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Vote Switching in Multiparty Presidential Systems: Evidence from the Argentine Chamber of Deputies

Alejandro Bonvecchi (*)
abonvecchi@utdt.edu

Paula Clerici (*)
paula.clerici@mail.utdt.edu

(*) Universidad Torcuato Di Tella (UTDT)/Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET)

ABSTRACT Why do legislators switch their votes between the committee and floor stages in multiparty presidential systems? The literature on the United States Congress has argued that switches are conditional on cross-cutting pressures by competing principals (i.e. party leaders and interest groups), partisanship, electoral competitiveness, ideology, seniority, and informational updates. This paper argues that unlike in the US two-party system, in multiparty systems electoral competitiveness increases the likelihood of switching. Additionally, the practice of switching is more likely for legislators whose competing principals are leaders with conflicting electoral interests. We test these hypotheses analyzing vote switches between committee reports and roll-call votes in the Argentine Chamber of Deputies. Our results indicate that legislative vote switching indeed behaves differently in multiparty than in a two-party presidential system.

Why do legislators switch their vote between the committee and floor stages of lawmaking? The literature on the United States Congress has argued that switches are conditional on cross-cutting pressures by competing principals (i.e. party leaders and interest groups), partisanship, electoral competitiveness, ideology, seniority, and informational updates. Legislators may be cross-pressured by party leaders who control selective incentives in Congress – such as committee appointments, resources, and campaign funds – and interest groups who may mobilize against them and de-fund their future campaigns. Majority party legislators may additionally experience pressure from the Executive branch – i.e. from Presidents seeking to consolidate their agenda. Electorally vulnerable legislators may be less likely to switch their vote than those competing in more secure districts. Ideologically extreme legislators may be less likely to switch than moderates, whereas senior legislators may be more likely to do so than rookies. And legislators in general would be more likely to switch upon informational updates on bills – such as committee reports, hearings, and other cues that may increase issue salience.

To what extent may these arguments obtain in multiparty settings? While claims about informational, ideological, and seniority effects may arguably be construed as general, those about competing principals, partisanship, and electoral competitiveness may be affected by idiosyncrasies. The competing principals in a two-party system with decentralized candidate selection procedures may indeed be the Congressional party leaders who control parliamentary resources and the constituent interest groups who finance electoral campaigns; whereas in multiparty systems with more centralized candidate selection methods they may also include local party leaders and the President. Partisanship in a two-party system may be less conducive to switching than in multiparty systems, where plurality congresses may be the rule, and thus cross-party coalitions may be consistently necessary to pass legislation. Electoral

competitiveness in two-party systems with single-member districts may also be less conducive to switching than in multiparty systems with varying district magnitudes, where it may serve to (re)capture marginal seats. Presidential systems may very well undermine party discipline compared to parliamentary systems (Carey 2007), but different types of presidential system may likely do it differently.

This paper probes the explanations of vote switching developed for the United States House of Representatives by focusing on a most-different case of legislature in a federal presidential democracy: the Argentine Chamber of Deputies. This case is arguably representative of its kind. Like many other countries in Latin America, Argentina is a multiparty presidential system. Its mean effective number of legislative groups (ENP) (Laakso and Taagepera 1979) of 4 between 1993 and 2017 (authors' data) is similar to those of Bolivia (3.4), Mexico (3.6), and Colombia (4.8).[1] And, as Hix and Noury (2016) show for Brazil, Chile, Mexico, and Peru, in Argentina the main driver of voting behavior in Congress is also the government-opposition dynamic (Alemán et al. 2009, 2018, Jones and Hwang 2005), rooted in informal legislative coalitions where minor parties pivot along the government-opposition line under plurality congresses. While the US House is the product of a two-party system with single-member districts and decentralized candidate selection, and typically operates under majority or divided government, the Argentine House is the outcome of a multiparty system with multi-member districts of varying magnitude and relatively more centralized candidate selection, and typically operates under plurality, rather than majority or divided government. We therefore expect the informational, ideological, and seniority factors to influence vote switching the same way as in

[1] A legislative bloc or group may be equivalent to a legislative party, or legislators from the same party may belong to different blocs. Adrián Albala, Paula Clerici, and Alejandro Olivares provided data for Bolivia, Colombia, and Mexico.

the US, and the electoral and partisan variables to behave differently. In Argentina's multiparty system, parties have different degrees of nationalization, their candidates are mostly selected by subnational party leaders (governors or factional leaders) who may vary in their alignment with the President's party, display different preferences on legislative initiatives, and face diverse electoral competition environments. We therefore argue that vote switching is more likely for legislators whose competing principals are leaders with conflicting electoral interests – i.e. are not simultaneously aligned with the President and the provincial governor. We also expect more switching from legislators in districts with a higher number of parties.

Our analysis is focused on those bills with the highest potential for conflict amongst competing principals: those submitted by the Executive, reported by committees to the floor of the House, that were politically relevant, i.e. economic, institutional, penal, social, tax, civil rights, and regulatory bills.[2] Our database includes 336 executive bills, 575 deputies, and 7379 observations, which correspond to legislators' positions on each bill in committee reports and roll-call votes, 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 fragmentation and nationalization of the party system. Our findings indicate that switching is more likely for legislators from more electorally competitive districts, and for those whose principals are not politically aligned across levels of government.

We proceed as follows. The first section reviews the literature on vote switching in the United States and argues for potential differences in legislator behavior in multiparty systems. The second section proposes the research design. The third section presents and discusses the results of our analyses. The final section concludes.

[2] See the Methods section below for details.

Explaining Vote Switching

The practice of switching votes between committee and floor has hitherto been explained as a consequence of informational, ideological, organizational, electoral, and partisan variables. The arguments about information, ideology, and organization have been construed as general claims whose validity may be sustained irrespective of regime types. The informational argument claims that legislators may switch their votes prompted by new information about bills that may emerge in the course of the lawmaking process (Espino and Canon 2009; Hamm 1982; Harden and Kirkland 2018; Krehbiel 1995; Odom et al. 2018). Debates among bill sponsors and critics in committee may induce them to vote one way, but either subsequent discussion of the bill – i.e. with interest groups or constituents – or amendments on the floor may generate new information that cause them to update their beliefs, alter their preferences, and vote differently in floor roll-calls.[3] Since lawmaking procedures are typically sequential, and most legislatures conduct floor debates under open rule, it would be likely for informational effects to induce switching regardless of regime and electoral system types – except for bills brought to the floor via discharge petitions.

