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The Vanishing Incumbency Advantage in State House Elections

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Abstract: Ninety-six percent of state legislative incumbents who appeared on the November 2022 ballot reclaimed their seats in the state legislature, the highest percentage since at least the 2010 elections. Such electoral success would suggest that these state legislators enjoyed a healthy incumbency advantage. However, prior work (e.g. Jacobson, G. C. 2015. "It's Nothing Personal: The Decline of the Incumbency Advantage in US House Elections." *The Journal of Politics* 77 (3): 861–73.) indicates that the incumbency advantage has diminished in recent elections, at least in the US House. I find similar – but smaller – declines in the magnitude of the incumbency advantage in state house elections in the last two decades. Instead of being attributable to the traditional incumbency advantage, state legislative incumbents' success in the 2022 elections is more likely a consequence of the increasing number of partisan state house districts and the continued nationalization of state politics.

Keywords: 2022 election, state legislative elections, incumbency advantage, nationalization

State legislative Democrats had reason to worry about the 2022 midterm election. It was the first midterm election during a new Democratic presidential administration, and such midterms were historically bad for Democrats. In the first midterm elections during the Clinton and Obama presidencies, Democrats lost 7 and 11 percent of the state house seats they held. The 2010 election was the worst midterm election for either political party at the state legislative level since 1922. Even before ballots were cast in November 2022, the outlook in state legislatures did not look good for Democrats. Republicans were guaranteed to win 25 percent of the state legislative races, as these contests did not have a Democratic candidate. In turn, Republicans secured majorities in at least one legislative chamber in 20 states before election day (Ballotpedia 2023).[1]

1 The comparable percentage of uncontested Democrats was 15.9%.

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Democrats lost seats in 2022, but to their relief, the losses were historically small. In the 6278 seats up for election nationwide, Democrats lost a net six seats, and Republicans gained 28 seats.[2] Democrats also held all their state legislative majorities, which had not happened in a midterm election with a Democratic president since 1934. Democrats even gained majorities in Michigan, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania. State legislative incumbents were historically successful overall, at least in the general election. Ninety-six percent of state legislative incumbents who appeared on the November ballot were reelected to the state legislature, which is the highest percentage since at least 2010, according to Ballotpedia. Only 93 Democrats (or 4.2 percent) and 83 Republicans (3.4 percent) lost their seats.

State legislative incumbents' successes reflect a well-documented regularity in American elections: the incumbency advantage. Political scientists offer many explanations for the incumbency advantage, such as legislators cultivating a "personal vote" with their constituents (e.g. Ansolabehere et al. 2000) or advantages afforded by legislative institutions (e.g. Berry et al. 2000). However, some explanations do not appear to immediately comport with voters' lack of familiarity with American politics and their legislators, particularly at the state level. For instance, given that approximately 11 percent of American voters know who their state legislator is (Rogers 2023), it would be surprising if legislators had strong personal relationships with many constituents. There is also increasing evidence of a decline in the incumbency advantage in US House elections. Jacobson (2021, 33) finds the incumbency advantage in US House elections to be "one-fifth of its value at the beginning of this century" and attributes this fall to the nationalization of American politics. However, I am unaware of a similar study of subnational elections, despite the growing evidence of nationalization of state politics (e.g. Hopkins 2018).

The following analysis draws from Jacobson's and others' insights about the incumbency advantage in US House elections to better understand why the 2022 state legislative elections brought about historically little change. When investigating state house elections since the turn of the century, I find that the incumbency advantage in state house elections has experienced a similar – but not as large – decline as in US House elections. The lack of change in state legislatures brought about by the 2022 elections was less likely the result of traditional explanations of the incumbency advantage but instead the consequence of increasingly partisan districts. In the last decade, American politics has appeared to experience another case of the "vanishing marginals," and there seems to be a strengthening of the relationship between federal and subnational voting behavior. Such findings are troubling, as they suggest state legislators' own behavior has relatively little relationship with their electoral fates.

