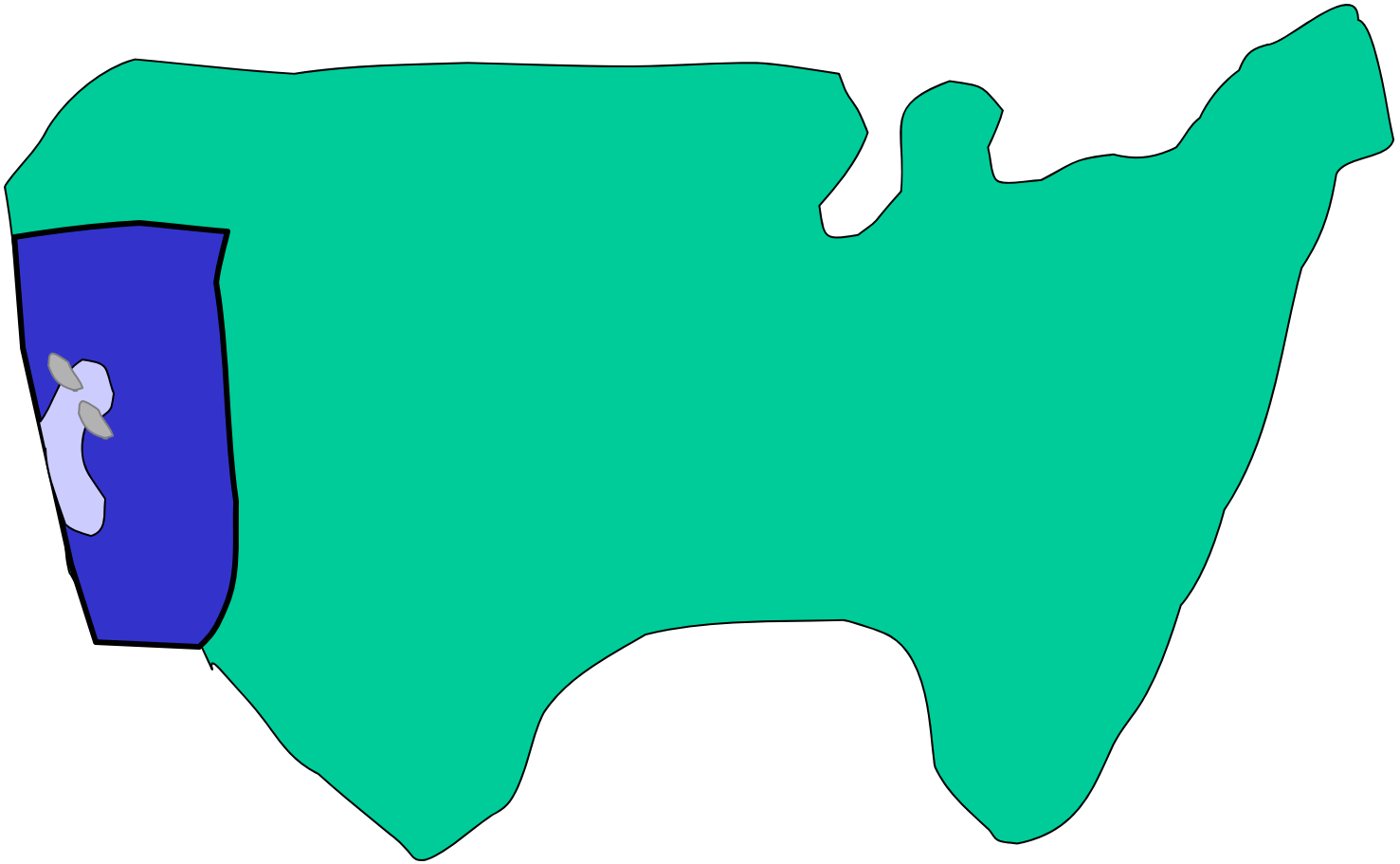
Congressional Candidates

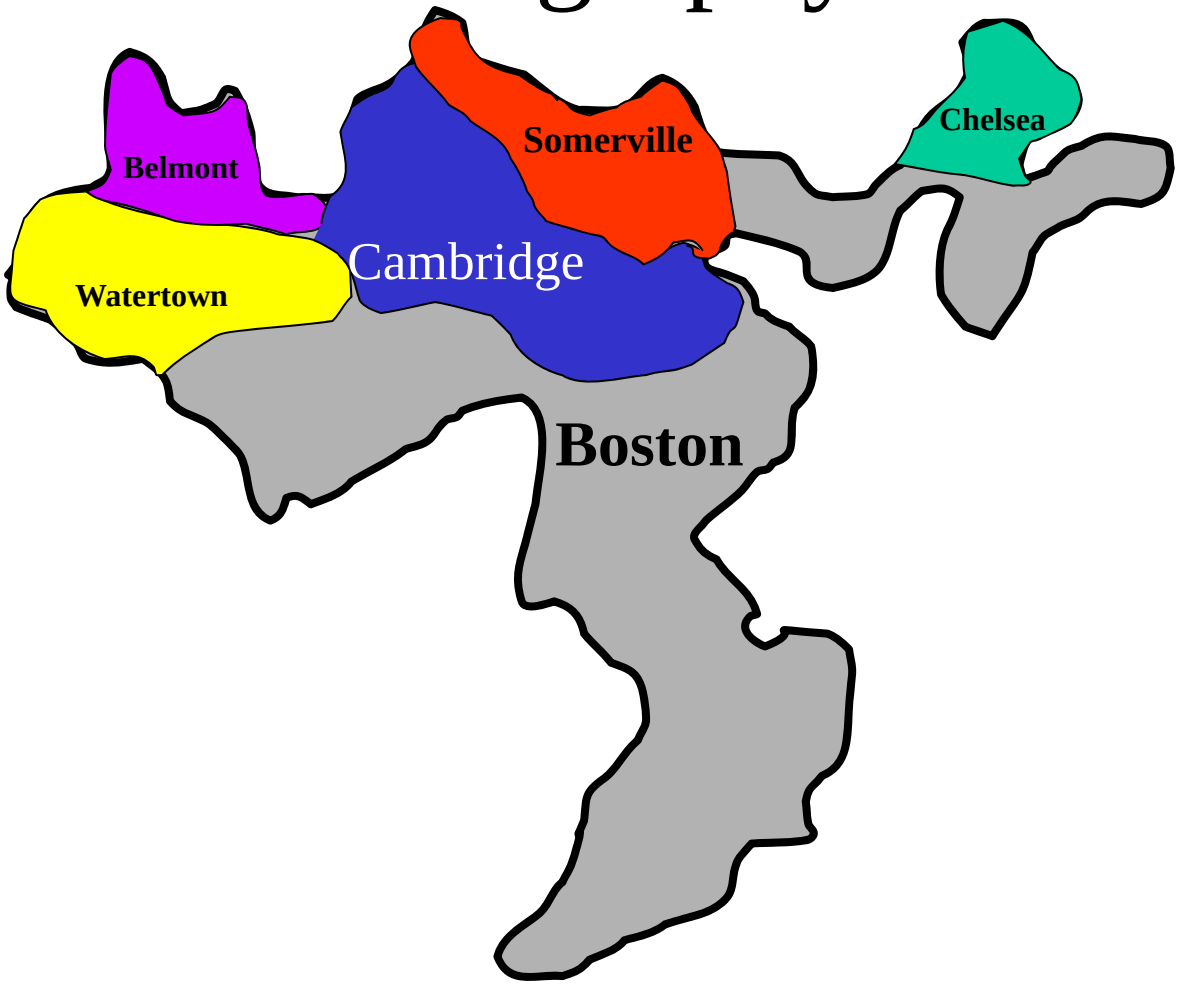
17.251

Fall 2012

The Hierarchical Structure of Running for Office



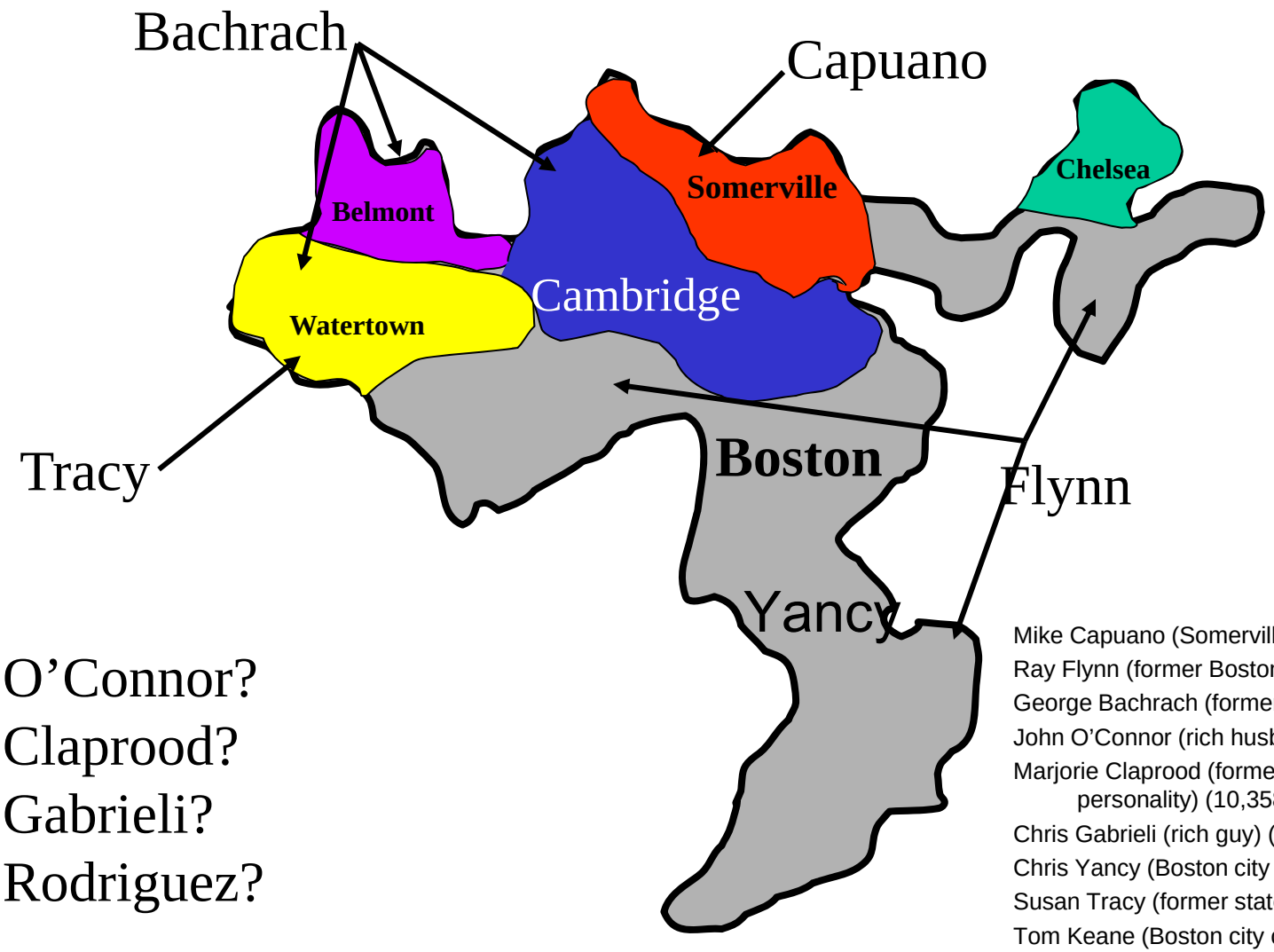
8th District 1998 Geography



8th District 1998 Candidates

- Mike Capuano (Somerville mayor) (19,439)
- Ray Flynn (former Boston Mayor) (14,829)
- George Bachrach (former state sen.) (12,166)
- John O'Connor (rich husband) (11,035)
- Marjorie Claprood (former state rep & radio personality) (10,358)
- Chris Gabrieli (rich guy) (5,732)
- Chris Yancy (Boston city council) (4,460)
- Susan Tracy (former state. Sen.) (2,855)
- Tom Keane (Boston city council) (2,150)
- Alex Rodriguez (1,799)

8th District 1998
Schematic of support



O'Connor?
Claprood?
Gabrieli?
Rodriguez?