The ideological argument claims that ideologically extreme legislators are less likely to switch their vote than ideological moderates because the former stand more to lose with their parties and constituents than the latter (Espino and Canon 2009; Harden and Kirkland 2018; Krehbiel 1995; Seo 2010). While switching by moderates may be perceived as accommodation of contrasting viewpoints, and thus help their reelection chances by propping up their reputation

[3] This is an argument about informational effects that prompt updates in beliefs and positions, not – as in the informational theory of legislative organization (Krehbiel 1995) – about the availability of expert information for legislators to consider within and/or beyond committees. The point is not, as in informational theory, that committee debates or reports may generate *expert* information which may lead to switching, but rather that they may generate information of any kind that may lead to updates in beliefs and positions, which may result in switching.

as centrists, switching by extremists would more likely be perceived as betrayal, and thus hurt their reelection prospects by construing them as flip-floppers. Since, to some extent or other, every legislature contains both ideological extremists and moderates, it would be likely for ideology to affect vote switching the aforementioned way irrespective of other political system traits.

The organizational argument claims that senior legislators are more likely to switch their vote than rookies (Espino and Canon 2009; Hamm 1982; Harden and Kirkland 2018; Seo 2010). The former would have typically gained reputation with their party leaders and constituents, as well as access to and communication with fellow members, that would provide them leeway to switch their vote without fearing damage to their records or relations. Whereas rookies would typically need to build reputation and networks, for which switching would provide equivocal signals. Since most legislatures, unless reelection is banned, are typically made up of overlapping generations of members, seniority would be likely to affect vote switching regardless of other characteristics of the political system.

In contrast, the electoral and partisan explanations hitherto proposed to account for vote switching have arguably been developed in idiosyncratic terms, as shaped by the specificities of the United States Congress. Electoral competitiveness has been argued to negatively affect switching by raising the stakes of inconsistent voting: the smaller the electoral margin, the higher the likelihood that inconsistent voting records may hurt reelection prospects, and thus the lower the probability of switching (Espino and Canon 2009; Harden and Kirkland 2018; Odom et al. 2018). However, while this logic may operate in single-member district electoral systems and two-party systems, in which electoral contests are typically zero-sum, it need not obtain in multi-member district and multiparty systems, in which parties, particularly as district magnitude

increases, face competition from across the political spectrum, and may therefore seek to capture marginal seats by accommodating the composition of their candidate lists and the appeal of their discourse to suit specific constituencies and viewpoints.

Parties have been argued to affect vote switching by way of cross-pressures from competing principals and bandwagon effects. Legislators would be pressured into switching their votes either by party leaders who control resources in Congress – such as appointments, budgets, and campaign funds – or by interest groups in their constituencies who decide campaign contributions and may damage reputations via increasing the salience of inconsistent voting records (Burden and Frisky 2004; Espino and Canon 2009; Harden and Kirkland 2018; Seo 2010). In addition, majority party legislators may be pressured by the President into switching their votes to build coalitions in support of Executive-sponsored legislation (Espino and Canon 2009; Harden and Kirkland 2018).[4] However, this definition of competing principals appears to be tailored to a federal, two-party system in which candidates are selected in local primaries, and the incentives for majority party legislators seem to be consistent only with a two-party presidential system in which the Executive operates under unified or divided government. Legislators in multiparty systems with more centralized candidate selection procedures may face different competing principals than in two-party systems; and would face different incentives to bandwagon with the President if the latter has to work under plurality congresses.

Our general theoretical argument is therefore that electoral and partisan explanations of vote switching must take into account differences in electoral and party system types within the presidential regime.

[4] Harden and Kirkland (2018) also test the opposite claim, exploiting the variation in electoral competition environments across state-level party systems in the US. Our argument, as explicated below, hinges on the different competition dynamics of multiparty systems vis-a-vis two-party systems.

The literature on electoral systems (Cox 1990; Gallego and Schofield 2013) argues that competition tends to be centrifugal under proportional representation and centripetal under majoritarian systems. This would particularly be the case under PR systems with varying district magnitudes, for which magnitude increases have been found to elicit a higher number of parties (Amorim Neto and Cox 1997; Singer and Gershman 2018).[5] As district magnitudes increase, large parties compete for the center and smaller parties for the extremes (Calvo and Hellwig 2011), and as competition yields fragmentation, large parties are stimulated to accommodate less moderate positions – either by incorporating less moderate candidates or adopting their discourse – in order to (re)capture seats from smaller, more extreme parties across the political spectrum. This dynamics should affect vote switching by increasing its likelihood as the effective number of parties grows – so legislators may use their vote switches to signal accommodation of diverse positions to voters who may be otherwise inclined to support competitor parties across the spectrum. In contrast, vote switching should decrease with the effective number of parties – as legislators, facing less competitors, would be wary of switching in case voters punish their inconsistency by abstaining or supporting their major competitor.[6]

The literature on competing principals across political regime types (Carey 2007) not only argues that presidential regimes tend to generate more competing principals than parliamentary systems, but also suggests, by underscoring the tendencies to voting disunity in

[5] Lucardi (2019) shows the same effect for Argentina: the effective number of parties, and the electoral support for smaller parties, increase in provinces with higher district magnitude.
[6] One could still argue that, all else equal, vote switching should be easier in safe districts. But the point about multiparty systems is that as district magnitudes and the effective number of parties increase, parties face more competition from across the spectrum for at least some seats, and citizens face more monitoring costs – in the form of more representatives, with more votes to watch. Under these conditions, switching is both encouraged for electoral reasons, and safer due to monitoring costs. Of course, some of these conditions may not hold under certain types of open-list PR or mixed electoral systems. We thank one of the Reviewers for raising this point.

federal systems and in countries where legislators are selected under rules that stimulate intraparty competition, that the number of competing principals would be higher in federal than unitary systems, and in countries that select their legislative candidates through open primaries than in those where party leaders choose them. The likelihood of vote switching should thus be higher in political systems that combine these features than in those that lack one or the other.

