycle for the NAFTA and GATT votes).

Electoral safety may enhance a legislator’s autonomy from constituency or other electoral pressures. For safe legislators, the potential for retaliation from their reelection constituencies may be quite low, allowing them to pursue other goals. For instance, safer Republicans from heavily blue-collar districts may be freer to vote with their party in support of trade than their copartisans from heavily blue-collar districts that are potential targets for the Democrats in the next election. Victory margins have been shown to be significant in previous analyses of trade voting (Conley 1999; Biglaiser, Jackson and Peake 2004), so we include them in our model below. The measure includes each member’s *margin of victory* (as a percentage of the two-party vote) in the election preceding the roll call vote.

Ideology, Party and the President. Legislator ideology may affect voting preferences on trade (Baldwin and Magee 2000; Conley 1999; Gartzke and Wrighton 1998; Kahane 1996; Nokken 2003; Sussman and Daynes 1995). Backers of freer trade often identify with a more conservative laissez-faire economic perspective, while liberals favor state involvement in protecting industry (Wink, Livingston, and Garand 1996, 753). An opposite relationship has been identified among

Republicans in the House, however (Conley 1999; Shoch 2001), with the most conservative Republicans more likely to vote against free trade measures during President Clinton's term. The effects of ideology among Republicans apparently disappears, however, once Bush, a Republican, becomes president in 2001 (see Biglaiser, Jackson, and Peake 2004). For the analyses on constant members, we use Poole and Rosenthal's (1997) first dimension CS-Nominate scores to measure *member ideology* (see also Poole 2003). For the pooled logit analyses, we employ DW-Nominate scores for the year the vote took place. Both measures range from -1 to +1, from most liberal to most conservative.¹⁰

As demonstrated in Table 1, party effects are clearly apparent in determining the propensity of representatives' consistently opposing or supporting trade measures. Party is a significant factor in trade voting, as demonstrated by previous research (e.g., Conley 1999; Shoch 2001). Due to the importance of party in explaining trade votes, we split all of our analyses by political party, which is the standard in recent roll call trade vote analyses by political scientists (Bardwell 2000; Conley 1999; Biglaiser, Jackson, and Peake 2004). Doing so also allows us to examine the effects of presidential support and ideology on trade votes, as these measures are highly correlated with party. Additionally, splitting by party makes theoretical sense in the analyses because it is our expectation that the changing context of party control of the White House will affect Republicans and Democrats in different ways. In the pooled logit analyses, we include *presidential support scores* for each member for the year in which the vote took place. The measure accounts for the effects of party because Democrats during the Clinton votes score highest, whereas Republicans tend to score the lowest. We do not use presidential support scores in our ordered logit analyses of those members who remained throughout the time period because ideology and presidential support over our time period are highly collinear.¹¹

FINDINGS

We first present the findings of the pooled logit analyses, including analyses pooling all of the key trade votes for all members, and all of the key trade votes for those members of Congress who remained throughout the entire period.¹² In each of these analyses we provide a dummy variable for each vote to control for specific vote-related characteristics. We also present the findings from the ordered logit analysis of member preference consistency.

Pooled Trade Vote Analysis

We find that constituency factors are important in structuring trade preferences in the House, yet significant cross-pressures remain over the entire time period of study (see Table 2). Party is clearly important. The baseline estimated probability of Democrats supporting trade is .24, while it is .61 among Republicans. Presidential support is also significant among both Democrats and Republicans. For Republicans this demonstrates the high probability of voting with

TABLE 2
*Logistic Regression Analysis, Pooling House Roll Call Votes on Trade,
 Split by Party, 1993 to 2001*

