

CHAPTER 3

Networks on the Ground

“There’s only one way to hold a district: you must study human nature and act accordin’. You can’t study human nature in books. Books is a hindrance more than anything else. If you have been to college, so much the worse for you. You’ll have to unlearn all you learned before you can get right down to human nature, and unlearnin’ takes a lot of time. Some men can never forget what they learned at college...To learn real human nature you have to go among the people, see them and be seen.”

– George W. Plunkitt¹

3.1 Parties on the Ground

If one accepts this more diffuse definition of political parties, we should forgive an initial sense of pessimism or despondency toward our ability to study their behavior in a systematic fashion. The diversity of potential actors – from party organizations, to activist networks; from interest groups, to old-fashioned machines – multiplies both the potential environments and potential resources available for electoral intervention. And worse yet, the actions of these extended party networks are often purposefully kept from the public eye. The choice to recruit candidates for office, pressure others out of a contest, or expend resources in support of particular campaigns are at best highly sensitive decisions and at worst skirt the borders of legality.² Moreover, the individual state primary and nomination contests are scattered over

¹Riordan, William. 1905. *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall*. The Project Gutenberg.

²For example, the same union officials central to the coming example in Pennsylvania’s 13th district are currently under a FBI investigation covering “virtually every aspect of the union’s operations, as well as [the union leader’s] personal finances” (Phillips and Fazlollah 2017).

the calendar from March until November, take place under a variety of rules and procedures, and have historically received little media or scholarly attention – all forces that hinder the systematic study of party activities.

However, it is the failure to focus on these obscured behaviors that gives occasion to critically paint political science as a “a drunk who looks for his lost car keys under a lamppost because that’s where the light is best” (Masket 2009). Given how important recruitment and dissuasion factor into a candidate’s decision to seek elected office (Carnes 2018; Fowler and McClure 1989; Fox and Lawless 2005; Ocampo 2017) and the central role that party actors play in nominations (Cohen et al. 2008; Masket 2009; Hassell 2016; 2018), understanding their behavior is most important in these opaque primary environments.

With these challenges in mind, six researchers from UCLA, myself included, undertook a mixed-method and relatively unstructured investigation into the dynamics behind open-seat nominations for the House of Representatives during the 2014 election cycle (see Bawn et al. 2015). The *Parties on the Ground* project made field trips to over 40 congressional districts to conduct hundreds of interviews with local journalists, party officials, activists, political consultants, interest groups, major donors, candidates, campaign staffers, local academics, and even the occasional primary voter – a snowball sample not inaccurately described as anyone and everyone who would talk to us – to determine how nomination contests worked across the country. Our efforts began in the summer of 2013 and continue to present. While we took initial inspiration for the interviews from the works of Fenno (1978), Fowler and McClure (1989), and Masket (2009), our approach remained flexible enough to account for the wide variation in activities and political actors. We gave our subjects the luxury of anonymity³ in the hopes that this produced more forthcoming responses and only cite them by name when granted explicit permission. While there is some concern of selection bias in those subjects who were willing to speak with us, data from these interviews are combined with journalistic accounts, political histories of the region, campaign finance disclosures, and

³All quotations from these interviews will be cited as part of *Parties on the Ground* (POG 2014). Transcripts of individual conversations with identifying information redacted will be provided upon request. Following publication, we will host the audio files in an archive for other scholars to investigate.

eventual primary and convention vote outcomes to describe a holistic account of the political systems in which each contest takes place.

The purpose of this chapter is not to summarize the findings of this larger project, but to highlight one specific pattern observed across these races that inspired this dissertation: the influence of both formal and informal *party networks* on the electoral prospects of candidates in pursuit of nomination. From national labor unions to small bands of like-minded business owners, from local party machines to informal mailing lists, organized interests mobilized their networks of support to influence nomination contests in their favor. In many cases, those interviewed concluded that with voters unable to rely on party identification or detailed media coverage of these races, it was the efforts of these networks that determined a primary's outcome. While the specific structure, composition, and motivations of these networks varied across districts and parties in substantively important ways, their general function as coordinating agents for donors and activists was consistent across nearly all of these races. Successful candidates in primaries were not “electoral self-starters” (Herrnson 2011), but agents competing for and on behalf of particular organized interests. These interests then in turn provided their candidates with resources unavailable to “freebooting political entrepreneurs” (Jacobson 2009), which in turn aided them in their primary and nominations contests.

Toward this aim, this chapter begins by providing a typology of party networks active in the 2014 cycle. Across these different races formal party organizations, national and local interest groups, and party activist networks succeeded in nominating a congressional candidate. For each type of network, I provide case studies detailing the general dynamics of the nomination contest while highlighting the methods and means used by these networks in support of their chosen candidates. Finally, I distill the commonalities across these different races to highlight how organized networks succeed in nominating their chosen candidates.

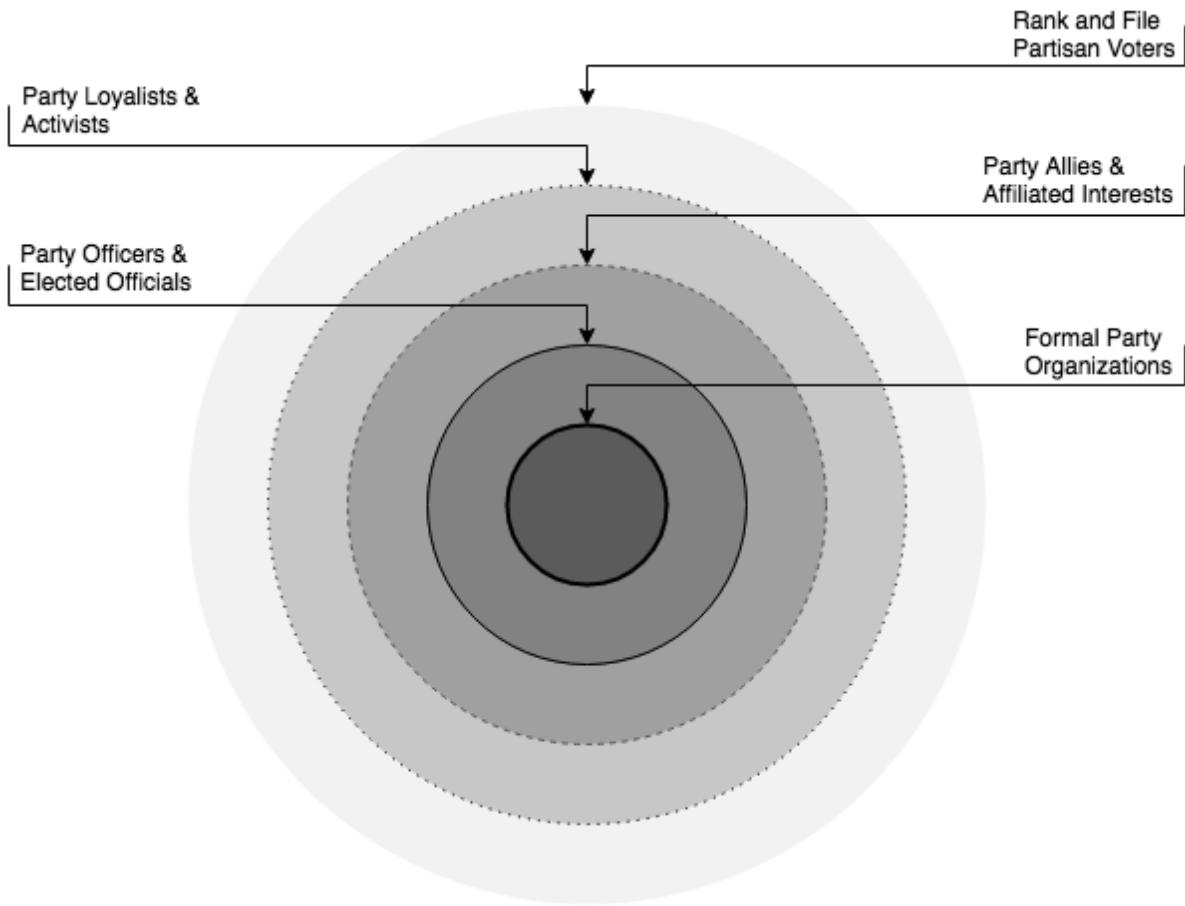
3.2 Groups within the Extended Party Network

A diverse array of actors with various levels of connection to the formal parties activated their networks and deployed resources on behalf of candidates in consequential open-seat primaries during the 2014 election cycle. Party networks were often centered around the usual suspects of partisan actors – EMILY’s List and the Chamber of Commerce, trade unions and pro-life groups, members of Congress and county parties – but also included local networks of women mayors, maritime development industrialists, homeschooling advocates, and other informal organizations lacking the traditional “brick and mortar” interest group structure. It was this wide range of organizations and political structures that provided the resources and support that set their candidates apart from the “electoral self-starters” in primary contests.

Traditionally, this collection of organizations have been described by their relationship to the formal party organization. Herrnson (2009) defined political parties as “enduring multi-layered coalitions,” with the formal party organization at its core, surrounded by “party allies that routinely work with one party in pursuit of their common goal” and the “party’s base” in the electorate. Similarly, Koger, Masket, and Noel (2009; 2010) conceive of parties as “networks of co-operating actors,” including “candidates and office holders; its formal apparatus; loyal donors, campaign workers and activists; allied interest groups; and friendly media outlets.” In studying patterns of data exchanges between partisan actors, they observe largely cooperative party coalitions with the formal party organizations situated centrally in the network. Figure 3.1 provides a rough structure for the party networks described by these authors which highlights their relationship to the formal party organization.

Formal party organizations, politician-centered machines, local and national interest groups, and activist networks – the types of networks described in this structure – were all instrumental in the primary campaigns of candidates during the 2014 nominating cycle. While they may play a more muted role in particular nominations in particular districts, the formal party organizations are still central organizing institutions for national politics (Hassell 2016; 2018, Koger, Masket, Noel 2009; 2010). These organizations include the party

Figure 3.1: Political Parties as Enduring Multi-Layered Coalitions



Note: A similar diagram is developed by Herrnson (2009). I recreate it here and rename some categories to include actors described in Koger, Masket, and Noel (2009; 2010).

congressional fundraising committees and the national party committee leadership. On the Democratic side, this includes the Democratic National Committee (DNC), the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC), the Democratic Governors Association (DGA), the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC), the Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee (DLCC), the Association of State Democratic Chairs, and the state, county, congressional district, and local Democratic party organizations. Parallel organizations can be found for the Republican Party.

Closely related to these national party organizations are the party officers and elected

officials who represent them around the country. These actors often have sway in their own right. The federal structure of party leaders – the national, state, county, and local party organizations – usually provides an array of actors individual autonomy in making particular decisions. For example, elected officials have more control over the management of their own campaigns and local party officials have more control over particular resources, such as endorsements and volunteers. This autonomy allows these actors to participate in nomination contests in their own right, not simply as tools of the national party organization.

Party allies and affiliated interest groups constitute the most closely connected layer of the “party periphery” – those actors without a formal/legal connection to the party architecture. These actors are recognizable players in partisan politics: EMILY’s List, the Sierra Club, and organized labor, among others, for the Democrats; Right to Life, the Chamber of Commerce, and the National Rifle Association, among others, for the Republicans. These groups, while organized around particular policy demands, are deeply embedded in the networks of particular parties.⁴ The path to political success for these groups travels through their influence within one of the political parties. As someone familiar with EMILY’s List’s organization reported: “we’re not trying to control a majority in Congress, we’re trying to control a majority within the Democratic caucus” (POG 2014).

Beyond these partisan interest groups exists the network of loyalists and party activists. These are individuals with no formal positions as elected officials or party officers, that lack the structure of an organized interest or pressure group, but are involved in the political process beyond the ballot box. Unlike interest groups and elected officials which can straddle the local/national divide, activist networks of this variety are almost always locally bound. These are the frequent donors, convention delegates, political club members, and campaign volunteers that provide the financing and “boots on the ground” for most political activities. These actors are more often supporters than drivers of party activity – numerous activists described the social nature of “party work” and were more invested in supporting the “home

⁴There are exceptions. These groups will occasionally work with incumbents on the other side of the aisle, such as Pro-Life Susan B. Anthony List’s assistance for Dan Lipinski’s renomination in Illinois (Desantis 2018) or the Teamster’s support of Rob Portman’s (R-OH) reelection (Garcia 2016). These examples, however, are the exception, and even more rarely extended to races without entrenched incumbents.

team” rather than pressuring the party toward particular actions. As we will see in Pennsylvania’s 6th district, however, their numbers in comparison to party officials and their focus in comparison to the electorate make them an influential, if rarely activated, type of network.

But, in the oft repeated adage of the late Tip O’Neill, “all politics is local.” While these various actors may have a hierarchical or radial structure within the *national* party network, in individual nomination contests, these various types of groups often competed among themselves in order to support particular candidates. With competitive general elections a rarity, these organizations were able to compete freely, knowing that regardless of the outcome, a reliable partisan will be sent to Washington. The competition is driven not by a desire for support on particular votes, but by a desire to nominate a champion of their particular cause. Each type of network attempted to marshal resources to tip the scales in favor of “one of us,” but the resources available to these networks and the environments in which they could be deployed varied by their nature.

Reflecting back on the motivating anecdote from Chapter 1, the groups and organizations supporting candidates competing in the primary were not cooperating, nor were the centrally organized around the formal party organization. The DCCC and EMILY’s List were both supporting one candidate, Bernie Sander’s and local organized labor another, while a national activist network of doctors and scientists supported yet another. These organizations often cooperate in the general election (Koger, Masket, Noel 2010) and see themselves as part of the larger party (e.g. Pathé 2017), but when the potential to nominate one of their own is on the line, this diverse assortment of actors are more than willing to compete among themselves.

3.3 The Party Sometimes Decides

Perhaps one of the most surprising discoveries from these investigations was the degree to which formal party organizations still hold sway over nominations for office. In Connecticut and Utah, party conventions have long been the primary means of nominating candidates

for office.⁵ In Virginia, the state party can choose cycle-by-cycle, race-by-race what method they would prefer to select their nominee. Iowa uses party conventions to select nominees in the event that no candidate receives 35% of the vote. While not formally in control of the selection of nominees, New Jersey's county parties have the ability to provide their endorsed candidates with a preferential ballot placement that rarely, if ever, fails to secure them the plurality of support in the primary. These three resources – party conventions, control over voting methods, and preferential ballot placement – give local formal parties tremendously powerful resources in nomination contests.

The national parties, in comparison, had a more muted, but not imperceptible impact on these races. In the 2014, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee only made one endorsement in a contested open-seat primary, and their Republican counterparts avoided endorsements altogether. This is not to suggest, however, that either party's presence is not felt (see Hassell 2018). As I describe in Colorado, their behind the scenes efforts often shape the outcomes in congressional nominations.

3.3.1 Party Conventions

In 2014, Republican Mia Love had her eyes set on Utah's 4th district. Having lost to Democrat Jim Matheson by fewer than 800 votes in 2012, Love was considered the favorite for the GOP nomination following Matheson's decision to retire. Two insiders we spoke to described Love as essentially the nominee from when she announced – “the 2014 nomination was sewn up in 2012” (POG 2014). They mentioned that some state legislators, party officials, and major donors made calls to other candidates, discouraging them from challenging Love at the 2014 convention. Some in the party were concerned that the dysfunctions of Love's 2012 campaign would keep her from taking back the heavily Republican seat. In her previous campaign, she had three different campaign managers, occasionally missed events due to scheduling errors, and according to some party officials had trouble developing a

⁵In late-2014, Utah passed SB54, which would allow candidates to gather signatures and move directly to the primary, avoiding the convention. The legality of this act is still being considered in the courts (Davidson and Harrie 2018), but would undoubtedly weaken the ability of formal parties to select their nominees in Utah.

message beyond national talking points (Canham 2014). But those concerns were clearly limited. Love received the support of 662 (78%) delegates on the first ballot at the Utah Republican convention – beating her opponent, Utah’s Director of Business and Economic Development Bob Fuehr, and finishing well above the threshold needed to avoid a primary (Gehrke 2014). With the nomination in hand, Love went on to win the general election in a wave Republican year.