2 These net losses and gains do not equal zero due to the filling of vacancies and Independents losing seats.

1 The Incumbency Advantage in Legislative Elections

The incumbency advantage is a long-documented phenomenon in American congressional elections (e.g. Cox and Katz 2002; King and Gelman 1991; Mayhew 1974). Empirically, the incumbency advantage is frequently defined as the difference in the vote that an incumbent party receives when this party's candidate is an incumbent versus a non-incumbent.

Early studies of the incumbency advantage in US House elections focused on how incumbents' vote shares changed over time. For example, Mayhew (1974, 304) showed that from 1956 to 1972 the number of districts where incumbents received less than 60 or 55 percent of the vote declined, which he characterized as the "vanishing marginals." Mayhew's work spurred debate for decades, enriching our understanding of the sources of the incumbency advantage (e.g. Fiorina 1977; Goidel and Shields 1994; Jacobson 1987). Even today, the importance of marginal districts is not lost on congressional Republicans, who earned a slim majority in the US House in the 2022 elections. When reflecting on these elections, US Representative Peter King told *The Atlantic*, "The only reason [Speaker of the US House of Representatives] Kevin McCarthy has the majority is because of the very close marginal seats that Republicans won in New York … We can lose all of them in the next election" (Berman 2023).

More recent research shows that the incumbency advantage persists in US House elections but also notably reveals that the magnitude of the incumbency advantage has substantially lessened. For example, Jacobson (2015, 2021) found that the incumbency advantage in US House elections reached a relatively high point of 12 percent in 1986 but fell to 8 percent in 2000. And in the 2020 elections, Jacobson found the incumbency advantage to be a mere 1.6 percent. Jacobson also shows how the decline in the incumbency advantage coincided with the rise in nationalization in American politics, as evidenced by decreased ticket-splitting in US House and presidential elections along with a decline in party voting in US House elections (Jacobson 2015, Figures 4 and 2). Carson et al. (2019, Figure 1) further demonstrate that the correlation between US House vote and presidential vote generally increased from approximately 0.6 in the 1970s to over 0.9 in the 2010s.[3] Together, these works provide evidence that the incumbency advantage is not as strong as it used to be, and this decline is possibly due to the nationalization of American politics.

3 Carson et al. (2019) also estimate the direct and indirect effects of the incumbency on U.S. House elections and show that the decline in the incumbency advantage is concentrated within the direct effects of incumbency.

1.1 The Vanishing Marginals in State House Elections

There is also a well-documented incumbency advantage in state legislative elections (e.g. Berry et al. 2000; Fowler 2016; King 1991), but we know less about how the advantage for state legislative incumbents has changed over time, at least in more recent elections. For instance, in the 1990s, Weber et al. (1991) found a decline in marginal districts from 1950 to 1986, similar to the vanishing marginals found in congressional elections. To update this work through the 2022 elections, Figure 1 illustrates the percentage of "marginal" and "close" state house races that featured an incumbent (Klarner 2021). I define a marginal district as one where the two-party vote was between 40 and 60 percent and a close race as one where the two-party vote was between 45 and 55 percent. When interpreting Figure 1, marginal races then include close races. For these and the analyses below, I only consider even-numbered year state house elections where only one candidate could win.

Over the last 50 years, the percentage of marginal incumbent state house races declined and somewhat rebounded. Within the considered elections, there were the most marginal races in the early 1970s, with approximately 32 percent of seats being "marginal." Consistent with Weber, Tucker, and Brace's findings, Figure 1 shows that the percentage of marginal races declined into the 1980s, where approximately 19 percent of state house races were marginal in 1988. However, in the 1990s and 2000s, the percentage of marginal incumbent races began to rebound slowly. From 1994

