

Defensive Agenda Control: The Evolution of Tabling Motions in the U.S. Senate, 1865-1945

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Abstract

Scholars of the U.S. Senate frequently discuss the theoretical power the tabling motion provides majorities to advance their legislative agenda and control floor debate. Nevertheless, our understanding of this procedural motion is rather limited and confined to the modern era. To evaluate the development of this procedural tool, we analyze the historical usage of tabling motions in the Senate from 1865-1945. We argue that the tabling motion provides majorities with a comparably modest means of defending their legislative agenda. Using a new dataset derived from all motions to table that yielded roll calls in the U.S. Senate, we find evidence consistent with this claim.

On January 3, 1957, Senator Clinton Anderson (D-NM) introduced a resolution that would formally change the rules of the United States Senate to allow a simple majority to end debate. Anderson and his allies had seen a number of filibusters led by conservative Southern Democrats kill, delay or weaken significant civil rights proposals that they championed.¹ His resolution – coupled with a favorable ruling on a question of order by Vice President Richard Nixon (R-CA) – would effectively end filibustering in the chamber (Binder and Smith 1997; Caro 2002; Mann 2006). While liberals had unsuccessfully attempted to pass similar resolutions in earlier congresses, the 1956 election gave them renewed hope. Record numbers of black voters supported civil rights liberals at the polls, leading both parties to revise their stances on the issue. However, before Anderson and his allies could get a ruling from Nixon on his resolution, Majority Leader Johnson (D-TX) moved to table the proposal.

According to chamber rules, Johnson’s tabling motion had precedence over both the adoption of the resolution and the question of order.² The motion is also non-debatable. Moreover, Senate precedents require the presiding officer to recognize the Senate majority leader first, thus ensuring the motion would be offered first. Civil rights proponents had hoped to avoid a tabling motion and knew that it made the passage of the rules change more difficult. Moderates could now vote for the tabling motion without having to claim opposition to the Anderson rules resolution, or the broader civil rights issue. Senator Wayne Morse (D-OR) immediately expressed this concern, declaring that the tabling motion meant that “the Senate will not face up to the question [of its rules] directly” and instead, they would be dealing with “the parliamentary diversionary tactic of the motion to lay on the table (*Congressional Record*, 95th Congress, January 3, 1957, 11).”³

¹Southern Democratic filibusters derailed anti-lynching bills in 1922, 1935 and 1938, an anti-poll tax bill in 1946, and a fair employment bill in 1946 (Binder and Smith 1997). The situation was made substantially worse in 1948, when presiding officer Arthur Vandenberg ruled that the chambers’ cloture rule did not apply to motions to proceed (Gold and Gupta 2005; Mann 2006). This ruling effectively eliminated cloture in the Senate as small numbers of bill opponents could hold the floor indefinitely on the motion to proceed. Thus, the underlying bill would never make it to the Senate floor (Binder and Smith 1997).

²Tiefer (1989, 666) notes that only three motions hold precedent over the motion to table: motions to adjourn, to take a recess, and to proceed to executive business.

³Morse went on to argue that “the Senate and public should know that when any Senator votes on the motion to lay on the table, he really is voting on the question of whether new rules for the Senate should be

Johnson proposed a unanimous consent agreement allowing for a limited amount of debate on the Anderson resolution. The agreement allowed Anderson and his supporters to raise a non-binding parliamentary inquiry as to whether or not a chamber majority could proceed to a vote on the resolution.⁴ Unlike a ruling on a question of order, a ruling on a parliamentary inquiry would not formally bind the chamber. While this was unfavorable to the civil rights proponents, the threat of the motion to table left them with no alternative but to agree to Johnson's unanimous consent agreement. Thus, although Vice President Nixon's ruling on the parliamentary inquiry was favorable to Anderson and his allies, it had no bearing on the outcome of the debate.⁵ The motion to table passed 55-38, killing the rules change resolution and dooming any chance of significant civil rights legislation being enacted in that Congress.

The preceding example underscores the important role the motion to table plays in the U.S. Senate. While House leaders can manage the chamber floor through their control over the Rules Committee, the Senate has no comparable institutional feature. The motion to table is one of the few procedural tools that allow a simple majority to attempt to end consideration on a resolution or amendment without the opportunity for further debate on the procedural motion.⁶ Moreover, as Senator Morse pointed out, votes on tabling motions can obfuscate the underlying issue, thus providing members with political cover come reelection time. For these reasons, Tiefer (1989, 658) dubbed the motion to table the "workhorse" of Senate majorities and it has occupied a central role in theories of party influence in the chamber (Den Hartog and Monroe 2011; Gailmard and Jenkins 2007, 2008; Goodman 2010;

adopted at the beginning of the 85th Congress (*Congressional Record*, 95th Congress, January 3, 1957, 11)."

⁴Anderson's allies had sought to get a ruling on whether or not the Senate was a "continuing body." The continuing body theory argued that since senators had staggered terms, two-thirds of the membership continued to the next Senate (Mann 2006; Binder, Madonna and Smith 2007).

⁵Nixon knew that his position as vice president made him the forerunner for the Republican nomination when Eisenhower retired. He also knew that African American voters were going to be an important demographic in the next election. He ruled that "the right of a current majority of the Senate at the beginning of a new Congress to adopt its own rules, stemming as it does from the Constitution itself, cannot be restricted or limited by rules adopted by a majority of the Senate in a previous Congress" (*Congressional Record*, 95 Congress, January 4, 1957, 178).

⁶If the tabling motion fails to pass by a simple majority, debate would continue on the resolution or amendment. This occurred less than 10 percent of the time in our data, suggesting considerable majority party influence over this procedural motion.

Lee 2009).

Despite this scholarly interest, our understanding of the motion to table is fairly limited, and confined to the modern era. This is unfortunate given the strong theoretical power afforded to this procedural motion. To better understand the role and development of the motion to table in the Senate, we analyze the historical usage of tabling motions in the upper chamber from 1865-1945. In particular, we argue that weak party institutions in the early Senate led to increased conflict on the chamber floor, causing majority party leaders to rely heavily on the motion to table to deal with this issue. The procedure allowed them to defend the floor against proposals that could distract from their legislative agenda. In contrast to the modern era, leaders targeted proposals offered by minority party moderates (which had a higher probability of success) and majority party extremists (which could split the party and distract from their broader agenda).

To be clear, the motion to table does not allow the majority to prevent the minority from introducing legislation in the Senate the same way that restrictive rules allow for such an opportunity in the House. Moreover, it does not prevent dissident senators from obstructing important legislative proposals. Rather, this procedure provides majorities with a comparably modest means of controlling floor debate. To evaluate our arguments, we constructed a new dataset containing sponsor information on all tabling motions that resulted in roll call votes from 1865 to 1945. We then merged these data with a new dataset containing sponsor information for all measures that received roll call votes in the U.S. Senate over this period. An examination of measures subjected to tabling motions provides support for our claims. This also allows us to examine tabling motions with respect to all roll call activity in the Senate during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – an era of open floor procedures.

