Online Appendix for How Partisan Is Local Election Administration?

Intended for online publication only.

Contents

A.1 Review of Previous Literature on Partisan Differences in Local Election Administration

Table A.1 summarizes the literature to date on partisan differences in local election administration. Each row of A.1 represents a study of partisan differences, and the columns summarize the study's setting, research design, outcome of interest, finding, and any conditional aspects of the finding.

Table A.1: **Review of Partisan Local Election Official Literature.**

Paper	Setting	Design	Outcome	Partisan Difference	Condition
Hamilton and Ladd (1996)	NC	X-Section	Straight party voting option	Yes	
Stuart (2004)	FL	X-Section	Purge rate of potential felons	Yes	
Kimball, Kropf, and Battles (2006)	USA	X-Section	Provisional ballots cast	Mixed	In heavily co-partisan jurisdictions
Kimball, Kropf, and Battles (2006)	USA	X-Section	Provisional ballots counted	Mixed	In heavily co-partisan jurisdictions
Bassi, Morton, and Trounstine (2009)*	USA	County DiD	Change in Turnout	Yes	
Bassi, Morton, and Trounstine (2009)*	USA	County DiD	Dem Margin of Vicotry	Yes	
Dyck and Seabrook (2009)*	OR	X-Section	Vote-by-Mail Acceptance	Yes	
Dyck and Seabrook (2009)*	OR	X-Section	Move Dems to inactive list	Yes	
Kimball and Baybeck (2010)*	USA	Survey	Support for access and security policies	Mixed	In large jurisdictions
Burden et al. (2013)	WI	X-Section	Support for access and security policies	No	
Burden et al. (2013)	WI	X-Section	Turnout	Mixed	For appointed Reps in Dem electorates
Kimball et al. (2013)	USA	Survey	Support for access and security policies	Mixed	In large jurisdictions
Kimball et al. (2013)	USA	Survey	Support for provisional voting programs	Mixed	In heavily co-partisan jurisdictions
Kropf, Vercellotti, and Kimball (2013)	USA	Survey	Support for provisional voting	Mixed	In heavily co-partisan jurisdictions
White, Nathan, and Faller (2015)	USA	Experiment	Bias in email response rate	No	
Merivaki and Smith (2016)	FL	X-Section	Provisional ballots cast	Mixed	In midterm elections
Merivaki and Smith (2016)	FL	X-Section	Provisional ballots rejected	Mixed	In midterm elections
Porter and Rogowski (2018)	WI	Experiment	Co-partisan email response rate	Mixed	In heavily co-partisan jurisdictions
Mohr et al. (2019)	NC	County DiD	Election expenditures	Mixed	In heavily co-partisan jurisdictions
McBrayer, Williams, and Eckelman (2020)	TX	X-Section	Number of early voting sites	Yes	
McBrayer, Williams, and Eckelman (2020)	TX	X-Section	Location of early voting sites	No	
Shepherd et al. (2021)	NC	Individual Panel	Polling location change	No	

X-Section refers to a cross-sectional design, and DiD refers to a difference-in-differences design. *Unpublished manuscript.

A.2 The Responsibilities of Local Election Officials

Table A.2 shows a stylized division of states into tiers based on how much authority is vested in a single partisan elected election official. Table A.3 describes the duties of these officials across states. In cases where officials have limited discretion under state law, we indicate that by describing the discretion they have as high, mid, or low, indicating much, some, or little discretion, respectively.

Table A.2: **States with Partisan Elected Local Election Officals.**

Tier	Description	Examples	States	In Analysis?
1	Partisan elected official does everything or nearly everything	Separate canvassing board (FL)	CO, FL, IA, ID, IL, KS, MO, MT, NE, NV, SD, UT, WA, WY	Yes
2	Partisan elected official has some shared authority	Separate registration board or absentee voting official (AL, GA, NM, TX); Shares authority with elections board but holds the decisive vote (IN, KY); Shares authority with county legislative body (WV)	AL, GA, IN, KY, NM, TX, WV	Yes; excluded in robustness check
3	Partisan elected official has limited authority	Administers registration and early voting but not Election Day voting (AR, AZ, MS); Shares authority with separate board and lacks decisive vote (LA)	AR, AZ, LA, MS	No
4	Partisan elected official has severely limited authority	Municipal official or divided between city and county (CT, MA, MI, RI, VT, WI); Shares authority and has few responsibilities (NJ)	CT, MA, MI, NJ, RI, VT, WI	No
5	No partisan elected official	Election officials nonpartisan and/or appointed	AK, CA, DC, DE, HI, MD, ME, MN, NC, ND, NH, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, SC, TN, VA	No

This table divides states into tiers based on the amount of responsibility individual partisan elected local officials have in administering elections. In states with local- and county-level variation in responsibilities, only those counties with partisan elected officials are considered. Where there is within-state variation in the presence of other officials (i.e., for IN and TX), the modal case for each state is considered.

Table A.3: **Local Election Offical Responsibilities by State.**

State	Officer	Registration	List Maintenance	Polling Place	Early Voting	Poll Workers	Voting Equipment	Training
Alabama	Probate Judge	Low	Low	Mid	Low	Low	High	High
Colorado	Clerk	High	High	Low	Low	Low	High	Low
Florida	Supervisor of Elections	High	High	Mid	High	Mid	High	High
Georgia	Probate Judge	Low	Low	High	Mid	Mid	High	Low
Idaho	Clerk	High	High	Low	High	Mid	High	High
Illinois	Clerk	High	High	High	High	Low	High	Mid
Indiana	Clerk	High*	High*	Low	High	Low	High	Mid
Iowa	Auditor	High	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
Kansas	Clerk	High	Mid	High	High	Low	High	Mid
Kentucky	Clerk	High	Mid	Mid	Low	Low	High	Mid
Missouri	Clerk	High	High	High	Low	Low	High	High
Montana	Election Administrator	High	High	Low	Low	Low	High	Low
Nebraska	Clerk	High	Mid	High	High	Mid	High	Mid
Nevada	Clerk	High	High	High	High	Mid	High	High
New Mexico	Clerk	High	High	Low	High	Low	Low	Mid
South Dakota	Auditor / Finance Officer	High	High	Mid	Low	Mid	High	High
Texas	Clerk / District Clerk / Tax Assessor	Varies	Varies	Mid	High	Mid	High	High
Utah	Clerk	High	High	High	High	Low	High	High
Washington	Auditor	High	High	Low	Low	N/A	High	High
West Virginia	Clerk	High	High	Mid	Mid	Mid	High	Mid
Wyoming	Clerk	High	High	High	Low	Mid	High	High

High, mid, and low indicate degrees of discretion with high representing the most discretion and low representing the least. In states with county-level variation in local election official responsibilities, this table applies to officials with primary responsibility over voting administration. *In Indiana, Allen, LaPorte, Madison, Marion, St. Joseph, Vanderburgh, and Vigo counties have separate registration officials.

A.3 Describing the New Data on Election Officials

As we discuss in our Data section, the top panel of Figure A.1 presents the relationship between Democratic clerk vote share and Democratic presidential vote share in counties that elect clerks on a presidential election cycle. The bottom panel plots the relationship between lagged Democratic presidential vote share and current period Democratic presidential vote share. The correlation between presidential and clerk vote share is quite low, suggesting that voters are considering additional factors and treat Democratic and Republican party labels differently in local election official races. This is even more striking considering the comparison is between clerk and presidential races featured in the same election and presidential contests occuring four years apart. Considering the full dataset of elections and comparing Democratic clerk vote share with lagged presidential vote share weakens the correlation even further, to 0.30.

Table A.4 compares the counties for which we have election data to the counties that elect partisan local election officials but where we do not have election data using 2010 decennial census data.[27] The counties we are missing tend to be less populous, in the South, and have larger Black and Hispanic populations. The counties that do not have elected partisan election officials tend to be much more populous, in the South or Northeast, and have larger Black but smaller Hispanic populations.

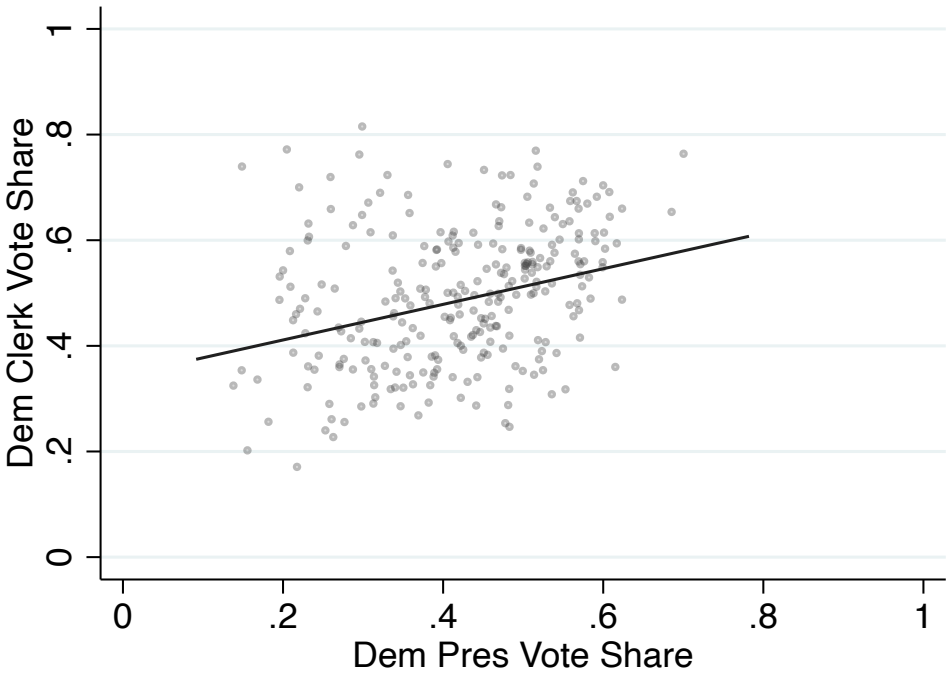
[27] https://www.census.gov/data/datasets/2010/dec/summary-file-1.html

