

**Gendermandering:
The Impact of Redistricting on the Success of Women Candidates**

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INTRODUCTION

It is a political ritual as old as the Republic. Article I, Section 2 of the Constitution assigns two tasks to the national government. First, a census is to be conducted every ten years. Second, based upon population changes from the census, Congress is assigned the task of reapportionment – redistributing seats in the House of Representatives among the states. Once this is completed, the process moves to the individual states where the geographic boundaries of the congressional districts are redrawn.

For incumbents of both parties, this process is potentially disruptive. Entirely new districts appear and old districts are dissolved. In addition, the partisan and demographic composition of members' home districts may be substantially altered. Beginning in 1972, for example, we find significantly more incumbents lost primaries in redistricting years compared to other election years; when combined with the creation of new seats from reapportionment, the average number of open seats in redistricting years was 64 compared to an average of 41 in other years.¹

Although the work on redistricting is considerable,² its impact on the political fortunes of female candidates has received very little, if any, systematic attention. Our analysis is designed to examine whether the round of redistricting following the 2010 census had a disproportionate impact on the female incumbents who served in the 112th Congress (2011-2013). To address this question, our analysis consists of four sections. The first provides a brief history of redistricting since the 1950s with an eye on the impact of this process on the women who were elected to the US House. The second section tracks the House incumbents who served in the 112th Congress through the 2012 elections following the redistricting based upon the 2010 census, paying particular attention to whether women were systematically disadvantaged in this process. The third and four sections are case studies. In section three, we use California as an example of a state whose new district lines were drawn by an independent commission. Here, we trace the electoral fate of the state's delegation to the 112th Congress in light of the rather unusual changes produced by the commission. In section four, we provide a contrast to California by examining a case of partisan-controlled redistricting in the state of Ohio, looking at both US House districts and state house districts. On the basis of our analysis, we find no systematic evidence that female incumbents disproportionately endured disruptions in their political careers; seats held by female incumbents, like their male counterparts, often present "targets of opportunity."

WOMEN AND REDISTRICTING: A BRIEF HISTORY

Between 1916 and 1956, 55 women were elected to the US House of Representatives. A cursory analysis suggests that these pioneering women came from districts that were different from the districts that elected men (see for example Gerrity, Osborn and Mendez 2007; Simon and Palmer 2010). Many of the successful female candidates who won election during this time period,

¹This is calculated from data collected by Palmer and Simon (2012, 19-20) and updated to include the 2012 election cycle. We use 1972 in the comparison because it was the first redistricting cycle in which states had to equalize population in congressional districts. Between 1972 and 2012, 1.8 percent of House incumbents lost their nomination bid in redistricting years (279/1740) compared to 0.7 percent (49/6960) in other election years.

² See the sources cited in Bullock (2012) as well as Butler and Cain (1992).

regardless of party, came from large cities. For example, Representative Enid Green (D-OR) was from Portland, Frances Bolton (R-OH) was from Cleveland, Marguerite Church (R-IL) was from Chicago, Kathryn Granahan (D-PA) was from Philadelphia, Edna Kelly (D-NY) was from New York City, and Leonor Sullivan (D-MO) was from St. Louis. In 1956, the median urban population of districts electing men was 58 percent. In contrast, the median urban population in those fifteen districts that elected women was 87 percent. Among the twelve women that won their party's nomination but were defeated in the general election, the median urban population in those twelve districts was only 54 percent.

The “Equal Population Revolution.”³ This “urban connection” becomes particularly important given the state of malapportionment across House districts that favored rural districts during this period. Prior to the early 1960s, most districts in the United States were malapportioned; in other words, districts did not have equal populations. After decades of dismissing malapportionment as a “political question,” in 1962, the US Supreme Court finally ruled in *Baker v. Carr* that a challenge to the apportionment of seats in the Tennessee General Assembly was a “justiciable issue.” The standard established by this landmark case is often described as the “one person, one vote” rule and held that disparities in population across legislative districts were unconstitutional. Once implemented, the decision reduced the dominance of representatives from under-populated rural districts in many state legislatures (see for example Mann and Cain 2005). In 1964, the Supreme Court announced its decision in *Wesberry v. Sanders*, a case that challenged the congressional district boundaries in Georgia. Here, the Court applied the precedent from *Baker* and held that “construed in its historical context, the command of Article I, Section 2, that Representatives be chosen ‘by the People of the several States’ means that as nearly as is practicable one man’s vote in a congressional election is to be worth as much as another’s” (376 US 1, 7). Subsequent Supreme Court decisions strictly enforced this new equal population rule for US House districts; the Court threw out redistricting plans in which House districts varied by less than one percent. However, strangely enough, the Court has not applied these strict equal population rules to state legislative districts (see for example Scarinci and Magyar 2010).

Prior to these landmark decisions, inequities in population were substantial. According to the 1950 census, if US House districts had been apportioned with equal populations, they would have had approximately 349,000 residents.⁴ The actual population of congressional districts, however, varied widely. In 1950, 89 districts had less than 300,000 residents, and 28 districts had less than 250,000 residents. There were also 89 districts with populations exceeding 400,000, and twenty-eight with populations exceeding 450,000 (Simon 2004).

This malapportionment created widespread disparities in representation that favored rural America. In essence, votes in less populated districts were “worth more” than the votes in highly populated districts. For example, the most populous constituency to elect a woman in 1956 was the 3rd District of Oregon, Democratic Representative Edith Green’s district. The 3rd District, with a population of 471,537, was a geographically small district that included the city of Portland. In contrast, the rural 4th District of Texas, represented by Democratic Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn, or “Mr. Sam,” had 186,043 people. The value of an individual vote in the

³ The term is used by Butler and Cain (1992, 27).

⁴ Calculation of this target population excludes those at-large seats that have a statewide constituency and those states that are guaranteed one representative regardless of population (e.g., Vermont).

Texas 4th was over two-and-a-half times the value of an individual vote in Oregon's 3rd. In addition to diluting the voting power of minority groups residing in urban areas, the impact of this rural bias was to limit the number of urban districts, the kinds of districts in which the women of the 1950s were successful.

There were other apportionment issues that affected the electoral fate of women as well. Prior to the Supreme Court's decision in *Wesberry v. Sanders* in 1964, it was not unusual for a state gaining a seat in the reapportionment process to elect the new member at large for one or two elections until the state legislature got around to redrawing the district lines and eliminated the at-large seat. Of the fifty-five women elected between 1916 and 1956, eight were elected as at-large representatives. Only two, Representatives Isabella Greenway (D-AZ) and Caroline O'Day (D-NY), served more than one term in the House. Two women, Representatives Jeannette Rankin (R-MT) and Winnifred Stanley (R-NY), left the House after redistricting dissolved their at-large seats.

After the 1960 Census and the Supreme Court's decisions in *Baker* and *Wesberry*, states began a wave of redistricting throughout the 1960s (see for example Bullock 2010; Galderisi 2005). Several other women who were first elected between 1916 and 1956 fell victim to reapportionment. Some states lost seats and existing districts had to be dissolved, as was the case for Representative Kathryn Granahan's district (D-PA). As "compensation," Democratic leaders in Pennsylvania persuaded President John F. Kennedy to nominate Granahan for the post of US Treasurer (Foerstel 1999, 100). In some cases, redistricting forced two incumbents to compete for a single seat. In 1968, to comply with *Wesberry*, Ohio enacted a redistricting plan that pitted Republican Representative Frances Bolton, who was seeking her sixteenth term in the House, against Democratic incumbent Charles Vanik. He defeated Bolton with 55 percent of the vote. Redistricting also forced incumbents of the same party to compete against each other. The 1968 redistricting plan in New York ended the career of Representative Edna Kelly when she had to run against fellow Democrat Emanuel Celler. This suggests that the success of some female candidates was often thwarted in the process of redistricting.

