

Path-to-Citizenship or Deportation? How Elite Cues Shaped Opinion on Immigration in the 2010 U.S. House Elections

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Abstract The ascendancy of immigration as an issue in elections has been concomitant with massive increases in the Hispanic population in the U.S. We examine how immigration cues prompt greater or lesser levels of restrictionist sentiment among individuals, showing demographic context conditions the effect of candidates cues. Using data from the 2010 U.S. House elections, we illustrate cues presented in new destination states—states with massive increases in the size of the Hispanic population from 1990 to 2010—have a larger impact on individuals' immigration preferences than cues presented in non-new destination contexts. We show candidates with more extreme immigration positions are more likely to prioritize the issue of immigration in their campaigns, suggesting campaign prioritization of immigration has a directional cue. We conclude these directional cues from Republican candidates in new destination contexts move individual attitudes toward restrictionist preferences.

Keywords Immigration · Cues · Framing · Race and ethnicity · Congressional elections · Latinopolitics

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Data and code to reproduce and replicate all analysis (including analysis in the Supplemental Appendix) can be found at https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/jjm_polbeh.

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Introduction

The issue of illegal immigration has been a salient issue in recent national elections. In 2010, a midterm cycle described as one of the most “vitriolic election cycles in recent memory” (America’s Voice 2010), illegal immigration was one of the leading issues candidates, especially Republican candidates, prioritized in their campaigns. Republican cues in this election cycle were largely restrictionist, heavily emphasizing enforcement and deportation policies rather than reform-minded policies. A natural question to ask is whether or not candidate cues presented in the 2010 midterm elections induced individuals to take more restrictive positions on the issue of illegal immigration, and how the effect of elite cues varies by demographic context. This analysis takes advantage of a unique design permitting us to map candidate prioritization of the immigration issue onto district constituents, thus allowing us to assess how candidate behavior influenced individual-level opinion. Specifically, we examine the relationship among three key factors: elite cues, individual-level policy preferences, and geographical context. We demonstrate cues matter, but only in context and only cues from Republican candidates. Specifically, we show Republican emphasis of the illegal immigration issue in races occurring in *new destination contexts*—geographical locations associated with high growth rates of Hispanics, foreign-born individuals, and undocumented immigrants—is associated with higher rates of restrictionist preferences. We demonstrate this result is not endogenously determined and that it holds under alternative measures of demographic context.

Cues and Context

Strategic Immigration Emphasis

Our primary research question deals with the relationship between candidate cues and individuals’ preferences on immigration. As such, we first consider the content of elite immigration cues in the context of partisan politics, positing a theory of strategic immigration emphasis. We contend candidates strategically discuss the issue of immigration more or less frequently depending on the extremity of their own immigration preferences. With respect to the two parties, Republican candidates have advocated positions stressing extensive militarization of the border, deportation, and substantial restriction on migrant rights (c.f. Barreto and Segura 2014, Kopacz 2008, Parker and Barreto 2014, Schaller 2015). Given the high salience of the illegal immigration issue, we expect that Republican candidates actively emphasizing and prioritizing the issue is not only expected, but is an “easy” position to emphasize. If the preponderance of likely Republican supporters harbor conservative preferences, then in principle, there is little for Republican candidates to lose by emphasizing extreme, restrictionist positions—these positions are consistent with supporters’ positioning on this issue. Moreover, for Republican candidates, the demographic group ostensibly most proximal to undocumented

immigration issues—Latinos—have displayed relatively low rates of support for Republican candidates (Hawley 2012). Therefore, it is electorally strategic for a Republican candidate with restrictionist preferences to frequently discuss immigration.

Similarly, Democratic candidates have an incentive to espouse relatively liberal positions on the immigration issue. In national elections like U.S. congressional elections, Democratic candidates, *if* they emphasize the issue of undocumented immigration, tend to espouse positions supportive of liberalized policies (Jeong et al. 2011). Democratic identifiers have more moderate-to-liberal preferences on the immigration issue, so advocating liberal positions in this context is spatially consistent with preferences of the Democratic base. Moreover, the electoral constituency of many Democratic candidates is in part dependent upon Latino support. Given the overwhelmingly high rate of support for liberalized immigration policy among Latinos (c.f. Latino 2009, 2010), a Democrat advocating a centrist position may risk losing Latino votes, thus hurting, at the margins, their expected vote gain. In general then, it is expected Democratic candidates with more liberal preferences on the illegal immigration issue are more likely to espouse these positions in campaigns—it is strategically advantageous for a Democrat with liberal immigration preferences to discuss immigration more frequently.

Apart from the immigration issue specifically, Schofield and Miller (2007) (see also Stone and Simas 2010) show there is an incentive for candidates to adopt non-moderate ideological positions. Candidates taking extreme positions—what they refer to as “activist valence”—may appeal more strongly to party activists and partisan financiers, thus generating a resource advantage over candidates who take more moderate positions. As such, even if extremity in position-taking does not directly translate into increased vote share (c.f. Monogan 2013a), position-taking can indirectly impact outcomes in terms of resource inflows and motivating base supporters. Therefore, it may be strategic to emphasize immigration positions not only based on support that more extreme immigration positions may garner among voters generally, but also strategic for gaining resources and rallying activist supporters. The upshot is the kind of cues offered by candidates should vary by party, thus making it natural to assess how cue variance translates into variance in individuals’ preferences on the issue. If relative extremity of position is associated with candidate behavior, then we would predict extreme positioning is related to candidate prioritization of the issue, thus leading to predictable cue variance:

H₁ Candidates with more extreme preferences on immigration will prioritize immigration more readily than candidates with moderate positions.

Individuals’ Opinion on Immigration and Elite Cues

Opinion formation is influenced by many factors including individual characteristics, elite campaign messages, and population or contextual factors. Individual characteristics such as party identification, ideology (e.g., Hood and Morris 1998), education (Hood and Morris 1998), level of moral traditionalism (Branton et al. 2011), and feelings toward minority groups (e.g., Citrin et al. 1997, Branton et al.

2011) each shape individuals' opinions on immigration. Yet these individual-level factors do not influence immigration attitudes in a vacuum—elite cues also play a role. Elite cues may amplify or mitigate the affects of these characteristics. Generally, elite cues—through priming, framing, and the media (e.g., Chong and Druckman 2007, Iyengar and Kinder 1987, Miller and Krosnick 2000)—have been shown to shape individuals' opinion; therefore it is natural to explore how immigration cues from elites in campaigns influence judgment on the immigration issue. If political campaigns are influential in shaping attitudes and preferences, and work by Brady and Johnston (2006), Hillygus (2010), Hillygus and Jackman (2003), Iyengar and Simon (2000) among others suggest they are, then political campaigns extensively focusing on immigration likely have an impact on individuals.

Extant research exploring the question of immigration framing and priming suggests immigrant/immigration cues can exacerbate feelings of anxiety and nativism with respect to the undocumented immigration issue. Valentino et al. (2013) contend immigration cues can induce “racial priming” (Valentino et al. 2002). The triggering of negative stereotypes of the outgroup leads to negative outgroup judgment. Importantly, as Valentino et al. (2013) show, the simple cue of Latino identity is sufficient to heighten restrictionist immigration preferences and anti-immigrant affect among non-Latinos. Based on experimental evidence, Brader et al. (2008) find elite cues trigger emotions, such as anxiety, that influence public opinion and behavior toward immigration, particularly if the cue evokes Hispanic ethnicity. Briefly, their results suggest *mere exposure* to the issue, *if the exposure contains ethnic cues*, can arouse opposition attitudes on immigration and increase levels of anxiety toward immigrants. Gadarian and Albertson (2014), also using an experimental design, find individuals with heightened levels of anxiety about illegal immigration are more prone to engage in “biased information processing; they read, remember, and agree with threatening information” (p. 133) and discount less threatening information. In short, anxiety induces biased information processing leading to greater nativist tendencies and greater support for restrictionist policies. Further, using implicit association tests, Knoll (2013) finds mere exposure to images associated with Latinos induced nativist sentiments, even among subjects who did not espouse overt nativism in experimental pre-tests. Relatedly, Newman et al. (2012) demonstrate that when non-Latinos are exposed to Spanish-speaking immigrants, support for restrictionist policies significantly increased. Finally, Suthammanont et al. (2010) show that anxiety can exacerbate prejudicial attitudes and opposition to race-based policies.

Elite framing of immigration policies also impacts individuals' attitudes toward immigration. Looking specifically at the framing of immigration, Merolla et al. (2013) use survey experiments to demonstrate equivalency frames (using the terms “illegal,” “undocumented,” or “unauthorized”) do not influence public opinion, but how immigration policies are framed influence opinion on immigration. That is, when frames highlighted the negative externalities of immigration, restrictionist opinion increased. Yet when frames focused on less-restrictionist policy options (sometimes called “welcoming” policies), restrictionist preferences abated. Evidence suggests elite cues can induce changes in public opinion, and on immigration attitudes specifically.