Moreover, the number of competing principals should be even higher in federal presidential multiparty systems than in two-party federal presidential systems, since the former typically display incongruent patterns of electoral competition across levels of government (Gibson and Suárez-Cao 2010). As parties have different degrees of nationalization of their vote, and are thus interested in legislative agendas with different scopes, some legislators may face two competing principals – national and subnational party leaders – while other may face three – national, subnational and factional leaders – which, in turn, may (not) have congruent electoral interests. These varying degrees of party nationalization and congruence in electoral competition should also affect vote switches by confronting legislators not merely with competing but with *conflicting* principals – i.e. principals that may cross-pressure them in conflicting directions because they have conflicting party alignments and electoral interests.

We therefore expect competing principals in multiparty presidential systems to affect vote switching not only by their higher number but also by the nature of their influence. The higher number of principals would increase the likelihood of switching by increasing the number of pressure sources. Principals with *conflicting* interests would increase the likelihood of switching, compared to merely competing principals, by pressuring legislators not only – as the latter may – with threats of withdrawing campaign funds, human resources or congressional

appointments, but also with outright electoral competition, by fielding other factional candidates or supporting another party's lists.

The literature on legislative cartels (Calvo 2014; Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005) argues that while in majoritarian political systems under unified government majority parties dominate the legislative agenda and under divided government gridlock ensues, in proportional representation political systems plurality congresses may be the typical outcome – which would require cross-party cooperation to build legislative coalitions. These plurality cartels, as Calvo (2014) calls them, would positively affect the likelihood of vote switching by encouraging cross-party amendment activity on the floor.

We test these claims about vote switching in multiparty systems by focusing on a most-different case of legislature from the United States House of Representatives in a federal presidential system: the Argentine Chamber of Deputies. While the former is elected in single-member districts under first-past-the-post system, the latter is elected in multi-member districts under proportional representation with D'Hont formula. While the candidates for the former are selected in open primaries, those for the latter are typically selected by party leaders in closed lists where not only provincial governors but also the President, national, and factional party leaders may place candidates. While the former typically operates via majority party cartels or falls into gridlock, the latter typically operates by plurality cartels. While the former typically rallies with the President or the opposition party majority, the latter typically amends Executive bills and kills about 50 per cent of them. Consequently, we expect Argentine legislators to switch their votes from committee to floor stage when they face more competitive electoral districts, and/or belong to parties whose leaders are not simultaneously aligned with the President and the

provincial governor. The next section specifies the hypotheses, methodology, and data used to probe these arguments.

Research Design

Inspired by the literature on vote switching in the United States and the institutional differences between the US presidential system and the multiparty presidential regime in Argentina, we test two hypotheses. First, following the electoral explanation, as amended above for multiparty presidential systems, we expect the probability of switching to increase as electoral competitiveness in legislators' districts increases. Consequently,

H1: Legislators from more electorally competitive districts are more likely to switch their votes.

Second, following the competing principals explanation, as amended for a federal multiparty presidential system with a closed-list proportional representation electoral system and incongruent competition patterns across levels of government, we expect the probability of switching to increase for legislators who belong to parties whose leaders are not simultaneously aligned with the President and the provincial governor. Consequently,

H2: Legislators who belong to parties whose leaders are not politically aligned across levels of government are more likely to switch their votes.

Consistent with our claim that informational, ideological, and organizational factors should operate the same way in two-party systems and multiparty presidential systems, we employ as controls the informational, ideological, and organizational explanations of vote switching developed for the US Congress.

Partially following Espino and Canon (2009), we analyze our dependent variable, *switching*, in four ways:

(i) *Total switching*: any form of switching position from committee to roll-call vote.

(ii) *Favorable switching*: switching from rejection or amendment in committee to voting yea on the floor.

(iii) *Unfavorable switching*: switching from support or amendment in committee to vote nay on the floor.

(iv) *Demobilizing*: switching from any position in committee to abstention or absence on the floor.

The rationale for these distinctions stems from the rules of legislative procedure in the Argentine Chamber. After a bill is submitted, either by the President, or any deputy or senator, it is assigned to one or more committees, according to its subject matter, by the Secretary of Legislative Affairs. If, after meetings and/or hearings with interest groups, a majority emerges within committees to report the bill to the floor, such report may be prepared that contains a record of all the individual positions of all legislators present at the signing. 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); or absent themselves from the report's signing (i.e. by not participating in committee meetings at the time, or by not signing).

The reported bill is held in reserve for seven days, during which legislators from other committees may propose amendments, and only subsequently is ready for debate on the floor. However, it will only be scheduled for that purpose if the Parliamentary Labor Committee,

which consists of all the parliamentary party leaders, so agrees, or if a majority is formed on the floor to include it in a given session's agenda (Calvo 2014). Once the bill is debated on the floor, legislators in the roll-call may support it (voting yea), reject it (voting nay), abstain (voting neither yea nor nay) or absent themselves from the plenary session.

Legislators may therefore switch their vote to favor, reject, or demobilize. Theoretically, as Espino and Canon (2009) argue, they may also switch to mobilize – i.e. from abstention or absence to support or rejection – but unfortunately there is not enough information available on abstentions and absences in committees in the Argentine Chamber to measure this form of switching.

The strategy for modeling switching is to run a multilevel logit regression that estimates the probability for a legislator to switch their vote between committee report and roll-call votes. The choice of a multilevel model is appropriate due to the hierarchical nature of the data: legislators nested in (two-year-period) congresses. This approach allows us to simultaneously estimate bill- and legislator-specific effects while including random effects of unobserved variables at the congress level.

Our independent variables are electoral competitiveness and competing principals. As indicator of electoral competitiveness, since the Argentine electoral system is based upon multi-member districts with a five-member minimum whose magnitude increases according to the number of inhabitants in each province, we employ the effective number of electoral parties (*ENP*) using the log of the classic Laakso and Taagepera (1979) indicator to measure district competitiveness (electoral results are available at the Dirección Nacional Electoral website).

