

## **Party Strategies, Constituency Links, and Legislative Speech**

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### **Abstract**

This paper examines how parties organize legislative speech. Electoral incentives and legislative institutions affect speech participation. When electoral systems create personal vote-seeking incentives, parties are less concerned with screening speeches and more supportive of members seeking to garner name recognition. But in many countries legislative rules and norms constrain opportunities for individual position taking during the lawmaking debates. We argue that parties resolve this dilemma by organizing speech participation into nonlegislative speeches and lawmaking debates. In each instance, different types of legislators are more likely to speak. We examine the case of Chile and test the implications of our theory with data on congressional speeches.

## **Introduction**

Parties face a perennial challenge—how can leaders exercise sufficient control over their members in Congress to build and maintain the party’s ideological identity, while still providing legislators with opportunities to establish a connection with constituents? On the one hand, if parties give backbenchers free reign, these backbenchers may express positions at odds with the party line, muddying the ideological waters and doing harm to the party’s image. On the other hand, backbenchers likely bolster their reelection chances by developing a unique political identity and honing their constituency connection. Moreover, parties clearly benefit when their members are good at attracting votes.

This tension between establishing party loyalty and allowing for some dissent exists in democracies across Latin America (Carey 2007, 2009), as well as in the United States (e.g., Cox and McCubbins 1993; Lindstadt and Vander Wielen 2011), Europe (e.g., Hix 2002; Lindstädt, Slapin, and Vander Wielen 2011; Proksch and Slapin 2012) and elsewhere (Kam 2009). However, the nature and extent of the tension between partisan control and legislator freedom varies with electoral incentives and institutions (e.g., Carey and Shugart 1995; Chang and Golden 2007). Typically, scholars explore the manifestation of these tensions by examining levels of party unity on roll-call votes (Carey 2009; Morgenstern 2004). But roll-call votes can only tell part of the story. They are subject to selection effects (Carrubba, Gabel, and Hug 2008) and a very high degree of partisan control (Depauw and Martin 2009). Recently, scholars have turned to other sources of data to examine the effects of electoral incentives on intraparty dissent and representation, including bill cosponsorship (Alemán and Calvo 2013; Crisp, Kanthak, and Leijonhufvud 2004; Kirkland 2012) press releases (Grimmer 2013), and legislative debate participation (Proksch and Slapin 2012, 2015).

In this paper, we present new data on legislative debate in Chile, which we use to explain how parties organize the legislative agenda to provide individuals with an opportunity to connect with constituents, while still maintaining a coherent party message. Parties in Chile have set aside time at the end of most legislative sessions for speeches unrelated to bills—the *Hora de Incidentes* or Incidents Hour—during which members can give speeches that may help them establish an electoral connection with their constituents. While the parliamentary rules of procedure allow parties to strictly control access to the floor at this time, we find that parties do not prevent their members from speaking. Instead, they create opportunities for their more rebellious and marginal members to use *nonideological* speeches to connect with voters. Moreover, we find that members who use this opportunity tend to fare better at the polls.

Rules differ for debates on bills during the *Orden del Dia*, or Order of the Day. During these debates, the rules give all members the right to speak. But rather than equal participation among all members, we find that more experienced legislators, those with more influential committee positions, and those from the governing parties participate more often in lawmaking debates. The results suggest that parties use both formal rules and informal norms (albeit in unexpected ways) to control which of their members gain access to the floor at different times. Formal rules during the *Hora de Incidentes* ensure that parties can get floor time for members seeking to bolster their individual legislative profile among constituents. And while technically parties cannot control who speaks during the *Orden del Dia*, they appear to have developed norms that result in experienced, senior members taking the floor at this time.

Our findings contribute to a growing literature on legislative behavior in the US Congress (e.g., Grimmer 2013), European parliamentary democracies (Martin and Vanberg 2008; Proksch and Slapin 2012), and Latin American presidential systems (Crisp and Desposato 2004; Crisp,

Kanthak, and Leijonhufvud 2004; Taylor-Robinson and David 2002) that seeks to move beyond the use of roll-call data to understand legislative behavior, intraparty politics and dissent, as well as modes of political representation. Moreover, we offer one of the first empirical analyses of legislative debate participation in Latin American legislatures.<sup>1</sup>

Our paper proceeds as follows: we first present the literature on personal vote-seeking, intraparty dissent, and parliamentary speech; we then move on to describe the case of Chile and offer hypotheses regarding the allocation of floor time to Chilean legislators; finally, we describe our data and offer our findings. In short, we argue that Chilean parties balance the competing pressures of maintaining party discipline while allowing backbenchers time to address constituents' concerns by carving out a specific time in the legislative session for addressing constituent matters—the *Hora de Incidentes*. During this time, we find that legislators who are more likely to dissent from the party on roll call votes and who represent districts further from the capital are more likely to take the floor. These are precisely the members who are most likely to benefit from and to seek greater name recognition among constituents. Finally, we show that members who participate in the *Hora de Incidentes* are more likely to be reelected. Thus, the *Hora de Incidentes* in Chile plays a similar role to parliamentary question time in countries such as the United Kingdom or Ireland where MPs often use questions to raise constituency concerns. During debates on bills, however, it is more senior members and members of key committees who speak more.