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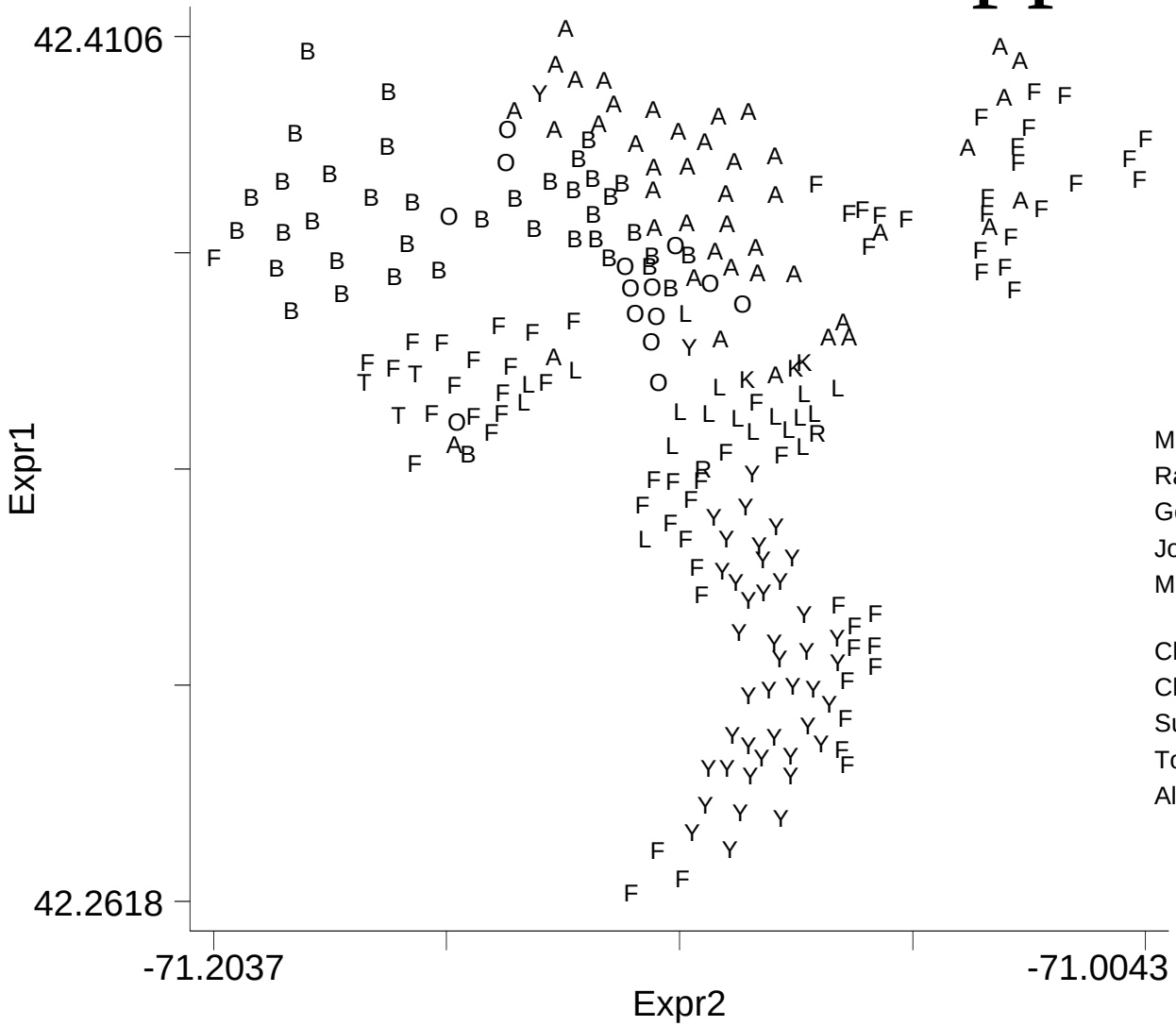
8th District 1998
District Support



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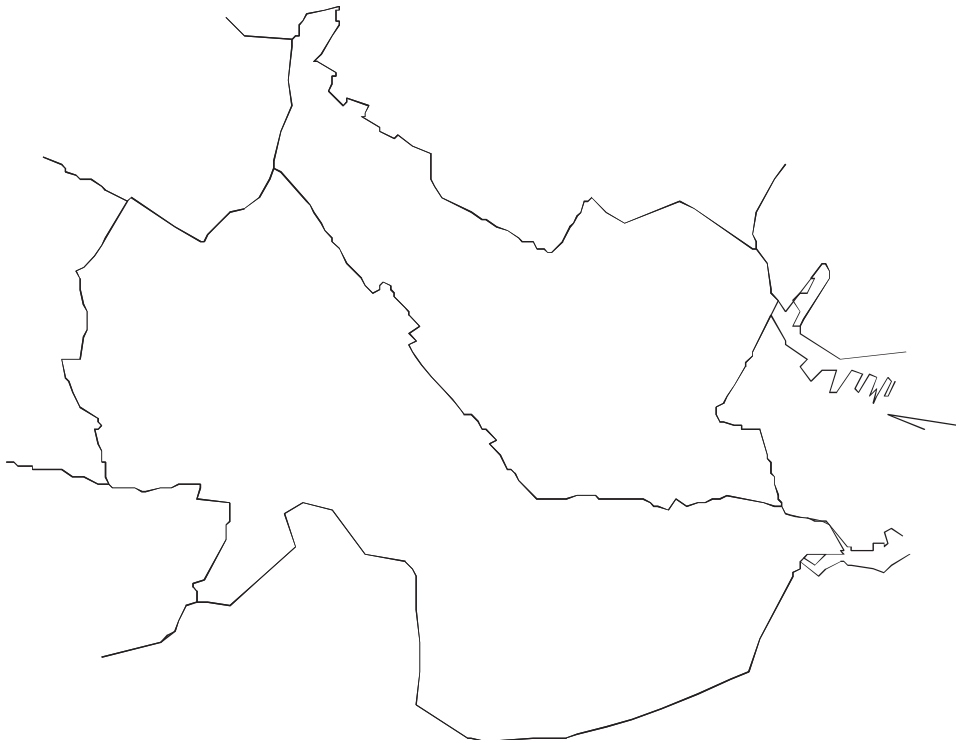
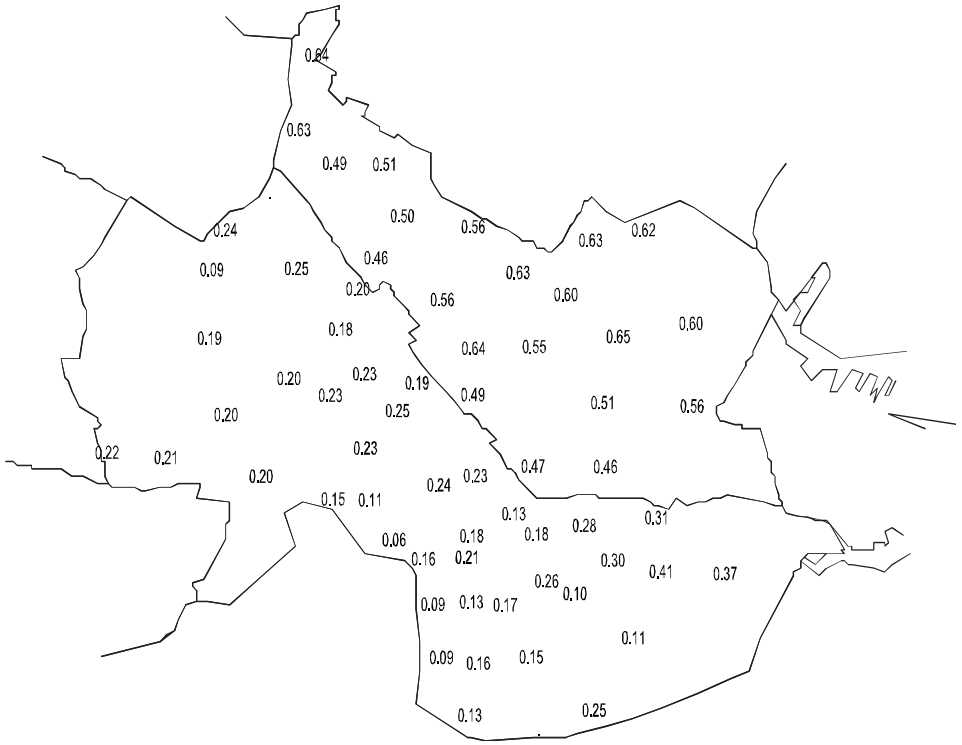
MEDFORD
EVERETT
SOMERVILLE
CAMBRIDGE*



Capuano Support



Strategic Choice and Political Careers

$$E(a_i) = P_i U_i - C_i$$

$$E(a_j) = P_j U_j - C_j$$

Some important considerations

- Variations in variable values
  - across time
  - cross-sectionally
- Factors that affect the calculus of progressive ambition

Factors that Affect the Calculu∫ of Progressive Ambition

B_L vs. B_H	P_L vs. P_H	C_L vs. C_H
-Scope of legislative authority -Political and policy resources within the institution -Pay and perquisites -Springboard effects	-National forces -Party identification in the districts -Redistricting -Scandal	-Opportunities foregone -Number and quality of challengers -Fund-raising efficiency -Efficiency of translating money and volunteer time into votes

Pay and Perquisites of state legislatures (some examples)

State	Stipend	Travel allowance
Alabama	$10/day (C)	$3958/month plus $50/day for three days during each week that the legislature actually meets during any session (U).
California	$95,290.56/year	$141.86 per day for each day they are in session
Georgia	$17,342/yr	$173/day (U) set by the Legislative Services Committee.
Massachusetts	$61,132.99 /year	From $10/day-$100/day, depending on distance from State House (V) set by the legislature.
New Hampshire	$200/two-year term	No per diem is paid.
Rhode Island	$13,962.55/yr	No per diem is paid.
West Virginia	$20,000/yr	$131/day during session (U) set by compensation commission

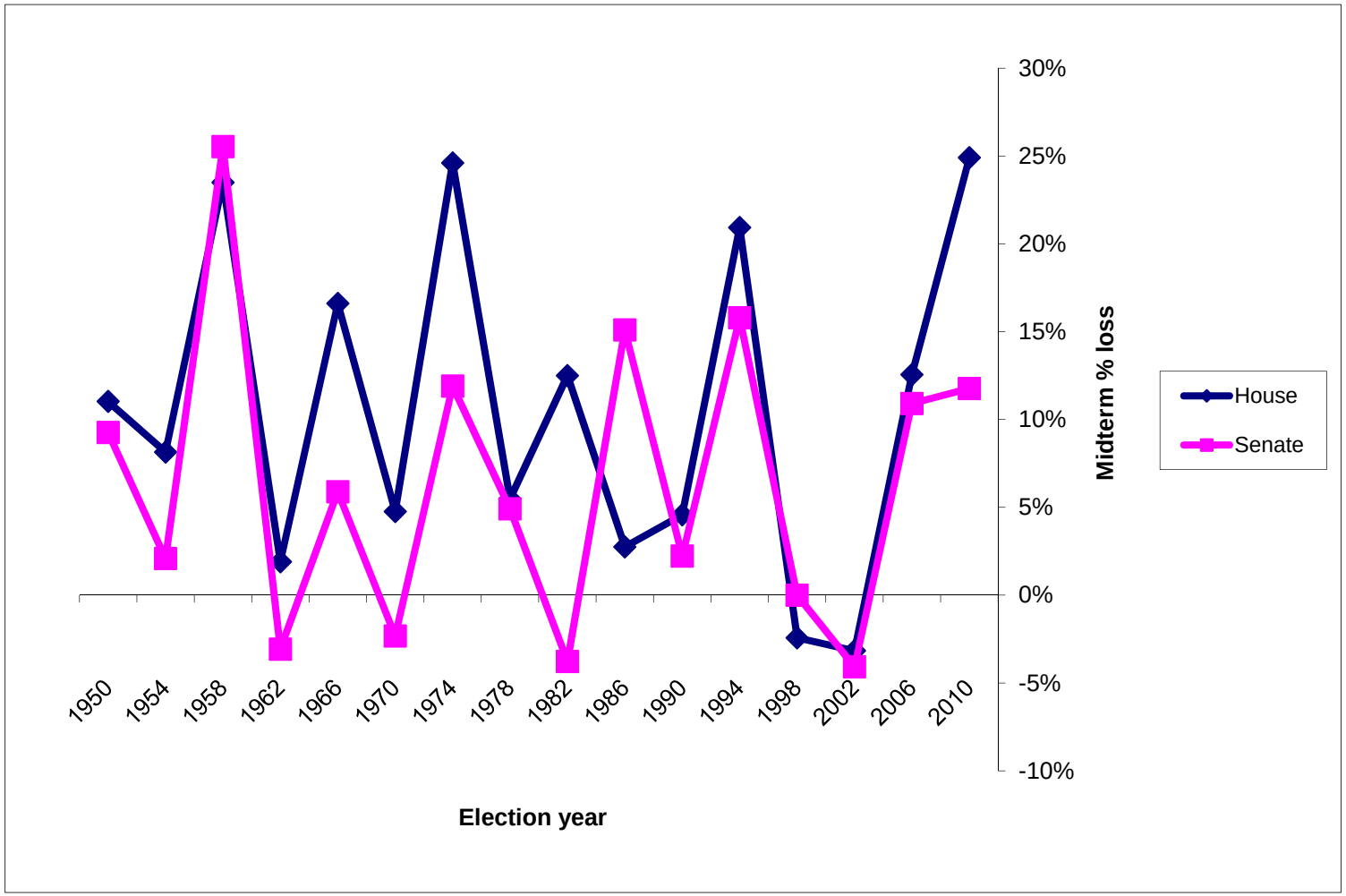
Source: National Conference on State Legislatures
http://www.ncsl.org/legislatures-elections/legisdata/2011-ncsl-legislator-compensation-table.aspx