Independent Variable	Democrats			Republicans		
	Coefficient	z	Predicted Probability	Coefficient	z	Predicted Probability
Member Ideology	1.35	3.47**	.31, .39	-0.196	-0.35	
Presidential Support	0.053	6.95**	.48, .63	0.049	5.05**	.84, .95
NAFTA Job Losses	0.0001	0.70		-0.0004	-2.56**	.57, .52
District Blue Collar %	-0.097	-2.20*	.21, .18	-0.086	-1.98*	.57, .52
District Median Income	-0.000002	-0.14		0.00001	0.99	
District Union Density	-11.78	-7.57**	.13, .07	2.86	1.56	
Margin of Victory	-0.015	-3.40**	.18, .13	0.011	2.49**	.66, .71
Business PAC \$ (z)	0.365	4.28**	.31, .40	0.397	4.04**	.70, .77
Labor PAC \$ (z)	-0.531	-5.30**	.16, .10	-1.24	-4.44**	.51, .40
NAFTA Vote ('93)	-0.166	-0.40		1.03	1.84*	
GATT Vote ('94)	1.32	3.23**		0.204	0.42	
Fast-Track Count ('97)	-0.719	-1.72*		1.04	1.76*	
PNTR Vote ('00)	0.224	0.54		1.41	2.31*	
Constant	-2.47	-3.25**		-2.54	-2.18*	
N		1052			925	
Pseudo R-Square		.32			.14	
LR Chi-Square		438.2**			144.1**	
% Modal Category		64.8%, Y = 0			73.7%, Y = 1	
% Correct Predicted		79.7%			77.0%	
Prop. Reduction Err.		.42			.12	
Baseline Probability (Y = 1)		.24			.61	

Note: Y = 1 for a YES vote for trade, Y = 0 for a NO vote. The 2001 Trade Promotion Authority vote is the excluded vote. Analysis was run using STATA 9.0, predicted probabilities determined using Clarify in STATA 9.0 (Tomz, Wittenberg, and King 2003). Predicted probabilities reflect the estimated probability of Y when going from the mean value of X to one and two standard deviations above the mean of X, respectively. The baseline probability reported is Pr(Y = 1) when X is at its mean plus one standard deviation, with all other variables held at their mean values (and vote dummies at 0). The baseline probability is useful for comparison purposes to the predicted probabilities reported for each model. *p < .05, **p < .01, one-tailed.

Bush in 2001 on Trade Promotion Authority.¹³ For Democrats, those most supportive of Clinton were more likely to vote in favor of trade.

Among Democrats, the percentage of blue-collar workers in the district and union density significantly impact a member’s probability of voting in favor of trade. The relationships are negative and statistically significant, as expected. Union density is especially important, according to the marginal effects shown in Table 2.¹⁴ A Democrat from a highly union-dense district (one standard deviation above the mean value among Democrats) has a predicted probability of voting for trade of .13, about half the baseline probability for Democrats. Electoral safety is also a strong predictor, as the more safe a Democrat is, the less likely he or she will vote in favor of trade. PAC contributions are also salient among Democrats, in the

expected directions. For Democrats who receive significantly greater labor PAC contributions, the probability of voting yes is .16. For the Democrats receiving lots of cash from business PACs, their probability of voting yes is .31. Finally, for Democrats, ideology also contributes to their proclivity to support trade—the more conservative the Democrat, the more likely he or she voted for trade.

For Republicans, the story is somewhat different (see Table 3). Constituency effects matter, particularly when the economic effects of free trade are apparent, as represented by the NAFTA job losses variable. As shown by Bardwell (2000), Republicans from districts adversely affected by NAFTA were less likely to vote with their party leadership in support of trade. The same negative impact exists for Republicans from heavily blue-collar districts. Electoral safety also matters in the expected direction for Republicans—the safest Republicans were most likely to vote in favor of trade.¹⁵ Business and labor PAC contributions affect Republicans in predicted directions, with those supported by business favoring trade.

Turning to the members of Congress who remained throughout our time period, we find the long-serving Democrats behaved similarly to what is presented above. The main difference among these Democrats from the results presented above is that they are even less likely to vote in favor of trade, with a baseline probability of only .16. On the other hand, long-serving Republicans behaved differently in the way they responded to constituency pressures. These Republicans' voting patterns were not significantly affected by the density of the blue-collar workforce in their district or the job losses experienced by that workforce as a result of NAFTA. The other major change in results is that ideology proves a significant cross-pressure among these Republicans, with the most conservative in the GOP less likely to vote in favor of trade over the time period. For example, a highly conservative Republican has a predicted probability of voting for trade of .64, compared to the baseline (of the constant members) of .71. Though counterintuitive, this relationship makes sense when one accounts for the pressures conservatives face from the religious right, who sometimes oppose expanding trade with communist or other anti-Christian states (e.g., PNTR in 2000, see Nokken 2003).

Consistency Analysis for Trade Voting, 1993 to 2001

We now turn our attention to the preference consistency analysis of those members who remained in the House over the entire time frame. To isolate the effects on preference changes among House members, we focus on these 225 members. It is these representatives that should account for much of the consistency in trade preferences, as demonstrated in Table 1. But an interesting puzzle remains. Of those members who remain in the House, what leads them to be consistent in their trade preferences?

