

Committee Collaboration, Competing Principals, and Partisanship in Argentina

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When will legislators assigned to the same committee cooperate with each other? Will members of Congress favorable to the sitting president cross-the-aisle to cooperate with their opposition peers? In federal presidential regimes, both the President and the governors demand policy responses from House and Senate members. The preferences of these Members of Congress (MC) sometimes align with the preferences of the President and their Home State governors; other times they only align with the preferences of the President or the State governor; and, finally, preferences sometimes align with neither of them. In this paper, I analyze the committee system of a multi-party and multi-level legislature, and test the partisan and territorial determinants of committee collaboration. My theory clarifies the inner workings of committee systems with competing principals and multiple parties. The proposed theory explains why we observe more active collaboration among supporters of the President and less active collaboration among those only aligned with the governor or in the opposition. I exemplify modeling collaboration in the Argentine House committees between 1993 and 2017.

Competing principals | Party system | Legislative studies | Networks |

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In this paper, I analyze the committee system of a multi-party and multi-level legislature, and test the partisan and territorial determinants of committee collaboration. My theory clarifies the inner workings of committee systems with competing principals and multiple parties. The proposed theory explains why we observe more active collaboration among supporters of the President and less active collaboration among those only aligned with the governor or in the opposition. I exemplify modeling collaboration in the Argentine House committees between 1993 and 2017.

Theoretically, my argument connects the distributive theory of the committee system in the US (Mayhew, 1974; Fenno, 1978) and the competing principals' model proposed by Carey (2007). More important, because these theories were based on two-party systems, single-member districts, and a decentralized selection of candidates, they fail to capture committee behavior in multiparty systems with PR rules. In this article, I propose an alternative description of the committee system that explains legislative behavior in presidential federal countries such as Argentina, Brazil, or Mexico. That is, in

federal multiparty countries with multimember districts and party-centered rules for the nomination of candidates.

My argument takes as a point of departure an important stylized fact of presidential federal regimes: Presidents allocate resources (infrastructure investment, discretionary funds, advertising) to aligned governors with the same policy preferences (Ardanaz et al., 2014; Brollo and Nannicini, 2012; González and Lodola, 2005; González and Mamone, 2015). Legislators then enact statutory rules to deliver particularistic benefits than maximize the vote share of governors they align with or, if in the opposition, to shift resources to misaligned majors. Indeed, as nomination rules give extraordinary power to party leaders, committee activity seeks to maximize the electoral success of provincial or municipal authorities, rather than secure an electoral connection between the MCs and the voters (Gibson and Calvo, 2000; Kikuchi and Lodola, 2014; Gervasoni, 2018a,b; Jones and Hwang, 2005; Rosas and Langston, 2011).

This article provides evidence of committee collaboration that is consistent with these nomination rules. I find that collaboration to deliver benefits is stronger among legislators of the incumbent federal coalition (aligned with both the President and their home state governor). Collaboration declines both for provincial coalitions (where the MC aligns with an opposition governor or opposes to an aligned governor), and for misaligned MCs (those with divergent interests).

The mechanism is relatively simple and reminds the ideas of the deliberate discretion delegation to the bureaucracy (Ep-

Significance Statement

The contributions of this study are theoretical and empirical. In regards to theory, it is of use to both committees' distributive theory and competing principals' theory, adapting them to assess presidential federal countries with multiparty, multimember districts, and party-centered candidate selection. In these systems, legislators are responsive to governors as principals, instead of constituents. I propose a classification of legislators' types of alignment: federal, provincial, and misalignment, and show that the federal alignment has stronger ties in committees than the others. Additionally, I find that provincial alignments and misalignment increase the likelihood of ties in committees under decentralized party systems. Empirically, this article innovates in the analysis of legislators' connections focusing on committees instead of on co-sponsorship or roll-call votes. As it is possible to identify individual positions in the committee report, Argentina brings a perfect opportunity to examine the strength of ties in a different step of the legislative process, where position-taking and (lack of) cohesion are costly.

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stein and O'Halloran, 1996; Huber and Shipan, 2002).¹ Incumbent federal coalitions may broadly delegate the allocation of resources to governors without micro-managing its implementation. By contrast, both provincial MCs and misaligned MCs need to detail expenses to prevent the discretionary allocation of resources by those who control the state and provincial executives. The result is that incumbent federal coalitions can produce less complex legislation that includes a larger set of MCs. By contrast, provincial coalitions and misaligned legislators write legislation that is more complex and that may be agreed by a smaller subset of MCs. In the case of provincial alignment, because logrolling by provincial incumbents results in collaboration with the federal government in the committees to bring president bills to the plenary (Clerici, 2020). In the case of misaligned MCs, because they have a narrow set of principals. Consequently, collaboration in committee is the most limited.

While centralized nomination rules reduce committee collaboration by misaligned representatives, the effect is smaller in decentralized party systems. As partisan veto points augment, the increase in the number of actors make policy change more difficult and increases the weight of local elites in the committee outcome (Tsebelis, 1995). As decentralization augments, committees collaboration declines among the incumbent federal MCs, bringing them closer to the collaboration rates of the "provincial" and "misaligned" MCs. Indeed, results will show that as party system becomes more denationalized, differences in the collaboration rates of the different groups are greatly reduced.