To measure the competing principals variable we employ three indicators. The first, *type of legislator*, describes deputies according to their relation to their principals: (a) the political (non)alignment between the governor of the province that each legislator represents and the President (as established by Cherny et al. 2015 and Ingelmo 2017)[7], and (b) the (non)shared party affiliation between legislator and governor (as determined by Clerici 2020). Legislators may be beholden to the President, the provincial governors, or factional party leaders – all of whom, in turn, may (not) be politically aligned. Competition amongst these principals to influence legislative behavior has been noted by many studies in the last decade, which have tried to find evidence of gubernatorial impact on legislative voting – albeit with partial, if not inconclusive results (Bonvecchi et al. 2018; Cheibub et al. 2009; Gervasoni and Nazareno 2017; Jones and Hwang 2005; Rosas and Langston 2011). Still, there is sufficient evidence to assume that governors are strong competitors for influence over legislators, for three main reasons. First, they are typically the local party leaders, which in a closed PR system such as Argentina's grants them significant power over candidate selection for both national and subnational offices (Jones et al. 2002). Second, they typically enjoy electoral control over their districts, based upon the possibility of reelection – indefinite in some provinces – and electoral systems with majoritarian bias for the legislature, which grant them power to distribute positions in provincial executives and nominations for legislative seats (Calvo and Escolar 2005; Gibson 2010). Finally, they have discretionary control over the majority of the monies transferred by the federal government,

[7] Cherny et al. (2015) measure whether governors are aligned with the President around the electoral cycle by looking into electoral alignments or the explicit positioning of elected candidates. Given that alignment and non-alignment to the federal government is clear at election time, the variable indicates whether the governor is aligned with, or opposed to, the President. To establish alignment, the authors code statements from newspaper articles appeared in two main national newspapers, La Nación and Página12, as well as two provincial newspapers available online a month before and after the elections. Ingelmo (2017) replicates Cherny et al. (2015) for more recent years.

particularly the receipts from the shared-revenue system of Coparticipation, which constitutes the main financial source for provincial budgets and which governors can typically allocate without restrictions (Bonvecchi and Lodola 2011). In all, these resources enable governors to condition the political career options – and chances – of legislators, and thus give them clout over their voting decisions in Congress. Presidents, in turn, are also strong competing principals due to their national leadership, to the control it provides over significant intergovernmental transfers and the execution of the national administration's budget – which affects local interests through public works, tax credits, and social assistance programs – (ibid.), and to the influence it allows over candidate selection for congressional seats (Cherny et al. 2015) and appointments to executive offices. Factional party leaders can also compete for influence over legislators insofar as their factions are rooted enough in local politics to resist gubernatorial dominance (ibid.).

We expect legislators who belong to parties whose leaders are not politically aligned across levels of government to be more likely to switch their votes. These expectations are rooted in the assumption, based upon Gibson and Suárez-Cao (2010), that in federal multiparty systems opposition parties have conflicting interests with government parties due to electoral competition: national opposition parties seek to capture more seats in Congress or the presidency at the expense of national government parties; and provincial opposition parties seek to capture governorships and more seats in Congress and provincial legislatures at the expense of both national and provincial government parties. However, legislators may also be affiliated with factional leaders who support/oppose the President/governor, which would create conflict among principals if those factional leaders are not aligned simultaneously with the President and the governor, and the latter are aligned themselves. Table 1 shows the expected probability of total switching for each legislator type.

Table 1. Type of legislator and theoretical expectations on total switching

Governor	Legislator	Type of legislator	Expected impact on switching
Aligned with president	Same party as governor	National and provincial ally	(-)
	Different party as governor	Provincial ally	(+)
NOT aligned with president	Same party as governor	Provincial opposition	(+)
	Different party as governor	National and provincial opposition	(+)

Source: prepared by the authors.

Our second indicator of competing principals is the scope of the legislative agenda in the Chamber of Deputies, which can be described as sectoral or non-sectoral. *Sectoral* bills are those dealing with taxation and regulation, while non-sectoral bills are those that address general issues by imposing nationwide, not sector-specific, rules.[8] Following Carey (2007, 2009) and the application of his argument to Argentina by Bonvecchi and Mustapic (2011), we expect for competing principals to clash, and for legislators to increase their probability of switching, over bills initiated by the President that deal with sectoral issues. However, since different types of legislator, as defined above, would have different political incentives to switch their votes, we also analyze the interaction term between *sectoral* bills and the *type of legislator*. Additionally, we introduce an interaction term between *sectoral* bills and *time*, in order to test whether competing principals cross-pressure legislators over these bills in-between committee reports and roll-call votes.

[8] Tax bills are sectoral because their clauses typically affect the scope of their application – i.e. the composition of tax bases, rates, credits, etc. – even when their rules are initially formulated as general. Bonvecchi, Calvo and Stein (2020) show how Argentine legislators systematically amend tax bills to benefit local interests. Regulation bills are sectoral by definition: they pertain to specific economic activities.

Our control variables are information, ideology, seniority, plurality congresses, and party discipline. Following the informational explanation, we expect the probability of switching to increase when bills are amended on the floor, since floor debates and amendments may generate new information that may prompt switches by reframing debates on bills and/or accommodating legislator demands on the substance of initiatives. As indicators of information, we use the introduction of *amendments* during floor debates, and the passage of *time*, measured as the log of the number of days between the signature of committee reports and the roll-call votes – as extracted from committee reports and floor proceedings. Since information may also be acquired as time passes and bills are debated beyond Congress in the court of public opinion, we also expect time to increase the probability of switching. For this reason, we also run an interaction term between *amendments* and *time.*

Following the ideological explanation, we expect the probability of switching to decrease for legislators with extreme positions, and to increase for moderates. As indicator of ideology we employ the legislator's *ideological extremity*. We analyze the roll-call votes of the Argentine House between 1993 and 2017 (available at the Chamber of Deputies website) using DW-NOMINATE (McCarty et al 2006; Poole et al 2011; Poole and Rosenthal 1997). This procedure considers voting as a function of the distance between ideal points in a certain ordering dimension.[9] Since we are interested in how extreme the position of each deputy is irrespective of the main dimension that orders voting in the Chamber, we transform the positive and negative values into absolute ones. Thus, following Alemán et al. (2009) and Harden and Kirkland (2018), the indicator measures how far the legislator's ideal point is from the plenary median.

[9] Scholars who study the Argentine congress agree that the main dimension is government-opposition (Alemán et al 2018; Calvo 2007, 2014; Jones and Hwang 2005).

Following the organizational explanation, we expect the probability of switching to increase for senior legislators compared to rookies. Legislative reelection rate in Argentina is low: 77 per cent of deputies elected between 1983 and 2017 (including alternate representatives) served only one term in office (as established by Clerici 2020). In our sample, 66.3 per cent of deputies are newbies. As indicator of *seniority*, we use a dummy for registering those representatives that were reelected at least once by the moment of certain roll-call vote.