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<sup>1</sup> One exception is an article by Taylor-Robinson and David (2002) on the Honduran Congress, but their focus is not on explaining how parties resolve conflicting incentives through organization or on comparing differences within different parts of the session.

## **Electoral Incentives and Legislative Debate Participation**

When political scientists seek to understand how members elected to legislatures represent their constituents while serving in the chamber, they most frequently turn to data on roll-call votes. Typically they take roll-call behavior as an indicator of ideology (e.g., Clinton, Jackman, and Rivers 2004; Poole 2005; Poole and Rosenthal 1997) and may compare it to preferences among constituents (e.g., Masket and Noel 2012). However, roll-call data are far from a perfect measure of legislator ideology. Because votes are ultimately the means by which consequential policy decisions are made, they are often subject to a high degree of partisan influence. Parties attempt to keep votes off the floor that may split the party, and some parties and actors (e.g., the president in the case of most Latin American democracies or the majority party in the US Congress) have significant control over what bills come up for a vote on the floor, while others have less influence (e.g., minority parties). Thus roll-call votes are subject to selection effects in ways that other forms of data are not (Carrubba, Gabel, and Hug 2008). In particular, they may mask intraparty dissent that simmers below the surface—sufficient to be of concern to the party, but insufficient to manifest on roll calls. Moreover, they are a blunt and imperfect tool for members to signal positions to their constituents.

Influencing policy via votes, though, is only one way that members of a legislature can connect with constituents. Indeed, legislators often pursue several different means of connecting with voters, including bringing “pork” back to the district (Cox and Thies 1998; Samuels 2001), providing constituency service (Cain, Ferejohn, and Fiorina 1987; Crisp and Desposato 2004), standing up for constituents in parliament during debates and questions (Martin 2011; Proksch and Slapin 2012), and releasing statements to the press (Grimmer 2013). As scholars have become ever more aware of the limitations surrounding the use of roll-call votes when

attempting to explore ideology, intraparty dissent, and constituency connections, they have begun to explore other forms of data including bill initiation and cosponsorship, press releases, media statements, and legislative speech. Each of these can be viewed as a tool at the disposal of parties and their members for representing and connecting with their constituents.

How parties and their members use these tools, though, is likely a function of the personal vote-seeking incentives that electoral systems create (Carey and Shugart 1995). Much literature suggests that parties seek to create an ideological “brand” that voters can cue off of at election time (Downs 1957) and that this “brand” can be treated as public good that parties must protect (Aldrich 1995; Cox and McCubbins 1993; Kiewiet and McCubbins 1991). The extent to which, and methods by which, parties seek to protect this brand varies with political regime and electoral system (Carey and Shugart 1995). Systems that generate little incentive for personal vote seeking (e.g., closed list, high district-magnitude proportional representation systems) not only lead parties to strictly monitor and control votes, but also to carefully control access to the floor and the content of legislative debates. Where electoral incentives mean that legislators must cultivate a personal vote (e.g., single-member districts where candidate names appear prominently on the ballot, and open-list systems that generate intraparty competition), parties may still carefully monitor votes, but they have a greater incentive to provide members with floor time (Proksch and Slapin 2012, 2015). During legislative debates, members may stake out a position more in line with the position of their constituents than the position offered by the party, or they may address concerns only of relevance to their constituency.

Some acts of constituency representation are more likely than others to harm the image of the party. A legislator creating a name for himself as an ideological rebel willing to buck the party line on policy could be detrimental to the party. On the contrary, giving speeches regarding

the local community projects in one's district, or the new community health center paid for with government money, is less likely to damage the party. Ideally, parties would like to provide opportunities for the latter, less detrimental speech, while preventing the former. In many parliaments, particular times during the legislative session are well suited to this type of legislative constituency service. Legislatures often set time aside specifically for speeches unrelated to bills, often through one-minute speeches. These include the US House of Representatives and the parliaments and congresses of Australia, Canada, Costa Rica, Israel, Panama, Puerto Rico, and Uruguay among others. Martin (2011), for example, demonstrates that parliamentary questions primarily function as a means of addressing constituency concerns in Ireland. As we will demonstrate, a similar division of the legislative agenda occurs in Chile.