Conditional Nature of Elite Cues: Party and Context

However, elite cues may not affect all individuals homogeneously. Indeed, the effect of elite cues and political campaigns varies by level of political sophistication and interest (Zaller 1992), and which types of voters are most influenced by a campaign may depend on the level of campaign intensity (Zaller 1989). Related specifically to immigration cues, Knoll et al. (2011) use a survey experiment to show framing labels matter most among Republican identifiers, indicating a frame's influence may be conditional on party identification and issue salience. They find Republican identifiers, especially those who view immigration as an important issue, express more restrictionist immigration policy preferences when exposed to frames with an explicit ethnic cue—evidence Republicans' immigration policy preferences may be more influenced by ethnic cues than Democrats.

Within the context of a political campaign and given the political nature of immigration policies, we contend responsiveness to candidates' immigration cues varies by individuals' party identification. Given our theory of strategic immigration issue emphasis, and the restrictionist versus welcoming cues emphasized by Republican and Democratic candidates respectively, we expect responses to elite cues are conditioned on an individual's party identification. Consistent with Knoll et al. (2011), we anticipate Republican identifiers will be more responsive to candidates' immigration cues, and to Republican candidate cues in particular. We expect the effect of elite immigration policy cues is contingent on individuals' party identification:

H₂ Conditioned on party, exposure to restrictionist cues regarding illegal immigration will be associated with increased rates of restrictionist preferences among individuals.

H₃ Conditioned on party, exposure to welcoming cues regarding illegal immigration will be associated with decreased rates of restrictionist preferences among individuals.

Since restrictionist cues likely come from Republican candidates and welcoming cues likely come from Democratic candidates, exposure to restrictionist or welcoming cues is essentially exposure to party cues, which individuals may use as heuristics in their vote choice and opinion formation (e.g., Rahn 1993, Kam 2005). Given the political and contentious nature of the immigration issue, we expect individuals will be most receptive to cues from candidates of their own political party. Indeed, individuals likely behave consistent with theories of motivated reasoning (e.g., Taber and Lodge 2006), discounting information from candidates of the opposite party, while focusing on and weighing more heavily information from their own party candidates. Using survey experiments Slothuus and de Vreese (2010) in fact find that individuals are more responsive to an issue frame advanced by their party, and this partisan information-processing bias is more pronounced with politically divisive issues. Therefore, we anticipate Republicans will be more responsive to restrictionist cues, which are most likely from Republican candidates: among Republicans, exposure to restrictionist cues

regarding illegal immigration will be associated with increased rates of restrictionist preferences among individuals. Conversely, among Democrats, exposure to welcoming cues regarding illegal immigration—likely from Democratic candidates—will be associated with decreased rates of restrictionist preferences among individuals.

In addition to context defined by political campaigns and elite cues, the population characteristics of an individual's environment and proximity to the U.S.-Mexico border play a unique role in immigration attitude formation. Branton et al. (2007), for instance, find party identification and proximity to the U.S.-Mexico border interact to influence support for nativist ballot propositions in California. Comparing states on the U.S.-Mexico border to non-border states, Dunaway et al. (2010) show variations in media coverage of immigration has a larger impact in non-border states than border states. Combined, these studies indicate the effect of individual characteristics—party identification specifically—and elite cues are dependent on the population context in which individuals reside.

Examining the relationship between population context and immigration attitudes, an important factor to consider is the notion of threat. Cues given in a context of threat may propel greater rates of animus toward undocumented migrants and higher rates of support for restrictionist policies. Threat contexts can evoke feelings of anxiety, which in turn can induce negative expectancies about outgroup members (Plant and Devine 2003), for example, immigrants. By the middle-to-late 2000s, individuals residing in many parts of the United States had considerably greater exposure to Hispanics and immigrants, documented or otherwise, compared to previous years. Individuals residing in so-called “new destination” states—a subset of states that saw massive increases in the size of the Hispanic population from 1990 to the mid-2000s—in particular, may be more influenced by immigration cues compared to individuals not residing in these contexts. Indeed, evidence by Chiricos et al. (2014), Newman (2013), and Newman and Velez (2014) suggest population *change*, not size, is strongly associated with greater rates of restrictionist sentiment and perceptions of immigrant threat. With respect to restrictionism and context, Hopkins (2010) gives among the clearest explanations in his “politicized places” theory. He contends “at times when rhetoric related to immigrants is highly salient nationally, those witnessing influxes of immigrants locally will find it easier to draw political conclusions from their experiences” (p. 43). He further argues geographical contexts associated with massive changes in its demographics “will lead to political hostility in affected places” (p. 43). In this sense, individuals' susceptibility to immigration cues may be conditioned by geographical factors, such as Hispanic and immigrant population growth. Indeed, if cues on immigration evoke racial priming, as suggested by Valentino et al. (2013), then high-Hispanic growth contexts may make candidate cues more salient, an implication of Hopkins (2010) theory. If susceptibility to cues varies across demographic contexts, then we would expect the following:

H₄ Conditioned on residence in a new destination state, exposure to restrictionist cues regarding illegal immigration will be associated with increased rates of restrictionist preferences among individuals.

H₅ Conditioned on residence in a new destination state, exposure to welcoming cues regarding illegal immigration will be associated with decreased rates of restrictionist preferences among individuals.

We expect individuals residing in new destination states—arguably contexts with higher levels of threat—will be more receptive to immigration cues. Restrictionist immigration cues, which potentially heighten feelings of threat and anxiety and prompt negative feelings toward an outgroup such as immigrants, in particular may be salient and compelling for individuals in new destination states. Thus individuals, especially Republicans, who reside in new destination states and are exposed to restrictionist cues may be most likely to espouse restrictionist immigration preferences. While support for some of our hypotheses have been found in previous work, prior research examining campaign cues and immigration attitudes lacked systematic data mapping observed candidate behavior to individuals' reported opinions. Our study resolves this problem and gives us the opportunity to assess how a candidate's emphasis of illegal immigration in his or her campaign relates to constituents' opinions.

Research Design and Data

During the 2010 midterm election cycle, illegal immigration was a highly salient issue, propelled in part by media coverage of Arizona's controversial immigration law, S.B. 1070. Data collected during this election cycle provides an opportunity to examine the linkage between elite cues and opinion on illegal immigration. We use data from the 2010 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) and UC Davis Congressional Election Study.¹ In all, our data contains a sample of 155 districts.² This dataset is unique in that political experts in each congressional district were asked to rate House candidates (incumbents and challengers) on a variety of policy positions, including illegal immigration, candidate qualities, and features of the campaign. The expert survey was of county party chairs, delegates to the 2008 national convention, state legislators from the districts, and district constituents who scored above a certain threshold on a knowledge battery. The survey collected information from experts in both political parties, which allows us to estimate and correct for partisan bias in individual expert informants' candidate assessments.³ The district expert samples averaged just above 31 respondents per district, and the candidate-assessment measures are district means of adjusted individual expert ratings. Scholars found these district expert ratings to be both

¹ Data is available at <http://electionstudy.ucdavis.edu>.

² The district sample is composed of a random cross-section of 100 districts, in addition to a sample of 55 districts predicted in the summer of 2006 to be competitive and/or open. The selection of districts was conducted in June 2006 and consulted *Congressional Quarterly*, *Cook Report*, *Sabato Crystal Ball*, and *National Journal*.

³ We corrected for partisan bias following precedent set by studies also using this dataset. See, for example, Stone and Simas (2010), Buttice and Stone (2012), Joesten and Stone (2014), and Maestas et al. (2014).

reliable and valid (Maestas et al. 2014). From the expert surveys we not only have an estimate of a candidate’s position on the immigration issue, but also, and importantly, the extent to which the candidate prioritized the issue in his/her campaign. In combining this expert data with constituent data (discussed shortly), we can connect candidate behavior to individual-level opinion.