Love owed her 2014 nomination to the network of supporters that gained her the nomination in 2012 – a network of supporters brought to the convention by Senator Orrin Hatch. Early polls of the 2012 Utah Republican convention delegates suggested there was little chance of Orrin Hatch winning renomination. Hoping to avoid the fate of his junior colleague Bob Bennett, who lost renomination at the convention the previous cycle because his support of the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) angered the dominant Tea Party faction in the party, Hatch sought to elect more moderate supporters to the convention. According to Dave Hansen, Hatch’s campaign manager, 2012 was “not going to be a campaign of persuading delegates...it is going to be a campaign of replacing delegates” (Kane 2012). The team of 25 campaign staffers organized between 20,000 and 35,000 pro-Hatch activists to vote in 2,000 precinct level contests to select delegates to the national convention.

He also benefited from the tacit support of the Mormon Church:

“For example, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sent its usual letter to Mormon churches urging its faithful to attend the party caucuses, but this time church leaders encouraged that the letter to be read to congregations multiple times. Then, Mormon leaders canceled church activities for the caucus nights of March 13 (Democrats) and March 15 (Republicans). In addition, most Utah Republicans had come to view former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney not just as a favorite son who ran the 2002 Olympics in Salt Lake City, he had become the likely next president in their eyes, the first Mormon to do so.

Romney made an ad supporting Hatch, who is also a Mormon, that ran repeatedly in the three weeks leading up to the caucus. Touting Hatch’s possible chairmanship of the Finance Committee if Republicans win the Senate majority, Romney told voters to ‘keep Orrin fighting for Utah.’” (*ibid*).

Hatch’s efforts were largely successful. Only 20% of those at the convention had been

delegates to the previous convention. And where surveys of delegates had initially shown Hatch with levels of support similar to Bennett in 2010, after the selection of the new delegates internal polling showed them within reach of the nomination threshold of 60%.

These more moderate delegates were central to Love's nomination in 2012. Those close to her campaign admitted that her opponent, Carl Wimmer, was the early favorite for the nomination in 2012, and drew much of his support from the same pool of delegates behind Bennett's 2010 loss. But with a more pro-Hatch, pro-Mormon pool of delegates, Love, the more moderate candidate who was also a member of the Church of Latter-day Saints, became the candidate to beat. While they stressed that Love had a path to victory regardless – she held numerous one-on-one meetings with delegates, was a charismatic speaker, and because of her race had garnered national media attention – they also admitted that after the influx of Hatch supporters her polling among convention delegates increased nearly 10 points. Love eventually won 53% of delegates on the first ballot among the five candidates. The three bottom placing candidates all dropped out and endorsed Love, and she was able to win the nomination with 70% of the convention delegates.

In states with party conventions, the party still has the formal ability to select their nominee. In terms of resources that can benefit a candidate's pursuit of nomination, these formal powers can't be beat. In these examples, the networks of supporters behind a candidate always win.

3.3.2 ‘Firehouse’ Primaries

In Virginia, political parties have the ability to select the method by which they choose their nominees on a race-by-race and cycle-by-cycle basis. For example, for Congress, the Virginia Republican Party is divided into 11 districts. Each district has an executive committee that consists of an elected chair, members of the state committee, and representatives of local Republican organizations. In the 10th district this includes a chairman, five state committee members, and one representative from the college Republicans, the young Republicans, and the district federation of Republican women. These individuals can vote to hold

a state primary, a party canvass, a mass meeting, or a convention to select their nominees.

For example, while the state GOP selected their gubernatorial nominee, Ken Cuccinelli by convention in 2013, they selected their 2017 nominee, Ed Gillespie, in a state run primary. The choice is often a political one. Conventions tend to “attract the party’s most ardent conservatives,” where a “primary, because it is extended and draws a larger electorate – including Democrats, Republicans and independents – favors well-financed establishment candidates” (Schwartzman 2015). This ability to chose their nominating procedures gives the formal party organizations within each individual district the potential to benefit different types of candidates in different races.

A method unique to Virginia, the ‘Firehouse Primary’ or party canvass, was used to select the nominee for the open 10th district contest in 2014. A party canvass is a primary election run by party officials and volunteers, rather than the state. Beau Correll, chair of a local county Republican committee, described it as “a middle ground between a convention or a conventional primary” (Badcock 2014). Because the primary is run by the party, they can choose where, when, and how many polling stations will be used. For example, the 10th district ‘firehouse’ primary had 10 polling locations across the district (Olivo 2014), whereas Loudon County – the largest county entirely within the 10th district – alone has 96 polling locations in a normal election (Loudon County 2018). Additionally, whereas Virginia has an open primary system, allowing potential out-party participation, parties can require a loyalty pledge from voters under this system. As John Whitebeck, chair of the districts Republican committee described, “[w]e set up voting locations around the district, and as long as you’re a registered voter who’s willing to sign a statement confirming that you’re going to support the Republican nominee, you can vote in the process” (Badcock 2014).

The more moderate faction of the party preferred the eventual-nominee Barbara Comstock. She had endorsements from members of the 10th district Republican committee and the chairman of the state party. The 10th district committee was also considered to be a more pro-establishment committee than the statewide party which had more Tea Party support. Dody Stottlemeyer, president of a local Tea Party network, said that she was clearly “the establishment candidate” (Pershing 2014), a label used in many of our interviews to

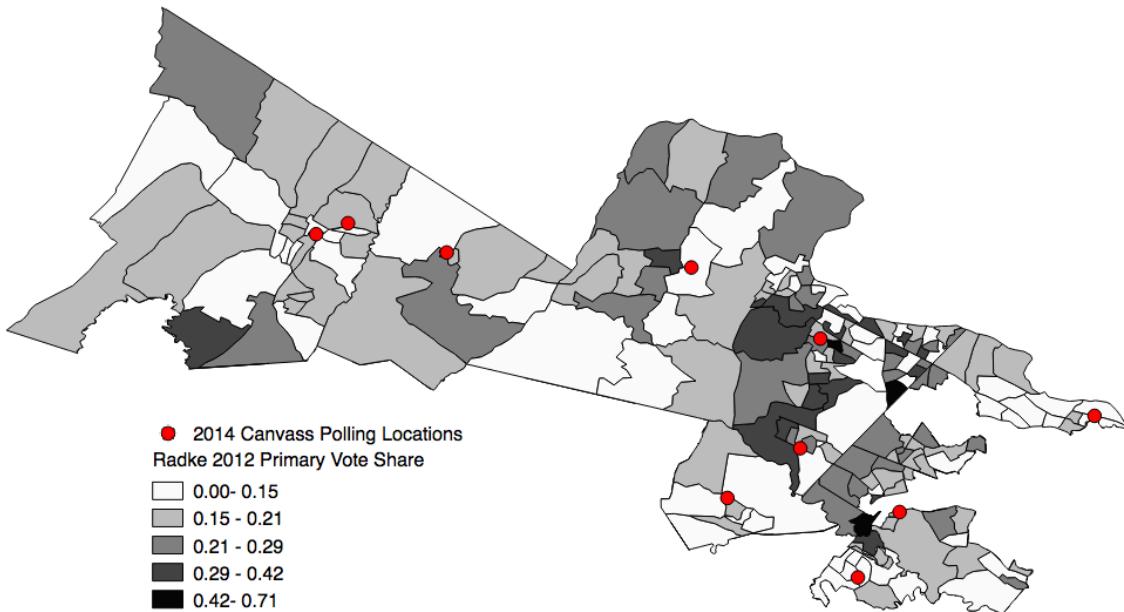
describe Comstock. One local pro-life activist reported that her main opponent, Bob Marshall, was “more outspoken and ha[d] a longer track record” on conservative causes, and was “certainly not a member of the establishment.” He was in many ways “Tea Party before the Tea Party” (POG 2014).

Media coverage and local experts were divided over whether the decision to use a ‘fire-house’ primary in the 10th district was to prevent a more conservative state convention from supporting a more extreme candidate who would be less viable in the general election or was simply a matter of practicality. Some party officials we spoke to said that candidates who performed worse in the primary had been advocating for a convention since it was their only viable path to victory. One local activist mentioned how the primary system with plurality rule benefited Comstock, as there would likely be a majority of more ardent Tea Party supporters at the convention, even if there was not a majority for any one particular Tea Party candidate. But a state party official was confident that Comstock would have won under any circumstance, but that the party canvass method would give the party more control while preventing criticisms of a closed-party process (*ibid.*).

There is some evidence that the party canvass was designed to help the party establishment. The choice of which polling locations to use is a choice to determine which voters will be convenience and inconvenienced by the process. In the 10th district, the selection of the particular canvass locations was biased against Tea Party voters. By way of background, in the previous election cycle, former Senator George Allen sought to reclaim his U.S. Senate seat when Senator Jim Webb announced his retirement. While he won the nomination by a comfortable margin – 66% of the vote in a four person primary – President of the Richmond Tea Party and co-founder of the Virginia Tea Party Patriots Federation Jamie Radke won 23% of the vote statewide, a figure that far exceeded expectations set by public polling (WaPo Poll 2012). Figure 3.2 maps Radke’s vote share by precinct in Virginia’s 10th district, and also plots the locations chosen by the 10th district Republican committee for the 2014. The average precinct with a canvass location cast 16.2% of their ballots for the Tea Party candidate, in comparison to the district at large which cast 19.5% of their ballots in support of Radke – a statistically significant bias against Tea Party supporting precincts. If

the committee were randomly selecting polling locations from all available polling locations in the district, we would expect this degree of pro-establishment bias to occur only around 8% of the time.⁶ Admittedly, this evidence is only suggestive. However, whether the selection of the locations was done intentionally or coincidentally, and whether the benefit was determinative or not, it was an available tool for the party to use in benefit of her campaign.

Figure 3.2: Canvass Locations in Virginia’s 10th District Republican Primary



Taken together, Comstock’s network of establishment supporters – those officials in charge of deciding how the party will select its nominee – whether intentionally or not, helped

⁶The difference in Radke’s primary vote share between precincts with canvass locations and those without is statistically significant under a Welch two sample t-test ($p \approx 0.013$). Using 100,000 simulated draws from the list of 210 potential polling locations within the district, I find only 8.22% of draws with Radke’s average less than or equal to the 16.2% observed. Geocoding of the polling locations was conducted using the Google Maps API and the geo-spatial subsetting was conducted using QGIS. Using the number of potential polling locations accounts for variations in population, as precincts with more polling locations are those with larger voting populations.

create an electoral environment more favorable to their chosen candidate. They designed a party canvass requiring voters from areas with larger concentrations of Tea Party support to travel further and use polling locations different from their usual location. Both of these factors could have easily benefited Comstock on the margins. And these are the decisions we can easily observe. For example, there were 10 locations in the firehouse primary, but party rules only dictate that each electoral unit has one location. Why then were Loudon and Fairfax counties given multiple locations? Any explanation would, at this point, be speculation. But regardless of whether that tool *was* used to support Comstock's particular nomination, it is sufficient to note the range of resources Comstock's establishment network *could* have used if circumstances demanded.

3.3.3 The County Line

In New Jersey, the county party's endorsement is *key* to nomination. Before I could ask my first question in regards to the Democratic primary in New Jersey's 1st district, a political consultant declared that "the most important thing to keep in mind for New Jersey primary politics is the case *Lautenberg v. Kelly*." He went on to explain how this court case allowed county parties to start placing statewide office seekers at the top of the 'party line' and not in a separate column. Befuddled, I asked "umm...what is the party line?" He laughed. "Oh, you *really* don't know Jersey" (POG 2014).

The "party line" in New Jersey is the preferential ballot placement that comes with the endorsement of the county party organization. Figure 3.3 provides a sample ballot from the 2014 Democratic Primary in Mercer and Middlesex counties. In Column A, voters can find the county's "slate" – the candidates who are running with the county endorsement, or have been given "the county line." In Middlesex County, Linda Greenstein won the endorsement of the county party, whereas Bonnie Watson Coleman did so in her home county of Mercer. The advantage to the line comes predominantly from the ballot design. Candidate's in full columns simply "look like they belong there," and are more likely to be selected, all else equal. Some counties also identify that column separately, as Burlington County does with

Figure 3.3: Sample Ballots from New Jersey's 12th District Democratic Primary

Elaine M. Flynn

Elaine M. Flynn
County Clerk

Sample Voting Machine Ballot

Official Primary Election

Tuesday, June 3, 2014, County of Middlesex, New Jersey

Ejemplo de la Papeleta en la Máquina de Votar * Elección Primaria, Martes, 3 de junio, 2014

OFFICE TITLE CARGO	DEMOCRATIC DEMOCRÁTICO A	DEMOCRATIC DEMOCRÁTICO B	DEMOCRATIC DEMOCRÁTICO C	DEMOCRATIC DEMOCRÁTICO D	PERSONAL CHOICE SELECCIÓN PERSONAL		
U.S. Senator 6 Year Term, Vote for One Senador de Los E.U. Término de 6 Años, Vota por Uno	Cory BOOKER Middlesex County Democratic Organization	<input type="radio"/> 1A			<input type="checkbox"/> Write In Escríba		
Member of the House of Representatives 2 Year Term, Vote for One Miembro de la Cámara de Representantes Distrito Congresional 12 Término de 2 Años, Vota por Uno	Linda R. GREENSTEIN Middlesex County Democratic Organization	<input type="radio"/> 2A	Bonnie Watson COLEMAN Middlesex Democrats 2014	<input type="radio"/> 2B	Andrew ZWICKER Democrat, Progressive, Scientist-Make a Difference	<input type="radio"/> 2D	<input type="checkbox"/> Write In Escríba
Members of the Board of Chosen Freeholders 3 Year Term, Vote for Two Miembros de la Junta de Propietarios Electos Término de 3 Años, Vota por Dos	Carol BARRETT Middlesex County Democratic Organization	<input type="radio"/> 1A			Jay MODY Progressive Democrat	<input type="radio"/> 3B	<input type="checkbox"/> Write In Escríba
	Charles TOMARO Middlesex County Democratic Organization	<input type="radio"/> 1B				<input type="radio"/> 3D	<input type="checkbox"/> Write In Escríba
Mayor 4 Year Term, Vote for One Alcalde Término de 4 Años, Vota por Uno	Frank GAMBATESE Middlesex County Democratic Organization	<input type="radio"/> 5A				<input type="radio"/> 4B	<input type="checkbox"/> Write In Escríba
Member of the Township Council 4 Year Term, Vote for One Miembros del Consejo Municipal Término de 4 Años, Vota por Uno	Christopher J. KILLMURRAY Middlesex County Democratic Organization	<input type="radio"/> 6A				<input type="radio"/> 4C	<input type="checkbox"/> Write In Escríba

Paula Sollami Covello

PAULA SOLLAMI COVELLO

Mercer County Clerk
209 South Broad Street
P.O. Box 8068, Trenton, NJ 08650-0068



OFFICIAL PRIMARY ELECTION SAMPLE BALLOT

East Windsor Township

Mercer County, New Jersey

June 3, 2014

12th Congressional District

OFFICE TITLE	Column A Democratic	Column B Democratic	Column C Democratic	Column D Democratic
U.S. Senate 6 Year Term - Vote for One	Regular Democratic Organization BOOKER <input type="radio"/> 1A			
House of Representatives 2 Year Term - Vote for One	Regular Democratic Organization WATSON COLEMAN <input type="radio"/> 2A	Progressive Democrat CHIVUKULA <input type="radio"/> 2B	Mercer County Progressive Democrat GREENSTEIN <input type="radio"/> 2C	Democrat, Progressive, Scientist - Make a Difference ZWICKER <input type="radio"/> 2D
Sheriff 3 Year Term - Vote for One	Regular Democratic Organization KEMLER <input type="radio"/> 3A			
Board of Chosen Freeholders 3 Year Term - Vote for Two	Regular Democratic Organization WALTER <input type="radio"/> 4A			
Male Member of County Committee 2 Year Term - Vote for One	Regular Democratic Organization CIMINO <input type="radio"/> 5A			
Female Member of County Committee 2 Year Term - Vote for One	Regular Democratic Organization KURS <input type="radio"/> 6A			
	Regular Democratic Organization DIRERSTEIN-KURS <input type="radio"/> 7A			

the label “Burlington County Regular Democrats.” Following *Lautenberg v. Kelly* (1994), the top of these columns were headed by the endorsed candidates for statewide office, which added the value of higher name recognition to the county line. While this process ostensibly leaves the power of nominations in the hands of voters, those interviewed could only recall two or three instances ever in which a candidate won a primary “off the line,” and my own research nominations could find no such exceptions for congressional primaries.