With a few exceptions, redistricting is done by state legislatures. In most instances, special committees are created to draw the maps. Then the maps then make their way through the legislative process just like any other bill, requiring a majority vote in both chambers and the governor's signature (Scarinci and Magyar 2010; Winburn 2008). State legislators interested in running for Congress often serve on the committee in the legislature responsible for creating the maps. This gives them the opportunity to create a US House district that largely overlaps their current constituency, making the transition from state legislature to the House much easier. For example, Barbara Jordan was elected to the Texas state senate in 1966, making her the first African American to serve in that chamber since Reconstruction. In the round of redistricting following the 1970 census, Jordan created a US House district in central Houston that contained most of her state senate district, and in 1972, became the first African American woman elected to the House from the former Confederacy (Barone, Ujifusa and Matthews 1973, 1003). In 1992, twenty years after Jordan, another African American woman in the Texas state senate, Eddie Bernice Johnson, chaired the Committee on Reapportionment and drew herself a US House district that overlapped her constituency in Dallas; she won with 72 percent of the vote (Foerstel 1999, 135). Cynthia McKinney was elected to the Georgia house of representatives in 1988. She served on the Reapportionment Committee, drew herself a House district that was 60

percent black and won the seat in 1992 (Foerstel 1999, 181).⁵ In 1990, Karen Thurman served in the Florida state senate and chaired the Committee on Congressional Reapportionment. As a result of the 1990 Census, Florida gained four new seats. In the redistricting process, Thurman was instrumental in making sure the one of the new seats included most of her state senate district (Foerstel 1999, 270). When she ran in 1992 for the new House district she created, Thurman won with 53 percent of the vote, and did not have any serious competition in the next four election cycles. By 2000, however, the redistricting committee in the state legislature was controlled by Republicans. Ginny Brown-Waite was first elected to the Florida state senate in 1992, the year Thurman ran for Congress. Brown-Waite moved up the leadership ladder, becoming the Republican whip, and developed congressional aspirations of her own. The Redistricting Committee redrew Thurman's House district to include all of Brown-Waite's state senate district and exclude the more liberal part of the district around the University of Florida ("Brown-Waite, Ginny" 2005). In 2002, with the new map in place, Brown-Waite narrowly defeated Thurman by less than 2 points. In 2011, Representative Dan Burton (R-IN) had his US House district redrawn by his brother, Indiana state representative Woody Burton, who happened to serve on the state legislature's redistricting committee (Toeplitz 2011).

The Voting Rights Revolution. In 1965, Congress passed and President Lyndon Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the act was renewed in 1970, 1975, 1982, and 2006. Of particular relevance to House elections are two provisions in Section 5 of the act. The first is a provision that requires all "covered jurisdictions" to "pre-clear" redistricting plans with the Department of Justice; the second provision prohibits "retrogression" in redistricting plans.⁶ In its 1982 renewal of the Voting Rights Act, Congress mandated that minority voters be able to "elect representatives of their own choice."⁷

The 1982 renewal sparked considerable controversy during the redistricting cycle following the 1990 census. Whereas the redistricting disputes in the 1960s focused on mal-apportionment and the resulting rural dominance in state legislatures, the debates in the 1990s focused upon racial gerrymandering and its impact on the representation of people of color in Congress (see for example Canon 1999; Epstein and O'Halloran 1999; Galderisi 2005; Lublin 1997; Lublin 1999). While there is no doubt that racial gerrymandering has increased the number of minority members of Congress, there is also evidence that the creation of minority-majority districts has also had at least one unintended consequence: helping Republicans. In fact, some argue that racial gerrymandering actually gave Republicans the opportunity to take control of the House in 1994 (see for example Bullock 1995; Guinier 1995; Hill 1995). To create majority-minority districts, large numbers of African Americans are "packed" into a district. Because African Americans disproportionately vote Democratic, these seats elect Democratic House members by extremely large margins that, in essence, waste Democratic votes. Packing Democratic voters into one district creates opportunities for Republicans in other districts (Hill 1995). As a result,

⁵This district was then the subject of a lawsuit filed by white voters challenging the constitutionality of "racial gerrymandering," and according to the Supreme Court in *Miller v. Johnson*, had to be redrawn. In 1996, she was reelected in her new district, which was now 65 percent white; Moore 2003.

⁶ See U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division. 2012. "Voting Section." <http://www.justice.gov/crt/about/vot/misc/faq.php>. The covered jurisdictions include the entire states of Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia; it also includes 40 counties in North Carolina, 2 in South Dakota, and five in California, Florida, and New York. Retrogressive provisions are defined by the Department of Justice as redistricting plans that would make minority voters worse off than they were under the previous districting plan.

⁷ See Canon (1999).

according to Michael McDonald, a professor at George Mason University and a redistricting consultant, racial gerrymandering has created an “unholy alliance” between minority and Republican House members.⁸ In 2011, for example, Republicans in the Ohio state legislature worked hard to get the support of African American Democrats to pass a new congressional map that would have given the GOP control of twelve of the state’s sixteen US House seats (Joseph 2011).

Incumbent Protection. The redistricting that occurred after the 2000 census refocused the debate on incumbent protection. In fact, “[t]he nationwide theme of congressional line drawing was incumbent protection” (Benenson, Giroux and Allen 2002, 1274; see also Giroux 2001b, 2627; Scammon, McGillivray and Cook 2003; Cox and Katz 2002; but see Friedman and Holden 2009). In 1992, eighty House members won their seats with less than 55 percent of the vote. In 2002, thirty-seven—fewer than half as many—House members won their seats with less than 55 percent of the vote. In 2000, the election cycle before the redistricting, there were 57 House members who came from marginal seats. In 2002, after the redistricting, only three of these incumbent House members lost.⁹ Incumbent protection plans are typically the product of bipartisan negotiations. For example, Republican Representative and then Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert and Democratic Representative William Lipinski, both from Illinois, brokered a deal that “protected the reelection prospects of almost every Illinois incumbent” (Giroux 2001b, 2627). In 2001, their proposal sailed through a state legislature that was under divided control of the parties (Giroux 2001b, 2627). Even in California, where Democrats controlled the state legislature, incumbent protection was the goal. In addition to protecting almost all of the safe Democratic House members, the seven marginal Democratic House members were given safe seats, and nineteen of the twenty Republicans in the California House delegation were also protected (Giroux 2001a, 2224).

Seats are made safer by adding more constituents who identify with the House member’s party; Democratic members are given more Democratic voters, and Republican members are given more Republican voters, typically until they reach the 55 to 60 percent range. In addition to being used in racial gerrymandering, “packing” is a technique in which seats are made overly safe (that is, beyond the 55 to 60 percent range) by the opposition party in an effort to waste votes in one district while creating opportunities for themselves in other districts (Jost 2004). This method of “partisan gerrymandering” became a flashpoint in Texas. In 2000, the state legislature was under divided party control and passed an incumbent protection plan. The state’s congressional delegation was seventeen Democrats and fifteen Republicans, in spite of the fact that in the aggregate, voters in the state leaned Republican. In 2002, the Republicans gained control of both the state house and senate and also held the governor’s seat. In an unprecedented move, in May 2003, House Majority Leader Tom DeLay and Karl Rove, one of President Bush’s closest advisors, met with state legislators and proposed a new redistricting plan that would create twenty-two Republican House seats. Historically, no state had redrawn its district lines at this point in the ten-year cycle unless under orders from the federal courts. In response to this re-districting plan, Democrats in the state legislature walked out and took up temporary residence in Oklahoma, out of reach of the state troopers and Texas Rangers. After a bitter fight, which included another walkout to New Mexico by Senate Democrats, the new map passed (Gaddie

⁸Interview with Barbara Palmer, Washington, D.C., March 17, 2004.

