

Keeping Up with the Congressmen: Evaluating Constituents' Awareness of Redistricting

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A Appendix: Variables used in the analysis

Awareness of being in the new district The respondent's level of awareness of redistricting and whether they knew they were included in the new district.

Is {Georgetown/York/Sumter} County in the new district Whether the respondent believed the specified county was included in the new 7th district.

Better representation in new district Whether the respondent thought their interests would receive "better" or "worse" representation in Congress, or anticipating "no difference."

Part of district likely to benefit more Respondent's answer to an open-ended question asking respondents to identify whether any part of the district would disproportionately benefit from redistricting.

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Expected vote The respondent’s answer to a question asking who they would vote for if the election were held on the date of interview, with the candidates identified by name and major party affiliation.

Political knowledge A four-item index constructed from whether the respondent knew the current lieutenant governor of South Carolina, the Chief Justice of the United States, the 30-year trend in violent crime rates, and the 30-year trend in teen pregnancy rates. “Don’t know” responses were coded as incorrect per Luskin and Bullock (2011).

Interviewer measure of political knowledge A seven-point scale of perceived political awareness, ranging from “Extremely high” to “Extremely low.”

Political awareness Four-point scale based on respondent’s response to “how often would you say you follow what’s going on in government and public affairs?": “Most of the time,” “Some of the time,” “Only now and then,” and “Hardly at all.”

Income Respondent’s income category (11-point scale): ‘Under \$15,000’, ‘\$15-20,000’, ‘\$20-30,000’, ‘\$30-40,000’, ‘\$40-50,000’, ‘\$50-75,000’, ‘\$75-100,000’, ‘\$100-125,000’, ‘\$125-175,000’, ‘\$175-250,000’, and ‘Over \$250,000’.

Female Based on interviewer’s coding of respondent’s perceived gender.

Age Respondent’s self-reported age at his or her last birthday.

Black Based on respondent’s self-reported race or ethnicity.

Education Respondent’s level of formal education: ‘Less than High School’, ‘High School graduate / GED’, ‘Some college’, ‘Two-year tech college grad’, ‘Four-year college degree’, or ‘Post Graduate’.

Married Coded 1 for respondents who reported currently being married, 0 for all other marital statuses.

Party identification Seven-point party identification scale, based on the conventional ANES branching questions, ranging from “Strong Democrat” (1) to “Strong Republican” (7). “Republican identifiers/leaners” include values 5–7.

Ideology Respondent’s ideological self-placement on a five-point scale, ranging from “Very liberal” (1) to “Very conservative” (5).

B Online Appendix: Study Methodology and Content

The October 2012 Winthrop Poll was one of an ongoing series of polls on national, regional, and state politics and policy conducted by the Social and Behavioral Research Laboratory at Winthrop University. The SBRL has a dedicated telephone interviewing facility using live interviewers, assisted by a computer-assisted telephone interviewing package, The Survey System by Creative Research Systems. The sponsors of the Winthrop Poll are Winthrop University and the John C. West Forum on Policy and Politics.

Although the poll's director (one of the co-authors of this paper) has a great deal of freedom to select the subjects, scope, and content of each poll, as a general rule the Winthrop Poll, as part of its public service mission, generally focuses primarily on contemporary issues of interest to the citizens of South Carolina and, to a lesser extent, the southeastern United States.

In the October 2012 poll, which solely interviewed registered voters in the newly-formed 7th District, respondents were asked to respond to questions on contemporary political concerns and public policy issues facing the United States, South Carolina, and the Grand Strand and Pee Dee regions of the state. Questions were also included regarding the awareness of the effects of redistricting on the area covered by the 7th District. The subject and timing of the poll in question were primarily selected to reflect public and media interest in the election contest, with the academic research in this paper being a secondary consideration. Accordingly the data we report on in this paper is necessarily limited to that collected as part of this broader project.

Further information on the Winthrop Poll is available online at <http://www.winthrop.edu/winthropoll/default.aspx>.

References

- Luskin, Robert C., and John G. Bullock. 2011. "'Don't Know' Means 'Don't Know': DK Responses and the Public's Level of Political Knowledge." *The Journal of Politics* 73 (2): 547–57.