

**The Out of Iraq Caucus
and
Congressional Foreign Policy Assertiveness¹**

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We examine the membership of Congress's Out of Iraq Caucus to uncover which members of Congress are most likely to join this group. Since taking their leadership positions in the House and Senate, the Democrats have made several efforts to restrain and check the president's foreign policy ambitions in Iraq, much of which has come from Congress's "Out of Iraq Caucus," which formed in 2005. This caucus seeks to provide a larger voice for Congress on the war in Iraq, including increased public discussion on the reasons for entering the war and a speedy end to the US deployment in Iraq. Building on literature on war powers, caucus membership and congressional preferences in foreign policy activism, this analysis examines the relative impact of partisanship, ideology, and electoral calculation - three leading explanations for congressional activity - while also controlling for a number of other variables. We conclude that a cascading set of variables, including congressional deference, partisanship, a member's ideological leanings, and electoral calculations provide the best guides to understanding membership in the Out of Iraq Caucus. These findings may also provide some insight on why President Bush's policies on Iraq have continued since the 2006 elections, despite the election of Democratic majorities in the House and Senate.

The 2006 midterm elections ostensibly called for a new direction in American foreign policy. Much evidence suggests that the Democrats were able to gain majority status in both the House and Senate due to widespread national doubts over President George W. Bush's military efforts in Iraq (Jacobson, 2007). After taking their leadership positions in the House and Senate, the Democrats made several efforts to restrain and check the president's foreign policy ambitions in Iraq, much of which came from members of Congress's "Out of Iraq Caucus," which formed in 2005. This caucus seeks to provide a larger voice for Congress on the war in Iraq, including increased public discussion on the reasons for entering the war, and seeks to "urge the return of US service members to their families as soon as possible." (Waters 2007). Such a sustained and organized congressional challenge against the

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commander in chief during military conflict is relatively uncommon in recent American foreign policy history.

This article examines the membership of Congress's Out of Iraq Caucus in the 109th Congress in an effort to explain the choice by some members to join this group. To do so it draws on at least three bodies of scholarship on Congress's role in the foreign policy making process. First, much research on the exercise of congressional war powers suggests that Congress as an institution is less likely to act in an assertive manner toward the president during times of war. On the other hand, Congress's "Out of Iraq" Caucus's current level(s) of activism presents a relatively unique example of efforts at assertiveness by individual members of Congress during an American military crisis, and thus may shed light on the motives that lead individual members to attempt to challenge the commander in chief. Second, this research has relevance to the scholarship that examines membership in congressional caucuses. While a number of variables have been provided to explain caucus membership, many of the findings point to the importance of individual members' policy preferences and electoral interests. Finally, a more recent body of scholarship seeks to explain congressional entrepreneurship, that is, the presence of individual members of Congress who advocate for new foreign policy positions counter to the president. Within this literature, much like the literature on caucus membership, a prominent causal variable appears to be a member's individual policy preferences.

Building on these three streams of previous literature on war powers, caucus membership and congressional preferences in foreign policy activism, this analysis develops a model to explain the choice to join the caucus that takes into account partisanship, ideology, and electoral calculation• three leading explanations for congressional activity• while also controlling for a number of other variables. We connect these arguments in a novel "cascading" or "nested" explanation" that links them sequentially in a series of contingency arguments. Our argument begins with all members of the House of Representatives in the 109th Congress and proceeds to the examination of the relatively small group of Democrats who elected to participate, adding layers of nested explanation and hypotheses for the choice to join the Caucus. Hence, our model provides insights into membership in the Out of Iraq Caucus, both in terms of those who elected to join, and why more members did not. Hence, our findings may also provide some insight on why President Bush's policies on Iraq continued after the 2006 elections, despite the election of Democratic majorities in the House and Senate.

Congressional Foreign Policy Activity and Motivation

In the post-World War II years, many scholars agree that Congress and its members became increasingly assertive during and after the Vietnam War. This heightened assertiveness applies broadly across a wide range of foreign policy issue

areas (e.g., Fleisher et al. 2000; Johnson, 2006; Ripley and Lindsay, 1993), and increased to new levels in the post Cold War era (Carter, 2007; Marshall and Prins, 2002; Scott and Carter, 2002; Carter, 1998; Wittkopf and McCormick, 1998). However, with respect to war powers and uses of force, many maintain that the president as commander in chief has become increasingly powerful in determining when force will be used abroad.