The county line was critical in securing the party’s nomination in the open-seat contests in the 2014 cycle. When Representative Rush Holt announced that he would not seek reelection to New Jersey’s heavily Democratic 12th district in 2014, four candidates quickly filed to run for the Democratic nomination: State Sen. Linda Greenstein, State Rep. Upendra Chivukula, State Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman, and Princeton Physicist Andrew Zwicker. Greenstein, Chivukula, and Watson Coleman were each endorsed by their home county’s Democratic party. On March 11, 2014, the three major candidates all met at Giovanna’s Restaurant in Plainfield, NJ to meet with the Democratic chairpeople of the three Union County towns in the 12th District – Assemblyman Jerry Green, Mayor Colleen Mahr, and Assemblywoman Linda Stender (Spoto 2014). In a private room in this Italian Restaurant the three party leaders decided to endorse Watson Coleman. She would go on to win the nomination in no small part due to her 76% of the vote from Union County. Table 3.1 presents the county-level results for that contest, as well as the counterfactual in which Greenstein had performed as well as Watson Coleman in Union County. It is not inconceivable that the Union County endorsement determined the outcome of this race.

Table 3.1: County Results in New Jersey’s 12th District Democratic Primary

County	Watson Coleman	Greenstein	Chivukula	Zwicker
Mercer	10,908	2,837	1,693	1,648
Middlesex	772	6,466	2,789	708
Somerset	790	418	2,923	169
Union	3,133	368	485	143
Total	15,603	10,089	7,890	2,668
Counterfactual	12,838	12,854	–	–

3.3.4 The Party's Primary

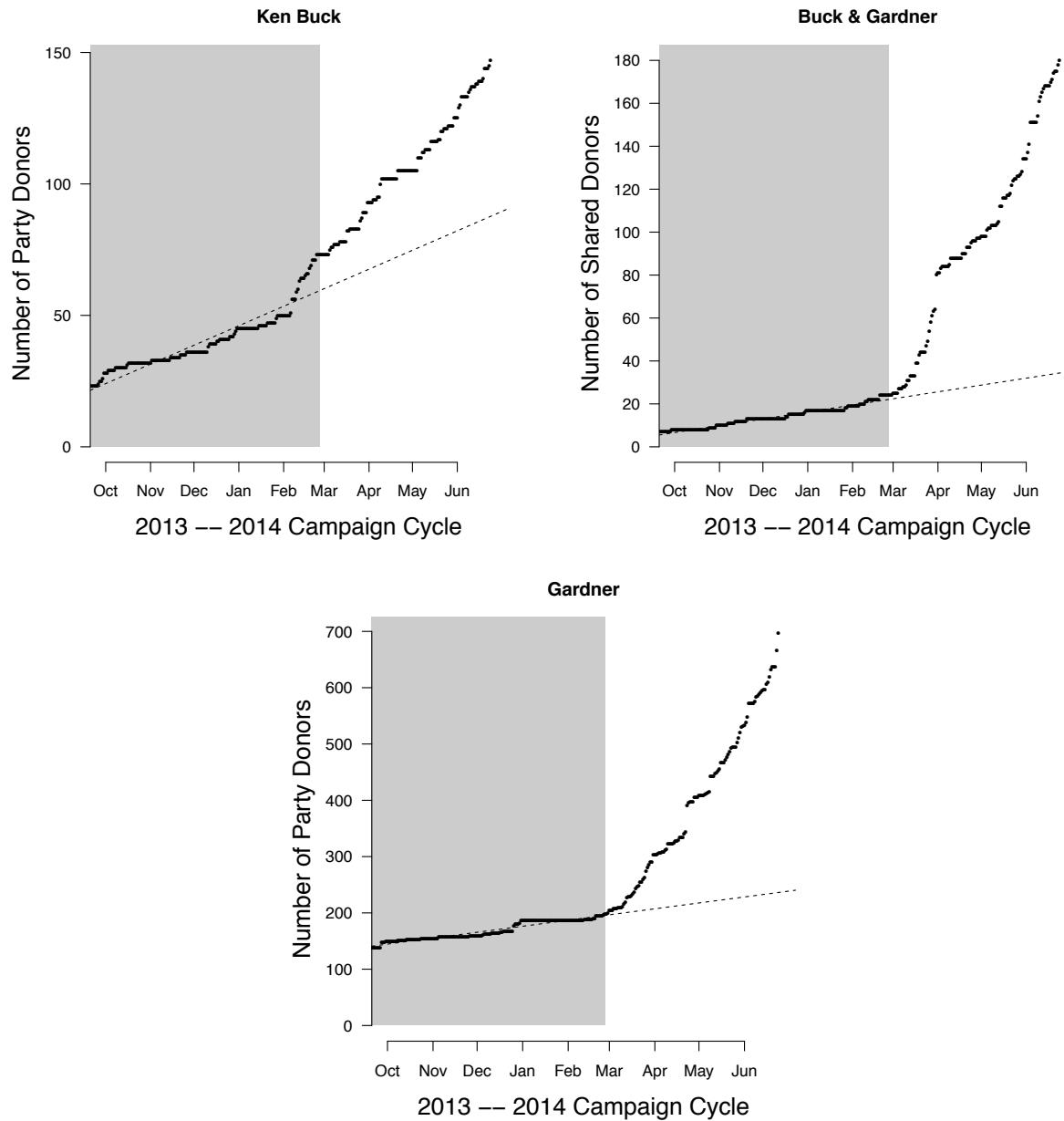
In his book *The Party's Primary*, Hassell questions the conventional wisdom that the national political parties are not influential in congressional primary contests. As institutions they lack the formal powers of their local counterparts and rarely make endorsements to avoid alienating potential supporters. But the party still has an interest in supporting nominees that will further its goals, so “the party network needs a means to coordinate its efforts” in support of particular candidates (2018). The national party, he argues, as the center of this networks (Herrnson 2009; Koger, Maskett, Noel 2008; 2009) can direct donors and interest groups toward their preferred nominee – funnelling resources to aid their preferred candidates’ pursuit of the nomination.

These dynamics were on clear display in Colorado’s 4th district Republican primary. In 2010 Ken Buck’s U.S. Senate campaign was marred by controversy over his previous role in a rape case as Weld County District Attorney. When he decided not to prosecute the case, he told the victim that “a jury could very well conclude that this is a case of buyer’s remorse” (Waddingham 2010). He was also branded as “too extreme for Colorado,” supporting the repeal of the 17th Amendment – the direct election of senators – and laws prohibiting abortion even in cases of rape and incest (Brady 2010). This loss, like those in Delaware and Nevada, was seen by the national party as an unforced error in a cycle where Republicans were generally successful.

National party leaders were eager to avoid another unnecessary defeat four years later. In another election cycle that looked to benefit Republicans nationwide, the national party hoped to find a more “electable” candidate for the general election. Buck’s decision to try once more for a U.S. Senate seat complicated these efforts. With his wide name recognition and strong support in many Tea Party circles, beating him in a primary would be difficult and expensive. Insiders disagree as to the exact origin of the idea, but when 4th District Congressman Corey Gardner entered the primary race for Senate, Buck dropped out and ran for Gardner’s now open seat. Each then immediately endorsed the other’s campaign. This “switcheroo” would give the party a stronger general election candidate for the Senate

contest and wouldn't endanger the heavily Republican 4th district (Hohmann et al. 2014).

Figure 3.4: Overlap in Donors between Ken Buck, Corey Gardner, and the RNC



Note: Panel 1 provides the number of donors Ken Buck shared with the national party's fundraising committees over the course of the campaign. The greyed area is the period before the "switcheroo." The dotted line is a linear projection based on the rate prior to the switch. Panel 2 provides a similar plot, but with the number of donors Ken Buck shared with Corey Gardner's campaign. Similarly, Panel 3 provides Gardner's number of party donors across the primary cycle.

Regardless of who approached who with the idea for the candidate swap, it was orchestrated and financially supported by the national party. RNC Chairman Reince Priebus publicly disclosed that discussions between the two campaigns had been going on for weeks, and much of the political coverage of the switch referenced the major role that prominent national Republican strategist Karl Rove played in pressuring Buck to agree to the switch (Pols 2014b). Figure 3.4 provides some initial evidence that the party did in fact move behind and support Buck once he shifted to the House contest. The first figure plots the cumulative number of donors that contributed to the Buck campaign who also contributed to one of the national Republican fundraising committees – the RNC, RSCC, or RCCC. The second figure shows the cumulative number of donors that contributed to both Gardner and Buck’s campaign. The grayed areas are the time during which Buck was running for the Senate seat, and the dotted lines are a linear projection based solely on rate of donors prior to the switch. As a result of the switch, Buck’s campaign began to receive the support from significantly more national donors – a support network that increasingly overlapped with that of Gardner. Importantly, the shift in national donors appears to begin just *before* details of the switch went public, supporting Preibus’s claim that these efforts began behind the scenes prior to the announcement. While these data alone are somewhat speculative, they conform to insider reports that the national party moved behind Buck to encourage him to switch to the House contest. In sum, following the switch, the national party came to support Buck’s candidacy in the contested 4th district primary and Corey Gardner’s campaign.

The increase in Ken Buck’s number of national party donors in the first week after the switch (+10) was greater than the total number of national party donations any of his house primary opponents received during the duration of the primary. The shift toward Buck by national party donors is important as it signals that the national parties are still able to marshal important resource networks behind their chosen candidates and are not simply falling in line behind the presumptive nominee. The national party had no fear of losing the 4th district in the general election, and would have been well represented by any of Buck’s 4th district opponents. If anything, his opponents had less electoral baggage and weren’t subject to the criticisms of the switching “back room deal” (Fasano 2014). But

in exchange for assisting their preferred Senate contest, the party was willing to expend it's scares resources – campaign donations and endorsements – to help nominate Buck.

3.3.5 Party Capture and the Formal Powers of Local Organizations

It could be tempting to view these as instances in which networks of support had little sway over the outcome of the nominations. Love's ability to win the nomination in Utah could have simply come from her abilities to persuade delegates. Watson Coleman's charm could have allowed her to win over the Union County committee. Comstock's talents as a politician and fundraiser could have convinced the formal party to get behind her. These could easily be viewed as textbook examples of the candidate-centered parties that are “maintained, used or abused, reformed or ignored” when doing so furthers the goals of politicians and ambitious office-seekers (Aldrich 1995 p.4; see Schwartz 1989). However, when the formal party holds such significant influence over the process, it provides ample incentive to seek control over that party’s formal apparatus. When these organized interests gain sufficient control to use the party’s levers of power to their own advantage, the parties are essentially “captured” by the network. Two noteworthy examples of party capture – the trade unions in the Democratic Party in southern New Jersey and the Tea Party in the Virginia state Republican Party – factored heavily into nomination contests in those states and suggest that even in these states with formal party powers, the networks of supporters behind the party are critical.

3.3.5.1 An Electrician with a Tie

Within moments of Representative Rob Andrew’s retirement announcement, State Senator Donald Norcross announced his own intentions to seek the Democratic nomination for the first district of New Jersey with the endorsement of dozens of local, county, and state officials, including Senators Bob Menendez and Corey Booker, Congressmen Pallone, Andrews, Sires, Pascrell, Holt, and Payne – the entirety of the state’s federal Democratic delegation (PolitickerNJ 2014). This overwhelming show of support was in no small part driven by

George Norcross, the undisputed boss of South Jersey's Democratic Party. To describe his influence, one *Republican* operative confessed

"People joke around about Hague, and some of the other classic New Jersey Bosses, that everyone says during his time period in Hudson County, Hague was the boss of all bosses, ya know, you see Boardwalk Empire, and that's based on a true character...but George [Norcross] probably is the best and the greatest one of all time. He's taken it to a level those guys never could have dreamed it could go. And I'm not talking about illegal stuff, just how his power, his strength, getting stuff done, and also just the money...the money he raises is beyond anything anyone in Jersey has ever seen...he's impossible to beat, and when he's personally involved like this [referring to his brother's Congressional campaign], I *truly mean impossible* to beat" (POG 2014).

A piece in *Philadelphia Magazine* described the reach of his influence:

"Norcross holds unshakable influence over offices from the mayor of Collingswood to the Camden County freeholders to the state senate. Within New Jersey, he boasts true omnipotence – his alliances with North Jersey Democrats are so strong that no governor can ignore his wants, and he is second only to Governor Chris Christie in terms of influence" (Volk 2013).

According to a senior political consultant for the Camden County Democratic party, the political influence of the Norcross family is not limited to George "Donald is a player in his own right." In a much more behind the scenes fashion, Donald Norcross has been a crucial player in merging the South Jersey labor movement and the Democratic Party into a single force. "Donald is the union movement," and as a result of his efforts and organizing "the union movement and the Democratic Party are now often one and the same" (POG 2014).

Donald Norcross began his professional career as a union electrician. He would rise through the ranks and go on to serve as the president of the South New Jersey Branch of the AFL-CIO's Central Labor Council, and has spent the last 15 years working for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), most recently serving as the assistant business manager of IBEW Local 351. Norcross is most known for his work bridging the efforts of public service charities and union organizations.

One program that Norcross was instrumental in bringing to New Jersey was the 2-1-1 initiative – a state program to help connect the public with government and private resource services. Norcross’s work on this program established beneficial relationships between the trade unions, the charitable organizations, and the community, while also building both his reputation and network of supporters and allies.

Potential candidates frequently sought his advice when seeking office and members of the legislature would seek his advice when considering legislation. Through these interactions, Norcross realized that too few members of the unions were represented in local planning boards, public works commissions, and county offices, and began recruiting members of the trade unions to seek these offices. “He would sit at a diner all day making his pitch to potential candidates,” and through the years brought enough trade union members into the process to make them *the* central players in the Democratic party (POG 2014).

One such candidate Norcross recruited was his family friend and member of the local ironworkers union, Stephen Sweeney, who Norcross convinced and supported in his run for the Gloucester County Board of Freeholders. Now the President of the New Jersey Senate, Sweeney is one of the most influential policy makers in the Garden State. His first run for the State Senate was the most expensive state legislative race in New Jersey history, costing nearly \$2.4 million (Smith 2007). Much of Sweeney’s fundraising strength and his eventual victory are often attributed to George Norcross’s political machine, but it was Donald behind the scenes pushing trade union workers to run for office that brought Sweeney into the electoral arena.

Donald and George’s work built the unions into the most influential group in New Jersey Democratic politics. Donald forced labor to the center of the Democratic party by directly recruiting and supporting union members and labor supporters pursuing office, and George used his fundraising strength to make sure that these candidates were successful. For example: “[George Norcross] raised \$2 million, for the 2003 state senate race that installed unknown challenger [and police union member] Fred Madden over Republican incumbent George Geist” in the most expensive state legislative race in Jersey history (Volk 2013).

When State Assembly Speaker Joe Roberts decided to retire, he approached Donald Norcross, so often the recruiter, and convinced him to run for the seat in the Assembly. Roberts was renominated for the office in the primary, but then announced that he would not seek re-election in the general election. This allowed the party organization to select a replacement candidate for the general election. Considering the number of members of the committee that Norcross had originally recruited to get involved, and the influence his brother's fundraising ability still had over the organization, Donald getting on the ballot was no more difficult than signaling that he was interested in the position. In the same general election, 5th district State Senator Dana Reed was elected Mayor of Camden, creating another vacancy, which the party then decided to fill with...Donald Norcross.

Five years later, at his congressional campaign launch, Norcross declared that he was "an electrician with a tie," running "because South Jersey needs to continue to have an effective advocate" in Washington (Arco 2014). His close ties with the labor movement were on full display. The Senate President Sweeney was on hand to endorse Norcross at the announcement event. "Donald is a true champion of the people, [and] one of us," said Sweeney. "I cant believe an ironworker is saying such nice things about an electrician," he joked as a childhood friend of the Norcross family. Sweeney went on to say, "but it's time we send a union electrician to Washington" (Caffrey 2014).

While Logan Township Mayor Frank Minor competed in the primary, Norcross won the Camden County party endorsement, the support of dozens of local elected official, the Democratic nomination with five times as many votes as his nearest opponent, and the general election with ease. It is difficult to disaggregate the impact of the party line from the support of the larger Norcross operation, but these forces are far from independent. The support of the Norcross machine secured him the support of the formal party. When I asked someone familiar the Camden County endorsement how they decided to endorse Norcross, he just looked over his glasses and laughed. Through years of organizing union candidates, the Norcross family had created an unbeatable party organization in which "Democrat" and "Union" were essentially synonymous.

