

**Don't Talk to Strangers:  
Experimental Evidence of the Need for Targeting**

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Abstract:

A field experiment was conducted by a progressive political organization in five Oregon state house districts to determine whether in-partisans and Independents are equally persuadable. The organization targeted households in areas that supported Democrats at the top of the ballot but traditionally voted for Republicans in the state house. Of these households, 50% were randomly assigned to a control group, and the remaining 50% were exposed to a very personalized campaign involving three face-to-face visits and handwritten follow up. Surveys were administered to both the treatment and control group before and after the campaign to gauge support for Democratic candidates. The experiment detects no persuasive effect whatsoever among in-partisans, but a very strong dissuasion effect among Independents. This finding suggests a limited capacity to shore up support among in-partisans and that Independents can behave as out-partisans. The conclusion is that careful targeting is essential to effective campaigning.

Many theorists view deliberation and discussion that bridges ideological and partisan divides as essential to the democratic process (e.g., Habermas 1981; Fishkin 1993; Gutman and Thompson 1996). At times, political parties cast a big tent in an attempt to appeal to supporters of the opposing party (e.g., Reagan Democrats) thereby gesturing towards commonality and dialogue. More often, parties focus their attention upon supporters, largely ignoring independents and members of the opposing party (e.g., Rove's strategy in 2004 to mobilize 4 million evangelical non-voters). Thus, while idealized democratic campaigns engage in a multi-perspective deliberation, actual campaigns are far more insular and deviate from ideal speech conditions. Practitioners justify the lack of inter-party dialogue by claiming that victory is the only goal in an election and that persuading supporters of the opposition is not realistic.

The academic literature on the effect of campaigns on independents and out-partisans is surprisingly thin. Early works found that campaigns had little effect on vote choice for any population (e.g., Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet 1948; Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes 1960), but recent work suggests that campaigns do matter and out-partisans strongly resist messages. There is evidence that in-partisans and out-partisans respond differently to negative political advertisements (Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1997; Martin 2004), but the differences often do not cross traditional thresholds for statistical significance and the findings are contradicted by similar studies (Lau et al. 1999). Viewing campaign messages as frames, laboratory experiments point towards heterogeneity in response to campaign messages. Randomly varying the partisan labels attached to positions, researchers find out-partisans strongly resist messages, while in-partisans are far more accepting (e.g., Druckman 2001; Kam 2005). Thus, the extant academic literature offers tepid support for the practitioner view that campaigns should not attempt to

persuade members of the opposing party. At best, such outreach is ignored. At worst, the opposition is mobilized.

If out-partisans resist attempts at persuasion, then the logical group to persuade is political independents. A left-leaning political organization implemented precisely this strategy during the Oregon gubernatorial and state house races in 2006. In five competitive state house races, the organization targeted precincts with a history of supporting Democrats at the top of the ticket but “underperforming” down ballot. In these precincts, the organization excluded households containing registered Republicans (i.e., out-partisans). The remaining households were deemed persuadable regarding the state house election and received a series of three face-to-face visits from canvassers.

To measure the effectiveness of the door-to-door persuasion campaign, a randomized field experiment was conducted where 50% of experimental households containing one or two voters were assigned to receive no contact from the organization’s canvassers. The random assignment creates a comparison group by which the persuasive effects of the visits can be accurately gauged among households with one or two registered voters. Vote preference of experimental individuals were measured in pre and post surveys. The study constitutes one of the few field experiments to measure vote choice and the first to focus upon the difference between persuading co-partisans and independents.

Contrary to the laboratory framing experiments, the Oregon field experiment finds no evidence that in-partisans respond to persuasive messages from campaigns. Independents responded overwhelmingly to the organization’s voter mobilization, but the outreach caused a net decrease in support for Democratic candidates. This finding suggests Independents in the experimental areas were Republican-leaners and the campaign’s message was resisted in the

field as the laboratory experiments suggest. The result also supports the view that true political independents are rare and careful targeting for political campaigns is essential. Given that Independents broke decisively for Democratic candidates and the Republicans lost 4 of the 5 targeted seats, the paper also serves as a nice illustration of the utility of randomized experiments for program evaluation.

### **Literature and Hypotheses**

Several field experiments have established the efficacy of face-to-face canvassing as a mobilization tactic. Both partisan (Nickerson, Friedrichs, and King 2006) and non-partisan (Gerber and Green 2000; Green, Gerber, and Nickerson 2003) door-to-door campaigns can increase voter turnout. Few experiments, however, have measured the effect of voter mobilization efforts on vote choice. Arceneaux (2007) finds persuasion effects from both telephone and door-to-door canvassing, but the Democratic primary studied does not allow for analysis of out-partisans. Gerber (2004) manipulates partisan direct mail and concludes that challengers generate votes more efficiently than incumbents, but re-analyzing the experiments to disaggregate in-partisans, out-partisans and independents would be uninformative because the treatment effect from mail is weak. Similarly, Adams and Smith (1980) find no overall persuasion effect from their telephone mobilization experiment, but the sample size is too small to disaggregate the subjects. Nickerson (2005) examines partisan leaflets and phone calls for differential effects among in-partisans and out-partisans, but finds no evidence of persuasion among either population. Because of homogeneous subject populations, weak treatments, and small sample sizes, field experiments have offered no answer as to whether independents respond differently to campaign messages than co-partisans.