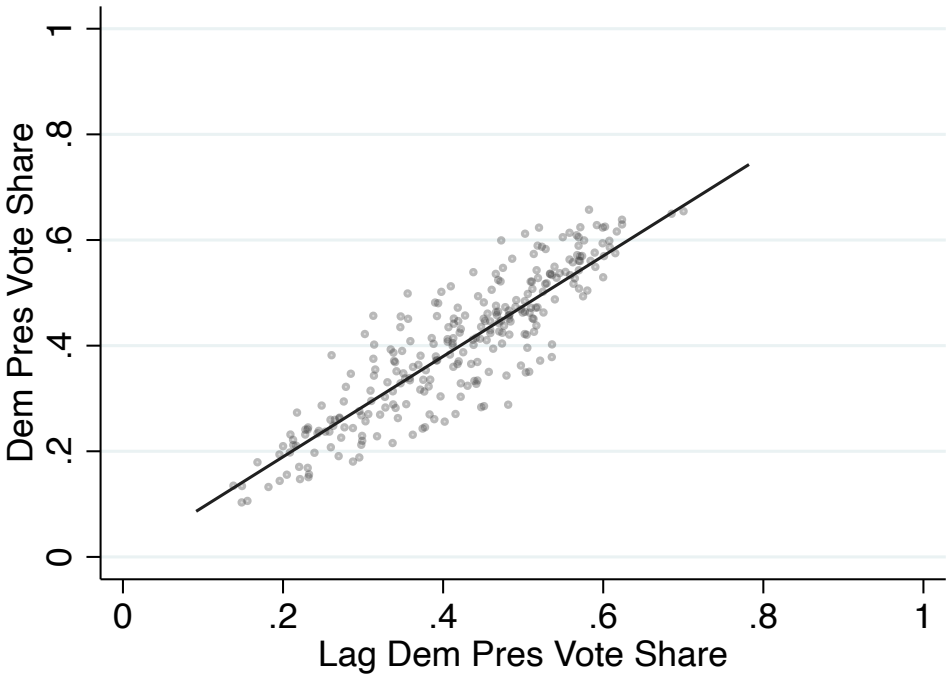
Table A.4: **Description of Counties In and Not In Sample.**

Outcome	In Sample	Not In Sample	Not In Scope
Population (Thousands)	55.51	37.88	143.06
	(171.99)	(111.74)	(404.58)
Share Non-Hispanic White	0.81	0.77	0.76
	(0.19)	(0.22)	(404.58)
Share Black	0.05	0.08	0.12
	(0.11)	(0.13)	(0.16)
Share Hispanic	0.10	0.12	0.06
	(0.15)	(0.20)	(0.10)
Northeast	0.00	0.00	0.14
Midwest	0.41	0.46	0.26
South	0.38	0.54	0.50
West	0.21	0.00	0.10
Num Counties	1,310	237	1,586

Standard deviations reported in parentheses below group means.

Figure A.1: **Low Correlation between Democratic Clerk Vote Share and Democratic Presidential Vote Share**. The top panel presents the relationship between Democratic clerk vote share and Democratic presidential vote share in counties that elect clerks on a presidential election cycle. The bottom panel presents the much stronger relationship between Democratic presidential vote share and lagged Democratic presidential vote share in these counties.





A.4 Predicting Election Results

When a lagged outcome is available, it is standard practice in regression discontinuity designs to improve precision by including the lagged outcome as a covariate in the regression (Calonico et al. 2019). This approach works well when the relationship between the lagged outcome and current-period outcome is constant across units. While the relationship between lagged and current-period Democratic presidential vote share is positive across states and times, there is still considerable variation in this relationship due to differences in candidates over time as well as regional and state-specific political changes. If we had many counties in each state and election year that had close elections for their local election officials, we could include state-year-specific intercepts and coefficients on lagged vote share to account for this variation and improve our precision. However, only a subset of counties have close elections for local election official.

As we discuss in our Empirical Strategy section, we improve on standard practice using a three-step process that follows the recommendations of Lee and Lemieux (2010) and Noack, Olma, and Rothe (2021). They study an estimator that first predicts the outcome and then uses the residuals from that prediction exercise as the outcome in a standard regression discontinuity estimator. Under the standard regression discontinuity design assumption of smoothness in predetermined covariates at the treatment assignment threshold, this estimator produces unbiased point estimates and valid inference.

We use this procedure throughout the paper, constructing residualized outcomes by first using a lagged outcome to predict the outcome of interest and then taking the remaining error from this prediction process. We choose the predictor that minimizes out-of-sample prediction error using leave-one-out cross-validation. We fit our regression holding out one observation at a time, use that regression to predict the held out unit's outcome value, and compute the error as the difference between the observed and predicted outcome values.

We test four regression specifications:

- Pooled coefficients and intercepts: $Y_{ct+k} = \beta Y_{ct} + \gamma + \epsilon_{ct+k}$
- State-specific coefficients and intercepts: $Y_{ct+k} = \beta_s Y_{ct} + \gamma_s + \epsilon_{ct+k}$
- Year-specific coefficients and intercept: $Y_{ct+k} = \beta_{t+k} Y_{ct} + \gamma_{t+k} + \epsilon_{ct+k}$

- State-year-specific coefficients and intercept: $Y_{ct+k} = \beta_{st+k} Y_{ct} + \gamma_{st+k} + \epsilon_{ct+k}$

where Y is our outcome variable, c indexes counties, s indexes states, t indexes election years, and $t + k$ is the election k years later (e.g., $k = 4$ for presidential elections and $k = 6$ for senate elections).

Predicting Democratic presidential vote share in leave-one-out cross-validation, we find that the mean squared prediction error is 0.030 for the state-year-specific regression, 0.041 for the year-specific regression, 0.053 for the state-specific regression, and 0.056 for the pooled regression. We choose the state-year-specific regression because it minimizes out-of-sample error when predicting presidential election results. We follow this specification for all other outcomes, using state-year-specific regressions to maintain consistency.

A.5 Calculating Minimimum Detectable Effects

Throughout the paper, we present estimates of the minimum detectable effect with 80% power. We compute these estimates with the following optimization procedure:

$$\arg\min_{\tau} \ (\phi(\frac{\tau}{\sigma} - z_{\alpha}) - (1 - \beta))^2, \text{ subject to } \tau > 0$$

where τ is the hypothesized effect, σ is the standard error for the effect, z_{α} is the z score threshold implied by a significance level of α, β is the power level, and ϕ is the standard normal cumulative distribution function. We plug in our estimate of σ from each regression and set $\alpha = 0.05$ and $\beta = 0.80$ per convention. We use numerical optimization to find the positive value of τ that minimizes this function.

A.6 Validating the Main Findings

A.6.1 Counties that Narrowly Elect Democrats vs. Republicans Are Similar on Pre-Treatment Covariates

As we discuss in our Methods section, our close-election regression discontinuity design should ensure that the local averages of pre-treatment county-level covariates are similar in places that narrowly elect Democrats and those that narrowly elect Republicans. We show that this holds in practice in Tables A.5 and A.6. We find that the design works as expected, giving us balance on all of the pre-treatment covariates we check across our regression specifications.

Table A.5: **Regression Discontinuity Design Balances Pre-Treatment Democratic Presidential Vote Share and Turnout.**

	Lagged Dem Pres Vote Share				Lagged Turnout			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Dem Elec Official	0.029	0.040	0.007	0.020	0.008	0.005	0.019	0.013
	(0.022)	(0.017)	(0.029)	(0.022)	(0.019)	(0.014)	(0.026)	(0.019)
N	355	643	178	392	614	1115	307	698
Clusters	355	643	178	392	355	643	179	404
Bandwidth	0.07	0.15	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.15	0.04	0.09
BW Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Unif	Unif	Unif	Tri	Unif	Unif	Unif	Tri

Robust standard errors clustered by clerk election in parentheses. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure. Unif means the specification uses a uniform kernel. Tri means the specification uses a triangular kernel.

Table A.6: **Regression Discontinuity Balances County-Level Covariates.**

Outcome Variable	Balance at RD Cut Point			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Log(Population)	0.294	0.131	0.262	0.231
	(0.253)	(0.195)	(0.350)	(0.262)
	[447]	[772]	[772]	[772]
Share Non-Hispanic White	0.007	0.018	0.046	0.022
	(0.035)	(0.027)	(0.052)	(0.042)
	[393]	[650]	[650]	[650]
Share Black	0.029	0.014	0.026	0.017
	(0.024)	(0.016)	(0.034)	(0.020)
	[254]	[479]	[479]	[479]
South	0.016	0.018	0.001	0.040
	(0.097)	(0.070)	(0.131)	(0.094)
	[372]	[675]	[675]	[675]
West	0.017	0.051	-0.066	0.009
	(0.084)	(0.062)	(0.116)	(0.083)
	[406]	[726]	[726]	[726]
Bandwidth Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Triangular

Each unbracketed number is an estimate of balance for a particular variable at the discontinuity using a given RD estimator. Robust standard errors clustered by clerk election in parentheses. Sample size reported in square braces. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure.

A.6.2 Counties Not Sorting into Treatment or Control

As we discuss in our Methods section, one potential threat to our design is counties sorting into treatment or control. This could happen if local election officials can manipulate the vote total in subtle ways to ensure they win if they would otherwise lose without intervention. We evaluate this concern using a modified version of the density test proposed in McCrary (2008). Since we expect counties with Democratic clerks to be more likely to narrowly elect Democrats, and the same for Republicans, we change the running variable to ask whether the sitting party is more likely to win very close elections.

Figure A.2: **Density of Clerk Election Results.**

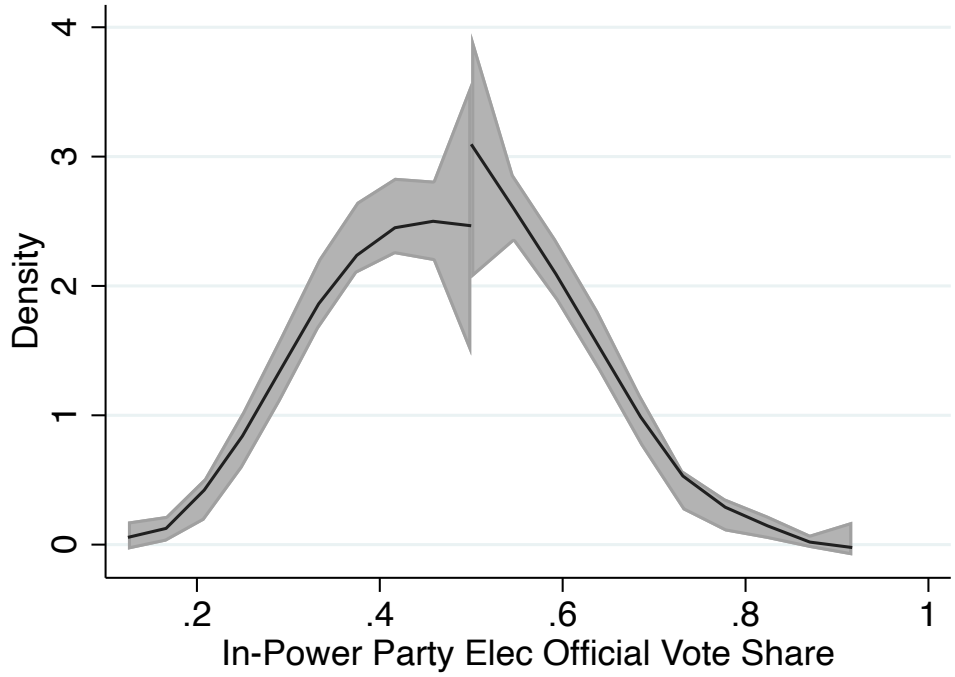


Figure A.2 presents the McCrary plot. While the party in power wins slightly more close elections than they lose, the difference in the densities is small enough that it could easily arise by chance.