To test my argument, I analyze the signatures of all committee reports issued by Argentine House members from 1993 to 2017. The dependent variable, *ties in committee*, describes the number of times two legislators sign committee reports that inform the plenary on a presidential bill.² In the Argentine Congress, committee members may issue multiple competing reports ("órdenes del día") that are then brought to the plenary floor. These reports both indicate the members position on the bill (in favor or against) as well as proposed amendments to the majority report.³

The committee system is one of the most relevant steps in legislative work (Strøm, 1998). How deputies behave in committee conditions largely the viability of the bills' success (Calvo and Sagarzazu, 2011; Calvo, 2014; Kikuchi, 2019) and the policy-shaping (Berry and Fowler, 2018; Katznelson and Lapinski, 2006). Notwithstanding, there has been little discussion on the way MCs behave in committee (Gaines et al., 2019), and fewer studies that develop network analysis on committees. As regards behavior and collaboration, there is a considerable difference between committees and co-sponsorship. In the

former, legislators' positions are reactions to others' initiatives, either the executive or other MC, i.e., they are not voluntary manifestations of preferences. Moreover, they come as a result of party interactions (Sieberer and Höhmann, 2017) and transaction costs. For this reason, committee reports are costly tools of position-taking. Additionally, the opportunities for position taking in committees are limited. In this respect, there is a limit in the number of bills legislators receive in committee and refer to the floor.

The contributions of this study are theoretical and empirical. In regards to theory, it is of use to both committees' distributional theory and competing principals' theory, adapting them to assess presidential federal countries with multiparty, multi-member districts, and party-centered candidate selection. In these systems, MCs are responsive to governors as principals, instead of constituents. I propose a classification of legislators' types of alignments: federal, provincial, and misalignment, and show that the federal alignment has stronger ties in committees than the others. Additionally, I find that provincial alignment and misalignment increase the likelihood of ties in committees under decentralized party systems. Empirically, this article innovates in the analysis of legislators' connections focusing on committees instead of on co-sponsorship or roll-call votes. As it is possible to identify individual positions in the committee report, Argentina brings a perfect opportunity to examine the strength of ties in a different step of the legislative process, where position-taking and (lack of) cohesion are costly.

I proceed as follows. The first section explains why it is worth it to study ties in committees and why this is different from analyzing ties in co-sponsorship. The second section develops the hypothesis framed by the competing principals' theory and the committees' distributional theory, both aimed at highlighting the differences in MC behavior in multiparty systems. Moreover, I present a series of expectations on the interaction effects of certain aspects connected with the party system as well as the type of alignments combined with the probability of the strength of ties in committees. The third section introduces the research design. Then, the results are analyzed, and a final section concludes.

1. Why should we study committee collaboration?

Scholars who study legislative networks often focus on co-sponsorship data (Alemán et al., 2009; Alemán and Calvo, 2012; Battaglini et al., 2020; Briatte, 2016; Cho and Fowler, 2010; Fowler, 2006; Kirkland, 2012; Lee et al., 2017; Neal, 2020; Park and Jang, 2017; Skigin, 2019; Zhang et al., 2008). Co-sponsorship is an incredible data source on individual preferences, behavioral drivers, and original party alignments. Nevertheless, my strategy is to focus on committee ties to analyze reactive positions because in committee the votes are negotiated, legislators react to bills, and there is a limit in the number of opportunities to collaborate.

Original preferences *versus* logrolling scenarios. Authoring and co-sponsoring may be understood as an instance of manifesting original preferences because "they tend to be unaffected by the gatekeeping behavior of congressional leaders and they are less likely to be curved by whipping" (Alemán and Calvo, 2012, p. 5). It is the first formal evidence of position-taking in the legislative process to show commitment with their party (Gilligan and Krehbiel, 1994; Kessler and Krehbiel, 1996; Wawro, 2000; Wilson and Young, 1997), interest group

¹ The argument highlights that legislative statutes vary in their level of discretion assigned to the bureaucracy. Statutes with greater detail delegate less discretion on the bureaucracy.

² A tie or edge describes a connection between two nodes (such as approving the same report or co-signing a bill initiative). The strength of these ties describes the probability (or sometimes the frequency) of such collaboration (Granovetter, 1973). Consequently, two actors are connected by strong ties when their interactions are direct (and often frequent), while ties are weak when they are mediated by another node (or very infrequent). While there are plenty of studies measuring co-sponsorship networks, there is considerable less work analyzing committee votes and collaboration in committee reporting. In co-sponsorship networks, the individual characteristics as party, district, seniority, ethnicity, and gender are mentioned regularly as explanations of the strength of ties. Homophily, the tendency of similar individuals to get associated with each other, is largely known to be an important element of tie formation (McPherson et al., 2001). Co-sponsoring is a voluntary, unlimited, and low-cost action to demonstrate position-taking to different audiences (Kessler and Krehbiel, 1996).

³ It is worth mentioning that the executive's legislative agenda success or failure is not under scrutiny in this study.

or constituency (Campbell, 1982; Balla and Nemacheck, 2000; Koger, 2003; Mayhew, 1974), influence public policy (Alemán, 2009; Aleman et al., 2009; Crisp et al., 2004) or support colleagues. MCs write or connect (co-sponsor) to those with whom they share some commonality of policy preferences as well as an interest in similar policy areas or jurisdictions. (Talbert and Potoski, 2002) mention that, unlike roll-call voting, co-sponsorship activity is not structured by party discipline or negative agenda. The point that the authors make could be extrapolated to the difference between co-sponsorship and committee behavior. From a distributive approach, committees are institutionalized arenas for logrolling and a source of resources for legislators to deliver pork to their constituencies to achieve reelection (Mayhew, 1974; Shepsle and Weingast, 1987). For this reason, committees are a place for negotiating the vote, especially for MCs from the opposition who have more incentives to negotiate and cooperate with the government party. Then, the executive is in the position of using institutional and fiscal resources to succeed in committee.