In the following section, we briefly touch upon prior research that has examined the use of procedural tools in Congress before shifting more specifically to theoretical research examining the motion to table in the Senate. From there, we examine the use and sponsorship of

tabling motions in the post-Civil War Senate. After discussing our theoretical expectations, we turn to the presentation of the data and results. We conclude the paper with a summary of our findings and discuss potential avenues of research related to the motion to table.

Tabling Motions and Agenda Control

There is an expansive literature in political science that links non-median policy outcomes with control over legislative procedures. Specifically, scholars have demonstrated that procedural votes in the U.S. House of Representatives generally exhibit higher levels of party discipline than substantive votes (Cox and Poole 2002; Roberts 2005; Rohde 1991; Smith 1989; Snyder and Groseclose 2000). This is due to the perceived “traceability” (or the lack thereof) of procedural votes (Arnold 1990). While a vote in favor of an unpopular policy in the member’s home district can be used against him electorally, a vote in favor of a rule facilitating the passage of an unpopular policy is less salient. Thus, House members are expected to exhibit higher degrees of loyalty on procedural votes.

Through the majority party’s control of the Rules Committee, they can dictate the text of the rules the chamber votes on. This will determine – among other things – the length of time devoted to debate over a bill and what amendments can be offered. Partisan cartel theory argues that the majority party uses this procedural control to block substantive proposals from moderates and minority party members (Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2002, 2005). This negative agenda control results in policy outcomes biased towards the majority party median. Moreover, it explains the majority party’s high success rate in the House throughout congressional history.

While partisan cartel theory focused on roll call behavior on House procedures, recent work has found support for majority party influence via the tabling motion to block minority party proposals on the Senate floor (Goodman 2010; Lee 2009; Tiefer 1989). In his treatise on congressional procedure, for instance, Tiefer (1989) argues that the motion to table is the primary agenda control tool of Senate majority leaders. He attributes the growth in its

usage to the increasing demand of senators to request roll call votes and put the opposing party on the record. Quoting former Majority Leader Robert Byrd (D-WV), he argues that it is employed primarily because of the traceability issue:

A motion to table is a procedural motion. It obfuscates the issue, and it makes possible an explanation by a senators to his constituents, if he wishes to do, that his vote was not on the merits of the issue. He can claim that he might have voted this way or he might have voted that way, if the Senate had voted up or down on the issue itself (Tiefer 1989, 660).

Focusing directly on the usage of tabling motions, Goodman (2010) argues they are an important tool for majority party leaders in the Senate, especially when the legislation or amendment sponsor is ideologically distant from the majority party's median ideology. Employing a dataset on recorded roll call votes on all motions to table from 1977 to 2007, he reports that members of the majority party are more likely to be a cohesive voting bloc when voting on procedural motions, even when controlling for ideology. Den Hartog and Monroe (2011) argue that tabling motions make the adoption of bills or amendments more difficult for minority party members given that they reduce the likelihood that the minority party's legislation will receive consideration on the floor. This provides the majority with greater leverage in scheduling legislative business in the Senate. Examining all roll call votes on amendments from 1989 to 2000, they find substantial support for their hypotheses. Their findings also suggest that when the motion to table is made by a member of the majority party, it is more likely to be successful.⁷

In sum, Senate scholars have argued the motion to table helps insulate Senate majorities from the threat of non-germane amendments. Such non-germane amendments offered by the minority party encourage the majority party to act more cohesively in order to table proposed amendments (Den Hartog and Monroe 2008, 2011; Gailmard and Jenkins 2007). This allows majority party members coverage in explaining votes against substantively popular amendments, suggesting that the motion to table is a form of negative agenda control.

⁷See also Marshall, Prins and Rohde (1999) who were among the first to empirically examine tabling motions in the Senate.

Despite the attractiveness of the motion to table for majorities, scholars have argued that its power is far more conditional than the type of negative control enjoyed in the House for several reasons (Goodman 2010; Smith 2007). First, avoiding losses on the floor is not necessarily a strategy that will enhance a party's reputation (Smith 2007). Thus, while the majority may successfully block minority party proposals with the motion to table, this should not dissuade the minority from offering future proposals. Second, procedural tools that strengthen the power of party leaders are only likely to be employed when the leader is confident the motion will pass (Finocchiaro and Rohde 2008; Lee 2009). The implication is that the effectiveness of the motion to table should be conditional on the ideological homogeneity of the majority party (Rohde 1991). Specifically, the relative success of the motion to table when implemented would not be diminished during these periods, but the frequency may decrease. Indeed, in recent congresses, Senate leaders have utilized fewer tabling motions to curb minority party amendments – opting instead to fill the amendment tree (Beth et al. 2009; Smith 2010).⁸

While this literature has greatly aided our understanding of partisan behavior in the Senate, it has been almost entirely focused on the modern era. This is largely due to the claim that tabling motions were rarely employed prior to the leadership of Senator Robert Byrd (D-WV). Byrd's tenure as Majority Leader during the mid to late twentieth century coincided with a sharp increase in usage of tabling motions (Smith 1989; Tiefer 1989). However, as we will demonstrate, tabling motions were employed at fairly high levels in the absence of formal leadership positions in the early U.S. Senate. We argue that the motion was used by majority party members to defend their party's agenda against proposals made by both minority party members *and* extreme members of their own party.

⁸Senate majority leaders have recently begun utilizing this tactic in order to limit the number of potential amendments that might get introduced by minority party members. By filling the amendment tree, no other amendments can be introduced until one has been disposed of, which helps to reduce overall levels of uncertainty in the Senate (Smith 2010).

Tabling Motions in the Post-Bellum Senate

The motion to lay on the table was first added to the Senate’s formal rules in 1820 (Binder, Madonna and Smith 2007; Tiefer 1989). However, a resolution by Senator James Burrill (F-RI) making the motion non-debatable failed to carry. Without this component, the motion had very little utility for senators. Over the next few decades, several rulings by presiding officers eventually led to the motion being considered non-debatable and gave it increased precedence. This was formally codified in the 1868 Senate rules.⁹

The timing of this formal codification was important, as it coincided with an increase in chamber business in the wake of the Civil War.¹⁰ Senate majorities enjoyed some procedural advantages in advancing and defending their legislative agenda during this era. First, by virtue of having a majority, policy entrepreneurs could place bills on the schedule using another procedural motion – the motion to proceed to consider. Second, Republicans had established the position of conference chairman in 1862, and tasked the chairman with the job of setting the order of business.¹¹ These points notwithstanding, majority party leadership structures were comparably quite weak in the nineteenth century (Rothman 1966; Gamm and Smith 2002a). Conference chairmen found that senators were often unwilling to defer