A.6.3 Main Findings Not Sensitive to Choice of Estimator

As we discuss in our Empirical Strategy section, using the residuals after predicting Democratic presidential vote share can substantially improve precision relative to using vote share as the outcome or adjusting for lagged vote share within the regression. In Table A.7 below, we validate that our main results are not limited to using our residualized outcome. The first four columns of Table A.7 present the simplest regression discontinuity estimates including no covariates and using Democratic presidential vote share as our outcome. While our estimates are noisy, they are consistent with our main finding that clerks do not offer their party a substantial advantage. The point estimates are also quite similar to the point estimates we find in columns 1 through 4 of Table A.5, suggesting that most of the higher Democratic presidential vote share in Democratic-controlled counties arises from a modest imbalance in treatment assignment. In columns 5 thorugh 8 of Table A.7, we include lagged Democratic presidential vote share as a covariate. Our findings are similar to those we report in our main analysis in our Results section. Put together, we find in Table A.7 that our main results are not limited to our chosen estimator.

Table A.7: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Democratic Presidential Vote Share.**

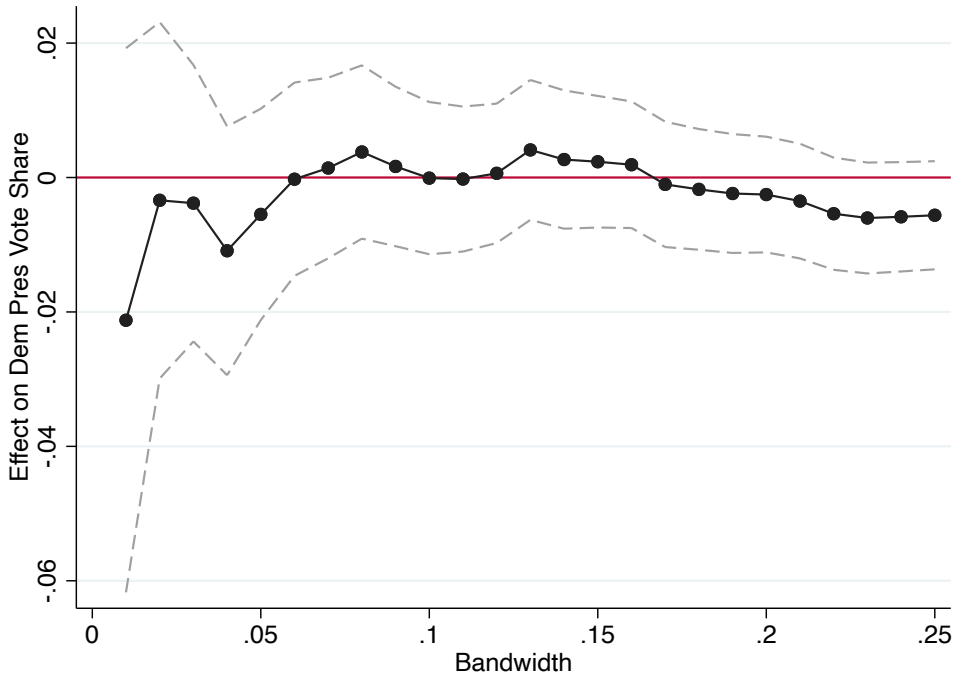
	Dem Pres Vote Share							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Dem Elec Official	0.030	0.027	0.002	0.025	-0.005	-0.001	0.003	-0.006
	(0.024)	(0.018)	(0.032)	(0.024)	(0.013)	(0.009)	(0.018)	(0.011)
N	403	723	202	456	327	597	165	462
Clusters	391	702	198	442	327	597	165	462
Bandwidth	0.08	0.16	0.04	0.09	0.07	0.13	0.03	0.10
BW Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Unif	Unif	Unif	Tri	Unif	Unif	Unif	Tri
Lagged Vote Share	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Min Detectable Effect	0.060	0.046	0.079	0.060	0.032	0.024	0.044	0.028

Robust standard errors in parentheses. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure. Min detectable effect refers to the minimum effect that a one-sided test with a 0.05 alpha would have 80% power to detect. Lagged vote share captures whether lagged Democratic presidential vote share is included as a covariate in the regression. Unif means the specification uses a uniform kernel. Tri means the specification uses a triangular kernel.

A.6.4 Main Findings Not Sensitive to Choice of Bandwidth

Analyses of regression discontinuities must weigh the bias reduction that comes from only using data close to the cut point against the precision improvement that comes from using data further from the cut point. In Figure A.3 we present our main result across many possible bandwidths. The choice of bandwidth does not meaningfully change the interpretation of our findings. All of these analyses imply that local election officials do not meaningfully advantage their party.

Figure A.3: **Sensitivity of Estimated Effect on Democratic Presidential Vote Share across Bandwidths.**



A.6.5 Main Finding Similar Across Time

In Figure 4 in the main analysis, we presented graphical evidence that our main finding—election officials do not noticeably advantage their party—is not limited to the early part of our study period but rather holds across time. Here, we present the results of our analysis in tabular format, conducting a separate regression discontinuity of electing a Democratic local election official on Democratic presidential vote share in every presidential election since 2004.

Table A.8: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Democratic Presidential Vote Share for Each Presidential Election.**

	Dem Pres Vote Share				
	2004	2008	2012	2016	2020
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Dem Elec Official	0.022	-0.013	-0.009	0.006	-0.010
	(0.032)	(0.014)	(0.013)	(0.017)	(0.011)
N	46	67	63	93	83
Bandwidth	0.08	0.08	0.07	0.08	0.07
BW Selection	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT
Kernel	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri

Robust standard errors in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure. Tri means the specification uses a triangular kernel.

A.6.6 No Substantial Average Effect in States Granting Full Authority to One Official

In Table A.9, we present the results of our analysis focused only on the 14 states where one official has broad and unilateral authority (i.e., "Tier 1" states as shown in Table A.2, with Tier 2 states excluded). These states are: Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. Our estimates are substantively similar to the estimates we report in Table 1.

Table A.9: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Democratic Presidential Vote Share, States with Full Authority in One Official.**

	Dem Pres Vote Share			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dem Elec Official	0.004	-0.002	-0.011	-0.003
	(0.009)	(0.006)	(0.014)	(0.009)
N	200	370	104	223
Bandwidth	0.07	0.15	0.04	0.09
Bandwidth Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Triangular

Robust standard errors in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure.

A.6.7 Main Finding Similar Across States

In Figure A.4 and Table A.10, we present regression discontinuity estimates of the effect of electing a Democratic clerk on Democratic presidential vote share across states. We present all eight states from which we have at least 50 competitive races in our data. While the estimates are noisy, we do not find convincing evidence that clerks are able to advantage their party in any state.

Figure A.4: **Sensitivity of Estimated Effect on Democratic Presidential Vote Share across States.** Each dot represents a regression discontinuity-based estimate of the effect of electing a Democratic clerk on residual Democratic presidential vote share in a given state. Vertical lines extending from each point represent 95-percent confidence intervals. Estimates come from regressions that mimic column 4 in Table 1 using local linear regression with traingular kernel weights. Full tabular results are found below in Table A.10.

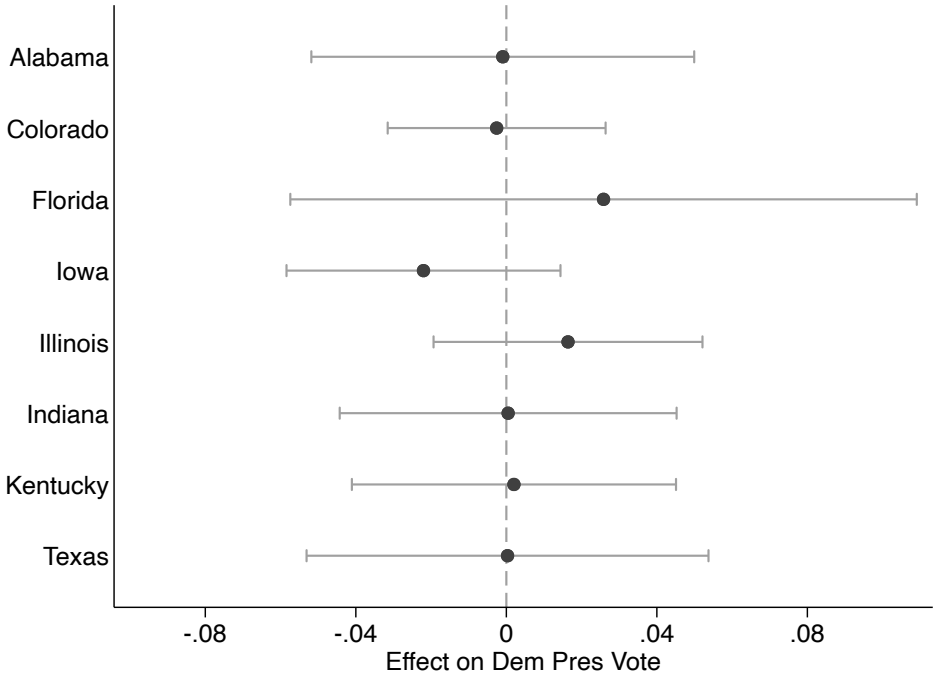


Table A.10: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Democratic Presidential Vote Share Across States.**

	Dem Pres Vote Share							
	Alabama	Colorado	Florida	Iowa	Illinois	Indiana	Kentucky	Texas
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Dem Elec Official	-0.001	-0.003	0.026	-0.022	0.016	0.000	0.002	0.000
	(0.026)	(0.015)	(0.042)	(0.019)	(0.018)	(0.023)	(0.022)	(0.027)
N	32	24	14	32	44	40	19	24
Bandwidth	0.12	0.06	0.07	0.09	0.06	0.05	0.07	0.08
BW Selection	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT
Kernel	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri

Robust standard errors in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure. Tri means the specification uses a triangular kernel.

A.6.8 Finding Not Sensitive to Excluding the South

In Table A.11, we present the results of our analysis focused only on counties in non-Southern states. We follow the U.S. Census Bureau defintion of Southern states. Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Texas, and West Virginia are excluded. Our estimates are substantively similar to those reported in Table 1.

Table A.11: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Democratic Presidential Vote Share, Non-Southern Counties.**

	Dem Pres Vote Share			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dem Elec Official	0.001	0.003	0.001	0.000
	(0.008)	(0.006)	(0.012)	(0.008)
N	246	436	122	294
Bandwidth	0.07	0.14	0.03	0.09
Bandwidth Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Triangular

Robust standard errors in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure.