Results from laboratory studies can inform our expectations. Both Druckman (2001) and Kam (2005) find subjects to be receptive to messages from their own party. Such messages are deemed credible and readily incorporated into the voter's assessment of candidates. Thus, in-partisans on the fence should be persuaded to vote for the party's candidate and in-partisans planning to vote for the party will have their support bolstered making defections rare. The following expectation can be derived:

***Partisan Effect Hypothesis*** : Campaign messages to co-partisans should cause an increase in vote share.

On the other hand, it is possible that campaigns are preaching to the converted and no difference in vote choice will be observed. A subject can only cast one vote in favor of a candidate. If defections are rare, then bolstering existing support will not lead to an appreciable change in vote choice among the population of co-partisans. Furthermore, if an in-partisan is not planning to vote for a particular candidate, the subject may behave more like an out-partisan and resist messages on behalf of the candidate. Thus, a reasonable alternative can be stated to the partisan effect hypothesis:

***Partisan Null Hypothesis*** : Co-partisans already support the candidate and cannot be persuaded by campaign messages.

Little guidance can be offered for how independents will respond to campaign blandishments. The conventional political wisdom is that independents are the lone persuadable group in an increasingly polarized electorate. With no strong ties to either party, independent voters should be open to messages from both sides of the aisle. This sensible intuition leads to a straightforward hypothesis:

***Independent Effect Hypothesis*** : Independents will be open to campaign messages leading to an increase in vote share.

While laboratory and field experiments may not have much to say about the behavior of independents, the survey based literature offers an intriguing alternative hypothesis. A large number of studies have concluded that political independents don't exist, or are a much smaller portion of the population than facile survey responses would indicate (Miller and Wattenberg 1983; Dennis 1988; Dennis 1992; Keith et al. 1992). Independents are closet partisans, who have the psychological profile of partisans but are often less politically engaged. If this is the case, then stated independents should be expected to behave like partisans with regards to receptiveness to campaign messages. In-partisan-leaners will generally accept encouragement to vote for a candidate and out-partisan-leaners will resist the outreach and may even be mobilized the other way.

For the state house districts in the current Oregon study, it is hard to anticipate whether independents will generally lean towards the Democrats. Democrats comprise 51% of the total affiliated electorate (and 53% of the registered two party share), but the districts were selected precisely because Democratic state house candidates performed worse than would be anticipated given past Presidential and Gubernatorial performance. However, if independents are partisans in actuality, the best a campaign could hope for in these districts is a wash electorally with the Democratic supporters counter-balancing Republican supporters. The final hypothesis is then:

***Closet Partisan Hypothesis*** : At best, campaign messages aimed at Independents will have no net persuasive effect.

The experiment described in the next section provides an excellent test of these four hypotheses.

## **Experimental Design and Setting**

The progressive political organization sought to elect Democrats in five state house districts previously held by Republicans. In order to maximize the effect of a \$300,000 campaign budget, the organization targeted state house districts where the race was close. Moreover, canvassers were placed in precincts where voters had supported John Kerry in 2004 and the Democratic governor (Kulongoski) in 2002, but supported Republicans for offices lower on the ballot, in particular state house. These precincts were thought to have the highest density of persuadable voters. Given the low salience of the elections and limited campaign budgets, the organization anticipated little counter-mobilization from the opposition.

The state house districts targeted were 10, 14, 21, 30, and 49 (see Table 1 for descriptive statistics).<sup>1</sup> The districts range from rural to urban and the percentage of registered Democrats from 34% to 42%. While the districts were selected precisely because they were deemed close but winnable, the types of neighborhoods canvassed represent a broad cross-section of Oregon.

Within targeted precincts, the organization eliminated households containing registered Republicans because these households were not deemed persuadable. The winnowing at the precinct and household meant the organization targeted roughly 25% of households in each state house district (see Table 1, columns 6 and 7). In order to be eligible for the experiment, two additional constraints were placed on the sample. To facilitate the pre and post-election surveys, households could contain no more than two registered voters and must possess a valid phone number. Selecting on these criteria further narrowed the pool of subject households by 42%. A random sample of 6,200 households then was drawn and polled before and after the election. These experimental households were divided randomly into a treatment and control group.

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<sup>1</sup> HD49 represented a special challenge since it contained the speaker of the state house.

Every randomization test confirms that observed differences between the treatment and control groups are due strictly to chance (see Reviewer's Appendix Table RA1 and RA2).

The treatment provided by the progressive organization was extensive and stretched from September 1<sup>st</sup> through the end of October when ballots had to be returned via mail. The program included three face-to-face meetings. Each visit was preceded by a pre-recorded message from the candidate informing voters that s/he wanted to hear the voter's opinions. Canvassers, wearing a t-shirt and/or hat with the name of the candidate, identified each voter's issues of concern during the visit. Each night canvassers mailed a handwritten postcard thanking the subject for her/his time and included a brief message concerning the issue identified earlier that day. The notes taken during each visit were also used to personalize future visits. The goal of the personalized tactics was to establish a relationship with each household and respond to the issues raised by the subject. The effort was intended to define largely unknown challengers in low salience races and put them in a positive frame. Canvassers were explicitly instructed not to go for the hard sell so as to avoid backlash.

Over the entire program, roughly three quarters of households were contacted at least once. The contact rate for individual visits hovered around 40%. Past canvassing experiments demonstrated a boost in turnout from just one visit, so the treatment provided by the organization represents a far more comprehensive program than has been tested before.

A very brief telephone survey was conducted to gauge initial support for the governor and state house candidates. The response rate for the pre-survey was 34% (N = 2103) and there was no difference between the treatment and control groups. Immediately following the election, a nearly identical survey was conducted to determine subject vote choice (see Appendix). The response rate in the post-survey was 18% (N = 1143) for both the treatment and

control groups. For households containing two registered voters, the same person who answered the survey before the campaign was interviewed in the post-survey to facilitate a valid panel. Ultimately, 497 people completed both waves of the survey. The lower response rate in the post-survey is partly attributable to election fatigue by voters. While the organization did not anticipate substantial counter-mobilization by Republicans and affiliated organizations, the five state house races received considerable attention and became charged electoral environments.