Positions and Priorities

To measure a candidate’s prioritization of the illegal immigration issue, we rely on expert assessments of how much each candidate weighted this issue in the campaign. District experts were asked to evaluate how much priority the campaign

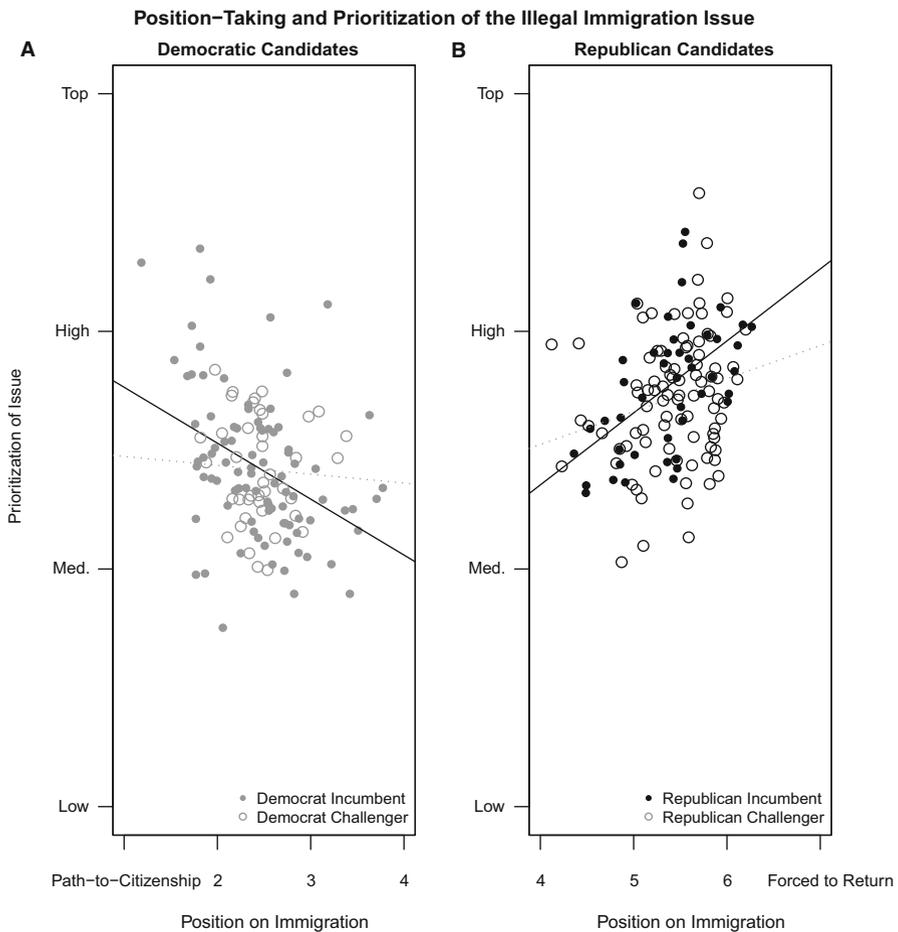


Fig. 1 Panel A plots candidate emphasis by candidate position on the illegal immigration issue for Democratic candidates; Panel B plots this relationship for Republican candidates. Data are from the 2010 CCES and UC Davis Congressional Election Study.

placed on the issue of immigration for each U.S. House candidate in the 2010 election. Experts were asked:

“Regardless of the candidate’s position on these issues, please indicate the priority of each of the following issue areas to the Democratic (Republican) candidate for the U.S. House in your district: Health care, Tax reform, War in Afghanistan, Immigration, Gay marriage, Governmental environmental regulation.”

Raters were given the following options: low priority, medium priority, high priority, top priority, and not sure. High values (4) indicate immigration was a high or top priority for the campaign; low values (1) indicate immigration was a low priority for the campaign. For each district we have a rating of emphasis on immigration for the Democratic candidate and Republican candidate. Mean levels of issue prioritization for Republicans was 2.75 (sd = 0.29) and for Democrats, 2.4 (sd = 0.31). In other words, Republican candidates out-emphasized Democratic candidates on this issue giving a difference-in-means *t*-statistic of 9.07 ($p = 0.00$). To connect candidates’ prioritization of the issue to candidate *position* on the issue, we also examine experts’ assessment of the candidate’s location on the immigration issue. Experts were asked: “Some people believe that illegal immigrants in the U.S. should be given a path-to-citizenship if they have a job; others believe that illegal immigrants should be forced to return to their home country. On the one to seven scale below, where would you place the Democratic (Republican) U.S. House candidate in your district?”

The scale is anchored with “Provide path to U.S. citizenship” and “Forced to return home” with an option to select “Not sure.” High values (7) correspond to a candidate whose position is more conservative or restrictionist; low values (1) correspond to a candidate whose position is more liberal or welcoming. Mean placement on this issue for Republican candidates is 5.44 (sd = 0.44) and for Democratic candidates, 2.44 (sd = 0.49), with a difference-in-means $t = 56.26$ ($p = 0.00$).

Assessment of the candidate’s position and prioritization is *not necessarily* a reflection of the tone of the candidate’s rhetoric in the campaign (or even if this information was revealed in the campaign). For example, a candidate may be rated as restrictionist even if the immigration issue was *never* raised in the campaign. Nonetheless, analysis of the candidate’s position and prioritization reveals important features of Republican and Democratic campaign behavior; further, this information provides a test of H_1 . To illustrate, Fig. 1 plots the campaign prioritization variable by the candidate position variable for Democratic incumbents and challengers (Panel A) and Republican incumbents and challengers (Panel B).

Examining Fig. 1, three points are relevant. First, there is a clear separation between the parties in terms of candidate positioning on the immigration issue. Candidate position-taking effectively ranges from 1 (Path-to-Citizenship) to 4, the scale midpoint and implied centrist position, for Democrats. For Republicans, the effective range is from 4 to 7 (Forced to return). Republicans espouse far greater rates of restrictionism than Democrats. Second, there are *no differences* in emphasis and position-taking due to incumbency status: Democratic incumbents and Democratic challengers are indistinguishable in their rates of emphasis and positioning; similar remarks apply to Republican incumbents and challengers.

Third, if a Republican candidate emphasizes the immigration issue, this candidate will have high restrictionist preferences on the issue; if a Democrat candidate emphasizes the issue, this candidate, in general, will be associated with moderate or welcoming preferences. As such, we can infer issue prioritization *has an implicit directional cue*, suggesting our prioritization measure also is tapping candidate positioning. This result is consistent with H_1 and gives us confidence our indicator of prioritization is implicitly directional in terms of candidate positions.⁴

Cues and Individual Preferences

When a candidate prioritizes illegal immigration, likely exposure to the issue among constituents increases. Since we have established candidate prioritization has an implicit directional cue, the natural question to ask is: to what extent do these cues influence individuals' judgment of illegal immigration? In the CCES study, 2000 respondents were sampled across the 155 congressional districts in our sample. We therefore can pair the expert data with individual-level data, allowing us to map candidate campaign behavior to constituent opinion. To measure individual-level opinion on immigration policy preferences, we rely on the same question wording asked of district experts regarding immigration:

“Some people believe that illegal immigrants in the U.S. should be given a path to citizenship if they have a job; others believe that illegal immigrants should be forced to return to their home country. On the one to seven scale below, where would you place yourself?”

The scale is anchored on the welcoming end with “Provide path to U.S. citizenship” and on the restrictionist end with “Force to return home.” This seven-point scale is integer-scored to range from one, corresponding to “Provide path to U.S. citizenship,” to seven, corresponding to “Force to return home.” Therefore, respondents with higher values have restrictionist opinions; respondents with lower values have less restrictionist preferences.⁵ In our models this opinion measure is used as the response variable.

In H_2 and H_3 we suggest candidate cues influence individual-level judgment and that judgment may be conditional on one's party affiliation. To assess these hypotheses we treat individual-level opinion, conditional on party identification, as a function of the candidate-level measures of issue prioritization displayed in Fig. 1. As such, immigration opinion is a function of both Republican and Democratic candidate prioritization of the illegal immigration issue.⁶ From Fig. 1, we know

⁴ In Section 1 of the Supplemental Materials we provide an additional check regarding the content of campaign cues as a robustness check for this assertion.

⁵ Respondents who selected the “Not sure” option or who did not answer the question are coded to the neutral position. There are 170 respondents who did not answer the question and 46 respondents who selected “Not sure.” This choice of re-coding the “Not sure” and missing respondents to the neutral position is robust to the alternative of list-wise deletion of these 216 respondents. When we run analysis with these 216 respondents dropped rather than included at the neutral position, the results are substantively the same.

⁶ In the models, we mean-centered the candidate prioritization measure in order to facilitate interpretation of interaction terms.

Republican prioritization is related to restrictionist positioning (Deportation) and Democratic prioritization is related to immigration reform (Path-to-Citizenship). Therefore, *ceteris paribus*, restrictionist cues should be associated with restrictionist preferences; welcoming cues should be associated with welcoming preferences.

Population Characteristics

As discussed above, cues and opinion may be conditioned by geographical context, and population characteristics specifically, as suggested by H_4 and H_5 . We rely on four indicators of population characteristics. The first is the proportion of the congressional district population that is of Hispanic origin (measured by 2010 U.S. Census data). This variable ranges from 0.01 (OH-18) to 0.825 (TX-15) with a mean of 0.13. Second, we consider how the rate-of-change in the district's Hispanic population is related to individual-level attitudes on immigration. This rate-of-change is based on population change from 2000 to 2010, and is configured for districts drawn in the post-2000 redistricting period. The rate is expressed in terms of the proportional change in the Hispanic population and ranges from -0.03 (CA-31) to 0.67 (MD-6) with a mean of 0.37.