A.6.9 Finding Not Sensitive to Excluding VRA Counties

In Table A.12, we present the results of our analysis focused only on counties not covered under the Section 5 pre-clearance provisions of the Voting Rights Act. We use data on Voting Rights Act preclearance coverage from Ang (2019). Our estimates are substantively similar to those reported in Table 1.

Table A.12: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Democratic Presidential Vote Share, Counties Not Subject to Pre-Clearance under VRA.**

	Dem Pres Vote Share			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dem Elec Official	0.003	0.004	-0.008	-0.002
	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.010)	(0.008)
N	336	616	172	335
Bandwidth	0.08	0.15	0.04	0.08
Bandwidth Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Triangular

Robust standard errors in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure.

In Table A.13, we present the results of our analysis focused only on counties previously covered under the pre-clearance provision of the Voting Rights Act but after the ruling in *Shelby County v. Holder* that removed them. Our estimates are substantively similar to those reported in Table 1.

Table A.13: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Democratic Presidential Vote Share, Counties Formerly Subject to Pre-Clearance.**

	Dem Pres Vote Share			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dem Elec Official	-0.015	0.014	0.001	0.014
	(0.024)	(0.018)	(0.024)	(0.020)
N	25	43	12	18
Bandwidth	0.07	0.14	0.03	0.05
Bandwidth Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Triangular

Robust standard errors in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure.

A.6.10 No Substantial Average Effect in Senate, Governor, or Presidential Elections

In Table A.14, we present the results of our analysis including elections for governor, US senate, and president. Our estimates are substantively similar to those reported in Table 1, although are noisier and slightly more positive.

Table A.14: **Effect of Democratic Election Official on Democratic Vote Share, Elections for President, Senate, and Governor.**

	Dem Vote Share			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dem Elec Official	0.006	0.004	-0.006	0.003
	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.010)	(0.007)
N	1211	2144	610	1460
Clusters	422	750	219	507
Bandwidth	0.09	0.18	0.05	0.11
Bandwidth Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Triangular
Min Detectable Effect	0.018	0.011	0.026	0.018

Robust standard errors clustered by clerk election in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure. Min detectable effect refers to the minimum effect that a one-sided test with a 0.05 alpha would have 80% power to detect.

A.6.11 Effect Not Limited To Counties with Close Clerk Elections

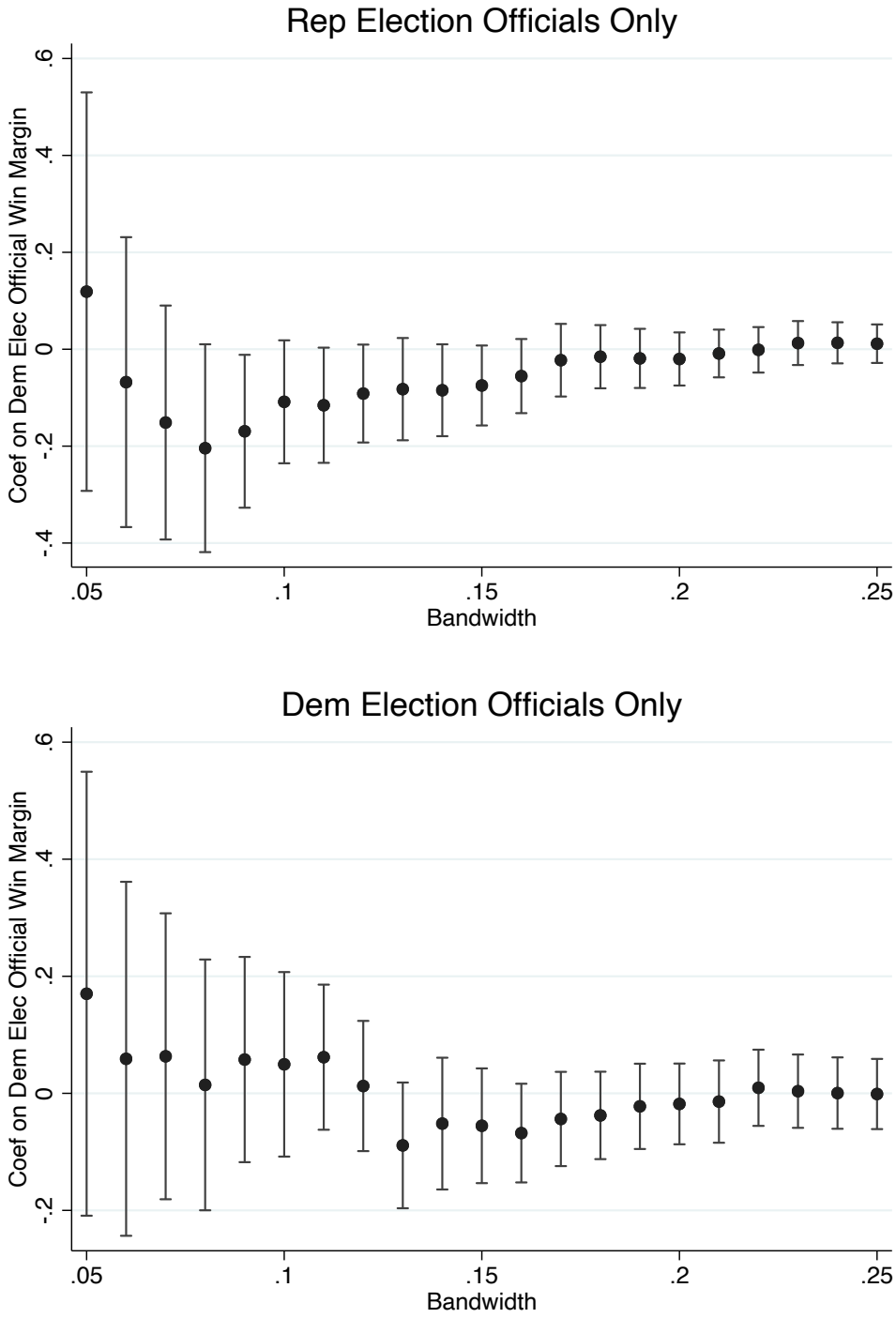
In this section, we draw heavily from Angrist and Rokkanen (2015) and Hainmueller, Hall, and Snyder Jr (2015).

If the treatment (Democratic clerk) were independent of the potential outcomes (Democratic presidential vote share under treatment and control), we could identify the average effect of the treatment without the regression discontinuity design. This would allow us to estimate the average advantage clerks give their co-partisans in elections.

As Angrist and Rokkanen (2015) point out, in regression discontinuity designs, the treatment is a deterministic function of the running variable (Democratic clerk vote share). This means that we can test the independence assumption by looking at the relationship between the potential outcomes and running variable. If the relationship is approximately flat over some region, we can interpret the difference in means in that region as the average effect for that entire region.

We follow Angrist and Rokkanen (2015) and Hainmueller, Hall, and Snyder Jr (2015), regressing residual Democratic presidential vote share on Democratic clerk vote share separately for counties in which Democratic clerks won and lost across multiple bandwidths. Figure A.5 reports the coefficient on Democratic clerk vote share across bandwidths. Across all bandwidths we investigate, even when including clerk elections won with 75% of the vote, we cannot reject a coefficient of zero. This implies that the conditional independence assumption likely holds when we study a much larger set of counties. This also means that the difference in average residual Democratic presidential vote share under Democratic and Republican clerks who win less than 75% of the total vote can be interpreted as the average causal effect of electing a Democratic clerk rather than a Republican. Similar to the results we report in our Results section, using all counties where the Democratic clerk won between 25% and 75% of the vote, Democrats decrease Democratic presidential vote share by 0.4 percentage points. The standard error of this estimate is 0.23 percentage points, meaning that we cannot reject the null of no effect.

Figure A.5: **Slope of Residual Dem Pres Vote Share on Dem Clerk Vote Share across Bandwidths.**



A.6.12 Democratic and Republican Clerks Administer Elections Similarly

Our results could arise if partisan clerks implement different policies that have approximately neutral effects on election outcomes. Committed partisan clerks could pursue these policies anyway if they are unaware of their ineffectiveness or if they have ideological positions about how elections ought to be administered.

Table A.15 presents estimates of the effect of electing a Democratic rather than Republican election official on outcomes more proximate to the policy choices these officials make. Across the eight columns, we present the effect of electing a Democratic rather than Republican election official on 1) the number of polling places per 1,000 residents, 2) the share of votes cast provisionally, 3) the share of provisional ballots rejected, 4) the share of absentee ballots rejected, 5) the share of voting-age residents registered, 6) the share of registrants removed from the list, 7) the share of registrants registered with the Democratic party, and 8) the share of voters in the CCES reporting a wait time longer than 30 minutes. Tables A.24 through A.31 show these results are similar across many different specifications.

In all cases except for registration rates, the effect of electing a Democrat rather than a Republican is too close to zero to rule out both groups implementing the same policies on average. We find precise evidence that electing a Democrat does not reduce removals from the voter rolls or increase the share of registrants aligned with Democrats. While not estimated very precisely, the effect on the number of polling places is especially strong evidence against the expectation that Democratic and Republican officials pursue markedly different policies given the central role of local election officials in setting the number and location of polling places. Our estimates of the effect on the number of provisionals, the share of provisionals or absentees rejected, and wait times are noisier due to much more idiosyncratic variation in the raw data. Still, we do not find evidence that electing a Democrat rather than a Republican affects these outcomes either. We do find evidence that registration rates are about 2 percentage points higher under Democratic election officials than Republican officials. However, combined with the other findings it does not seem that increased registration translates into a difference in the partisan balance of registrations, and this positive effect may have arisen by chance given the large number of policies we study.

Table A.15: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Policies and More Proximate Outcomes.**

	Polling Places (1)	Prov Share (2)	Prov Rejection (3)	Absentee Rejection (4)	Reg Rate (5)	Reg Removal (6)	Dem Reg Share (7)	Wait Share (8)
Dem Elec Official	-0.068	-0.000	-0.059	0.010	0.019	0.004	0.001	-0.020
	(0.087)	(0.001)	(0.060)	(0.016)	(0.009)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.022)
N	222	178	281	496	699	402	428	400
Clusters	165	124	190	324	410	259	247	273
Outcome Mean	0.982	0.005	0.483	0.028	0.857	0.091	0.489	0.045
Bandwidth	0.07	0.04	0.10	0.10	0.09	0.08	0.13	0.10
BW Selection	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT
Kernel	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri

Robust standard errors clustered by clerk election in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure. Tri refers to a triangular kernel.

In Tables A.16 and A.17, we present additional evidence that Democrats and Republicans administer elections similarly across parties regardless of whether they serve in a majority-Democratic or majority-Republican county.