⁹Connie Morella (R-MD), Bill Luther (D-MN), and Jim Maloney (D-CT); Scammon, McGillivray, and Cook 2003, 2.

2004; Jost 2004). In 2004, the Texas congressional delegation included twenty Republicans and twelve Democrats.

Women and Redistricting in the 21st Century. The 2010 redistricting cycle appeared to be even more contentious than usual, but with a variety of approaches being taken among the states. For example, this time around, the process in Texas included a controversial process called “bleaching,” or packing districts with white/non-Hispanic voters (“Between the Lines” 2011). In Arizona, one of the few states that has an independent commission redraw district lines, Republican Governor Jan Brewer initiated impeachment proceedings against the chair of the commission. In response, one Democratic Party leader called her “drunk with power” and said that the impeachment was “a brazen power grab that would rival any in Arizona history” (Livingston 2011). While there may not have been a “clear theme” in 2010, as one redistricting consultant explained, “All roads in redistricting lead to the courthouse” (Miller 2010). One hundred and ninety-five cases were filed in 41 states (Levitt 2012; see also Toepfritz and Trygstad 2011). In Florida, for example, voters approved a constitutional amendment that banned incumbent protection and partisan gerrymandering. Immediately after it passed, Representatives Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL) and Corrine Brown (D-FL) filed a lawsuit to have the amendment overturned (Miller 2010).

In the last two redistricting cycles, there were numerous claims that women were the “targets” of those who controlled the process of drawing the new lines. In 2001, Virginia State Senator Virginia Byrne accused the state legislature of “gender gerrymandering” and making it tougher for the women who had been elected in the northern part of the state to get reelected. Her colleague, Senator Linda Puller, agreed and said that in the latest round of redistricting, “They were harsher on us. It’s still good ol’ boys” drawing the lines (Melton 2001). Also in 2001, Minnesota’s state legislature was unable to agree on a new map, so the process was turned over to a special redistricting panel made up of judges. In their order establishing the new district lines, the judicial panel took into account a complaint by women’s groups that a few of the maps that had been proposed by the legislature disproportionately hurt female incumbents (“Final Order” 2002). In the 2011 round of redistricting, female legislators in four states, Colorado, Georgia, New Jersey, and North Carolina, complained that they were specifically targeted. In North Carolina, for example, ten of twenty-five female Democratic incumbents, or 40 percent, were either forced to run against another incumbent or had their districts substantially redrawn to favor Republican candidates (Libby 2012).

This historical overview suggests that the electoral fortunes of women seeking legislative office are closely connected to the politics of redistricting. Clearly, the “revolution in equal population” and the Voting Rights Act were milestones that expanded opportunities for female aspirants. Among the more recent controversies is the suggestion that female incumbents may be the “targets” of redistricting.

REDISTRICTING AND THE FATE OF INCUMBENTS AFTER THE 2010 CENSUS

In the most recent redistricting cycle, the decennial census was submitted to the President on December 21, 2010, and transmitted to Congress on January 5, 2011; Congress completed its work on the reapportionment of US House seats and sent the results to the individual states on January 18, 2011 (Burnett 2011, 6-7). There was a shift of twelve seats involving 18 states. Eight states gained seats, including four in Texas and two in Florida; eight states lost a seat and two states, New York and Ohio, lost two seats.¹⁰ Responsibility then passed to the individual states to add or delete US House seats, draw districts with equal populations, and to comply with the provisions of the Voting Rights Act.

*** Please Refer to Table 1 ***

States have a great deal of control over the procedures used to redraw district lines, and the methods vary widely. Based upon an analysis by Iyer and Gaskins (2012, 20), Table 1 lists the number of states using a given method, the number of seats that were redrawn by each method, and the partisan breakdown of those seats. The unified versus divided government distinction is straightforward: states where a the same party controls the governor and state legislature are classified as “unified,” and those where control is split or passing redistricting legislation requires a “super majority” are categorized as divided. States with political commissions permit elected officials or party leaders to serve on these boards, while states with independent commissions prohibit such service (Iyer and Gaskins 2012, 8). State and federal courts assume responsibility for drawing district lines when the “normal procedures” of a state lead to deadlock or in response to law suits.¹¹

Table 1 reveals that, nationally, Republicans clearly had the upper hand in what can be an intensely divisive procedure. Republicans drew the new district lines in 18 states; these states account for 47 percent of the seats in the US House and include nearly 60 percent of seats held by House Republicans.¹² The remainder of the Republican seats were spread among the other methods, with 13 percent (32) subject to the work of independent commissions.¹³ The US House seats held by Democrats were more evenly distributed among the methods: 32 percent were redrawn by Republicans, 23 percent by independent commissions, 19 percent by state or federal courts, and 15 percent by state governments controlled by the Democratic Party.

Because the demographic data for the new House districts has yet to be released by the Bureau of the Census, it is difficult to assess the extent to which the change in House districts varies by the methods employed. Iyer and Gaskins develop one, albeit imperfect, measure to make such an assessment. The measure is based upon a two-step process. First, Iyer and Gaskins calculated the 2008 vote for President Obama in the “old” districts of the 112th Congress. Second, using the new district maps for the 113th Congress, they re-calculate the 2008 “Obama vote” in the

¹⁰ Arizona, Georgia, Nevada, South Carolina, Utah, and Washington gained one seat; Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania each lost a seat.

¹¹ Several examples of such litigation are cited in Iyer and Gaskins, 2012, 21-26.

¹² Iyer and Gaskins (2012, 20) exclude Texas from their analysis because of ongoing litigation. We categorize Texas as under Republican control because the interim map created by the Republicans was used in both the primary and general elections for the House.

¹³ Arizona, California, Idaho, Iowa, and Washington relied upon independent commissions.

redrawn districts. Subtracting the “pre” measure from the “post” measure provides an indicator of the partisan change in a district; positive values indicate a pro-Democratic shift while negative values indicate a shift toward the Republicans.¹⁴ Our analysis of these data reveals that the average change in the “Obama vote” does not vary systematically across these methods.¹⁵ Rather, particularly sizable changes appear to depend upon a variety of circumstances in each state, such as the “target seats” identified by line-drawers, pairing incumbents, and the “fine arts” of packing, cracking, and bleaching districts (Bullock 2010, 77; Butler and Cain 1992, 87). To explore the role of these particular circumstances in each state, our strategy in assessing the impact of redistricting will be to track the fate of incumbents of the 112th Congress through each phase of the 2012 election cycle and the disruption they faced from the normal process of reelection.

*** Please Refer to Table 2 ***

The Decision to Seek Reelection. The first decision facing an incumbent as the election season approaches is whether to run for reelection. There is considerable research that such decisions are strategic (see, for example, Stone, et. al., 2010). In the context of redistricting, the prospect of a substantially changed district or being “paired” against another incumbent may induce a member to retire. Table 2 summarizes the decisions made by the incumbents serving in the 112th Congress. For our analysis, we eliminated incumbents whose districts include an entire state, such as North Dakota, leaving 428. Overall, the impact of all retirements, as Table 2 shows, was to reduce the number of incumbents from 428 to 387. Fourteen retired to run for another office,¹⁶ 16 retired for other reasons, and 11 retired explicitly because of redistricting.¹⁷ All of the incumbents who retired because of redistricting were men. Examples include Gary Ackerman, a Democrat from New York, who retired because “his district was essentially dismantled and his home was drawn into the district of Representative Steve Israel, the Chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee” (Miller, 2012a). The retirement of another Democrat, John Olver of Massachusetts, was seen as “sparing state lawmakers the task of pitting incumbents against each other” (Miller, 2012b).¹⁸ Of the 41 incumbents who retired, 27 percent, nearly a third, threw in the towel because of redistricting.