Since the organization wanted to elect Democratic candidates, support for the Democrat was coded +1, abstention, undecideds, and support for third party candidates was coded 0, and support for the Republican candidate was coded -1. This coding decision was made to reflect the fact that a vote for a Republican is essentially a vote against the Democrat, while voting for a third party candidate is the equivalent of abstaining with regards to the election's outcome. Thus, the coefficients reported in the regression analysis in the next section represent point swings between the two candidates.

## **Results**

At first blush, the experimental campaign looked to be a success. The incumbent Democratic governor was re-elected easily and Democrats won four of the five targeted state house seats. The picture was equally rosy when examining the pre and post surveys. Undecided voters clearly broke towards the Democratic candidates in both the gubernatorial and state house races (see Tables 2 and 3). The magnitude of the shift was comparable for both Democrats and Independents. The Democratic governor picked up 36 points between the pre and post surveys among Democrats and 35 points among Independents. The picture was similar among state house candidates where Democrats gained 26 points among in-partisans and 21 points among

Independents. Thus, the organization had good reason to be optimistic that the campaign was successful.

However, the swing in votes could have been due to a large number of factors outside the control of the organization. The 2006 election was notable in part for the defeat of Republicans across the country at all levels of government. By comparing the treatment to the constructed control group, the marginal effect of the experimental campaign can be accurately estimated.

Table 4 compares the post-election survey results of the treatment and control groups for both Democrats and non-partisans.<sup>2</sup> In the governor's race, Democrats in the treatment group were 4 percentage points *less* likely than the control group to support the Democratic incumbent (see Table 4, column 2). In the state house races, Democrats in the treatment group were 2 points more likely than the control group to support Democratic candidates (see Table 4, column 4). These results contradict the *partisan effect hypothesis* and support the *partisan null hypothesis*.

The picture is somewhat different among Independents. Independent subjects receiving the treatment were 11 percentage points less likely to support the Democratic governor (see Table 4, column 3) and 17 percentage points less likely to support Democratic house candidates (see Table 4, column 5). That is, the personalized mobilization campaign appears to have dissuaded people from voting for Democratic candidates. These findings contradict the *Independent Effect Hypothesis* and bolster the *Closet Partisan Hypothesis*. Moreover, they suggest that Independents in these areas lean far more towards Republicans than Democrats. The results for the gubernatorial election do not cross traditional thresholds for statistical significance, but the state house results are extremely unlikely to be due strictly to chance.

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<sup>2</sup> Analogous results are derived using ordered probit (see Reviewer's Appendix RA4).

Another way to analyze the data is to take advantage of the survey panel and control for preferences prior to the mobilization campaign. Pre-existing beliefs should be excellent predictors of post-election beliefs and increase statistical power by reducing unexplained variance. However, this gain in efficiency is offset by the decrease in the number of subjects included in the analysis. Thus, the panel analysis is not more precise, but offers an alternative metric by which to measure the change caused by the campaign.

Table 5 reports the results of the panel analysis.<sup>3</sup> Once again, there is scant evidence that Democrats in the treatment group were moved to vote for Democrats. The treatment and control groups were equally likely to vote for Democrats running for state house and only two percentage points separated them in the gubernatorial race (see Table 5, columns 2 and 4). The Oregon panel experiment once again rejects the *partisan effect hypothesis* and is consistent with the *partisan null hypothesis*.

The findings concerning Independents from the post-election survey are also confirmed using the panel survey. Members of the treatment group are far less supportive of democratic candidates than members of the control group. Assignment to receive the three visits from the progressive organization lead to a 27-28 point swing away from Democratic candidates at both the gubernatorial and state house levels (see Table 5, columns 3 and 5). These coefficients may appear an order of magnitude larger than the differences found in the post-election survey, but with standard errors near 13 points the precise point estimates are not statistically different from those in Table 4 and should be taken with a grain of salt. However, the results offer a strong rebuke of the *Independent Effect Hypothesis* and strong support for the *Closet Partisan*

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<sup>3</sup> Using ordered probit rather than OLS does nothing to change the substantive interpretation of the results (see Reviewer's Appendix, Table RA7).

*Hypothesis.* The Independents contained in this experiment are responding in a manner (and magnitude) reminiscent of out-partisans in laboratory experiments.

## **Discussion**

The results of the Oregon experiment should not be taken to mean that canvassing is without value. Canvassing routinely raises turnout among those contacted, which can be useful to campaigns. However, these results demonstrate that it is of paramount importance for campaigns to verify that they are mobilizing supporters and not opponents. Simply assuming that independents will be persuaded by your message and that contact can do no harm appears false.

A possible explanation for the surprising, perverse treatment effect among Independents is that the Independents leaned-Republican and the outreach triggered resistance to the campaign message. Given that each of the state house districts had previously elected Republicans, this explanation is plausible. However, the same districts contained an equal number of registered Republicans and Democrats, so theories based on geographic clustering of partisans (e.g., Oliver 2001) would suggest that Independent-leaners would be equally split between the two sides. Furthermore, the same precincts supported Kerry and the Kulongoski, the Democratic governor in the past. There is no evidence from the voter file that Republican turnout was especially low relative to Democrats in either the 2002 or 2004 elections, so Independents must have cast the deciding ballots. It would be a curious type of out-partisan who supports Democrats at the top of the ballot but strongly rejects Democratic overtures down ballot. If there was a negative reaction, it probably was issue specific (e.g., the environment). Given that canvassers took pains to identify key issues for each household, the issue-specific reaction seems unlikely. In any

event, replications of this experiment should ask the seven-point party identification question in the pre-survey to distinguish between Independent leaners and true Independents. The campaign studied in this experiment relied upon self-identification in the voter file, so a more fine-grained analysis is not possible.