These findings also provide some evidence that countermobilization strategies pursued by party elites in response to clerk actions (Cantoni and Pons 2021) do not explain our finding of minimal partisan differences. Whereas differences in presidential vote share, turnout, and registration rates could potentially be mitigated by strategic elite mobilization strategies, it is less plausible that countermobilization could also affect the number of polling places, registration and absentee rejection rates, or registration removals.

Table A.16: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Policies and More Proximate Outcomes (Democrat Majority Counties Only).**

	Polling Places (1)	Prov Share (2)	Prov Rejection (3)	Absentee Rejection (4)	Reg Rate (5)	Reg Removal (6)	Dem Reg Share (7)	Wait Share (8)
Dem Elec Official	-0.190	0.001	-0.252	-0.010	0.031	0.009	-0.018	0.006
	(0.107)	(0.001)	(0.084)	(0.021)	(0.024)	(0.017)	(0.015)	(0.027)
N	77	63	98	122	150	86	112	103
Clusters	203	132	181	252	295	181	168	211
Outcome Mean	0.770	0.006	0.443	0.020	0.858	0.085	0.565	0.036
Bandwidth	0.09	0.04	0.09	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.09	0.08
BW Selection	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT
Kernel	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri

Robust standard errors clustered by clerk election in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure. Tri refers to a triangular kernel. Democrat counties are those in which the Democratic clerk candidate's vote share is greater than 0.50.

Table A.17: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Policies and More Proximate Outcomes (Republican Majority Counties Only).**

	Polling Places (1)	Prov Share (2)	Prov Rejection (3)	Absentee Rejection (4)	Reg Rate (5)	Reg Removal (6)	Dem Reg Share (7)	Wait Share (8)
Dem Elec Official	-0.031	0.001	-0.021	0.021	0.021	-0.008	0.007	-0.012
	(0.102)	(0.001)	(0.070)	(0.020)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.026)
N	137	221	164	377	690	249	268	280
Clusters	155	233	179	342	539	229	243	273
Outcome Mean	1.044	0.005	0.496	0.031	0.856	0.092	0.455	0.048
Bandwidth	0.06	0.08	0.09	0.11	0.12	0.07	0.13	0.10
BW Selection	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT	CCT
Kernel	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri	Tri

Robust standard errors clustered by clerk election in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure. Tri refers to a triangular kernel. Republican counties are those in which the Democratic clerk candidate's vote share is less than 0.50.

A.7 Studying Mechanisms

A.7.1 Clerks Do Not Advantage Their Party More in More Segregated Counties

A.7.1.1 Main Estimates of the Effect in Segregated Counties

As we discuss in our Mechanisms section, race is one of the most useful heuristics for guessing the party a citizen may vote for (Carmines and Stimson 1989; Carlson and Hill 2021; Hersh 2015). If a county is segregated by race, a local election official may have an easier time identifying areas of the county to send resources in order to increase turnout and where to curtail resources in order to reduce participation. According to this logic, we would expect clerks serving in counties in which different racial groups live in different places to have an easier time affecting election outcomes.

We measure residential racial segregation using the 2010 decennial census to compute a racial dissimilarity score across blocks within a county, following standard practice.[28] We compute the residential dissimilarity score as

$$D = \sum_{b} |\frac{W_b}{W} - \frac{N_b}{N}|$$

where D is our dissimilarity measure for a county, W_b is the number of non-Hispanic White residents in the Census block, W is the number of non-Hispanic White residents in the county, N_b is the number of Hispanic or non-White residents in the Census block, and N is the number of Hispanic or non-White residents in the county.

In Table A.18, we investigate the prediction that clerks will advantage their party more in more segregated counties. The evidence is consistent with clerks not providing an advantage to their party even in the most segregated counties. We further validate this finding in Figure A.6, which shows that our finding is not sensitive to the threshold we use to separate more and less diverse counties.

[28] `https://www.census.gov/data/datasets/2010/dec/summary-file-1.html`

Table A.18: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Democratic Presidential Vote Share, More vs. Less Racially Segregated Counties.**

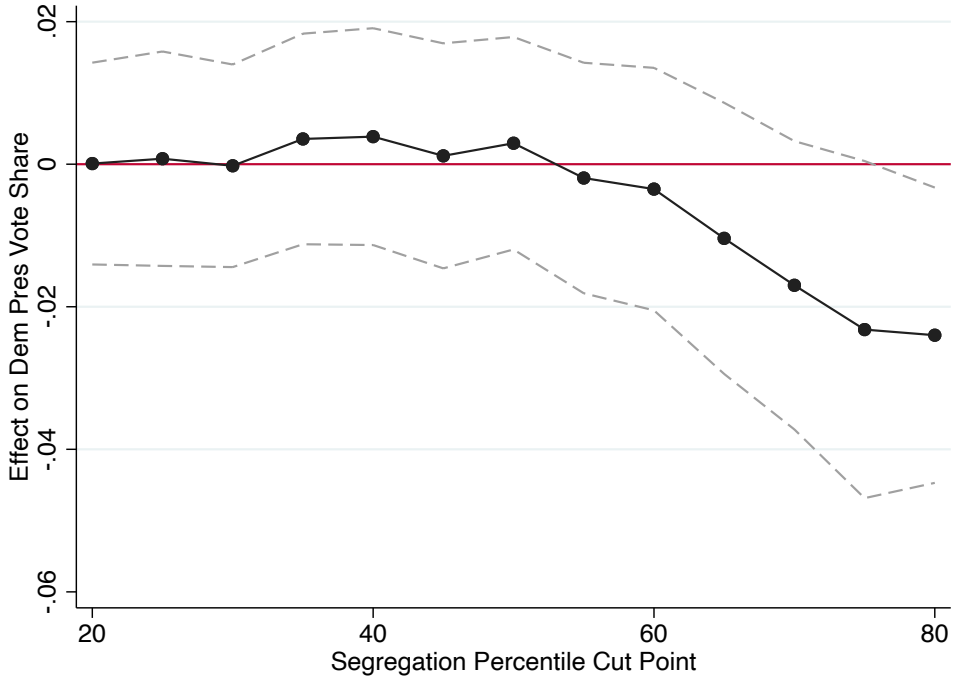
	Dem Pres Vote Share							
	Less Segregated				More Segregated			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Dem Elec Official	-0.006	-0.004	-0.009	-0.005	-0.000	-0.003	0.005	0.003
	(0.010)	(0.007)	(0.013)	(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.006)	(0.011)	(0.008)
N	159	288	78	200	229	379	119	286
Bandwidth	0.06	0.12	0.03	0.08	0.11	0.21	0.05	0.14
BW Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Unif	Unif	Unif	Tri	Unif	Unif	Unif	Tri

Robust standard errors in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure. Unif means the specification uses a uniform kernel. Tri means the specification uses a triangular kernel. More segregated counties are those above the median racial racial dissimilarity index. All other counties are coded as less segregated.

A.7.1.2 Findings Not Sensitive to Definition of Segregated Counties

In Figure A.6, we demonstrate that our finding that clerks do not advantage their party even in more segregated counties holds across many thresholds for defining which counties are more or less segregated. Since segregation should make it easier for clerks to advantage their party, we would expect clerks motivated by advantaging their party to have a large effect in more segregated counties. We find instead that as we tighten our rule to throw less segregated counties out of our analysis, we estimate effects that are increasingly more negative. This is the opposite of what we would expect if election officials are seeking to advantage their party.

Figure A.6: **Effect in Segregated Counties Not Sensitive to Definition of Segregation.** The horizontal axis captures our definition of segregated counties. A value of 50 means that the county must be more segregated than 50% of counties in our sample. Each dot represents a regression discontinuity-based estimate of the effect of electing a Democratic clerk on residual Democratic presidential vote share. The lines above and below each point represent 95-percent confidence intervals. Estimates come from regressions that mimic Column 4 in Table 1 using local linear regression with a traingular kernel.



A.7.2 Clerks Do Not Advantage Their Party More in More Diverse Counties

A.7.2.1 Main Estimates of the Effect in Diverse Counties

As noted aboved, race is an extremely informative heuristic for party affiliation (Carmines and Stimson 1989; Carlson and Hill 2021). There is also a long history of race-based disenfranchisement in the US (Keyssar 2000), and recent scholarship has identified racial and ethnic disparities in resource and communication decisions made by local election officials (Herron and Smith 2015; Hughes et al. 2020; Merivaki and Smith 2020; Pettigrew 2017; Stuart 2004; White, Nathan, and Faller 2015) Accordingly, we might expect that clerks would have a harder time giving their party an advantage in counties where the population is overwhelmingly composed of non-Hispanic White citizens.

We investigate this prediction in Table A.19. For the purposes of the table, we define racially and ethnically diverse counties as those where non-Hispanic White residents make up less than 80% of the population. We use two census datasets to calculate county-level ethnoracial demographics: the 2000-2010 County Characteristics Intercensal Population Estimates[29] and the 7/1/2019 County Characteristics Resident Population Estimates.[30] These cover all presidental elections between 2000 and 2016. While we do find more positive point estimates in diverse counties, the evidence is consistent with clerks not providing an advantage to their party even in counties with more ethnic and racial minorities. We further validate this finding in Figure A.7, which shows that our finding is not sensitive to the threshold we use to separate more and less diverse counties.