In addition to these district variables, we also consider two binary indicator variables measured at the *state* level. The first binary indicator accounts for states having traditionally large numbers of Hispanics residing within them—states sometimes referred to as “traditional receiving” states. The second binary indicator accounts for states that have experienced the highest rates-of-change in Hispanic population, sometimes called “new destination” states. In this study, we defined a state as “new destination” if its rate-of-change in the Hispanic population from 1990-2010 exceeded the 75th percentile for all states combined. From 1990 to 2010, the rate-of-change 75th percentile is 352 %—clearly a large-scale change. States surpassing this threshold (from lowest-to-highest rate-of-change) are: *Nebraska* (352 %), Delaware (363 %), *Iowa* (364 %), *Minnesota* (364 %), Mississippi (411 %), *Nevada* (476 %), *Kentucky* (504 %), Alabama (654 %), *South Carolina* (671 %), *Georgia* (684 %), *Tennessee* (786 %), *Arkansas* (836 %), and *North Carolina* (943 %). The states listed in italics are states sampled in the 2010 CCES UC Davis Congressional Election Study and are therefore included in our study. It is important to note the states defined as new destination using our third quartile rule correspond closely to other analysts' definition of new destination locales (c.f. Chiricos et al. 2014; Fraga et al. 2010, 2012; Lichter and Johnson 2009; Zuniga and Hernandez-Leon 2006) and non-partisan research institute's definition of new destination (c.f. Terrazas 2011). Also, as we show in the Supplemental Materials (Section 5), this measure is robust to alternative measures of “new destination.” States defined as “traditional receiving” are: Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas, the four states conventionally defined as such (c.f. Fraga et al. 2010, 2012; Zuniga and Hernandez-Leon 2006).

Although the elections we examine are U.S. House elections, we consider *state*-level indicators of population because the framing of the illegal immigration issue by politicians, including U.S. House members during the 2000s, was replete with language suggesting states, especially new destination states, were being overrun by

immigrants (U.S. House of Representatives 2005). This state-level focus makes sense: a restrictionist-minded politician in a low Hispanic-growth, low Hispanic-populated district could reside in a high-growth, high-populated state, thus making the illegal immigration issue salient. Further, as Monogan (2013b) shows, states having the highest immigrant population rates-of-change were the states most likely to propose and implement restrictionist state-level immigration policies, suggesting, again, that the salience of the illegal immigration issue in these states likely would be high even if the population most closely associated with the issue was low in any particular district.

In Section 2 of the Supplemental Materials, we demonstrate our binary state-level measures are highly correlated with a number of population characteristics relevant to the undocumented immigration debate. For example, the binary indicator for new destination status has a correlation with the rate-of-change in the foreign-born population of 0.77 and with the estimated rate-of-change of the undocumented population of 0.69. Because changes to the immigrant, unauthorized, and Hispanic populations are so highly correlated and most pronounced in new destination states, Hispanics, *invariant to immigration status*, may be viewed as a threatening population. From the perspective of Hopkins (2010) politicized places theory, these new destination states exhibit characteristics conducive to the emergence of “political hostility” (p. 43) vis-a-vis immigration. Here we assess the role cues in these kinds of contexts have on moving preferences toward restrictionism, which is the basis of **H₄** and **H₅**. In our models, then, we treat opinion as a function of these two state population indicators as well as district-level indicators.

Individual-Level Factors

In addition to treating opinion as a function of candidates’ immigration priority level and contextual factors, we also include important individual-level factors. These consist of: respondent’s self-reported ideology (“Ideology”), respondent’s score on a moral traditionalism scale (“Moral Traditionalism”), respondent’s reported interest in politics (“Interest in Politics”), respondent’s level of religiosity (“Attend Church”), and the respondent’s retrospective evaluation of the economy (“Econ. Evaluation”). Individual-level demographic measures are also included: income and education levels (labeled “Income” and “Education” in figures), respondent gender (“Female” = 1), and respondent age (“Age”).⁷ Ideology is measured on a seven-point liberal-conservative scale ranging from “Very liberal” (0) to “Very conservative” (1). Moral traditionalism is a scale derived from four survey questions tapping respondents’ level of cultural or moral traditionalism and preference for maintaining cultural values and norms (Conover and Feldman 1989). Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with four statements relating to newer lifestyles contributing to societal breakdown, moral behavior in a changing world, emphasis on traditional family ties, and tolerance of people who choose to live according to their own moral standards (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.84$; exact question wording provided in Supplemental Materials, Section 3). The moral traditionalism

⁷ Immigrant status of the respondent is not controlled for because there are only 12 respondents in the sample who report being a non-citizen.

variable is scored from zero, indicating a low level of moral traditionalism, to one, indicating a high level of moral traditionalism. Interest in politics is measured on a four-point scale ranging from “interested in news and public affairs most of the time” (1) to “interested in news and public affairs hardly at all” (0). Religiosity is based on a measure of how frequently the respondent reports attending church (1 = at least once a week; 0.5 = a few times a year; 0 = seldom or never). Retrospective economic evaluations are coded on a five-point scale ranging from “gotten much worse” (1) to “gotten much better” (0). Income is measured by annual income levels ranging from less than \$10,000 to greater than \$150,000. There are 14 income levels in all, rescaled to fall on the unit interval 0 (minimum category) to 1 (maximum category). Education was scored by education levels ranging from “no high school” (0) to “post-graduate” education (1), including six education levels. Finally, the model we estimate considers a district-level factor measuring economic conditions, operationalized as the district’s unemployment rate (“District Unemployment”). In the analysis below, we estimate two models. The first (model 1) is a model where all of the covariates just discussed are unconditionally related to opinion (i.e., there are no interactions of cues with population characteristics or state-level indicators). The second (model 2) reports results from a model containing conditional effects.

Results

To estimate the models, we use a proportional odds estimator. The model was estimated in three ways: (1) for Republican identifiers; (2) for Democratic identifiers; and (3) for all respondents (including independent identifiers) pooled together.⁸ Results reported are based on models including only white, non-Hispanic respondents.⁹ Log-odds estimates and 95 % confidence intervals are reported in Fig. 2 (the log-odds estimates are reported in full in the Appendix). The top panel of Fig. 2 gives the proportional odds estimates for the unconditional model and the bottom panel of Fig. 2 gives the estimates for the model with conditional effects.¹⁰

Turning to the unconditional results first (model 1), there are several points to note. First, there is no evidence for a main effect of *Republican* candidate prioritization of the immigration issue on attitudes. The log-odds estimate of “Rep. Priority” is no different from 0 for each of the three models. For Democratic

⁸ The proportional odds assumption was tested using the pooled model. Using a cut-off $p = 0.02$ for the Wald test, some covariates were found to exhibit nonproportionality; however, in estimating an unconstrained model, we found the overlap in confidence intervals for the nonproportional covariates was substantial, so we opt to report the easier-to-interpret proportional odds model. In the Appendix, we report the log-odds estimates for each of the models shown in Fig. 2. Table 1 corresponds to Republican identifiers, Table 2 corresponds to Democratic identifiers, and Table 3 corresponds to all respondents, including independents.

⁹ Latino and other non-white respondents are excluded from the analysis because of potential heterogeneity associated with immigration preferences associated with race and ethnicity.

¹⁰ For models pooling partisans (i.e., using all respondents, including independent identifiers), we include an interaction of the party affiliation variable with *all* covariates to assess if the effects were conditioned by party; we found no strong evidence warranting inclusion of these interactions.