To this point, one of the clearest findings from the analysis is that party matters considerably on trade issues. In part, the lack of support House Democrats have given major trade measures over the past decade stems from constituency concerns. Since a protrade Democrat held the White House for much of this

TABLE 3
*Logistic Regression Analysis, Pooling House Roll Call Votes on Trade,
 Split by Party, Constant Membership Only, 1993 to 2001*

Independent Variable	Democrats			Republicans		
	Coefficient	z	Predicted Probability	Coefficient	z	Predicted Probability
Member Ideology	2.37	2.92**	.22, .30	-2.23	-1.98*	.64, .56
Presidential Support	0.077	5.76**	.47, .68	0.056	3.57**	.90, .97
NAFTA Job Losses	-0.0001	-0.39		-0.0003	-1.47	
District Blue Collar %	-0.122	-1.84*	.13, .10	-0.045	-0.76	
District Median Income	-0.000004	-0.28		0.00004	2.10*	.76, .81
District Union Density	-12.64	-5.69**	.08, .04	4.22	1.60	
Margin of Victory	-0.016	-2.35**	.12, .08	0.011	1.74*	.75, .78
Business PAC \$ (z)	0.326	2.44**	.20, .25	0.756	4.19**	.82, .90
Labor PAC \$ (z)	-0.520	-3.28**	.11, .07	-3.90	-6.56**	.44, .21
NAFTA Vote ('93)	-0.489	-0.73		0.518	0.62	
GATT Vote ('94)	1.244	1.93*		-0.542	-0.73	
Fast-Track Count ('97)	-0.884	-1.33		0.740	0.83	
PNTR Vote ('00)	0.097	0.15		0.880	0.95	
Constant	-3.70	-3.18**		-4.50	-2.39**	
N		556			468	
Pseudo R-Square		.35			.22	
LR Chi-Square		222.9**			121.7**	
% Modal Category		73% (Y = 0)			72% (Y = 1)	
% Correct Predicted		88.5%			77.6%	
Prop. Reduction Err.		.39			.21	
Baseline Probability (Y = 1)		.16			.71	

Note: Y = 1 for a YES vote for trade, Y = 0 for a NO vote. The 2001 Trade Promotion Authority vote is the excluded vote. Analysis was run using STATA 9.0, predicted probabilities determined using Clarify in STATA 9.0 (Tomz, Wittenberg, and King 2003). Predicted probabilities reflect the estimated probability of Y when going from the mean value of X to one and two standard deviations above the mean of X, respectively. The baseline probability reported is Pr(Y = 1) when X is at its mean plus one standard deviation, with all other variables held at their mean values (and vote dummies at 0). The baseline probability is useful for comparison purposes to the predicted probabilities reported for each model.

*p < .05, **p < .01, one-tailed.

period, significant cross-pressures may have affected Democratic support for trade, affecting Democratic preference consistency. Moreover, Republicans appear to be much more supportive of trade, on average. Yet, for much of the time a Democratic president was asking for the trade measures, which may have allowed constituency-minded Republicans to vote against these trade measures and then change to support trade once George W. Bush ascended to the presidency. We revisit these cross-pressured members of Congress below in the last section of the analysis.

Incumbent Democrats. In Table 4, we present an ordered logit analysis containing three categories in the dependent variable. The first category (Y = 0) includes representatives who consistently voted against trade throughout the period. The

TABLE 4
*Ordered Logit Results for Consistent Position Taking by Constant Members
 on Key Trade Votes in the House, 1993 to 2001*