[29] https://www.census.gov/data/datasets/time-series/demo/popest/intercensal-2000-2010-counties.html
[30] https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/popest/2010s-counties-detail.html

Table A.19: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Democratic Presidential Vote Share, More vs. Less Racially and Ethnically Diverse Counties.**

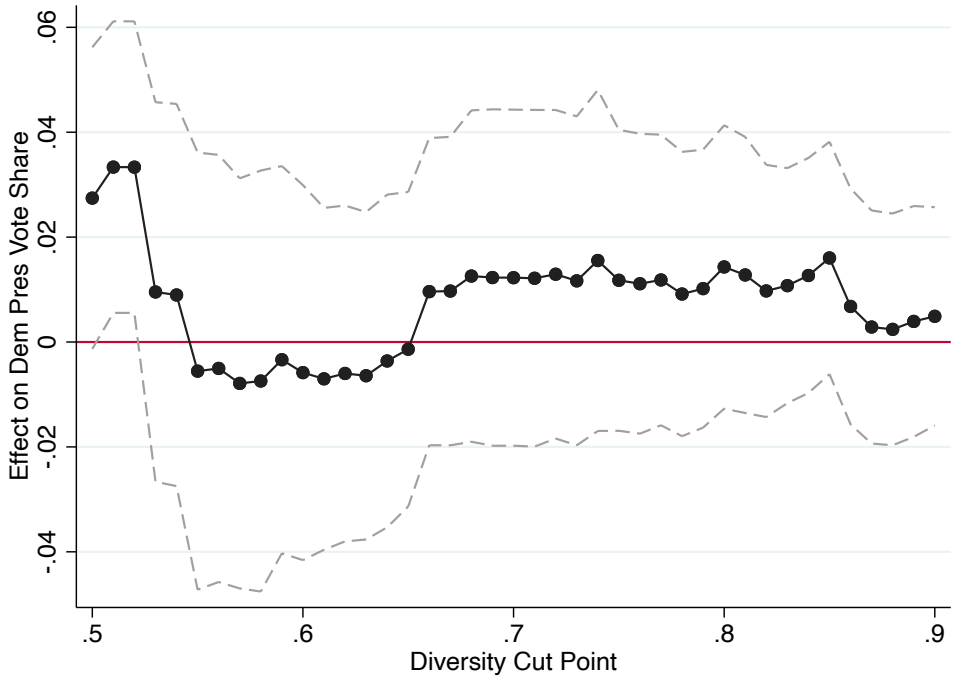
	Dem Pres Vote Share							
	Less Diverse				More Diverse			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Dem Elec Official	-0.001	0.001	-0.014	-0.006	0.013	0.006	0.007	0.014
	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.011)	(0.008)	(0.015)	(0.012)	(0.018)	(0.014)
N	282	505	145	274	83	166	43	103
Bandwidth	0.08	0.16	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.14	0.04	0.09
BW Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Unif	Unif	Unif	Tri	Unif	Unif	Unif	Tri

Robust standard errors in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure. Unif means the specification uses a uniform kernel. Tri means the specification uses a triangular kernel. More diverse counties are those where the non-Hispanic White residents make up less than 80% of the population. All other counties are coded as less diverse.

A.7.2.2 Findings Not Sensitive to Definition of Diverse Counties

In Figure A.7, we demonstrate that our finding that clerks do not advantage their party even in more diverse counties holds across many thresholds for defining which counties are more or less diverse.

Figure A.7: **Effect in Diverse Counties Not Sensitive to Definition of Diversity.** The horizontal axis captures our definition of diverse counties. Non-Hispanic White citizens must make up a smaller share than the cut point value for a county to be included in the analysis. Estimates on the left side of the figure use fewer counties but restrict the analysis to a stricter definition of diversity. Each dot represents a regression discontinuity-based estimate of the effect of electing a Democratic clerk on residual Democratic presidential vote share. The lines above and below each point represent 95-percent confidence intervals. Estimates come from regressions that mimic column 4 in Table 1 using local linear regression with a traingular kernel.



A.7.3 Estimated Effects No Larger in Balanced Districts

A.7.3.1 Effects Largest in Districts Split Between Parties if Officials Are Committed Partisans

As we discuss in our Mechanisms section, the effect of electing a Democratic rather than a Republican clerk should be larger in counties that are evenly balanced between the parties if the clerks are focused exclusively on advantaging their party. To see why, imagine that the only choice a clerk can make is whether or not to increase the cost of voting for the opposing party such that 20% of opposing party members fail to vote. In a county made up of 90% Democrats and 10% Republicans, a Democratic clerk motivated by partisan advantage would raise the cost of voting for Republicans, resulting in a 91.8% Democratic vote share in the election. In the same county, a Republican clerk motivated by partisan advantage would raise the cost of voting for Democrats, resulting in a 87.8% Democratic vote share in the election. This implies that the effect of electing a Democratic clerk rather than a Republican is a 4-percentage point increase to Democratic vote share in this county.

Now, consider a county made up of 50% Democrats and 50% Republicans. A Democratic clerk motivated by partisan advantage would raise the cost of voting for Republicans, resulting in a 55.6% Democratic vote share in the election. A Republican clerk motivated by partisan advantage would raise the cost of voting for Democrats, resulting in a 44.4% Democratic vote share in the election. This implies that the effect of electing a Democratic clerk rather than a Republican clerk is an 11-percentage point increase to Democratic vote share in this county, 7 percentage points larger than the effect in the Democratic-dominated county.

We generate a more general version of this prediction by studying a very simple model of a clerk's behavior. In the model, clerks can reduce the turnout of either party by a factor $1-p$ or do nothing. Here, p represents the turnout rate of the party affected by the policy and can range from 0 to 1 depending on how effective the policy is at reducing turnout. To maximize their party's vote share, Democratic clerks will always reduce Republican turnout and Republican clerks will always reduce Democratic turnout. Plugging in values of p and the share of citizens who are members of each party, we can compute the Democratic vote share under Democratic clerks as

$$DemVS = \frac{DemPopShare}{DemPopShare + RepPopShare * p}$$

and the Democratic vote share under Republican clerks as

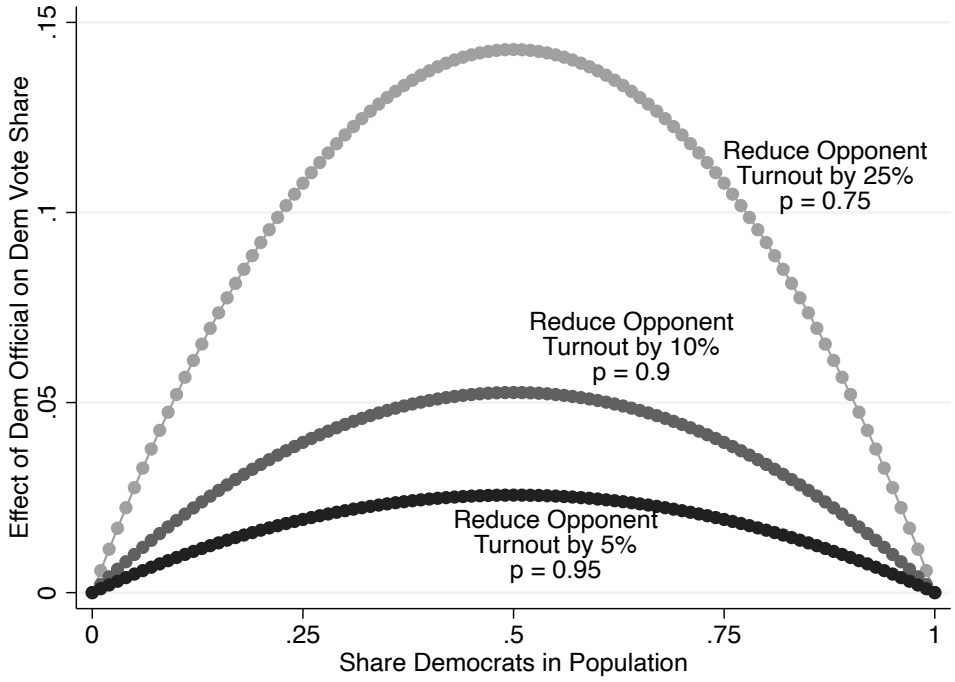
$$DemVS = \frac{DemPopShare * p}{DemPopShare * p + RepPopShare}$$

.

We can then take the difference of these two vote shares to get the effect of electing a Democratic rather than Republican clerk on Democratic vote share.

In Figure A.8 we plot how the effect on Democratic vote share changes when the district has a higher or lower proportion of Democrats in the population. We show how the effect changes for different values of p. Partisan clerks seeking to maximize their party's vote share have the biggest effect when they serve a county where 50% of residents are Democrats and 50% of residents are Republicans.

Figure A.8: **In Model of Partisan Officials Seeking to Advantage Their Party, Effect on Democratic Presidential Vote Share Largest in Balanced Counties.**



A.7.3.2 Main Estimates of the Effect in Balanced Districts

As we discussed in A.7.3.1, election officials who are solely motivated by advantaging their party will have an easier time doing so in places where the public is more evenly split between Democrats and Republicans. This allows us to make a prediction: if clerks are primarily motivated by providing their party an advantage, they will be more effective in counties that are evenly split between Democrats and Republicans.

We evaluate this prediction by estimating the effect of electing a Democratic rather than Republican election official in more and less competitive counties, with imbalanced defined as those where the Democratic presidential candidate won more than 65% or less than 35% in the previous election and all others defined as balanced. Table A.20 presents the results. We find that, despite the prediction that the effects would be larger in more competitive counties, the effects are not noticeably different. Section A.7.3.3 shows that this result is not sensitive to our chosen definition of which counties are most competitive. In summary, the simple model in which local officials are committed partisans seeking to advantage their party is inconsistent with our findings. We also find no evidence that partisan effects are larger in heavily co-partisan (imbalanced) jurisdictions, contrary to previous literature observing an effect only in such counties (Kimball, Kropf, and Battles 2006; Mohr et al. 2019; Porter and Rogowski 2018).

Table A.20: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Democratic Presidential Vote Share, Balanced vs. Imbalanced Counties.**

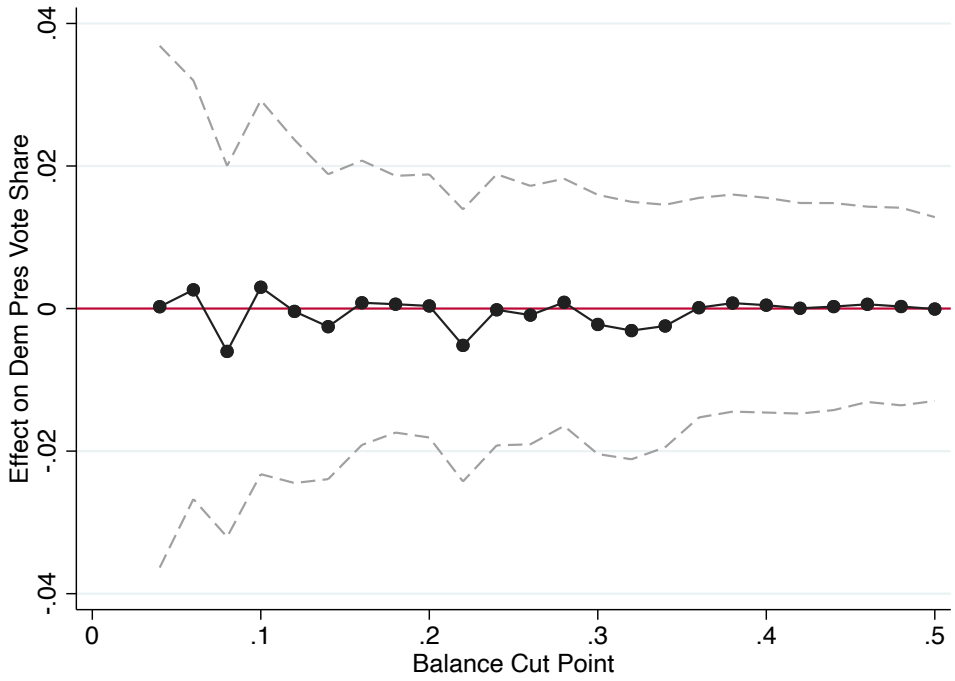
	Dem Pres Vote Share							
	Imbalanced				Balanced			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Dem Elec Official	0.005	0.002	-0.012	-0.004	0.000	0.004	0.001	-0.002
	(0.011)	(0.008)	(0.017)	(0.010)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.012)	(0.009)
N	94	184	46	135	233	409	118	235
Bandwidth	0.07	0.13	0.03	0.10	0.07	0.13	0.03	0.07
BW Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Unif	Unif	Unif	Tri	Unif	Unif	Unif	Tri

Robust standard errors in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure. Unif means the specification uses a uniform kernel. Tri means the specification uses a triangular kernel. Imbalanced counties are those where the Democratic presidential candidate won more the 65% or less than 35% in the previous election. All other counties are coded as balanced.