Primary Elections. For incumbents, choosing to retire because of redistricting is, quite obviously, one form of disruption from the usual electoral routine of running in the primary and in the general election in your “home district.” Two additional forms of disruption can occur once an incumbent decides to seek reelection following a round of redistricting. The first is that the incumbent’s home district is effectively dissolved or so altered that the choice is made to run

¹⁴ See http://www.brennancenter.org/content/resource/redistricting_and_congressional_control_a_first_look/#map. We are most grateful to Sundeep Iyer for providing these data to us.

¹⁵ Calculating the mean change in the “Obama vote” for each method produces the following: Republican control (-0.60), Democratic control (-0.60), Divided Government (0.16), Independent Commissions (-0.91), state and federal courts (-0.47) and Political Commissions (0.11). The F-ratio generated by an analysis of variance was statistically insignificant.

¹⁶ A list of the fourteen is presented in CQ Weekly, November 12, 2012, 2308-2309.

¹⁷ In classifying members of the U.S. House who retired due to redistricting, we tracked the “Congress in Transition” section of CQ Weekly to identify those incumbents who announced their retirement; we then searched for accounts of these retirements in CQ Weekly and in *The Washington Post*, *The Hill*, and *Roll Call*. We classified a member as retiring because of redistricting if and only if there was an account that explicitly tied a retirement to the redrawn lines of a district or a prospective matchup with another incumbent.

¹⁸ We will consider other examples of redistricting-induced retirements when we discuss the cases of California and Ohio.

in a “different district.” This often results in a pair of incumbents running in the same primary. The second form of disruption occurs when the “home district” of an incumbent is “invaded” by another incumbent seeking a new home district, producing a “pair” in the primary election.

*** Please Refer to Table 3***

Table 3 summarizes the results for the 387 incumbents who ran in the primaries of 2012. The table shows that the victory rate for incumbents who faced no disruptions was 99 percent (357/362). Jean Schmidt in the 2nd District of Ohio was the only woman among the five incumbents who lost. The second panel of Table 3 shows that the victory rate for incumbents facing disruptions was 68 percent (17/25), well below the rate for incumbents experiencing normal primary competition. Ten of the 11 incumbents fended off a primary challenge from an “invading” incumbent to win the primary in their “home” district. Democrat Hansen Clarke of Michigan was the exception; he was defeated in his home district by a fellow Democratic incumbent, Gary Peters. Among those incumbents who ran in “different” districts to challenge a “home district” incumbent, four won and seven lost. The three incumbents who “moved” to a different district and faced a non-incumbent challenger were victorious.

Overall, seven percent (25/374) of incumbents seeking re-nomination faced a disruption during the primary season. Five of these were women and four of them won. As a result of California’s “jungle primary,” Democrats Janice Hahn and Laura Richardson were paired in the new 44th District of California and were the “top two” voter getters. In Ohio, Marcy Kaptur defeated another Democratic incumbent, Dennis Kucinich in the 9th District, while Betty Sutton won her Democratic primary against a non-incumbent in the 16th District. Republican Sandy Adams of Florida was defeated by fellow Republican incumbent John Mica in the redrawn 24th District of Florida.

General Elections. Of the 428 original incumbents in the cohort, 374 (87.4 percent) advanced to the general election of 2012. Thirty-two of these candidates faced disruptions in their general election contests. First, there were atypical general election matchups, including two races where a Democratic and Republican were paired in the general election,¹⁹ one contest with two Republican incumbents,²⁰ and two races that paired two Democratic incumbents.²¹ Second, there were five contests in which an incumbent ran against a challenger from the same party in California.²² Third, seventeen incumbents faced a general election constituency whose partisan composition was substantially altered by redistricting. The use of “substantially altered” in our analysis is based upon the change in the “Obama vote” measure that we described earlier. We define a disruption as any adverse partisan change of 7 percentage points or more; this is the equivalent of two standard deviations in the distribution of the vote change measure. Thus, for Democrats, a decline of 7 or more points in the Obama vote is considered a disruption as is an increase of 7 points or more for Republicans.

¹⁹ In Iowa’s 3rd District and Ohio’s 16th.

²⁰ In Louisiana’s 3rd District.

²¹ In California’s 30th and 44th Districts.

²² In Districts 15, 31, 35, 40, and 43.

*** Please Refer to Table 4 ***

Table 4 summarizes the victory rates for incumbents who faced “typical” and “disrupted” elections. The most striking difference is the success rate of incumbents running in a typical contest, 95 percent, compared to those facing disruptions, 69 percent. These differences hold when we control for party, sex, and jointly for party and sex. In each comparison, the victory rate in the disrupted category is substantially lower than the typical category.

The table shows that in the typical category, four women were defeated. The lone Democrat was Kathy Hochul who came to the House after winning, in May 2011, a special election in the old 26th District of New York (now the 27th). This suburban Buffalo district was solidly Republican, casting 56 percent of the vote for George W. Bush in 2004 and 53 percent for John McCain in 2008 (Barone and McCutcheon 2011, 1183). The incumbent initially elected to the 112th Congress was Republican Chris Lee who won the seat in 2010 with 74 percent of the vote. In February of 2011, Lee abruptly resigned following “an embarrassing episode in his personal life” (Barone and McCutcheon 2011, 1184).²³ Hochul won the special election with 47 percent of the vote; the Republican vote in the district was split between Republican Jane Corwin (42 percent) and Tea Party candidate, Jack Davis (9 percent). In 2012, Republican Chris Collins defeated Hochul by the narrow margin of 51 to 49 percent.

Whereas Hochul was a Democrat elected in a Republican district, two of the other women defeated in typical elections were Republicans elected in districts that leaned Democratic. Like Hochul, both were from New York and both were in the first term of their service. In 2010, Nan Hayworth defeated a Democratic incumbent, by 6 points in the old 19th District (now the 18th). In 2008, however, this district supported Obama over McCain, 51 to 49 percent. In 2012, Hayworth lost to Democrat Sean Maloney by two points. Anne Marie Buerkle represents another marginal winner in the “wave election” of 2010. She defeated Democratic incumbent Dan Maffei by only 648 votes of the 208,556 cast (50.15 percent to 49.85 percent). The district, however, was solidly Democratic, casting nearly 57 percent of the vote for President Obama in 2008 (Barone and McCutcheon 2011, 1181). In a rematch of their 2010 contest, Buerkle lost to Maffei, 47 to 53 percent.²⁴

Table 4 also shows that there were three female incumbents who lost their seats in “disrupted elections.” Laura Richard Richardson was paired against another female incumbent, Democrat Janice Hahn, in the 44th District of California; Richardson lost to Hahn by 20 points. Democrat Betty Sutton was paired against Republican incumbent Jim Renacci in the 16th District of Ohio and lost by four points. In the 11th District of Illinois, Republican Judy Biggert, a seven-term incumbent, lost decisively to Democrat Bill Foster.

The case of Judy Biggert is particularly instructive as she was, along with other Republicans in the Illinois delegation, a target of a partisan redistricting plan. After the 2010 midterm election, the House delegation from Illinois numbered eight Democrats and 11 Republicans, including two

²³ As reported by Barone and McCutcheon (2011, 1184), Lee responded to a personal ad in Craigslist and described his marital status as divorced, his age as 39, and his occupation as lobbyist. He also included a shirtless photo of himself. The website, Gawker.com, reported the incident which led to his resignation.