Independent Variable	Democrats		Republicans			
	Coefficient (S.E.)	z	Coefficient (S.E.)	z		
Member Ideology	0.87	0.49	-8.60	-3.63***		
District Blue Collar %	-0.13	-1.09	-0.21	-1.50*		
NAFTA Job Losses	-0.0004	-0.65	-0.0004	-0.90		
District Median Income	-0.00001	-0.44	0.00003	0.74		
District Union Density	-17.59	-3.98***	12.38	1.98**		
Avg. Margin of Victory	-0.123	-0.76	0.030	1.58*		
Avg. Labor PAC Contribution (z)	-0.627	-1.59*	-7.85	-4.85***		
Avg. Business PAC Contribution (z)	0.748	2.32**	1.43	3.44***		
N	103		88			
Pseudo R-Square	.25		.32			
LR Chi-Square	43.39***		48.42***			
Cut 1 (S. E.)	-3.93 (2.03)		-2.05 (2.14)			
Cut 2 (S. E.)	0.77 (1.91)		2.46 (2.13)			
Marginal Effects	P(Y = 0)	P(Y = 1)	P(Y = 2)	P(Y = 0)	P(Y = 1)	P(Y = 2)
Prob. w/ Base Values	.30	.67	.02	.02	.51	.48
Ideology	—	—	—	.04	.71	.24
Union Density	.56	.43	.01	.01	.35	.64
Labor PAC \$.41	.57	.02	.10	.79	.11
Business PAC \$.19	.76	.04	.01	.26	.74
Blue Collar %	—	—	—	.02	.61	.37
Margin Victory	—	—	—	.01	.41	.57

Note: The dependent variable contains three categories: always opposed trade (0), sometimes supported trade (1, where member voted 1-4 times in favor), and always supported trade (2). P(Y = 0) are the consistently opposed members; P(Y = 2) are those members who consistently support trade; and P(Y = 1) are the inconsistent members. Marginal effects reflect the probability of Y when X is one standard deviation above its mean value. The baseline probability reported is based on holding the X variables at their mean values. The model was estimated using STATA 9.0.

*p < .1, **p < .05, ***p < .01, one-tailed.

second category (Y = 1) includes those representatives inconsistent in their trade votes—meaning they supported trade in one to four of the key votes. The third category (Y = 2) includes representatives who consistently supported the key trade measures (voted yes on all five votes).¹⁶ Because Democrats provide the greatest opposition to trade bills, the category of interest is the group of Democrats who always opposed trade (Y = 0). Among the Democrats, high-union density in the district is a strong predictor of consistent opposition to the trade measures. For example, a Democrat from a highly unionized district (one standard deviation above the Democratic mean) has a .56 probability of having always opposed free trade, compared to the party baseline of .30. Democrats who receive significant support from business PACs are less consistent in their opposition to

trade (.19 compared to .30), whereas those Democrats who receive significant support from labor are more likely to be consistently opposed (.41).

Incumbent Republicans. Among Republicans, the category of interest is the group who always supported trade ($Y = 2$). The Republican base probability of falling in this category is .48. Which Republicans were consistent in their support of free trade? As shown above in the pooled logit analysis, ideology has an interesting counterintuitive relationship with trade support among Republicans. While our ideology measure among all incumbent members is positively related to the number of yes votes in favor of trade (Pearson’s $r = .55, p < .01$), the relationship shown in Table 4 is reversed. It is significantly negative, with the most conservative Republicans the least likely to consistently support trade. Their expected probability is only .24, half of the baseline probability. Shoch (2000) noticed an alliance on trade issues between protectionist Democrats and highly conservative Republicans, who either opposed trade for protectionist reasons or did not like the idea of trading with communist China. Also, since it was President Clinton asking for four of the five trade measures, these very conservative Republicans might have felt less inclined to go with their party on this key issue, instead placating conservative supporters in their districts. Below, we take into account party change of the White House.

PAC contributions also affect trade voting consistency in the expected directions. The model predicts that Republicans who receive much support from organized labor compared to other Republicans have only a .11 probability of consistently supporting trade, compared to the base probability of .48. On the other hand, members of the GOP who receive substantial support from business PACs have a .74 probability of consistently supporting trade. One odd finding among Republicans is that one constituency factor that appears to affect trade voting consistency among these enduring members is union density, but it does so in the opposite direction from what we expected. Republicans from the most unionized districts are predicted to fall within the consistently supporting trade category with a probability of .64, significantly greater than the baseline probability. We speculate that this could be a result of Republicans from these districts focusing on satisfying their reelection constituencies, in which unions are unlikely to be included.¹⁷ More intuitively, Republicans from high-percentage blue-collar districts are less likely to consistently support trade (.37 compared to .48). Additionally, Republicans who, on average, win reelection overwhelmingly are more likely to consistently favor trade (.57 to .48), as they are in a better position to support their party leadership.¹⁸

Constituency effects on trade preference consistency appear different for Democrats than Republicans. Whereas Democrats tend to respond to the anti-trade concerns leveled by organized labor—hence they are more consistently opposed to trade measures—Republicans appear to behave in the opposite manner by overtly rejecting the preferences of organized labor even when union members are present in large numbers in their districts. This does not mean, however, that Republicans are not responsive to affected constituents when voting on trade. While Democrats respond to union membership, the analyses above sug-

gest they are much less responsive to nonunionized blue-collar workers and workers displaced by trade liberalization (through NAFTA job losses), as these variables have no effect on Democrats. It is possible that the interests of unions and the Democratic Party on trade have become so intertwined that other constituency effects matter less to long-serving Democratic House members. Democrats consistently oppose trade liberalization, and this has become easier to do with a Republican in the White House.