Despite the array of enumerated constitutional powers that permit Congress to play a critical role in checking the president both before and during war, these analysts argue that Congress has generally deferred to a dominant chief executive (Adler, 1988; Lofgren, 1972; Moss, 2008). Advocates of this perspective argue that, even through the first six years of the Bush administration, the president has operated with considerable leeway as commander in chief (Hendrickson, 2007; Mann and Ornstein, 2006; Schonberg, 2004; Fisher, 2003; Kassop, 2003; Lindsay, 2003; Wolfensberger, 2002). This is especially true with respect to collective, institutional challenges through formal legislative activities on the use of force such as invoking the War Powers Act, exercising the power of the purse, or passing other direct legislation. However, others argue that decisions to use force have been influenced by Congress less formally, but often significantly, as presidents have been forced to adjust to the very existence of the War Powers Act, anticipate congressional reactions, and contend with assertive individuals (e.g., Auerswald and Cowhey, 1997; Carter and Scott, 2009; Gartzke, 1996; Howell and Pevehouse, 2005; 2007). In this context, the presence of Congress's Out of Iraq Caucus, which first appeared in 2005, represents an especially interesting development in congressional foreign policy activism in the Bush presidency. In general, existing research suggests that while Congress may influence presidential decisions to use force, most members will be reluctant to challenge actively and directly (e.g., legislatively) such presidential decisions once made. This is especially true: a) unless such uses of force prove costly and time-consuming, and, b) if such uses of force prove successful.

While this context provides insight into the limits one might expect for congressional assertiveness on uses of force, other scholarship helps to explain when and why those members who do choose to challenge presidential leadership. In general, three bodies of literature provide insights into member foreign policy behavior and motivation, each of which sheds light on the phenomenon of the Out of Iraq Caucus. First, much research points to the importance of heightened partisanship in Congress, even in foreign policy areas that have traditionally been viewed in a bipartisan manner (Auerswald and Maltzman 2003; Carter, 1998; Cooper and Young, 1997; DeLaet and Scott 2006; Martin 2000; McCormick and Wittkopf, 1990; Caldiera and Wright, 1998; McCormick, Wittkopf, and Danna, 1997; Meernik, 1993; Scott and Carter 2002; Wittkopf and McCormick, 1998). While some studies on uses of force and war powers find the impact of partisanship less important (e.g., Moss, 2008; Fisher, 2004; Hendrickson, 2002; Fordham, 2002; Gowa, 1998), others have concluded the opposite (e.g., Auerswald and Cowhey, 1997; Gartzke, 1996; Howell and Pevehouse, 2005; 2007; and Meernik, 1995). This

literature clearly suggests, not surprisingly, members who choose to challenge presidential uses of force are highly likely to have partisan differences with the president. We expect the Out of Iraq caucus membership to reflect this partisan dimension.

At the same time, however, since there is disagreement on the extent to which such partisan factors shape member behavior in the war powers arena, we do not expect membership in the Out of Iraq caucus to be simply reflective of partisan differences. A second body of literature provides further insight into member behavior by highlighting the significance of electoral incentives for members of Congress to engage in foreign policy activism (Marshall and Prins, 2002; Fleischer et al., 2000; Lindsay, 1994; Fiorina, 1974; Kingdon, 1977). For example, McCormick and Mitchell (2007) conclude that constituency demographics appear to influence membership in the Congressional Human Rights Caucus (see also Hammond, 1998). Such incentives square with Mayhew's (1974) influential argument that a member's primary goal while serving in Congress is to advance his/her reelection prospects.

Some scholars maintain that when it comes to foreign policy and analyses of foreign policy votes, it has been difficult to identify voting patterns based upon electoral interests stemming from specific constituency interests (Avery and Forsythe, 1979; Bernstein and Anthony, 1974; Carter, 1989; Fleisher, 1985; LeoGrande and Brenner, 1993; Lindsay, 1990; McCormick, 1985; McCormick and Black, 1983; in contrast, see Holian et. al., 1997; Gartzke and Wrighton, 1998). Thus, considerable debate exists within the recent literature on the impact of a member's electoral interests and his/her foreign policy behavior, which merits additional analysis. However, when combined with the apparent deference shown by many members toward presidential leadership on force decisions, one particularly important form of electoral calculation might involve perceived electoral costs of challenging the president. Hence, we expect that members anticipating such costs will be less likely to join the Out of Iraq caucus than those who do not.