We also control for plurality congresses, so following the plurality cartel theory we expect the probability of switching to increase for legislators in general under plurality congresses, as they amend bills in order to build legislative coalitions. By the same logic, we expect this probability of switching to increase particularly for ideologically extreme legislators, since under plurality their votes may pivot to form winning coalitions. As indicator of *plurality congresses*, we use the share of seats of the larger party in the Chamber of Deputies, as reported by the Chamber's Parliamentary Information Directorate: whenever this share is smaller than 50 per cent, we classify the congress as plurality.

Finally, since Argentine deputies have been found to be highly disciplined (Jones 2002), we control for position of the bloc leader in roll-call votes, as registered by the Chamber's Parliamentary Information Directorate: whether the *leader votes yea* in the cases of *favorable switching*, *nay* in cases of *unfavorable switching*, and whether the *leader demobilizes* (by abstaining or absenting from the vote) when *demobilizing* is the dependent variable. We expect the likelihood of switching to increase in these different scenarios.

To test these arguments, we focused on those bills with the highest potential for conflict amongst competing principals: bills 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), that were politically relevant (i.e. economic, institutional, penal, social, tax, civil rights, and regulatory bills. We 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. [10] Since these administrative bills are supported by government and opposition parties because they are non-controversial formalities, including all presidential initiatives with committee report would underestimate switching. Our database includes 336 executive bills, 575 deputies, and 7379 observations, i.e. legislators' positions on each bill in committee report and roll-call votes, 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 fragmentation and nationalization of the party system.

Results

Table 2 presents a parsimonious initial set of estimates of the effects of our independent variables on individual legislators' probability of switching, as measured by the four different dependent variables defined above: *total switching*, *favorable switching*, *unfavorable switching*, and *demobilizing.*

[10] 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. We also exclude international agreements, which are considered under closed rule, because legislators cannot amend them, and we cannot fully test our models on them.

Table 2. Explaining Vote Switching in the Argentine House (1993-2017)

	Model 1 Total	**Model 2 Favorable**	**Model 3 Unfavorable**	**Model 4 Demobilizing**
Provincial ally	1.23***	1.60***	2.63***	1.24***
	(0.09)	(0.13)	(0.28)	(0.09)
Provincial opposition	0.91***	1.40***	2.56***	0.86***
	(0.12)	(0.16)	(0.31)	(0.12)
National and provincial opposition	0.81***	0.94***	2.21***	0.79***
	(0.11)	(0.16)	(0.32)	(0.11)
ENP	-0.08	0.65***	0.04	0.21
	(0.13)	(0.20)	(0.27)	(0.13)
Sectoral	-0.60***	0.31	0.52	-0.78***
	(0.16)	(0.27)	(0.36)	(0.15)
Constant	-1.83***	-5.50***	-6.78***	-2.31***
	(0.37)	(0.47)	(0.71)	(0.29)
N	7379	7379	7379	7379

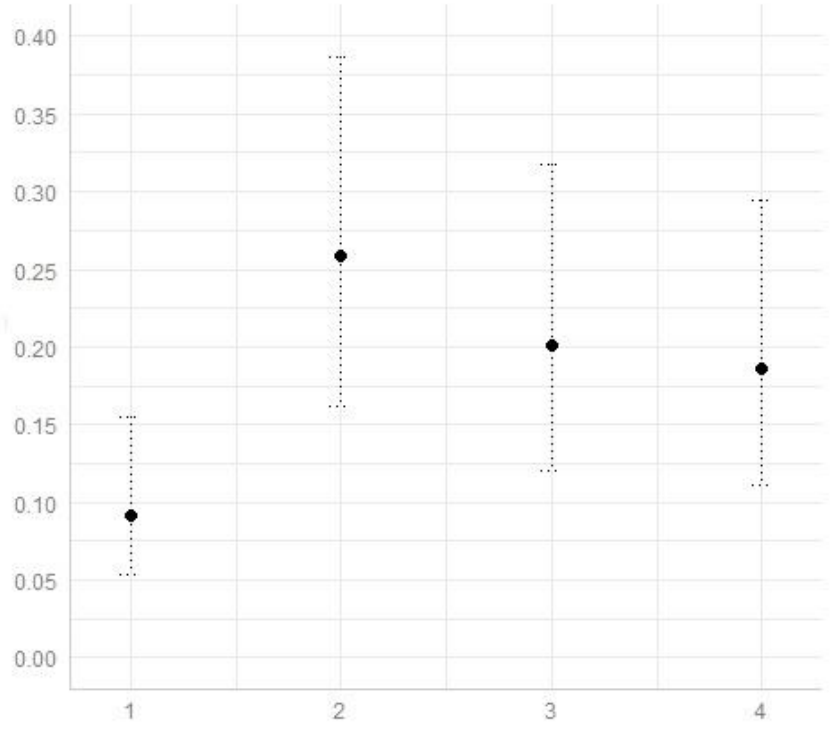
Note: Standard errors are reported in parentheses, with confidence levels as follows: *p < 0.1; **p < 0.05; ***p < 0.01. Multilevel logistic model (GLMER, R 3.3.2), with random intercepts by Congress. Descriptive statistics available at Table A on supplementary materials.

Consistently with H1, legislators from electorally competitive districts seem to be more likely to switch votes to a favorable position. In model 2 the *ENP* coefficient is positive and statistically significant, as in models 6, 10, and 14 in Tables 3, 4 and 5, respectively. For example, the likelihood of *favorable switching* increases 17.4 per cent in districts with four effective parties compared to those with two. *National and provincial ally* legislators (the baseline) generally practice less switching because they are politically aligned with all their principals. However, those from the most competitive provinces (i.e. with larger district magnitudes), faced with a more insecure position, sometimes signal disagreement with their principals in the committee stage, and then turn to a favorable switching, probably prompted by the resources that provide those principals with clout over their political careers.

All types of legislators are more likely to switch their votes compared to the *national and provincial ally* legislator (baseline), who is simultaneously aligned with their provincial governor

and the President. This is consistent with our theoretical expectation from H2 based on the competing principals explanation, and results are sustained in all models specifications, as Tables 3, 4, and 5 also display. Figure 1 shows the marginal effects of the *type of legislator* (fixed portion) on the probability of switching positions on Executive-sponsored bills. According to the fixed portion of Model 1 the probability of switching for the median *provincial ally* is around 25 per cent, and decreases for the median *provincial opposition*, and for the median *national and provincial opposition* types of legislator until reaching 18 per cent.