Action versus reaction. Authoring and co-sponsoring bills are voluntary. Whichever the purposes are, some of them already mentioned, authoring and co-sponsoring are pro-active activities. As neither the fact of authoring bills nor co-sponsoring them constitutes a requirement in the legislative work, this data only brings information on those individuals who act proactively in showing a position on certain public policy issues. “Cosponsoring is a voluntary activity that only describes a positive inclination toward the future location of a policy vis-à-vis the current status quo” (Aleman et al., 2009, p. 88). These activities do not generate the costs associated with other signals such as abstention, negative voting, or explicit declarations (Rocca and Gordon, 2010). On the contrary, position taking in committee consists of reacting to the bill received. Legislators analyze the initiative, manifest opinions, and do recommendations to the floor. *A priori* all MCs have the same opportunity to write initiatives or co-sponsor bills while only some of them may discuss specific ones in committee depending on how committees are integrated. In order to avoid political costs, preserve party strategy, target efforts, or due to lack of time or disinterest, legislators may decide to maintain reactive attitudes towards certain issues. Unless they make public declarations to the media, it is not possible to know their preferences in advance. For example, any MC interested in legalizing abortion might author or co-sponsor a bill oriented to this. However, only those participating in Health, Women, or Constitutional Issues Committees would have the chance to discuss it formally and produce recommendations for the rest of the house. In a negative sense, this is also a crucial difference. Nobody obligates a representative who is against abortion to initiate a bill to legalize it. Inaction is the best strategy in this scenario. Nevertheless, if this same representative is part of the Women Committee which receives a bill proposing legalization, they must react showing a position in the report that the committee produces after debating the initiative unless this legislator is absent the day the committees sign the document.

An unlimited *versus* limited number of opportunities to collaborate. MCs may initiate all the bills they want or can, and they have as many opportunities to cosponsor bills as initiatives entering the house.⁴ Moreover, co-sponsoring is a

low-cost mechanism for position-taking (Kessler and Krehbiel, 1996). In this sense, there are almost unlimited chances to collaborate. Networks could be potentially huge. The situation in committees is very different. There is a limit in the type of issue legislators discuss in committees. Commonly, MCs integrate committees according to, among other reasons, individual background and interests. As shown in the example above, only legislators that integrate Health, Women, or Constitutional Issues might discuss a bill on abortion. From the informational theory perspective, the committee system creates opportunities for party labor division and specialization (Buchanan et al., 1960; Krehbiel, 1991). Because of the issue of division of labor, there is also a limit on the number of initiatives received by each committee. More important, there is a limit in the number due to the eventual political interest of the committee’s chairs to push the bill’s discussion. Chairpersons may facilitate the discharge of legislation or let the bill ‘die’ at the committee stage. In sum, due to the committee system functioning, there is a limit on the possible number of nodes (legislators and ties).

2. Theoretical Expectations

The social network theory that focuses on co-sponsorship highlights that ties are influenced by homophily, i.e., the tendency of similar individuals to get associated with each other (McPherson et al., 2001). Shared features as party (Alemán and Calvo, 2012; Bratton and Rouse, 2011; Koger, 2003), district (Alemán and Calvo, 2012; Calvo and Leiras, 2012; Micozzi, 2014), committee (Alemán and Calvo, 2012; Gross and Shalizi, 2008), gender (Barnes, 2016; Gross and Shalizi, 2008), seniority (Campbell, 1982), ethnicity (Bratton and Rouse, 2011), or national cleavages (Parigi and Sartori, 2014), among others, play significant roles in connecting legislators. Homophily, then, is widely considered evidence of commonality in policy preferences. Nevertheless, there are barely any studies on network analysis based on individual positions in committees.⁵ Beyond the homophily explanation, I argue here that in presidential federal countries MCs position themselves in government-opposition terms in the multilevel scenario. This defines the type of alignment two deputies establish, which influences their ties in committee. I claim that the type of alignments may be (a) federal, (b) provincial, or (c) misalignment. This classification analyzes both legislators in the ‘dyad’ according to their relation to their principals (Bonvecchi and Clerici, 2021) considering (i) the political (non)alignment between the governor of the province that each MC represents and the President (Cherny et al., 2015; Ingelmo, 2017), and (ii) the (non)shared party affiliation between legislator and governor. MCs may be beholden to the President, or the provincial governors, all of whom, in turn, may (not) be politically aligned. These determine that each legislator is ally/opposition to the national and/or to the provincial government.

The distributional theory to study committees suggests that these organizations exist to allow members to distribute

does not try to be a cosponsor of almost every bill (...). I do not think that co-sponsorship is everyone’s by-default option for each bill written. Rather, private information of small and denser networks let MCs build selective interactions with whom they will send the right messages to the right audience.” (Micozzi, 2014, p. 19).

⁵Porter et al. (2013) use network analysis to investigate the networks of committee and subcommittee assignments in the United States House of Representatives from the 101st-108th Congresses. Although the purpose is different, it is the only study that develop network analysis to committees as far as I know.