²⁴ Mary Bono Mack of California was the third Republican woman to lose in a “typical election.” Her case will be considered in the next section.

women – Jan Shakowsky (D) and Judy Biggert (R). The state lost one seat to reapportionment. Redistricting was controlled by a Democratic state legislature and governor. The Democratic legislature paired two Republican incumbents in a newly-drawn 16th District. In the primary, Adam Kinzinger, serving his first term, defeated Don Manzullo, a ten-term incumbent.²⁵ In addition, the legislature substantially altered the partisan composition in three districts held by Republicans. The Obama vote was increased by 8 points in Judy Biggert’s 13th District, by 7 points in Joe Walsh’s 8th District, and by 4 points in Bobby Schilling’s 17th District. In the general election, Biggert lost to Democrat Bill Foster, 42 to 58 percent, Walsh lost to Democrat Tammy Duckworth, 45 to 55 percent; and Democrat Cheri Bustos defeated Schilling, 53 to 47 percent. Finally, Brad Schneider added to the Democratic victory, narrowly defeating Republican incumbent Robert Dold with 50.5 percent of the vote. As a result, the Illinois delegation in the 113th Congress will consist of 12 Democrats and six Republican; the delegation contains three female Democrats. Jan Shakowsky will be joined by newly-elected Tammy Duckworth and Cherie Bustos.

The House elections in North Carolina illustrate how incumbents can be both the targets and beneficiaries of newly drawn lines. In fact, North Carolina represents one of the most prominent examples of Republican artistry in drawing districts.²⁶ The targets of the line drawers were four white Democratic men. Their districts were redrawn to reduce the Obama vote by 14 points in Brad Miller’s 13th District, by 11 points in Larry Kissell’s 8th District, by 7 points in Heath Shuler’s 11th District, and by 6 points in Mike McIntyre’s 7th District. These changes were accomplished, in part, by further packing the two districts held by black Democrats. The Obama vote was increased from 63 to 71 percent in the 1st District of J.K. Butterfield and from 71 to 79 percent in the 12th District of the Melvin Watt. In addition, to buttress the prospects of Republican Renee Elmers, a first-term member, the legislature reduced the Obama vote in her 2nd District from 52 to 43 percent. Given these changes, the results are not surprising. Shuler retired, and Miller, to avoid facing Democratic incumbent David Price, also retired (Etheridge 2012). Their seats were won by Republicans, as was the seat of Larry Kissell who lost the general election with only 45 percent of the vote. Ellmers, who won her first election with just 50.3 percent of the vote, defeated Democrat Steve Wilkins by 14 points. While Mike McIntyre managed to hang on to his seat with just over 50 percent of the vote, the North Carolina congressional delegation flipped from a seven to six Democratic advantage to a nine to four Republican majority.

In sum, Table 4 provides a dramatic illustration of how redistricting can short-circuit the typical advantage enjoyed by incumbents in House elections. The table also shows that the victory rates of Democrats and Republicans, as well as men and women, were reduced in the cases of disruption. It also appears that Democrats, who lost seven of 21 contests (33 percent), and Republicans, who lost three of 11 (27 percent), suffered equally, as did male and female incumbents, who both lost approximately one-third of their contests.

²⁵ The outcome proved controversial because both Speaker of the House John Boehner and Majority Leader Eric Cantor violated the usual “rule of neutrality” for party leaders and supported Kinzinger (Joseph 2012).

²⁶ In North Carolina, Republicans control the state legislature but the governor is a Democrat. The governor, however, is not given the power to veto redistricting legislation (Iyer and Gaskins 2012, 20).

Summary: Redistricting and Electoral Disruptions. Throughout the analysis, we have used the notion of a disruption in examining the effects of redistricting. Here, we explore the concept of disruption more systematically. A disruption is characterized as a departure from the normal and expected routine of an electoral cycle. For the purposes of summarizing the analysis, a disruption is said to occur when an incumbent:

- (1) retires for reasons related to redistricting
- (2) moves into a different district to run in a primary election
- (3) running in a home district, faces another incumbent in the primary election
- (4) of one party runs against an incumbent from the opposition party in the general election
- (5) of one party is paired against an incumbent from the same party in the general election
- (6) of one party faces a non-incumbent challenger from the same party in the general election
- (7) suffers a change in the partisan composition of his district of seven points or more

Each of these conditions represents a departure from a typical election involving an incumbent. Accordingly, we classify each incumbent in the 2012 cohort as facing a “typical election” or a “disrupted election.”²⁷

*** Please refer to Table 5 ***

Table 5 shows, first of all, that disruptions do not vary systematically by the sex of the incumbent. This holds true for male and female incumbents generally, but it also holds when we control for both sex and party. Twenty-two percent of male Democratic incumbents faced disruption, along with 23 percent of female Democratic incumbents, 10 percent of male Republican incumbents and 9 percent of female Republican incumbents. There is little evidence then that female incumbents suffered disproportionately compared to their male counterparts.

Table 5 also demonstrates that both the party of the incumbent and the method of redistricting are significantly related to disruptions. Only 9 percent (22/225) of Republican incumbents were involved in disrupted elections compared to 22 percent of their Democratic counterparts (38/173). The disruption rate was lowest in states where federal or state courts drew the lines (7 percent) and in states where political control of redistricting was divided (10 percent). The disruption rate in states under unified Democratic control was 20 percent compared to a rate of 12 percent in states controlled by the Republicans.²⁸

Independent Commissions produced the most disruptions, in 28 percent (20 of 71) of the districts redrawn by this method. However, most of these disruptions occurred in one state: California. That state’s independent commission redrew 53 of the 71 seats in Table 5. It is to this story that we now turn.

²⁷ We exclude those incumbents elected from states with a single congressional district as well as those who retired for reasons unrelated to redistricting.

²⁸ Closer inspection of the states under unified control reveals the expected partisan approach – Democrats target Republicans and Republicans target Democrats. In states where redistricting was controlled by the Republicans, the disruption rate for Democrat incumbents was 25 percent (14/56) compared to 7 percent (9/136) for Republican incumbents; in states controlled by the Democrats, the disruption rate for Democrat incumbents was 16 percent (4/25) compared to 28 percent (5/18) for Republican incumbents.

THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION IN CALIFORNIA

Redistricting and Election Results in California

As the redistricting process and the 2012 elections approached, US House incumbents from California faced a “double whammy.” This was a product of two ballot propositions approved by California voters in 2010. First, in June, voters passed Proposition 14, known as the “Top Two Primaries Act” (Fama 2012; Trygstad 2012). The proposition established a blanket or “jungle primary” in which all candidates, regardless of party affiliation, would appear on a single ballot. Voters would choose one candidate from the list. The top two vote-getters would then move on the general election. Proposition 14 thus introduced the possibility of two candidates from the same party competing for a House seat in the general election.

Second, in November of 2010, Californians approved Proposition 20. This initiative removed the authority to draw district lines from the California legislature and placed it in the hands of an independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (Iyer and Gaskins 2012, 13; Stephanopoulos 2012).²⁹ The initiative was supported by Republicans and a “diverse coalition of reformers” (Cohen 2011). It was a reaction to the 2001 redistricting plan, widely seen as an incumbent protection scheme (Barone and Cohen 2003, 155-157). In 2001, as Cohen (2011) explains, “senior members of the House delegation, working closely with their political advisors, drew up maps that protected incumbents of both parties. The Legislature rubber-stamped the plan.” The new commission was charged with redrawing the 53 congressional districts “without any regard for protecting incumbency” (Kane 2011, A5).³⁰

These changes led to “chaos” and “tumult” within the California delegation (Kane 2012, A5), suggesting that there would be a great deal of disruption among incumbents in the new round of redistricting. This is not surprising given the success rates of incumbents under the previous districting regime. In the 265 House elections between 2002 and 2010, only once did a seat change party hands; in the midterm election 2006, Democrat Jerry McNerney defeated Republican Richard Pombo, the incumbent in the 11th District. During this period, there were only 10 open seats and California incumbents enjoyed a success rate of 99.6 percent (254/255).