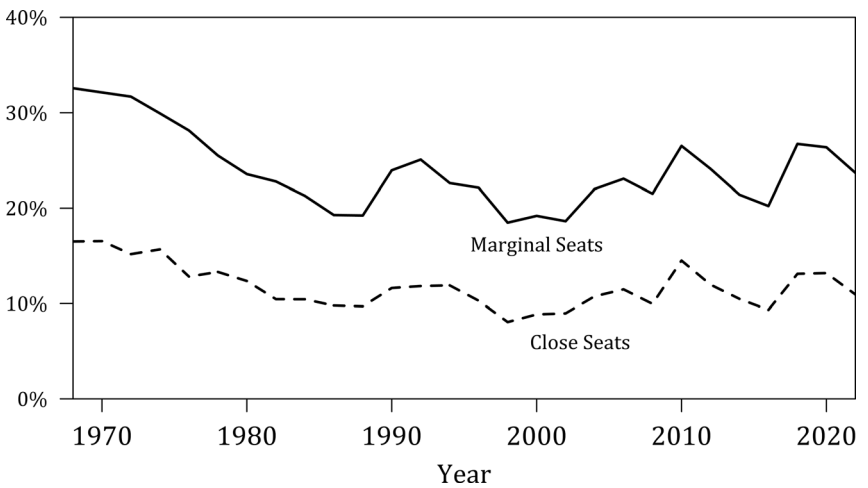

Figure 1: Marginal and close incumbent state house races. The percentage of incumbent state house races that were "marginal," where the two-party, state house vote share was between 40 and 60 percent, or "close," where the two-party, state house vote share was between 45 and 55 percent.

until 2008, the percentage of marginal races varied from 18 to 23 percent. In the 2010s, the 2016 elections featured the fewest percentage of marginal races (20.2 percent), and the 2018 elections featured the most (26.7 percent).

In the 2022 elections, 23.7 percent of incumbent races were marginal. This percentage is less than the 24 percent average over the previous 50 years and slightly lower than the percentages of marginal races during the first midterms of the Obama (26.5 percent) or Trump presidencies (26.7 percent). If marginal races reflect vulnerability, it is surprising that relatively few incumbents lost in 2022 when almost a fourth of races were marginal.

It additionally is important to consider that the above analyses do not include all districts but only those where an incumbent sought reelection. As discussed in greater detail below, incumbents may strategically decide to retire, altering our estimates of the incumbency advantage (e.g. Cox and Katz 2002). Similarly, challengers may be selective and not challenge a sitting incumbent, thereby increasing an incumbent's two-party vote share outside the marginal range. For example, the peak levels of marginal races in state house elections (Figure 1) occurred in an era when there were relatively more contested seats in state legislative elections (e.g. Burden and Snyder 2021).

To partly avoid issues of strategic retirement or challenger entry, Figure 2 offers an alternative characterization of competitiveness and illustrates the distributions of the two-party presidential vote by state house districts for the last four main sets of

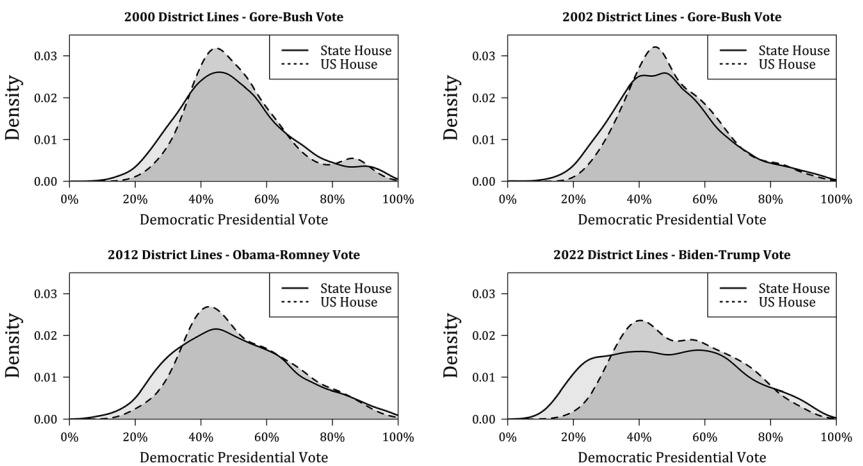

Figure 2: Distributions of district-level presidential vote in US and state house districts. The distributions of presidential vote in US House and state house districts. Titles of each panel indicate the district lines and presidential vote considered.

Table 1: Percentages of partisan, leaning, and close state house districts.