A.7.3.3 Findings Not Sensitive to Definition of Balanced Counties

In Figure A.9, we demonstrate that our finding that clerks do not advantage their party even in more competitive counties holds across many definitions of competitiveness. While we estimate the most positive point estimates in the most competitive states, suggesting that clerks advantage their party more in very competitive states, the estimates are still relatively small (less than one percentage point). The confidence intervals we estimate include zero regardless of the threshold used for defining competitive states.

Figure A.9: **Effect in Balanced Counties Not Sensitive to Definition of Partisan Balance.** The horizontal axis captures our definition of balanced counties. The win margin in the last Democratic presidential election must be smaller than the cut point value for a county to be included in the analysis. Estimates on the left side of the figure use fewer counties but restrict the analysis to a stricter definition of balance. Each dot represents a regression discontinuity-based estimate of the effect of electing a Democratic clerk on residual Democratic presidential vote share. The lines above and below each point represent 95-percent confidence intervals. Estimates come from regressions that mimic column 4 in Table 1 using local linear regression with a traingular kernel.



A.7.4 Clerks Do Not Advantage Their Party More in Larger Counties

A.7.4.1 Main Estimates of the Effect in Large-Population Counties

Election officials who want to advantage their party may have an easier time if they have the resources and staff to carry out their plans. We expect larger counties to have more of these resources (Kimball and Baybeck 2013). Previous literature has also found clerks to diverge along party lines in their support for voter access and security policies only in large jurisdictions (Kimball and Baybeck 2010, 2013). In Table A.21, we investigate the prediction that clerks will advantage their party more in larger counties, defining large counties as those with more than 100,000 residents. We uses two census datasets to calculate county-level population: the 2000-2010 County Characteristics Intercensal Population Estimates[31] and the 7/1/2019 County Characteristics Resident Population Estimates.[32] We extrapolate population figures to 2020 using linear regression. Despite the prediction that the effects will be largest in counties with larger populations, we find that the effects are similar in large and small counties.

Table A.21: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Democratic Presidential Vote Share, Small vs. Large Counties.**

	Dem Pres Vote Share							
	Pop < 100k				Pop ≥ 100k			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Dem Elec Official	-0.004	-0.001	-0.009	-0.004	0.011	-0.003	0.003	0.007
	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.012)	(0.009)	(0.014)	(0.012)
N	341	580	181	292	82	149	40	95
Bandwidth	0.10	0.21	0.05	0.09	0.06	0.12	0.03	0.07
BW Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Unif	Unif	Unif	Tri	Unif	Unif	Unif	Tri

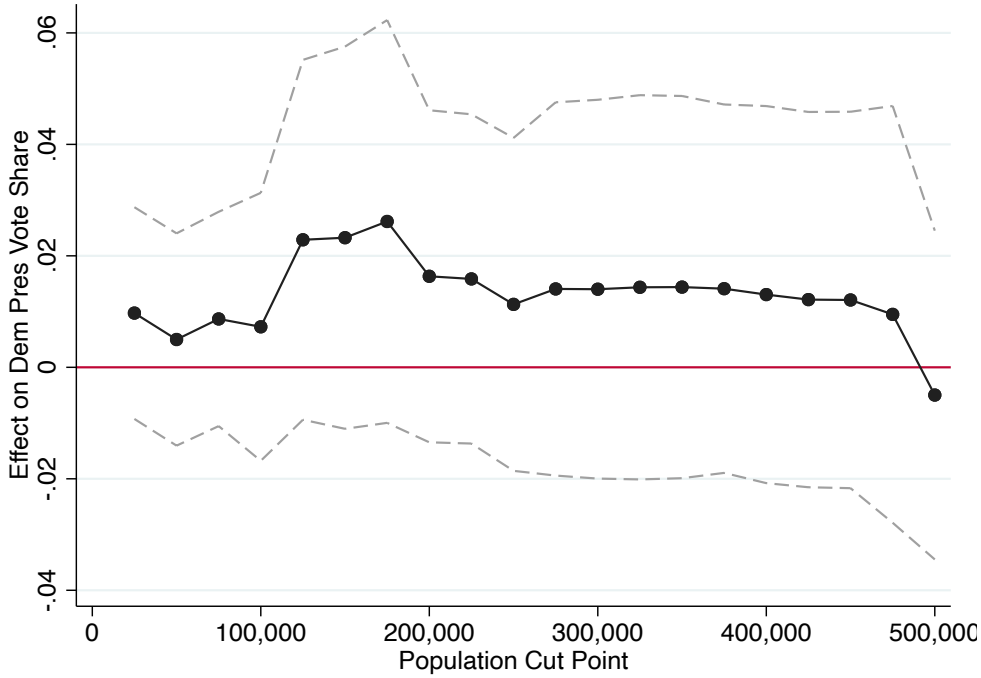
Robust standard errors in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure. Unif means the specification uses a uniform kernel. Tri means the specification uses a triangular kernel.

[31] https://www.census.gov/data/datasets/time-series/demo/popest/intercensal-2000-2010-counties.html
[32] https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/popest/2010s-counties-detail.html

A.7.4.2 Findings Not Sensitive to Definition of Large-Population Counties

In Figure A.10, we demonstrate that our finding that clerks do not advantage their party even in large-population counties holds across many thresholds for defining what counts as a large-population county. While we generally estimate the most positive point estimates in more populous counties, suggesting that clerks advantage their party in heavily populated counties, the estimates are still relatively small (less than 1.5 percentage points). The confidence intervals we estimate include zero regardless of the threshold we use for defining large-population.

Figure A.10: **Effect in Large-Population Counties Not Sensitive to Population Threshold for Inclusion.** The horizontal axis captures our population threshold for including a county in the large-population analysis. Each dot represents a regression discontinuity-based estimate of the effect of electing a Democratic clerk on residual Democratic presidential vote share. The lines above and below each point represent 95-percent confidence intervals. Estimates come from regressions that mimic column 4 in Table 1 using local linear regression with a traingular kernel.



A.7.5 Clerks Do Not Advantage Their Party More in More Competitive States

A.7.5.1 Main Estimates of the Effect in Competitive States

Election officials may feel more motivated to advantage their party in more competitive states. In Table A.22, we investigate the prediction that clerks will advantage their party more in more competitive states, defining competitive states as those in which the Democratic or Republican presidential candidate won by less than five percentage points in the previous election. The evidence in consistent with clerks not providing an advantage to their party regardless of whether the clerk serves in a more or less competitive state.

Table A.22: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Democratic Presidential Vote Share, More vs. Less Competitive States.**

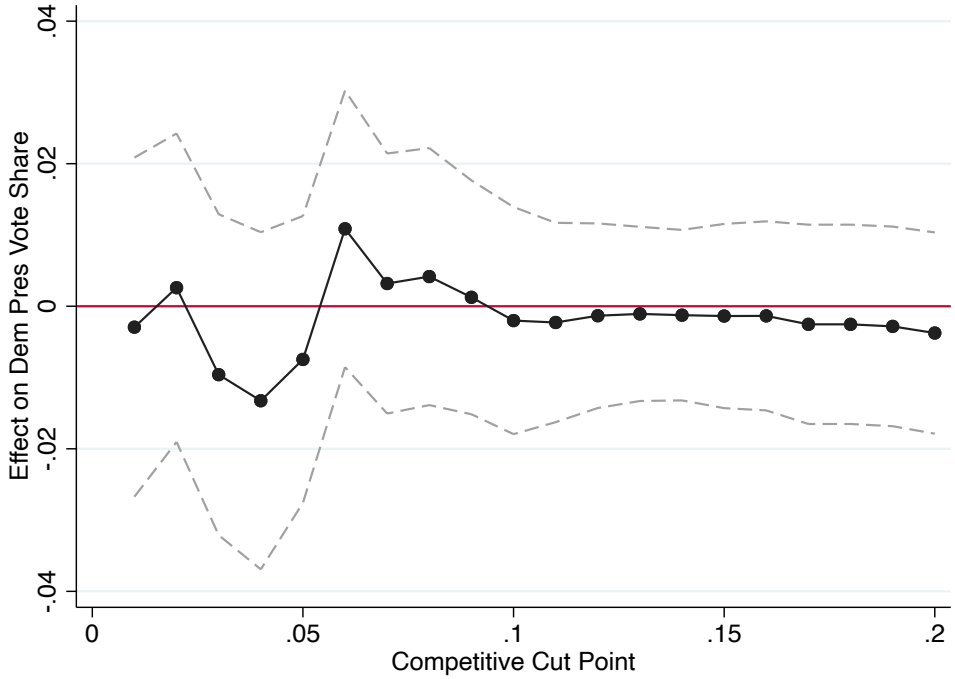
	Dem Pres Vote Share							
	Less Competitive				More Competitive			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Dem Elec Official	0.001	-0.001	0.001	0.001	0.006	0.004	-0.006	-0.007
	(0.009)	(0.007)	(0.013)	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.007)	(0.011)	(0.010)
N	237	432	118	263	143	240	76	101
Bandwidth	0.07	0.14	0.03	0.08	0.11	0.21	0.05	0.07
BW Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Unif	Unif	Unif	Tri	Unif	Unif	Unif	Tri

Robust standard errors in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure. Unif means the specification uses a uniform kernel. Tri means the specification uses a triangular kernel. More competitve states are those in which the last presidential election was decided by less than five percentage points.

A.7.5.2 Findings Not Sensitive to Definition of More Competitive States

In Figure A.11, we demonstrate that our finding that clerks do not advantage their party even in competitive states holds across many thresholds for defining what counts as a competitive state. The confidence intervals we estimate include zero regardless of the threshold we use for defining competitive states.

Figure A.11: **Effect in Competitive States Not Sensitive to Threshold for Inclusion.** The horizontal axis captures our threshold for counting a state as competitive. Each dot represents a regression discontinuity-based estimate of the effect of electing a Democratic clerk on residual Democratic presidential vote share. The lines above and below each point represent 95-percent confidence intervals. Estimates come from regressions that mimic column 4 in Table 1 using local linear regression with a traingular kernel.