⁹A reading of the formal chamber rules adopted in both 1820 and 1868 demonstrate that the motion was made non-debatable sometime between those two formal rules codifications. Senate Rule 11 in 1820 specified that, “When a question is under debate, no motion shall be received but to adjourn, to lie on the table, to postpone indefinitely, to postpone to a day certain, to commit, or to amend; which several motions shall have precedence in the order they stand arranged, and the motion for adjournment shall always be in order, and be decided without debate (*Journal of the Senate*, 40th Congress, February 14, 1828.)” In contrast, Rule 11 in 1868 specified that, “When a question is under debate no motion shall be received but to adjourn; to proceed to the consideration of executive business; to lay on the table; to postpone indefinitely; to postpone to a day certain; to commit; or to amend; which several motions shall have precedence in the order they stand arranged; and motions to adjourn, to proceed to the consideration of executive business, and to lie on the table, shall be decided without debate, and motions to take up or proceed to the consideration of any question shall be determined without debate upon the merits of the question proposed to be considered (*Journal of the Senate*, 20th Congress, March 25, 1868.)” See Binder, Madonna and Smith (2007) for a discussion of the measure’s procedural evolution.

¹⁰Even after the 1868 codification, additional rulings on questions of order throughout the late 19th century increased the strength of the motion. For example, in 1875, the Senate ruled 29-25 that motions to table were in order regardless of whether or not the underlying motion was debatable (*Congressional Record*, 43rd Congress, February 15, 1875).

¹¹Democrats followed suit in 1877, naming Senator John W. Stevenson (D-KY) conference chair in the 1870s (Gamm and Smith 2002b). This was prior to their retaking the Senate majority for the first time since the Civil War in the 46th Congress (1879-1881).

to them when it came to setting legislative priorities and problems inherent with nineteenth century travel likely made coordinating among senators on strategies even more challenging.

These weak leadership structures meant that the order of chamber business was often determined on the floor (Gamm and Smith 2002*b*). Given the importance of private bills during this era, these factors led to a substantial amount of conflict.¹² In order to advance and defend a national party agenda, majority party leaders needed to block proposals that could weaken their legislation or split their party. As we have previously noted, the motion to table is an ideal tool for these purposes. As a procedural motion, it could provide cross-pressured members with political cover. Moreover, the motion was non-debatable, allowing bill managers to save valuable time during the legislative session. Finally, the motion to table allowed majorities to control the content of debate on the Senate floor. By tabling an uncomfortable amendment or motion to proceed to a bill, majorities could block lengthy, substantive discussions of those underlying motions.

As is the case in the modern era, the most obvious threat to the majority party's ability to advance their agenda came from the minority party. Minority party members frequently offered amendments designed to pull the ideological locations of key majority party proposals toward their ideal points. They also occasionally sought to kill particularly egregious majority proposals by offering motions to proceed to the consideration of more palatable proposals in an effort to attract the support of disgruntled majority partisans. The motion to table provides members with political cover to vote against these motions and in doing so, push potentially uncomfortable debates off of the Senate floor.

For example, majority party Republicans in the 51st Congress (1889-1891) were split into three different factions. The first of these, representing Northeastern banking and manufacturing interests, wanted to revise the tariff (Stephenson 1930; Sage 1956). Western Republicans – by contrast – greatly wanted to pass silver legislation (Ellis 1956; Elliott 1983). Finally, older members from the Reconstruction coalition wanted to see voting rights

¹²See Finocchiaro (2008, 2010) for a discussion of the increasing number of private bills considered in the post-Civil War Congress.

legislation enacted (Hoar 1903). Despite its fairly quick passage in the House, legislation protecting black voting rights was displaced three times on the Senate floor. In the final instance, a coalition of Western Republicans (frustrated by the lengthy debate over the measure) joined with minority party Democrats on a motion to consider silver legislation. The failure of this voting rights legislation represented the last seriously considered voting rights bill for nearly seventy-five years (Binder and Smith 1997).

As the preceding example suggests, conflict on the floor over the legislative agenda frequently occurred amongst fellow partisans, as well as between them. As Gamm and Smith (2002*a*, 440) note, “Majority party senators regularly found themselves in open competition with each other to get their legislation considered by the Senate, and misunderstandings about the agreed-upon order of business were common.” Again, the popularity of private legislation during the nineteenth likely made this problem worse. In the 42nd Congress (1871-1873), for example, Senate Republicans sought to adopt a reduction of tariff duties. The tariff was the central partisan issue for much of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Epstein and O’Halloran 1996; Hansen 1990; Madonna 2011) and members viewed its enactment as a key priority before the election of 1872. However, after it was brought to the floor in late May, Senator Timothy Otis Howe (R-WI) moved to postpone its consideration. The de-facto bill manager, Senator John Sherman (R-OH) immediately moved to table Howe’s amendment. Howe immediately took to the floor to urge his colleagues to defeat Sherman’s tabling motion:

I just want to notify those senators who are interested in the private bills on the calendar that they have noticed now from those two senators that the moment the tariff bill is disposed of the miscellaneous appropriations bill will be moved, and every senator here knows that the moment those two bills are out of the way of the Senate, the Senate will be out of Washington. If they are going to have their claims considered, they must defeat this motion to lay on the table, and get an evening assigned now (*The Congressional Globe*, 42nd Congress, May 27, 1872, 3895).¹³

¹³Sherman’s tabling motion passed 31 to 22.

Conflicts like this occurred even after partisan reforms in the mid-1870s (Gamm and Smith 2002*b*). In this era, new majority parties routinely replaced Senate officers. In addition, Democrats established their first ad hoc steering committee in 1872. However, Gamm and Smith (2002*b*, 226) note these institutions were not utilized consistently, and offered “little leadership to the caucus or the chamber.”¹⁴ After the 1890s, both Senate parties sought to centralize their agenda through the establishment of permanent steering committees (Gamm and Smith 2002*b*; Hurley and Wilson 1989; Ripley 1969; Rothman 1966). While this change facilitated the majority’s ability to control legislation on the floor, it did not yield them the kind of strength enjoyed in the House, nor the modern Senate (Gamm and Smith 2002*b*). There was no formal floor leader for parties to defer to until 1911 and it was not until 1937 that the majority leader enjoyed an established right of first recognition.¹⁵

Maintaining a positive record in government for their party is essential for politicians who possess both reelection and good public policy goals.¹⁶ Thus, the preceding discussion leads us to draw several conclusions about how tabling motions would be used in the early Senate. First, we expect a considerable number of tabling motions to be employed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century U.S. Senate to ensure a greater degree of “defensive” agenda control, which would provide some advantage for the majority party. This should be especially true before the establishment of formal leadership positions. In addition to

¹⁴By the 1890s, Regular Steering Committees had been established, and these seemed to slightly mitigate the problem (Rothman 1966).