District lines	Vote	Partisan republican	Leans republican	Close districts	Leans democratic	Partisan democratic
2000	Gore – Bush	28.5%	12.7%	24.6%	9.7%	24.5%
2002	Gore – Bush	30.5%	12.8%	24.3%	9.7%	22.7%
2012	Obama – Romney	30.8%	10.7%	19.8%	9.0%	29.6%
2022	Biden – Trump	35.5%	8.3%	15.4%	8.6%	32.2%

district boundaries in 2000, 2002, 2012, and 2022.[4] Solid lines outline the densities for state house districts, and dashed lines outline densities for US House districts. The top left panel shows these distributions for districts used in the 2000 election. Here, the density plots largely peak in the more marginal range. However, the bottom right panel focuses on the 2022 election and shows how the distribution of state house districts is relatively spread, reflecting fewer marginal districts. The 2022 elections also featured more heavily partisan districts at the state level (lighter density) compared to the federal level (darker density).

Using the data in Figure 2, I classify districts as close, leaning, or partisan in Table 1. "Close" districts are those where presidential candidates won between 45 and 55 percent of the vote. In "leaning" districts, one of the two major party presidential candidates won between 55 and 60 percent of the vote. Compared to the classifications in Figure 1, marginal districts would be the combination of "leaning" and "close" districts. "Partisan" districts are those where one of the major two political parties received at least 60 percent of the presidential vote.

When evaluating the partisanship of 2022 state house districts, findings in Table 1 suggest American politics again seems to have a case of the "vanishing marginals." Focusing on "leaning" state house districts, approximately 22 percent of districts leaned towards one of the two major political parties in 2000 and 2002. However, in 2012 this fell to 20 percent, and by 2022, only 17 percent of districts leaned toward one of the two major political parties. Together, this was a net loss of 5 percent. Similarly, there were 9 percent fewer "close" state house districts in the 2022 election as compared to the 2000 election. These declines in leaning and close districts led to a substantial rise

4 Presidential election results by state legislative district for 2000 districts were collected by the author. Data for 2002 districts were provided by the National Coalition for Effective Campaigns. Data for the 2012 districts was provided by DailyKOS. Data for the 2022 districts was provided by Tausanovitch and Warshaw (2013). Rogers (2023) provides more detail about 2000 the 2016 data used in this manuscript's analysis. Despite these data collection efforts, presidential vote by state legislative district is not available for all states in all years. For each year, at least 40 states are included in the above analyses. Main conclusions do not change when restricting analyses only to state where data is available for all years.

in partisan districts.[5] In 2000 and 2002, approximately 53 percent of districts were partisan. By 2012, this figure was 60 percent, and by 2022, this figure rose to 68 percent.

1.2 Consequences of Partisan State Legislative Districts

State legislative districts became more partisan for reasons such as gerrymandering (e.g. Stephanopoulos and McGhee 2015) or voters geographically sorting (e.g. Brown and Enos 2021). For readers specifically interested in the 2022 redistricting, I recommend Warshaw, McGhee, and Migurski's (2022) excellent discussion of the processes behind the 2022 redistricting and the partisan fairness of the new redistricting plans. Whether due to new district lines or voters moving, legislators representing a partisan instead of marginal districts have substantial implications for state legislative elections, even before the general election occurs. In *Accountability in State Legislatures*, I more thoroughly examine the importance of district partisanship, as measured by presidential vote, in state legislative elections from 2001 to 2020. Focusing on incumbent retirement, I find a standard deviation or 13 percent change in district-level partisanship towards the incumbent party increases the probability that a legislator will run for reelection by 0.019 (Rogers 2023, Table 2.4). I also discover incumbents are less likely to survive the primary or face major party challengers. A standard deviation increase in presidential vote increases the probability that an incumbent faces a primary challenger by at least 0.045 (Rogers 2023, Table 8.2) or loses their primary election by at least 0.006 (Rogers 2023, Table 8.3). Such a change in partisanship also decreases the predicted probability that an incumbent faces a major party challenger by 0.114 (Rogers 2023, Table 3.2).[6] If these past patterns persist, the partisan districts of 2022 will have substantial implications on elites' behavior over the next decade, even before voters cast their ballots.