Figure 1. Marginal effects (fixed portion) of type of legislator on the predicted probabilities of general switching (95 per cent confidence)



Note: on x-axis (1) National and provincial ally, (2) Provincial ally, (3) Provincial opposition, and (4) National and provincial opposition.
Source: prepared by the authors with data from the Chamber of Deputies.

Results in Table 2 show that dealing with *sectoral* bills, contrary to our expectations, decreases the likelihood of both *total* (in models 1, 5, 9 and 13, in Tables 2 to 5 respectively) and *demobilizing switching* (in models 4, 8, 12 and 16, in the same tables). For *sectoral* bills, the probability of *total switching* decreases 33.2 per cent compared to other kinds of bills. In the case of *demobilization*, likelihood decreases by 45.5 per cent, according to models 1 and 4, respectively. Nevertheless, the consideration of the passage of time in-between committee reports and roll-call votes may open the door to either significant changes in the principals' positions or higher cross-pressure. This may be observed in Table 3, which introduces the control variables and a set of interaction terms. Correspondingly, the coefficient of the interaction term between *sectoral* and *time* in models 5 and 7 shows that switching is more likely.

Table 3. Explaining Vote Switching in the Argentine House (1993-2017) with time and plurality interactions

	Model 5 Total	**Model 6 Favorable**	**Model 7 Unfavorable**	**Model 8 Demobilizing**
Provincial ally	1.23***	1.65***	2.54***	1.24***
	(0.09)	(0.14)	(0.28)	(0.09)
Provincial opposition	0.91***	1.40***	2.46***	0.86***
	(0.12)	(0.17)	(0.31)	(0.12)
National and provincial opposition	0.81***	1.01***	2.10***	0.80***
	(0.11)	(0.17)	(0.32)	(0.11)
Seniority	0.12	0.05	-0.01	0.18*
	(0.08)	(0.11)	(0.17)	(0.07)
ENP	-0.08	0.67**	0.07	0.22
	(0.13)	(0.21)	(0.27)	(0.13)
Time	0.12	-0.08	1.50	0.13
	(0.15)	(510.06)	(0.78)	(0.14)
Amendments	-0.45	16.04	7.81*	-0.51
	(0.46)	(1430.38)	(3.08)	(0.43)
Sectoral	-0.98***	0.19	-0.76	-0.97***
	(0.29)	(0.50)	(0.61)	(0.26)
Plurality	-1.91**	0.25	-4.15***	-1.11

	(0.72)	(1.03)	(1.14)	(0.60)
Ideological extremity	-1.32*	-0.48	-1.33	-1.69**
	(0.53)	(0.89)	(0.69)	(0.64)
*Time **	0.07	0.03	-1.71*	0.11
Amendments	(0.16)	(510.06)	(0.78)	(0.15)
*Time **	0.23*	-0.05	0.50*	0.14
Sectoral	(0.11)	(0.19)	(0.23)	(0.10)
*Plurality **	1.51**	-0.39	2.30**	1.96**
Ideological extremity	(0.55)	(0.91)	(0.79)	(0.65)
Constant	-0.42	-20.86	-10.56**	-1.71*
	(0.84)	(1430.38)	(3.29)	(0.74)
N	7379	7379	7379	7379

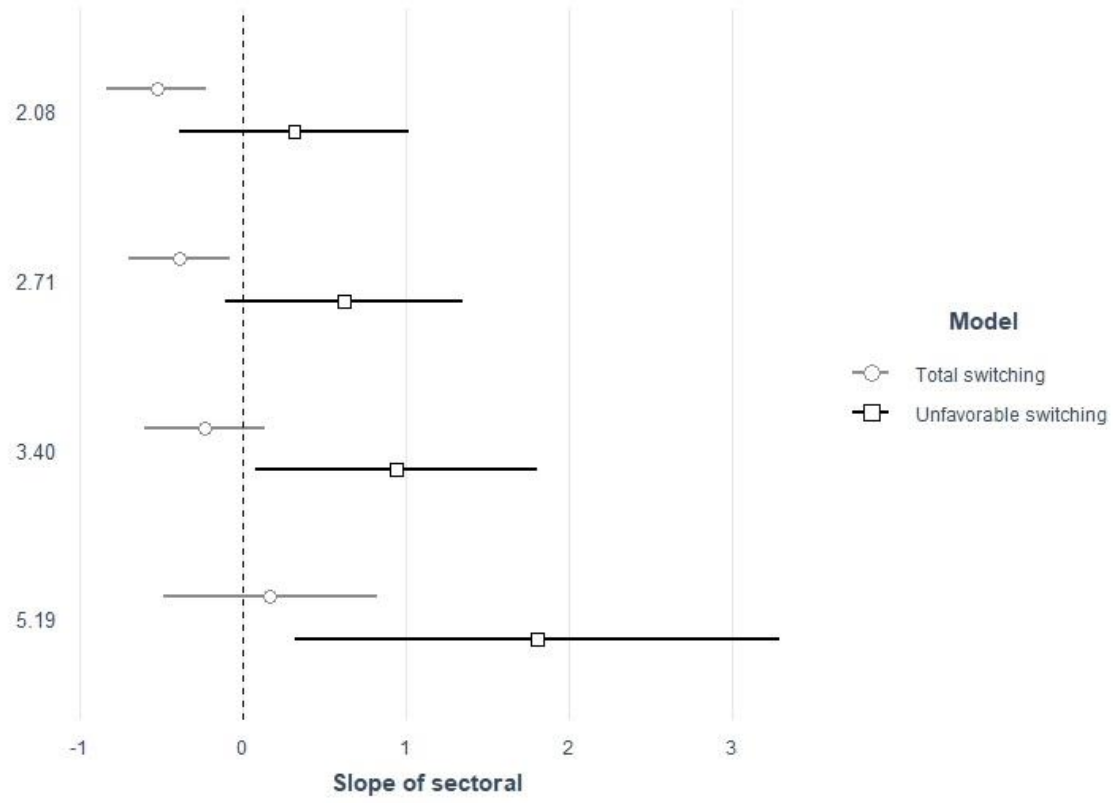
Note: Standard errors are reported in parentheses, with confidence levels as follows: *p < 0.1; **p < 0.05; ***p < 0.01. Multilevel logistic model (GLMER, R 3.3.2), with random intercepts by Congress. Descriptive statistics available at Table A on supplementary materials.