Similarly situated Republicans from heavier union districts may realize, however, that unions rarely make up their reelection constituency, as defined by Fenno (1978). Economic interests that tend to be protrade prove most significant for these Republican legislators, including agriculture, which also is significant in many of the Midwestern districts that contain a lot of union members. For example, Representatives Camp (R-MI), Oxley (R-OH) and Gillmor (R-OH) all consistently supported trade, yet come from heavily unionized districts that also rely on the export farming economy. It is reasonable to conclude that these representatives, while cross-pressured by competing constituency interests, sided with agriculture and business interests over unions because of organized labor's allegiance to the Democratic Party and the fact that labor was not part of their reelection constituency.¹⁹ Inconsistent long-serving Republicans may be responding to the concerns of their constituents, as they are more commonly from heavily blue-collar districts. The negative relationship between ideological conservatism and support for trade that we unearth may also be a reflection of constituency pressure, as discussed above.

THE PRESIDENT AS A CROSS-PRESSURE

Scholars who have examined trade voting have linked congressional behavior to presidential influence. They highlight the cross-pressures that exist when a president asks congressional copartisans for support, yet constituency and group pressures push the representative to oppose trade (Biglaiser, Jackson, and Peake 2004; Conley 1999; Uslaner 1998). Therefore, we examine the incumbent representatives whose behavior indicates the most substantial cross-pressuring: Republicans who always opposed trade under Clinton but switched to support it under Bush, and Democrats who always supported trade under Clinton but switched to oppose it under Bush.

Eight representatives served in the House from 1993 to 2001 and voted against each of the first four trade bills brought up during the Clinton administration, but they voted in favor of Trade promotion Authority for President Bush in 2001. All Republicans, these members are Richard Pombo (CA), Duncan Hunter (CA), Cliff Stearns (FL), John Mica (FL), Michael Bilirakis (FL), Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (FL), Lincoln Diaz-Balart (FL), and Dan Burton (IN). These eight switches from total opposition to major trade liberalization, to support, demonstrate the importance of the presidency, partisanship, and ideology in trade matters, especially given that the 2001 vote passed by the narrowest of margins (215-214) and the more recent CAFTA passed in July 2005 by just two votes (217-215).

These Republicans were unwilling to give President Clinton a victory on trade but completely flipped when Bush was president in 2001. Five of the eight members are significantly more conservative than the Republican average. Probit analysis confirms that the most conservative Republicans were more likely to switch from always opposing trade to supporting trade under Bush. Additionally, Republicans who received substantial labor cash were more likely to flip once Bush was president. The added pressure of a Republican president tipped the scales for these individuals, leading them to eschew their labor and/or conservative supporters.²⁰

On the flip side, eight Democrats and zero Republicans switched from consistent support for freer trade during the Clinton administration, to opposition to Trade Promotion Authority for President Bush in 2001. The eight Democrats are Robert Matsui (CA), Anna Eshoo (CA), Steny Hoyer (MD), Thomas Sawyer (OH), Harold Ford, Jr. (TN), Chet Edwards (TX), Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX), and Jim McDermott (WA). Six of the eight Democrats are more liberal than the average incumbent Democrat, and the group’s average CS-Nominate score is -.363, while the rest of Congress averages .038, and incumbent Democrats average -.331. While no statistical patterns emerge in a probit analysis, descriptive analyses suggest that partisanship was a major factor in the abandonment of free trade principles by these eight Democrats. For example, Representative Matsui pushed an alternative measure (HR 3019) which would have given Bush more limited trade powers than the bill (HR 3005) that eventually passed (Destler 2004a, 2004b). It is reasonable to conclude that Matsui would not have pushed an alternative to the president’s bill if Al Gore had been president.²¹

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Overall, our analysis demonstrates that preference conversion is an important explanation for changing trade policies in the U.S. House of Representatives. District-level pressures influence representatives’ consistency on trade preferences. As constituents go, unions matter most for Democrats. In our analysis of trade votes from the 1993 NAFTA vote to the 2001 Trade Promotion Authority vote, union density significantly predicts reduced Democratic support of free trade. Moreover, among incumbent Democrats union density predicts consistent opposition to trade agreements during the period. But not only does union density predict less support of free trade, union dollars do too. For both incumbent Republicans and Democrats, increased labor money correlates with reduced support for trade.