When voters cast their ballots in these future state elections, they will likely be doing so with nationalized partisanship. Caughey and Warshaw in *Dynamic Democracy*

5 Consider that the 7.3 percent increase in the number of partisan districts from 2012 to 2022 came from a 2.8 percent decrease in leaning districts and a 4.4 percent decrease in marginal districts. Even if every leaning district became a partisan district, at least 1.6 percent of districts shifted from marginal to partisan.

6 The present manuscript focuses on the 2022 general elections. However, the 2022 elections featured competitive primary elections, at least by state legislative standards. According to Ballotpedia, 22 percent of Democratic incumbents faced a primary challenger, and 3 percent of Democratic incumbents lost their primary election. The competition was even stiffer for Republicans. A third of Republican incumbents faced a primary challenger, and 6.2% lost their primary election. Overall, primary challengers defeated 69 Democratic and 160 Republican incumbents, which is the highest number since at least 2010, according to Ballotpedia. The red wave in the 2022 elections then appeared to hit shore during the primary instead of the general election.

impressively study 1.6 million survey respondents from 1936 to 2019 to better understand how Americans' partisanship varies across the country. They find that the label "Democrat" has come increasingly to have the same ideological meaning everywhere in the country; the same is true of the label "Republican" (Caughey and Warshaw 2022, 46; see also Hopkins 2018, chp. 3), reflecting an ideological nationalization of partisanship. A single national and state-level partisan identity is potentially troublesome for accountability and representation in American legislatures. For instance, if a voter relies on their partisanship to make decisions in state legislative elections, their choices in *state* elections are potentially influenced by national affairs.[7]

2 The Incumbency Advantage and Nationalization from 2000 to 2022

Even with the growing number of partisan districts and the nationalization of partisanship, it is unknown if Jacobson's findings concerning the changes to the incumbency advantage at the federal level also emerge in states. To better determine whether this is the case, I follow Jacobson (2015) and use a modified version of the Gelman-King index (1990) to estimate the incumbency advantage in US House and state house elections from 2000 to 2022. Jacobson's (2015, 862) modification to the original index replaces "the lagged Democratic vote with the Democratic presidential candidate's share of the major party vote in the district in the current or, for midterms, previous election," allowing redistricting years (e.g. 2002, 2012, and 2022) to be included in the analyses. Specifically, I estimate the following model using OLS regressions for each presidential and midterm election year.

$$\text{Vote}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{PresidentialVote}_i + \beta_2 \text{PartySeat}_i + \beta_3 \text{Incumbency}_i + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

Vote_i =		Two-party State House Democratic Vote Share
Presidential Vote_i =		Two-party presidential Democratic vote share in district
PartySeat_i =	{	1 if the Democrat holds current seat −1 if the Republican holds current seat
Incumbency_i =	{	1 if Democratic incumbent runs for reelection −1 if Republican incumbent runs for reelection 0 otherwise

7 There would be less concern if all the state Democratic and Republican parties held similar positions. However what it means for a the typical state legislator to be a Democrat or Republican in Massachusetts is far different than what it means in Mississippi (Shor and McCarty 2011).

As characterized by Jacobson (2015, 862), "[t]he coefficient on the incumbency variable under this modification is derived from a comparison of how incumbents fare compared to candidates for open seats, given the district's partisan composition (measured by presidential vote) and previous party occupancy." Jacobson shows that for House elections, these measures correlate well with the traditional Gelman-King index or "sophomore surge" approaches to measuring the incumbency advantage.

For my analyses of state house elections, a team of devoted research assistants collected the 2022 state house election results for 40 states.[8] I exclude the following states for the reasons listed in parentheses: AK (Ranked Choice Voting); AZ, MD, NH, VT (Multi-Member Districts); LA (Two-Stage Primary); NE (Non-Partisan Elections); NJ, VA, MS (no 2022 state house elections). For the 2000–2020 elections, I use data collected by Carl Klarner and others (Klarner 2021). I exclusively focus on elections that elect a single legislator and, for consistency in the samples, exclude each of the states above when studying state house elections for all years. To measure *Incumbency* and *PartySeat* variables and identify who incumbents are or which party held a seat before the election, I use roll calls collected by Shor and McCarty (2011) or a candidate's incumbency status, as indicated by Klarner. The district-level presidential vote variable is the same as that described above.