¹⁵The right of first recognition specifies that if multiple senators request recognition at the same time “priority of recognition shall be accorded to the Majority and Minority Leader, the majority manager and the minority manager, in that order (Gold 2004, 40).” Scholars have pointed out the important implications it has had on policy-making in the Senate. Byrd (1988) argues that the right of first recognition has since become the most important power enjoyed by the majority leader. Scholars and other majority leaders have echoed this point. Gold (2004, 40) points to a biography of former majority leader Mike Mansfield (D-MT), which argued that the right allowed the leader to “outflank any other senator in offering motions or amendments, and to the most important voice, rarely overruled, in shaping the nature and timing of Senate business.” It guarantees that the majority leader will be the first member allowed to propose a motion to proceed, to report a unanimous consent agreement or offer an amendment (Gamm and Smith 2002*a*; Beth et al. 2009). These powers are critical in order for the majority leader to manage the Senate’s floor time effectively.

¹⁶Even in an era before direct election, it is reasonable to assume that senators cared about reelection despite the fact they were selected by state legislators rather than voters directly (Gamm and Smith 2002*a*; Meinke 2008).

increased authority and responsibilities, the creation of those positions coincided with increasingly regular caucus meetings and better travel conditions. This enabled higher levels of intraparty coordination, leading to fewer conflicts on the chamber floor. Second, tabling motions should be used by senior majority party members and legislators holding leadership and committee chair positions given their greater familiarity with chamber procedures. In addition, members elected to leadership and key committee positions have a greater stake in maintaining the party's reputation by advancing and defending the broader agenda.

As in the modern era, tabling motions should be used to target measures sponsored by minority party members. Since tabling motions provide political cover to members who may otherwise be inclined to support a measure on the merits, they should be used to target proposals that have the greatest chance of succeeding. We would anticipate that potentially successful proposals opposed by the majority party are also those most likely to precipitate floor debate that could serve to embarrass them. We argue that this partisan hypothesis should be largely conditional on ideology. More specifically, majority policy entrepreneurs are more likely to be concerned with proposals offered by moderate members of the minority party.¹⁷ In contrast to more ideologically extreme members, moderates within the minority party are more likely to generate support amongst majority party rank and file members. Thus, they have a greater chance of success and represent a more substantial threat to the majority's agenda.

The lack of strong party institutions that facilitate coordination led to battles amongst majority party members for control of the agenda. We anticipate tabling motions will be used to defend the majority party's agenda against dissident majority party members in addition to members of the minority. This should also be conditional on member ideology. By virtue of their location near the chamber median, proposals offered by majority party

¹⁷In this respect, the ideology of the proposing senator is being used as a proxy for ideological location of the underlying motion. Although this may not be ideal given the potential for strategic action, we believe this concern is mitigated both by the large number of cases in our dataset and the likelihood that most tabling motions will be employed against amendment votes where individual senators are attempting to move the status quo location.

moderates may be necessary to ensure their support for the underlying legislation. Majority policy entrepreneurs should be less willing to risk the defeat of their proposals by alienating those moderates through the usage of tabling motions.

In contrast, proposals offered by extremists may make the underlying measure more ideological (or displace it in favor of a more controversial measure). This could result in the proposal's defeat, or force a prolonged floor debate that damages the majority's brand name by exposing internal rifts within the party (i.e., extreme members of the majority may inadvertently engage in debate that ultimately serves to fracture or embarrass party leaders). That being said, most proposals moving status quo policy outcomes toward the majority party should also benefit extremists (Lawrence, Maltzman and Smith 2006). Given this, we anticipate that tabling motions would be used on proposals sponsored by extreme members of the majority to minimize potential conflict.¹⁸ The next section examines the usage of tabling motions empirically.

Tabling Motion Sponsorship

In order to better examine how the majority party utilized tabling motions to influence policy output in the early United States Senate, we created a dataset of all tabling motions that yielded roll call votes.¹⁹ We then located the pages that tabling motion votes occurred on in the *Congressional Globe* and *Congressional Record*, from the 39th (1865-1867) to 79th

¹⁸Lynch, Madonna and Roberts (2010) make a similar argument in examination of structured rules in the 110th House of Representatives. They report that extremists within the majority party are less likely to have their amendments included in structured rules, and are less likely to have their amendments adopted on the floor.

¹⁹Although recorded voting occurred less frequently in the early U.S. Senate (Lynch and Madonna 2008; Madonna 2011), we remain confident that the universe of all tabling motions is not much greater than the number that appeared with a recorded vote. This is due to a combination of factors. First, the U.S. Constitution specifies a small, one-fifth of a quorum threshold for recorded votes, setting a sufficient second at just 11 members in the modern Senate. Second, members can threaten obstruction if roll call vote requests are not honored. For example, after his request for a recorded roll call failed to muster a sufficient second, Senator Arthur Vandenberg (R-MI) stated that, "I shall have to suggest the absence of a quorum. I shall be very frank about the matter. We shall simply save time if we may have a roll call. I ask for the yeas and nays (*Congressional Record*, 75th Congress, December 15, 1937, 1528-1529)." A roll call was eventually granted. Thus, sufficiently motivated senators can generally receive a recorded vote on controversial or salient measures. Tiefer (1989) reports that in 1984, 98% of all tabling motions occurred with recorded votes.

(1945-1947) Senates. From there, we coded the measure being subjected to the tabling motion, the sponsor of that measure, as well as the name and party affiliation of the member offering the tabling motion.²⁰ This resulted in a total of 967 tabling motions over the eighty year period. Of these 967 motions, 46 of them resulted in “no quorums.”²¹ These have been dropped from the analysis. Figure 1 posts the percentage of the roll call record devoted to tabling motions per Congress.

[Figure 1 Here]

Figure 1 suggests that the motion to table is not purely a late twentieth century phenomenon. In the 46th Senate (1879-1881), tabling motions represented just over 17% of the roll call voting record. While this is below the 30% Tiefer (1989) reports in 1984, it still represents a fairly substantial proportion of all votes. This does not, however, mean that this was a tool utilized exclusively by the majority party. To examine that, Figure 2 plots the raw number of tabling motions in addition to the number offered by majority party members over that period.

[Figure 2 Here]

Figure 2 suggests that even in the early Senate, the motion to table was primarily a tool of the majority party – though perhaps not in the same degree that it is today. Of the 921 votes on tabling motions from 1865 to 1945, 719 were offered by majority party members (78%). The success rate on the motion was also slightly lower than the 80% Lee (2009) reports in the modern era. In our dataset, 71.1% of all tabling motions were successful,

²⁰The tabling motion sponsor was the member who moved the motion. The record was fairly explicit on this point. For example, in the 84th Congress, Senator Prescott Bush (R-CT) moved “to lay on the table the amendment on page 3, line 10 (*Congressional Record*, 84th Congress, July 22, 1956, 10831.)” In this case, Bush was listed as the tabling motion sponsor. Determining the sponsor of the underlying motion was more difficult. Consult Appendix A for a more detailed discussion of how this was done.