Proportional Odds Models of Immigration Preferences (Unconditional and Conditional Models)

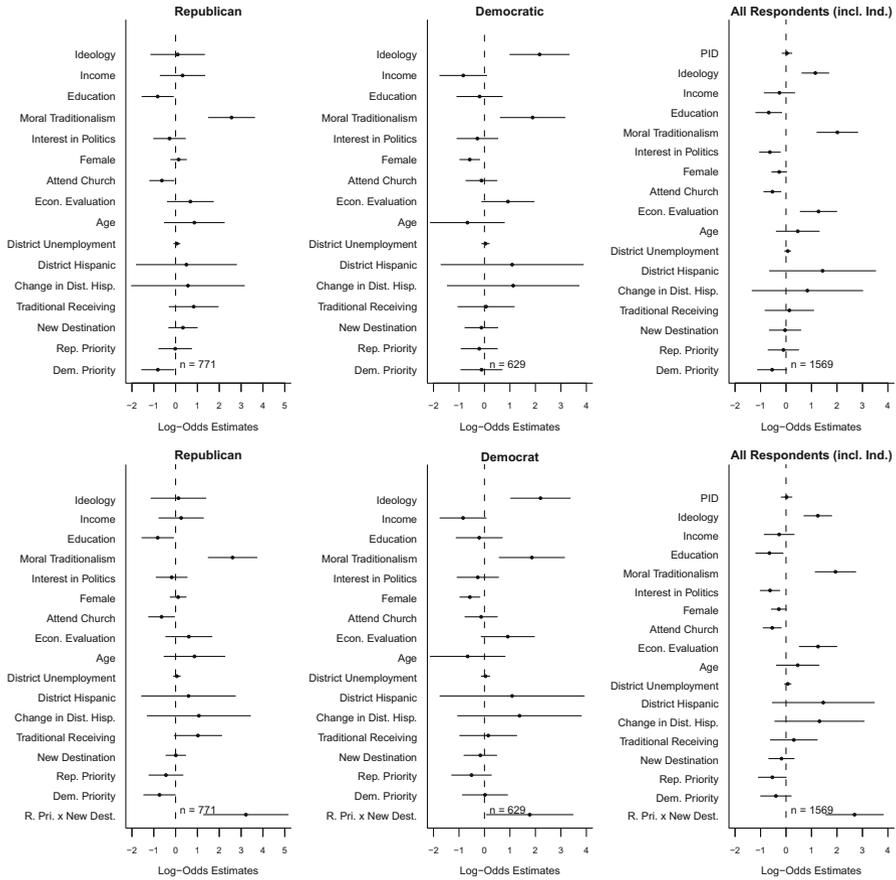


Fig. 2 The *top row* presents estimates from the unconditional models (model 1); the *bottom row* presents estimates from the conditional model (model 2). Each column corresponds to Republican identifiers, Democratic identifiers, and all respondents (including independent identifiers). Data are from the 2010 CCES and UC Davis Congressional Election Study.

candidate prioritization (“Dem. Priority”), there is some evidence Democratic prioritization of the issue works to moderate *Republican* identifier opinions about deportation (see the top left panel of Fig. 2). The log-odds estimate of the “Dem. Priority” coefficient is -0.81 ($p = 0.03$) implying the probability of a Republican identifier answering in the highest category (“Forcible return”) decreases with respect to increased Democratic candidate prioritization. While, the probability range is small (shown below), the results suggests when Democrats prioritize the immigration issue, a prioritization that, as established, is associated with liberal to moderate positioning, restrictionist opinion among Republican identifiers may, in fact moderate slightly.

Second, with respect to the population indicators, there is no discernible main effects for *any* of the Hispanic population variables. The log-odds estimates across

the two partisan subsamples and for the full sample are 0 for both the district-level measures and state indicators. Third, the indicators measuring traditional receiving states and new destination states also have estimates no different from 0—there seems to be no main effect of context. Fourth, for the individual-level covariates, moral traditionalism is consistently and strongly related to immigration opinion across the three models, a result consistent with Branton et al. (2011). Moreover, the estimated log-odds for this covariate is large in magnitude, a result we return to shortly. Other individual-level covariates show a mixed relationship to opinion. Education level matters with respect to attitudes, but only for Republican identifiers. More educated Republicans are associated with relatively less restrictionist positions compared to less educated Republicans. For Democratic respondents, unlike Republican respondents, conservative ideology is related to greater reported rates of restrictionist opinion compared to liberals. Uniformly, respondents' income level, gender, age, and interest in politics exhibit no strong relationship to opinion. Church attendance is weakly related to restrictionist preferences for both Democrats and Republicans (as well as the combined sample including independent identifiers). Finally, evaluating the economy as faring poorly is associated with higher rates of restrictionist opinion (we discuss this further below).

Overall, the unconditional model suggests Republican candidate cues seem to not matter with respect to individual-level opinion. This is important because as we have shown, Republican candidates generally prioritized (and politicized) this issue more prevalently in the 2010 midterm elections than did Democratic candidates. However, if the relationship between cues and attitudes is conditional on Hispanic population characteristics and/or the state-level indicators discussed previously, then this would give rise to a model with conditional effects. To test for these, we first estimated a model including all possible interactions of the population characteristic variables and candidate prioritization. After inspecting these results, we omitted any interaction terms that were indistinguishable from 0 across the two partisan subsamples and full sample. Evidence of a consistently insignificant interaction term implies the simpler, unconditional relationship is preferred. Thus, what is reported in the bottom panel of Fig. 2 is a conditional model retaining only the interactions that were distinguishable from 0 in either of the partisan subsample models or in the full sample model. The *only* conditional result retained is the interaction between *Republican* candidate prioritization and the new destination state indicator. We found no strong evidence Democratic cues exerted a differential relationship in new destination contexts compared to non-new destination contexts: that is, to the extent there was a relationship between Democratic candidate cues and opinion, it held invariant to demographic characteristics.

In general, there are differences in where and how cues matter that are associated with partisanship of the candidate. Cues from Republican candidates matter, but only in context. Across each model reported in the bottom panel of Fig. 2, there is evidence of a significant cues-by-context interaction: GOP cues in campaigns in high-Hispanic growth contexts—that is, new destination states—are associated with a significant increase in the odds a respondent will offer a restrictionist preference on the illegal immigration issue (“R. Pri x New Dest.” coefficient). Republican cues outside of these contexts are not significantly related to opinion, as evinced by the

insignificance of the “Rep. Priority” coefficients. In contrast, there is a statistically significant coefficient of issue prioritization for Democratic candidates’ emphasis among *Republican* identifiers (see the results reported in the bottom left panel of Fig. 2.). The log-odds estimate of -0.74 ($p = 0.05$) suggests campaigns associated with increased Democratic prioritization of the issue results in a slight decrease in the odds a Republican identifier would take an extreme restrictionist position.

To visualize these estimated relationships, consider Fig. 3. Here we estimate the probability a respondent will answer in the highest category on the dependent variable, that is, espouse support for a forcible deportation policy, as a function of Republican and Democratic prioritization of the illegal immigration issue in the midterm election. The interval around the estimates correspond to the 95 %

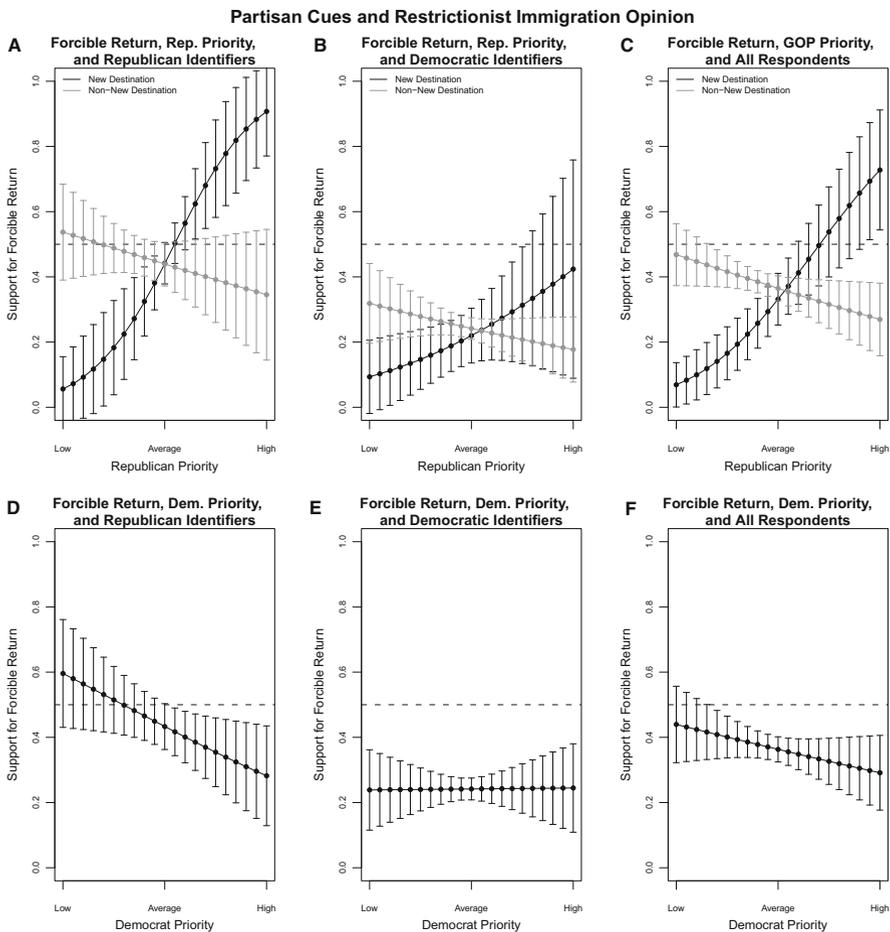


Fig. 3 Panels A, B, and C give estimates of response probabilities as a function of Republican cues and new destination state status. Panels D, E, and F give the estimates for Democratic cues. The interval around the estimates correspond to the 95 % confidence interval and the horizontal reference line is set at 0.50. Data are from the 2010 CCES and UC Davis Congressional Election Study.

confidence interval and the horizontal reference line is set at 0.50. In other words, Fig. 3 presents a full interpretation of the candidate cue coefficients reported in Fig. 2. The top row of Fig. 3 gives the estimated conditional relationship for Republican prioritization, conditional on new destination state status; the bottom row of Fig. 3 gives the unconditional relationship of Democratic cues on opinion. Panels A and D give the probability estimates for Republican identifiers; Panels B and E are estimates for Democratic identifiers; Panels C and F are the estimates for the full model (i.e., all respondents, including independent identifiers).