I also conduct comparable analyses of US House elections from 2000 to 2022, using data generously shared by Gary Jacobson or Carlos Algara (Algara and Bae 2023). For my state and US House analyses, I focus on contested races, which I define by whether each major two-party candidate received at least 5 percent of the vote. Focusing on contested races again introduces biases, as challengers may strategically decide to avoid strong incumbents. Similarly, weak incumbents may not seek reelection, particularly after redistricting. I encourage readers to consider these biases when interpreting the results below.

2.1 The Declining State House Incumbency Advantage

Since the 2000 election, there has been a steady decline in the magnitude of the incumbency advantage in American legislative elections. Figure 1 illustrates the size of the incumbency advantage in state house and US House elections over the last 22 years. Black circles reflect year-specific estimates of the incumbency advantage in US House elections (β_3 in Equation (1), see Table A1 for estimates), and the black line represents the loess curve of these estimates. Extending Jacobson's analyses, the

8 Due to the publication schedule of the special issue, the collected 2022 state house results were not always the "certified" results. Results for all districts, however, include at least 99 percent of precincts.

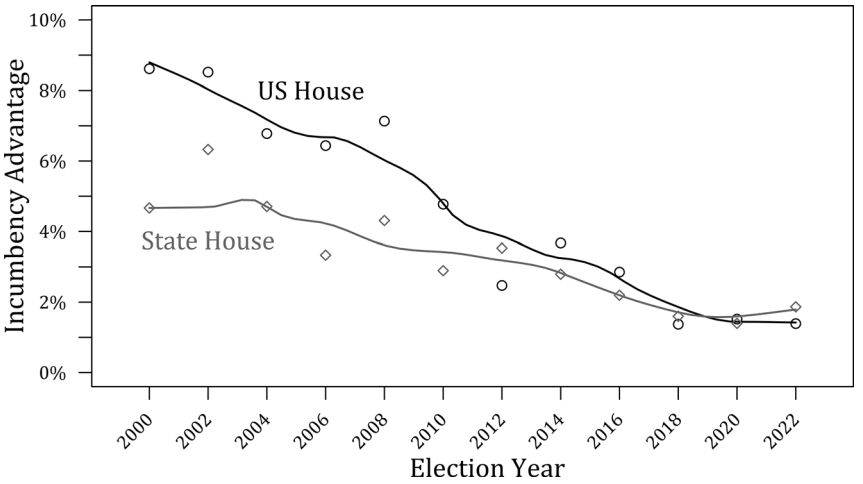

Figure 3: Incumbency advantage in US house and state house elections. The estimated incumbency advantage in US house (black circles) and state house (gray diamonds) elections. OLS estimates are available in Tables A-1 and A-2.

incumbency advantage declines from approximately 8.6 percent in the 2000 election to 1.4 percent in 2022. This decline amounts to roughly an 84 percent decrease in the magnitude of the incumbency advantage during this time.

A similar declining pattern emerges in state house elections. The gray points in Figure 1 are like the black points but illustrate the magnitude of the incumbency advantage in state house elections from 2000 to 2022 (see Table A-2 for estimates). The largest advantage for state house incumbents occurred in the 2002 state house elections, where statistical analyses predicted that incumbents received 6.3 percent more votes than non-incumbents. However, the state house incumbency advantage was less than 2 percent in the 2020 and 2022 elections.[9] From 2000 to 2022, the magnitude of the incumbency advantage in state house elections declined by 70 percent.

2.2 Growing Nationalization of State House Elections

Given how small the incumbency advantage was in the 2022 state house elections, the traditional incumbency advantage is unlikely to have played a significant role in

9 Supplementary analyses suggest that the incumbency advantage in the 2022 elections was also no stronger in professionalize legislatures or in states where there are more reporters devoted to covering state government.