²¹When a point of order that a roll call vote revealed no quorum was upheld, the chamber generally had to revote. These were often the result of the disappearing quorum tactic that was frequently employed in the nineteenth century House and Senate. During a disappearing quorum, members – even those in the chamber – would refuse to vote on a roll call. By not providing votes, minority members could prevent the chamber from having a quorum present to do business. For more details on disappearing quorums, see Koger (2010).

with the majority party enjoying a higher rate (as expected) than the minority. Seventy percent of all majority sponsored tabling motions were successful – as opposed to 60.1% of those offered by the minority. A t-test reveals that this difference is statistically significant at $p < .05$.

The trend in Figure 2 also suggests that the link between partisan institutions and the usage of tabling motions on the floor of the Senate has some validity. We observe a fairly sharp drop in their usage after the establishment of formal party leadership positions in 1911 and 1913. Consistent with our theory, a majority of these tabling motions targeted proposals offered by majority party members. Of the 921 tabling motions, 645 (70%) of them were on majority-sponsored motions. By comparison, majority party members sponsored roughly 60% of all motions that received roll calls in this era.

The results from the data collected of all motions to table from 1865 to 1945 suggest that the motion was used as a tool of agenda control in the U.S. Senate prior to the twentieth century. Up to this point we believed the emergence of the tabling motion was a result of the institutional knowledge of Senator Robert Byrd (D-WV). The previously displayed figures show a significant increase in the use of tabling motions after 1865 and throughout the Reconstruction period. Despite a drop in the number of measures that received roll call votes at the turn of the century, the use of tabling motions peaked again. The figures also show a decrease in the number of motions to table prior to World War II, which is where the literature written thus far begins to analyze procedural votes in the Senate.

We have also discussed how motions to table allow senators to obfuscate their positions by limiting the legislative proposals that come to a final vote. This reduces the likelihood that a less sophisticated constituency back home is able to recognize the votes of senators. During this historical period it is even more likely this is the case with less information about the activities of legislators. Tabling motions lower the costs for majority party senators to oppose proposals they (or their electoral coalitions) may be ideologically sympathetic to, but could weaken the majority's agenda.

Fitting a Model of Tabling Motions

The U.S. Senate from 1865 to 1945 had several unique procedural features. First, it lacked institutions that would facilitate either inter-party or intra-party coordination. The ability to formulate a central majority party agenda was likely further hampered by sporadic turnout and the large number of private bills that members sought to provide. Second, it featured political parties marked by serious sectional divides. This led to a substantial amount of both inter and intra-party conflict on the chamber floor (Gamm and Smith 2002*b*). We have argued that this conflict on the floor led majority party leaders to utilize the motion to table in an effort to defend and advance their agenda.

Specifically, we posit that the motion to table will be employed against proposals that could weaken or distract from the majority party’s agenda. Thus, we anticipate that tabling motions were more likely to be utilized to defeat proposals advocated by moderate members of the minority party. Proposals advocated by minority party moderates could weaken or defeat substantively important majority party proposals. There are also more likely to attract support from members of the majority than proposals advocated by minority party extremists. These have greater chances of success, and as such, represent more significant threats to the agenda.

In addition, conflict amongst fellow partisans was commonplace in this era. Given their ideological location, threats to defect from the majority’s agenda are more credible for moderates within the majority caucus than extremists. Measures sponsored by extremists could make the underlying agenda more ideological and less likely to succeed down the road. We expect that more extreme members are thus more likely to have their proposals tabled than majority moderates. To examine this more systematically, we merged our tabling motion dataset with a new dataset of all motions that received recorded roll call votes from 1865 to 1945. We recorded the sponsor information for all these motions. When a measure received a recorded vote on a tabling motion, it was coded as “1,” otherwise “0.”²²

²²As we discuss in Appendix A, this process was quite tedious at times. Nominations are excluded from

A potential concern with these data stems from the possibility of “test votes.” For example, during the 35th Senate (1857-1859), majority party Democrats sought the passage of a bill appropriating funds to President James Buchanan authorizing the acquisition of Cuba. Cuba offered Southern Democrats an attractive opportunity to alter the sectional balance in the nation. Unfortunately Northerners, as well as the Spanish, had foiled all attempts at acquiring the slave-heavy island. Thus, when Senator John Slidell (D-LA) brought the measure to the Senate floor on February 25, 1859, it was met with aggressive Republican obstruction. Democrats unsuccessfully attempted to break the Republican filibuster through favorable chair rulings and by forcing them to hold the floor at lengths. Senator Albert Brown (D-MS) then proposed to lay the Cuba bill on the table as a “test vote,” complaining that “the Opposition manifestly do not allow us to get to a vote done (*Congressional Globe*, 35th Congress, February 25, 1859, 1363).” The motion to table was defeated overwhelmingly, 18 to 30, thus establishing that a majority existed in favor of the bill. Test votes – like the one in the preceding example – do not constitute usage of a tabling motion to control the chamber floor.²³ As such, we dropped instances where the member offering the tabling motion subsequently voted against it (this only amounted to 1.24% of all instances).

To tap our key independent variables, we coded the partisan affiliation of both the sponsors of measures that received roll call votes. We hypothesize that moderates within the minority party and extremists within the majority party are more likely to have their proposals tabled. Given the conditional nature of our argument, we interacted a majority party dummy (for the motion sponsor) with the motion sponsor’s first dimension DW-NOMINATE score.²⁴ We anticipate a significant, negative coefficient on the majority party dummy, and

this analysis because sponsor affiliation could not be determined.

²³Tests votes occurred occasionally in the more modern era as well. In the 87th Congress (1961-1963), Senator Mike Mansfield (D-MT) moved to table an amendment he co-sponsored, stating that “Mr. President, in accord with the information previously given to the Senate by the majority leader, I move to table the Mansfield-Dirksen amendment. I wish to inform the Senate that it is my intention to vote against my motion.” After the motion failed, Mansfield noted that “the large vote against tabling would suggest to the leadership that if the Senate could arrive at a reasonable understanding on the termination of debate the Senate would like to vote on the merits of the issue (*Congressional Record*, 87th Congress, May 9, 1962, 8047.)”

²⁴Both the roll call vote data and the member DW-NOMINATE scores were taken from Keith Poole’s

a positive, significant coefficient on our interactive term. We also include several additional control variables.

First, the pre-World War II Senate featured two sizeable, long-serving majority parties: the Republican majorities during Reconstruction, and Democratic New Deal majorities. Accordingly, we may expect to see more intra-party tabling motions employed due to the sheer size of the majorities during these eras. We control for this possibility using the size of the majority party's seat share in each Senate. This variable is calculated by taking the number of seats the majority party controls and dividing them by the total number of seats in the Senate.