There are three important features of Fig. 3 central to our hypotheses. First, we see Republican candidate cues exert a stronger impact on individual-level attitudes than Democratic cues (contrast the top row with the bottom row); however, this relationship, for Republican candidate cues, is conditional on new destination state status. Again, cues matter, but only in context. Second, this result is strongest for Republican identifiers (see Panel A) than when compared to Democratic identifiers (see Panel B). Although the Republican cue \times new destination state interaction is statistically significant ($p = 0.04$) for Democratic identifiers, the substantive effect of Republican cues on attitudes for Democratic respondents residing within or outside new destination contexts is not large, exhibiting considerable overlap in probability estimates. For Republicans, the estimated relationship is crisp and discernible. For Republican identifiers residing in new destination states, when Republican candidates heavily prioritize the immigration issue, the probability of support for forcible deportation approaches 0.90. Further, since from Fig. 3 we know when Republicans prioritize the issue, their campaign emphasis is on restrictionism, it can be inferred the “message” conveyed in the campaign espouses immigration enforcement and deportation. In contrast, for Republican identifiers in non-new destination states, the role of Republican candidate prioritization is (effectively) nonexistent: the confidence intervals over the range of the prioritization variable overlap. Third, Panel D of Fig. 3 demonstrates Democratic cues may serve to weakly moderate *Republican* identifier opinion about immigration policy: invariant to context, when Democratic cues are prevalent, the probability of Republicans answering in the most extreme category declines, although the range of the probability estimates is small and there is substantial overlapping confidence intervals in the probabilities. Finally, for Democratic identifiers, the probability of taking extreme restrictionist positions is unaffected by Democratic cues.

As such, there is partisan asymmetry in the relationship between immigration attitudes and cues. Further, there is geographical asymmetry in this relationship for Republican campaign behavior on the immigration issue. Republican cues matter, but only in new destination state contexts and matter most strongly for Republican identifiers. It is also worth noting the traditional receiving and new destination state coefficients are essentially 0 implying individuals in traditional receiving states evince no greater or lesser levels of restrictionist opinion than individuals in any other context. Importantly, the insignificant estimate for the new destination indicator implies *absent cues*, there is *no* main effect, thus addressing an important issue: there is no evidence from this model individuals in new destination contexts have baseline immigration attitudes that are appreciably more restrictionist than individuals not residing in these contexts. We discuss this result below.

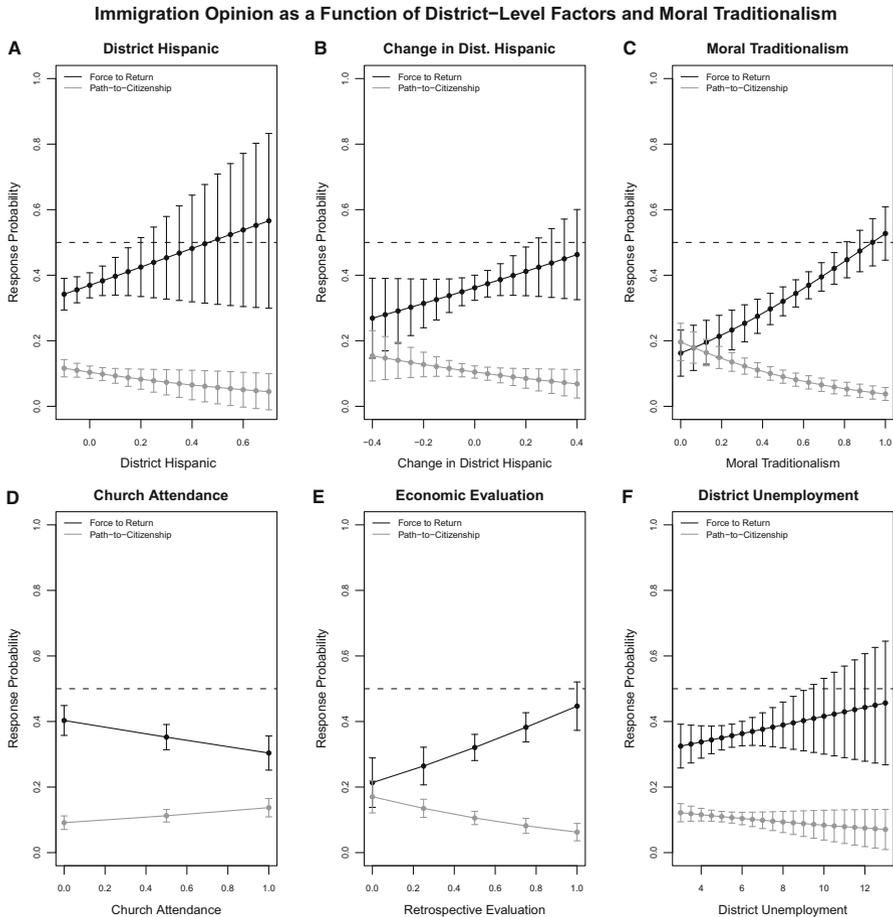


Fig. 4 This figure gives estimates of response probabilities as a function of a district’s Hispanic population size (Panel A), the change in the size of the Hispanic population (Panel B), moral traditionalism (Panel C), and district unemployment (Panel D). Data are from the 2010 CCES and UC Davis Congressional Election Study.

With respect to the other covariates, we provide a graphical interpretation of the results in Fig. 4.¹¹ Our analysis shows that measures of district-level population characteristics elicit a relatively weak association with immigration opinion. In Fig. 4, Panels A and B, we plot the probabilities of the extreme restrictionist responses for immigration opinion (scoring a 1 or 7) conditional on the district’s Hispanic population (Panel A) and for change in the district’s Hispanic population (Panel B). The estimated probabilities for district Hispanic population are not large and are generally indistinguishable over the range of values for the district Hispanic size variable. With respect to change, the plot suggests increases in the change in the

¹¹ For this interpretation, we rely on results from the pooled model (bottom right panel of Fig. 2) since the results reported are consistent across the two partisan models.

district's Hispanic population are associated with an increased probability to favor a deportation policy and a decreased probability to favor path-to-citizenship policies; however, the magnitude of the estimates are not large.

With respect to individual-level characteristics, we find levels of moral traditionalism are strongly related to restrictionist opinion. Figure 4C gives the probability estimates for immigration attitudes across the range of the moral traditionalism scale. Compared to low traditionalists, high traditionalists exhibit a significantly greater probability of preferring a deportation policy and significantly lower probability of preferring a path-to-citizenship policy. Figure 4D plots the probability estimates for religiosity (as measured by church attendance). While the log-odds estimate in the model is statistically significant, the substantive impact on immigration attitudes is relatively weak, indicating attendance seems to be associated with less restrictionist attitudes.¹² Finally, Fig. 4E and F plot probability estimates for individual evaluations of the the economy (Fig. 4E) as well as an objective measure of economic conditions using the congressional district's unemployment rate (Fig. 4F). Individuals who judged the economy to be "much worse" were significantly more likely to evince restrictionist preferences compared to individuals judging the economy to be improving. While the range in probabilities is not large, this result runs counter to the prevailing finding that economic factors elicit weak associations with immigration attitudes (Citrin et al. 1997). Given the salience of the economy in the 2010 elections, coupled with the continuing downturn in the economy that was occurring during this period, perhaps an economic effect emerged. It is also worth noting many candidates, particularly Republican candidates, emphasized the negative consequences illegal immigration had on the economy in their campaigns in 2010 (On The Issues 2010), and this emphasis may have made the economy salient in contexts where the economy was faring poorly. This assertion is mostly speculative; we find no evidence of a prioritization-by-economy interaction. Lastly, as Fig. 4F shows, there is no strong evidence of an objective economic effect on attitudes: district unemployment has no statistically discernible relationship with opinion.¹³

To summarize, five hypotheses were of interest. The first postulated candidate prioritization of illegal immigration would be associated with extreme position-taking on the issue. We find support for this hypothesis, demonstrating Republican prioritization is highest among the most restrictionist-minded candidates and Democratic prioritization tends to be highest among candidates with welcoming preferences. As such, we established campaign prioritization has an implicit directional cue. These cues, in turn, were shown to be significantly related to individuals' policy preferences on the immigration issue, but in a very specific way. Republican cues move attitudes toward the restrictionist end of the spectrum, but only

¹² It is important to note this result does not take into account one's religious beliefs or denomination, for example whether or not someone is a Christian fundamentalist or liberal Catholic. There is not sufficient information in the survey to explore this issue more extensively.