Variation in state legislative capacities

Category of Legislature	Time on the Job	States	Compensation	Staff per Member
Red	80%	-CA, MI, NY, PA -IL, MA, OH, WI (light)	$68,599	8.9
White	67%	AK, AL, AR, AZ, CO, CT, DE, HI, IA, KY, LA, MD MN, MO, NC, NE, OK, OR, SC, TN, TX, VA, WA	$35,326	3.1
Blue	50%	-GA, ID, IN, KS, ME, MS, NM, NV, RI, VT, WV -MT, NH, ND, SD, UT, WY (light)	$15,984	1.2

Source: http://www.ncsl.org/legislatures-elections/legislatures/full-and-part-time-legislatures.aspx

National tides



The National Tide in 2004, 2008, 2012

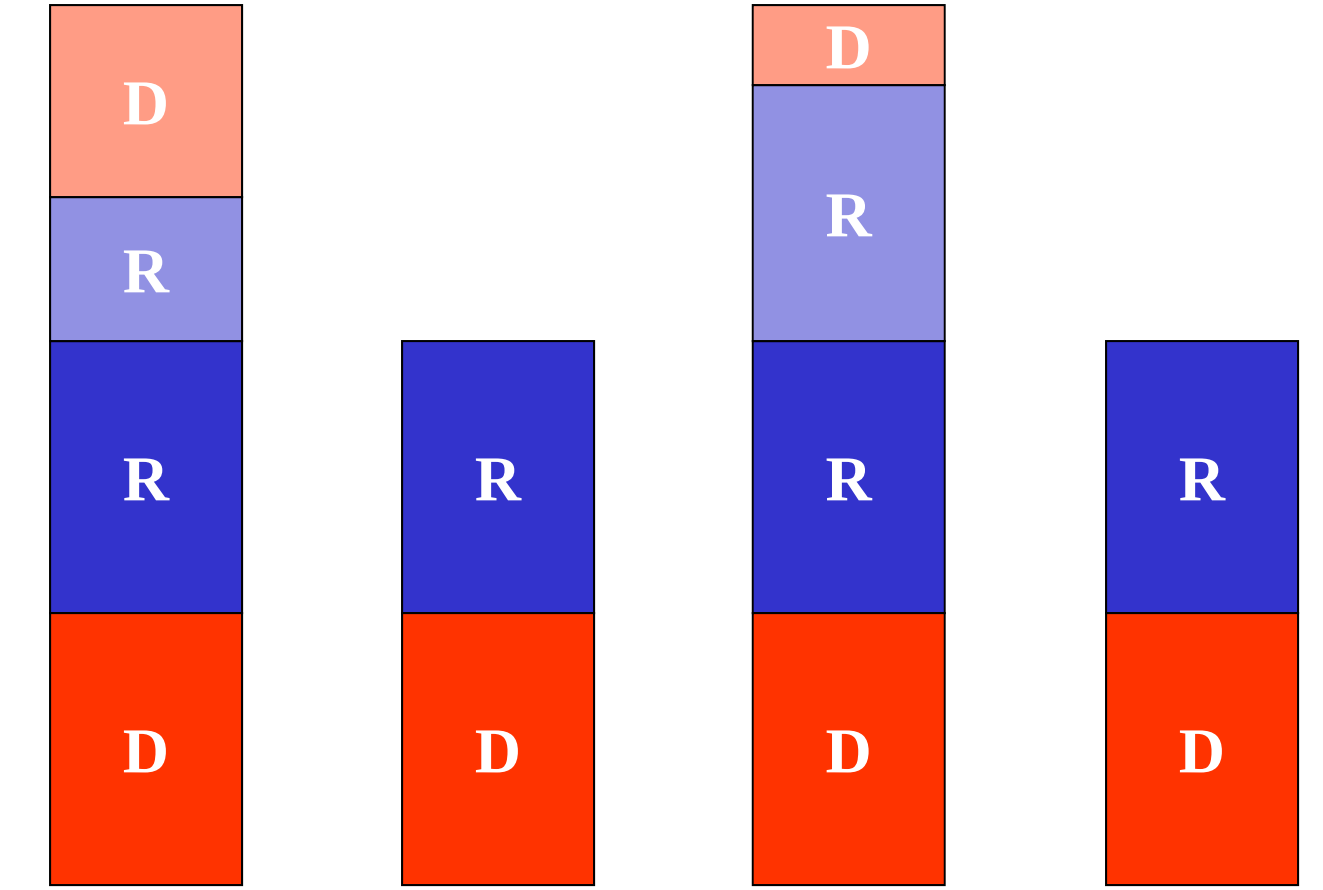
- Retiring from the Senate
  - 2004: 3R, 4D (+4D)
  - 2008: 5R, 0D (+8D)
  - 2012: 3R, 6D, 1I (??)
- Retiring from the House
  - 2004: 11R, 7D (+3R)
  - 2008: 23R, 3D (+24D)
  - 2012: 14D, 11R (??)

Why the midterm loss?*

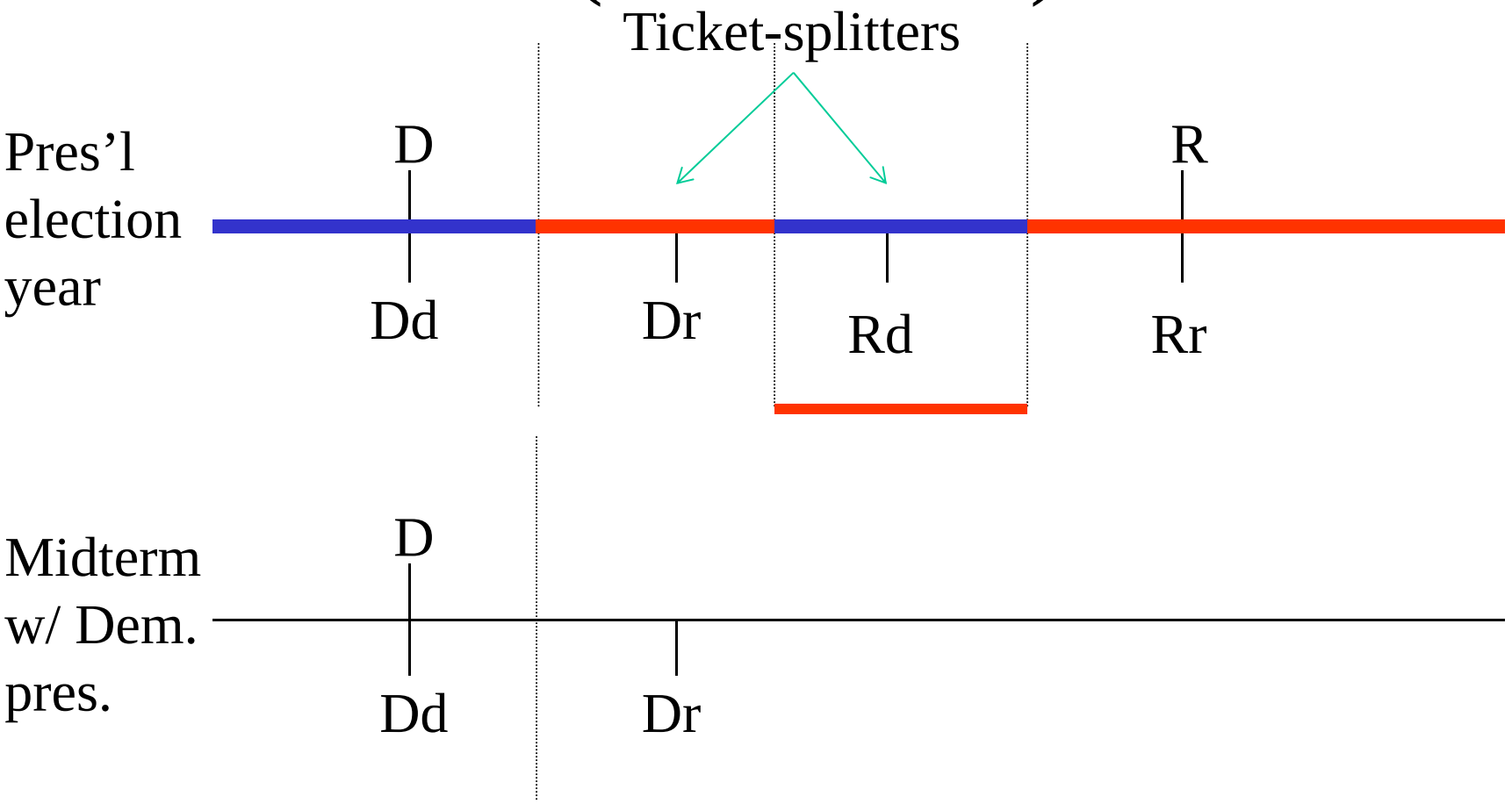
- Surge and decline effect
- Strategic voters
- Strategic politicians

*And where did it go?