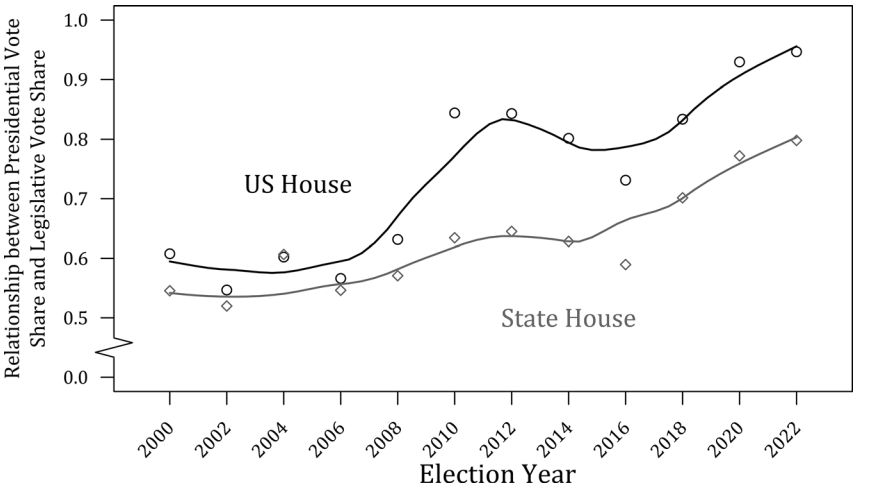

Figure 4: Incumbency advantage in US house and state house elections. The linear relationships between district-level presidential vote and US house (black circles) or state house vote (gray diamonds). Estimates are available in Tables A-1 and A-2.

why so few incumbents lost their seats. As discussed above, Jacobson's and others' recent studies of the incumbency advantage show how vote shares in US House elections have become more strongly correlated with presidential vote shares. Figure 4 helps illustrate this correlation by plotting the coefficient on the *PresidentialVote* measure (β_1 in Equation (1)). The black circles represent the predicted linear increase in Democratic US House vote share associated with a 1 percent increase in the vote for the Democratic party's presidential candidate in the most recent presidential election. From 2000 to 2008, the estimated magnitude of the relationship between presidential vote and US House vote ranged from approximately 0.54 to 0.63. From 2010 to 2018, this range increased to be between 0.73 and 0.83. And in the 2020 and 2022 elections, the strength of the relationship between presidential and US House vote shares exceeds 0.90, reaching a new high of 0.95 in the 2022 elections.

Similar, albeit weaker, nationalization appears in state house elections. The gray points in Figure 4 are like the black points but reflect estimates of the linear relationship between vote shares in state house elections and presidential vote. From 2000 to 2008, the estimated magnitude of the relationship between presidential and state house vote ranged from 0.52 to 0.60. From 2010 to 2018, the range was 0.58 to 0.70, and in 2020 and 2022, the strength of the relationship was at least 0.77. These relationships are not as strong as those found in federal elections but are consistent with prior research that show there is a strong relationship between national politics and outcomes in state legislative elections (e.g. Chubb 1988; Rogers 2016; Zingher and Richman 2019).

3 Discussion

Conventional wisdom was that the president's party was going to lose legislative seats at the national and state levels in the 2022 elections, but to the surprise of many, there was relatively little change in the overall control of seats in federal and state legislatures. The lack of change is further surprising given the declines in the incumbency advantage in US House and state house races (Figure 3). However, it appears that incumbents likely did not need the incumbency advantage to win as much as they did in the past, especially if they ran in one of the increasingly available partisan districts. These districts combined with the increasing nationalization of American state politics meant that legislators seeking reelection likely enjoyed a "partisan" instead of an "incumbency" advantage.

The above analyses suggest that the incumbency advantage declined in state house elections. However, I again caution readers that, like most studies of the incumbency advantage, the present study is subject to selection effects (Cox and Katz 2002). For example, in 2000 and 2002, approximately 47 percent of state house incumbents who ran for reelection did so in a district where their party received at least 60 percent of the presidential vote. In 2012, this percentage rose to 57 percent, and then 63 percent of in 2022. To explain why so few incumbents lost in 2022, it may be a story that incumbents simply ran more often in safe districts, and there were more safe partisan districts in 2022 than in any election since at least 2000 (Figure 2, Table 1). But even in this story, district partisanship keeps incumbents in office and not what the incumbent did for their constituents or a special advantage of incumbents.