A.7.6 Clerks Do Not Advantage Their Party More in Determinative Counties

A.7.6.1 Main Estimates of the Effect in Determinative Counties

Election officials may feel more motivated to advantage their party when their county makes up a larger share of the win margin in their state. In Table A.23, we investigate the prediction that clerks will advantage their party more in more determinative counties, defining determinative counties as those in which the Democratic or Republican presidential candidate won by less than two times the population of the county in the most recent election. While point estimates are generally more positive in determinative counties, we find that Democratic and Republican clerks oversee similar elections regardless of whether the clerk serves in a determinative county or not.

Table A.23: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Democratic Presidential Vote Share, Determinative vs. Not Determinative Counties.**

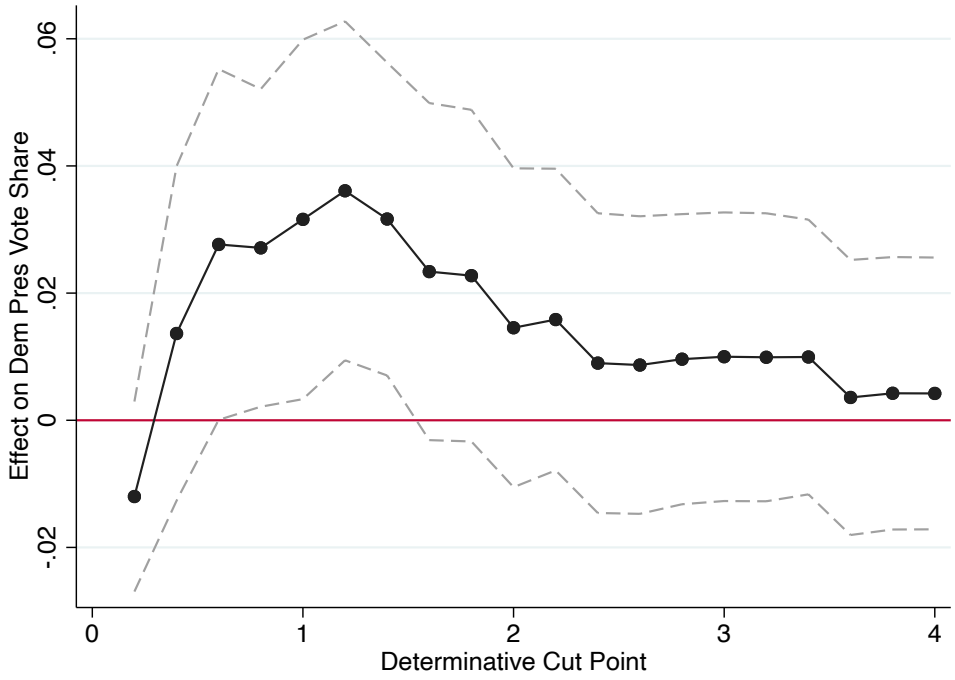
	Dem Pres Vote Share							
	Not Determinative				Determinative			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Dem Elec Official	-0.005	-0.001	-0.012	-0.005	0.019	0.004	0.012	0.015
	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.010)	(0.007)	(0.014)	(0.011)	(0.018)	(0.013)
N	311	531	162	366	72	142	39	95
Bandwidth	0.09	0.19	0.05	0.11	0.05	0.11	0.03	0.07
BW Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Unif	Unif	Unif	Tri	Unif	Unif	Unif	Tri

Robust standard errors in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure. Unif means the specification uses a uniform kernel. Tri means the specification uses a triangular kernel. Determinative counties are those that have more people than half of the margin in the last presidential election in that state. All other counties are coded as not determinative.

A.7.6.2 Findings Not Sensitive to Definition of Determinative Counties

In Figure A.12, we demonstrate that our finding that clerks do not advantage their party even in determinative counties holds across many thresholds for defining what counts as a determinative county. Our threshold is defined by how many counties of this size would have to swing entirely from one candidate to the other to make up the margin in the state's previous presidential election. On the left side of the plot, only the counties with the largest effects on statewide election outcomes are included. While the point estimates go up and down, we read this as consistent with our other findings that election officials are not dramatically advantaging their party even when it matters most.

Figure A.12: **Effect in Determinative Counties Not Sensitive to Threshold for Inclusion.** The horizontal axis captures our threshold for counting a county as determinative. Each dot represents a regression discontinuity-based estimate of the effect of electing a Democratic clerk on residual Democratic presidential vote share. The lines above and below each point represent 95-percent confidence intervals. Estimates come from regressions that mimic column 4 in Table 1 using local linear regression with a traingular kernel.



A.7.7 Effect of Electing a Democratic Clerk on All Policy Outcomes Collected

In Table A.15 in Section A.6.12, we present evidence that Democratic and Republican election officials implement similar policies when serving in similar counties. Here, we share the full results for each of the policy outcomes. Five indictaors use the US Election Assistance Commission's 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2020 Election Administration and Voting Survey (EAVS): the number of polling places, provisional ballots cast, provisional ballots rejected, absentee ballots rejected, and the number of registrants removed from the voter roll.[33] Two indicators use Dave Leip's Election Atlas: the number of registered voters in each county and the share of registered voters listed as members of the Democratic party.[34] One indictator uses the 2006, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2018 CCES survey: the share of voters who had to wait at the polls for more than 30 minutes.[35]

We find the same pattern as presented in the main text across all eight policy outcomes. We also run specifications measuring wait times as the share of voters in the CCES reporting a wait time longer than 10 minutes. We find similar results to the 30 minute or longer measure used in the main analysis. Additionally, we report results testing a measure of voter wait times derived from phone location data calculated by Chen et al. (2020). These are only available for the 2016 election, but include county-level measures of both average wait times and racial disparity in wait times. The results are reported below. The results are substantively the same to those reported in Table A.15.

[33] https://www.eac.gov/research-and-data/datasets-codebooks-and-surveys
[34] https://uselectionatlas.org/
[35] https://cces.gov.harvard.edu/data

Table A.24: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Polling Places.**

	Polling Places per 1k			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dem Elec Official	-0.041	0.025	-0.100	-0.068
	(0.085)	(0.071)	(0.098)	(0.087)
N	242	422	122	222
Clusters	180	314	94	165
Bandwidth	0.08	0.15	0.04	0.07
Bandwidth Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Triangular

Robust standard errors clustered by clerk election in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure.

Table A.25: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Provisional Share.**

	Provisional Share of Ballots			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dem Elec Official	0.002	0.000	-0.000	-0.000
	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
N	194	353	102	178
Clusters	136	243	74	124
Bandwidth	0.04	0.08	0.02	0.04
Bandwidth Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Triangular

Robust standard errors clustered by clerk election in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure.

Table A.26: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Provisional Rejection Rate.**

	Provisionals Rejection Rate			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dem Elec Official	-0.070	-0.059	0.009	-0.059
	(0.061)	(0.043)	(0.084)	(0.060)
N	236	412	127	281
Clusters	162	277	88	190
Bandwidth	0.08	0.15	0.04	0.10
Bandwidth Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Triangular

Robust standard errors clustered by clerk election in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure.

Table A.27: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Absentee Rejection Rate.**

	Absentee Rejection Rate			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dem Elec Official	0.003	0.011	0.013	0.010
	(0.017)	(0.013)	(0.020)	(0.016)
N	370	639	188	496
Clusters	242	418	126	324
Bandwidth	0.07	0.14	0.03	0.10
Bandwidth Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Triangular

Robust standard errors clustered by clerk election in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure.

Table A.28: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Registration.**

	Registered Voters per VAP			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dem Elec Official	0.013	0.018	0.022	0.019
	(0.009)	(0.007)	(0.011)	(0.009)
N	649	1174	330	699
Clusters	380	688	194	410
Bandwidth	0.08	0.16	0.04	0.09
Bandwidth Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Triangular

Robust standard errors clustered by clerk election in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure.

Table A.29: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Registration Removals.**

	Registrations Removed / Total Registrants			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dem Elec Official	0.005	0.002	0.002	0.004
	(0.008)	(0.006)	(0.011)	(0.007)
N	325	558	161	402
Clusters	207	358	105	259
Bandwidth	0.06	0.12	0.03	0.08
Bandwidth Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Triangular

Robust standard errors clustered by clerk election in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure.

Table A.30: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Democratic Registration Share.**

	Dem Reg Share			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dem Elec Official	0.001	-0.000	-0.001	0.001
	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.008)	(0.006)
N	367	663	199	428
Clusters	213	384	116	247
Bandwidth	0.11	0.22	0.06	0.13
Bandwidth Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Triangular

Robust standard errors clustered by clerk election in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure.

Table A.31: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Wait Times.**

	Share Over 30 min Wait			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dem Elec Official	-0.013	-0.036	-0.043	-0.020
	(0.024)	(0.018)	(0.030)	(0.022)
N	289	515	143	400
Clusters	195	358	93	273
Bandwidth	0.07	0.14	0.03	0.10
Bandwidth Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Triangular

Robust standard errors clustered by clerk election in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag of turnout using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure.

Table A.32: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Wait Times.**

	Share Over 10 min Wait			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dem Elec Official	-0.029	-0.040	0.007	-0.022
	(0.055)	(0.038)	(0.075)	(0.048)
N	297	537	151	449
Clusters	201	372	98	309
Bandwidth	0.07	0.14	0.04	0.11
Bandwidth Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Triangular

Robust standard errors clustered by clerk election in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag of turnout using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure.

Table A.33: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Phone Location-Based Wait Times.**

	Average Wait Time			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dem Elec Official	-1.476	0.372	-2.250	-1.779
	(3.656)	(2.664)	(4.949)	(3.983)
N	30	46	19	31
Bandwidth	0.08	0.16	0.04	0.09
Bandwidth Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Triangular

Robust standard errors in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag of turnout using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure.

Table A.34: **Effect of Democratic Election Officials on Racial Disparities in Phone Location-Based Wait Times.**

	Average Wait Time Disparity			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dem Elec Official	-0.436	4.164	-8.126	-2.980
	(21.388)	(14.540)	(24.657)	(21.420)
N	31	48	20	34
Clusters	31	48	20	34
Bandwidth	0.08	0.17	0.04	0.10
Bandwidth Selection	CCT	CCT*2	CCT/2	CCT
Kernel	Uniform	Uniform	Uniform	Triangular

Robust standard errors clustered by clerk election in parentheses. The outcome is first regressed on a state- and year-specific lag of turnout using all counties including those for which clerk election results are not available. The regression discontinuity is estimated using the residuals from that regression. The bandwidth row reports the number of maximum clerk win margin allowed for inclusion in each specificaiton. CCT refers to Calonico, Cattaneo, and Titiunik (2014) bandwidth selection procedure.

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