⁴It is not generally clear why, if it is such a cheap and useful resource, almost every legislator

particularistic benefits to their constituencies. As legislators are motivated to achieve re-election, they tend to build a personal reputation for their constituents by providing pork-barrel projects and aligning their legislative positions with voters' salient issues (Mayhew, 1974; Fenno, 1978). Committees as institutional solutions to drive geographically focused particularistic distribution have profoundly influenced the study of American politics (Martin, 2014). With an alternative interpretation, it may be useful to understand other presidential federal countries, and the same occurs with Carey's competing principal's theory. On the one side, in presidential countries, presidents are strong principals, they have an obvious national leadership, control the national administration's budget, decide the policies, distribute intergovernmental transfers, affect local interests, and appoint executive offices. Typically, they are national party leaders, have nomination power for congressional seats (Cherny et al., 2018), and have important legislative prerogatives. On the other side, in presidential federal countries, governors are powerful actors. In particular, the literature on Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico note that governors have important institutional, political, and fiscal resources at their disposal. Governors are typically the local party leaders. In a closed PR system such as Argentina's, governors have significant power over candidate selection for both national and sub-national offices (De Luca et al., 2002; Jones, 2002; Jones and Micozzi, 2013). Additionally, after completing their term, governors may boost MCs' political careers locally (Calvo and Escobar, 2005) and they have discretionary control over most of the federal transfers, particularly over the shared-revenue system of co-participation, which constitutes the main financial source for provincial budgets (Bonvecchi and Lodola, 2011; Gervasoni, 2018b). They control budgets, typically allocate resources without restrictions, and manage provincial public administration. These resources enable governors to condition legislators' political career options. Moreover, they arouse expectation on the governor's side to extend this influence to the legislative arena and maintain a principal-agent relationship with the deputy (Bonvecchi et al., 2018; Gervasoni, 2018b; Jones and Hwang, 2005; Rosas and Langston, 2011). The alignment between presidents and governors matters in terms of the legislators' behavior in committee when discussing and reporting presidential bills. In federal countries, presidents allocate resources (infrastructure investment, discretionary funds, advertising) to aligned governors (Ardanaz et al., 2014; Arulampalam et al., 2009; Brollo and Nannicini, 2012; Larcinese et al., 2006), which are useful also to build coalitions in congress (Alston and Mueller, 2005; González, 2016; Hiroi and Renno, 2014). There are reasons to believe that those governors politically aligned with the national executive, even if they belong to a different party, may positively influence their same party and province deputies, which are considered (1) national and provincial allies. For similar reasons but in the inverse direction, MCs who belong to parties whose leaders are not politically aligned across levels of governments, are either (2) national and provincial opposition or (3) national opposition and provincial allies. Finally, legislators from different parties as governors do not align with the president, are (4) provincial opposition and (circumstantial) national allies. Either because these deputies belong to the president's party or a third party, they are in opposition to their provinces' governors. Considering this, they have incentives to support

the president. The alignment between types of MCs produces different 'dyads', which I expect to have greater or fewer ties in committee: (a) federal alignment, (b) provincial alignment, and (c) misalignment. A (a) federal alignment is the one between two (1) national and provincial allies, two (4) provincial opposition and (circumstantial) national allies, or between legislators (1) and (4). Because they belong to parties whose leaders are politically aligned across levels of governments or for local party circumstantial reasons, they push the presidential legislative agenda to achieve the discharge of legislation. Incumbent federal coalitions may broadly delegate the allocation of resources to governors without micro-managing its implementation. This type of alignment is expected to have more ties in committee than the others. A (b) provincial alignment, in turn, connects two (2) national and provincial opposition legislators, two (3) national opposition and provincial allies, or MCs (2) and (3). Finally, a (c) misalignment consists of the collaboration between a (1) national and provincial ally either with a (2) national and provincial opposition legislator or with a (3) national opposition and provincial ally. And a (4) provincial opposition and (circumstantial) national ally, either with legislator (2) or (3). The misalignment ties are formed by deputies with divergent interests or principals. I claim, then, that provincial alignments and misaligned MCs have lower number of ties in committees than federal ones (H1). Contrary to the latter, provincial alignments and misaligned MCs need to detail expenses to prevent the discretionary allocation of resources by those who control the state and provincial executives. They write legislation that is more complex and that may be agreed by a smaller subset of MCs. In the case of provincial alignment, because logrolling by provincial incumbents results in collaboration with the federal government in the committees to bring president bills to the plenary (Clerici, 2020). In the case of misaligned MCs, because they have a narrow set of principals. Consequently, collaboration in committee is the most limited. By contrast, the incumbent federal coalitions can produce less complex legislation that includes a larger set of legislators.

Notwithstanding, principals and legislators behave under the circumstances that certain institutional scenarios impose. While centralized nomination rules reduce committee collaboration by misaligned representatives, the effect is smaller in decentralized party systems. Following Tsebelis (1995), when the party system has more partisan veto points, decision-making intertwines diverse interests. More and different actors are involved in the negotiation. As decentralization augments, committees collaboration declines among the incumbent federal MCs, bringing them closer to the collaboration rates of the provincial alignments and the misaligned MCs (H2).

I rely on two different mechanisms to develop the decentralization argument: the denationalization of the electoral party system and the fragmentation in the plenary. Previous studies have demonstrated that the static denationalization of the electoral party system impacts on the erosion of the government-opposition dynamic (Alemán et al., 2021; Calvo and Leiras, 2012; Cantú and Desposato, 2012; Clerici, 2021). When the system is nationalized, its parties—or at least, the main ones—have a national scope with values and ideas that are territorially extended (Golosov, 2016). Parties, issues, and voters at the subnational level are linked to the national level (Rodden and Wibbels, 2011; Schakel, 2013; Thorlakson, 2007).

Table 1. Type of alignment and the expected impact of the strength of ties in committee.

		<i>Expected impact on ties in committees</i>	
<i>Type of legislators</i>	<i>Type of alignments</i>		<i>Increasing party system decentralization</i>
(1) - (1) (4) - (4) (1) - (4)	(a) Federal alignment	(+)	(-)
(2) - (2) (3) - (3) (2) - (3)	(b) Provincial alignment	(-)	(+)
(1) - (2) (1) - (3) (2) - (4) (3) - (4)	(c) Misalignment	(-)	(+)

Source. Prepared by the author.