There is also a growing literature about constituency representation in Latin America that has paid particular attention to legislative behavior and attitudes. Several authors have examined the effects of electoral incentives (Crisp and Ingall 2002; Crisp et al. 2004; Micozzi 2013) and gender (Htun, Lacalle, and Micozzi 2013; Schwindt-Bayer 2006) on bill-initiation patterns, while others have focused on legislators' travel patterns (Crisp and Desposato 2004), cosponsorship activities (Alemán and Calvo 2013; Crisp, Kanthak, and Leijonhufvud 2004), and opinions vis-à-vis those of their constituents (Luna and Zechmeister 2005). While less work exists on debates, there have been at least two studies on the subject in Latin America. Piscopo (2011), for example, discusses the participation of women in debates on health policy in Argentina, while Taylor-Robinson and David (2002) examine debate participation in Honduras. The latter study focuses on exploring overall rates of participation (rather than differences within a session) and finds that lawyers, government legislators, and senior members have a higher rate of participation. We add to this literature by specifically examining the challenges parties face in

organizing debate as they aim to use it as a tool for constituency representation. Moreover, we examine how debate patterns vary at different times in the legislative agenda.

The next sections focus on speech participation in the Chilean Congress. In Chile, a presidential democracy with a long tradition of parliamentary politics, electoral rules make the personal traits of individual candidates important to parties and voters. But, as we describe below, parties have to accommodate individual demands for district-focused representation while maintaining their focus on national policy and presenting a cohesive message. Thus, party members must coordinate to both boost their personal reputation and deliver a unified party. This dilemma, we argue, is resolved endogenously through norms about the allocation of speech time at different moments during the session.

### **Parties, Institutions, and Legislators' Incentives in Chile**

In this section, we first describe the partisan and institutional context influencing legislators' behavior, as well as the opportunities they have to attend to district needs. We conclude with testable hypotheses about how legislators' coordinate the allocation of speaking time.

The contemporary Chilean party system is divided into two stable multiparty coalitions that have dominated electoral competition over the last 25 years. The center-right coalition is composed of two main parties: National Renewal (RN) and Independent Democratic Union (UDI). The center-left coalition was composed of four main parties until 2013, the Christian Democratic Party (DC), Radical Social-Democratic Party (PRSD), the Party for Democracy (PPD), and the Socialist Party (PS).<sup>2</sup> Chilean parties are typically considered to be well-

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<sup>2</sup> Since 2013, the coalition has included another small party, the Communist Party (PC).



institutionalized and organizationally strong (Mainwaring and Scully 1995). Party labels are important and tend to convey recognizable ideological positions. Roll-call votes reveal unified legislative parties and two clearly distinct coalitions (Alemán and Saiegh 2007; Carey 2002; Toro Maureira 2007).

Throughout the post-Pinochet period, legislators in Chile have been elected under rules that emphasize individual candidates. In 2015, Congress passed a new electoral system to take effect with the 2017 elections, and we discuss the likely implications of the rules' changes in the conclusion. We expect our argument and findings here to remain largely unchanged under the new system. The binomial system, as the pre-2017 electoral rules have been called, requires voters to pick one candidate from one list. There are two seats available per district, and list totals determine how they are allocated among lists. Parties or electoral alliances can present two candidates per list in each district, but they can only win both seats if their vote total doubles the vote of the list coming second in the district. If this is not the case, the second seat goes to the list coming second in the district. Within each list, the individual candidate with the most votes wins the seat. This is equal to an open-list proportional representation system with districts of magnitude two and a D'Hondt formula. There are 60 districts for elections to the Chamber of Deputies and 19 districts for elections to the Senate. Given the relative vote strength of each coalition, most districts end up electing one member from each coalition. This means that most often the focus of the electoral contest is between the two individual candidates of the same list (i.e., coalition), who always belong to different parties.<sup>3</sup> Yet, those districts where the top list doubles the one coming second tend to determine which coalition controls the chamber.

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<sup>3</sup> In the election of 2013, for example, the winning coalition doubled the vote of the second list in 10 of the 60 districts.

Chilean legislators often build a career in Congress. The country has one of the highest rates of reelection in Latin America, with a membership turnover similar to that of European parliamentary democracies. Since 1998, first-time members have represented around one-third of the membership of the Chamber of Deputies (Botero 2008; Navia 2008). Notwithstanding the relevance of individual candidacies in Chilean elections, parties exert a large influence over the selection of candidates and electoral campaigns. This is particularly the case in the Chamber of Deputies. Legislators who want to run for reelection typically receive the endorsement of their parties and compete again in their district. But other candidacies involve complex negotiations within parties and among coalition partners. While there are variations across parties in the degree to which local actors and members can voice their input, candidate selection is generally considered to be centralized in the party leadership (Siavelis 2002).<sup>4</sup> At election time, campaigns tend to be national in focus, particularly if the congressional election is concurrent with the presidential election.

But local politics and individual candidacies are also of importance to voters, and parties work to enhance their candidates' reputation in the district. Political parties often poll voters to gauge the support of potential candidates and rivals in the district and on occasion have used these poll numbers to decide on individual candidacies. According to Navia, small district magnitude, preelectoral polls, and forceful competition between coalition partners "have forced parties to pay more and more attention to the personal characteristics and electability of potential Chilean legislative candidates" (2008, 92–93).