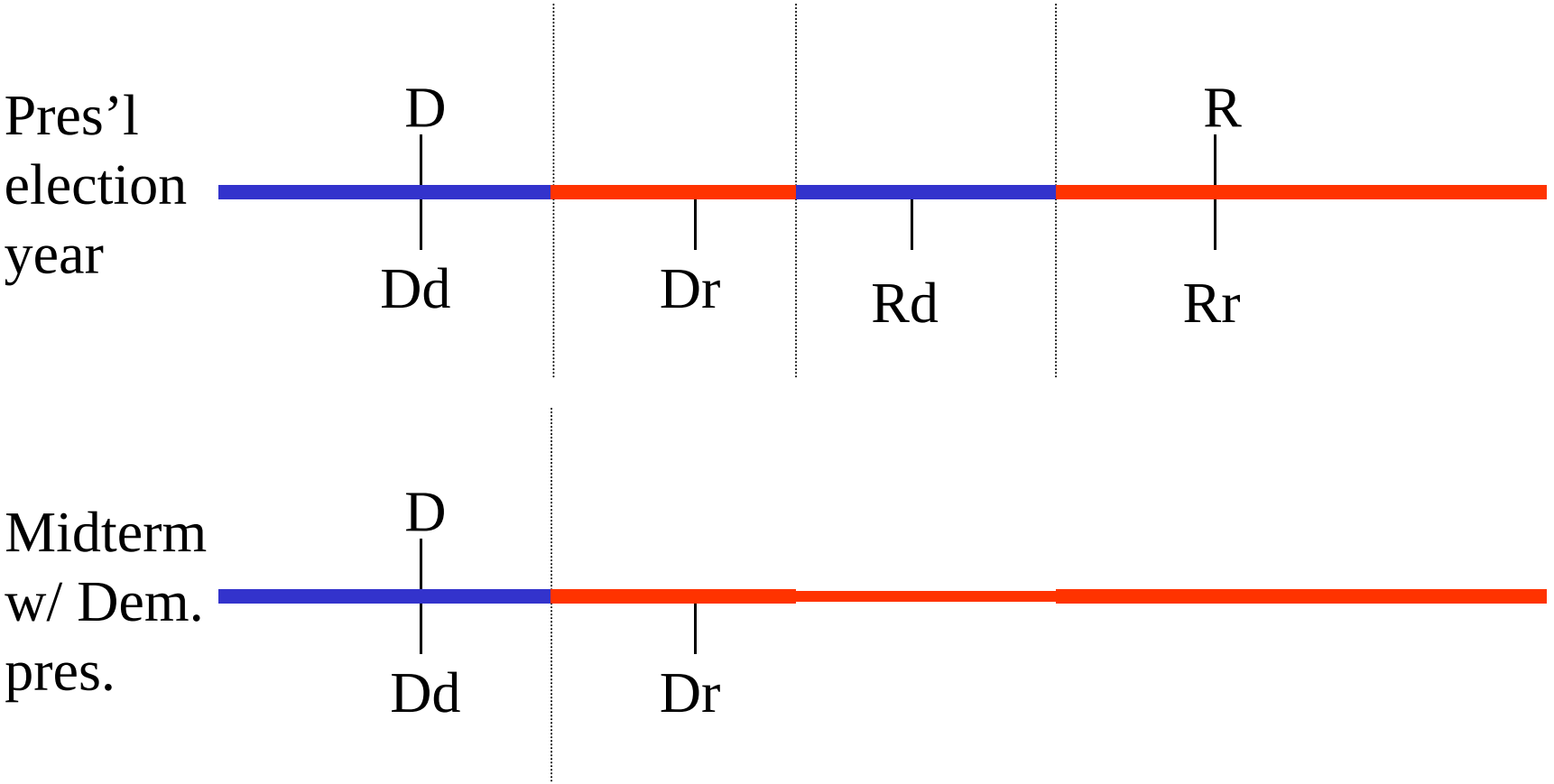
Surge and decline effect



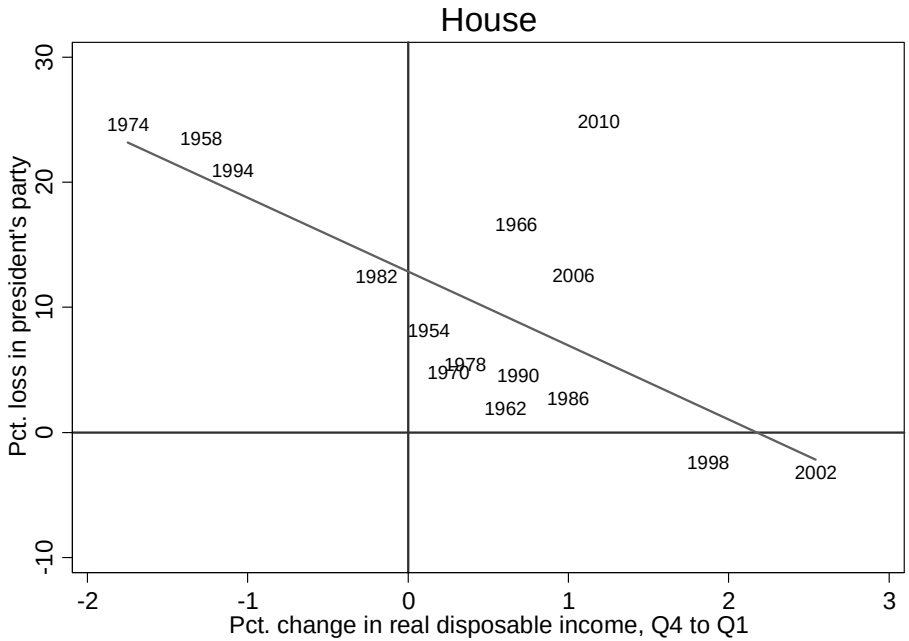
Strategic voters (not to scale)



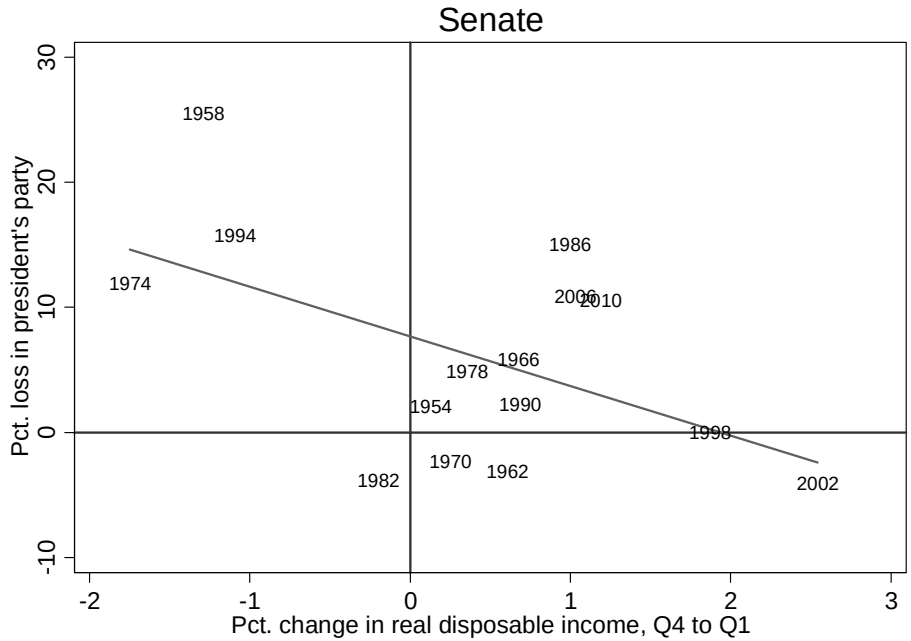
Strategic voters (not to scale)



Strategic Candidates



$R^2 = .49$

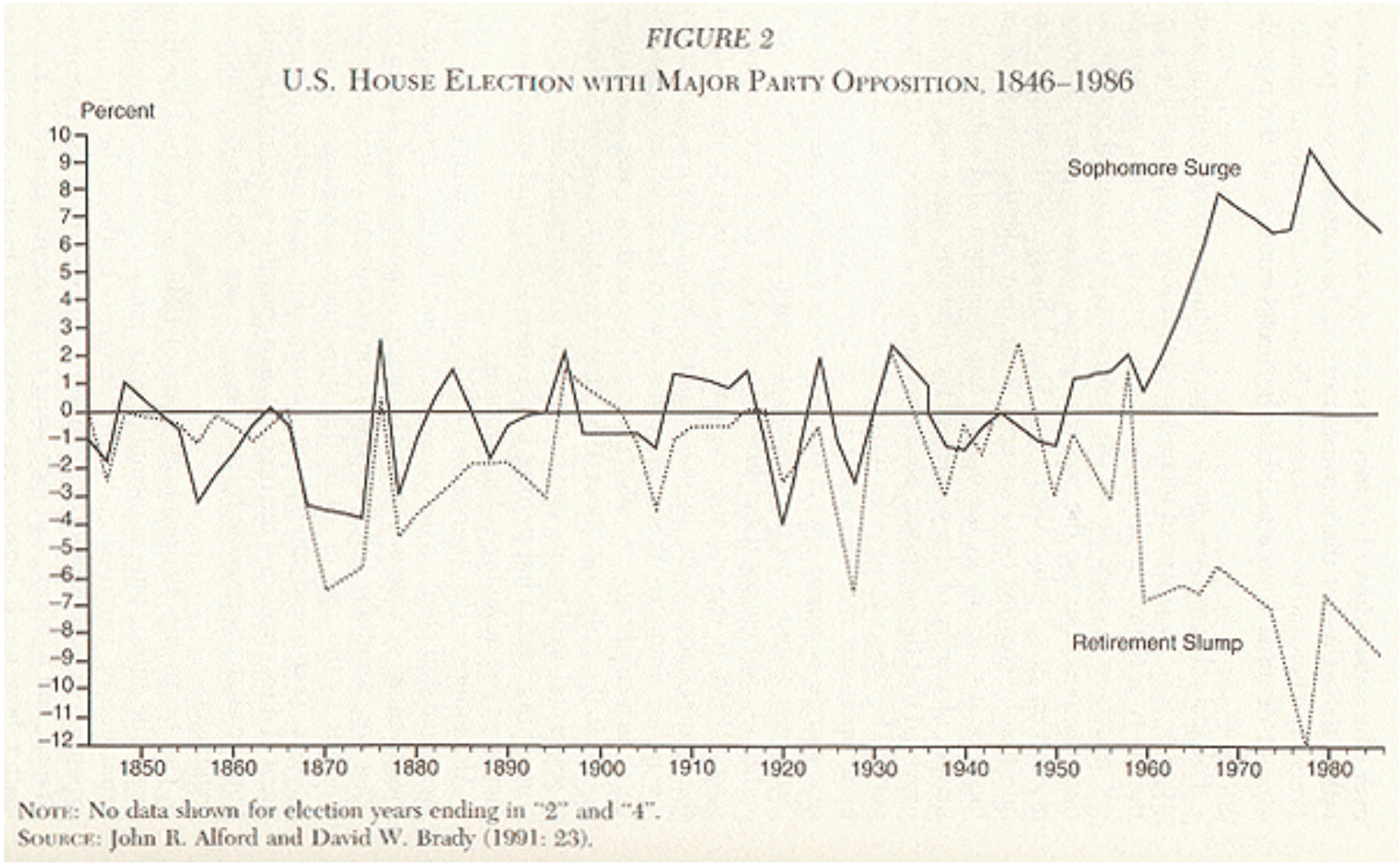


$R^2=.28$

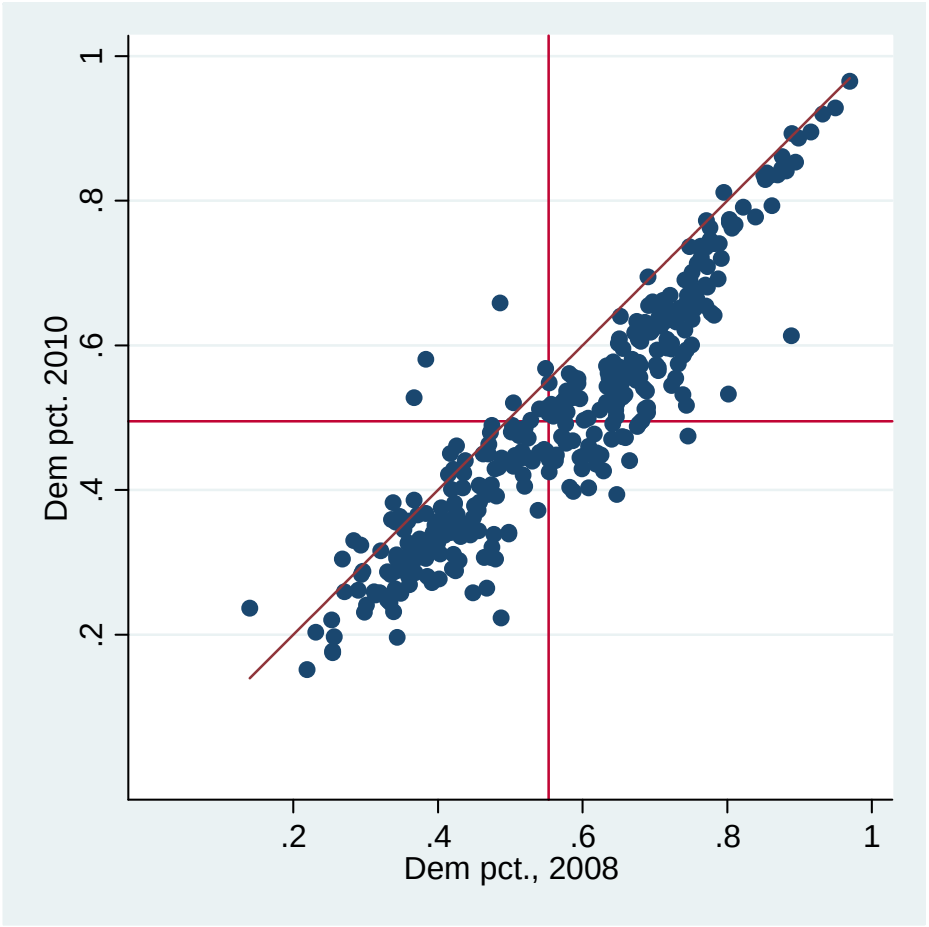
Incumbents, challengers, and open seat candidates

- Incumbents
  - Incumbency advantage
- Challengers
  - Challenger quality
- Open seat candidates
  - The free-for-all