*** Please Refer to Table 6 ***

Our Analysis: the Fate of Incumbents in California

Table 6 summarizes the fate of the 53 California incumbents under the changes that resulted from Propositions 14 and 20. Prior to “jungle primary” on June 5, 2012, four incumbents retired as a result of the redistricting scheme. Democrat Dennis Cardoza reportedly retired because he would have been paired with fellow Democratic incumbent Jim Costa; Republican David Dreier was “plunked into a district that favors Democrats;” both Jerry Lewis and Elton Gallegly faced the prospect of challenging fellow Republican incumbents (Cohen 2011).

²⁹ The commission maintains a web site called “We Draw the Lines.” See <http://wedrawthelines.ca.gov/maps-final-drafts.html>.

³⁰ The commission consist of 14 members (5 Democrats, 5 Republicans, and 4 independents). Citizens of California were invited to apply for membership and the application required completing an essay question and submitting letters of recommendation. The first eight members were chosen through a lottery and then given the authority to select the remaining six members. Approval of a districting plan required the votes of 3 Democrats, 3 Republicans, and 3 independents (Cohen 2011).

The 2012 primary elections in California produced no incumbent defeats. They did, however, create seven unusual match-ups in the general elections. First, it paired Democratic incumbents in two newly-drawn districts: Howard Berman versus Brad Sherman in the 30th, and Janice Hahn versus Laura Richardson in the 44th. Second, there were contests that pitted an incumbent against a challenger that was fellow party member: Democrats Pete Stark and Eric Swalwell in the 15th District, incumbent Joe Baca and Gloria Negrete McLeod in the 35th, Lucille Roybal-Allard and David Sanchez in the 40th, Maxine Waters and Bob Flores in the 43rd, and Republicans Gary Miller and Robert Dutton in the 31st. As Table 6 shows, Democratic incumbents Berman, Richardson, Baca, and Stark were defeated in the general election. Adding to the changing face of the California delegation were the defeats suffered by Republican incumbents to Democratic challengers: Dan Lungren lost to Ami Bera in District 7, Mary Bono Mack lost to Raul Ruiz in District 36³¹, and Brian Bilbray lost to Scott Peters in District 52.

In light of the overwhelming success enjoyed by California incumbents from 2002 to 2010, the change in the delegation is dramatic; there was, in fact, a great deal of disruption among incumbents with a redistricting plan drawn by an independent commission. The overall attrition rate for incumbents in 2012 was 26 percent (14/53). Given the Republican support for the independent redistricting commission, it is ironic that the California delegation in the 113th Congress will consist of 38 Democrats and 15 Republicans, a loss of 4 seats for the Republicans. Three of the 19 women from the delegation to the 112th Congress will not return; Laura Richardson (D) and Mary Bono Mack (R) lost their reelection bids, and Lynn Woolsey (D) retired. The election of two female Democratic challengers – Julia Brownley in District 26 and Gloria Negrete McLeod in District 35 – brings the number of women who will serve in the 113th Congress to 18, one less than served in the 112th Congress. As such, female representation under the new independent redistricting commission made no advances.

THE PARTISAN PROCESS IN OHIO

Redistricting and Election Results in Ohio

Here we analyze what happened at both the US House and state-house level in Ohio. Adding Ohio to our analysis provides the opportunity to compare California, a state that used a non-partisan commission, to a state where the process was extremely partisan.

Ohio uses what can be called a “hybrid” method for redistricting. The US House map is drawn by the state legislature. The maps for state house and senate districts are drawn by a five-member commission, the Ohio Reapportionment Board made up of the Secretary of State, the State Auditor, the Governor, a member chosen by the Republican legislative leadership, and another chosen by the Democratic legislative leadership. This commission was created not to promote bipartisanship, non-partisanship, or fairness, but “to give control of the redistricting process to the political party that had won the support of voters in a majority of the three most important state government elections” (Scarinci and Magyar 2010, 263).

³¹ Her husband, Connie Mack III relinquished his House seat in Florida to challenge Democrat incumbent Bill Nelson for the U.S. Senate. Nelson defeated Mack, 55 percent-42 percent. This, we believe, is the first instance of a husband and wife losing an election in the same year.

Ohio's constitution requires that priority is to be given to keeping counties whole. As mentioned earlier, states do not have to follow the strict rules regarding population equality when drawing *state* legislative lines, particularly if they can justify the lines based on keeping political subdivisions, such as counties, whole. For example, in 1992, the US Supreme Court upheld the boundaries of Ohio's legislative map, in spite of population deviations of 10.5 percent among state senate districts and 13.8 percent among state house districts (Scarinci and Magyar 2010, 263).

The Ohio State House of Representatives has 99 members who serve two-year terms, so all seats are up for election every two years. The Ohio State Senate has 33 members who serve four-year terms; only 16 were up for reelection in 2012; for this reason, the redistricting of the Ohio State Senate will not be included in our analysis.

After the 2010 election, Republicans had lopsided majorities in both state legislative chambers. In the Ohio House of Representatives, there were 59 Republicans and only 40 Democrats. In the Senate, there were 23 Republicans and only 10 Democrats. Republicans also controlled the governorship, as well as the positions of Secretary of State and State Auditor. Consequently, Republicans had a four-to-one majority on the state legislative redistricting Board. An analysis by the *Dayton Daily News* of the new state house districts drawn by the Board suggested that, going in to the 2012 election, Republicans would have a 10-point advantage in 32 districts and at least a 5-point advantage in 19 more. In addition, Democratic districts were "packed:" the new maps created 11 districts where Democrats would have a 3 to 1 majority (Hershey and McCall 2011).

During the reapportionment process, Ohio lost two US House seats, reducing the congressional delegation from 18 to 16. In 2010, prior to redistricting, among the 18 US House members, there were 14 men and four women, making the delegation approximately one-fourth female. One woman was a Republican and three were Democrats. After the 2012 election, among Ohio's 16 House members, only three were women, all of them Democrats. Among the men, only one was a Democrat. While the numbers are small, the proportion of women decreased, while the proportion of Republicans, and particularly male Republicans, increased.

Similar trends can be seen in the state house of representatives. In 2010, among the 99 state house members, 74 were male and 25 were female; prior to redistricting, women made up about one-fourth of Ohio's state house; twelve were Democrats and 13 were Republicans. After the 2012 election and redistricting, 75 state house members were male and 24 were female; eleven were Democrats and 13 were Republicans.

Our Analysis: the Fate of Incumbents in Ohio

Data on state legislative districts is scarce, so to the extent that we could, in addition to the data on US House districts, we created similar data on Ohio's state house districts with information from *Ballotpedia.com* and various websites sponsored by the state government. Two-thirds of Ohio's 99 state house districts were renumbered; new district numbers were coded by matching the incumbent from 2010 with the incumbent in 2012.

US House Incumbents. The new US House map in Ohio caused a significant amount of disruption among incumbents. Three of the four incumbents who will not be serving in the 113th Congress are out of job because of redistricting.

Two incumbents retired. One left for reasons not related to redistricting. Steve LaTourette, a moderate, pro-union Republican who would have been running for his tenth term, announced on July 30, 2012, after he won his primary, that he was dropping out of the general, leaving party officials scrambling for a replacement candidate. LaTourette's district was virtually untouched by redistricting. He said he was leaving because, "[T]he current climate [in Washington] has increased the toll that it takes on a person" (Sherman, Isenstadt, and Allen 2012). However, another incumbent, Republican Steve Austria, retired to "avert a redistricting civil war" among Republicans (Weiner 2011). Austria said, "I am not going to run for Congress next term as a result of the redistricting map" and that he did not want to get into a primary that "pitted friends against friends" (Weiner 2011). His district had been virtually eliminated, making his only options to run against Mike Turner, a five-term Republican incumbent, or move and run against Steve Stivers, another Republican incumbent who was also a close friend (Weiner 2011).