In elite surveys, Chilean legislators often underline their concern for local constituents. They usually respond that they primarily represent district voters rather than all voters or the

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<sup>4</sup> While party elites do not fully control the candidate-selection process, they exercise veto power over nominations (Navia 2008).

party, express allegiance to district voters in conflictive cases, and give significant importance to bringing resources into the district (Marenghi 2009; Marenghi and Garcia Montero 2006; Nolte 2002; Valverde 2009). However, the apparent predilection of Chilean legislators for regional interests above partisan interests revealed by elite surveys is not readily obvious in their behavior (Siavelis 2009). Chilean legislators do not seem to translate their district-oriented attitudes into locally oriented legislation (Marenghi 2009).

One important reason locally oriented legislative behavior is not readily apparent is because political institutions discourage it. Legislators cannot initiate spending bills or introduce amendments that increase spending; the executive has exclusive initiation powers over several policy areas, omnibus legislation is forbidden, and strict germaneness rules bar both amendments and discussion on matters not directly related to the main topic of the bill being debated. These rules are enforced by the president of the chamber. While legislators are limited in their ability to initiate pork-barrel legislation (Siavelis 1997) and usually behave in a disciplined fashion, on occasions they exchange their support on plenary votes for district specific benefits (Toro Maureira 2007).

Parties play an important role in the distribution of congressional offices, including positions in the chamber's directorate and assignments to permanent committees. In the Chamber of Deputies, the majority-elected directorate, called *Mesa*, crafts the daily schedule after consultation with the leaders of the legislative party blocs (*Jefes de Comités Parlamentarios*).

Sessions of Congress are normally divided into three parts. The first two are dedicated to bills and resolutions. As in most national legislatures in democratic countries, the central part of the session is allocated to discussing and voting bills (*Orden del Día*). In Chile, executive bills take up a substantial portion of this time. This is mainly the consequence of presidents' wide

urgency power, which forces bills into the agenda after a short period of time, and their prerogatives over bill initiation. But legislator initiated bills are also regularly debated. In this part of the session, any member has the right to speak for a limited time about the bill being debated.

Following debate and votes on bills, the session moves to address congressional declarations and resolutions for 20 minutes. They are typically initiated by multiple authors (up to 10) and are automatically put on the calendar.<sup>5</sup> They are voted without amendments<sup>6</sup> after very short statements in favor and against it.<sup>7</sup>

The last part of the session is called the Incident Hour (*Hora de Incidentes*) and is dedicated to individual speeches on any matter, except bills. It lasts 60 minutes per session, which are allotted to party groups according to their seat share. These speeches can include information requests to the bureaucracy (*oficios*). The Incidents Hour has a long history in the Chilean Congress. It was already in place in the late nineteenth century (Obando 2011). In his examination of Chilean congressional politics prior to the 1970s, Agor (1971, 133–34) noted that legislators often distributed these speeches among district constituents to show how they were working for their interests. This is still common. Frequently, legislators request that transcripts of their speech be sent to important members of their constituency. Interestingly, parties ensure that all MPs who wish to make a speech during the Incident Hour have the opportunity to do so. Dockendorff (2016), when conducting interviews with former Chilean party whips and senior party officials, finds that parties make time for their members wishing to participate to do so,

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<sup>5</sup> Each item cannot take the plenary more than 10 minutes.

<sup>6</sup> The authors of the resolution can present modifications before the proposal is debated by the plenary.

<sup>7</sup> If quorum is not met, they are considered rejected.

even if only for a minute. The whips do not restrict access to the floor at this time and the leadership does not control what rebels do during the Incident Hour.

In sum, electoral incentives make the personal traits of individual candidates important to Chilean parties, and career-oriented legislators know that they need to appear responsive to the demands of district constituents. The lawmaking route, however, is difficult. Political institutions constrain opportunities for initiating pork-barrel legislation or adding nongermane amendments, electoral competition usually centers around national-level policies, and there are significant hurdles to getting locally oriented bills passed. Speech offers another route for legislators to appear responsive to their districts. But parties need to resolve how to accommodate individual demands for district-focused signals with their focus on national policy and the leaders' demand for a cohesive party message. In the language of organizational theory, they need to adjust to the external demands imposed by the electoral context and the internal stress arising from the diversity of positions, priorities, and policy goals.

We believe that parties resolve this dilemma endogenously through norms about the allocation of speech time. Seeking to enhance the personal reputation of individual legislators while working to convey a unified policy message demands coordination. A division of labor where different types of legislators speak at different moments during the session is one such mechanism that goal-oriented members can establish. We expect to find such a division in the Chilean Chamber of Deputies. More specifically, we hypothesize that legislators more likely to be rewarded electorally as a result of strengthening constituency support should be more likely to participate during the stage of the session dedicated to nonlawmaking speeches. During bill debates, however, legislators should have greater incentives to privilege the party's policy message, which should lead parties – perhaps through informal norms – to prioritize expertise

despite rules that provide egalitarian access to debate time. Such prioritizing benefits the party brand and has positive implications for the electoral prospects of individual members.