3.3.5.2 The Most Powerful Man You've Never Heard Of

Russ Moulton, the leader of the grassroots conservative wing of the Virginia Republican Party – the Conservative Fellowship – has been described as “the most powerful man in Virginia you’ve never heard of” (Martin 2015). Moulton

“shares his beliefs with his conservative network through e-mail, chiding such Republicans as [former] House of Delegates Speaker William J. Howell for supporting a tax increase that ‘destroyed our brand.’ In one e-mail, he warned legislators they’d be ‘Cantor’d!’ if they didn’t oppose Virginia’s same-sex marriage law...The way to ‘save our Republic,’ he wrote, is ‘conservatives organizing precinct-by-precinct, and seat-by-seat.’” (Schwartzman 2015).

Moulton was instrumental in organizing the Tea Party takeover of the Virginia Republican Party. During the 2009 gubernatorial primary, Lt. Governor Bill Bolling agreed to support the establishment candidate Bob McDonnell’s candidacy under the condition that he supported Bolling to replace him in 2013. Moulton, however, preferred a more conservative alternative to Bolling. Moulton used this local activist strategy to seize control of the Virginia Republican Party. He and his network supported thirteen candidates to run for internal party elections across the state. Twelve of these “conservative grass-roots and tea party activists” candidates won against candidates from the “establishment wing,” giving Moulton’s Fellowship a majority of seats on the state committee (Nolan 2016).

A state primary is organized and run by state government as with most other states. Virginia, however, does not have voter party registration, and concerns about Democrats participating in Republican primaries and the lack of control for party officials causes party leaders to often look elsewhere. A party canvass, or a “firehouse” primary, is a private primary run by the party in which any voter who signs a statement of intent to vote Republican can participate. A mass meeting is similar to a traditional convention, but it is open to anyone in the district who wishes to attend – these are often avoided because of the logistical difficulties. Finally, parties can opt to use political conventions in which each county and municipality elects and sends delegates to a state convention to choose nominees.

Moulton hoped to use this new control over the party organization to conduct conventions rather than primaries for choosing Republican nominees. Conventions tend to “attract the party’s most ardent conservatives,” where a “primary, because it is extended and draws a larger electorate including Democrats, Republicans and independents – favors well-financed establishment candidates” (Schwartzman 2015). Moulton’s new Fellowship majority reversed the decision to hold a gubernatorial primary – disadvantaging Bolling who hoped to mirror McDonnell’s electoral strategy. Instead, Ken Cuccinelli, a close Moulton ally, won the Republican nomination at the party’s convention.

Cuccinelli’s convention win and general election loss was taken by establishment Republicans as evidence that the convention strategy was not in the party’s best interest. Using Moulton’s own playbook against him, the more establishment faction of the party regained a one seat majority on the state committee in 2016. By a 41-40 vote, “the GOP’s State Central Committee effectively upended a compromise agreement reached last year by factions within the state party that called for a primary in the 2016 race for president to be followed by a nominating convention for statewide offices in 2017” and “voted to select their 2017 statewide candidates in a primary rather than at a convention” (Nolan 2016).

These dynamics are currently playing out in Virginia’s 6th congressional district. After Eric Cantor’s surprising 2014 primary defeat, establishment candidates became increasingly hesitant to put their electoral fate in the hands of primary voters. The 6th district’s party committee voted to hold a convention to choose the 2018 nominee to replace retiring Rep. Bob Goodlatte, but only knowing that the majority of delegates supported the establishment faction. “That was until the committee decided the nominee would be chosen by a plurality of the vote rather than a majority,” which the establishment candidate, Ben Cline, complained was an attempt “to rig the convention to help their chosen candidate because they do not believe their candidate of choice is strong enough to win a majority of delegates under the standard Convention rules” (Leahy 2018). By relaxing the requirement that a candidate be nominated by a majority of delegates, Tea Party supporters hope to put their thumb on the scale for the more conservative candidate, Virginia’s GOP national committeewoman, Cynthia Dunbar.

The amount of influence the method of selecting nominees has over the outcome of particular contests provides organized interests with ample incentive to attempt to control the formal party organizations in Virginia. The Tea Party and establishment factions of the Republican Party have become well aware of this dynamic, and have increasingly taken to competing in internal party elections to help control the levers of party power. While the particular faction in control has varied from cycle to cycle lately, this has not stopped ideologically motivated networks of supporters from “capturing” the parties to further their goals.

3.4 Candidate-Centered Informal Party Networks

In Masket’s overview of five party networks in California, he noted that “officeholders...are often the builders of and top players in [informal party organizations]...They provide much of the effort to forge alliance with other officeholders and to get their own proteges elected” (2009, p. 129). We observed a similar dynamic in some 2014 primary races, with regional elected officials playing central roles in the recruitment, dissuasion, and support of candidates in primary elections. In Michigan’s 4th district, Bill Schuette’s political network was seen as critical to overcoming the wide name recognition and self-fundraising abilities of an outsider candidate, while in North Carolina’s 12th district, the atrophy of Charlotte’s Democratic establishment allowed for an outsider candidate to succeed in a crowded field.

3.4.1 Bill Schuette’s ‘Midland Team’

Bill Schuette has been a major player in Michigan Republican politics for the past thirty-five years. First elected to Congress in 1984 at the age of 31, he served three terms before unsuccessfully challenging incumbent Democrat, Carl Levin, in the 1990 Senate election. Fellow Republican and then-Governor John Engler then appointed Schuette to head the Michigan Department of Agriculture, where he served until running for the Michigan State Senate in 1994, where he served until 2003. From here he was elected to the Michigan 4th District Court of Appeals, until he was chosen by the Michigan Republican convention as

their nominee for state Attorney General in 2010. When he sought re-election to the position in 2014, he had represented some portion of Michigan's current 4th congressional district continuously for nearly 30 years.

When Schuette decided to challenge Levin for the Senate seat in 1990, he encouraged Dave Camp to run to replace him in Congress. Before serving as Schuette's chief of staff, Camp served on the Midland County Board of Canvassers and was a member of the Midland County Republican Committee, and had served one term in the Michigan House of Representatives. In the Republican primary his major opponents consisted of former congressman James Dunn, and former state legislators Alan Cropsey and Richard Allen. Despite trailing Dunn in early polls, Camp won the Republican primary with a plurality of 33%, which sources attributed largely to the support of Schuette. He went on to win the general election easily.

Since 1990, Schuette and Camp have built an impressive grassroots Republican machine based out of their home county of Midland. As one Schuette associate put it:

"The 4th district, from a party stand point, has always been controlled by the alliance of Dave Camp...and Bill Schuette...They have built a strong grassroots operation throughout the district...They know who the activists are, who to put into different places, and who to talk to in order to get things done...they were trusted in the district...if they said this is our guy, then people would say 'if Dave Camp likes him, then he must be the right one'" (POG 2014).

They built this machine slowly over the years by tending to and fostering relationships among Midland County elected Republicans and the major business interests in the district, particularly Dow Chemical. Bill Schuette would hold townhall-style meetings where business leaders, local officials, and activists could come and ask him questions while he poured them coffee. He was a central player in organizing the "4th District Round-up" – an annual dinner hosted by Schuette on behalf of Camp to bring together the various party officials and activists to continue to foster those relationships.

But those we interviewed were quick to point out that this machine was not "like Tammany Hall or anything untoward," simply the bi-product of years of "relationships"

reinforced by cooperation on “many projects for the district.” That said, political consultants “call it a machine, because when it comes to convention politics...if we want the 4th district to be locked up, we get Schuette’s blessing” (POG 2014).

Realizing, as one campaign adviser put it, “the importance of keeping this a Midland seat,” Schuette again took an active role in supporting a Midland County based nominee when Camp decided to retire in 2014. As he described:

“Between Bill [Schuette] and Dave [Camp] there was a sense that it’s nice to have someone from Midland, who knows the concerns of Midland, who will keep an eye out for Midland, who’s going to make sure that Midland’s best interests are looked after first and foremost, because that’s the hometown team.

We want someone who is going to make sure that Midland gets its fair share, whether that is highway funds, new exchanges, pilot projects to fix infrastructure, maybe tax changes. [Who will consider] what that will do to the biggest employer in town ...if Dow sneezes, Midland County catches a cold” (*ibid.*).

The obvious choice was John Moolenaar, the state senator representing a large chunk of the district and a former Dow Chemical Company chemist. Moolenaar had been a part of the “Midland Team” for many years.

“Politically, the 4th district is a tight district. Everybody knows everybody. And Bill Schuette was friends with everybody. Dave Camp was friends with everybody. [John] Moolenaar was friends with everybody. So there was a built in network that he could tap into...

We all knew Moolenaar, because he had a long history. He had been state rep. He had been state senator. He was a longtime activist in the party. My wife knew John going back to the Headlee [gubernatorial] campaign going back to 1982. What’s that like 35 years we’ve known John? John was just a known quantity” (*ibid.*).

But Schuette and Moolenaar had to overcome one obstacle between them and the nomination: the self-financing former Ross Education CEO, Paul Mitchell. While Mitchell had no elected experience, it would have been difficult if not impossible to compete with Mitchell on the airwaves given the \$3.5 million dollars he loaned his campaign. And this disadvantage

kept Moolenaar as the underdog for the bulk of the campaign – early public polling had Paul Mitchell at 50% to Moolenaar’s 23% (Roelofs 2014). So

“they got a bus, some sort of vehicle or RV...and they hit all the high points, the bars, restaurants, attractions in the 4th district. Bill knows the district like the back of his hand...he’s represented it by and large his whole life, whether as a Congressman, or a state senator, certainly as a judge, and now as Attorney General he has the whole state as part of his portfolio...he knows the 4th district backwards and forwards, all the coffee shops and gathering spots where people get together to talk about politics...and that’s where you want to take your candidate...like Don’s in Mt. Pleasant and Pizza Sam’s and Charlene’s in Midland...each community has one of these places, and that’s what Bill was very good at...”

“Moolenaar did not have the money that his primary opponent did. We needed to counteract that with something else. Bill [Schuette] felt that we could have a better ground game, a more localized ground game, with more local support for John [Moolenaar]...John and Bill had more long standing relationships in the community...so we could better capitalize on that and go to these local communities...” (POG 2014).

This description may falsely convey an image of some sort of shoe-string operation. Between independent expenditures made on Moolenaar’s behalf and the expenditures of his own campaign, over \$1 million dollars went toward securing him the nomination. Importantly, most of this money came from the “Midland Team” network. Of those itemized contributions made to Moolenaar during the primary, more than 52% (253/489) had previously contributed to one of Bill Schuette’s campaigns (Bonica 2015, MI SOS 2018). 36% (174/489) of these donors had contributed to Schuette *before* he was elected Attorney General. And about 10% (45/489) had been consistently active in the network back to David Camp’s 1990 primary campaign, including Dow Chemical Presidents Paul Oreffice and Macauley Whiting, The Michigan Farm Bureau, Midland Cogeneration Venture CEO Rodney Boulanger, the Narton Corporation Chairman Norman Rautiola, Midland County GOP Chair Judy Rapanos, and of course, Bill Schuette.

It was Schuette’s network that allowed Moolenaar to overcome his financial disadvantages and win the primary. By tapping into this network, Moolenaar had access to endorse-

ments, campaign contributions, and a grassroots network of supporters that allowed him to compete with Paul Mitchell. Initially down in the polls and considerably outspent, it would be a mistake to conclude that this result was preordained, or that this network was simply falling in line behind the eventual nominee. It was the network marshaling powerful resources behind their candidate that allowed Moolenaar to win the nomination.

3.4.2 Charlotte's Empty Bench

Politician-centered networks also featured prominently in Democratic nominations, but the most informative example of their influence came in the form of a network's failure. Through a series of retirements and federal appointments, the bench of African-American politicians in Charlotte, North Carolina emptied too quickly for new leadership to emerge. As a result, they lacked the structure necessary coalesce around one candidate, which allowed a candidate from outside the city, Alma Adams of Greensboro, to take the seat.

On January 17, 2014, Charlotte gathered to mourn the loss of civil rights icon, Franklin McCain. McCain had been one of the four North Carolina A & T students who staged the famous sit-in at a whites-only lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina (Morrill 2014). Sadly, this was the second time in recent months that Charlotte had come together to bury one of its heroes. Only four months prior, the community lost Julius Chambers, a civil rights lawyer instrumental in many of the Supreme Court victories surrounding desegregation, school busing, and employment discrimination. Sitting in the pews for the service sat his numerous proteges and partners: Former Charlotte Mayor Harvey Gant, prominent civil rights James Ferguson, Former Representative and FHFA Director Mel Watt, Former Mayor and Current U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx, and city councilman James Mitchell.

All of these men stood as monumental figures in their own right. Mayor Gant was the first African-American mayor of Charlotte, ran for the Senate twice in campaigns against Jesse Helms, and serves as a “father figure” to both the Democratic establishment and the city at large (POG 2014). His Senate campaigns, some of the earliest competitive state

wide races made by an African-American candidate, would inspire countless young African Americans to pursue careers in public service and elected office, including a then Harvard law student, Barack Obama. James Ferguson, a partner with Julius Chambers at the prominent law firm Ferguson, Chambers, and Sumter, had a reputation both in the Charlotte and legal communities second to none. Among their more illustrious proteges, Representative Mel Watt, or “Mel, just Mel,” as he’s known in the district, was the first congressman to represent the newly created district and developed such a reputation for gravitas and leadership that many people I interviewed referred to him simply as “the man.” Anthony Foxx had distinguished himself during his tenure on the city council and as mayor as a rising Democratic star, and was widely viewed as the heir-apparent to replace Watt were he to retire or seek another office.

While activist networks in most congressional districts are often small and tightly knit communities, in North Carolina’s 12th district, political power remained in the hands of individuals with deeply personal connections. Watt and Ferguson worked at the same law firm, and Watt and Gantt were next-door neighbors. All three were close family friends. Anthony Foxx’s grandfather was Gantt’s political mentor, and was himself almost an “adoptive son” of Mel Watt. From the mayor’s office to Congress, from city council to planning the 2012 DNC convention, Democratic politics in Charlotte was a family affair. As Jim Morrill (2012), the long-time political reporter for *The Charlotte Observer*, writes:

‘Like Gantt, Ferguson and Watt had been part of a new generation of black professionals in Charlotte. The three became good friends. So did their kids. Watt and Gantt even lived side by side...Sometimes the historical continuum ran through their kitchens...Their kids hung out at each other’s homes. They went to good colleges. They played tennis on the backyard court Gantt and Watt shared...And since elementary school the kids counted in their group a friend named Anthony Foxx, whose grandfather, James Foxx, had been Gantt’s own political mentor...Anthony Foxx would go on to the city council in 2005. Two years later he confided to Gantt that he wanted to run for mayor. And when he did in 2009, it was in Gantt’s living room that he sought advice. ‘Harvey blazed a trail for a lot of people including me,’ Foxx says. ‘The great advantage I have...that he didn’t have is I have him’.”

The first generation of African-American political leaders helped revitalized Charlotte,

and North Carolina more generally, into a region rich in political and economic energy. They broke down many of the racial barriers and built up a legal community to provide starts for many African-American lawyers and public servants – Gantt, Watt, and Foxx among the most illustrious examples. Given how few African Americans are elected to statewide office, a congressional seats and mayorships are often considered the “crown jewels” for black politicians. One House Democrat confided that “[b]efore Barack Obama, if you were elected to Congress, it was like being a king, African-Americans weren’t elected as senator or governor. So you had to be mayor or a [House] member. That was the pinnacle of power” (Bresnahan 2014). From these position of influence, Gantt and Watt held tremendous influence over Democratic politics in the region.

But by early 2014, however, this second generation had begun taking a step back from the city it helped build. Mayor Gantt has increasingly taken a less active role in politics, and his influence was less pronounced – his endorsed candidate, James Mitchell, lost the primary for mayor just the year before. Mel Watt, the only congressman the 12th district has ever known, and the “reigning king” of Charlotte for the past 20 years, was nominated by President Obama to serve as the Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency. His “heir apparent,” the individual most assumed would run for Watt’s seat upon his retirement, Mayor Anthony Foxx, was also nominated by the Obama Administration to serve as his Secretary of Transportation. With these two appointments in particular, Charlotte and the 12th Congressional District, lost the bulk of its political leadership, creating a vacuum in the political hierarchy of the region that the next generation of leaders was eager to fill. As one local official noted:

“For years and years you’ve had a certain group that are known to be the power players...but that’s changing...kid’s today don’t know who Julius Chambers is...it wasn’t passed on to the next generation, and so now there is a generational gap in that leadership (POG 2014).”

Without the guiding hand of these political leaders, there was nothing short of a free-for-all for the Democratic nomination. Seven Democrats filed to run for the open seat, four of whom hailed from Charlotte. This does not take into consideration the four or five other

candidates who had publicly explored making a run for the office. Two candidates vying for the seat, Curtis Osborne and Rajive Patel, were not considered “serious candidates” by anyone interviewed, but the remaining five all had reason to believe they could be the next Mel Watt.