Incumbency advantage: The Picture

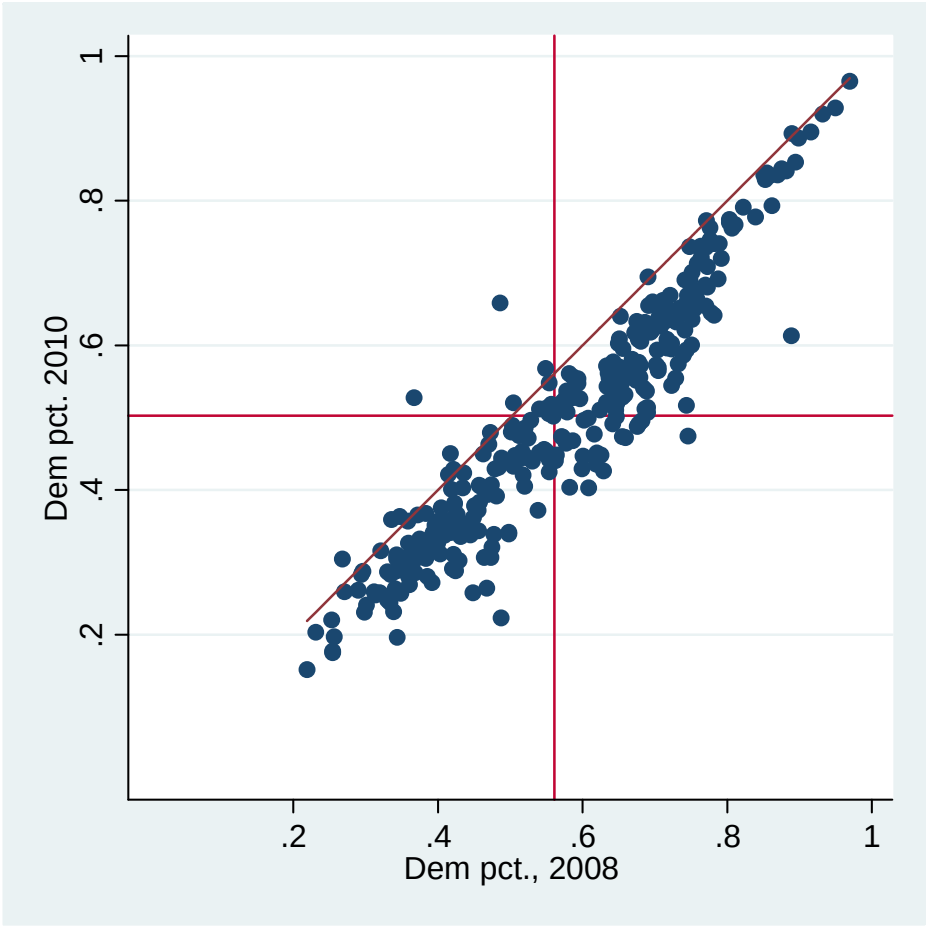


A simple look at incumbent advantage in 2010



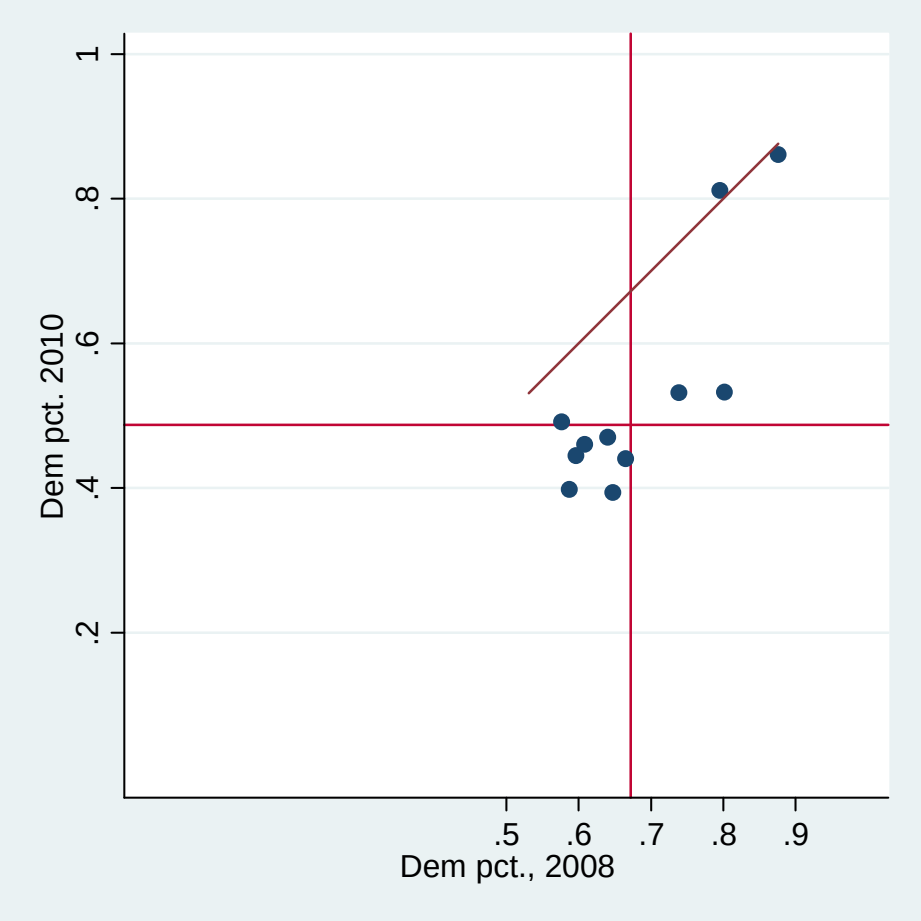
Dem. pct., 2008 = 56.0%
Dem. pct., 2010 = 48.5%
Diff = 7.5%

A simple look at incumbent advantage in 2010--incumbents



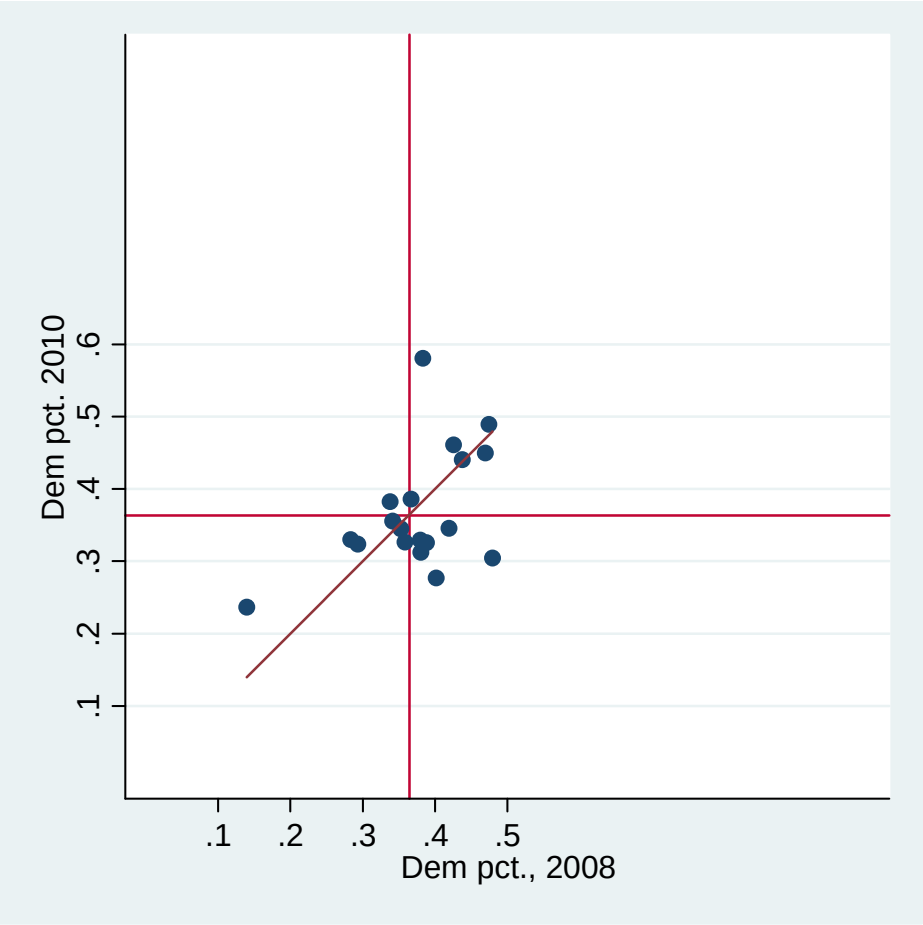
Dem. pct., 2008 = 56.6%
Dem. pct., 2010 = 49.0%
Diff = 7.6%

A simple look at incumbent advantage in 2010---Dem. open



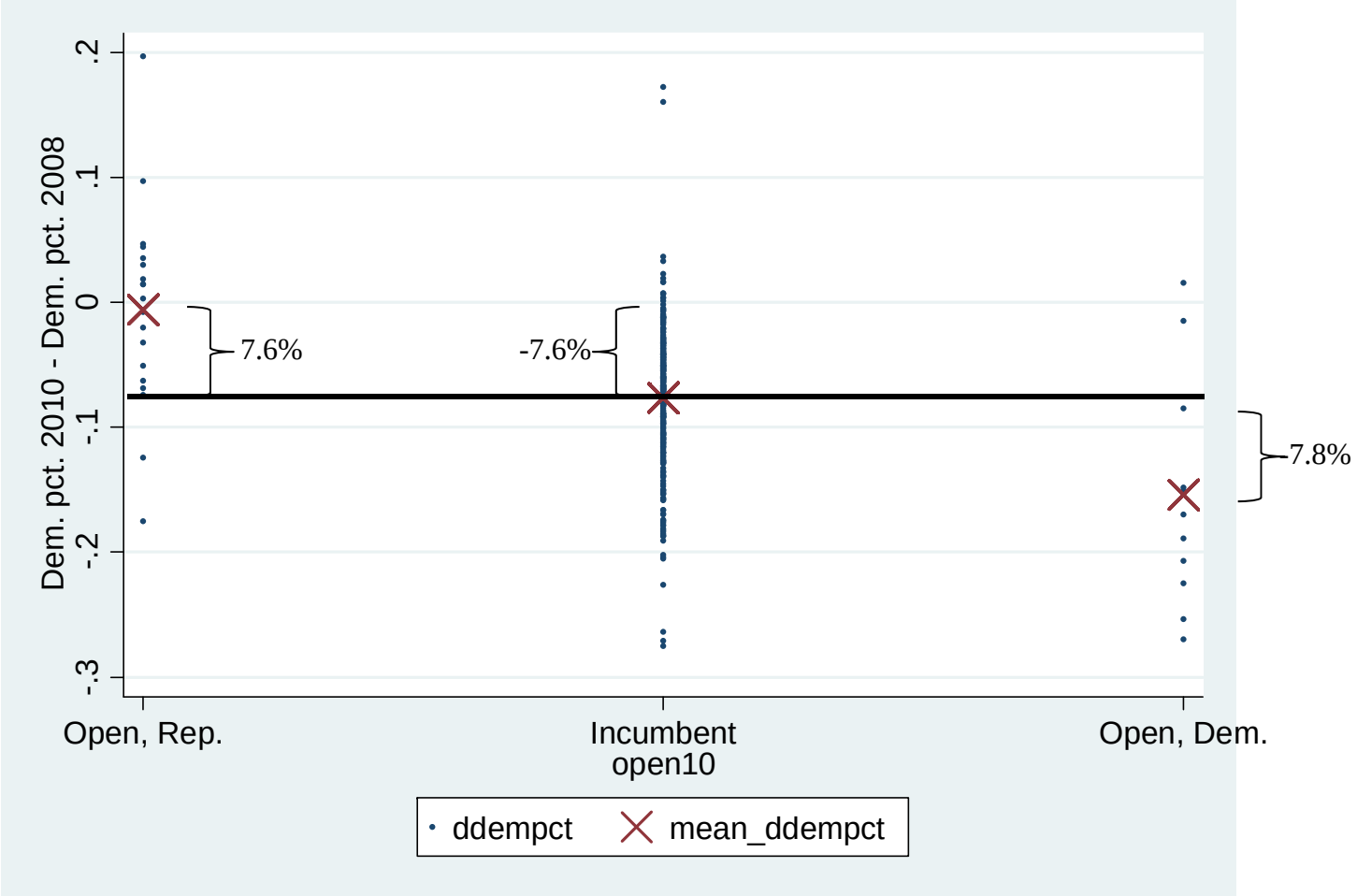
Dem. pct., 2008 = 68.5%
Dem. pct., 2010 = 53.1%
Diff = 15.4%

