

# FLORIDA POLITICAL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 16  
SPRING  
2005

A Journal of the Florida Political Science Association

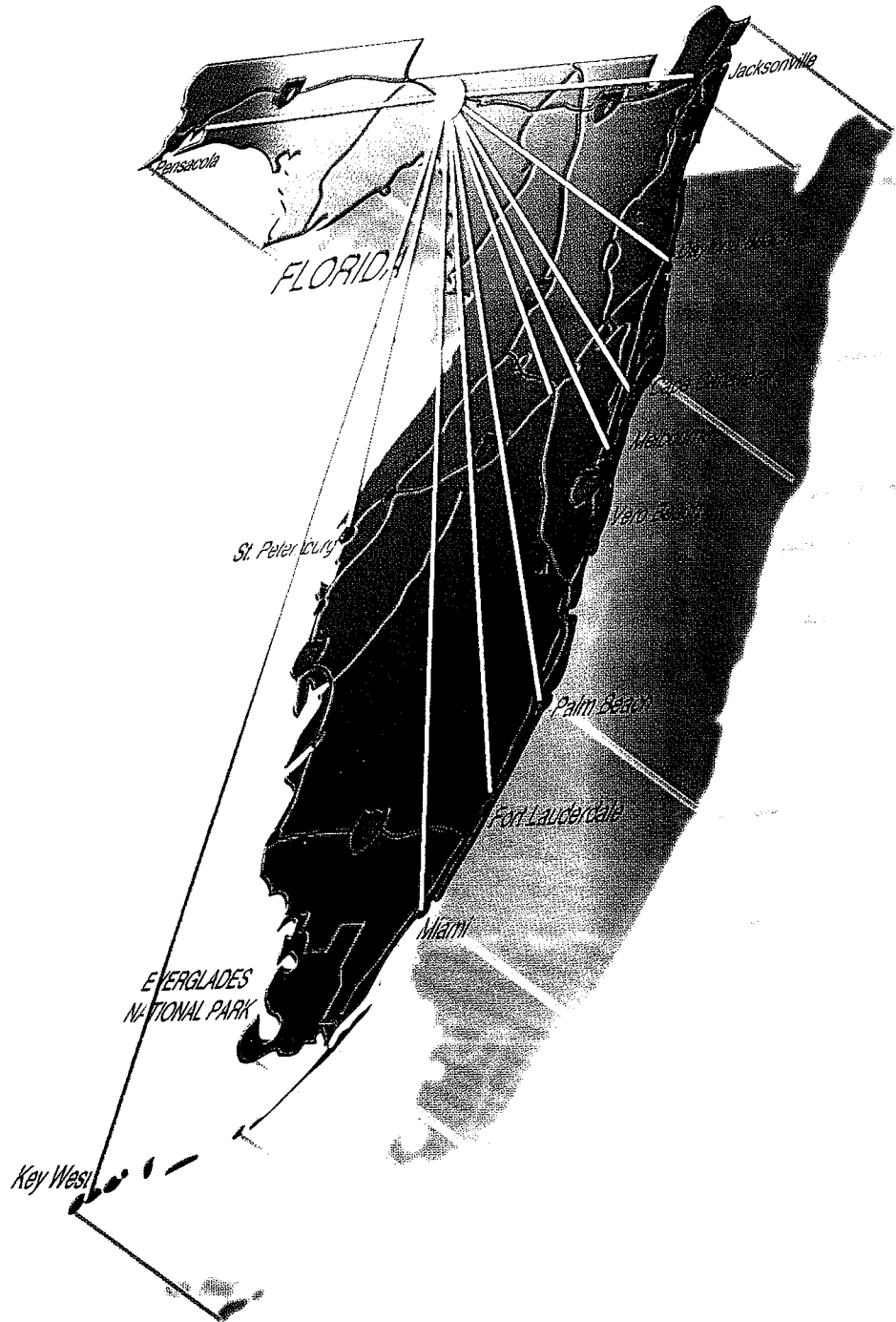




Table of Contents

- 01 Save Our Homes or Save Our Mansions?: Impact of Florida's  
Amendment 10 as Public Policy  
Pamela Pearson Mann and Theodore J. Stumm
- 11 Women Follow Different Paths to the Florida Legislature: A Look at  
the Class of 2002-2004  
Susan A. MacManus  
Assisted by Brittany L. Penberthy
- 31 Understanding State Legislative Electoral Competition: The Case of  
Florida 1988-2002  
Scot D. Schraufnagel
- 43 Registering Jail Inmates in Orange County: A Personal Account  
A Research Note  
Terri Susan Fine
- 49 Book Review: The Myth of Representation and the Florida Legislature:  
A House of Competing Loyalties, 1927-2000 by Eric Prier.  
Review by Kevin M. Wagner

---

## Florida Political Chronicle - Editorial Board

J. Edwin Benton  
University of South Florida

Michael E. Milakovich  
University of Miami

John Bertalan  
Hillsborough Community College

Dario Moreno  
Florida International University

Richard C. Feiock  
Florida State University

Hudson Reynolds  
St. Leo University

Terri S. Fine  
University of Central Florida

Robert P. Watson  
Florida Atlantic University

Aubrey Jewett  
University of Central Florida

Jonathan P. West  
University of Miami

Gary Maris  
Stetson University

Pamela Zeiser  
University of North Florida

## Florida Political Science Association

### Officers of the Association

President: David Hedge, University of Florida  
First Vice President: Alka Sapat, Florida Atlantic University  
Second Vice President: Matthew T. Corrigan, University of North Florida  
Secretary/Treasurer: J. Edwin Benton, University of South Florida