Beyond what might be characterized as a basal reluctance to challenge presidential leadership on matters of force, and factors such as partisanship and electoral considerations, other research suggests that personal policy preferences best explain why a member of Congress engages in foreign policy activism (Holmes, 2005; Lindsay, 1990; Fenno, 1973). For instance, in addition to electoral calculations, McCormick and Mitchell (2007) also conclude that a member's policy preferences, as typically measured by ideological predisposition and his/her personal interest in creating good public policy, help explain membership in the Congressional Human Rights Caucus (see also Hammond, 1998). Others provide additional evidence that personal policy preferences—measured as ideology—may be key in motivating members to become active in foreign policy (Carter, Scott and

Rowling, 2004; DeLaet and Scott, 2006; Gartzke and Wrighton, 1998; LeoGrande and Brenner, 1993; Lindsay, 1990; Avery and Forsythe, 1979; Bernstein and Anthony, 1974; Carter, 1989; Fleisher, 1985; McCormick, 1985; McCormick and Black, 1983). Thus, we expect member policy preferences to influence membership in the Out of Iraq caucus as well.

Congress and the Out of Iraq Caucus: Some Hypotheses

Building on these literatures, we develop a model that encompasses and synthesizes these previous insights. It consists of four nested propositions. First, given what we have characterized as a general reluctance by the average member of Congress to challenge presidents on war powers, we expect most members to refrain from joining the Out of Iraq Caucus. Second, reflecting the significance of partisanship, we expect those members who do join to be primarily, if not exclusively, members of the Democratic Party. Third, within the Democratic Party, we expect more liberal (i.e., those with more committed policy preferences hostile to the use of force) members to be more likely to join the Out of Iraq caucus than less liberal members. Finally, reflecting previous studies and our characterization of electoral calculations, we expect more electorally vulnerable members to be less likely to join the caucus than those who are less vulnerable (or electorally safe). In short, our model predicts a more liberal, electorally safe subset of the Democratic Party in Congress to join the Out of Iraq Caucus.

This nested model therefore provides the following hypotheses for empirical testing:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): General deference to presidential leadership on decisions to use force makes members more likely to stay out of the Out of Iraq caucus than to join it.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Given H1, partisanship will shape member decisions on whether or not to join the Out of Iraq Caucus, with Democrats more likely to join the caucus than Republicans

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Given H1 and H2, the policy preferences of members of Congress, as reflected by their individual ideologies, will guide their decisions on whether or not to join the Out of Iraq Caucus, with liberal members more likely to join than other members.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Given H1, H2 and H3, electoral concerns, reflected in member calculations over constituency preferences and reelection considerations, will influence member decisions on whether or not to join the Out of Iraq Caucus.²

² As discussed in the data section, we use three separate measures for constituency preference/reelection considerations in separate models for robustness in our effort to capture the impact of such factors on member decisions.

4a: Electorally safe members are more likely to join the caucus than other members.

4b: Members of districts in which George W. Bush was unpopular will be more likely to join than those in districts in which he was popular.

4c: Electorally vulnerable members are less likely to join the caucus than other members.

Of course, other factors may also shape a given member's decision to join the caucus, so we also include a number of control variables to account for the potential influence of such other variables. First, we control for the possibility that a member's gender might play a role, as a substantial literature points to a gender gap on issues related to military force, with women more likely to oppose the use of force than men (Bendyna et al., 1996; Conover and Sapiro, 1993; Shapiro and Mahajan, 1986; Smith, 1984). Additionally, a member's seniority might affect the decision to join the caucus, so we control for years of service in the House of Representatives. Further, prior military service might play a role in a member's decision, so we also control for such backgrounds. Some public opinion polling also suggests that the war in Iraq has been less popular among African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans in general (Nagourney and Elder, 2003), so we control for membership in the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus as well (although these factors are likely to be reflected in the policy preferences of members as integrated into our model). Finally, a member's committee assignment might be a factor, as members tend to seek out committees that reflect both their own unique policy, constituency and political interests (Deering and Smith, 1997; Fenno, 1973; McCormick, 1993). Membership in particular committees may play a role because members may have greater independence to act as policy experts in specific issue areas. On foreign policy-related committees in particular, committee membership may indicate policy *interest* and may also offer members access to less accessible or sensitive intelligence reports or studies. These factors may provide additional incentives for policy action, so we control for such membership in our models.