While the *closet partisan hypothesis* is consistent with the data, another possibility is that Independents are fiercely apolitical and do not respond well to campaign contact. The implication of this hypothesis is that Independents will vote in reaction against campaign contact rather than be persuaded by outreach. Independents are often less political than partisans, but this degree of hostility towards campaign messages is unanticipated. If Independents are commonly this disagreeable, the campaigns should tread lightly when wooing swing voters in the run up to Election Day.

The canvassing conducted by the left-leaning political organization was far more intensive than past experiments, but in keeping with best practices among real world campaigns. Political consultants push campaigns to establish a relationship with individual voters through repeated contact. If three visits and personalized follow-up are inappropriate, then campaigns need to rethink the multiple contact strategy – at least among Independents. The Independent backlash also calls into question the relationship between the quality of the contact and its effectiveness (Nickerson 2007). It is difficult to conceive of a large-scale program that would be more personalized, and yet it failed in a very important regard.

An intriguing possible explanation for the failure is that the people who answered the survey are different from the general population of Independents. Independents who care enough to answer a political survey twice, even an extremely short two-question survey, also hold political beliefs more firmly. Survey non-respondents might have been more amenable to

the progressive organization's outreach, but their attitudes cannot be measured by definition. The response rates in both waves of the survey were respectable by most standards, but eliciting higher response rates is about the only way to shed light on this heterogeneous respondent hypothesis. A few prior experiments have measured vote choice by looking at precinct-level vote tallies to surmount the response rate problem. Unfortunately, analyzing precinct-level voting patterns would not allow for the disaggregation of in-partisans and Independents. Thus, future work should endeavor to obtain a much higher response rate than normally is required of survey research.

The provocative nature of these findings calls for replication. Most of the findings achieve statistical significance and the N is respectable for a panel experiment conducted in the field, but conducting similar experiments again in different elections and places would offer reassurance. It is possible that the sample is atypical in important regards. Oregon is a vote by mail state, but it is unclear why that should make a difference regarding vote choice. The particular nature of the targeting utilized by the progressive organization might limit the external validity of these findings. The process of isolating persuadable voters may have created an idiosyncratic sample. Given the high degree to which contemporary campaigns micro-target and segment populations, the process of targeting probably does not hinder external validity.

Supporters of deliberation and discussion bridging ideologies and beliefs should find these results discouraging. At root, the Oregon experiment suggests that campaigns should focus primarily upon mobilizing supporters and not generating new supporters through persuasion. The time horizon for a campaign is short and the risk of mobilizing voters opposing your views is too high. It may be rational for political *parties* to cultivate new constituencies, but *campaigns* should be very careful before talking to voters whose preferences are unknown.

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**Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of state house Districts**

HD	Type	Voters Registered	Registered Democrats	Registered Independents	HH's Total	HH's Targeted	HH's Experimental
10	Rural	34,171	42%	24%	24,161	2,710	1,321
14	Rural	34,014	39%	23%	23,749	3,055	1,496
21	Urban	24,516	40%	22%	19,150	1,886	912
30	Exurban	34,137	34%	26%	24,482	1,734	1,127
49	Suburban	26,996	41%	23%	19,221	1,999	1,344

HH stands for households as determined by address.

Targeted households exclude households containing Republicans, contain no more than 2 registered voters, and have valid phone numbers.

**Table 2 Support for Gubernatorial Candidates by Partisanship**

Candidate	Democrats		Independents	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Saxton – Republican	180	98	162	107
Challenger	(15%)	(14%)	(21%)	(27%)
Other / Undecided	577	86	449	68
	(48%)	(13%)	(58%)	(17%)
Kulongoski – Democrat	452	503	166	225
Incumbent	(37%)	(73%)	(21%)	(56%)

Numbers report the raw number of respondents.

Numbers in parentheses report percent of respondents for that wave of the survey.

**Table 3 Support for state house Candidates in Experimental Sample**

House District	Candidate	Democrat		Independent	
		Pre	Post	Pre	Post
10	Brown –Republican Incumbent	42 (23%)	23 (13%)	32 (26%)	23 (23%)
	Other / Undecided	49 (27%)	26 (14%)	43 (36%)	26 (26%)
	Cowen – Democrat Challenger	91 (50%)	134 (73%)	46 (38%)	52 (51%)
14	Farr –Republican Incumbent	47 (18%)	24 (14%)	31 (21%)	27 (31%)
	Other / Undecided	105 (40%)	17 (10%)	82 (54%)	17 (20%)
	Edwards – Democrat Challenger	112 (42%)	130 (76%)	38 (25%)	42 (49%)
21	Dalto –Republican Incumbent	16 (10%)	6 (6%)	15 (15%)	12 (19%)
	Other / Undecided	58 (36%)	16 (17%)	51 (51%)	16 (26%)
	Clemm – Democrat Challenger	89 (55%)	74 (77%)	34 (34%)	34 (55%)
30	Curry –Republican Open	18 (9%)	18 (15%)	17 (11%)	14 (18%)
	Other / Undecided	83 (42%)	17 (14%)	97 (63%)	24 (31%)
	Edwards – Democrat Open	97 (49%)	84 (71%)	41 (26%)	40 (51%)
49	Minnis –Republican Incumbent	42 (16%)	16 (14%)	28 (19%)	15 (21%)
	Other / Undecided	398 (37%)	21 (18%)	82 (57%)	24 (34%)
	Brading – Democrat Challenger	509 (47%)	78 (68%)	34 (24%)	31 (44%)

Numbers report the raw number of respondents.

Numbers in parentheses report percent of respondents for that wave of the survey within the house district.