In a crowded field of five credible candidates, three came from the Charlotte: George Battle, Malcolm Graham, and James Mitchell. Formerly associate general counsel for Carolinas Healthcare System, Battle was currently serving as the general counsel for the Charlotte Mecklenburg School Board when he announced his candidacy. Having never been elected to prior office, Battle positioned himself to run as an outsider with experience in education – an issue every interviewee noted would be particularly important in this race. Battle’s greatest strength came from the name recognition he enjoyed courtesy of his father. As the Bishop of the AME Zion church, George Battle, Jr. was very well known throughout the district.

The initial frontrunner from the Charlotte area was State Senator Malcolm Graham. Of all the officeholders seeking the 12th district nomination, Graham’s district encompassed the largest portion of the 12th district, and included the large financial sector in uptown Charlotte. He was often described as “more moderate,” a “corporate Democrat” with a track record of advocating for Charlotte’s larger employers. The only publicly released poll found Graham to be the early lead with 31%, with Adams nine points behind (PPP 2013).

Former City Council Member and Mayoral Candidate James Mitchell was the last of the “competitive” candidates to enter the race. Ironically, it was his late entry into the previous mayoral primary that was summarily judged to be the cause of his narrow defeat against Patrick Cannon, and it was his late entry into the race for the 12th district nomination that handicapped him in this contest as well. “There just wasn’t room for another Charlotte candidate at that point,” one potential candidate told us. Besides his name recognition and association with Gantt, Mitchell had few other forces working in his direction.

In North Carolina, if no candidate receives 40% of the vote in a primary, the two top candidates then compete in a run-off election. All those believed that if the race went to a run-off that the Charlotte candidate would be able to win the race against the outsider.

But without Foxx, the fractured city Democratic structure lacked an obvious candidate to rally around, and without Gantt or Watt taking a central role in the nomination, they lacked any source of coordination. As a result, all three of these candidates competed among themselves for the same 50% of the vote that came from Charlotte, and gave an opening for a non-Charlottean.

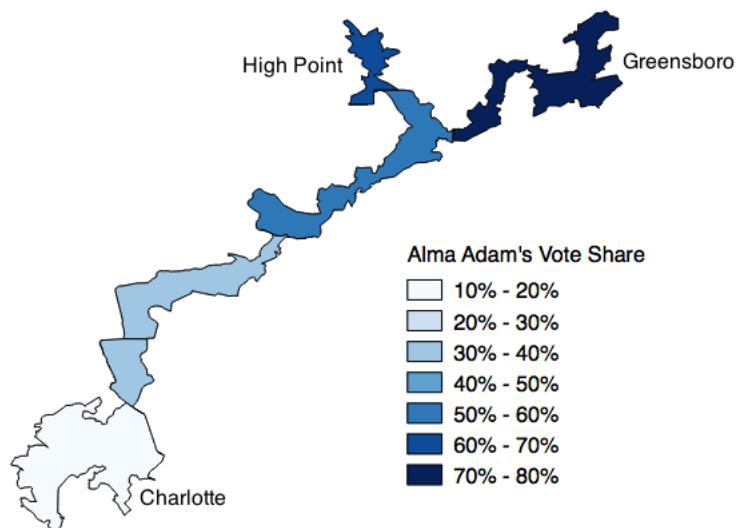
State Representative Alma Adams of Greensboro had represented one of the northern branches of the 12th district for twenty years and had served as the chair of the North Carolina Legislative Black Caucus since 2008. Prior to her election to the state house, Adams served one term on the Greensboro City School Board and four terms on the Greensboro City Council. When asked as to the reputation Adams has developed in Raleigh, most politicos point to her background as an art teacher and her legislative track record focusing on education and issues affecting teachers. As the only woman in the race, EMILY's List was quick to support her campaign, and conducted a large independent expenditure campaign on her behalf.

Marcus Brandon was the other candidate running from outside of Charlotte. Representing an area including parts of High Point in the State Legislature, Brandon has developed a reputation as an independent thinker, and as the candidate least likely to toe the party line. Having been elected to the state house only in 2010, Brandon has only served in the minority, but has been willing to work with Republicans on some pieces of legislation, including school vouchers. As the only openly gay member of the North Carolina state legislature, Brandon also had the endorsement of national LGBT advocacy groups, such as the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund. Some individuals we spoke to worried that even in this heavily Democratic district, Brandon's sexuality could hinder his campaign – the district voted narrowly in favor of the controversial Amendment 1 in 2012, which prohibited the state from recognizing same-sex marriages.

In the end, Adams was able to eke out a 44% plurality by running up large margins outside of Mecklenberg County while the four Charlotte candidates split the most populous

county.⁷ The county level results for this contest can be seen in Figure 3.5. Almost every subject we spoke with mentioned how the divided field of candidates was critical in allowing a candidate from outside the city to win. Not only did the Charlotte candidates outperform Adams (albeit narrowly, with 45% of the vote), the negative campaigning among the Charlotte candidates was also blamed for the relative decrease in turnout in Charlotte. For example, Charlotte's Mecklenberg County constituted 50% of the Democratic vote in the 2012 general election, but only 45% of the vote in the 2014 primary. Had Charlotte still had the party infrastructure that would have allowed for coalescing behind a single candidate, it is highly unlikely that Alma Adams would have been elected to Congress in 2014.

Figure 3.5: North Carolina's 12th District Democrat Primary Results



Note: Each county is shaded by Adam's vote share in the county.

⁷This was undoubtedly aided by the nearly \$250,000 in independent expenditure mailing's conducted by EMILY's List and Progressive KICK, but for a clearer example of EMILY's List network at work, see the MI-14 Democratic Primary case study in section 2.3.

3.5 National Interest Groups

National interest groups played a major role in numerous nomination contests in the 2014 cycle. With the formal party organization reserving its resources for competitive seats and their reticence to appear heavy handed in local contests, national interest groups often find open-seat primaries as prime opportunities to elect an ally to Congress. In Michigan's 14th district, EMILY's List strategically targeted voters with massive independent expenditures and helped staff Brenda Lawrence's campaign, which allowed her to overcome the local political machine and win the nomination. In North Carolina's 7th district, the overwhelming support of the Chamber of Commerce allowed David Rouzer to overcome the controversial Tea Party-esque Woody White in an area with little Republican organization.

3.5.1 EMILY's List

The three R's of Michigan's 14th district Democratic primary were reapportionment, redistricting, and retirement. Due to continued population loss, Michigan lost another congressional seat in the 2010 reapportionment, continuing a pattern of seat loss started in 1980. Having gained control of the legislature and the governor's mansion in 2010, Republicans designed the new map to cut one Democratic seat from the Detroit metropolitan area. This in turn placed three incumbents, John Conyers, Hansen Clark, and Gary Peters, in a position to decide between two districts. Neither Clark nor Hansen found a viable path to nomination in challenging Conyers, so both competed in the newly drawn 14th district. However, the newly borders included a sizable portion of suburban Oakland county, which encouraged Brenda Lawrence, mayor of Southfield, to also seek the nomination.

Gary Peters was seen as the logical choice for Democrats to nominate for Governor in 2014 to challenge Republican incumbent Rick Snyder. In order to keep him a strong, viable candidate, the unions, a major player in Michigan Democratic politics, felt it necessary to keep Peters in Congress: A congressman challenging an incumbent governor was better than a former congressman challenging an incumbent governor (POG 2014). Their efforts paid off and Peters beat Hansen 47% to 35% with Brenda Lawrence coming in a distant third.

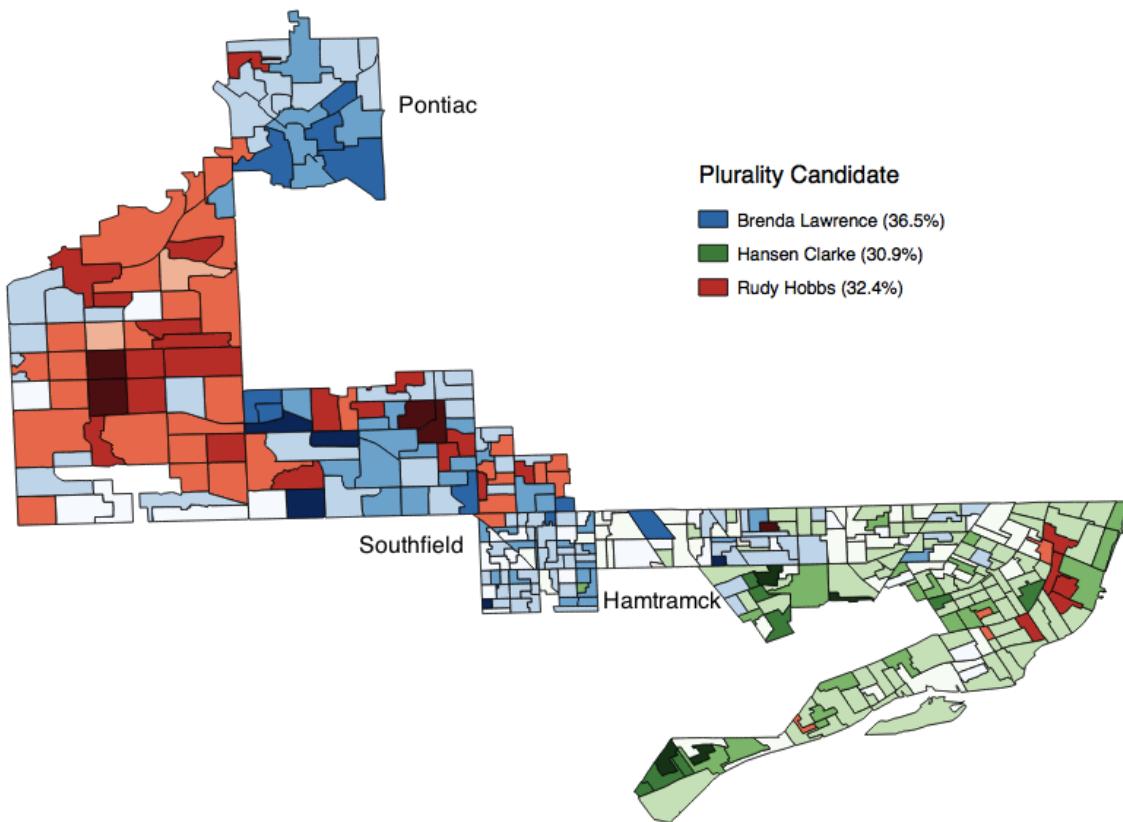
As predicted, Peters sought statewide office in the following election (although it ended up being the less challenging contest of the open Senate seat as a result of Carl Levin’s retirement), opening the 14th district once again. In many ways, the 2014 Democratic primary was a replay of 2012. Hansen Clarke and Brenda Lawrence both sought the nomination once again. Rudy Hobbs, a former employee of Rep. Sander Levin and ally of Gary Peters, took up the mantel as the “establishment” replacement.

Hansen Clarke was in many ways an “accidental” incumbent – his nomination and election to the 13th district in 2010 was more related to his opponent’s, Congresswoman’s Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick, political scandal involving her son, Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick. One insider noted that whatever candidate had been “crazy” enough to challenge Kilpatrick’s safe seat would have lucked into the nomination following the scandal. While he had a small cadre of loyal followers, he lacked institutional connections to the “Democratic stakeholders” and the organizational support necessary to compete in a truly contested primary (POG 2014). His previous tenure as a Congressman from 2011 – 2013 gave him access to some national donors, but he was vastly outspent by his opponents. Those we spoke with often noted that the only element making him competitive was his wide name recognition from his previous runs for office and that geographically, he was the only candidate from the Detroit half of the district. No one we spoke with was surprised Clarke failed to win the nomination in 2014. In fact, the only surprise was how close his 3rd place finish was.

Rudy Hobbs was seen as the one to beat throughout much of the campaign. He was the first candidate to declare his candidacy, and quickly secured the support of Congressman Sander Levin’s political organization, which came with “almost all of the institutional support” from the Michigan “Democratic party stakeholders” (POG 2014). In addition to the \$225,000 independent expenditure campaign conducted on his behalf by the Levin-affiliated GOALPAC, this support gained him the endorsements of former Governor Jennifer Granholm, former Lt. Governor John Cherry, and outgoing Senator Carl Levin, in addition to the almost unanimous support of the labor community. One insider noted that “run of the mill Democrats will usually defer to the endorsements of the unions,” where another mentioned that when it came to the unions’ endorsements, “Democrats tend to be more sheep

than goats, more likely to follow than lead.” Knowing this, the union’s would often support their candidates with large, early shows of support in order to “box out other candidates,” or “starve out the competition” (*ibid.*).

Figure 3.6: Michigan’s 14th District Democratic Primary Results



Note: Each precinct is shaded in proportion to the size of each candidate’s plurality. Paler precincts are just plurality winners, whereas the darkest of each color represent greater than majority support.

Where Rudy Hobbs had help from the Levin Democratic “establishment,” Brenda Lawrence drew her local base of support from “people that she had developed a relationship with during her [mayoralty] who weren’t concerned about getting out in front of the unions.” Most prominently, Lawrence was supported by a network of women mayors, many of whom her campaign team had helped elect and re-elect. Deirdre Waterman, mayor of Pontiac, Marian McClellan, mayor of Oak Park, Karen Majewski, mayor of Hamtramck, and Brenda

Jones, president of the Detroit City Council, were all early, vocal supporters of Lawrence in the primary. This network was connected by a close group of campaign advisors, most notably, Christine Jensen, who served as the campaign manager for Lawrence, Waterman, McClellan, and as a political advisor to Jones. The recent reelection campaigns of these mayors allowed the Lawrence campaign to tap into existing infrastructure and support at the grassroots level. This also allowed the campaign to have a “more local focus, we could run mailers in Pontiac with Deirdre [Waterman] standing with Brenda [Lawrence]” (*ibid.*). While many other factors could explain Lawrence’s success in these areas, it was in Pontiac, Southfield, and Hamtramck that she ran ahead of her opponents, as demonstrated in Figure 3.6.

This local support was supplemented by national support from EMILY’s List. In addition to nearly \$300,000 dollars in independent expenditures on her behalf, EMILY’s List donors – those donors who contributed to both Lawrence’s campaign and EMILY’s List – contributed nearly \$70,000 directly to her campaign and were roughly 9% of her primary donors overall (Bonica 2015). With Hobbs and Lawrence both representing the Oakland County portion of the district, their relative performance in the Detroit/Wayne County portion of the district was particularly crucial. Even though Hobbs and Lawrence both had independent expenditure mail campaigns conducted on their behalf, insiders noted that EMILY’s List was more strategic with their advertisements. They focused more heavily on criticizing Clarke in Wayne County, knowing that was his base of support, and mailed the bulk of their literature to coincide with the period in which absentee voters were receiving their vote-by-mail ballots. One source mentioned that in comparison to union canvassers, who were active only out of professional obligations, the EMILY’s List staff were more well-trained and productive than the competition. When questioned as to how EMILY’s List helped Lawrence, another source noted:

“EMILY’s list mailing being so heavy and seemed to have come so early. Rudy Hobbs had mailings, [but they] didn’t seem to happen until most absentee ballots had been out for two weeks, a week or two. So there was a gap that helped [Lawrence]” (POG 2014).

Table 3.2: County Results in Michigan’s 14th District Democratic Primary

Wayne County	Total Votes	%	Election Day	Absentee
Hansen Clarke	16,743	40.50	9,198	7,545
Burgess Foster	429	1.04	259	170
Rudy Hobbs	11,025	26.67	8,108	2,917
Brenda Lawrence	12,988	31.41	7,764	5,224
Oakland County	Total Votes	%	Election Day	Absentee
Hansen Clarke	6,123	18.61	3,663	2,460
Burgess Foster	402	1.02	237	165
Rudy Hobbs	12,971	39.43	8,878	4,093
Brenda Lawrence	13,399	40.73	8,784	4,615

Table 3.2 provides the county level results disaggregated by election day and absentee voting. While Hobbs edged Lawrence by a few hundred votes on election day, Lawrence’s eventual 2,391 winning vote margin came entirely from her 2,829 lead in absentee votes, and almost all of that came from Wayne County.