Data and Research Design

To test our model, we operationalize our variables as follows:

Dependent Variable: Membership in the Out of Iraq Caucus, 109th Congress. Our dependent variable is membership in the Out of Iraq Caucus in the 109th Congress.³ Founded on 16 June, 2005, the caucus's mission states that it will work

³ We examine the 109th Congress in large part because it was the Congress in which the Out of Iraq caucus was formed and in which the vast majority of its members made their decision to join. As we later discuss in more detail, the caucus had 71 Democratic members in the 109th Congress. Membership

with “other Caucuses and national organizations” to help end America’s military presence in Iraq (Waters 2007). Among its eight co-founders, at least three have achieved some prominence through their leadership efforts, including Representatives Barbara Lee (D-CA), Maxine Waters (D-CA), and Lynne Woolsey (D-CA), labeled by some as “the triad.” Over 40 additional members joined the 8 founders almost immediately, with the remaining 20 or so electing to participate over the subsequent year. The Caucus has attempted to influence the agenda, shape the debate, and pursue formal legislative efforts to limit and end funding for the war. Among its other activities, it provides policy information to its members and the public regarding an array of topics associated with the war (Soraghan, 2007). For the 109th Congress, as of November 2006, 71 representatives had joined the caucus, (a membership essentially unchanged in the subsequent Congress). We code membership dichotomously, with 0 indicating no membership and 1 indicating membership.

Independent Variables. Party Identification. Our measure of partisanship is dichotomous, with 1 classifying a Democrat and 0 classifying a Republican. As explained in our model, we expect caucus membership to reflect mostly, if not exclusively, members of the Democratic Party.

Ideology. To assess a member’s policy preferences, we use the DW-NOMINATE ideology scores created by Poole and Rosenthal (e.g., 1991; 1996). Using ideology scores is the standard way to measure policy preferences (e.g., DeLaet and Scott, 2006; Gartzke and Wrighton, 1998; LeoGrande and Brenner, 1993; Lindsay, 1990; Avery and Forsythe, 1979; Bernstein and Anthony, 1974; Carter, 1989; Fleisher, 1985; McCormick, 1985; McCormick and Black, 1983); a generally accepted approach to measure individual ideology using roll call data is to use NOMINATE scores or rating scores from organizations such as the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), the American Conservative Union (ACU), or the *National Journal*, which use member votes to develop an ideology index. Although Fiorina (1979) and Jackson and Kingdon (1993) have argued that the votes that make up these indices also reflect party and constituency factors and may exaggerate the affect of personal policy preferences and ideology, Burden, Caldeira, and Groseclose (2000) maintain that roll call data are good proxies and are still useful measures of a member’s personal ideology. The NOMINATE scores are widely used and respected, and are available for the 109th Congress. These scores range from -1.0 (liberal) to 1.0 (conservative). We expect more liberal representatives to be more likely to join the caucus, due to their relatively greater support for cooperative behavior and liberal internationalism and their relatively stronger opposition to militant foreign policy choices (e.g., Holsti, 1996; Holsti and Rosenau, 1984; Wittkopf, 1990).

changes only very marginally, from 71 to 73 members in the subsequent Congress (with just 5 new members of the 30 freshman representatives), and 3 who did not return to Congress.

Electoral Vulnerability. To assess the impact of electoral calculations in a member's decision to join the Out of Iraq caucus, we employ three separate measures which are used in separate models. First, we measure the "safeness" of the district, based on the member's percent of the vote gained in the 2004 elections. We expect members with higher vote percentages to be safer, less deferent to the president, and freer to pursue their own policy preferences. In operational terms, we measure this "safeness" in two ways: a) dichotomously, as winning more than 55% of the vote in the 2004 election; and b) continuously, as a member's share of the 2004 vote. Second, we measure President Bush's popularity/approval in a member's district, as based on President Bush's percentage of the vote in the district in the 2004 elections (the most recent presidential election). We expect members in districts in which the president was less popular to be more likely to join the caucus, since: a) at least to some degree, presidential unpopularity in 2004 was tied to unhappiness with the war, and; b) members tend to be less deferent to unpopular presidents and more likely to challenge their policies. Third, we measure "vulnerability" following DeLaet and Scott (2006), by subtracting the president's percentage of the vote in the member's district in the 2004 election from the member's percentage of the vote in the same election. In this way, we define vulnerability as the distance between the district's support for the president as measured against the percentage of the vote gained by representative in the same election cycle.⁴ We anticipate that more vulnerable representatives, that is, those House members who won their districts with smaller vote percentages than the president won in that election cycle, will be less likely to join the caucus; their vulnerability score will reflect both their ideological preferences and the possibility of electoral punishment due to the president's ostensibly higher popularity in the district. Our data on electoral results was drawn from the *Almanac of American Politics* (2006 ed.).⁵

⁴ Like DeLaet and Scott (2006), we maintain that this measure represents general constituency preferences for the district, which a member is likely to accommodate if this hypothesis is correct. For example, if the representative was elected with 60 percent of the district's vote, but 65 percent of the district voted for the president, our score would be -.5, which would indicate higher vulnerability than a representative who won with 65 percent of the vote to the 60 percent who voted for the president, which is a score of +.5. Note that we include this measure as an alternative and supplemental measure for robustness. As discussed later, all measures of electoral concerns returned consistent results so, ultimately, our confidence in the impact of electoral concerns is greater for its robustness across measures.