Figure 2 shows that the effect of *sectoral* on *total switching* only exists when the time elapsed from committee to roll call is a week (log 8) or 15 days (2.71), i.e. the slope of sectoral is significantly different from zero. For *unfavorable switching* this effect seems to have an impact when the lapse lasts a month (log 3.4) or six months (log 5.19).

As expected, *amendments* have a positive impact on *unfavorable switching* (model 7), increasing its likelihood by 98.5 per cent compared to non-amended bills. However, the interaction term between *amendments* and *time* is negative. It is less likely that legislators would switch to a negative position in roll-call votes the more time passes since a bill was reported from committee with *amendments*. For example, the probability of *unfavorable switching* decreases 4.5 per cent for amended bills when voted on the floor a week to 15 days from committee reports, and 9.2 per cent from a week to a month. This may indicate that as time

elapses between committee report and floor vote, it becomes more likely for legislators to bargain over the bill in order to avoid its rejection on the floor.[11]

Figure 2. Sectoral bills slopes at different lapses between committee and roll- call votes



Source: prepared by the authors with data from the Chamber of Deputies. Slope analysis available at the supplementary material.

Table 3 also shows that *ideological extremity* is negative and statistically significant in models 5 and 8. There is a decrease of 10.6 per cent in the probability of *total switching*, and of 15.3 per cent in the likelihood of *demobilizing* for the most extreme legislators compared to the moderates. These findings support our expectations and are consistent with previous research (Alemán et al 2009; Bernhard and Sulkin 2013; Unekis 1978). Ideological extremists seemed to

[11] Figure A in supplementary material shows that the *amendments* slope is increasingly negative while time in-between committee and roll call is passing.

be less susceptible to competing pressures, which would contribute to consistency between committee behavior and roll-call votes.

The *seniority* coefficient partially supports our expectations. It is positively associated to an increase in the likelihood of switching in the case of *demobilizing* (in models 8, 12 and 16, in Tables 3, 4 and 5 respectively). Deputies reelected at least once are 18.8 per cent more likely to demobilize compared to rookies. This is consistent with the literature's claims about the impact of legislators' expertise on their leeway to decide whether and how to vote.

Contrary to our expectations, switching is less likely under *plurality* congresses. The probability decreases 56.3 per cent for *total switching* (model 5) and 93.7 for *unfavorable switching* (model 7) respectively in plurality scenarios compared to majority congresses. However, the direction of the effect changes when the plurality variable is interacted with *ideological extremity*, which is consistent with our theory. When no party holds 50 per cent of the seats, those legislators located in the most extreme ideological positions are more likely to switch positions compared to the most moderate representative.

The models displayed in Table 4 include an interaction term between *type of legislator* and *sectoral* bill. In the case of *provincial ally* legislators, the change in the effect is negative and statistically significant for *demobilizing* (model 12) when bill under discussion is *sectoral*. We claim that this result illustrates a conflict between competing principals. This type of legislator has to answer to both a national and a provincial boss, plus local voters. As Espino and Canon (2009) argue, *demobilizing* may be a solution to their cross-pressure, since it allows legislators to avoid position taking when their party does not agree with a president’s bill that affects their province's interests.

Table 4. Explaining Vote Switching in the Argentine House (1993-2017) with sectoral bills interactions

	Model 9 Total	**Model 10 Favorable**	**Model 11 Unfavorable**	**Model 12 Demobilizing**
Provincial ally	1.36***	1.96***	2.90***	1.49***
	(0.13)	(0.24)	(0.47)	(0.12)
Provincial opposition	0.72***	1.93***	2.45***	1.06***
	(0.19)	(0.29)	(0.54)	(0.17)
National and provincial	0.94***	1.58***	1.75**	0.93***
Opposition	(0.16)	(0.26)	(0.55)	(0.15)
Sectoral	-0.37*	0.62	0.52	-0.36*
	(0.18)	(0.35)	(0.63)	(0.17)
Seniority	0.12	0.07	0.02	0.19*
	(0.08)	(0.11)	(0.17)	(0.07)
ENP	-0.07	0.68**	0.17	0.24
	(0.13)	(0.21)	(0.28)	(0.13)
Time	0.29***	-0.08	0.14	0.30***
	(0.06)	(0.11)	(0.13)	(0.05)
Amendments	-0.25	16.38	2.18**	-0.20
	(0.21)	(646.53)	(0.72)	(0.19)
Plurality	-1.11	0.06	-2.79**	-0.12
	(0.67)	(0.92)	(1.03)	(0.52)
Ideological extremity	0.08	-0.88***	0.39	0.15
	(0.15)	(0.20)	(0.33)	(0.15)
*Provincial ally * Sectoral*	-0.23	-0.50	-0.44	-0.51**
	(0.18)	(0.30)	(0.58)	(0.17)
*Provincial opposition * Sectoral*	0.31	-0.82*	0.14	-0.39
	(0.24)	(0.35)	(0.65)	(0.24)
*National and provincial opposition * Sectoral*	-0.23	-0.95**	0.64	-0.26
	(0.21)	(0.33)	(0.66)	(0.21)
Constant	-1.67*	-21.29	-7.20***	-3.22***
	(0.72)	(646.53)	(1.43)	(0.60)
N	7379	7379	7379	7379

Note: Standard errors are reported in parentheses, with confidence levels as follows: *p < 0.1; **p < 0.05; ***p < 0.01. Multilevel logistic model (GLMER, R 3.3.2), with random intercepts by Congress. Descriptive statistics available at Table A on supplementary materials.

Provincial opposition and *national and provincial opposition* legislators are less likely to perform *favorable switching* (model 10) in *sectoral* bills than the baseline representative

(*national and provincial ally*). Both types come from provinces whose governor is not aligned to the President; but while the former is aligned with the governor, the latter is not: they are in opposition at both the national and subnational levels. These two types of legislators may not support sectoral bills at any point, either because of their opposition to the President, or to both the President and the governor.[12]

To check for robustness, we present in Table 5 other estimations for the four types of switching, now including the position of the bloc leader in roll-call votes (*leader votes yea*, *leader votes nay*, and *leader demobilizes*), and the interaction term with *type of legislator*.