Party is a significant explanatory variable for trade support, and its significance has grown in recent years as the issue has become more divisive. While long-serving Democrats more consistently oppose trade and long-serving Republicans more consistently support trade, the story is a bit more complicated. Even those members of the House that remained in office over the entire time period have been significantly cross-pressured on trade issues contributing to their inconsistency in trade preferences. Democratic consistency is influenced by con-

stituency factors such as union density and support from interest groups. Republicans are not reflexive supporters of free trade agreements, but instead their support for trade measures correlates with interest group money and constituency-based factors. Highly conservative Republicans are much less likely to consistently support trade than the typical Republican. This means that crosspressuring happens, even among the long-serving members of Congress.

Declining union membership would predict that unions might lose influence in Congress over time. On the other hand, the remaining union strength in districts with industries threatened by foreign competition will likely lead to the continuation of a cadre of committed antitrade Democrats in the House. Also, while only about 14% of the American workforce now belongs to unions, according to exit polls in the 2004 presidential election members of union households made up nearly a quarter of the electorate. Members of union households tend to vote Democratic (59% voted for John Kerry in 2004). Moreover, even with declines in membership, unions have been able to maintain very high levels of campaign contributions over the time period we have studied, and there is no evidence to suggest they are about to get out of the contribution game.²² The same goes for business PACs, whose membership is not declining and who have always had more money than unions.²³ Additionally, with a Republican in the White House, we expect Republicans to be strongly pressured to support their president and his trade policies, while Democrats may get something of a free pass to remain in opposition to trade without a president of their party calling for support.

The relevance of our study is demonstrated by the closeness of the passage of CAFTA by the House (217-215). Probusiness and protrade House Democrats announced in advance that they would vote against CAFTA (Edsall 2005). Only 15 Democrats joined 202 Republicans in voting for the agreement and many of the Democratic backers recognized that organized labor might force them to face a primary fight in the next election. According to a July 29th, 2005 *New York Times* editorial, entitled "Applauding the CAFTA 15," *Working Life*, a prolabor blog, led with the headline "Punish the CAFTA 15." Rancor between House Democrats and the administration also suggests that gaining Democratic support on future controversial trade measures may be futile. This is especially significant given the results of the 2006 midterm elections where Democrats won control of both chambers of Congress.

Democrats are not the only ones balking at trade agreements. Republicans are also expressing reservations. In the case of CAFTA, President Bush received opposition from his own party. In two instances Republicans in sugar and textile districts voted for CAFTA only because of inducements or threats made by the Republican House leadership. Robin Hayes, a North Carolina Republican whose district had lost thousands of textile jobs over the past four years, voted for CAFTA because House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-IL) promised to help restrict imports of Chinese clothing. Mark Foley, a Florida Republican representative in a district that includes large sugar producers, supported CAFTA as "Republican leaders had already made it clear that they would punish the sugar industry in the next farm bill if they managed to defeat the trade pact" (Andrews 2005). Still,

27 Republicans voted against the agreement. Many others would have joined them if not for lawmakers “earmarking billions of dollars for pet projects in a \$286 billion highway spending bill” (Andrews 2005).

As suggested by our research and the discussion of the CAFTA battle, it is likely that more comprehensive trade agreements, including the FTAA and the Doha round of the World Trade Organization, will face major opposition by unified Democrats and cross-pressured Republicans regardless of which party controls the White House. However, a Republican like Bush may be able to pressure House Republicans to gain yet another major trade policy victory. However, with the Democratic victory in the 2006 midterm elections, prospects for House support of comprehensive trade deals in the 110th Congress are significantly reduced.

Notes

The authors wish to thank Scott Adler, Kedron Bardwell, Richard Conley, and Christopher Zorn for making their data available. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Southern Political Science Association meetings in New Orleans, Louisiana, in January 2005. STATA 9.0 was used for the statistical analyses.