⁵ Nominate scores and our measures for electoral concerns do not correlate higher than .51, so we are not concerned about multicollinearity among these variables. According to Gujarati (2003), .70 is a standard level of correlation for such concerns. Moreover, since we do not use more than one measure of electoral concern in any given model, we are not troubled by multicollinearity among these specific measures either. Finally, we examined Variance Inflation Factor scores for our independent variables (measures for electoral concerns, ideology, gender, seniority, military service, caucus membership, and committee membership). These scores ranged from 1.03-2.35. According to Gujarati (2003: 362), a rule of thumb is values greater than 10 indicate multi-collinearity problems.

Control Variables. Military Service. To control for the effects of military service in member decisions to join the Out of Iraq Caucus, we code those members with such service backgrounds as 1 and those without as 0. Our source for this data was the *Congressional Biographical Directory*.

Seniority. We control for the effects of seniority with a variable counting the years of service in the House of Representatives prior to 2006. Our source for this data was the *Congressional Biographical Directory*.

Gender. Because existing literature points strongly to a gender gap on issues related to the use of military force, we control for such effects by identifying the sex of the members of the House of Representatives. We code women as 1 and men as 0.

Caucus Membership. To control for the effects of membership in the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, we code members of those caucuses as 1 and non-members as 0. Caucus membership information was provided directly to the authors by the respective caucuses.

Committee Membership. To control for the impact of committee membership on membership in the caucus, we used the relevant volumes of the *Congressional Quarterly Almanac* to identify members serving on three key foreign policy committees—the International Relations, Armed Services, and Intelligence committees. We recognize that membership in these committees may reflect a member’s individual policy and constituency preferences and interests. Members with greater substantive foreign policy interest may be attracted to such committees, as well as members of Congress who have certain constituency interests such as a district with defense industries or many military personnel in residence. Since committee membership can be shaped by several factors, including member policy preferences and constituency interests, we have no specific hypotheses regarding the impact of membership in one of these three foreign policy committees, yet we believe that controlling for committee effects is still important since it may also provide us with another means of capturing a House member’s policy and constituency preferences. We include controls for these committees because they oversee most issues related to military force. We code members of the committees as 1 and non-members as 0.

We examine this data in two passes. First, we present and discuss bivariate relationships between our key measures and membership in the Out of Iraq caucus for all members of the House of Representatives in the 109th Congress. This pass provides evidence in support of the first two hypotheses and indicates the highly partisan composition of the caucus (no Republican members). Then, we continue to apply our model and its nested explanations, conducting a multivariate analysis examining membership in the Out of Iraq caucus as a function of our measures for ideology, electoral calculations, and other controls as the indicators, examining the

members of the Democratic Party who joined (as we explain below). Since the dependent variable is dichotomous, we employ logit regression. All of our results were obtained from Stata, version 10.0.

Results and Analysis

Our data show significant support for our model and provide important insights into decisions to join the Out of Iraq Caucus. We begin with bivariate evidence, which is shown in Table 1. This first pass provides powerful initial evidence in support of our model and its hypotheses. First, as the data in the table show, only 71 members joined the caucus, less than one-sixth of the House of Representatives, which is consistent with our initial expectation that most members would be unlikely to join out of general reluctance to challenge the president. Second, our evidence shows the expected partisan effect. As the table indicates, all members of the Out of Iraq caucus were members of the Democratic Party, which supports our second hypothesis (although Texas Congressman Ron Paul appeared briefly on the caucus membership list in 2007). At the same time, consistent with our initial expectation, only about one-third of Democrats joined the caucus. Third, our initial evidence indicates that the policy preferences of the Democrats who joined the caucus were significantly more liberal than those who did not join, which supports our third hypothesis. As noted in the table, which shows the difference in means for members and non-members (Democrats only), this difference was statistically significant at the .01 level or better.