A simple look at incumbent advantage in 2010—Rep. open

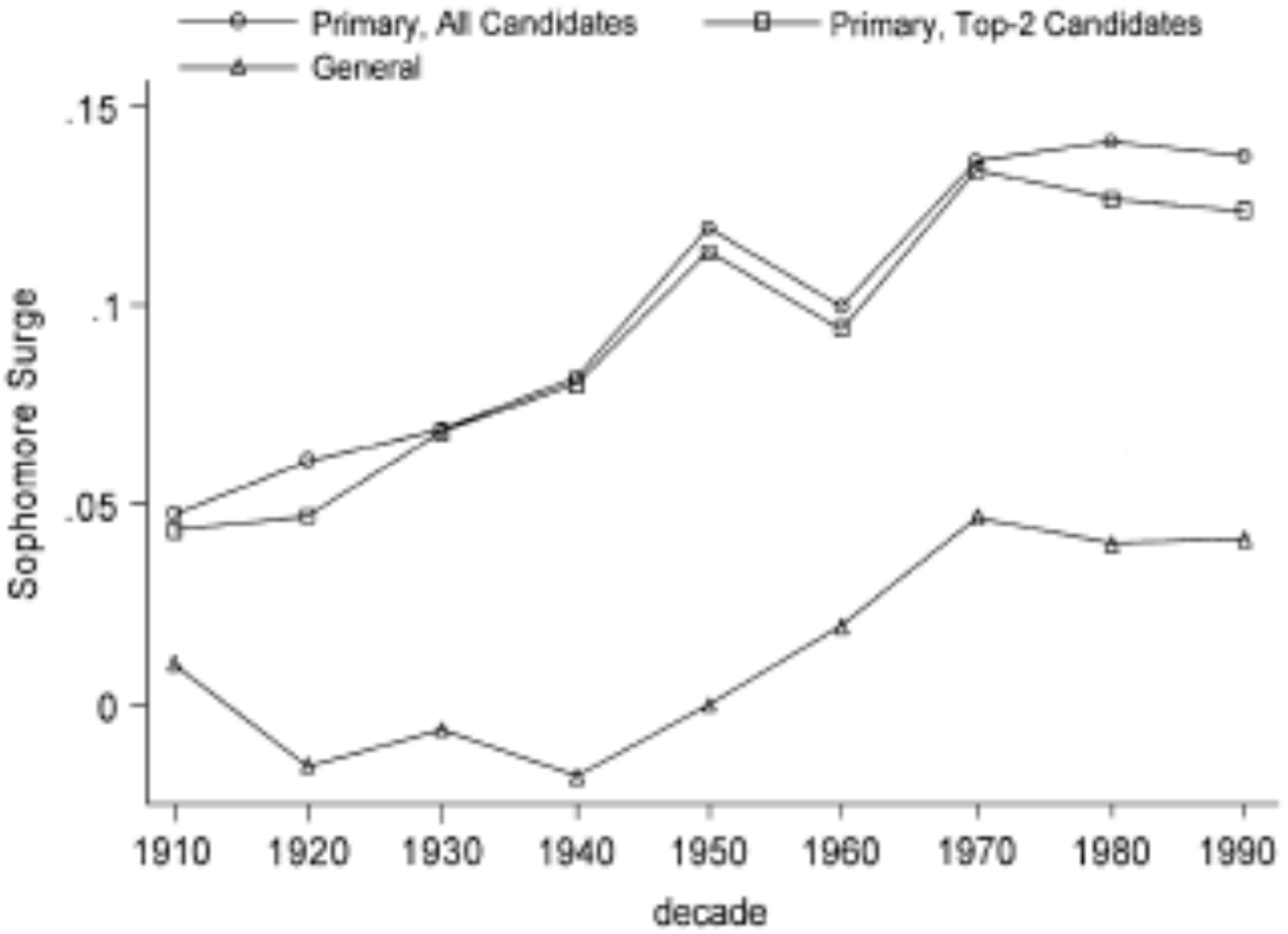


Dem. pct., 2008 = 37.4%
Dem. pct., 2010 = 36.8%
Diff = 0.6%

2010 summary (compared to 2008)



Incumbency Advantage: Primaries



Source: Ansolabehere, et al., 2007, "The incumbency advantage in U.S. House elections, *Electoral Studies*.

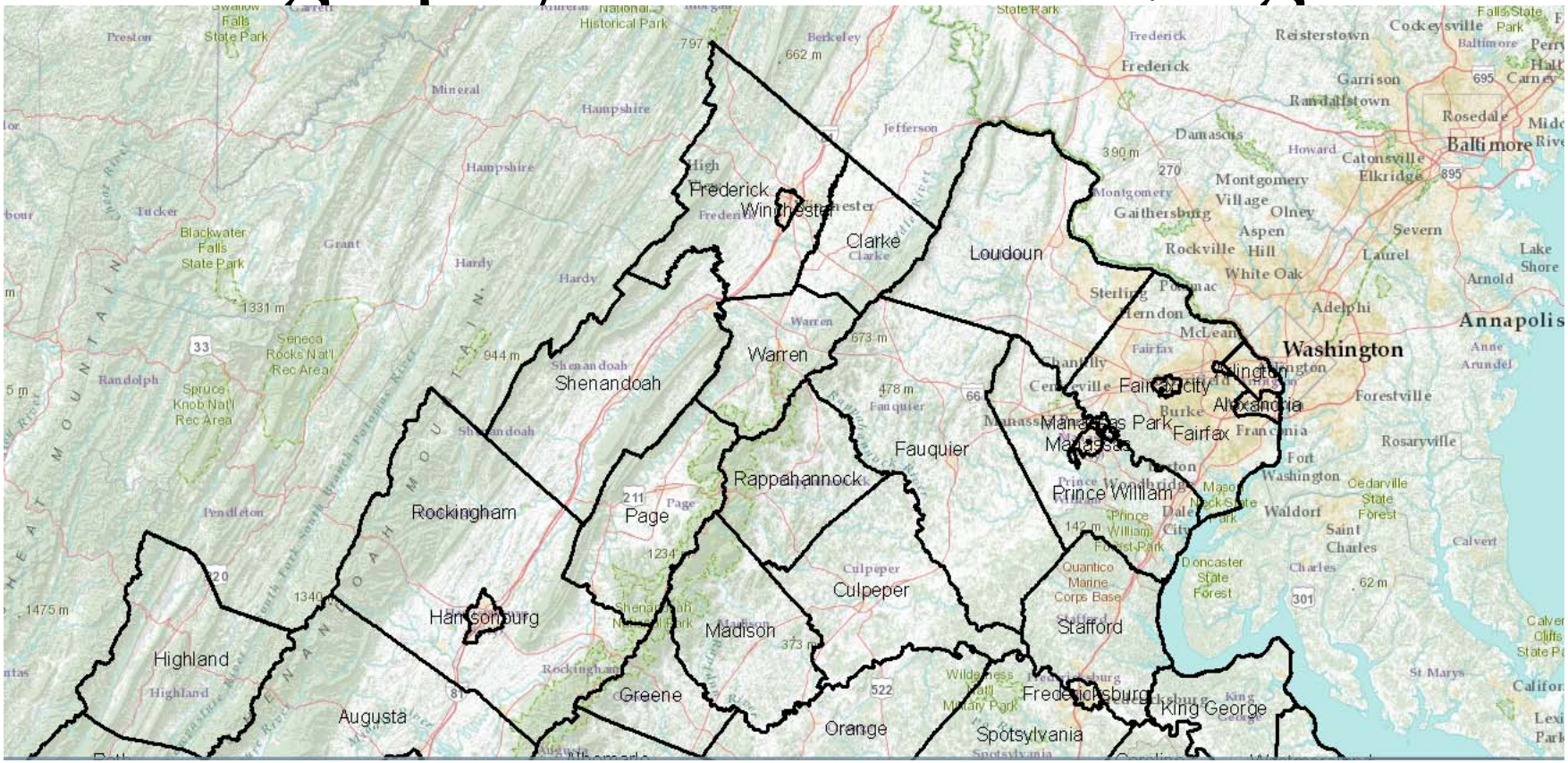
Incumbency advantage

- Why does it exist?
  - Franking, etc.
  - Constituency service
  - Redistricting
  - Smarter candidates
  - Spending advantage

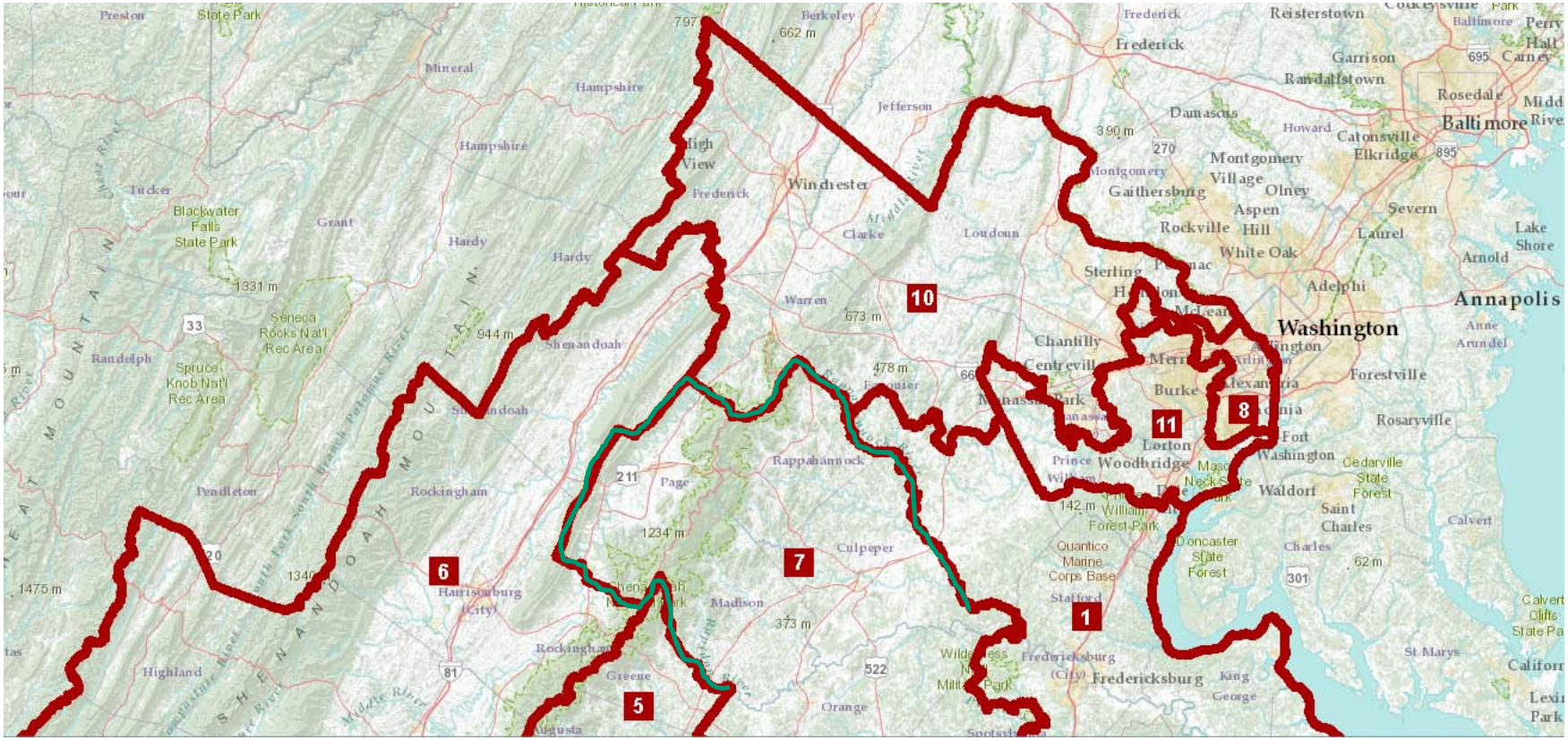
Incumbent-protection gerrymandering

- Frank Wolf (Figure 4.1 in Analyzing Congress)