Legislators tempted to shirk from this norm most often acquiesce because party leaders have the means to provide electoral and policy benefits that are valuable to them, as well as the ability to impose costs that may affect the fate of their bills, amendments, assignments, and political careers.

In the next section, we describe the data we use to test these hypotheses and our operationalization of the different variables.

### **Congressional Speech Data**

To examine the organization of legislative speech, we collected information on individual participation in bill debates (*Orden del Día*) and the Incidents Hour in the Chilean Chamber of Deputies between 2006 and 2010. Data on the number of times each legislator participated during the section dedicated to lawmaking debates comes from the chamber's summary of daily sessions. Between 2006 and 2010 there were a total of 3,937 such events. The same summaries provide data on whether or not a legislator participated during the Incidents Hour. During the same four-year period, there were a total of 1,960 individual participations in the Incidents Hour. These individual-level counts of different types of debate participation make up our dependent variables.

Legislators tend to use the Incidents Hour to speak about constituency issues and request information from government agencies. Our examination of the content of these speeches reveals that most focus on local or regional issues and often address specific institutions or officials operating at the local level. Around 62% of the speeches refer to a matter related to a region or a

city (including celebrations), address individuals, or demand information from government agencies about their activities at the local level, while only 22% refer to national issues.<sup>8</sup> Interventions during the Incidents Hour can include *oficios*, which are formal requests for information from government offices or petitions for the bureaucracy to act in a certain manner. For example, at the end of 2006 Deputy Rosauro Martínez took to the floor of the chamber to demand the reopening of a government office for consumer protection (Sernac) that had recently closed in the city of Chillan.<sup>9</sup> Martínez, a third-term legislator and former mayor of the city, added an *oficio* asking the President to instruct his Minister of Economy to work on reopening the office. In August of 2007, Deputy Marcelo Díaz expressed his concern about possible shortages of anesthesia in public hospitals in Andacollo and Vicuña, two cities in his district.<sup>10</sup> He added an *oficio* asking the Minister of Health and the director of Coquimbo's Health Service to clarify this matter. In 94% of the individual interventions that took place during the Incident Hour between 2006 and 2008, legislators presented *oficios*. Most of them were remitted to executive offices: around 86% went to the national government, with 69% of these addressing at least one cabinet member and 11% addressing the President. Next in line were those sent to the appointed administrative heads of the country's regions (about 9%) and to mayors, governors, and the city council (about 6%). About half of the *oficios* had a local (28%) or regional focus (21%), with just 22% addressing national issues.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Other scholars have also characterized speeches during the Incidents Hour as focused on constituency service and district concerns (Agor 1971; Visconti 2011). While speeches are not commonly characterized as ideological, they often include criticisms at the functioning of government agencies.

<sup>9</sup> Intervention took place on December 19, 2006.

<sup>10</sup> Intervention took place on August 7, 2007.

<sup>11</sup> The rest focus on individuals (14%), sectors (9%), and administrative issues (6%).

We hypothesize that legislators more likely to gain electorally as a result of strengthening constituency support and garnering name recognition should be more likely to participate during the Incidents Hour. We first examine whether those legislators who disagree most with the party on policy participate more frequently during the Incidents Hour. These legislators are less likely to benefit from the party “label” and thus they may need to rely more on constituency-focused legislative activity to boost name recognition and their own “personal vote”. Specifically, we examine whether the percentage of times a legislator votes against the majority of the party on roll calls during the period of study affects debate participation. Next, we consider whether electorally insecure members participate more frequently. We consider both the electoral margins within and between lists. Lastly, we examine whether legislators who do not run in the subsequent election speak less often. If members know they are likely to retire, they have less need to engage in constituency-related personal vote-seeking activities.

Legislators from remote districts should also be particularly interested in participating in the Incidents Hour. It is typically more difficult for their constituents to directly access the central government bureaucracy. In addition, the local concerns of remote districts are less likely to be highlighted by the national media or influential interest groups. Legislators further from the capital should have particular incentives to use the Incidents Hour to call attention to their districts’ problems and to make demands to bureaucrats in the metropolitan center. As a result, we expect legislators to participate more often the further their districts are from the capital. To capture this effect, we include a variable measuring the distance from the legislator’s district to Santiago (in logged kilometers).