¹We determined our set of votes by examining the key votes provided in the *Congressional Quarterly Almanac* for each year. Of the votes listed as key votes, we included all of the final votes dealing with trade measures except for a steel quota measure in 1999. We excluded this vote because it dealt with only a specific sector of trade and thus was not as broad as the other measures. Our list gains validity when one examines the scholarly articles examining trade voting in Congress over the last decade. Each of our included votes was the subject of at least one scholarly analysis.

²See Goldstein (1986, 164), who discusses Congress’ decision to relinquish responsibility for trade policy to the executive.

³In an earlier version of this study, we explicitly tested the proposition that districts that experienced membership changes were more likely to have representatives inconsistent in their trade preferences, when controlling for the important constituency-based factors. Not surprisingly, we found that when party shifts did occur as a result of elections, preferences were less consistent; however, constituency effects (e.g., union density) were more significant. Moreover, we found that districts represented by members who remained throughout the time period were more likely to be represented consistently on trade issues when compared to districts that saw changes in membership, even different members of the same party.

⁴Of 113 total party shifts during our time period, 77 (68%) occurred in the 1994 elections. Therefore, shifts in party control of districts have decreased considerably since the Republican takeover in 1994. Much of the turnover in the House is a result of retirements, which more often than not results in the replacement of the retiring member with a copartisan.

⁵We relied upon head counts for the 1997 vote on Fast-Track as done by Bardwell (2000), Conley (1999), and Biglaiser, Jackson, and Peake (2004). The 1998 roll call came after President Clinton had given up on the real possibility of securing passage for this important measure, so Democrats were freed by the administration to vote against the measure in late 1998. By then, it was primarily a measure supported by the Republican leadership. Since the head-count data contained several missing values for members who had not clearly stated their position, we filled in this missing data with those members’ positions on the roll call in 1998. We did this because excluding those members would have led to a number of missing values among members incumbent over our entire time period and would also have underestimated the degree of consistency, as members always in support of trade, but not there for the head count, would have been measured as inconsistent in the ordered logit analysis. We estimated the ordered logit analysis excluding the 1997/1998 Fast-Track vote altogether, yielding the

same results. We estimated the pooled logit analyses, finding similar results for the Democrats but slightly different results for the Republicans. Comparing these results to a similar model examining just the 1998 vote and the 1997 head count (see Biglaiser, Jackson, and Peake 2004, 693) suggests that the changes are a result of excluding this measure from the model. It was the Fast-Track vote that accounted for the slight differences—yet these same differences do not appear when estimating the model examining head-count data or the roll call data of 1998. Therefore, we are comfortable with our decision to rely primarily on the 1997 head-count data for this measure.

⁶At the following web site (accessed December 5, 2004): <<http://sobek.colorado.edu/~esadler/districtdatawebsite/CongressionalDistrictDatasetwebpage.htm>>.

⁷We employ the same measure as Box-Steffensmeier, Arnold, and Zorn (1997), which is a “centered-mean” measure where positive values indicate greater than average union density and negative values indicate smaller than average union density for the district. The two measures (percent blue collar and union density) are not correlated ($r = .04$). Previous research on trade (Conley 1999; Biglaiser, Jackson, and Peake 2004) has also included a variable to code whether or not the member’s state was a “right-to-work” state, meaning it had laws that hamper collective bargaining and union growth within the state. This variable is highly correlated with union density ($r = -.76$), and for reasons of multicollinearity these variables should not be included in the same model.

⁸Studies have also demonstrated that the direction of this relationship is endogenous, meaning labor PACs give direct contributions to representatives who consistently support their stances against trade, so the causal nature of the relationship is disputed in the literature (see Wright 1985). As demonstrated in a series of studies by Jackson and Engel (2003a; 2003b), the relationship is likely reciprocal.

⁹Since we examine the behavior of individual members over the entire time period, we standardized our PAC contribution measures. To do so, we converted each year’s individual PAC total to a standardized z-score. We used these measures in the pooled logit analyses. We then averaged those standardized scores over the time period to produce a single measure of PAC support for labor and business for those members who remained throughout the time period. For instance, a score of -1 on labor PAC contributions indicates that that member received on average one standard deviation less labor PAC money than the average member of Congress.

¹⁰We employ DW-Nominate scores at the time of the vote for the pooled logit analyses, as this measure changes from year to year for each member. We use CS-Nominate scores for the analysis of enduring membership because CS-Nominate scores remain constant for the member over time, providing a career-based ideology score.