In a race as close as this primary, it is easy to justify any individual factor as critical to explaining the outcome. But the fact that the race was close is surprising in and of itself. Running with the reputation of a previous third place finish against a former member of Congress with large name recognition and a frontrunner with the support of the majority of the party establishment, Lawrence was still able to eke out a win. And while EMILY’s List was active in numerous Democratic primaries in 2014, it was in Michigan’s 14th that their efforts were most critical. By supplying Lawrence with a comparable independent expenditure campaign and providing a network of donors for Lawrence, they provided her campaign with the resources needed to overcome the more obvious replacements for Gary Peters. As one Wayne County politico noted:

“EMILY’s List was her saving grace because they poured a ton of money in for media, they poured a ton of money in for literature, and it worked. Without them, she’s not a U.S. Congresswoman” (*ibid.*).

3.5.2 The Chamber of Commerce

The dynamics behind the Republican primary in North Carolina's 7th district began in a similar fashion to the contest in Utah's 4th. In 2012, Democratic Representative Mike McIntyre narrowly bested Republican state senator David Rouzer by less than 700 votes to hold his seat for another term. With Republicans expected to make large gains in the 2014 midterm cycle, Rouzer initially sought a rematch with McIntyre. Most suspect that McIntyre realized he was unlikely to win reelection and announced his retirement in January of 2014. Prior to the announcement of his retirement, Rouzer was considered the hands-down favorite for renomination. Closely aligned with the more "establishment," business-oriented faction of the Republican party, Rouzer had the early support of the NRCC, who placed him "On the Radar" in December 2013 and following McIntyre's retirement up-graded him to their "Young Guns" program (Livingston 2013; NRCC 2014).

The lure of an open-seat contest, however, kept Rouzer from walking to the nomination. Chairman of the New Hanover County Commission, Woody White, had filed to run for the seat a few days before the retirement, and publicly declared his campaign following McIntyre's announcement (Hilburn 2014). He ran his campaign as the more conservative candidate in the race, running with the support of former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee (Isenstadt 2014). This, according to some insiders, raised concerns among the more "establishment" forces in the party:

"After the 2012 election, the U.S. Chamber identified that in many Republican primaries the strongest candidate for the general was not surviving [because]... of the things the Republican candidate was saying, because of the Republican candidate's background...so the U.S. Chamber said 'we need to get involved in the primaries'" (POG 2014).

Woody White was in many ways the type of candidate that worried the Chamber. A political strategist for the U.S. Chamber, Scott Reed, noted that the Chamber will now "look at everything they say...If you say something stupid, we're not going to support you" (Rauch and La Raja 2017). As law student, Woody White testified to many controversial beliefs

toward homosexuals. When asked whether he believed homosexuals should be treated as criminals before a Nebraska legislative committee, White said, “I come from a state in the South where it is still a crime to engage in sodomy. I would, as a personal choice, I would say, yes” (WECT 2014).

Given how likely the district was to switch to the Republicans in the fall, however, his occupation as a trial lawyer likely proved more salient than his positioning on social issues. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and most Republicans had long stood in conflict with the Association of Trial Lawyers of America (see Segal 1997).

“We have this interesting dynamic emerging in our politics in North Carolina where we have this cohort of Republican trial lawyers...and we’ve had to grapple with the historic antagonism between the trial lawyers and the business community...but Republican trial lawyers...are still trial lawyers at the end of the day and still carry that perceived threat to the business community...” (ibid).

Figure 3.7: U.S. Chamber’s Advertisement Against Woody White



This hostility between establishment Republicans and trial lawyers was not unique to North Carolina. In Louisiana, one major donor noted once candidate's viability because "he didn't raise any money from the wrong people...he didn't have any trial lawyers money." Another noted that "prior to 2008, 2009 you *never* saw a plaintiff attorney contributing" to a particular Republican candidate (*ibid.*).

With their new-found dedication to get involved in primaries and their historic animosity toward trial lawyers, the U.S. Chamber needed little persuasion to support Rouzer's primary campaign. They ran a \$300,000 independent expenditure attacking Woody White. Their ad claimed that "the last thing Congress needs is another trial lawyer like Woody White" (Wesleyan Media Project 2014a, see Figure 3.7). The more establishment elements of the Republican Party followed the Chamber's lead. American Action Network, a "center-right" think tank chaired by former Senator Norm Coleman, invested \$50,000 on a radio ad with the same message, while the YG Network, a 501(4)c organization started by former staffers of then-majority leader Eric Cantor (Conradis 2013), spent \$100,000 on mailers and phone calls accusing White of being part of the "lawsuit bonanza that destroys jobs" (Isenstadt 2014).

Most insiders attributed these nationally coordinated efforts as what pushed Rouzer over the edge. While no polls were made publicly available, insiders viewed the race as close, perhaps slightly leaning toward Rouzer, but "the Chamber's ad put the nail in the coffin." Rouzer bested White 53% to 40%, and went on to win the general election with little opposition. This national interest group, in coordination with establishment Republican organizations, was able to provide it's chosen candidate with the resources necessary to win the nomination and eventually take a seat in Congress. In an area with historically less developed formal parties (Mayhew 1986), these groups acted in the primaries not via the party, but individually, as there is little incentive. While Rouzer was definitely an ambitious and talented candidate, it was the support of this network of party actors that set his campaign on a path to success.

3.6 Local Interest Groups

Local interest groups often have access to a range of campaign resources beyond the reach of their national counterparts. In Pennsylvania’s 13th district, local trade unions were able to marshal a massive ground game organization on behalf of underdog Brendan Boyle and held enough sway in the political environment to keep Boyle’s area of the district free from electoral competition, allowing him to handily win the primary. In Louisiana’s 6th district, Lane Grigsby’s network of support – centered around the maritime construction industry in which he made his fortune – allows him to serve as a one-man party, marshaling field clearing and financial resources behind his chosen candidate, Garret Graves.

3.6.1 IBEW Local 98

Pennsylvania Congresswoman Allyson Schwartz began laying the groundwork to challenge incumbent Republican Governor Tom Corbett quietly following her reelection in 2012. By early 2014 four individuals emerged as candidates in the Democratic primary to fill her now open seat. The list of candidates for the nomination was in many ways unsurprising – each candidate coming from commonly recognized interests within the Democratic Party. Valarie Arkoosh, a health care activist, was an early advocate of the Affordable Care Act and the president of the National Physicians Alliance, a progressive health care organization. State Representative Brendan Boyle, elected from the largely blue-collar area of Northeast Philadelphia, ran proudly as the “union candidate.” Daylin Leach, a state senator from suburban Montgomery County, was an unabashed “liberal lion,” was known throughout Pennsylvania for his progressive policy positions, including marriage equality, strict environmental regulations, and expanded abortion access. Former Congresswoman Marjorie Margolies built her campaign around her national star-power derived from her previous tenure in the House and her close relationship with Bill and Hillary Clinton. Given her national connections, name recognition, public polling, and early fundraising dominance, Margolies was considered the frontrunner for the duration of the campaign.

The outcome of the race, however, surprised many political observers. Despite Margolies

front-runner status and wide name recognition, she was unable to carry that momentum over the finish line. Neither were Arkoosh, the candidate who raised the most money, nor Leach, the candidate with the greatest PAC support, able to secure the nomination. Behind in the polls, out-raised and out-spent by his opponents, Boyle won the Democratic primary with 41% of the vote to runner-up Margolies' 27%. The heavy Democratic lean of the district overall comfortably carried Boyle into Congress come November.

How was Boyle able to overcome these disadvantages to become the Democratic nominee? Boyle benefited from the overwhelming support of organized labor. As a campaign staffer summarized, he "had an existing relationship with organized labor, which is very strong in southeast Pennsylvania, and particularly strong in northeast Philly" (POG 2014). Endorsements, campaign donations, mailers, independent expenditures, campaign advisers, canvassers, phone-bank operators, election day door-knockers – all of this and more were marshaled by the Philadelphia unions in support of Boyle's campaign. Five months prior to the primary, Brendan Boyle had already secured over 20 endorsements from major trade unions in the district, and was endorsed by the state legislators most closely affiliated with the labor movement (Boyle for Congress 2014).

Most notably, Boyle was supported by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). With over 5,000 members and an average election cycle budget of 3-4 million dollars, the IBEW is one of the most influential political groups in the state. While an electrical workers union, they also represent line-runners, the mechanical crew at TastyKakes bakery, the broadcasters of all Philadelphia sporting events, and many other trades in Philadelphia.

The IBEW provided numerous key resources to support the Boyle campaign. First, they "push hard" on their membership to vote in every election: According to a high ranking political operative of the union, they can expect nearly 80% turnout among their members even in generally low turnout elections. Second, both union officials and those affiliated with the Boyle campaign spoke to the massive canvassing efforts union volunteers performed for the Boyle campaign. One individual affiliated with the unions described a ground game operation that dwarfed that of Arkoosh, Leach, and Margolies combined. In the month leading up to the primary, the IBEW had 10-20 people each weekday and nearly 50 people

on the weekends making phone calls, knocking on doors, passing out literature, and serving as a central hub for smaller unions to coordinate their own political outreach. On Election Day, the efforts were even more impressive. Around 1,000 union members spent the day making phone calls, knocking on doors, helping individuals get to the polls, passing out literature at polling locations, and canvassing low-turnout areas. He estimated that *every* registered Democrat had their door knocked on at least once by a union canvasser (POG 2014). Verifying these efforts in retrospect is difficult, but while conducting an exit poll on election day, my fellow surveyors and I saw union workers passing out literature near all of the selected polling locations first hand, and some reported seeing vans driving seniors to the polls (see DeMora et al. 2015).

Labor groups also put their financial resources behind Boyle. Building a Better Pennsylvania, a political action committee affiliated with the trade unions of Philadelphia, spent over \$350,000 on independent expenditures on behalf of his campaign, with over 2/3 of that coming from the IBEW (Brennan 2014). The strong support of the dominant IBEW encouraged other regional unions to coordinate behind Boyle. In addition to the \$5,000 direct contribution from the IBEW, nineteen other local unions maxed out in their support, which alone raised \$100,000 for the Boyle campaign.

In addition to these visible efforts, elites interviewed in the lead up to the primary believed that pressure from unions and city party officials kept other candidates from entering the race. Boyle won the endorsement of Rep. Bob Brady, chair of the Philadelphia Democratic Party, which discouraged other candidates from the city from entering the race (Gibson 2013). This provided Boyle with a geographic monopoly over the Philadelphia half of the district. Campaign operatives expressed the importance of keeping candidates like Jonathan Saidel, former Philadelphia City Controller, and state Rep. Mark Cohen out of the race to Boyle's eventual success. In sum, Boyle had the unwavering support of an organized interest group within the larger party network, which provided him with numerous campaign resources beyond the reach of political "self-starters."

This is not to suggest that the other candidates lacked any group support, or were motivated solely by their own ambition for office. Both Arkoosh and Leach had long standing

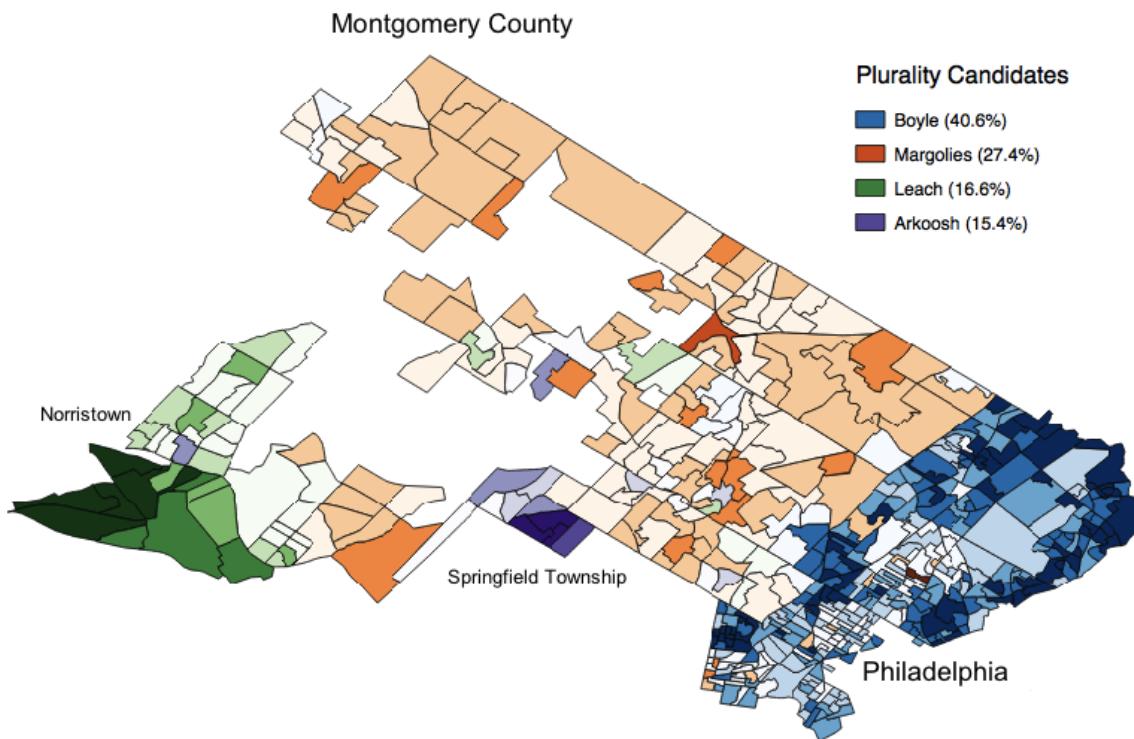
relationships with an existing network of support within the Democratic Party. Arkoosh received the endorsement of many medical organizations including the American Medical Association, and received as much as 75% of her campaign contributions from people working in medical fields (DeMora et al. 2015). Leach received the endorsements of many liberal leaning interest groups like the Progressive Change Campaign Committee. Margolies, while political inactive in recent years, was an early success story for and long time supporter of EMILY's List and maintained strong connections to it's founding members, and her support of the Clinton network brought in numerous large donors (Gibson 2014a) and helped clear some competitors out of the race (Gibson 2014b).

But many big interests within the traditional Democratic coalition sat out of the race. EMILY's List decided not to choose between the two female candidates in the race because both had a long history with the organization. EMILY's List and NARAL Pro-Choice America coordinated a series of independent expenditures against Boyle for his ambiguous position on abortion rights (Field 2014a), but without an endorsed candidate to benefit from their efforts, most political observers in the district felt the efforts were a waste. An individual affiliated with a leading LGBT rights group in Pennsylvania noted that the strong records of all the Montgomery County candidates made issuing an endorsement difficult. Leach, a long-time vocal advocate for pro-choice and progressive LGBT policies, expressed frustration that he didn't have the support of more liberal advocacy groups in the crowded primary. In comparison to the city party organization, the less centralized decision-making process of the Montgomery County Democratic Committee made coordination behind one candidate difficult and any attempt to push a candidate out of the race impossible.

How much impact did Boyle's coalition of support have on the outcome of the race? Boyle dominated the half of the district located in the city of Philadelphia, winning 70% of the vote in the city, while the remaining three candidates divided up Montgomery County, as demonstrated in Figure 3.8. Leach won the precincts in his state senate district near Norristown and Arkoosh won her home of Springfield Township, where Margolies won the remainder of Montgomery County. One really can't tell whether these results were driven by the campaigns and not just voters' preferences for home-town candidates. But even if we

assume that voters reflexively choose the candidate from their area, the benefit to the Boyle campaign came from his geographic monopoly over Philadelphia and the intense mobilization of these supporters, which was the result of union actions discouraging other Philadelphia challengers and turning out voters in the city.

Figure 3.8: Pennsylvania's 13th District Democratic Primary Results



Note: Each precinct is shaded in proportion to the size of each candidate's plurality. Paler precincts are just plurality winners, whereas the darkest of each color represent greater than majority support.

Understanding this predisposition, the unions focused their efforts on the Philadelphia portion of the district, canvassing nearly exclusively in Philadelphia. Using a geographic regression discontinuity model on the turnout of Democratic voters in the 13th district, I find a nearly 3% increase in turnout among those from the district in Philadelphia compared to those in Philadelphia but not in the district, but no difference for those in Montgomery

County.⁸ While it is not possible to parse the impact of the Boyle campaign itself versus the trade unions, given that both organizations agree to the major role of labor in the campaign efforts, it is safe to assume that the canvassing and GOTV efforts of the unions had a tangible impact on voter turnout in pro-Boyle areas, contributing to if not securing his nomination.