We hypothesize that during bill debates (*Orden del Día*) there should be greater incentives to privilege the party’s policy message and members’ expertise. This implies that



inexperienced legislators should be less likely to participate and that those with greater policy expertise should be more likely to participate. To capture these effects we include variables indicating whether legislators are first-time members of congress and whether they were assigned to key congressional committees.<sup>12</sup>

We also include three control variables. The first, leadership, indicates whether the legislator served in the chamber's directive board (*Mesa*) or is a leader of a party caucus. The second indicates whether the legislator belongs to the government coalition. Studies have found that opposition members are more likely to take advantage of the oversight aspects of question time in parliamentary countries (Dandoy 2011; Proksch and Slapin 2011; Rasch 2011) and the opportunities provided by the one-minute speeches in the US Congress (Maltzman and Sigelman 1996). Yet others have found that members of the government are generally more likely to speak (Taylor-Robinson and David 2002). The third, died, controls for two members who died in office midterm.

## Results

As our dependent variables are count data, we present two negative binomial regressions.<sup>13</sup> In all models, our unit of analysis is the legislator. In the first model, our dependent variable is the count of the sessions during which each legislator spoke during the

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<sup>12</sup> We considered as key committees the Finance Committee and the Constitution, Legislation, and Justice Committee.

<sup>13</sup> We have also run Poisson models and find nearly identical substantive results. The Poisson model, though, assumes that the conditional mean of the dependent variable equals its conditional variance. We find evidence of overdispersion, implying the conditional variance is greater than the conditional mean. The estimated standard errors of the Poisson model are likely biased downward. Indeed, the standard errors in the negative binomial models are substantially larger than those in the Poisson models. Nevertheless, we find statistically significant effects in the negative binomial models, making us more confident in our results. Additionally, we have run models including party fixed effects and the results do not change.

*Hora de Incidentes*.<sup>14</sup> The second model captures the number of speeches given during bill debates (*Orden del Día*).<sup>15</sup>

Table 1 about here

During the *Hora de Incidentes*, we find that those legislators who dissent from their party more often are significantly more likely to give speeches. An increase of 1 in the dissent score leads to an increase of 6% in the number of sessions where a speech was given, holding other variables constant. In terms of the number of speeches, an increase of one standard deviation (i.e., 3.3) in the party dissent score increases by three the number of sessions where a legislator gives a speech in the *Hora de Incidentes*. In addition, legislators who do not run again for a position in Congress at the end of their term are significantly less likely to give speeches during this part of the legislative sessions. These legislators give 44% fewer speeches than those who run again.

We also find that members from geographically remote districts speak more during the *Hora de Incidentes*. While members from the capital only speak in approximately 9 sessions on average, those in the most far-flung districts speak up to 25 times on average. This result suggests that members from outlying districts feel a greater need to inform the government about what is happening in their districts than those members from the capital or nearby. Or, alternatively, they feel a greater need to participate so they can signal to their constituents that they are standing up for their interests in the faraway capital.

The results also show that members of key committees speak significantly less. Such members speak in 53% fewer sessions than other legislators, holding other variables constant. The fact that members in key committees give fewer speeches suggests that expertise does not

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<sup>14</sup> The average number during the *Hora de Incidentes* is 16.

<sup>15</sup> The average number during the *Orden del Dia* is 32.

matter much for speeches given during this part of the session. Members of key committees tend to have sufficient exposure at other times besides the *Hora de Incidentes*. In addition, the coefficient for leadership suggests that such members speak less, but does not achieve statistical significance. Lastly, contrary to our expectations, the results of model 1 fail to find a statistically significant effect of the electoral marginality variables.

The results from model 2 highlight just how differently parties use floor time during the *Orden del Dia* compared with the *Hora de Incidentes*. Here, there is no statistically significant (or substantively important) impact of party dissent on speech participation. Geographical distance also does not matter as it is does during the *Hora de Incidentes*. Instead, members of key committees participate more, while those members new to congress participate less. Members serving on a key committee are expected to participate in 44% more sessions than others. Likewise, members in their first term are expected to speak in approximately 29% fewer sessions than longer-serving members. Lastly, the results show that members of the governing parties are significantly more likely to participate in this part of the congressional session than others. A legislator from a governing party is 39% more likely to give a speech during the *Orden del Dia* than a legislator from other parties. These results suggest that parties orchestrate floor appearances during bill debates to favor longer-serving members with greater policy expertise. Parties are unlikely harmed when freshmen outsiders give nonpolicy speeches, but when the policy content of bills is being discussed during the *Orden del Dia*, veteran members with policy expertise are more likely to take the floor.

Figure 1 about here

To demonstrate the significant differences in how parties organize participation during the *Hora de Incidentes* and *Orden del Dia* we plot the effects of one of our key variables, dissent,

during both types of debate. We use first differences; perhaps the most common tool for demonstrating substantive effects for generalized linear models (King, Tomz and Wittenberg 2000). Specifically, we examine the expected difference in speech participation when varying the level of dissent. Figure 1 presents two density plots, the top plot based on model 1 and the bottom on model 2. We plot the density of 5000 simulated differences in the number of expected speeches given by a hypothetical member who dissented on 20% of votes compared with a member who dissented on 1.3% of votes.<sup>16</sup> The top panel of Figure 1 shows that, during the *Hora de Incidentes*, a member who dissents on 20% of votes is expected to speak in approximately 25 more sessions than a member who dissents on 1.3% of votes (demarcated by the thick dashed line). The 90% confidence interval (shown by the thin dashed lines) ranges from approximately two additional sessions up to 69 additional sessions. The bottom panel displays the same first differences for participation during the *Orden del Dia*. Those members who dissent the most are no more likely to participate than those who do not. The expected effect is approximately 1.5 fewer sessions.