Table 1: Data on Out of Iraq Caucus Members, 109th Congress

Membership	Caucus Member	Non-Member
Out of Iraq Caucus	71	365
All Members• Party		
Republican	0	234
Democrat	71	131
Democrats Only• Ideology		
Ideology Score (-1.0 most liberal)*	-.538	-.326
(standard deviation in parentheses)	(.014)	(.011)
Electoral Calculation		
Electorally Safe (dichotomous)	70	116
Not Safe (dichotomous)	1	16
Electorally Safe (continuous)*	77.0%	68.4%
Presidential Vote*	31.9%	43.5%
Vulnerability Score*	45.01	24.95

*difference of means significant at .01 level

Finally, our initial pass at the data shows that electoral calculations appear to impact membership in the hypothesized manner. This is true irrespective of the measurement of this factor. As shown in Table 1, For Democrats, “safe” members are considerably more likely than “non-safe” members to be in the caucus. Only one unsafe member (of 17) was in the caucus, while nearly 40% of safe members were in the caucus. In terms of average percentage of the 2004 vote, caucus members received a statistically significant higher percent of the vote in their district than non-members. Members of the caucus also hailed from districts in which the president was substantially less popular (as measured by the president’s percent of the 2004 vote) than in non-member districts. Finally, members of the caucus were less vulnerable than non-members, as measured by the comparison between member vote and presidential vote in the district in 2004. Hence, in robust initial findings regardless of method of measurement, our evidence is consistent with the nested hypotheses of our model.

Table 2 presents our central multivariate results, which lend further support for our model. Note first that these results include only members of the Democratic Party. Since no Republicans joined the caucus, being Republican (0 on our party variable) perfectly predicts non-membership (0 on our dependent variable – caucus membership). In logistic regression models, this forces the variable out of the equation. Table 2 therefore presents our evidence on the impact of policy preferences and electoral calculations, controlling for gender, seniority, and military service, for Democrats in the House for the 109th Congress. We include three separate models, each of which includes one of our measures of electoral calculations.

The results in Table 2 provide support for our model. First, they show reasonably good model fit. For example, the pseudo- R^2 of .45 suggests substantial explanatory power for the overall equation in its three variants. Controlling for gender, seniority and military service, the data show that membership by Democrats in the Out of Iraq caucus is impacted by both ideology and electoral calculations, regardless of how the latter is measured. More liberal Democrats are more likely to join the caucus, as hypothesized. In terms of electoral calculations, safer, less vulnerable members are more likely to join the caucus: a) members with higher vote percentages in the 2004 vote are more likely to be members (Model 1); b) members in districts in which President Bush received lower percentages of the 2004 vote are more likely to be members (Model 2); c) members less vulnerable vis-à-vis the comparison between their percentage of the 2004 vote and that won by President Bush in their district are more likely to be members (Model 3). Hence, our results are robust across multiple measures of this factor. These results provide further strong support for our model. In terms of the control variables, only military service reached statistical significance: for Democrats, military service background increased the likelihood of joining the Out of Iraq caucus. In the context of the other findings, this is interesting as it suggests that Member *interest* or *expertise* may be a meaningful factor in caucus membership, even after controlling for ideology.

Table 2: Determinants of Membership in the Out of Iraq Caucus 109th Congress

Electoral Model Variants			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Independent Variables	Coeff SE Z	Coeff SE Z	Coeff SE Z
Ideology	-16.2** (2.57) -6.31	-15.55** (2.57) -6.05	-15.7** (2.58) -6.08
Safe	.035** (.017) 2.09	•	•
Presidential Popularity	•	-.035* (.02) -1.78	•
Vulnerability	•	•	.023** (.01) 2.2
Gender	.44 (.49) .88	.40 (.49) .81	.41 (.49) .84
Tenure	.01 (.03) .44	.006 (.03) .24	.009 (.03) .33
Military Service	2.10** (.85) 2.48	2.01** (.85) 2.37	2.09** (.86) 2.44
Constant	-34.1 (54.3) -.63	-19.0 (54.11) -.35	-26.6 (54.2) -.49
	Number of obs = 202 LR chi2(10) = 116.63 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000 Log likelihood = -72.65 Pseudo R2 = 0.45	Number of obs = 202 LR chi2(10) = 116.04 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000 Log likelihood = -73.38 Pseudo R2 = 0.45	Number of obs = 202 LR chi2(10) = 117.08 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000 Log likelihood = -72.43 Pseudo R2 = 0.45

* = .10; ** = .05

Table 3 presents the results of our more elaborate model which adds additional controls for membership in the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and the International Relations, Armed Services, and/or Intelligence committees. Again, model fit is reasonably strong. The pseudo- R^2 of .47 suggests substantial explanatory power, although the addition of the extended control variables did little to increase the overall explanatory power of the equation. As previously, while seniority and gender are not statistically significant, military

Table 3: Determinants of Membership in the Out of Iraq Caucus, 109th Congress, Democrats Only, Logistic Regression