3.6.2 Cajun Industries

Lane Grigsby, the founder and former Chairman of Cajun Industries, a construction company engaged in projects involving “oil, gas and energy; refining; chemical processing; power; manufacturing and buildings; governmental infrastructure; alternative energy; emergency preparedness and disaster response; communication; water quality; and more” (Cajun Industries 2018), is one of the most prolific donors and “opinion leaders” in Louisiana Republican politics. He has spent millions of dollars supporting candidates, pushing particular policies, and supporting political and charitable organizations. He conducts his own polling, opposition research, and candidate vetting operations. Journalists at *The Times-Picayune* found that of the 400 biggest campaign donors in Louisiana, Grigsby was third, coming in right after the Democratic Party and right before the Republican Party, bundling at least \$1.3 million between 2009 and 2012 (Zurik 2013). When asked about Grigsby, one campaign fundraiser noted that

“there are certain people in the community, especially in Baton Rouge, that are kind of the main players in politics, they max out their personal donations, they have companies, they max out their PAC donations, they’re the big players. Once they give you the go ahead, they write you the big checks, and then they branch out and tell their employees ‘this is a good guy, you might want to donate to him’” (POG 2014).

In many ways, Grigsby and his construction industry network are a party unto themselves.

U.S. Senator Bill Cassidy’s political career has been greatly helped by Grigsby’s support. Grigsby and his company contributed to his first run for the state Senate, after the incumbent

⁸See §3.6 and Appendix A for a more detail.

ran for Lt. Governor. Grigsby dissuaded Cassidy from running in the special election to replace Republican Congressman Richard Baker. When the Democrat surprisingly won that special election, Grigsby recruited Cassidy to challenge the incumbent, Dan Cazayoux. He had an “ace up his sleeve” to make sure that Republicans took back the seat with Cassidy. While Grigsby helped finance his campaign, he also recruited another Democrat, Michael Jackson, to run as an independent to siphon off Democratic votes (Kraushaar 2008). By his own accounting, he spent \$87,000 on an independent expenditure campaign on Jackson’s behalf. His political network also helped Jackson raise over \$20,000 dollars (Moses 2008). As he explained:

“I can only give \$2,600 as an individual,” but added with a laugh, “my wife can give \$2,600, my son and two daughters can give \$2,600, oh and their spouses can give \$2,600, my grand kids can give \$2,600...I’ve got a company of 2,200 employees, with the top 100 being pretty well paid executives – I can go around saying ‘hello, this is my friend Jackson, he sure could use your support...and your wife’s!’.”

Others we spoke to largely attributed Bill Cassidy’s congressional win to Grisby’s efforts. And when then-Congressman Cassidy was considering challenging Mary Landrieu in the 2014 U.S. Senate contest, it was Grigsby who he called for advice.

Politically, Grigsby is primarily motivated by a desire to limit the influence of unions over business. He expressed disappointment in former Rep. Alexander’s voting in support of Project Labor Agreements during the Hurricane Katrina reconstruction (see McKay 2011). One conservative commentator noted that he was involved in pushing for the merger of the police departments and the sheriff’s office because the sheriff’s office was not unionized, and how he pushed for the abolition of the plumbing certification board as a limitation on trade (POG 2014). He is also active in the charter school movement in Louisiana and has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on electing pro-charter school boardmembers (Sentell 2015). In interviews he noted that a former moderate Democratic Congressman Don Cazayoux’s

“only drawback is the fact that the labor unions gave him three hundred and eighty thousand dollars to run...they own him...the one thing that I’m interested

in is the labor votes. I'm a non-union contractor. I went through right to work with Louisiana and all those wars and...I don't want that to ever come back. And so Cazayoux's only black mark is that he's owned by the labor unions."

Considering himself "very active in the district," it was no surprise that he was an active player in the search for Cassidy's replacement in Louisiana's 6th district. Initially, he actively recruited candidates into the race, but "finding someone qualified for this open seat proved to be impossible. Therefore, [he] sat back and said 'let's see what individuals are interested'." And given his reputation, these interested candidates all made their pitch to Grigsby.

Grigsby claimed to have dissuaded three candidates from entering the race. One city council member who approached Grigsby was informed that he "can't raise the money to be a serious candidate." He talked a district attorney from the state out of the race because "almost everything you've done in your past history, no matter how far back it goes, is going to come forth in a campaign." After conducting his own opposition research, he also convinced a socially conservative activist that running for Congress was not a good idea, because it would allow him to be "painted as the devil himself."

The founder and CEO of Anedot, a fundraising software company, and the grandson of former LSU football coach, Paul Dietzel was the first to publicly announce his intention to seek Cassidy's seat. Most people we spoke to described him as a successful businessman, a traditional conservative, and a talented fundraiser. He had held no prior elected office, but had impressive name recognition "thanks to his family's background in LSU football. Dietzel's grandfather led LSU to the 1958 college football championship after a perfect season and is a member of the state's sports hall of fame" (Trygstad 2013). As an investor in Dietzel's company, however, Grigsby was skeptical that an individual who had recently started a business should be pursuing higher office:

"I said 'Paul, you've gotten an awful lot of money from an awful lot of investors to make a successful businesses. It's not yet successful. And here you are thinking about running for Congress? Anyway, he's still running. But I have questions of trust.'"

In December of 2014, State Senator Dan Claitor joined Dietzel in the primary election. Claitor had developed a reputation as an “unpredictable legislator known to weigh each individual bill based on merit and conscience” (McGaughy 2013). Grigsby described him as “intellectually gifted...he sees things from every angle and he doesn’t wear the conservative blinders,” but that “eclectic nature of his just [wouldn’t] fit in Washington,” not to mention that he was “as lovable as a porcupine.” He came from an old Baton Rouge family, and had a good deal of name recognition from his state senate campaigns, but “Congress is a young person’s game” because you need a long tenure to develop the seniority to be effective.

But Garret Graves had potential. He had served as an aide for Representative Billy Tauzin and Senator David Vitter, focusing on coastal policy and mitigating climate change impact, eventually rising to chief legislative aide to the U.S. Senate Committee on Environmental and Public Works. Republican Governor Bobby Jindal then appointed Graves to head the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority. In this capacity “Garrett has been up and down the coast... knows the local politicians...and they’re more more likely to gather their constituency behind somebody that they have rapport with.” A local journalist described him as “very well spoken, not a down the line conservative...he’s very good at finding pots of federal money that he can apply to a problem and he’s very good at the legislative process up in D.C.”

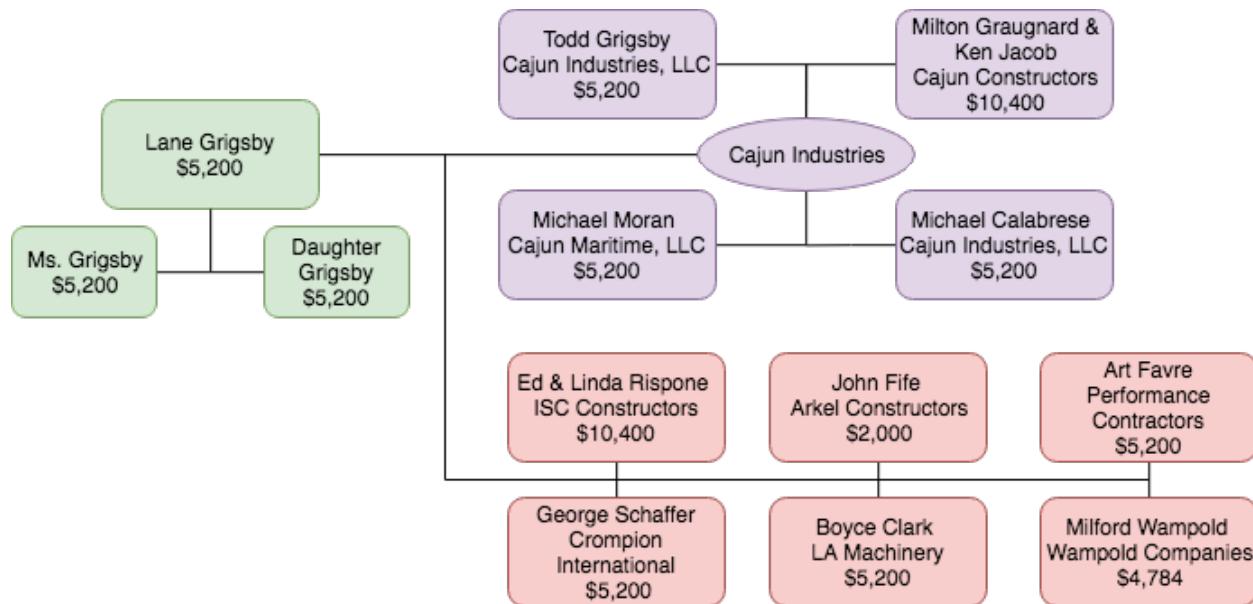
In our first interview, Grigsby hinted that there were some tensions between Graves and elements of his construction network. As a result he invited Graves in to be vetted by his “team” – the executives from Cajun Industries and its affiliates. During our second interview, he claimed that Graves had ameliorated any concerns – “had owned his mistakes” – and that Grigsby “elected to round up as much resources as I can through my family and my friends, and we’ve made a sizable contribution to Garrett Graves...I made a decision to support Garrett Graves significantly.”

He estimated that just from his personal and professional network, he could bundle a maximum of \$250,000 dollars for a particular candidate, and if he then extended his reach to his peripheral business networks of “electrical and mechanical contractors” he could raise another \$250,000. Figure 3.9 provides an extremely conservative estimate of the amount his

network was able to raise for Garret Graves in 2014. Graves was able to raise over \$40,000 from those who Grigsby mentioned as his immediate family (whose names are anonymized for confidentiality) and those who listed Cajun Industries, LLC or one of its subsidiaries as their employer in FEC records. While Grigsby did not mention these organizations specifically, he raised another \$30,000 from Baton Rouge based construction firm executives within the first three months of his campaign. But these numbers likely underestimate the financial resources his network can activate. As he described:

“I’ve seen some estimates [of his network’s contributions] and I just laugh at them...they’ll say we contributed \$40,000 in [a particular] race...and I’ll say they missed another 200,000, now didn’t they! ... It’s hard to know that [name redacted] is my daughter...they didn’t see all the tentacles that tie it all together.”

Figure 3.9: A Conservative Diagram of Lane Grigsby’s Network in Support of Graves

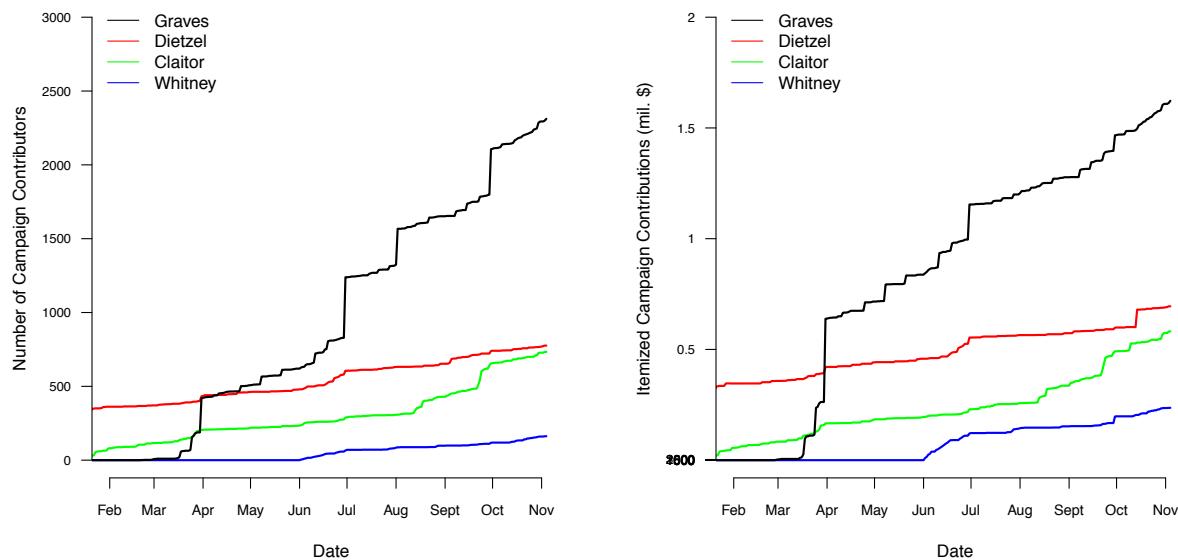


Those shaded in purple are executives at Cajun Industries, LLC. Those shaded in red are executives from Baton Rouge based construction firms. Donors in green are Lane Grigsby’s family members. All donors besides Grigsby’s immediate family contributed within the first three months of Graves’ campaign.

Donors quickly moved to support Graves campaign. In one month, Graves gathered more contributions and more money than any of his opponents, as demonstrated in Figure

3.10, including Paul Dietzel who had been campaign for over a year. These early contributors included Michael Graugnard, Todd Grigsby, and Ken Jacob, executives at Cajun Industries, Clark Boyce, Chairman of Louisiana Machinery, John Fife, President of Arkel Constructors, Art Favre of Performance Contractors, and George Schaffer, President of Crompton International, Ed Rispone (and his wife Linda), founder and chairman of ISC Constructors – all executives of Baton Rouge based construction firms – most of whom contributed the maximum federal amount. While Grigby’s network is the most visible network in the district, Graves’ father’s engineering firm also activated a similar network of support on his behalf – he received numerous, early, maximum donations from executives at engineering firms based in Baton Rouge.

Figure 3.10: Campaign Contributors to Louisiana’s 6th District Republicans



Despite this early and sizable financial support, it would be wrong to have considered him the frontrunner at this point. Having never served in public office, he had no natural base of support upon which to build a campaign. He had little name recognition of his own, although his father’s engineering firm was a familiar local business. In the public polls released in early 2014, Graves received 3% in February, 4% in March, and 2% in April

compared to Claitor's and Dietzel's 11-20% (Alford 2014; JMC 2014).

But the support of Grigsby's network went beyond the financial contributions. Grigsby's support alone was a "sign of legitimacy" to conservatives and Republicans in the district given his "principled" reputation. And the very act of activating the network increased his name recognition and approval across employees in these industries. While fewer lower level employees at many of these firms contributed directly to Graves' campaign, they knew that he was supported by their companies' leadership – stealing a quote from the labor organizers in Philadelphia – "people tend to vote their jobs." Moreover, as one candidate put it, "anybody who puts money in your campaign...they're going to do a little more than just write a check...they're going to tell their friends...you for sure count on them to roll out and on election day vote for you."

Louisiana has a unique "jungle primary" system in which all candidates run in a single primary election, which occurs on general election day in November, and then if no candidate receives a majority, the top two candidates, regardless of party, compete in a run-off election the first week in December. This creates a uniquely long primary campaign cycle in Louisiana. So while these professional networks quickly moved to support Graves after his announcement, the more traditional measures of group support – endorsements, mailers, etc. – came much later in the cycle. In October, the Business-Industry Political Action Committee (BIPAC) – "the largest grassroots business network in the United States" – endorsed Graves for Congress (Graves 2014). But even here, Grigsby's impact could be felt. The press release announcing the endorsement included additional praise from Grigsby: "Garret understands what drives the economy in South Louisiana. He has a proven record of breaking through the bureaucracy and dysfunction of Washington."

While many factors contributed to Graves making it into the December run-off, Grigsby's personal/professional/political network organized around the construction industry was central to Graves' raising the resources and name recognition necessary to surpass his more well-known opponents. By channeling a significant number of campaign contributions, connecting Graves to the important business industries in the district, and facilitating important business and political endorsements for Graves, Grigsby's network was able to marshal the

resources necessary to push his chosen candidate over the line.

3.7 Activist Networks

While traditional interest groups like the Chamber of Commerce and EMILY's List, local businesses and labor unions, formal parties and candidate-centered machines made up a bulk of the networks we observed supporting candidates, in some cases we observed truly grassroots networks of activists and party faithful organizing in important ways to support their preferred candidates. These networks were significantly more difficult to observe from 35,000 feet. They often lacked formal organization, and so the telltale signs of group support – PAC contributions and independent expenditures – were absent. However, those tools are powerful insofar as they provide the resources to reach their supporters and turn them out to the polls. As the primary contest in Pennsylvania's 6th district demonstrates, the influence of these local groups can, under the right circumstances, carry more weight than these more visible resources.

3.7.1 Meddling Marcel

Montgomery County Democratic Chairman, Marcel Groen, thought he had found the perfect candidate to take back Jim Gerlach's seat for Democrats. Obama had won the district by nearly 10% in 2008, and lost it by about a point in 2012. It was one of the few pick-up opportunities in a midterm election where the Democrats were poised to fight against voters' six-year itch toward the Obama presidency.