As a result, parties obtain similar electoral support in the competition for deputies' seats among districts. Then, the plenary is integrated mostly by national parties with national policy strategies. Contrary, when the system is denationalized, electoral politics is increasingly dissimilar in-between districts. Parties act in an uncoordinated manner in response to purely local dynamics (Calvo and Micozzi, 2005; Caramani, 2000), with an impact –in some significant degree of variability– on support across districts during any given election (Mustillo and Mustillo, 2012). Consequently, MCs with more diverse preferences enter the chamber. The plenary is a sum of national parties with subnational alignments on policy issues. Although this creates coordination problems for the governing party over the committee, individual behavior is more easily co-opted by the executive who builds a presidential coalition through targeting individual legislators. This way, presidents' bills receive support from the opposition at the committee stage. Consequently, connections between MCs with different interests and principals not aligned vertically are more likely. Denationalization means the influence of multiple veto points over the legislators. Thus, it increases the likelihood of ties in committees for provincial alignments and misalignment in comparison to federal alignments.

Another indicator of party system decentralization is the fragmentation in the plenary. This fragmentation depends on both the number and the strength distribution among political parties. When the plenary is fractionalized, there is an absence of a unique opposition leadership, and it is likely that the ruling party does not have the majority. Multiple veto points from the oppositions can unfold a negative scenario for the executive's legislative agenda. Therefore, the president or their party leader in the house must spend more time and resources negotiating with several parties to succeed in committee. The mechanism operates in a similar way than denationalization does, increasing the number of ties in committees for provincial alignments and misaligned MCs at the expense of federal. Table 1 presents the type of alignments and the theoretical expectation related to each of them, and their interaction with the decentralization of the party system.

3. Data and Methods

There are 45 permanent committees in the Argentine Chamber of Deputies, each integrated by between 15 and 45 representatives. Usually, MCs belong to more than one committee.

This integration follows individual background and, more relevantly, either legislative seniority or political and partisan leadership profile. As commonly seen in most presidential systems, committees are composed in the replication of the overall partisan seat distribution in the two-year term house. In the country, the government party controls the majority or plurality in the house. For this reason, it controls a majority or plurality of seats in almost all committees. Chairpersonships are allocated to blocs also in proportion to their share of Chamber seats.⁶ However, the most important committees as Appropriations, General Law, Constitutional Affairs, or Criminal Law are controlled by the majority or plurality party, i.e., the president's party. Chairpersons may facilitate the discharge of legislation or let the bill 'die' at the committee stage. Calvo (2014) has found that, in Argentina, almost 89 percent of bills in the Chamber are not discussed in committee, or although discussed, MCs do not get to produce a report. The fact of accepting to discuss the bill in committee is a sign of a good disposition to inter-party negotiation.

When a bill is initiated, either by the president, any deputy, or senator, it is assigned to one or more committees according to its subject matter by a nonpartisan agency, the Secretary of Legislative Affairs. As a result of the debate in committee meetings, a joint report may be prepared to report the bill to the floor. Such report contains a record of all the individual positions of every MC present at the signing. It is possible to identify individual positions, i.e., which legislators agree or disagree with the project, whether totally or partially. Each individual may support the bill (i.e. recommend that the floor enacts it as the committee reports it, which may include amendments to the original version); support it with dissidences (total, which would indicate agreement to discuss the bill on the floor, though not to vote for it; or partial, which would indicate agreement to discuss the bill on the floor and vote for it after new amendments are introduced); reject it (i.e. recommend that the floor votes against it, or votes for a different version of the bill, as submitted in a minority report).

The dependent variable, *ties in committee*, is the number of times two MCs share the same position on executive initiatives in committee by a two-year congress. I focus exclusively on the executive ordinary legislative procedure (statutes) for three reasons. First, those are bills with the highest potential for

⁶Legislative blocs are the units of groups of MCs in the Argentine Congress. A bloc may be equivalent to a legislative party or legislators from the same party may belong to different blocs.

conflict. They are submitted by the executive, reported by committees to the floor of the House (i.e., not scheduled through discharge petitions, because they do not record legislators' positions in committee), and politically relevant (i.e., economic, institutional, penal, social, tax, civil rights, and regulatory bills). I do not consider those bills that are administrative in nature, such as the ordinary congressional authorization for the president to travel abroad, or for military exercises with foreign troops, international agreements, and so forth.⁷ Since these administrative bills are supported by government and opposition parties because they are non-controversial formalities, including all presidential initiatives with committee reports would overestimate strong ties. Second, due to the *de facto* division of labor between the president and legislators, the former initiates bills on national issues more frequently than MCs, who focus more on regional/provincial issues (Bonvecchi and Mustapic, 2011). Third, the president has an advantage on the discharge ratio over the legislators. According to Calvo and Sagarzazu's data (2014), almost half of all executive bills in the Argentine Congress (from 1983 to 2007) are discharged. This number is markedly high compared to the 14 percent authored by MCs. Based on these arguments, the bills to which legislators react to are comparable.

Due to the count-dependent variable, my empirical strategy for modeling *ties in committee* is to run a generalized linear model with a binomial distribution and a logit link function. In the estimations, I consider trials the number of the same committee reports on executive bills two MCs sign by congress. It is the number of opportunities that two deputies encounter to share positions. This upper bound depends on the fact that two legislators integrate the committees that discuss and report any president's bill. For obvious reasons, I do not include alignments with zero opportunities to share positions, i.e., no committee report signed by both representatives. All the models include fixed effects (dummies) by Congress. My database includes 336 executive bills and 15,537 observations (dyads in every congress where both MCs coincide in at least one committee report and have a minimum of one connection), in 12 two-year congresses from 1993 to 2017. The period under analysis includes six administrations from three different parties and significant variation in the denationalization of the party system and the fragmentation in the plenary.