Recent literature on obstruction in the U.S. Senate has convincingly argued that the threat of obstruction was more serious in the waning days of the congressional session (Binder and Smith 1997; Wawro and Schickler 2006). Late in a session the physical costs of holding the chamber floor were far lower. With the elections already decided, retribution from constituents was a less credible threat on member behavior. Thus, during these periods, time was a more valuable commodity, and we would anticipate tabling motions should be utilized more frequently. We control for this through a dummy variable denoting the presence of a lame duck session.²⁵

Amendments can significantly alter the ideological content of legislation under consideration in Congress. They can break up or weaken the coalition supporting a bill. Additionally, debate over certain amendments can be embarrassing and time-consuming for the majority party. Thus, we expect that tabling motions should be used more frequently on amendments as opposed to other motions. We control for amendments using a simple dummy variable in our analysis.

Senior senators are more likely to be cognizant of the chamber's central agenda. Due to

voteview website. See Poole and Rosenthal (1997) for a discussion of NOMINATE scores.

²⁵Until the Twentieth Amendment took effect in 1933, the terms of Congress and the president began and ended on March 4th. This meant that lame-duck congresses could continue legislating for four months, during which a significant amount of legislation was often passed. The amendment moved the start of the term back to January 3rd, effectively killing lame-duck sessions (Binder and Smith 1997; Wawro and Schickler 2006).

their experience, these members are more likely to push measures more likely to succeed. Challenges to the control of the agenda are more likely to come from junior members – who are less likely to be a part of the leadership structure. We control for seniority using the number of years a member served prior to that Congress.²⁶ Finally, the motion to table has been employed in the modern era primarily as a mechanism for controlling minority party amendments. We assess the possibility that it could be used in a similar manner in this era by including dummy variables for all amendments that received recorded roll call votes.

As our dependent variable is dichotomous, we opt to employ a logit model as our method of analysis. The results from that model (Model 1) are reported in Table 1. Additionally, a final concern stems from the possibility that by including all tabling motions – regardless of their success – we are biasing the results in favor of several of our hypotheses. One could imagine a scenario where a disproportionate number of unsuccessful tabling motions targeted majority party extremists. To account for this, we also report the results from a model (Model 2) that only included successful tabling motions.

[Table 1 Here]

Results

Results from our logit analyses are presented in Table 1.²⁷ As there does not appear to be any substantively significant differences between the two models, our discussion is confined to Model 1 for simplicity. Again, our primary theoretical argument was that proposals that could weaken or distract from the majority party’s agenda would be significantly more likely to be subjected to tabling motions. The results presented in Table 1 are generally supportive of this argument.

²⁶These data are from the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) 1997.

²⁷Aggregating data over a wide time interval increases the potential for correlated errors. This suggests the usage of robust standard errors may be appropriate here. While there is no noticeable effect on the significance of the parameters, robust standard errors clustered on each congress are slightly larger and presented in Table 1.

As we hypothesized, the coefficient on the majority party dummy variable is significant and negative. This suggests that – as is the case in the modern era – tabling motions were significantly more likely to target minority party proposals, which provides evidence of majority party influence during this era of weak party institutions. Even in the early U.S. Senate, members of both parties sought to influence policy outcomes and better position themselves for reelection. This led minority party members to offer proposals on the chamber floor designed to shift policies toward their ideal points. An examination of the predicted probabilities provides additional leverage on this question. Holding the lame duck and amendment variables to zero and all other variables to their mean, the predicted probability that a minority party members’ proposal would be tabled was 7.74%. For majority party members, it was a mere 2.16%.²⁸

The ideological distance variable, and the variable interacting distance and majority party status were also significant and in the expected directions. Again, this suggests to us that majority party policy entrepreneurs were concerned with proposals that could weaken their legislation. This, we believe, led them to disproportionately target minority party moderate’s proposals. They also sought to defend the majority party’s agenda against dissident majority party members, who occasionally favor more extreme policies, but otherwise would support the median party position. Figure 3 presents the predicted probabilities for our interactive variables.

[Figure 3 Here]

Figure 3 illustrates the dramatic differences in the probability a majority party members’ measure receives a tabling motion across ideological levels. The mean distance between members of the majority party and the chamber median was 0.162. As previously noted, the probability a majority party members’ proposal would be tabled (holding the lame duck and amendment variables to zero and all other variables to their mean) was 2.16%. Moving

²⁸The 95% confidence interval for minority party members ranged from 4.92% to 10.55%. For majority party members, it ranged from 1.19% to 3.13%. Predicted probabilities were computed using the SPost package in Stata programmed by Long and Freese (2006).

one standard deviation away from the mean resulted in a nearly five-fold increase in the probability a proposal would be tabled. Conversely, the more extreme a minority party member, the less likely his measure will be subjected to a tabling motion. Holding the lame duck and amendment variables to zero and all other variables to their mean, the probability a minority party members' proposal would be tabled moves from 21.26% at the minimum level of ideological difference from the chamber median, to 0.22% at the maximum level.

Of our control variables, only the senate service variable reaches conventional levels of statistical significant. The negative sign on the coefficient suggests that senior senators were less likely to have their proposals subjected to tabling motions. This is consistent with our hypothesis that more senior senators would be more likely to sponsor measures that had high probabilities of success. Moreover, opponents may be less willing to try and table measures offered by more senior and potentially more influential members.

Discussion

The motion to table is a non-debatable procedural motion subject to a simple majority vote. As with votes on House rules, votes on tabling motions can obfuscate the underlying issue, providing members with political cover.²⁹ As Senator Morse argued in 1957, it serves as a parliamentary diversionary tactic. For much of the late twentieth century, the tabling motion was the primary mechanism employed by majorities to advance and defend their partisan agenda. Recent evidence suggests that the motion to table limits the effectiveness of amendments introduced by the minority party in an attempt to subvert the majority party's agenda (Den Hartog and Monroe 2011). In this paper, we examine the motion to table in the early U.S. Senate to better understand how it evolved as a procedural tool of majorities prior to the institutionalization of party leadership in the upper chamber.

Contrary to the conventional wisdom, we have argued that usage of the motion to table did not originate in the late-twentieth century with Senator Byrd. We posited that weak

²⁹For more evidence on this point, see Appendix B.

party institutions in the early Senate led majorities to rely heavily on the motion to table. Because of this, tabling motions should be utilized much more frequently in the early era than scholars have previously thought. Figure 1 provided evidence suggesting that this was the case. Tabling motions frequently made up more than 10% of the roll call record in these congresses. It was only after the establishment of formal leadership positions that coordination increased, leading to fewer tabling motions on the floor. Second, we argued that usage of tabling motions should primarily be a tool of the majority party. Figure 2 is supportive of this point: 78% of all tabling motions that yielded roll call votes were offered by majority party members. Majority party members were also significantly more likely to have their tabling motions successfully adopted.