¹³ We also tested for an interaction between retrospective judgment and economic conditions and found no evidence of a significant coefficient. Also, it is worth noting we estimated an interaction with candidate priority by respondent education-level. This was done to assess whether or not one's level of education moderate cue effects. We found no evidence of a significant interaction of these factors.

in contexts characterized by high Hispanic, high immigrant, and high undocumented immigrant growth—that is, new destination contexts. Further, among partisans residing in new destination contexts, Republican identifiers exhibited more “movement” in restrictionist preferences compared to Democratic identifiers. In this sense, one’s party affiliation conditioned the effect of Republican cues. If we can infer Republican cues are restrictionist—and our analysis of position-taking and prioritization suggests this is the case—then we have established some support for H_2 . However, support for H_2 is conditional on context: restrictionist cues in new destination contexts elicit an impact on opinion, but similar cues in non-new destination contexts elicit no relationship on opinion. This result provides support for H_4 , which suggested context would moderate the effect of restrictionist cues. Finally, we find weak support for H_3 in a way counter to theoretical expectations. H_3 suggested one’s partisanship would moderate the effect of “welcoming cues,” expecting Republican identifiers would be most “moved” by Republican candidates, and Democrats most “moved” by Democratic candidates. In fact we strongly *do* show this is the case in new destination contexts; however, we also demonstrate a weak (although statistically significant) relationship between Democratic prioritization and Republican attitudes: when Democrats heavily prioritized the issue, Republican identifiers elicited a decline in the probability of responding in the extreme (forced deportation) category. For completeness, there is no support of H_5 , which suggested context would moderate welcoming cues. Our principal finding, then, is restrictionist cues matter in context. And context here is explicitly connected, we argue, to facets of the population that have been tethered to the immigration issue. When restrictionist cues are offered in a context of massively changing population equilibria, as has been the case in new destination contexts, they exert the largest impact on opinion. We acknowledge that our analysis is based on observational data thus making explicit claims of causality difficult; however, because the theoretical mechanism we postulate is plausible and consistent with extant literature and findings, the results showing cues, particularly Republican cues in context, are associated with demonstrable movement in opinion, seem consistent with this theory (as well as consistent with Schaller (2015) argument about Republican retrenchment on the immigration issue).

Some objections and concerns could be raised regarding our conclusions, specifically issues pertinent to endogeneity, measurement of population characteristics, and our implicit assumption illegal immigration is a unique issue relative to candidate cues and opinion. In supplemental materials we provide analysis of each of these issues. In Section 4 of the Supplemental Materials we consider possible endogeneity. Looking both at individual-level data and district-level data, we can find no evidence candidates simply “supply” cues to high-restrictionist demanding districts/constituents. That is, if Republican candidates are “preaching to the choir,” results in the supplemental materials lend little support for this proposition. This analysis gives us confidence the relationship between individual preferences is, at least in part, driven by restrictionist cues. In Section 5 of the Supplemental Materials, we reestimate model 2 using 14 alternative measures of population characteristics, including continuous-level measures instead of our state-level binary measures. We find our central result regarding Republican prioritization and new destination states is unchanged and, hence robust to alternative measures. Finally, in

Section 6 of the Supplemental Materials, we offer placebo tests to demonstrate that when compared to other social issues important in the 2010 midterm elections (i.e., gay marriage, health care, and tax policy), immigration is the only issue upon which we find a cue-by-context interaction. In this sense, immigration is a unique issue relative to candidates' prioritization of issues in this election.

Discussion and Conclusion

Our results extend the literature on cues and attitudes, particularly in the context of immigration. Unlike other studies, we uniquely connect candidate campaign activity to individual-level opinion. We demonstrate cues matter, but more importantly, we demonstrate the effectiveness of cues is conditional. Restrictionist cues offered in new destination, high threat contexts—locales experiencing massive changes to its population equilibrium—are the contexts where cues induce the largest changes in attitudes. Thus our results connect a body of research showing how restrictionism is related to population change (Chiricos et al. 2014 Newman 2013, Newman and Velez 2014) and how these contexts condition the role of cues. As such, we view our results as complementary to and in part an affirmation of Hopkins (2010) notion of politicized places. The immigration issue was a nationally salient issue in the 2010 midterms, and across the electoral map there were clear regional differences in demographic characteristics associated with groups tethered to the immigration issue: Hispanics, foreign-born, and the undocumented (see Fig. S2 in the Supplemental Materials). We demonstrate that in these contexts, cues elicited an effect on attitudes. Hopkins (2010) theorizes the twin conditions of high salience and large demographic shifts are associated with the potential for more restrictionist attitudes and policies. We think these “Hopkins conditions” are met here: high salience mixed with large-scale population changes in some contexts. We thus extend his analysis by asking the natural question: do candidate cues in these contexts matter? The answer seems to clearly be yes, although conditional on one's party. As Zaller (1992) argued, receptivity to political information (for example, cues) may be highly conditional on individual characteristics. We find here the cue-by-context interaction only holds for Republican candidates and exerts its strongest effect on Republican identifiers.

Thus, we find cues given in contexts most reflective of the threat narrative associated with illegal immigration—that is, places where growth rates of the target population were massive—are the very contexts where cues mattered most. Further, given Republican cues, not Democratic cues, induce restrictionism, we think our results lend support to Schaller (2015) notion of retrenchment. House Republicans (incumbents and candidates alike) have doubled-down on the immigration issue, eschewing moderation and emphasizing hyper-restrictionism. Our results suggest such an emphasis, in context, induces greater rates of restrictionist preferences. Therefore, we would expect if the retrenchment strategy holds, there is little reason for optimism about emergent House GOP support for reform, even if such policy is supported by Republican voters nationally.

Moreover, we demonstrate that compared to other social issues (see Supplemental Materials), the illegal immigration issue indeed *is* a unique issue. In this

sense, our conclusion parallels Valentino et al. (2013) result showing immigration is a particularly distinct issue area with respect to the ability of cues to elicit racial priming. Restrictionist cues invoking the negative externalities of illegal immigration commonly evoke images of Hispanics (Branton and Dunaway 2008, Branton and Dunaway 2009a, b; Chavez (2013); Steinberg 2004). Here, we show in a high-Hispanic, foreign-born, unauthorized growth context, these cues induce greater rates of restrictionism. Since the immigration debate is so closely tethered to the Hispanic population, cues in these contexts likely exacerbate not only greater rates of restrictionism, but also heightened levels of negative expectancies with respect to the target population: Hispanics. The priming of the issue by elites evokes negative views of the target, precisely the result Valentino et al. (2013) show.

Therefore, *how* individuals view the illegal immigration issue has significant consequences not only for immigration policy and for the possibilities of comprehensive immigration reform, but also for Latinos. Chavez (2013) articulates what he calls the “Latino Threat Narrative,” the narrative propagated by media and elites that highlights and perpetuates negative stereotypes about Latinos, particularly Latino immigrants. He contends the prevalence of these stereotypes in political campaigns as well as in media coverage of Latino-relevant issues implicitly connects Latino citizens to the most negative portrayals of Latino immigrants, in particular undocumented immigrants. That this tethering has been so historically persistent, has led some to refer to Latino citizens as “alien citizens” (Ngai 2005) and “perpetual foreigners” (Rocco 2014). Given the prominence of the undocumented immigration issue during the 2010 election cycle and Republican candidates’ high prioritization of the issue, cues offered in the so-called new destination contexts exhibited a movement to high rates of restrictionism. With respect to the “alien citizen” and perceptions of Latinos in these contexts, elite cues and their effect on opinion could further exacerbate stereotyping in these high-Hispanic growth contexts. This conclusion, or perhaps implication, is consistent with Hopkins (2010) thoughts on how politicized places can induce “political hostility” (p. 43) and Monogan (2013b) results showing how high growth rates of populations associated with the immigration issue induced states to implement restrictionist policy.