The main explanatory variables are the type of alignment and decentralization of the party system, the latter measured by two indicators, *denationalization* of the party system and *fragmentation* in the plenary. *Type of alignment* may be *federal*, *provincial*, or *misalignment* (as presented in Table 1). For *denationalization* of the electoral party system, I use Moenius and Kasuya Weighted Inflation Score (Moenius and Kasuya, 2004). It is based on Cox's inflation indicator (1999), which results from the effective number of parties at the national level less the average effective number of parties at the district level, divided by the first measure. This is intended to capture the degree to which the national-level party system is "inflated" compared to the average size of subnational party systems. Moenius and Kasuya revisit this concept by also measuring

the contribution that each subnational unit makes to that inflation. Their indicator is similar to Cox's but changing the denominator to the average effective number of parties at the district level. Besides, to avoid the fact that small districts get over-represented in their contribution to the average effective number of parties at the district level, the authors weight the average based on the vote share of each district concerning the national-level aggregate number of votes. The indicator is suitable for Argentina, whose district magnitude ranges from two to thirty-five (with a median of three seats). Moenius and Kasuya Weighted Inflation Score has a minimum value of zero, i.e., perfect nationalization, to infinite. Larger values mean a more denationalized party system. Data were obtained from the Constituency-Level Elections Archive-CLEA (Kollman et al., 2018). To check for robustness, in Table D in the supplementary materials I show other statistical models with alternative indicators for denationalization using Cox's (1999) inflation, Kasuya and Moenius's (2008) Inflation and Dispersion Score, Jones and Mainwaring's (2003) Party System Nationalization Score, and Bochsler's (2010) Weighted Standardized Party System Nationalization.⁸ *Fragmentation* in the plenary is measured by the classic Laakso and Taagepera (1979) indicator to estimate the effective number of legislative blocs.

Some controls are added based on homophily reasons. Many scholars find that sharing party, district, and career paths tend to make legislators closer to each other (Alemán, 2009; Alemán et al., 2009; Alemán and Calvo, 2012; Crisp et al., 2004; High-ton and Rocca, 2005; Kessler and Krehbiel, 1996; Koger, 2003; Kirkland, 2011). Representatives are likely to cooperate with members of their strong networks (Micozzi, 2014). Regarding party adscription, I include a variable indicating whether both MCs in the alignment (dyad) belong to the *same bloc*. Another variable records whether the deputies in the dyad represent the *same district*. I expect that legislators who share bloc and district have stronger ties in committee than the rest of the dyads of representatives, i.e., different blocs and districts.

The variable on gender takes the value of 1 when both MCs in the dyad are *women*, and 0 otherwise. Barnes (2016) finds that a larger proportion of collaborators in co-sponsorship are women. However, Wojcik and Mullenax (2017) signal that as political and economic resources largely remain in the hands of male deputies, women need to form expansive networks, i.e., with diversity, to balance their marginalized status. This marginalization becomes more evident in committees where there are fewer women in general (due to the smaller presence of women in legislature compared to men), and even fewer in important committees (Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson, 2005, 2016; Krook and O'Brien, 2012), the ones that receive president's bills. I expect that women have a greater number of ties in committees than other genders, i.e., between men or intergender.

Finally, a variable of seniority. Experienced legislators would have typically gained a reputation (Campbell, 1982), as well as access to and communication with fellow members. They are more likely to have more influence over their colleagues. They have expertise in legislative work and logrolling, together with knowledge of the ambiguity of chamber rules.

⁷ Following Zelaznik (2014), non-relevant bills include: (a) appointment of consuls, acceptance of decorations, (b) authorizations for the President to leave the country, (c) authorization for entry and exit of Argentine and foreign troops, (d) donations of real estate, (e) changes of official time, (f) introduction of federal or bank holidays, (g) location of monuments, postmortem military promotions, and (h) international agreements. I also exclude international agreements, which are considered under closed rule, because MCs cannot amend them.

⁸ Several scholars arrive at similar results when studying Argentina using different indicators to measure the level of denationalization. Whereas Leiras (2010) uses Moenius and Kasuya's, Borges, Albala, and Burnik (2017) prefer Bochsler's. See Morgenstern, Swindle, and Castagnola (2009) for a detailed revision of indicators.

Longer terms are associated with increased legislative effort (Dal Bó and Rossi, 2011). Whereas rookies would typically need to build reputation and networks, they need to generate more connections. For this reason, I expect that senior ties in committees are fewer than rookies' and those of a senior deputy with a rookie. The legislative reelection rate in Argentina is low: 77 percent of deputies elected between 1983 and 2017 (including alternate representatives) served only one term in office (my own data). In my sample, 66.3 per cent of deputies are newbies. As indicator of *seniority*, I use a dummy for registering the situation when both representatives in the dyad were reelected at least once.

4. Results

Table 2 presents the results of the statistical models. The first model is the most parsimonious while the second and third include the indicators of decentralization, denationalization of the electoral party system, and fragmentation, respectively, and the interaction term with the type of alignment.

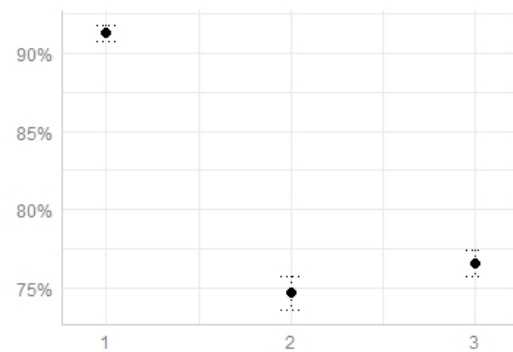
Table 2. Explaining the strength of ties in committee in Argentine House (1993-2017).