Mike Parrish, however, had the resume of an exception. He was a West Point graduate with 14 years of active duty service as an Army Aviator. He had advanced degrees from prestigious universities, but in the “practical fields” of engineering and business. He worked for General Electric and eventually founded his own environmental services company and then served as CEO of Environmental Infrastructure Holdings Corporation. As a former Republican, he had a conservative to non-existent record on the more controversial social issues. A handsome, moderate, veteran, business-owner – what more could a party leader

hope for?

Groen wasn't alone. Democratic Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi quickly endorsed Parrish, sent a fundraising e-mail on his behalf, and held a fundraiser for him in Philadelphia shortly after he announced (Field 2014b). Minority Whip Steny Hoyer held another fundraiser for him later that month (Foster 2014a). Congressman Bob Brady, chair of the powerful Philadelphia Democratic Party, quickly followed suit and endorsed Parrish (Smith 2014a). With eyes on the general election, the national party quickly converged on the candidate they found most electable.

The landscape changed when Gerlach decided to retire rather than seek reelection. Manan Trivedi, who had previously challenged Gerlach in 2010 and 2012, announced that he too would be seeking the Democratic nomination in the 6th district following Gerlach's announcement. In Trivedi's announcement, he touted the endorsement of dozens of local Democratic politicians and interest groups, including Wendell Young IV, President UFCW Local 1776; Kate Michelman, President Emerita, NARAL Pro-Choice America; Dennis Bomberger, Business Agent, Chocolate Workers Local 464; State Representative Mark Painter; Micah Mahjoubian, LGBT Rights Activist; Frank Burstein, Chairman of the Limerick Township Democratic Committee; and many other local Democratic committee people.

Regardless, the national and county party leaders were initially confident that voters would choose the more electable Parrish over the "perennial loser" Trivedi. Upon Trivedi's entrance into the race, Parrish commented that "I welcome Manan into the race...and I have confidence that voters in the primary will select the strongest nominee to ensure a Democrat wins this very tough district in November" (Foster 2014c).

But after Trivedi's announcement, local Democrats began to express greater skepticism toward Parrish's candidacy. As one activist explained, "Parrish was a Republican. I know gay Republicans who switched, and I get that. I know environmental Republicans who became Democrats, and I get that! This guy works producing fracking chemicals. I don't get that, I don't trust that" (POG 2014) One campaign worker in the neighboring district complained about "Meddling Marcel" trying to push a nominee on the district "House of

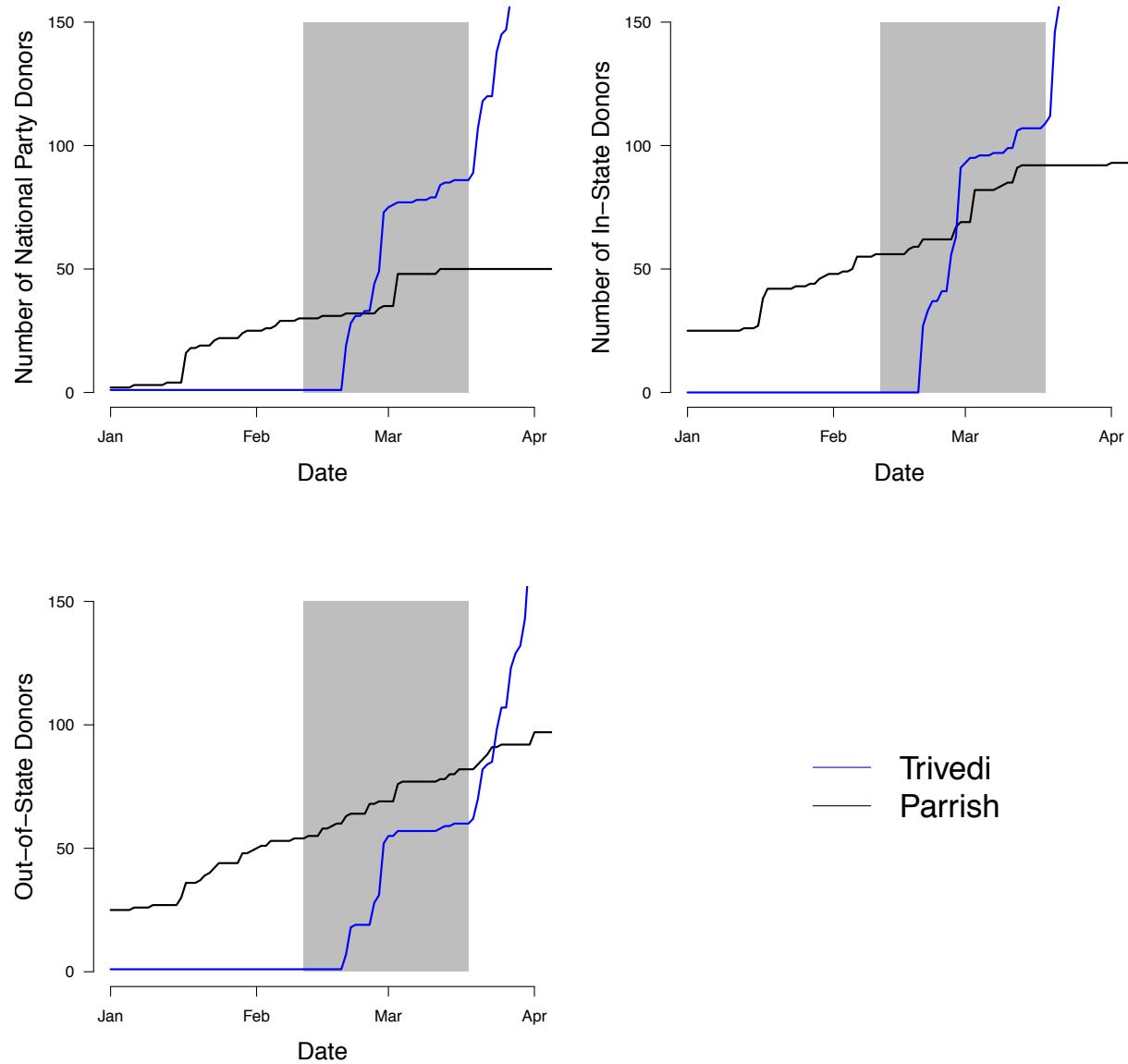
Cards style” (*ibid.*). A readers poll on the ostensibly non-partisan, but essentially Democratic political blog *PoliticsPA*⁹, also showed growing dissatisfaction with Parrish: Trivedi bested Parrish, 53% to 48%.

Donors were also more hesitant to support Parrish than Trivedi. Figure 3.11 presents the number of national party donors – those donors who had given to both Trivedi and a national Democratic campaign committee – as well as the in-state and out-of-state donors supporting each candidate over the course of the primary. The blue line are Trivedi’s donors, and the black line is Parrish’s donors. The greyed area is the period of time between Trivedi’s announcement and Parrish’s withdrawal from the race. Trivedi gained the support of among all subsets of donors at much faster rates than Parrish, but Trivedi only surpassed Parrish with out-of-state donors after Parrish dropped out. Together, these graphs provide additional evidence that the surge in support for Trivedi was driven by primarily local forces.

It was the county conventions that finally undid the party’s plans. The party leaders suspected (and rightly so) that the convention delegates would be more apt to support Trivedi over Parrish given his long-time relationships with the members derived from his previous runs for office. Groen and his Chester County compatriot, Michele Vaughn, hoped to keep the delegates from making an endorsement at each county’s party conventions and to allow the voters to decide in the primary. Trivedi, however, reached out to many of the delegates beforehand and persuaded them to support him. One delegate at the Chester County convention reported that the chairs motion to not consider an endorsement in the race was overturned by a voice vote. Another delegate couldn’t recall the series of events, but admitted that the party leaders had wished to avoid the endorsement. In either situation, the results were the same, Trivedi earned the Committee’s endorsement, receiving 74% of the vote over Parrish (Carrozza 2014). “It is because of Manan’s lifetime commitment to fighting for working families and improving education, *true Democrat values*, that I fully support him, and I am sure the Chester County Democrats endorsed him by such a large

⁹While the ownership team holds no editorial influence, it’s predominantly left-leaning and Democratic. For example, Larry Ceisler, was named one of the most influential Democrats in Pennsylvania in 2010 by *Politics Magazine* (Roarty and Coit 2010).

Figure 3.11: Campaign Contributions to Pennsylvania’s 6th District Democrats



Note: The three figures provide the number of national party, in-state, and out-of-state donors contributing to Manan Trivedi’s and Mike Parrish’s campaign over the course of the primary. The greyed area is the period of time during which both candidates were in the race.

majority for those very same reasons.” Democratic committeeperson Diane O’Dwyer said of the Chester County endorsement (emphasis added, Smith 2014b). Two days later, a similar

dynamic played out at Groen’s Montgomery County convention. It was reported as “highly possible [that] his familiarity with local politicos contributed to his massive total of 97% of the vote from Montgomery County’s Democrats” (Field 2014c).

In Pennsylvania’s 6th district, a coordinated network of donors and activists coordinated behind their preferred candidate, made sure he had the financial resources to compete with the national party’s preferred candidate, and organized to make sure he had access to the powerful endorsements of the party committees. This network of activists was not a formal party or organized around an elected official, nor was it driven by an organized interest group. It was a local grassroots network of party activists built on their shared long-term relationships.

3.8 Networks At Work

This typology describes less a series of discrete actors than a constellation of diverse, interconnected actors with varied relationships that are difficult to disentangle. In Utah, while the formal party controls the nomination, the composition of that formal party was the direct result of a politician-centered network’s efforts to elect their supportive activists. In Michigan, much of the Levin machine’s strength came from its close relationships with local organized labor. In Virginia, the borders between the Tea Party activists and the formal party organization were blurred and constantly in flux. In Pennsylvania, much of the IBEW’s strength came from the financial leverage it held over the city Democratic Party.

But it was these diverse party networks marshaling resources on behalf of their chosen candidates that helped propel them to the nomination. These networks were often the “intense policy demanding” coalitions hypothesized by Bawn et al. (2012). The structure of these networks, however, varied across the different districts. Rather than a hierarchical structure in which the formal party organizes a diverse array of party actors, competition between formal party organizations, politician-centered machines, interest groups, and activist networks was more common. This competition was driven by a lack of concern for a competitive general election and the expected value of a “champion” in Congress.

While the overlapping nature of these categorizes makes distinguishing the nature of the party difficult, they are extremely useful for highlighting the variety of resources available to different types of networks. Different types of networks are able to use different resources on behalf of their chosen candidates. The use of different resources was often predicated by the particular structure of a network. A group like EMILY's List may provide campaign staffers for a candidate, but have no formal powers of the nomination process in each district. The national parties, unwilling to appear heavy handed and step on the toes of local organizations, rarely make endorsements in a competitive primary, but may funnel resources to their preferred candidates behind the scenes (Hassell 2016; 2018). Local activists may have the grassroots support to knock on doors for their candidates, but rarely have the financial resources to pursue the five- and six-figure independent expenditure campaigns increasingly common in the post-*Citizen United* era.

But these resources are exceptionally difficult to measure systematically. In order to describe the dynamics in a mere dozen races took close to five years of field work, hundreds of interviews, and untold amounts of primary source research. It is an impractical method for measuring general patterns and relationships in primary nominations at large. In the next chapter, I will highlight these resources, stress the difficulties in systematically measuring them, and provide an alternative measure that I believe allows us to systematically assess the impact of party network support on the electoral prospects of primary candidates based on the one resource all networks were able to provide for their candidates – campaign contributions.

Chapter 3 Appendix A: Geographic Regression Discontinuity

Data Sources

Data for this analysis come from three sources. First, the Pennsylvania Voter File, purchased from the Pennsylvania Secretary of State’s Office, provides both the home address and voter history for all registered voters in Pennsylvania. This will be used to determine individual level voter turnout in the 2014 Pennsylvania Democratic Primary. Second, the U.S. Census Bureau provides geographic shapefile data for state, county, congressional district, and state legislative district boundaries. Third, the Data Science Toolkit provides geocoding services which allow me to determine the latitude and longitude coordinates of voters from their addresses. These data sources together will allow me to calculate the distance of individual voters from political borders – in this case the distance between a voter and the border of their congressional district. Finally, over 50 hours of elite interviews were conducted with the candidates, campaign staff, interest groups, and local activists during the campaign season to better understand the underlying dynamics of the race.

Compound Treatment Reduction

In geographic regression discontinuity models, researchers are often presented with situations in which more than one geographic ‘treatment’ affects the outcome of interest at the same time. In the primary in question, voters were exposed to primary campaigns for governor, congress, state senate, and state legislature. Election law in the United States is often administered at the county level, and exposure to campaign advertisements is often confined to particular media markets which are unique combinations of counties. In many of these instances the borders between these politically salient districts are the same. As Keele and Titiunik describe, this “poses a serious challenge if the researcher is interested in only one of those treatments since, absent any restrictions or assumptions, it will not be possible to separate the effect of the treatment of interest on the outcome from the effect of all other ‘irrelevant’ treatments” (2015).

In order to eliminate the issue of compound treatments, this project isolates areas that are within the same county, state senate, and state legislative district, that also contain portions both within and outside of the 13th Congressional district. Fortunately all of the 13th district falls within the Philadelphia media market, and is therefore held constant. By holding all other relevant political boundaries constant, we are essentially controlling for the effects of these alternative boundaries. I am able to isolate 16 regions along the border of the 13th district that meet these characteristics: six in Philadelphia and ten in Montgomery County. This provides us with 68,021 registered Democrats in Philadelphia, respectively, and 113,184 in Montgomery County. Figure A1 provides an example of a region within Philadelphia County that is within the 3rd State Senate district and the 179th State House district. The light blue area represents areas within this geographic subset that is within the 13th Congressional district, while the darker blue is within the 2nd Congressional district, which importantly did not have a contested Democratic primary. Each small dot represents a household with a registered voter.

Figure A1: Example of Compound Treatment Reduction



Measuring Geographic Distance

In order to measure the distance between each voter and the discontinuity (the congressional district boundary), I first geocoded the registered address of the voters that fell

within these compound treatment reduction geographies. Less than 0.5% of voters were dropped because of incomplete addresses. Next, I converted the census provided shapefile of the district into a geometric polygon. From here I use the `geosphere` package in R to calculate the shortest geographic distance between each voter and the congressional district border. This package allows one to take into consideration the ellipsoidal shape of the earth when calculating geographic distance for greater accuracy.

Measuring Turnout

Voter turnout is measured as the percentage of registered voters recorded as voting either at the polling location or absentee. Because Pennsylvania is a closed primary state, turnout in the primary is measured only among registered Democrats.

Results

Table A1 provides the results of the geoRDD model for turnout in the primary. All models are estimated with the `rdrobust` package. The results present both the initial estimates and the estimates with fixed-effects for each compound reduction geography. The effective number of observations on each side of the threshold are also provided.

What is immediately apparent is the difference in outcomes between the counties. In Philadelphia there is roughly a 3% increase in turnout in the presence of a ground game operation. While 3% may seem modest given the race was eventually decided by an over 10 point margin, given that turnout in these sections was only 21%, that constitutes a 14% change in turnout. No such effect is observed in Montgomery County, where no discernible ground game occurred. Figure A2 provides this trend graphically.

Table A1: Primary Election Turnout of Democrats

County	Model	Estimate	Std. Err.	p-value	C.I.	F.E.
Philly	Conventional	0.023*	0.010	0.026	0.003, 0.042	X
	Bias-Corrected	0.028**	0.010	0.006	0.008, 0.047	X
	Robust	0.028*	0.011	0.016	0.005, 0.050	X
	Conventional	0.032**	0.011	0.003	0.011, 0.053	✓
	Bias-Corrected	0.037***	0.011	0.001	0.016, 0.058	✓
	Robust	0.037**	0.012	0.002	0.014, 0.060	✓
Eff. Obs.	10,498 — 10,438					
MontCo	Conventional	0.001	0.008	0.900	-0.014, 0.016	X
	Bias-Corrected	0.005	0.008	0.563	-0.011, 0.020	X
	Robust	0.005	0.009	0.604	-0.013, 0.021	X
	Conventional	-0.003	0.013	0.797	-0.020, 0.022	✓
	Bias-Corrected	0.001	0.013	0.955	-0.025, 0.026	✓
	Robust	0.001	0.013	0.955	-0.025, 0.027	✓
Eff. Obs.	16,860 — 45,897					

Figure A2: Primary Election Turnout of Philadelphia Democrats