Four other incumbents were paired against each other. In the Democratic primary, eight-term incumbent Dennis Kucinich ran against Marcy Kaptur, the most senior woman in the US House, in the reshaped 9th District, nicknamed "the Mistake on the Lake." The newly drawn district stretches over 120 miles along Lake Erie, connecting parts of Cleveland and Toledo. One part of the district is so narrow that it runs along a beach in Crane Creek State Park. When the water is high, the beach is often entirely covered, suggesting that the district is technically not contiguous (Toeplitz 2011). Kaptur won the primary with 56 percent of the vote. In the general election, she was challenged by Republican Sam "Joe the Plumber" Wurzelbacher. Kaptur won by 50 points.

The fate of Democrat Betty Sutton, however, was quite different. Her original district, nicknamed the "T-Rex" district because of its distinctive shape, had been gerrymandered in 2001 to favor Democratic candidates (James 2010). In the 2011 round of redistricting, however, her district was substantially redrawn, with most of it combined with Republican incumbent Jim Renacci's district. In the general election, Sutton lost to Renacci by 4 points.

It is interesting that half of the incumbents who were paired against each other were women, and both of these women were Democrats. This suggests how party and gender can interact. In Ohio (and nationally), women are more likely to run as Democrats (see for example Burrell 2006; Palmer and Simon 2012; Sanbonmatsu 2004). But the redistricting process was controlled by Republicans. As a result, Kaptur and Sutton were not necessarily targeted because they were women, but because they were Democrats. As a result, the unintended consequence of the redistricting process was a reduction in the number and proportion of women Ohio sent to the US House.

Ohio state house incumbents. At first glance, it appears that redistricting caused very little disruption among Ohio state house incumbents. Sixteen state house incumbents did not run for re-election in 2012, but thirteen of them left for reasons that had nothing to do with redistricting. One incumbent lost his primary. Two incumbents dropped out after their primaries, one of

whom, Clayton Luckie, was indicted on 49 criminal charges. Seven of the twelve were not eligible to run again because of term limits.³² Three more said they left for personal reasons.³³

No Ohio house incumbents were paired against each other, but three had their districts virtually eliminated or “blown up.” One belonged to Democrat Kenny Yuko, who was termed out. Another belonged to Democrat Mark Okey, who also chose retire. He said he wanted to spend more time with his family and recover from knee surgery. He said, “my wife would like to see me around the house once in a while” (“State Rep. Okey Won’t Run Again” 2011). The third belonged to Republican Bruce Goodwin, who also decided to retire specifically because of what had happened to his district. He explained, “I’ve never served the people of those counties, and I just think a representative should know his constituents to be able to serve them best” (Bumb 2011).

In addition to Goodwin, two more incumbents, Democrats Ted Celeste and Nancy Garland, also retired because of redistricting. Celeste had the misfortune of having his house excluded from his new district (Corvo 2012); Ohio law required legislators live in their districts. He decided to run for the US House, but lost to fellow Democrat Joyce Beatty in the primary. Garland publicly stated she would not seek reelection because of the way her district was redrawn (Ellis 2012).

Three of 99 incumbents, two men and one woman, did not return to the state legislature because of redistricting. Of the 83 incumbents seeking reelection in the general, all but 2 won reelection. All of this suggests that there was only minor disruption for incumbents in the wake of Ohio’s legislative redistricting.

This masks, however, some other interesting trends. We created an additional variable that measured the extent to which each state house district was redrawn, in other words, how much each district changed. This was done by comparing the new 2012 maps with the 2002 maps.³⁴ Districts were classified based on the perspective of an incumbent running in that district and were put into one of 4 categories: little to no redraw,³⁵ moderate redraw,³⁶ substantial

³² One of these seven, Randy Gardner (R), has made a habit of jumping between the Ohio House and Senate since 1984. He left his house seat in 2012 and successfully ran for the senate for the second time. In 1992, Ohio voters passed a constitutional amendment limiting consecutive terms for house members to four and consecutive terms for senators to two (8 years of service for each); the amendment went into effect in 2000 (National Council of State Legislatures 2009)

³³ Mark Okey (D) said he wanted to spend more time with his family (“State Rep. Okey Won’t Run Again” 2011). Dennis Murray (D) said he wanted to spend more time focusing on his law practice (Siegel 2011). Richard Hollington (R) had been appointed to fill the remaining term of a vacant seat with the understanding that he would not seek election (Rusek 2011).

³⁴ Coding this variable was done by both Sara and Barb. We each coded all 99 districts independently, and then compared our codes. We then went through all the codes to make sure we agreed, which took several iterations until we became very familiar with the maps. Moving forward, as we code more states, we will use formal tests of inter-coder reliability.

³⁵ The district did not change or changed very little from the perspective of the incumbent.

³⁶ The district was 50 percent redrawn or less (in other words, half or more of the district stayed the same) from the perspective of the incumbent.

redraw, and completely redrawn (or “blown up”).³⁷ If a district was “borderline” (i.e. approximately half was changed), we used the lower classification.

*** Please Refer to Table 7 ***

As Table 7 shows, very few state house districts were left untouched by the redistricting process. In 79 of the 99 districts, or 80 percent, more than half of the district was new territory for the incumbent. Table 7 does suggest, however, that proportionally, female incumbents were more likely to have their districts substantially redrawn than their male counterparts. Fifteen out of 25 women had their districts substantially redrawn (60 percent), while only 32 of 47 men had their districts substantially redrawn (43 percent). All of these incumbents who sought reelection in the general won.

We also did an analysis to account for the party of incumbents. Given that the Ohio legislature and redistricting commission were controlled by Republicans, were Democratic female incumbents more likely to have their districts redrawn? In other words, are the results above more a function of party? Seven of the 12 Democratic female incumbents, or 58.3 percent, had their districts substantially redrawn, and eight of the 13 Republican female incumbents, or 61.5 percent, had their districts substantially redrawn. Among Democratic male incumbents, only 37.5 percent had their districts substantially redrawn, while 62.5 percent of Republican male incumbents had their districts substantially redrawn. Surprisingly, it was Democratic men who were the most likely to make it through the process with the districts left in tact.

It is important to keep in mind that redrawing districts may not necessarily disadvantage incumbents, but can, inversely, help them out. There were nearly twice as many Republican men than Democratic men who had their districts substantially redrawn. The Republicans, who had the most influence in redrawing the map, probably reshaped many of those Republican districts in order to secure those seats. And virtually all incumbents – regardless of party – won. In fact, the two incumbents who lost in the general election, both male Republicans, ran in districts that changed very little. Very few incumbents in the Ohio State House, male or female, Democratic or Republican, lost their jobs because of redistricting.

CONCLUSION

Our analysis of elections to the US House shows that redistricting in 2012 led to the departure of many incumbents. We began our analysis of redistricting in House elections with a base of 428 incumbents. Retirements reduced this number to 387; the 13 primary defeats further reduced the base to 374; with 28 losses in the general elections, the number of incumbents who electorally survived the 2012 election cycle is 346. This produces an electoral survival rate for incumbents in 2012 of 81 percent. While not all House incumbents were victimized by redistricting, our analysis shows that over 15 percent of the House incumbents (60/398) experienced some form of disruption, and such disruptions, in both primary and general elections, lead to significantly reduced rates of victory.

³⁷ The district was 51% redrawn or more (in other words, more than half of the district was new) from the perspective of the incumbent.

