

**Web Appendix to Alan I. Abramowitz, Brad Alexander, and Matthew Gunning,
“Incumbency, Redistricting, and the Decline of Competition in U.S. House
Elections.”**

At-Large House Elections

Between 1946 and 1968 there were a total of 82 at-large elections in states with more than one House district. A majority of these at-large elections, 48, involved states with only two House districts. Eight involved the state of Alabama in 1962 in which 3 Republicans ran statewide opposing 8 Democrats and all 8 Democrats were easily elected. Twenty-six at large elections involved statewide districts in multi-district states. The effects of including these multi-district elections in our analyses are trivial. They involved just over 1 percent of all House races between 1946 and 1968 so excluding them would have no effect on our estimates of the overall competitiveness of House elections during that time period. In addition, in all cases where a specific candidate pairing could not be determined, as was true in Alabama in 1962, the results of the at-large House elections were coded as missing. Finally, none of these at-large contests took place after 1968 so none of them were included in any of our regression analyses which were limited to elections between 1972 and 2002 for which campaign spending data were available. I

Using the Normalized Presidential Vote as a Measure of District Partisanship in Elections with Strong Third Party or Independent Presidential Candidates

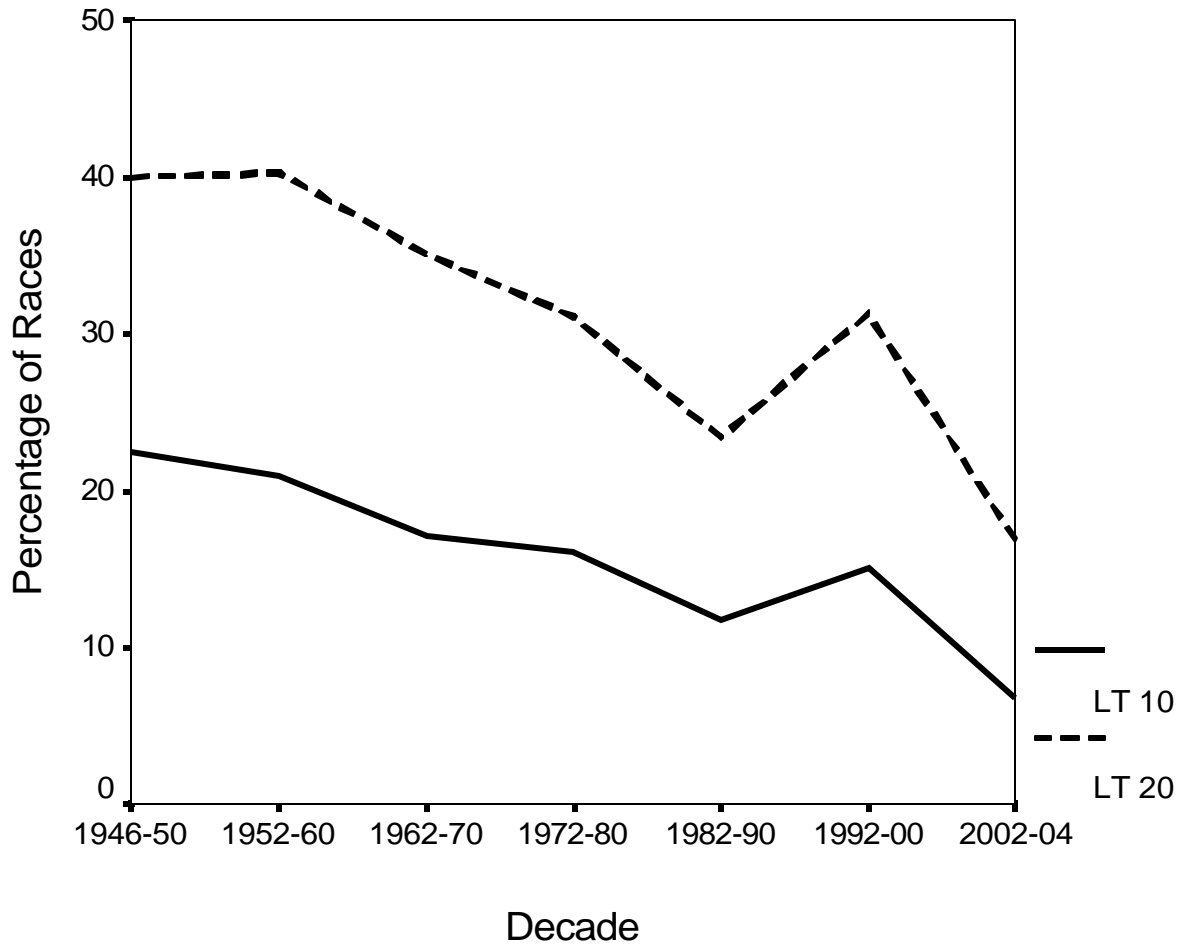
The validity of the normalized presidential vote as a measure of district partisanship does not appear to be affected by the presence of a strong third party or independent presidential candidate on the ballot. Evidence from exit polls, where available, shows that the third party voters would have split their votes almost evenly between the two major party candidates if the third party candidate had not been on the ballot. This was clearly the case in 1992, the election with by far the largest vote for a third party or independent candidate. According to the 1992 national exit poll, 50.8 percent of Perot voters would have voted for Clinton while 49.2 percent would have voted for Bush. Without Perot on the ballot, the exit poll data show that Clinton would have received almost exactly the same share of the major party vote. Furthermore, Clinton's share of the major party vote would have been almost identical in every major region of the country. In addition, the correlation between the normalized presidential vote and the House vote was just as great or greater in these elections as in elections without a strong third party or independent presidential candidate: the correlation between the normalized Democratic presidential vote and the Democratic share of the House vote in contested races was .63 in 1964 and .39 in 1966 versus .67 in 1968 and .63 in 1970. Similarly, the correlation was .65 in 1988 and .62 in 1990 versus .70 in 1992, .75 in 1994, .83 in 1996, and .81 in 1998. Thus, there is no evidence that the presence of a strong third party or independent presidential candidate on the ballot in 1968, 1992, or 1996 reduced the validity of the normalized presidential vote as a measure of district partisanship in those elections or in the subsequent midterm elections.