	Ties in committee		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>Provincial alignment</i>	-1.262*** (0.043)	-2.007*** (0.072)	-4.361*** (0.207)
<i>Misalignment</i>	-1.160*** (0.039)	-1.826*** (0.067)	-3.851*** (0.194)
<i>Denationalization:Provincial alignment</i>		0.859*** (0.064)	
<i>Denationalization:Misalignment</i>		0.794*** (0.062)	
<i>Fragmentation:Provincial alignment</i>			0.978*** (0.063)
<i>Fragmentation:Misalignment</i>			0.868*** (0.060)
<i>Same bloc</i>	1.266*** (0.033)	1.277*** (0.033)	1.249*** (0.034)
<i>Women</i>	0.382*** (0.070)	0.455*** (0.070)	0.442*** (0.070)
<i>Seniority</i>	-0.114*** (0.027)	-0.126*** (0.027)	-0.137*** (0.027)
<i>Same district</i>	0.112** (0.044)	0.124*** (0.044)	0.115*** (0.044)
<i>Denationalization</i>		0.272** (0.122)	
<i>Fragmentation</i>			-1.804*** (0.119)
Constant	2.074*** (0.058)	1.676*** (0.116)	7.420*** (0.368)
Observations	15,537	15,537	15,537

Notes. The baseline of *type of alignment* is federal. Dummies by Congress were calculated but omitted from the table. Descriptive statistics are available in Table A on supplementary materials. Standard errors are reported in parentheses, with confidence levels as follows: *p < .1; **p < .05; ***p < .01.

Consistently with H1, *provincial alignments* and *misalignment* have fewer ties in committees than *federal alignments* (baseline), the former likelihood of ties in committees decreases in all the models, the coefficients are negative and statistically significant. The predicted probability of *ties in committees* for the median *federal alignments* is between 90.89 percent (model 2) and 91.31 percent (model 3). This probability decreases for the median *misalignment* until reaching between 76.59 percent (model 1) and 76.65 percent (model 3). In turn, for

Fig. 1. Marginal effects of the type of alignment on the predicted probabilities of ties in committees (95 percent confidence).

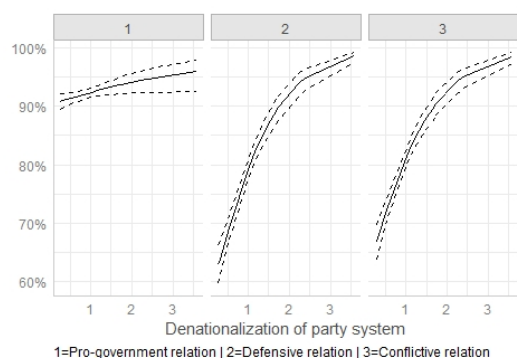


Note: on x-axis (1) Federal alignment, (2) Provincial alignment, and (3) Misalignment. Source: Prepared by the author.

provincial alignment the ties in committees are even fewer, their predicted probabilities are between 73.54 percent (model 3) and 74.7 percent (models 1 and 2). Figure 1 shows the marginal effects of the *type of alignment* on the probability of ties in committees based on model 1. It is noticeable that MCs in federal alignments are more likely to connect. These are responsive to principals who are politically aligned across levels of governments, i.e., president and governor. Or it might be the case that the local principal finds convenient to support the president to oppose the State governor. The federal coalition is able to produce less complex legislation that includes a larger set of MCs. These legislators collaborate to facilitate that the executive bills will be discharged from committee. Federal alignments have more ties in committees than provincial alignments and misaligned MCs.

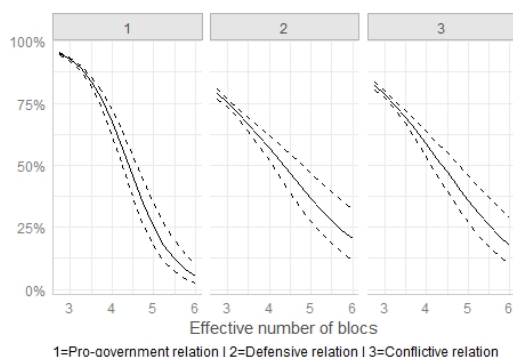
Notwithstanding, the direction of the type of alignment effect on the likelihood of ties in committees seems to change in increasingly decentralized party systems. When the party system is more decentralized, the likelihood of ties in committees for federal alignment decreases in comparison to provincial alignments and misaligned MCs. Evidence supports H2 with both indicators, *denationalization* of electoral party system (model 2) and *fragmentation* in the plenary (model 3). Figure 2, based on model 2, shows the interaction term between the *type of alignment* and *denationalization*. It is displayed there that *provincial alignment* and *misalignment* increase the probability of *ties in committee* more sharply compared to the baseline, i.e., *federal alignment*. In the three cases, the slope of *denationalization* is significantly different from zero (slope analysis available in Table B in the supplementary material). Moving from the lowest (0.276) to the largest value (3.585) of the Moenius and Kasuya Weighted Inflation Score (*denationalization*), there is an increase of 5.41 percent in the probability of *federal alignment* ties in committees, while for *provincial alignment* this likelihood is 36.21 percent, and for *misaligned MCs* it is 32.39 percent. Although the denationalization of the electoral party system seems to impact positively on the strength of ties in committees for all alignments, it is noticeable that the effect is stronger for provincial alignments and misalignment. Their likelihood of ties increases markedly. As denationalization brings the influence of multiple veto points in the party system, coordination problems emerge for the

Fig. 2. Predicted probabilities of ties in committees according to denationalization, by the type of alignment (95 percent confidence).