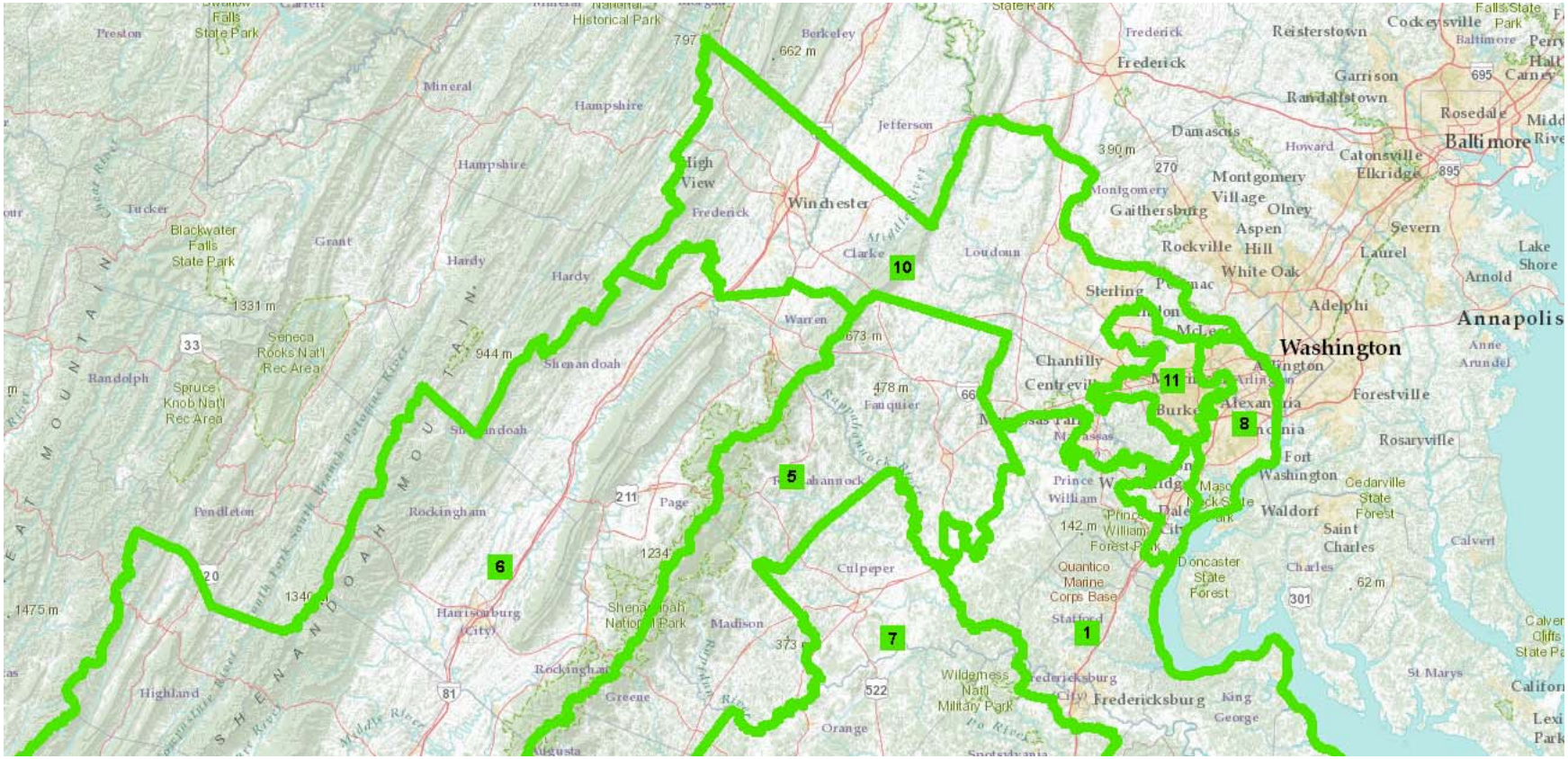
Geography of Northern Virginia



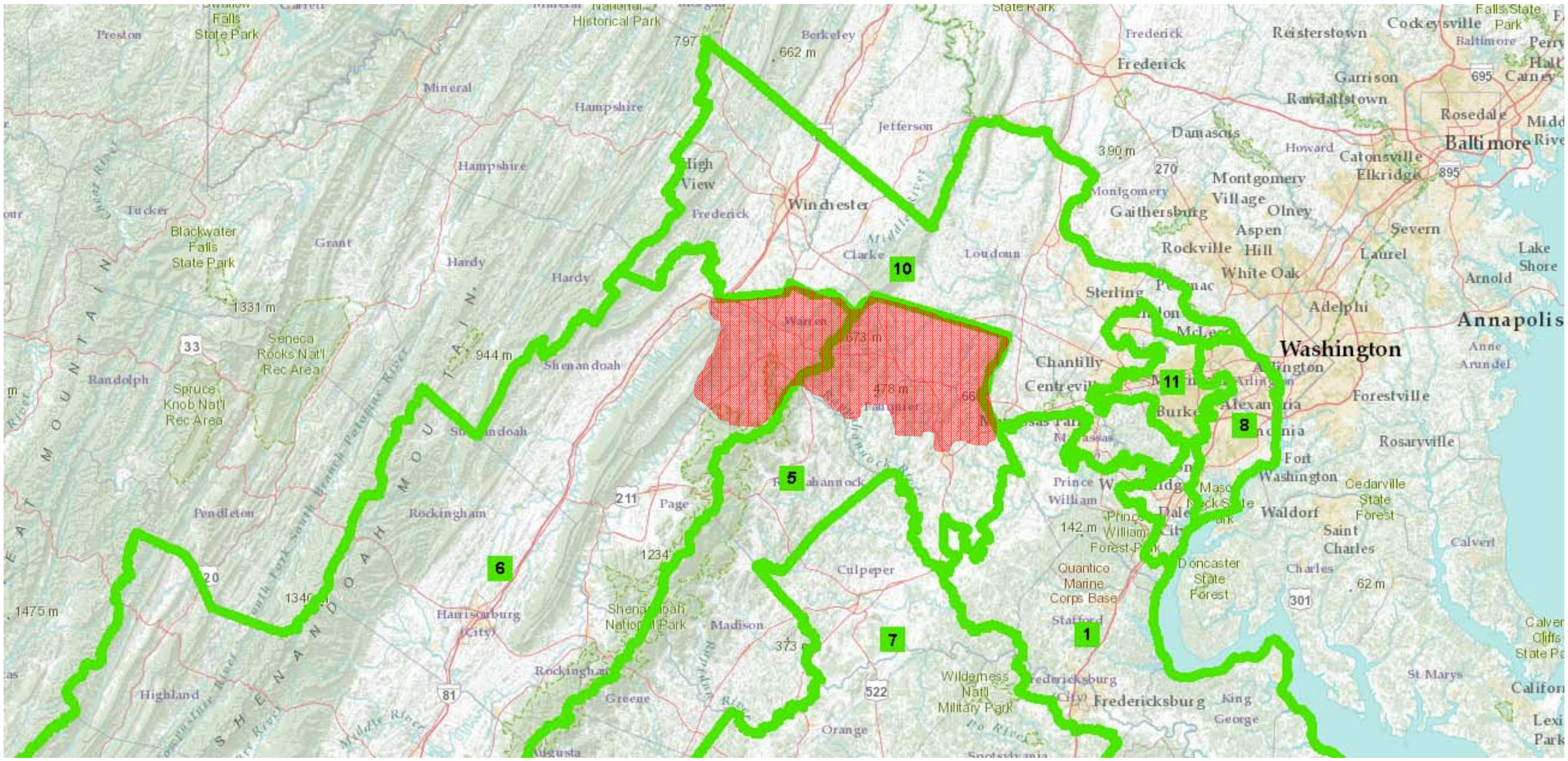
2001-2010 districts



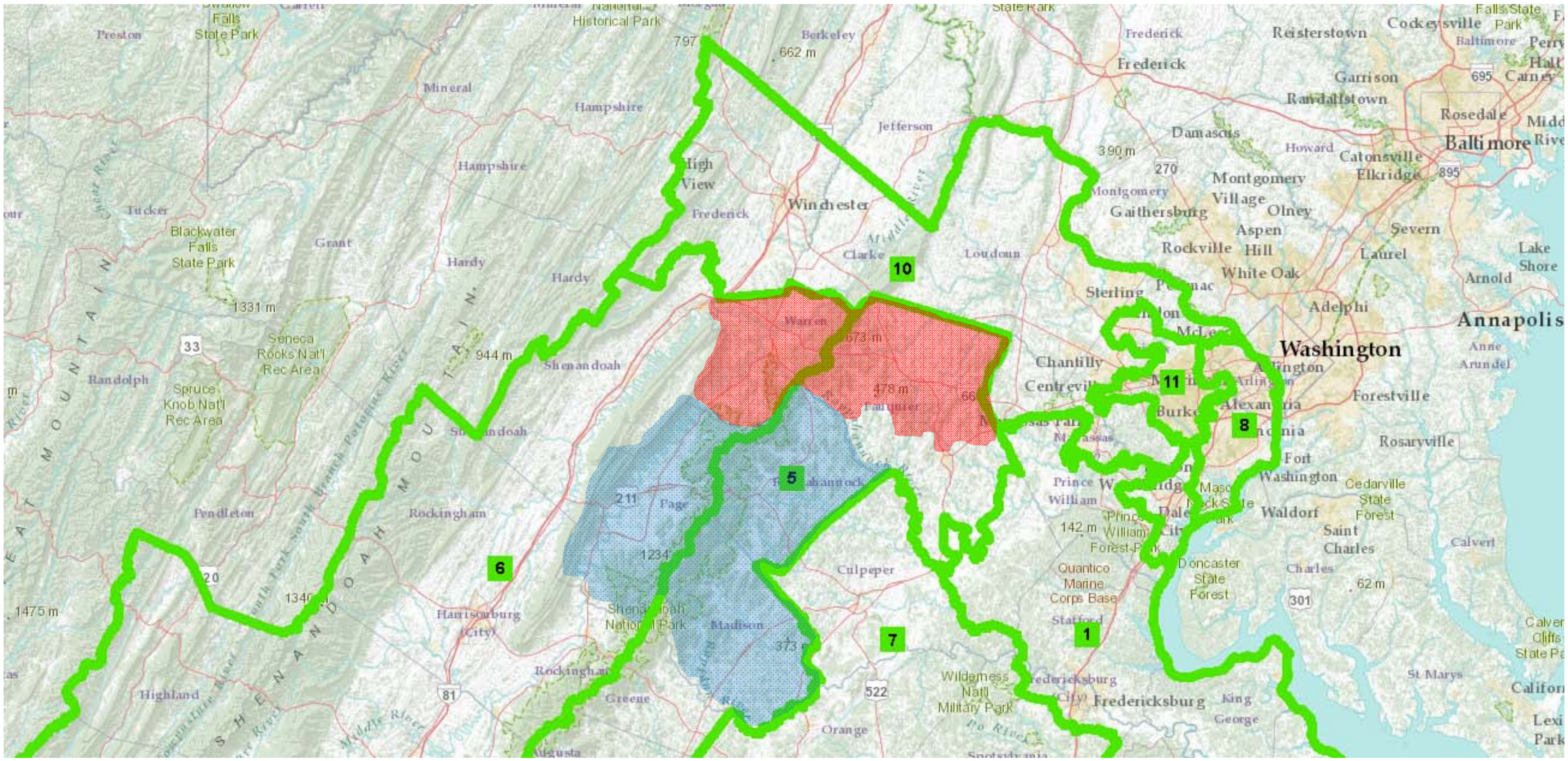
2011-2020 districts



2011-2020 districts



2011-2020 districts

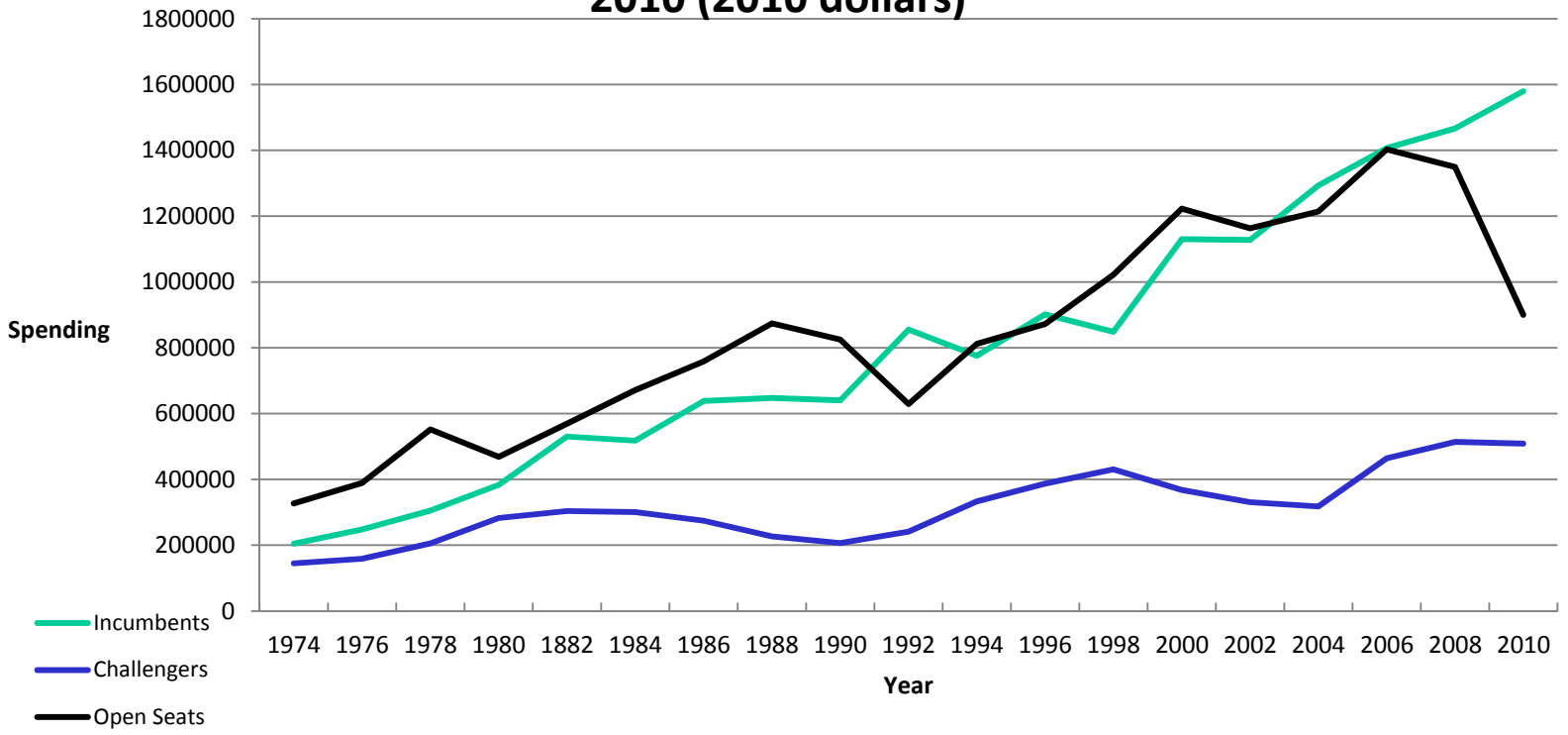


Effect of 2011 Redistricting

District	Republican before	Republican after	Difference
10 (Wolf)	46%	50%	+4%
7 (Cantor	53%	56%	+3%