Our results also speak to issues of geographical context and cues. We demonstrate district-level demographic measures (i.e., Hispanic population characteristics) exert no relationship on either attitudes or candidate behavior. The action, geographically speaking, is observed at the state-level and specifically within new destination states. If one accepts our measure of new destination state as a valid indicator—and we present much evidence suggesting it is (see Supplemental Materials)—then the relationship between context and attitudes, at least with respect to immigration, may be relatively diffuse. Politicians’ rhetoric on immigration certainly suggests this is the case. Portrayals of “states being overrun by illegals,” and borders that are “porous” suggest someone residing in a low-Hispanic growth district (or town, census tract, zip code, etc.), but in a high-Hispanic growth state could easily imagine the most negative and threatening aspects of immigration are playing out in their own backyard. Cues evoking these aspects of immigration may be vivid, powerful, and effective in shaping opinion.

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Appendix

Proportional odds estimates from Fig. 2 (Tables 1, 2, 3).

Table 1 Immigration preferences among Republican identifiers

| Independent Variables | Model 1 | | Model 2 | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| | Coefficient | (Std. Error) | Coefficient | (Std. Error) |
| Ideology | 0.095 | (0.64) | 0.131 | (0.64) |
| Income | 0.318 | (0.53) | 0.254 | (0.52) |
| Education | -0.822 | (0.38) | -0.820 | (0.37) |
| Moral traditionalism | 2.563 | (0.55) | 2.609 | (0.57) |
| Interest in politics | -0.278 | (0.38) | -0.181 | (0.36) |
| Female | 0.138 | (0.19) | 0.117 | (0.19) |
| Attend church | -0.630 | (0.29) | -0.643 | (0.30) |
| Economic evaluation | 0.677 | (0.55) | 0.606 | (0.54) |
| Age | 0.858 | (0.71) | 0.862 | (0.71) |
| District unemployment | 0.059 | (0.08) | 0.059 | (0.08) |
| District hispanic | 0.496 | (1.18) | 0.590 | (1.10) |
| Change in district hispanic | 0.565 | (1.33) | 1.065 | (1.21) |
| Traditional receiving state | 0.828 | (0.58) | 1.024 | (0.56) |
| New destination state | 0.339 | (0.34) | 0.010 | (0.23) |
| Republican priority | -0.019 | (0.39) | -0.442 | (0.40) |
| Democrat priority | -0.812 | (0.39) | -0.737 | (0.37) |
| Republican priority x new destination | | | 3.220 | (0.99) |
| Cut point 1 | -1.001 | (0.82) | -0.976 | (0.82) |
| Cut point 2 | 0.157 | (0.88) | 0.184 | (0.88) |
| Cut point 3 | 0.731 | (0.84) | 0.764 | (0.85) |
| Cut point 4 | 1.994 | (0.86) | 2.048 | (0.87) |
| Cut point 5 | 2.367 | (0.85) | 2.427 | (0.86) |
| Cut point 6 | 2.912 | (0.84) | 2.980 | (0.85) |
| N | | 771 | | 771 |
| Log-likelihood | | -895.50 | | -888.63 |
| χ^2 | | 161.04 | | 183.59 |

Estimates correspond to Fig. 2 in the manuscript. Entries are proportional odds coefficient estimates and robust standard errors. As described in the manuscript, model 1 estimates the proportional odds regression unconditional model (Fig. 2, Panel A) and model 2 estimates the proportional odds regression conditional model (Fig. 2, Panel D). The dependent variable is the respondent’s self-reported immigration opinion. Independent variables defined in the text. Data from the 2010 CCES and UC Davis Congressional Election Study

Table 2 Immigration preferences among Democratic identifiers

| Independent variables | Model 1 | | Model 2 | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| | Coefficient | (Std. error) | Coefficient | (Std. error) |
| Ideology | 2.163 | (0.60) | 2.209 | (0.60) |
| Income | -0.832 | (0.48) | -0.839 | (0.46) |
| Education | -0.191 | (0.46) | -0.206 | (0.46) |
| Moral traditionalism | 1.891 | (0.65) | 1.860 | (0.65) |
| Interest in politics | -0.277 | (0.42) | -0.261 | (0.42) |
| Female | -0.578 | (0.21) | -0.572 | (0.20) |
| Attend church | -0.117 | (0.32) | -0.131 | (0.32) |
| Economic evaluation | 0.922 | (0.53) | 0.916 | (0.53) |
| Age | -0.669 | (0.75) | -0.661 | (0.75) |
| District unemployment | 0.042 | (0.08) | 0.042 | (0.08) |
| District hispanic | 1.087 | (1.43) | 1.085 | (1.44) |
| Change in district hispanic | 1.127 | (1.33) | 1.377 | (1.24) |
| Traditional receiving state | 0.064 | (0.57) | 0.149 | (0.57) |
| New destination state | -0.122 | (0.34) | -0.161 | (0.33) |
| Republican priority | -0.205 | (0.37) | -0.508 | (0.40) |
| Democrat priority | -0.115 | (0.42) | 0.021 | (0.45) |
| Republican priority x new destination | | | 1.777 | (0.87) |
| Cut point 1 | -0.873 | (1.00) | -0.867 | (0.98) |
| Cut point 2 | -0.024 | (1.04) | -0.013 | (1.01) |
| Cut point 3 | 0.431 | (1.05) | 0.445 | (1.02) |
| Cut point 4 | 1.196 | (1.04) | 1.214 | (1.02) |
| Cut point 5 | 1.759 | (1.02) | 1.783 | (0.99) |
| Cut point 6 | 2.284 | (1.02) | 2.311 | (1.01) |
| N | | 629 | | 629 |
| Log-likelihood | | -1024.67 | | -1022.14 |
| χ^2 | | 341.05 | | 330.31 |

Estimates correspond to Fig. 2 in the manuscript. Entries are proportional odds coefficient estimates and robust standard errors. As described in the manuscript, model 1 estimates the proportional odds regression unconditional model (Fig. 2, Panel B) and model 2 estimates the proportional odds regression conditional model (Fig. 2, Panel E). The dependent variable is the respondent's self-reported immigration opinion. Independent variables defined in the text. Data from the 2010 CCES and UC Davis Congressional Election Study

Table 3 Immigration preferences among all respondents, including independents

| Independent Variables | Model 1 | | Model 2 | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| | Coefficient | (Std. Error) | Coefficient | (Std. Error) |
| Party identification | 0.037 | (0.10) | 0.021 | (0.11) |
| Ideology | 1.149 | (0.28) | 1.248 | (0.28) |
| Income | -0.257 | (0.31) | -0.270 | (0.30) |
| Education | -0.679 | (0.27) | -0.653 | (0.27) |
| Moral traditionalism | 2.014 | (0.42) | 1.940 | (0.41) |
| Interest in politics | -0.633 | (0.21) | -0.627 | (0.20) |
| Female | -0.269 | (0.16) | -0.283 | (0.15) |
| Attend church | -0.536 | (0.18) | -0.542 | (0.18) |
| Economic evaluation | 1.274 | (0.37) | 1.256 | (0.38) |
| Age | 0.461 | (0.44) | 0.460 | (0.43) |
| District unemployment | 0.066 | (0.07) | 0.069 | (0.06) |
| District hispanic | 1.435 | (1.07) | 1.462 | (1.02) |
| Change in district hispanic | 0.839 | (1.12) | 1.313 | (0.89) |
| Traditional receiving state | 0.130 | (0.49) | 0.306 | (0.47) |
| New destination state | -0.038 | (0.32) | -0.180 | (0.25) |
| Republican priority | -0.102 | (0.31) | -0.538 | (0.28) |
| Democrat priority | 0.547 | (0.30) | -0.398 | (0.31) |
| Republican priority x new destination | | | 2.691 | (0.58) |
| Cut point 1 | -0.631 | (0.64) | -0.623 | (0.62) |
| Cut point 2 | 0.337 | (0.70) | 0.358 | (0.68) |
| Cut point 3 | 0.816 | (0.70) | 0.847 | (0.68) |
| Cut point 4 | 1.831 | (0.70) | 1.878 | (0.69) |
| Cut point 5 | 2.244 | (0.71) | 2.297 | (0.69) |
| Cut point 6 | 2.719 | (0.71) | 2.778 | (0.69) |
| N | | 1569 | | 1569 |
| Log-likelihood | | -2311.57 | | -2297.69 |
| χ^2 | | 480.43 | | 459.44 |

Estimates correspond to Fig. 2 in the manuscript. Entries are proportional odds coefficient estimates and robust standard errors. As described in the manuscript, model 1 estimates the proportional odds regression unconditional model (Fig. 2, Panel C) and model 2 estimates the proportional odds regression conditional model (Fig. 2, Panel F). The dependent variable is the respondent’s self-reported immigration opinion. Independent variables defined in the text. Data from the 2010 CCEs and UC Davis Congressional Election Study

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