In our general analysis of US House seats, we found no systematic evidence that female incumbents disproportionately faced the disruptions wrought by redistricting. Instead, we find an interaction, so to speak, between party and sex. Seats held by female incumbents, like their male counterparts, often present “targets of opportunity” for line drawers in states where one party has the ability to exert disproportionate influence on the geographic lines of the district. Women were targets not because they were women, but because of their party label. The case of California is somewhat ambiguous, since the change to an independent commission was accompanied by changes in the primary election system. The consequences were reducing the number of incumbents who returned to the 113th Congress, which was the mission of the commission. However, the new map also had the unintended consequences of increasing the Democratic advantage in the delegation by four seats, and reducing the number of women in the delegation by one. This is particularly noteworthy, however, in that California sends not only the largest number of women to the US House, but historically has had one of the highest proportions of women in their congressional delegation. The use of an independent commission does not appear to have helped create more opportunities for women in that state. In Ohio, while the numbers are much smaller, a partisan redistricting process also reduced the number of women in the state’s congressional delegation. This was, however, also probably an unintended consequence, given the party affiliations of the women who were most directly affected by redistricting. At the state house level in Ohio, while the vast majority of incumbents had their districts change shape, given the extremely high survival rates, the districts were probably redrawn with the intent to shore up support for all incumbents and secure the Republican majority. Thus, while further research is necessary, we find no systematic evidence that female incumbents fared any worse than male incumbents in the latest round of redistricting.

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**TABLE 1
METHODS OF REDISTRICTING US HOUSE SEATS BY THE STATES**

Method	Number Of States	Total Number And% of House Seats	Number and% of Republican Seats	Number and of Percent of Democrats Seats
Unified Republican State Government	18	205 47.1%	144 59.5%	61 31.6%
Unified Democratic State Government	6	46 10.6%	18 7.4%	28 14.5%
Divided State Government	4	22 5.1%	11 4.5%	11 5.7%
Independent Commission	5	77 17.7%	32 13.2%	45 23.3%
State or Federal Courts	8	63 14.5%	26 10.7%	37 19.2%
Political Commission	2	15 3.4%	6 2.5%	9 4.7%
States with One Congressional District	7	7 1.4%	5 2.1%	2 1.0%
TOTAL	50	435	242	193

TABLE 2
INCUMBENT DECISIONS IN THE 112th CONGRESS
STATES WITH TWO OR MORE CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS
(excludes states with one congressional district)

Decision	Number of Incumbents	Percent of Incumbents
Run in Primary for US House	387	90.4%
Retire, run for other office	14	3.3%
Retire, not run for other office	16	3.7%
Retire because of redistricting	11	2.6%
TOTAL	428	100%

TABLE 3
INCUMBENT VICTORIES AND LOSSES IN PRIMARY ELECTIONS FOR THE US HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES, 2012
(excludes states with one congressional district)

Situation of the Incumbent and Outcome	Incumbents Winning Primary	Incumbents Losing Primary	Incumbent Victory Rate
<i>No Disruption</i> Ran in "Home District" – No incumbent opponent	357	5	98.6%
<i>Disruption</i> Ran in "Home District" – Faced another incumbent ^a	10	1	90.9%
Ran in "Different District" – Faced another incumbent ^a	4	7	36.4%
Ran in "Different District" – Did not face another incumbent	3	0	100%
<i>All Disruptions</i>	17	8	68.0%
<i>All Primary Elections With Incumbents</i>	374	13	96.6%

^a These categories include two races from the "Top Two" primary system in California. In the new 30th District of California, Democratic incumbents Brad Sherman and Howard Berman were the top two vote getters and faced off in the general election. In the new 44th District, Democratic incumbents Janice Hahn and Laura Richardson qualified to face each other in the general election. Because they advanced to the general election, we coded each of these incumbents as winning their primary. Similarly, because Louisiana lost a House seat, Republican incumbents Jeff Landry and Charles Boustany were paired in the 3rd District. Both were coded as having won their primary.

TABLE 4
INCUMBENTS AND THE 2012 GENERAL ELECTION TO THE US HOUSE
(excludes states with one congressional district)

Party and Sex	“Typical Elections” Percent Won	“Disrupted Elections” Percent Won	All Elections Percent Won
All Democrats All Republicans	97.8% (136/139) 91.9% (188/203)	66.7% (14/21) 72.7% (8/11)	93.7% (150/160) 91.2% (196/214)
All Males All Females	95.1% (274/288) 92.6% (50/54)	68.2% (15/22) 70.0% (7/10)	93.2% (289/310) 89.0% (57/64)
Male Democrat Female Democrat	98.1% (101/103) 97.2% (35/36)	58.3% (7/12) 77.8% (7/9)	93.9% (108/115) 93.3% (42/45)
Male Republican Female Republicans	93.5% (173/185) 83.3% (15/18)	80.0% (8/10) 0% (0/1)	92.8% (181/195) 78.9% (15/19)
All Incumbents	94.7% (324/342)	68.7% (22/32)	92.5% (346/374)

TABLE 5
REDISTRICTING AND DISRUPTED ELECTIONS: A SUMMARY
(excludes states with one congressional district and incumbents who retire for reasons unrelated to redistricting)

Category	“Disrupted Elections” (Disruptions/Total Incumbents)
<i>Party</i>	
All Democrats	22.0% (38/173) ^a
All Republicans	9.8% (22/225)
<i>Sex</i>	
All Males	14.5% (48/332)
All Females	18.2% (12/66)
<i>Party and Sex</i>	
Male Democrats	21.7% (28/129)
Female Democrats	22.7% (10/44)
Female Republicans	9.1% (2/22)
Male Republicans	9.9% (20/203)
<i>By Redistricting Method</i>	
Unified Republican	12.0% (23/192) ^a
Unified Democratic	20.9% (9/43)
Divided Government	10.0% (2/20)
Independent Commission	28.2% (28/71)
State or Federal Court	6.8% (4/59)
Political Commission	15.4% (2/13)
<i>Total</i>	15.1% (60/398)

^a Denotes that the chi-square statistic based upon the cross-tabulation of the measures is significant with $p < .01$.

TABLE 6
REDISTRICTING AND ATTRITION IN THE CALIFORNIA DELEGATION TO THE US HOUSE

Incumbent and Outcome	Democrats	Republicans	Total
Incumbents in the 112 th Congress ^a	34 (18 Women)	19 (1 Woman)	53 (19 Women)
Retire, run for other office	1 Filner	0	1
Retire, not run for other office	1 Woolsey	1 Herger	2
Retire because of redistricting	1 Cardoza	3 Gallegly Dreier Lewis	4
Lost general election to incumbent of own party	2 Berman Richardson	0	2
Lost general election to non-incumbent of own party	2 Baca Stark	0	2
Lost general election to a non-incumbent of the other party	0	3 Bilbray Bono Mack Lungren	3
Incumbents Exiting	7 (2 Women)	7 (1 Woman)	14 (3 Women)
Incumbents Re-Elected	27 (16 Women)	12 (No Women)	39 (10 Women)

^a There was only one change in the California delegation over the course of the 112th Congress. Jane Harman (D) resigned on February 28, 2011 to become the President of the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars. On July 12, 2011, Democrat Janice Hahn won the special election to succeed Harman. Hahn subsequently defeated fellow Democratic incumbent, Laura Richardson, in the general election.

TABLE 7
THE REDRAWING OF OHIO STATE HOUSE DISTRICTS

	Male Incumbents	Female Incumbents	Total
Little to no redraw	16 (21.6%)	4 (16.0%)	20 (20.2%)
Moderate redraw	23 (31.1%)	6 (24.0%)	29 (29.3%)
Substantial redraw	32 (43.2%)	15 (60.0%)	47 (47.5%)
Completely redrawn	3 (4.1%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (3.0%)

n=99. The differences between men and women were not statistically significant.