Independent Variables	Electoral Model Variants		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
	Coeff SE Z	Coeff SE Z	Coeff SE Z
Ideology	15.81** (2.59) 6.11	-15.75 ** (2.63) -5.99	-15.57** (2.59) -6.00
Safe	.022 (.019) 1.16	•	•
Presidential Popularity	•	-.008 (.025) -0.31	•
Vulnerability	•	•	-.012 (.013) -0.93
Military Service	1.65* (.904) 1.82	1.52* (.89) 1.70	1.63* (.908) 1.79
Tenure	.002 (.03) 0.06	.007 (.029) 0.24	.003 (9.03) 0.11
Gender	.24 (.519) 0.46	.231 (.515) 0.45	.231 (.517) 0.45
Congressional Black Caucus Membership	1.09* (.572) 1.91	1.22* (.646) 1.89	1.03* (.621) 1.67
Congressional Hispanic Caucus Membership	1.13* (.717) 1.58	1.21* (.719) 1.68	1.12* (.726) 1.54
International Relations	-.813 (.734) -1.11	-.776 (.72) -1.08	-.819 (.725) -1.13
Armed Services	-.117 (.735) -0.16	-.105 (.746) -0.14	-.12 (.737) -0.16
Intelligence	-.703 (1.22) -0.57	-.707 (1.18) -0.60	-.699 (1.2) -0.58
Constant	-5.66 59.5 -.09	6.22 58.4 .11	-1.68 59.4 -.03
	Number of obs = 202 LR chi2(10) = 123.93 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000 Log likelihood = -69.01 Pseudo R2 = 0.47	Number of obs = 202 LR chi2(10) = 122.68 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000 Log likelihood = -69.63 Pseudo R2 = 0.47	Number of obs = 202 LR chi2(10) = 123.45 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000 Log likelihood = -69.24 Pseudo R2 = 0.47

* = .10; ** = .05

service background increases the likelihood that a Democrat will join the caucus. Among the added control variables, members of the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus are more likely to join the Out of Iraq Caucus. Committee membership is not statistically significant as a predictor of caucus membership.⁶

This more elaborate model provides some support for our hypotheses. As the results clearly indicate, *a member's policy preferences, as measured by ideology scores, are again statistically significant determinants of membership in the Out of Iraq caucus*. Again, more liberal Democrats are more likely to join the caucus, even after controlling for all the other factors in the model. In practical terms, the average ideology score for all members is .087, and for Democrats is -0.326 (recall that the variable ranges from -1.0 – liberal- to 1.0 – conservative). For members of the Out of Iraq Caucus, the average ideology score is -0.538, significantly more liberal than the average representative and the average Democrat in the House. Moreover, the significance of military service suggests that *policy interest and expertise* and personal experience may also have a meaningful impact.

In this expanded model, our measures of electoral calculations are in the hypothesized direction, but do not achieve standard levels of statistical significance. While this would appear to weaken support for our explanatory model emphasis on the electoral calculations, the lack of statistical significance for these measures should be interpreted with some caution, as Black and Hispanic Democrats tend to represent districts that are overwhelmingly Democratic (and thus anti-Bush) in their leanings. The significance of membership in these caucuses is interesting, however, and is worthy of some additional investigation in future studies. For example, it may be that these members represent particularly liberal constituencies opposed to the Bush administration and its policies. Perhaps these members, experienced in their own caucuses, recognized the opportunities and possibilities presented by organized caucuses for pressing policy preferences. Key leaders such as Maxine Waters, Charles Rangel, John Lewis, John Conyers, and Barbara Lee may well have used these caucuses as vehicles for recruiting members to the Out of Iraq Caucus.⁷ Such possibilities warrant further study. Nevertheless, the results in this last table provide partial confirmation of our model.

In summary, the bivariate and multivariate evidence presented here provides strong support for our explanatory model positing a nested effect of deference, partisanship, policy preference and electoral calculation. The profile of members of the Out of Iraq Caucus appears straightforward: such a member is an electorally-

⁶ We also ran models with one committee at a time. None differed from our reported results.

⁷ We are indebted to an anonymous reviewer for these insights.

safer, more liberal Democrat (with some military experience) relatively free to challenge the president without fear of electoral consequence.

Conclusions.

Our model posited that, given general reluctance in Congress to challenge directly the president on military matters, Out of Iraq caucus membership would be relatively rare, but conditioned by partisanship, policy preferences and electoral calculations. We expected Democrats to make up most, if not all of the membership, which was confirmed by the data. Among Democrats, we expected more liberal representatives to make up most, if not all the caucus, which was also confirmed. Among more liberal Democrats, we expected safer, less electorally vulnerable members to be more likely to join the caucus, which also received substantial support from our tests of the evidence.