These results demonstrate the differences between speech participation in a nonlegislative setting and lawmaking debates. Our description of speech participation during the *Hora de Incidentes* underlines how electorally motivated legislators utilize this forum to address constituent concerns. We now ask whether participation provides deputies with some electoral return. Anecdotal evidence suggests that these speeches can play such a role. As mentioned above, regional newspapers frequently report on local matters highlighted by deputies during the *Hora de Incidentes*, and in doing so help to paint a picture of member concerned with

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<sup>16</sup> Simulated for members who are not members of key committees, leaders, or serving in their first term, did not die in office, and run again for congress. All other variables are held at their mean. Simulations were run using *Zelig: Everyone's Statistical Software* (Choirat et al 2016; Imai, King, and Lau 2008).

representing local interests. Legislators themselves frequently report about their speeches in their individual webpages. To more systematically evaluate whether such participation has an electoral payoff, we run a regression where the dependent variable is a dummy capturing whether a deputy was reelected either to the Chamber of Deputies or the Senate. Our key independent variable is speech participation in the *Hora de Incidentes* and we control for all the variables in Table 1 except those capturing whether a member ran again in the next election (we drop the two members who died during the term). Results appear in Table 2.

#### Table 2 About Here

The variable capturing speech participation during the *Hora de Incidentes* is positive and statistically significant. Delivering these constituency oriented speeches is strongly associated with ones chances of returning to the chamber. The model also suggests that those members who are more distant from their party and who won by a smaller intra-party list margin in the previous election are less likely to be re-elected. Simulations of first differences reveal that moving from the first quartile to the third quartile of members with respect to *Hora de Incidentes* participation increases the probability of re-election by approximately 20%. This is a very large effect. Of course, it would be unwise to assume a causal relationship. Rather, we believe that members who participate more during this part of the parliamentary day are likely those who are best at connecting with their constituents more generally, and they are rewarded for their constituency service. While explaining the political careers of individual deputies and their electoral success is not the focus of this paper, this preliminary evidence supports the notion that participation in the *Hora de Incidentes* provides some nontrivial electoral payoffs.

The empirical evidence suggests that parties carefully orchestrate the floor appearances of their members. Members, often dissidents, who need to demonstrate a pattern parliamentary

activity, and stand up for their constituents may do so, but they are much more likely to do so on non-policy debates than on those directly related to policy. Indeed, parties set aside a specific time during the parliamentary day for this purpose—the *Hora de Incidentes*. Interestingly, where formal rules exist to give parties control over floor time (e.g., the *Hora de Incidentes*), they use these rules to ensure that those members needing exposure get it. When members are technically guaranteed a right to speak during debates on bills, the evidence suggests that parties exert control, perhaps through informal norms, to ensure that more senior members in key roles have access to the floor.

## **Conclusion**

Recent work in the field of legislative politics has gone beyond roll-call vote analysis to examine other sources of information useful for understanding how parties control their members in the legislature. Specifically, legislative scholars have become increasingly interested in examining how parties balance the competing demands of offering members floor time while protecting the party message. Data on legislative debates offer new insights into how parties orchestrate the behavior of their members in the legislature and how members seek to connect with and represent their constituents. These new sources of data have received significant attention in the study of the US Congress and have recently been employed to understand intraparty politics in European democracies. But less work in this vein has been done in Latin American legislatures.

We have sought to fill this gap by offering new data on speechmaking in the National Congress of Chile. As we have discussed throughout the article, Chile combines electoral rules that make the personal vote relevant for career-oriented legislators with strong centralized

political parties that care about delivering a common message. It is also a country with highly institutionalized parliamentary politics with rules on legislative speech that we can trace back to at least the late nineteenth century. We demonstrate that parties and their members have an incentive to orchestrate their speeches in such a way that members can connect with constituents, but parties can still police their policy message. They have done so by carving out a time for debate—the *Hora de Incidentes*—in which parties can allow members who need to connect with constituents the opportunity to stand up for their districts’ concerns on the floor, without sully the party message on policy. Different members are likely to receive more floor time when discussing government and other bills during the *Orden del Dia*.