We further argued that the motion allowed majority party leaders to defend the floor against proposals that could weaken their legislative agenda or lead to uncomfortable debate on the chamber floor. This led us to hypothesize that majorities would be more likely to target measures offered by the minority that had high probabilities of success. This meant that they should be more likely to table measures offered by minority party moderates. Additionally, low levels of intraparty coordination due to the absence of strong party institutions meant conflicts among fellow partisans on the floor were common in this era (Gamm and Smith 2002*a*). Thus, tabling motions should be used to block proposals offered by extreme members of the majority given that these proposals tend to be more ideological and could potentially derail the party's agenda. Results from a logit model presented in Table 1 strongly support these claims.

We want to be clear, however, that the motion to table is not nearly as strong an agenda control tool as special rules utilized in the House. This motion cannot prevent senators from bringing proposals to the floor initially. This is a major reason why majority leaders have moved to filling the amendment tree in recent decades. Doing so allows the majority to block members from bringing potentially divisive amendments – and discussion of those amendments – to the floor entirely. Tabling motions also cannot be used to curtail most types

of obstruction. Indeed, this is why leaders rely heavily on unanimous consent agreements when scheduling legislation (Smith and Flathman 1989; Ainsworth and Flathman 1995). As such, we view the motion to table as providing majorities with a comparably modest means of defending their legislative agenda.

Future work should explore the connection between formal Senate leadership positions and usage of the motion to table more explicitly. The evidence presented here suggests that as leaders in the Senate became more influential during the early part of the twentieth century, tabling motions were employed less frequently against fellow partisans. This is more in keeping with recent studies of the motion to table that examine how this procedural tool has been primarily used by the majority to restrict minority participation (Goodman 2010; Den Hartog and Monroe 2011). Additional research should also examine how strong majority leader's shaped this procedural tool in order to achieve more favorable legislative outcomes. We believe that such work will go a long way toward further illustrating how procedural tools in the Senate can assist the majority party in accomplishing their specific legislative goals.

Appendix A: Coding Measure Sponsors

Determining the sponsor of all measures subjected to roll call votes was a difficult process. We are grateful to Keith Poole for providing us with sponsor names for some of the measures in question. For others, we are grateful to our excellent research assistants. In a limited number of cases, sponsor identification could not be determined. In particular, the sponsor of the underlying measure was listed as missing on votes occurring on nominations. This occurred in 325 observations (23 of which were subjected to tabling motions.) In an additional 602 votes, sponsor information could not be determined. This amounted to a total of 927 missing data points or 5.95% of our data. These observations were omitted from the logit analysis presented in Table 1.

Other instances were less clear, but manageable. In the rare cases where a member introduced a bill, resolution or amendment on behalf of himself and other senators, only the member introducing the measure on the floor was coded as the sponsor (Carson and Madonna 2010). For example, in the 88th Congress (1963-1965), the *Congressional Record* noted that, “Mr. Williams of Delaware (for himself and Mr. Case) submitted a resolution (S. Res. 330) to inquire into the financial of business interests or activities including use of campaign funds, of any Member of former Members of the Senate, officer, employee, or former employee of the Senate, which was ordered to lie on the table and to be printed (*Congressional Record*, 88th Congress, May 13, 1964, 10757.)” In this instance, Senator John Williams (R-DE) was coded as the sponsor.

When an amendment was described as a “committee amendment,” a detailed reading of the record was undertaken to determine whether the member who sponsored the amendment in the committee was identified. This was frequently the case. In the 77th Congress (1941-1943), Senator Walter George (D-GA), stated that an “amendment was presented to the committee by the Senator from Michigan [Mr. Vandenberg], and the committee voted favorably on the amendment offered (*Congressional Record*, 77th Congress, October 9, 1942, 10757.)” In this instance, Senator Arthur Vandenberg (R-MI) was listed as the sponsor.

If the committee sponsor was not explicitly listed, we listed the sponsor as the member who consumed the most floor time advocating for the adoption of the amendment. For example, in the 85th Congress (1957-1959), Senator Robert Kerr (D-OK) stated that, “Speaking for that committee and for what I believe to be the rights of the people of a great State and of a great metropolitan area, and in the conviction that it can do no harm to any area, I urge the passage of the proposed legislation by the Senate (*Congressional Record*, 85th Congress, August 22, 1958, 19125).” In this case, Kerr was listed as the sponsor.

For House bills and resolutions, the sponsor was listed as the senator who made the motion to consider the House bill or resolution. In the 51st Congress (1889-1891), Senator Edward Oliver Wolcott (R-CO) moved that “the Senate proceed to the consideration of the (H.R. 12500) making an apportionment of Representatives in Congress among the several States under the Eleventh Census (*Congressional Record*, 51st Congress, January 22, 1891, 1740).” In this case, Wolcott was listed as the sponsor of the measure. Similarly, when a conference report was voted on, the member who introduced the report on the floor is listed as the sponsor. For example, in the 87th Congress (1961-1963), Senator B. Everett Jordan (D-NC) moved to “submit a report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2010) to amend title V of the Agricultural Act of 1949, as amendment, and for other purposes (*Congressional Record*, 87th Congress, September 21, 1961, 10757.)” In this case, Jordan was listed as the sponsor.

Appendix B: Tabling Motions and Political Cover

In the section, “Fitting a Model of Tabling Motions,” we evaluated what proposals were more likely to be subjected to tabling motions. We argued that tabling motions provide majorities with a comparably modest means of “defensive agenda control.” This, we suggest, is due to three reasons. First, as a procedural motion, it can obfuscate the underlying motion and provide potentially pivotal members with political cover. Additionally, the motion is non-debatable and allows leaders a means of saving time during the session. Finally, it allows majorities to dictate the content of debate on the Senate floor.

In this appendix, we attempt to better examine the assumption that the motion to table provides members with political cover. There are some reasons why we may be skeptical of the notion that tabling motions were able to provide cover in this era. First, senators were not directly elected for much of this time period. While electoral concerns still likely factored into members’ calculations, it may not have played the same role it does in the more modern era. Second, turnout was exceptionally low in the era, and members seeking to avoid casting a difficult vote could simply opt for absence.

Building off of our original data provides us with a unique opportunity to examine this question empirically. Specifically, we collected member-vote level data on failed tabling motions and matched it with votes on the merits. Our expectation is that if the motion to table was providing members with political cover, we would anticipate moderates to exhibit inconsistent behavior on the motion to table than their more extreme counterparts. Specifically, we would expect that when a tabling motion fails, moderate senators should be more likely to “switch” their vote and support the underlying motion.