¹¹For the aggregated vote analyses, it does not make much sense to include presidential support as a variable because we would have to average the four Clinton support scores with the one Bush support score. The measure is highly correlated with ideology, as well. For Republicans, the average support score correlates with ideology at $r = -.78$. Dropping the 2001 vote to only examine Clinton votes exacerbates the problem, as support scores for Clinton among Democrats and Republicans, both, are highly correlated with ideology ($r = -.79$ and $-.90$, respectively). These multicollinearity problems are alleviated in the pooled logit analyses, as the support score references the president in office when the vote occurred, which changed over the time period.

¹²The baseline N for the all-member analysis is 2,175 (435 districts \times 5 votes) and 1,125 (225 constant members \times 5 votes) for the constant members analysis. The N’s reported in Tables 2 and 3 are significantly smaller because of missing data on several of the independent variables. For example, Louisiana’s representatives are excluded because of missing data in the margin-of-victory variable, since its run-off system prevents calculation of this variable. Washington’s representatives are also excluded because of missing values for the union density measure.

¹³For example, a Republican with a support score one standard deviation above the mean Republican value has a predicted probability of voting in favor of trade of .84 against the baseline of .61. This would reflect a Republican during the 2001 vote, as that is when Republican presidential support scores were at their highest.

¹⁴For purposes of interpretation, base probabilities are the probability that the dependent variable will fall in a particular category while holding the values of the independent variables at their mean, or zero if dummy. Thus, one need only compare the probabilities using base values with the probabilities given some change in the independent variable (X). In Table 2, we provide the probabilities of sup-

porting trade when X is increased by one and two standard deviations. For example, the probability of voting yes for a Democrat representing a district one standard deviation above the mean in union density is .13 (compared to the baseline probability of .24), a substantively significant reduction.

¹⁵See, however, Biglaiser, Jackson, and Peake (2004) for a discussion on how these constituency-based effects appear to evaporate in the 2001 vote when a president of their own party is asking for trade promotion authority.

¹⁶We collapse a six-value (0 to 5) dependent variable to three categories because this gives us greater leverage over the theoretical concept under investigation: voting consistency. Here, we are not interested in the factors that compel legislators to vote for three as opposed to four trade measures but instead are interested in the factors that compel legislators to be consistent one way or the other. We conducted a Poisson regression analysis (a count model) and found results similar to what we present above in Table 3.

¹⁷Excluding the union density variable has no substantive impact on the other variables, other than to make blue collar and winning percentage statistically significant at $p < .05$, and the model’s fit remains strong (pseudo R -squared = .30).

¹⁸We report significance levels of .1 here (but did not in the preceding analyses) because the consistency analysis includes a relatively low N (88 versus 468).

¹⁹An examination of PAC contributions by sector lends support to this suspicion. In each of the cases agribusiness supported these Republicans more heavily than did labor, and business PAC contributions dwarfed any contributions made by labor. Also of note is that labor, through PAC donations, backed the challengers opposing each of these members in their 2004 reelection campaigns, providing the largest sector totals for the Democratic candidates according to data from <www.opensecrets.org>.

²⁰We ran a probit model where the dependent variable was binomial, with a 1 indicating a Republican member that consistently opposed freer trade during the Clinton years but then flipped to support TPA in 2001. The model lacks strong diagnostics, and the only significant variables were labor PAC money ($p = .03$) and ideology ($p = .1$). We ran a similar model for the Democrats, which yielded nothing.

²¹By limiting our discussion to these 16 members, we do not suggest that others were not cross-pressured by Clinton and Bush. Uslander (1998) shows how Clinton lobbied fellow Democrats successfully enough to get NAFTA through the House in 1993. In 2001, other Republicans who had announced initial opposition to Bush on TPA due to constituency factors exchanged their support for TPA for concessions with regard to the domestic textile industry. For example, Jim DeMint (R-SC), in a last-minute move, switched his vote from no to yes as a result of these pressures, giving the president his victory (Destler 2004b).

²²From the 1991 to 1992 election cycle to the 1999 to 2000 election cycle the average total receipts from labor PACs of a member of Congress increased by 54%.

²³The average total receipts of a member of Congress from business PACs increased 75% between the 1991 to 1992 election cycle, and 1999 to 2000.

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