These early analyses of the 2022 elections provide insight into why there was so little change in the 2022 elections, but there is certainly more to the explanation of why incumbents were so successful. I look forward to future work more thoroughly examining how incumbency and district partisanship shaped both the elites' decisions to run for office and voters' decisions at the ballot box. Jacobson and others show there is a decline in the incumbency advantage in the US House due to nationalization, but why is this the case? And can the impacts of nationalization be thwarted? The "laboratories of democracy" again provide unique opportunities to scholars to answer these questions. States offer great variation, such as in institutional contributors to the incumbency advantage, which has been shown to diminish the effects of nationalization on state elections (Berry et al. 2000). The states then provide the opportunity to understand better how to make nationalization vanish itself, which is likely a good thing for state politics.

Appendix

Table A1: Incumbency advantage in US house elections.

	2000	2002	2004	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016	2018	2020	2022
Incumbent	8.613*	8.516*	6.780*	6.438*	7.134*	4.774*	2.474*	3.677*	2.854*	1.372*	1.520*
	(1.164)	(1.220)	(0.987)	(1.071)	(1.026)	(0.811)	(0.709)	(0.771)	(0.661)	(0.470)	(0.373)
Presidential vote	0.608*	0.547*	0.602*	0.566*	0.631*	0.844*	0.843*	0.802*	0.731*	0.834*	0.930*
	(0.029)	(0.032)	(0.027)	(0.031)	(0.027)	(0.021)	(0.020)	(0.027)	(0.020)	(0.017)	(0.012)
Party seat	3.670*	4.348*	4.735*	3.849*	2.596*	1.665*	2.551*	1.585*	3.371*	1.360*	0.880*
	(1.133)	(1.188)	(0.955)	(1.077)	(0.992)	(0.772)	(0.671)	(0.766)	(0.668)	(0.465)	(0.378)
Constant	20.461*	22.172*	21.834*	27.618*	20.528*	1.344	8.334*	6.609*	13.293*	11.399*	2.482*
	(1.557)	(1.648)	(1.352)	(1.579)	(1.465)	(1.152)	(1.085)	(1.419)	(1.104)	(0.903)	(0.615)
Observations	369	349	363	375	378	406	384	358	367	391	404

This table reports the results of linear regressions in which the dependent variable is the Democratic vote share in contested US House elections. Standard errors in parentheses. $^{*}p < 0.05$.

Table A-2: Incumbency advantage in state house elections.

	2000	2002	2004	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016	2018	2020	2022
Incumbent	4.667*	6.328*	4.708*	3.334*	4.310*	2.895*	3.533*	2.793*	2.197*	1.598*	1.397*
	(0.354)	(0.396)	(0.327)	(0.324)	(0.316)	(0.321)	(0.284)	(0.344)	(0.298)	(0.211)	(0.213)
Presidential vote	0.546*	0.520*	0.607*	0.546*	0.571*	0.634*	0.645*	0.628*	0.590*	0.701*	0.772*
	(0.012)	(0.015)	(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.008)
Party seat	5.674*	3.585*	3.908*	5.587*	4.498*	5.119*	3.288*	4.015*	5.061*	3.636*	3.082*
	(0.326)	(0.330)	(0.294)	(0.298)	(0.287)	(0.289)	(0.247)	(0.324)	(0.274)	(0.202)	(0.209)
Constant	24.667*	24.838*	22.211*	28.201*	22.808*	13.090*	19.509*	16.429*	21.027*	17.875*	10.494*
	(0.631)	(0.747)	(0.571)	(0.601)	(0.620)	(0.611)	(0.552)	(0.636)	(0.475)	(0.385)	(0.399)
Observations	2146	2094	2224	2266	2195	2442	2220	2074	2148	2569	2420

This table reports the results of linear regressions in which the dependent variable is the Democratic vote share in contested state house elections. Standard errors in parentheses. $^{*}p < 0.05$.

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