Provincial opposition legislators have more chances of performing *favorable switching* than the baseline legislator when their bloc *leader votes yea* in the plenary floor. It is plausible to assume that a non-aligned governor is either indifferent or against the President's bill: if the former is the case, this type of legislator has leeway to vote with the bloc leader; if the latter, the deputy would be facing cross-pressure from competing principals, the governor and the national bloc leader, and side with their parliamentary leader.

[12] Figure B in supplementary material shows the interaction term between *type of legislator* and *sectoral* on the predicted probability of *total switching*. The remaining variables present similar results to those in Table 3. Two are noteworthy. On the one hand, *time* is statistically significant when considering *total switching* and *demobilizing* as dependent variables (models 9 and 12), thus corroborating that the more time elapses between committee reports and roll-call votes, the more competing principals may cross-pressure legislators in general, and particularly in order to abstain or absent themselves from floor voting. On the other hand, *ideological extremity* is statistically significant in the cases of *favorable switching* (model 10).

Table 5. Explaining Vote Switching in the Argentine House (1993-2017) with bloc leader position on roll-call votes

	Model 13 Total	**Model 14 Favorable**	**Model 15 Unfavorable**	**Model 16 Demobilizing**
Provincial ally	1.24***	1.56***	2.74***	2.12***
	(0.09)	(0.15)	(0.32)	(0.38)
Provincial opposition	0.93***	1.21***	2.59***	1.87***
	(0.12)	(0.18)	(0.36)	(0.46)
National and provincial	0.83***	0.88***	2.17***	1.14**
opposition	(0.11)	(0.18)	(0.36)	(0.43)
Seniority	0.12	-0.01	-0.07	0.24**
	(0.08)	(0.11)	(0.18)	(0.08)
ENP	-0.07	0.67**	0.08	0.19
	(0.13)	(0.21)	(0.29)	(0.13)
Time	0.29***	-0.08	0.21	0.30***
	(0.06)	(0.11)	(0.14)	(0.05)
Sectoral	-0.45**	0.11	0.51	-0.65***
	(0.15)	(0.28)	(0.38)	(0.14)
Amendments	-0.25	16.00	2.01**	-0.17
	(0.21)	(528.65)	(0.73)	(0.20)
Plurality	-1.11	0.01	-2.89**	-0.19
	(0.66)	(0.93)	(1.05)	(0.58)
Ideological extremity	0.07	-0.79***	0.56	0.25
	(0.15)	(0.20)	(0.35)	(0.15)
Leader votes yea		0.17		
		(0.59)		
Leader votes nay			4.72***	
			(0.81)	
Leader demobilizes				1.82***
				(0.33)
*Provincial ally *		0.91		
Leader votes yea		(0.68)		
*Provincial opposition *		2.20**		
Leader votes yea		(0.76)		
National and provincial		1.24		
*opposition * Leader votes yea*		(0.69)		
*Provincial ally *			-2.66**	
Leader votes nay			(0.88)	
*Provincial opposition *			-2.96***	
Leader votes nay			(0.89)	
National and provincial			-1.47	
*opposition * Leader votes nay*			(0.96)	

*Provincial ally * Leader demobilizes*				-0.93* (0.40)
*Provincial opposition * Leader demobilizes*				-1.08* (0.48)
*National and provincial opposition * Leader demobilizes*				-0.32 (0.45)
Constant	-1.61* (0.72)	-20.57 (528.65)	-7.41*** (1.42)	-4.70*** (0.73)
N	7379	7379	7379	7379

Note: Standard errors are reported in parentheses, with confidence levels as follows: *p < 0.1; **p < 0.05; ***p < 0.01. Multilevel logistic model (GLMER, R 3.3.2), with random intercepts by Congress. Descriptive statistics available at Table A on supplementary materials.

Legislators whose party *leader votes nay* (model 15) or *demobilizes* (model 16) in the plenary floor are more likely to perform a similar behavior. Nevertheless, it is worth noting when legislators behave contrary to the party line. *Provincial ally* and *provincial opposition* legislators are less likely to change their vote in order to reject Executive-sponsored bills when their *leaders vote nay* (compared to the baseline), as are less likely to *demobilize* when their leaders do. These cases also illustrate conflicts between competing principals.

Conclusion

This paper has explored the determinants of vote switching by legislators in federal multiparty presidential systems focusing on the case of the Argentine Chamber of Deputies. The findings show, as hypothesized, that while some determinants operate the same way as in federal two-party presidential systems – as emerging from the literature on the US House – other factors work in the opposite manner, and yet others are specific to multiparty presidentialism.

Just like in the US case, Argentine deputies are more likely to switch their votes between committee and floor proceedings as more time elapses between these two votes, as amendments are introduced, and as their seniority in the Chamber increases. Also like in the US, ideologically extreme legislators are less likely to switch their votes in Argentina.

However, the effects of electoral competitiveness and competing principals differ across these two types of federal presidential systems. While electoral competitiveness decreases the likelihood of switching in the US, it increases it in Argentina – whose electoral system is closed-list PR with varying district magnitudes. These electoral rules, plus the relatively more centralized candidate selection procedures, which involve national, local, and factional party leaders, also increase the number and the nature of the principals competing to influence legislators' votes. Legislators may be simultaneously aligned with all three types of principal, or not aligned with one, the others, or none. Consequently, as our findings show, only legislators from the presidential party and from provinces whose governors are politically aligned with the President are unlikely to switch, and the probability of switching increases with the number of conflicting principals – i.e. those competing principals with conflicting electoral aims, such as non-aligned provincial and factional leaders.

These results speak to the comparative study of vote switching, and to the study of Argentine legislative politics. Comparatively, they support our contention that switching is more likely in systems with more competing principals: our data shows switching took place in 14.7% of observations, while Unekis (1978) finds an average of 8% across US congresses between 1971 and 1974. For Argentine politics, our results suggest that legislative decision-making is not thoroughly controlled by provincial governors as the extant literature contended.

Finally, our results beg the question of whether these determinants of vote switching would display the same effects in different types of presidential systems, and under different types of electoral rules. The logic of our argument and results would suggest that these determinants of vote switching would operate the same way in federal multiparty presidential systems with open-list PR and decentralized candidate selection, insofar as they increase the

number and nature of competing principals even further than in Argentina. In turn, competing principals and electoral competitiveness should be less likely to elicit switching in systems with majoritarian or mixed electoral systems and more centralized candidate selection procedures. On the contrary, time, amendments, seniority, and ideology should not display different effects. Testing these conjectures is the task for future research.

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