**Table 4 Comparing Support for Democratic Candidate by Partisanship (Post-Survey Only)**

	Governor		state house	
	Democrats	Independents	Democrats	Independents
Treatment	-4.2 (5.6)	-10.9 (8.7)	1.6 (5.4)	-16.7** (8.2)
HD 14	6.9 (7.7)	1.7 (12.5)	1.4 (7.5)	-12.5 (11.9)
HD 21	11.6 (9.2)	20.1 (14.0)	10.3 (8.9)	5.4 (13.1)
HD 30	-1.6 (8.5)	-2.6 (12.9)	-5.1 (8.3)	1.5 (12.3)
HD 49	1.3 (8.7)	-18.2 (13.4)	-6.7 (8.4)	-8.0 (12.6)
Constant	57.7** (6.1)	35.1** (9.8)	59.8** (5.9)	38.4** (9.4)
N	687	400	684	397
R-sq	0.04	0.01	0.01	0.02

Numbers represent OLS coefficients.

Numbers in parentheses represent standard errors.

\* indicate  $p < 0.1$  and \*\* indicate  $p < 0.05$

See Table RA3 in Reviewer's Appendix for results with covariates.

See Table RA4 in Reviewer's Appendix for ordered probit results.

See Table RA5 in Reviewer's Appendix for results omitting the undecided, "0", category.

**Table 5 Comparing Support for Democratic Candidate By Partisanship (Panel)**

	Governor		state house	
	Democrats	Independents	Democrats	Independents
Treatment	-2.4 (7.0)	-27.4** (12.7)	0.4 (8.1)	-28.2** (12.6)
Pre-survey	42.2** (4.9)	43.5** (9.2)	28.2** (6.0)	36.7** (9.0)
HD 14	-2.3 (10.8)	43.3** (20.5)	4.5 (12.6)	7.4 (20.6)
HD 21	-3.1 (12.1)	37.2 (21.6)	2.0 (13.9)	7.8 (21.3)
HD 30	-1.6 (11.5)	15.4 (20.1)	9.3 (13.3)	-16.5 (20.4)
HD 49	2.6 (11.3)	14.9 (20.6)	-8.8 (13.0)	-16.4 (20.6)
Constant	54.2** (9.1)	11.6 (16.5)	49.1** (10.8)	41.5** (17.0)
N	307	163	278	143
R-sq	19.9	19.7	8.9	16.6

Numbers represent OLS coefficients.

Numbers in parentheses represent standard errors.

\* indicate  $p < 0.1$  and \*\* indicate  $p < 0.05$

See Table RA6 in Reviewer's Appendix for results with covariates.

See Table RA7 in Reviewer's Appendix for ordered probit results.

See Table RA8 in Reviewer's Appendix for results omitting the undecided, "0", category.

**Appendix: Post Survey**

Hi, may I speak with \_\_\_\_\_. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ calling on behalf of researchers at XXXXXX. I'd like to ask you two questions that will take only 30 seconds of your time.

Who did you vote for in the gubernatorial election?

- A) Kulongoski
- B) Saxton
- C) Did not vote for Governor
- D) Other (Vounteered)
- E) Don't know / can't remember (volunteered)

Who did you vote for in the state House election?

- A) Local Democrat
- B) Local Republican
- C) Did not vote for state House
- D) Don't know / can't remember (volunteered)

That is all the questions we have for you. Thank you for your time and have a nice evening.

## Reviewer's Appendix

This appendix is offered to provide alternative analyses that were omitted from the text for the purposes of brevity.

As mentioned in the text, the treatment and control groups had statistically identical levels of support for Democratic candidates in the pre-survey. Table RA1 reports the randomization checks for both gubernatorial and state house attitudes.

### RA1 Randomization Checks on Pre-Support

	Pre-Survey Support for Democratic Gubernatorial Candidate	Pre-Survey Support for Democratic state house Candidate
Treatment	-0.015 (0.030)	0.013 (0.033)
Constant	0.153 (0.039)	0.192 (0.043)
House District Dummies	Yes	Yes
N	2103	1851

Numbers in parentheses represent standard errors.

Similarly, the treatment and control groups were balanced across a range of demographic characteristics in both the pre and post survey respondents. Table RA2 reports these randomization checks.

### RA2 Randomization Checks for Vote History and Demographics among Respondents

	Pre-Survey Respondents	Post-Survey Respondents
Voted 2004	-0.097 (0.138)	-0.157 (0.151)
Voted 2002	-0.018 (0.110)	-0.132 (0.117)
Voted 2000	-0.031 (0.127)	0.088 (0.138)
Voted 1998	0.060 (0.126)	-0.103 (0.132)
Democrat	-0.133 (0.196)	-0.132 (0.217)
Independent	-0.145 (0.198)	-0.084 (0.220)
Female	-0.155 (0.090)	0.019 (0.095)
Age	0.004 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)
Year Registered	-0.001 (0.007)	0.007 (0.008)
HD 14	0.097 (0.138)	0.015 (0.132)
HD 21	-0.040	0.083

	(0.156)	(0.153)
HD 30	0.033 (0.144)	-0.042 (0.146)
HD 49	0.140 (0.140)	0.117 (0.142)
Constant	0.053 (0.271)	0.026 (0.294)
N	2142	1896

Dependent variable is treatment assignment.

Numbers represent OLS coefficients. Logit yields substantively identical findings.

Numbers in parentheses report standard errors.

Table 4 uses the post-survey to examine differences between treatment and control groups for in-partisans and Independents. Table 4 offers an unbiased estimate of differences between the treatment and control groups and the results are not sensitive to the inclusion of covariates. Table RA3 presents the coefficients and associated standard errors for a model that controls for a range of behavioral and demographic features.