To match the failed tabling motion to the underlying motion, we examined all tabling motions from the 39th (1865-1867) to the 79th (1943-1945) congresses. We read through the *Congressional Record* to identify whether or not the underlying motion received a roll call vote. We dropped bills with intervening successful amendments, and amendments with intervening successful secondary amendments because of comparability. After identifying a

failed tabling motion, we looked through the record to see if we could identify a companion vote on the underlying measure. Of the 967 tabling motions in our dataset, 266 failed. An additional 46 were decided without a quorum voting, and those were omitted. Of the 266 failed tabling motions, we identified a companion vote on an unaltered underlying measure in 79 of them. We then compared members' votes on the two measures in an effort to identify "switching."³⁰ In particular, we looked for members who voted for the motion to table and then also supported the underlying measure. As such, we omitted instances where the failed tabling motion was on an appeal of order. In these situations, members who support the tabling motion also support upholding the chair's ruling. Additionally, we treated episodes where members were absent for either or both votes as missing data.

Given that we are identifying unsuccessful tabling motions, it follows that this is not a representative sample of all switching behavior on tabling motions. We would anticipate that the universe of successful tabling motions would feature a greater number of instances where a member supported the motion to table despite also supporting the underlying motion. Despite this, we found some evidence that members were utilizing tabling motions for political cover, even during this era.

Of the 4,652 identifiable vote pairs, we observed instances of switching in 174 of them (or 3.74%). As expected, the bulk of the switching was done by members of the majority party. Specifically, 135 of the 174 switches were done by majority party members. To examine the effect of ideology on switching, we take the absolute difference between individual senators and the chamber mean for a given congress as measured by first dimension DW-NOMINATE scores. Consistent with our expectations, moderate members are significantly more likely to engage in switching at least once in a given congress. The average DW-NOMINTE distance between senators who remained consistent on all vote pairs and the chamber mean is .321. For senators who switched on a vote pair, it is .241. This difference is statistically significant at the .05 level.

³⁰For each vote, we treated paired yes votes and announced yes votes as "yes votes," paired no votes as "no votes" and coded present and not voting categories as "absent."

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Figure 1: Tabling Motions as a Percent of the Roll Call Record per Senate, 1865-1945

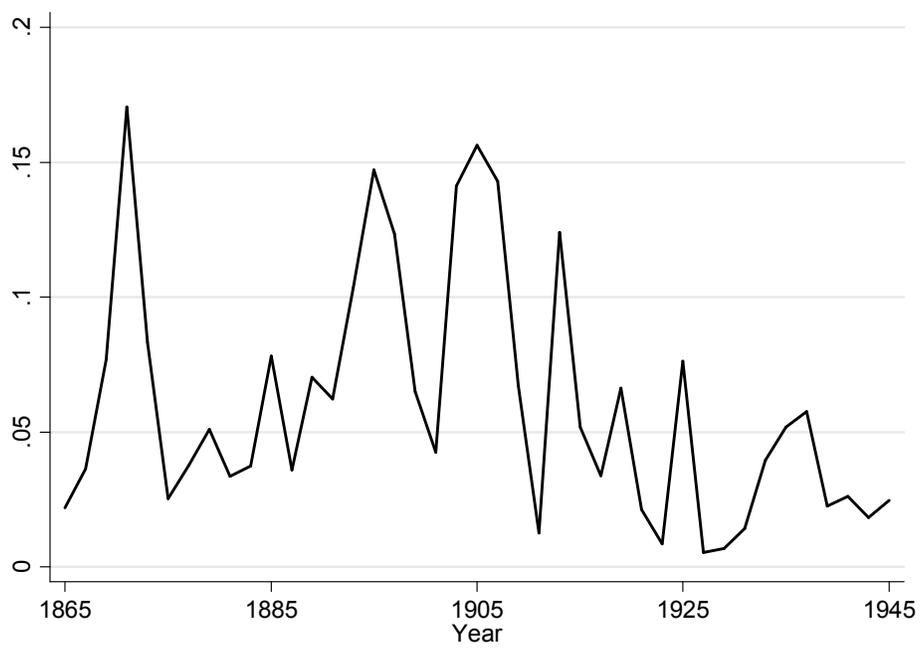


Figure 2: Tabling Motions per Senate, 1865-1945

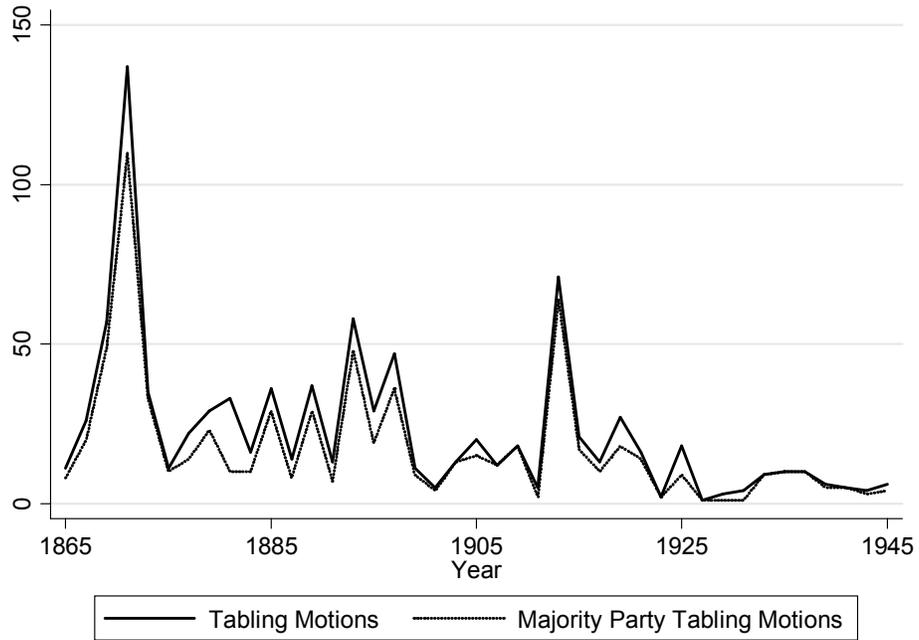


Table 1: Logit Models of Tabling Motions, 1865-1945

Covariate	Model 1	Model 2
Majority Party	-2.120* (0.396)	-1.984* (0.409)
Distance	-3.814* (0.919)	-3.230* (0.895)
Majority Party *	7.736* (1.046)	7.641* (1.080)
Distance		
Party Seat Share	2.203 (1.446)	1.511 (1.368)
Senate Service	-0.048* (0.008)	-0.043* (0.010)
Amendment	-0.225 (0.155)	0.045 (0.159)
Lame Duck	0.255 (0.184)	0.115 (0.175)
Constant	-2.273* (0.785)	-2.618* (0.776)
Observations	14437	14437
Prob > χ^2	0.000	0.000
Pseudo R^2	0.094	0.098

Note: *indicates significance at the $p = .05$ level. Coefficients with robust standard errors clustered on Congress listed in parentheses. Model 1 is the full model; Model 2 is restricted to only observations where the tabling motion was successful.

Figure 3: Effect of Chamber Distance on Likelihood a Measure is Tabled