Source: Prepared by the author based on model 2.

Fig. 3. Predicted probabilities of ties in committees according to the plenary fragmentation, by type of alignment (95 percent confidence).



Source: Prepared by the author based on model 3.

governing party in moving the president's agenda in committees. Under this circumstance, individual behavior is more easily co-opted. Then, ties between legislators with different interests and principals not aligned vertically are more likely. The probability of ties augment for provincial alignments and misalignment in comparison to federal alignments.

A similar effect causes the consideration of the *fragmentation* in the plenary in interaction with the *type of alignment*. Model 3 in Table 2 presents positive and statistically significant coefficients for the interaction terms between *provincial alignments* and *misalignment*, and the *fragmentation*, compared to *federal alignments* (baseline). The slope of fragmentation is significantly different from zero for the three types of alignments (slope analysis available in Table C in the supplementary material). Figure 3 shows the predicted probabilities of ties in committees for the different types of alignments according to the plenary fragmentation measured by the effective number of blocs.

Federal alignments are 94.4 percent more likely to decrease their *ties in committees* from the least fragmented plenary with 2.73 effective blocs to the most fragmented with 6 effective blocs. For *provincial alignments*, this likelihood represents 74.26 percent, and for *misalignment* 78.18 percent. An increasing *fragmentation* in the plenary causes a decrease in

the probability of ties in committees for the three types of alignments. However, this decline is more prominent for *federal alignments*. Because of facing multiple veto points –i.e., many leaders from opposition whose support is needed to discharge legislation from committee– transaction costs augments. Statutes need to be more complex and agreed by a greater subset of MCs, the executive or their party leader are forced to negotiate more and spend more resources to succeed in committee. In this sense, as expected in H2, provincial alignments and misaligned MCs are more likely to connect than federal alignment when the system is more decentralized.

Bloc, district, and career path controls have the expected effects on the dependent variable. When both MCs in the alignment belong to the *same bloc*, the likelihood of strong ties in committees increases between 19.96 (model 3) and 23.47 percent (model 1). And in the case of representing the *same district*, despite increasing the probability of ties also, the magnitude is minuscule in comparison with sharing the bloc, between 1.82 (model 1) and 2.02 percent (model 2). *Seniority* also shows the supposed effect, coefficients in the models are negative and statistically significant. When both legislators in the alignment have been reelected at least once, they are between 1.93 (model 1) and 2.35 percent (model 3) of decreasing their ties in committees. It is worth mentioning that in this opportunity the magnitude of the impact is minor, as well as with district sharing.

Contrary to my expectation, *women's* collaboration is stronger at the committee level than men's and woman-man's as well. The three specifications show that ties are between 5.52 (model 1) and 6.27 percent (model 3) more likely when the alignment is formed by two women. This evidence contributes to supporting gender argument as an explanation for ties in co-sponsorship (Barnes 2016, for example).

5. Conclusions

This article has explored the determinants of the strength of ties in committees in federal multiparty presidential systems focusing on the case of the Argentine Chamber of Deputies. This country offers an incredible opportunity to study individual behavior in committee as it is possible to identify MCs' positions in the committee report where position-taking and (lack of) cohesion are costly. Behavior and ties in committee differ greatly from co-sponsorship, one of the most common legislative instances to study networks and individual alignments. While co-sponsoring is a voluntary, unlimited and low-cost action to demonstrate position-taking to different audiences, in committee, legislators react to others' initiatives. Their manifestations of preferences are not voluntary and are the product of party interactions and transaction costs.

Homophily argument is common to explain legislative ties in co-sponsorship. Despite considering this claim as controls with the party, district, gender, and seniority variables, I argue that the likelihood of connecting depends on the fact that deputies are responsive to different principals. In presidential federal multiparty countries as Argentina, Brazil, or Mexico, MCs position themselves in government-opposition terms in the multilevel scenario, and this defines the type of alignment between two legislators: federal, provincial, and misalignment. Federal alignments are integrated by two representatives whose party leaders are politically aligned across levels of government. Both deputies push the presidential legislative agenda

to achieve the discharge of legislation, increasing the likelihood of ties in committees in comparison to alignments and misalignment. In a provincial alignment, deputies generally connect to oppose the executive proposals. Provincial alignments have fewer ties in committees than federal as opposition frequently collaborates with the ruling party in committee to bring president bills to the plenary. Misalignment is the collaboration between deputies with divergent interests or principals. Consequently, it is infrequent.

My argument is framed by both the committees' distributional theory and the competing principals' theory. However, as they were formulated based on a two-party system with single-member districts and decentralized candidate selection, I propose an alternative interpretation for multiparty and multimember districts presidential federal countries. Presidents allocate resources to aligned governors with the same policy preferences. And representatives tend to distribute particularistic benefits to their districts, not to generate an electoral connection with their constituents but with governors, who have nomination power and control their political careers. Under these circumstances, Presidents may initiate less complex bills that will be supported by a large subset of principals. Contrary, provincial coalitions and misaligned legislators need to negotiate details agreed by a smaller group decreasing their collaboration in committee.

Additionally, I find that the direction of the effect changes in decentralized party systems. Using two different indicators for testing the decentralization argument, I show that when the electoral party system is more denationalized, and the chamber plenary is more fragmented, the likelihood of ties in committees increases for provincial alignments and misaligned MCs compared to federal alignments. More partisan veto points mean more diverse interest playing in negotiations and decision-making.

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