As mentioned earlier, a new electoral rule will govern the next elections in 2017. The new rule remains open list proportional representation, but it increases district magnitude and the number of legislators, while reducing and the number of districts. The number of deputies will go from 120 to 155, and the number of senators from 38 to 50. The number of districts will shrink from 60 to 28 in the Chamber of Deputies, and from 19 to 15 in the Senate. District magnitude will vary from 3 to 8 for the Chamber of Deputies, and from 2 to 5 for the Senate. Two aspects of the electoral reform have the potential to impact legislators’ motivations for participating in the *hora de incidentes*. First, a larger district magnitude should increase the incentives to cultivate a personal vote, thereby enhancing the value of the type of speeches delivered during this part of the legislative session. As Carey and Shugart (1995) argued in their seminal article on the subject, increasing district magnitude in open list proportional representation systems should make a legislators’ personal reputation more important for electoral success. Second, the reform increased the number of representatives from the regions at the expense of those from the metropolitan area. Our empirical analysis demonstrated that

distance from the capital increases the likelihood that a deputy delivers a speech in the *Hora de Incidentes*. In short, the reform not only increased the number of deputies, but also made them more likely to care about their personal linkage with district constituents. We expect these changes to make participation in the *Hora de Incidentes* even more valuable for Chilean legislators.

In sum, the findings not only extend recent findings from the United States and Europe to Latin America, but also highlight the need to carefully examine how speechmaking (and other acts of constituency representation) varies within one legislature. Future research should examine legislative behavior in Chile going forward under the new rules and in other Latin American countries with similar institutions such as Costa Rica, Panama, and Uruguay.



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Table 1. Negative Binomial Model of Speech Participation

	<i>Hora de Incidentes</i>	<i>Orden del Dia</i>
	No. of Sessions	No. of Sessions
Party Dissent Score	0.055** (0.027)	-0.003 (0.022)
Distance from Capital (logged)	0.148*** (0.046)	0.022 (0.033)
Member of Key Committee	-0.759*** (0.216)	0.393*** (0.147)
Leadership	-0.165 (0.212)	-0.183 (0.150)
Not Run Again	-0.573** (0.288)	-0.297 (0.210)
Intra-List Margin	0.001 (0.007)	0.002 (0.004)
Margin List	-0.006 (0.006)	-0.003 (0.004)
First Term in Office	0.02 (0.21)	-0.351** (0.148)
Member of Gov. Coalition	0.188 (0.233)	0.333** (0.16)
Died in office	-1.481** (0.748)	-0.685 (0.465)
Intercept	1.811*** (0.334)	3.306*** (0.247)
N	112	112
Log Likelihood	-409.699	-480.004

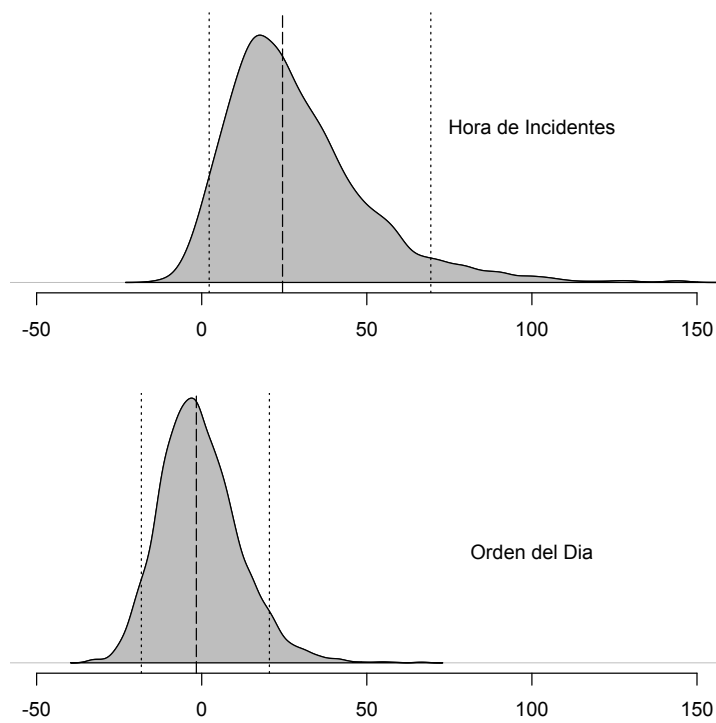
Note: statistical significance levels in two-tailed test  $p < 0.1$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ . Standard errors reported in parantheses.



Table 2. Logit Model of Re-election

	<i>Reelection</i>
Hora de Incidentes	0.051** (0.023)
Party Dissent Score	-0.211** (0.097)
Distance from Capital (logged)	0.073 (0.131)
Member of Key Committee	-0.021 (0.572)
Leadership	-0.723 (0.576)
Intra-List Margin	0.049** (0.020)
Margin List	-0.005 (0.017)
First Term in Office	0.505 (0.561)
Member of Gov. Coalition	0.657 (0.663)
Intercept	-0.188 (0.846)
N	110
Log Likelihood	-55.681

Figure 1. The Effect of Dissent on Speech Participation: First Differences



Note: Density plots of first differences in the expected number of speech sessions moving from the minimum to the maximum value on dissent (5000 simulations).