**Table RA3 Table 4 Reproduced with Full Covariates**

	Governor		state house	
	Democrats	Independents	Democrats	Independents
Treatment	-3.9 (5.6)	-12.4 (8.7)	2.2 (5.4)	-14.8 (8.4)
Age	0.1 (0.2)	0.2 (0.3)	0.1 (0.2)	0.2 (0.3)
Voted 2004 General	16.5 (9.8)	22.8 (13.7)	10.5 (9.4)	24.3 (13.1)
Voted 2002 General	5.1 (7.6)	4.3 (12.8)	-1.5 (7.4)	-14.6 (12.4)
Voted 2000 General	-17.7 (8.8)	20.3 (13.3)	-0.6 (8.6)	4.5 (12.7)
Voted 1998 General	16.5 (9.2)	-28.1 (13.6)	5.9 (9.0)	9.3 (12.8)
Voted 2006 Primary	20.2 (6.0)	11.2 (10.6)	19.4 (5.8)	8.3 (10.1)
Voted 2004 Primary	0.1 (6.5)	-0.2 (12.4)	0.3 (6.3)	2.2 (11.8)
Voted 2002 Primary	10.4 (7.7)	-1.8 (13.8)	2.4 (7.4)	10.9 (13.2)
Voted 2000 Primary	7.1 (7.8)	5.0 (13.3)	14.8 (7.5)	-12.1 (12.7)
Voted 1998 Primary	-8.9 (8.4)	10.9 (14.9)	-7.4 (8.2)	6.0 (14.2)
Voted 2004 Special	-10.0 (7.3)	-8.7 (11.8)	-9.6 (7.1)	-0.7 (11.4)
Voted 2002 Special	1.7 (7.9)	14.1 (13.4)	-1.9 (7.7)	-13.7 (12.7)

Voted 1999 Special	-11.2 (8.1)	5.1 (13.9)	6.8 (7.9)	6.6 (13.4)
HD 14	8.9 (8.2)	-3.4 (13.9)	1.2 (8.0)	-4.2 (13.4)
HD 21	13.9 (9.6)	17.6 (14.8)	12.2 (9.3)	13.2 (14.1)
HD 30	5.8 (9.3)	-6.2 (14.6)	-1.9 (9.1)	5.6 (14.1)
HD 49	4.9 (9.5)	-18.8 (14.7)	-5.4 (9.2)	-3.8 (14.0)
Constant	32.8 (14.5)	-2.2 (21.5)	33.0 (14.1)	0.2 (20.6)
N	687	400	684	396
R-sq	0.04	0.07	0.04	0.05

Numbers represent OLS coefficients.

Numbers in parentheses represent standard errors.

Replicating the analysis in Table 4 using ordered probit does nothing to change the interpretation of the results. Table RA4 presents the ordered probit results.

**Table RA4 Analysis from Table 4 conducted using Ordered Probit**

	Governor		state house	
	Democrats	Independents	Democrats	Independents
Treatment	-0.062 (0.103)	-0.175 (0.124)	0.036 (0.102)	-0.226 (0.120)
Age	0.001 (0.003)	0.003 (0.005)	0.001 (0.003)	0.003 (0.004)
Voted 2004 General	0.320 (0.169)	0.314 (0.183)	0.231 (0.170)	0.335 (0.182)
Voted 2002 General	0.110 (0.138)	0.038 (0.182)	-0.024 (0.138)	-0.222 (0.177)
Voted 2000 General	-0.326 (0.160)	0.328 (0.194)	-0.006 (0.158)	0.073 (0.182)
Voted 1998 General	0.322 (0.170)	-0.447 (0.200)	0.090 (0.168)	0.140 (0.185)
Voted 2006 Primary	0.421 (0.115)	0.177 (0.151)	0.415 (0.115)	0.124 (0.146)
Voted 2004 Primary	-0.001 (0.120)	0.028 (0.179)	-0.009 (0.120)	0.035 (0.169)
Voted 2002 Primary	0.195 (0.138)	-0.009 (0.196)	0.064 (0.139)	0.171 (0.190)
Voted 2000 Primary	0.133 (0.144)	0.077 (0.189)	0.275 (0.143)	-0.189 (0.186)
Voted 1998 Primary	-0.188 (0.156)	0.128 (0.216)	-0.137 (0.155)	0.071 (0.207)
Voted 2004 Special	-0.187 (0.136)	-0.120 (0.169)	-0.189 (0.136)	0.001 (0.164)

Voted 2002 Special	0.046 (0.147)	0.225 (0.193)	-0.029 (0.147)	-0.200 (0.185)
Voted 1999 Special	-0.214 (0.149)	0.077 (0.202)	0.146 (0.153)	0.109 (0.196)
HD 14	0.184 (0.151)	-0.044 (0.196)	0.057 (0.152)	-0.056 (0.192)
HD 21	0.275 (0.182)	0.286 (0.214)	0.239 (0.182)	0.201 (0.205)
HD 30	0.114 (0.168)	-0.089 (0.206)	-0.027 (0.171)	0.077 (0.203)
HD 49	0.099 (0.173)	-0.251 (0.204)	-0.100 (0.170)	-0.052 (0.199)
Cut 1	-0.602 (0.264)	-0.196 (0.299)	-0.665 (0.266)	-0.386 (0.295)
Cut 2	-0.136 (0.263)	0.292 (0.299)	-0.121 (0.265)	0.380 (0.295)
N	687	400	684	396

Numbers represent OLS coefficients.

Numbers in parentheses represent standard errors.

Focusing only upon those individuals expressing an opinion in the post-survey and omitting the undecideds does not meaningfully change the results. Democrats remain unmoved by the persuasive campaign and Independents are moved to vote for the opposing party. Table RA5 reports the results of such an analysis.