These findings clearly lend support to the wide body of literature that points to the increasing influence of partisanship on congressional foreign policy preferences. Our findings also build upon the research on congressional caucus membership (McCormick and Mitchell, 2007; Hammond, 1998), which finds that caucus membership is shaped by a member's policy preferences. In the Out of Iraq Caucus, a more liberal ideology clearly correlates with membership in this caucus. Our findings also show that, among these members, electoral considerations were also consequential.

Of smaller but important relevance, our findings provide some insights on the role of gender and membership in the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) and Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC). Our research indicated that gender was not a significant determinant in our analysis. These findings contrast with a considerably large body of literature that point to men's and women's different views on the use of force abroad.

In contrast, membership in the CBC or CHC does appear to have some impact in determining membership in the Out of Iraq Caucus, which is consistent with some public opinion polls finding differences in how African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans view the war. This finding is unique to the congressional foreign policy literature. Although evidence exists that members of congress will lobby together in ethnic-caucuses that are geared toward a narrow set of policy issues, little research points to a members' willingness to challenge the commander in chief on military policy based upon their membership in the CBC or CHC. A number of plausible explanations may be considered for future analyses.

The Out of Iraq Caucus continued essentially unchanged in the 110th Congress. The caucus lost three members who did not return to Congress, but gained 5 new members after the 2006 midterm elections. No new Republicans joined, and only 5 of the 30 freshman Democrats elected to join. Such minor changes offer no

challenge to our findings. First, in spite of the turnover that gave the Democrats majority control, the House overall was virtually unchanged ideologically (average Nominate score was .09 in the 109th and .04 in the 110th). Ideologically, Democrats were virtually identical -.40 and -.41 in 109th and 110th respectively); those Democrats electing to stay out of the caucus were ideologically the same as well (-.33 and -.34 in the two congresses), and the members were somewhat more liberal in the 110th (-.73) than the 109th (-.54), which only strengthens our central argument about policy preferences. Finally, the 5 new members of the caucus were electorally safer and less vulnerable on average than the 25 Democrat freshmen who did not join. Many of these new members refraining from joining the caucus won their seats in close electoral contests. Our examination of (and the findings from) the 109th Congress, when virtually all the members of the caucus made their decision to join, remains compelling.

In sum, the membership of the Out of Iraq Caucus in the 109th Congress, which differed very little from that of the 110th Congress, appears to be driven chiefly by a cascading set of variables presented by our explanatory model: deference, partisanship, policy preferences, and electoral calculations. The members of this caucus, though central to efforts in Congress since 2004 to challenge the war in Iraq and to provoke a change in course, are in the minority, both in terms of the Congress, and within their own party. Although they have played a role in several legislative and budgetary efforts to constrain or curtail the war, especially since the 2006 midterm elections, they have not been successful in their ultimate aims, in spite of Rep. Maxine Waters' claim of "victory" in June 2006 when Iraqi military commanders indicated they preferred to reduce combat brigades dramatically by 2008. President Bush and his supporters in Congress successfully fended off or blocked their efforts, benefitting in large measure from the reduction in violence (involving US troops at the least) associated by the "surge" strategy adopted by the administration after the 2006 elections. U.S. actions in Iraq therefore continued to reflect the administration's priorities rather than those of the caucus.

The caucus itself even showed cracks in 2007, with some members continuing to demand immediate withdrawal and some willing to settle for a slower process. While the caucus continued to exist after the 2008 presidential election and subsequent inauguration of Democrat Barack Obama as the 44th President, much of its *raison d'être* had evaporated with the end of the Bush administration and the new president's commitment to a speedy end to the war. Nor is there any reason to imagine the caucus would receive an infusion of new members. Certainly, Republicans are unlikely to join, given their policy preferences and support for the war in the preceding years. With a co-partisan in the White House (committed to ending the war), Democrats are also less likely to take such an assertive position as well. While members of the caucus may continue to raise concerns and advocate swifter or more thorough withdrawals (e.g.,

<http://edition.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/02/27/iraq.dems>), they are unlikely to mount the kind of concerted challenges they attempted during the previous administration.

In sum, and somewhat ironically, in spite of the efforts of the Out of Iraq caucus, the continuation of the war may in part be explained by the membership of the Caucus, which is not bipartisan, consists of only a third of House Democrats, and is ideologically more liberal than most congressional Democrats. While these individual members were obviously not deferent to the president, they challenged the White House from the relative safety of electorally less vulnerable districts. The complex combination of issue context and congressional orientation, partisan calculations, policy preference, and electoral calculation thus led to limits in the efforts of the House of Representatives in the 109th Congress to challenge the president.

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