Figure 1. Percentage of House Incumbents Reelected by Decade



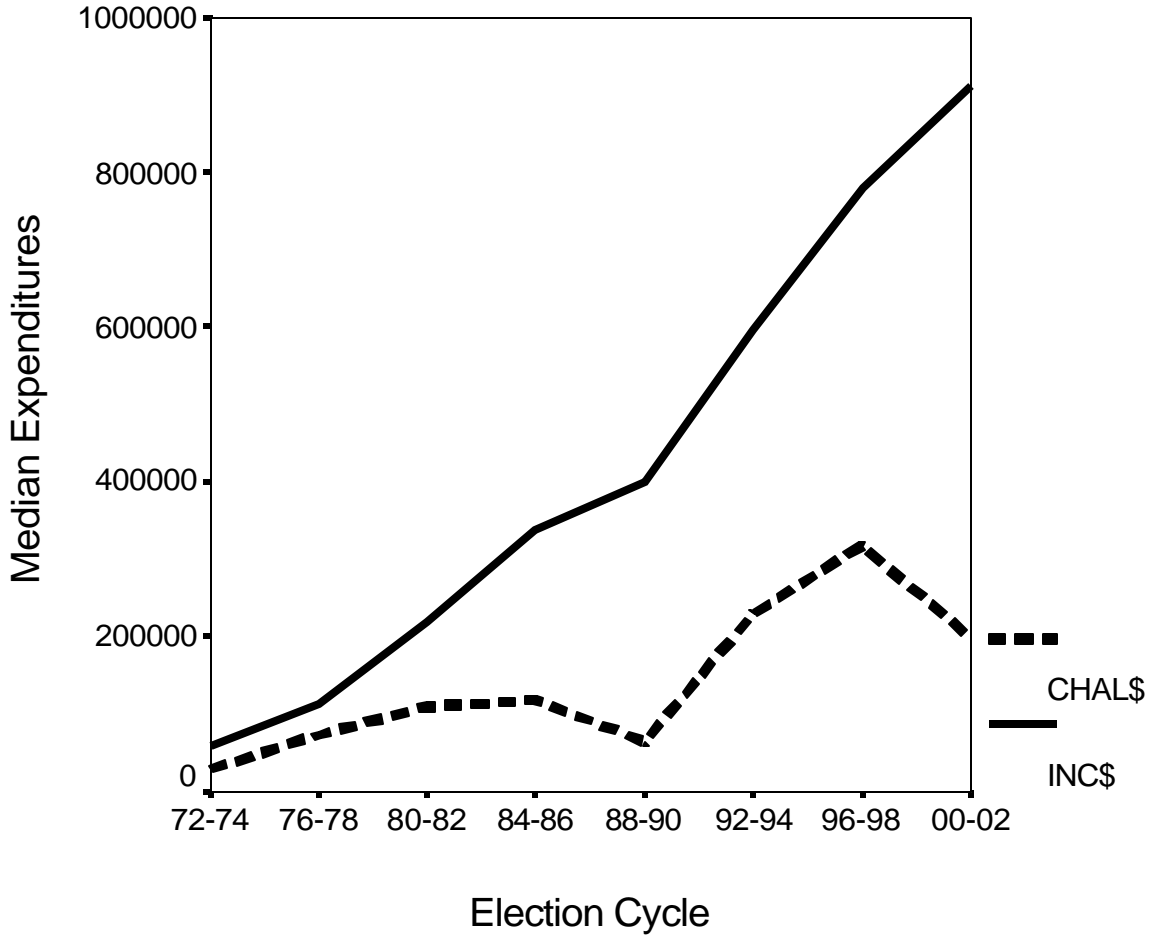
Source: Data compiled by authors.

Figure 2. Percentage of Competitive House Races by Decade



Source: Data compiled by authors.

Figure 3. Median Expenditures by Incumbents and Challengers in High-Risk Districts, 1972-2002



Note: High-risk districts are those in which percentage of vote for presidential candidate of incumbent's party is less than national percentage.

Source: Data compiled by authors.