**Table RA5 Table 4 Reproduced Omitting the Undecideds and Others**

	Governor		state house	
	Democrats	Independents	Democrats	Independents
Treatment	-4.4 (6.1)	-16.9 (10.6)	2.0 (5.8)	-18.1 (9.6)
Age	0.1 (0.2)	0.3 (0.4)	0.1 (0.2)	0.1 (0.3)
Voted 2004 General	9.8 (11.5)	26.9 (18.2)	3.4 (10.7)	29.7 (16.2)
Voted 2002 General	2.7 (8.4)	9.3 (15.3)	-1.9 (7.9)	-9.6 (14.1)
Voted 2000 General	-17.3 (9.7)	19.0 (15.5)	-3.6 (9.2)	4.5 (14.0)
Voted 1998 General	14.3 (10.0)	-30.1 (15.6)	5.0 (9.6)	6.6 (13.4)
Voted 2006 Primary	15.9 (6.5)	10.5 (12.5)	14.1 (6.1)	4.5 (11.4)
Voted 2004 Primary	-1.1 (7.1)	-7.2 (14.7)	-1.4 (6.7)	0.3 (13.3)
Voted 2002 Primary	11.2 (8.5)	-6.8 (16.7)	1.4 (8.0)	7.4 (15.3)
Voted 2000	8.0	8.7	13.9	-8.6

Primary	(8.5)	(16.3)	(8.0)	(14.5)
Voted 1998	-6.0	20.0	-5.7	17.1
Primary	(9.2)	(17.7)	(8.7)	(15.9)
Voted 2004	-11.1	-10.0	-8.2	-3.8
Special	(8.0)	(13.9)	(7.6)	(12.8)
Voted 2002	-0.6	16.5	-3.1	-13.3
Special	(8.6)	(15.8)	(8.2)	(14.4)
Voted 1999	-10.3	5.1	13.6	6.3
Special	(8.8)	(16.4)	(8.4)	(14.9)
HD 14	6.1	-4.8	-1.8	-8.0
	(9.0)	(16.7)	(8.5)	(15.4)
HD 21	14.3	18.8	14.5	5.5
	(10.7)	(18.0)	(10.0)	(16.3)
HD 30	5.3	-9.3	-6.0	-0.6
	(10.3)	(17.4)	(9.8)	(16.0)
HD 49	4.7	-25.3	-4.7	-12.9
	(10.5)	(17.9)	(9.9)	(16.3)
Constant	48.6	-0.3	48.4	11.1
	(16.2)	(26.8)	(15.3)	(24.4)
N	601	332	605	335
R-sq	0.03	0.07	0.04	0.05

Numbers represent OLS coefficients.

Numbers in parentheses represent standard errors.

The results from the panel analysis presented in Table 5 are similarly robust. Table RA6 reproduces Table 5 but includes a full range of covariates. The key difference between Democrats and Independents does not change.

**Table RA6 Table 5 Reproduced with Full Covariates**

	Governor		state house	
	Democrats	Independents	Democrats	Independents
Treatment	-0.2 (7.3)	-30.5 (13.4)	1.1 (8.4)	-31.3 (13.2)
Pre-survey	41.6 (5.1)	44.1 (9.6)	28.5 (6.2)	32.2 (9.4)
Age	0.0 (0.2)	0.3 (0.5)	0.0 (0.3)	0.7 (0.5)
Voted 2004	7.2 (11.8)	-11.1 (21.0)	-3.6 (13.2)	-6.3 (20.9)
General	-0.7 (10.4)	22.0 (20.1)	1.4 (11.8)	-4.6 (20.6)
Voted 2000	-20.1 (11.5)	21.0 (21.0)	-4.7 (13.6)	14.6 (20.9)
General	17.8 (11.8)	-18.2 (22.5)	3.0 (14.0)	-11.1 (22.4)
Voted 2006	4.5	6.6	5.5	6.7

Primary	(7.7)	(16.2)	(8.8)	(15.5)
Voted 2004	6.1	2.6	-3.8	-10.9
Primary	(8.3)	(18.1)	(9.8)	(18.8)
Voted 2002	3.9	-29.6	-16.9	3.6
Primary	(10.0)	(21.2)	(11.7)	(20.8)
Voted 2000	9.0	12.4	10.8	3.5
Primary	(10.2)	(18.7)	(11.8)	(18.8)
Voted 1998	-16.2	-15.5	4.6	-20.6
Primary	(10.6)	(21.5)	(12.5)	(20.7)
Voted 2004	-8.3	5.0	-9.3	-8.6
Special	(9.3)	(19.1)	(10.8)	(18.8)
Voted 2002	11.2	18.2	15.7	-17.6
Special	(10.4)	(18.9)	(11.9)	(18.3)
Voted 1999	7.7	18.8	15.4	48.0
Special	(10.5)	(20.9)	(12.3)	(21.6)
HD 14	-9.2	31.8	-0.1	11.9
	(11.9)	(22.6)	(13.8)	(23.1)
HD 21	-10.5	16.3	-2.6	14.0
	(13.2)	(23.9)	(15.1)	(23.5)
HD 30	-6.6	-2.7	2.1	-17.4
	(12.4)	(23.4)	(14.4)	(23.7)
HD 49	-5.0	6.1	-15.3	-14.1
	(12.6)	(22.4)	(14.4)	(23.1)
Constant	52.4	-0.6	56.3	7.9
	(18.3)	(31.9)	(21.2)	(32.6)
N	307	163	278	142
R-sq	0.23	0.26	0.12	0.25

Numbers represent OLS coefficients.

Numbers in parentheses represent standard errors.

Specifying an ordered probit model rather than OLS does nothing to change the qualitative interpretation of the results. Democrats remain unmoved by the canvassing on behalf of Democratic candidates and Independents are moved towards voting for Republicans. Table RA7 presents the ordered probit results.