The Incumbency Spending Advantage (Update of Fig. 4.2)

Figure 4.2: Average Campaign Fund Raising in House Races, 1974-2010 (2010 dollars)



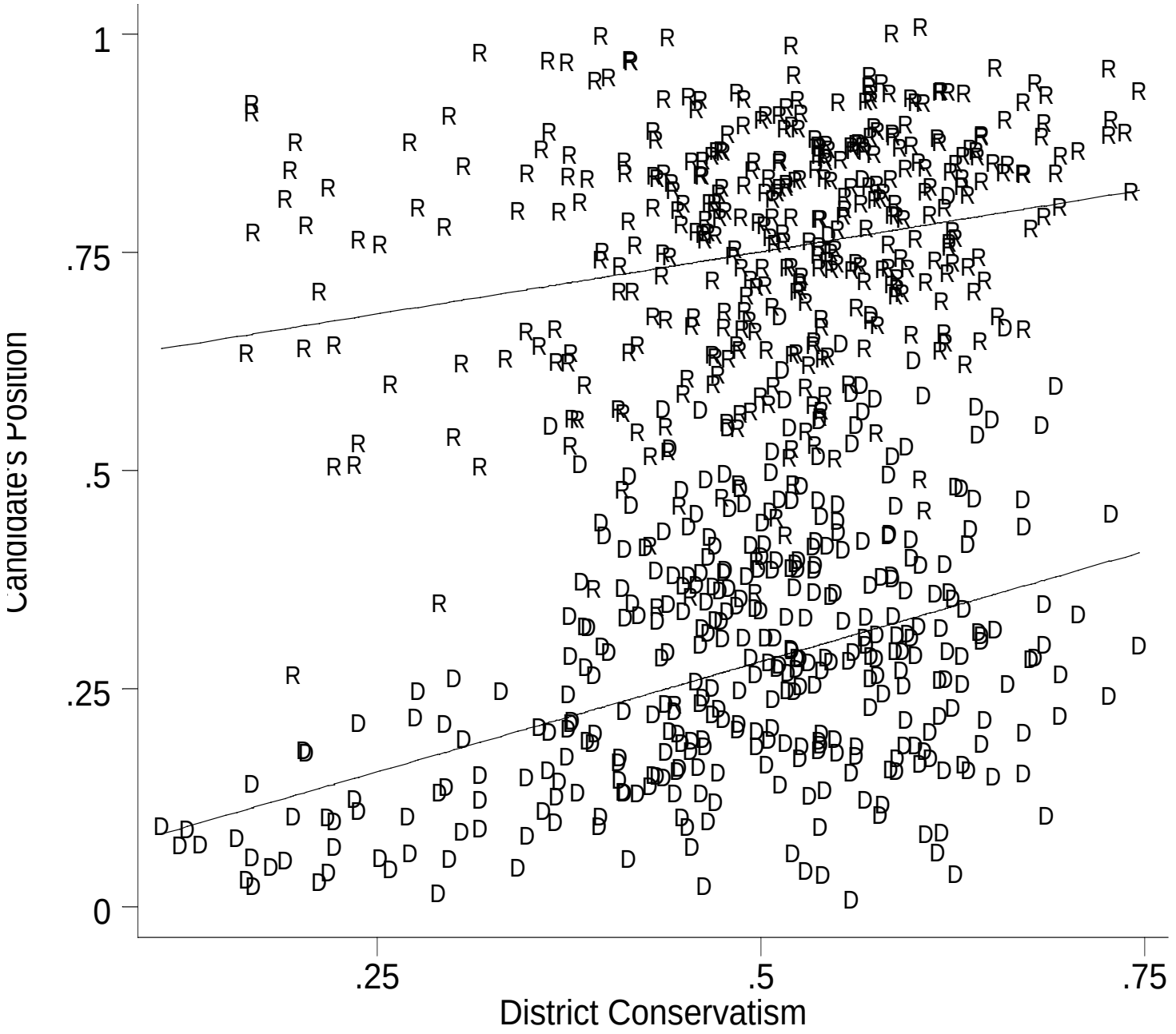
(Challenger) Candidate Quality: 2010

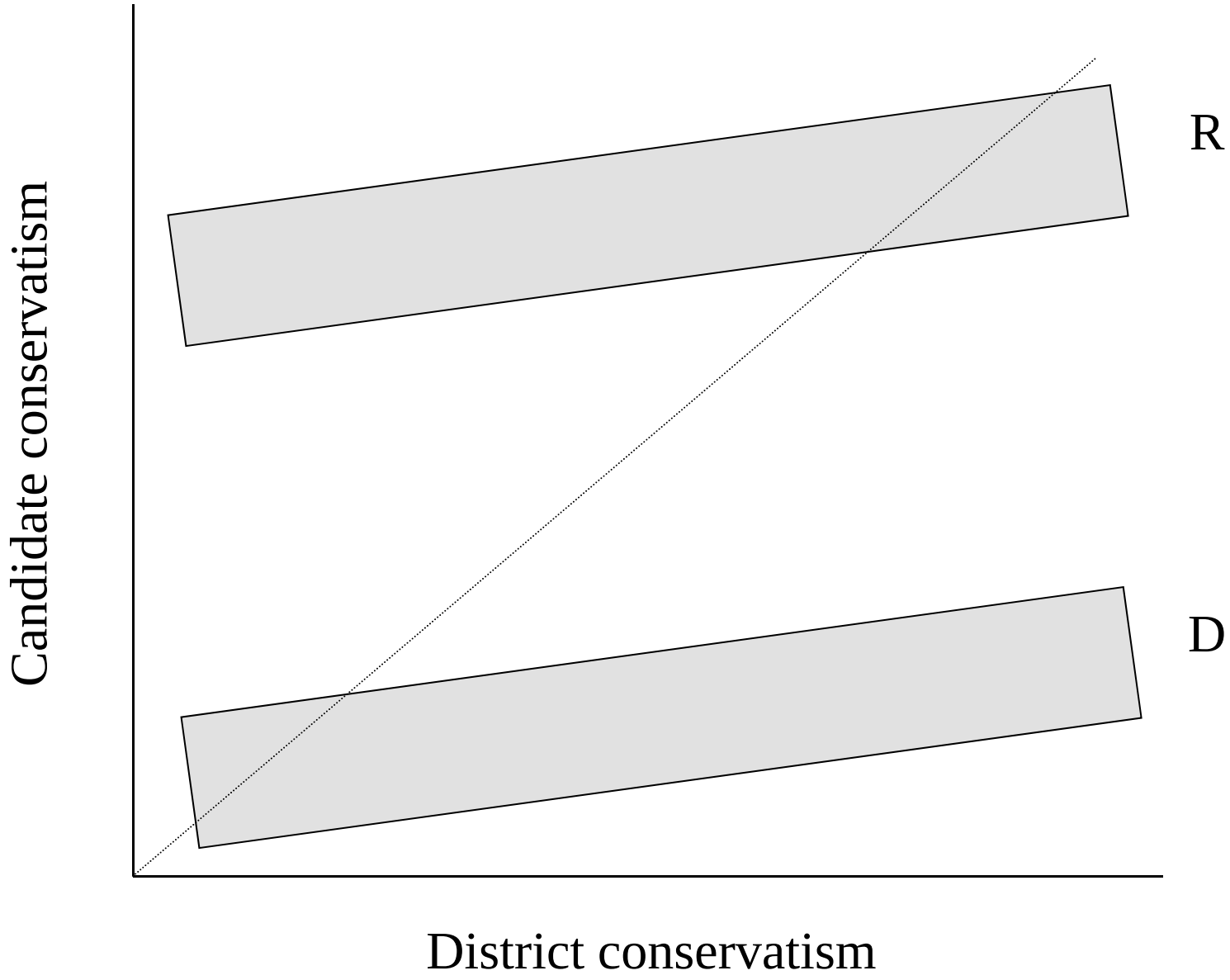
Table 4.4*

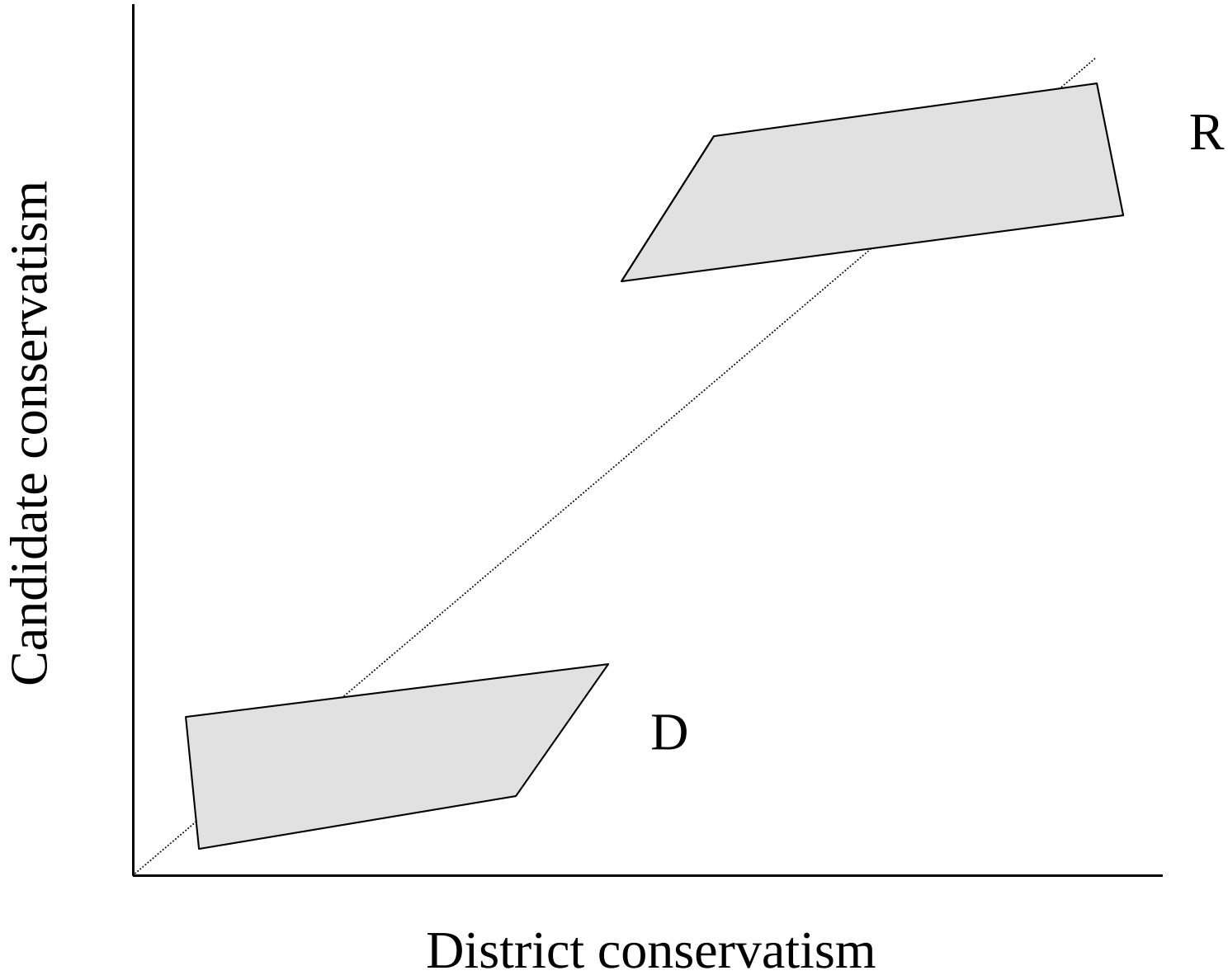
	Dem. Challenger against Rep. Incumbent		Rep. Challenger against Dem. Incumbent	
	No prior office	Held prior office	No prior office	Held prior office
Challenger won	0%	13%	12%	56%
Total challengers	111	23	179	52

*Perhaps someone will want to write a paper about what this table looks like in 2012

Candidate Positioning Add-on


Candidate's Position
1
.75
.5
.25
0
.25
.5
.75
District Conservatism


Candidate conservatism
R
D
District conservatism


Candidate conservatism
R
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District conservatism