**Table RA7 Analysis from Table 5 conducted using Ordered Probit**

	Governor		state house	
	Democrats	Independents	Democrats	Independents
Treatment	-0.070 (0.180)	-0.495 (0.206)	0.065 (0.180)	-0.556 (0.215)
Pre-Survey	0.947 (0.130)	0.755 (0.160)	0.568 (0.126)	0.546 (0.158)
Age	-0.001 (0.005)	0.004 (0.007)	-0.003 (0.005)	0.012 (0.008)
Voted 2004	0.258	-0.099	-0.003	-0.089

General	(0.263)	(0.306)	(0.283)	(0.323)
Voted 2002 General	0.018 (0.254)	0.321 (0.321)	0.088 (0.245)	-0.145 (0.340)
Voted 2000 General	-0.454 (0.275)	0.502 (0.350)	-0.015 (0.289)	0.242 (0.349)
Voted 1998 General	0.350 (0.284)	-0.459 (0.380)	-0.003 (0.292)	-0.273 (0.376)
Voted 2006 Primary	0.220 (0.199)	0.134 (0.251)	0.159 (0.191)	0.104 (0.249)
Voted 2004 Primary	0.130 (0.209)	0.096 (0.286)	-0.107 (0.207)	-0.183 (0.311)
Voted 2002 Primary	0.082 (0.240)	-0.532 (0.345)	-0.349 (0.247)	0.157 (0.333)
Voted 2000 Primary	0.213 (0.246)	0.188 (0.293)	0.230 (0.251)	0.122 (0.312)
Voted 1998 Primary	-0.433 (0.263)	-0.185 (0.337)	0.050 (0.265)	-0.324 (0.340)
Voted 2004 Special	-0.159 (0.229)	0.107 (0.302)	-0.282 (0.235)	-0.173 (0.297)
Voted 2002 Special	0.229 (0.261)	0.315 (0.304)	0.397 (0.262)	-0.304 (0.299)
Voted 1999 Special	0.201 (0.260)	0.292 (0.337)	0.449 (0.273)	0.823 (0.369)
HD 14	-0.242 (0.275)	0.491 (0.345)	0.052 (0.287)	0.183 (0.377)
HD 21	-0.201 (0.320)	0.268 (0.378)	-0.052 (0.321)	0.345 (0.395)
HD 30	0.002 (0.293)	-0.110 (0.357)	0.128 (0.312)	-0.290 (0.381)
HD 49	0.001 (0.303)	0.113 (0.336)	-0.274 (0.292)	-0.149 (0.373)
Cut 1	-1.141 (0.441)	-0.285 (0.491)	-1.063 (0.462)	-0.663 (0.534)
Cut 2	-0.578 (0.437)	0.375 (0.490)	-0.603 (0.459)	0.331 (0.533)
N	307	163	278	142

Numbers represent probit coefficients.

Numbers in standard errors represent standard errors.

None of the results are driven by the respondents who remained undecided after the election or voted for third party candidates. Table RA8 presents the results with these “0” category people omitted from the analysis.

**Table RA8 Table 5 Reproduced Omitting Undecideds**

	Governor	state house
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	Democrats	Independents	Democrats	Independents
Treatment	0.8 (7.8)	-41.7 (17.1)	-3.0 (9.1)	-36.2 (18.7)
Pre-survey	38.8 (5.6)	49.2 (11.9)	27.2 (6.5)	42.7 (12.0)
Age	0.0 (0.2)	0.5 (0.6)	0.1 (0.3)	1.1 (0.6)
Voted 2004 General	-0.4 (13.5)	-33.7 (30.2)	-8.8 (14.2)	-24.5 (33.8)
Voted 2002 General	-3.2 (11.1)	29.2 (25.1)	-4.6 (12.6)	13.9 (27.7)
Voted 2000 General	-22.7 (12.4)	12.9 (25.0)	-10.5 (14.1)	34.5 (28.5)
Voted 1998 General	18.0 (12.5)	-14.4 (27.4)	11.3 (14.9)	-1.6 (30.1)
Voted 2006 Primary	1.4 (8.3)	11.7 (20.3)	5.6 (9.4)	11.2 (20.8)
Voted 2004 Primary	9.3 (9.0)	-5.3 (22.3)	-3.6 (10.4)	-14.4 (25.5)
Voted 2002 Primary	8.9 (10.7)	-33.6 (26.6)	-18.5 (12.8)	-26.6 (31.3)
Voted 2000 Primary	9.2 (10.8)	17.4 (24.6)	14.0 (12.6)	-8.2 (25.6)
Voted 1998 Primary	-19.4 (11.5)	-17.3 (27.7)	4.0 (13.6)	-40.5 (29.8)
Voted 2004 Special	-11.1 (9.9)	3.6 (23.0)	-3.3 (11.3)	-4.5 (25.4)
Voted 2002 Special	10.9 (11.0)	22.3 (23.4)	15.1 (12.8)	-17.6 (25.3)
Voted 1999 Special	13.1 (11.1)	23.0 (25.3)	8.1 (13.3)	79.3 (29.4)
HD 14	-13.5 (13.1)	38.7 (28.4)	-7.5 (14.8)	5.9 (31.1)
HD 21	-15.0 (14.3)	25.8 (30.1)	-5.4 (16.4)	-9.8 (31.8)
HD 30	-13.9 (13.6)	3.9 (28.7)	-4.0 (15.3)	-33.9 (32.8)
HD 49	-10.4 (14.0)	10.1 (29.4)	-17.8 (15.7)	-47.6 (33.5)
Constant	70.7 (20.2)	10.1 (40.6)	65.4 (22.3)	13.8 (44.6)
N	273	130	249	100
R-sq	0.21	0.29	0.12	0.34

Numbers represent OLS coefficients.

Numbers in parentheses represent standard errors.