### Executive Committee

Barbara Giles, Florida Southern College  
Michael Lenaghan, Miami-Dade Community College  
Marsha Matson, University of Miami  
Dario Moreno, Florida International University  
Anita Pritchard, Florida Atlantic University  
Robert Watson, Florida Atlantic University

### Ex-Officio

Terri Susan Fine, University of Central Florida, Newsletter Editor  
Henry B. Thomas, Editor-in-Chief, *Florida Political Chronicle*  
Richard C. Feiock, Florida State University, Past President

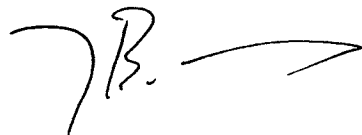
Dear Reader,

Thanks for reading the *Florida Political Chronicle*. It has been my great fortune to serve as editor-in-chief during the transition of the journal to the *Florida Political Chronicle*. I have been impressed with the number and quality of Florida-focused papers we are now receiving. However we continue to seek articles. The *Florida Political Chronicle* is a peer-reviewed publication with manuscripts anonymously reviewed by at least two external referees. Manuscripts should be no more than 30 double-spaced pages in 12-point Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins and follow standard APA style. For more information regarding the journal's manuscript requirements and submission policy, please refer to our Information for Contributors section.

*Florida Political Chronicle* says farewell to an old friend. With this issue, we mark the passing of an era -- Professor Gary Maris' retires as Secretary/Treasurer of the Florida Political Science Association. Gary has served in that position for almost a quarter of a century. He has been the constant in FPSA for a generation of Florida political scientists. We will miss Gary's steady hand and economic managing of the association's resources. Our readers join me in sending warm regards and thanks for your many years of service to FPSA.

I, and the editorial staff, would like to thank the FPSA and Dean Mark Workman at the University of North Florida for their financial support.

Once again, thank you for reading the *Florida Political Chronicle* and please continue to send Florida-focused papers and manuscripts.



Henry B. Thomas  
Editor-in-Chief

---

## Save Our Homes or Save Our Mansions?: Impact of Florida's Amendment 10 as Public Policy

Pamela Pearson Mann, Assistant Tax Assessor, St. Johns County, Florida  
and Theodore J. Stumm, University of North Florida

Florida's Amendment 10, a property tax limitation amendment, was approved by the voters in 1992 as a result of an initiative petition to protect the state's lower- and fixed-income residents from large increases in property tax levies as a result of market increases. Implemented in 1994, the amendment has been the target of criticism from many quarters: that it has significantly reduced the tax base for local governments, that it benefits only the wealthy whose property values increase more rapidly, and that it has substantially increased the use of special assessments to make up for revenues lost in ad valorem taxes. This paper uses data from assessment roll years 1995 through 1999 to examine the effectiveness of the policy outcomes to date of the Save Our Homes amendment in terms of benefits to homeowners and revenue impacts on county governments. Initial analysis points to policy ineffectiveness because the amendment is regressive in nature, failing to provide the intended relief for lower- and fixed-income residents and resulting in greater than anticipated revenue shifts for local governments in Florida. The implications of these findings are significant in terms of future ad valorem tax policy and revenue generation capacities of Florida's local governments.

In 1992, 54% of Florida's voters passed Amendment 10 or "Save Our Homes" (see Appendix) to the Florida Constitution. Amendment 10 was drafted as an initiative petition by the Lee County Property Appraiser in response to public outcry for tax relief. The "Save Our Homes" Amendment was initially promoted as a means to protect the homestead property of Florida's lower- and fixed-income residents. The wisdom of enacting such legislation through public forum will be up for debate in perpetuity. As Bowman and McCaffery suggest regarding California's Proposition 13, the complexity of such a sweeping change,

"provide(s) a lesson in the hazards of fiscal policymaking through direct voter participation" (1978, p. 247.)

Supporters of Amendment 10 point to two reasons why it is needed. One is that assessments are rising too rapidly and some homeowners cannot afford the increasing tax burden. The other is that these rising assessments provide local governments with increasing revenues – and spending – without accountability. (Wenner, 1992 p.1)

Proposed to benefit only those properties receiving homestead exemption, the general argument endorsing the legislation has been that too many speculators had driven the housing market beyond common folks' means: People who own real estate solely to have a place to live should be protected from rampant market increases. Conversely, those playing the market game (namely owners of commercial or high end) should bear the burden of their potential profitability. Therefore Amendment 10 would provide a *shifting* of the tax burden, keeping the tax base healthy and protecting lower- and fixed-income taxpayers.

Implemented in 1994, the "Save Our Homes" Amendment has now been sarcastically termed by critics as "Save Our Mansions." Many maintain that one of the least regressive state taxes has seemingly become one of the most. Prior to its implementation, Florida law provided for "fair and equitable" (F.S. 193.011) assessments for all properties. Exemptions and land classifications had perverted the system somewhat, but the actual assessments were still based purely on value. Adversaries to Amendment 10 contend that it takes all equity out of the process. Additionally, preliminary data indicated that Amendment 10 would significantly slice Florida's tax base for local governments, which are largely dependent upon ad valorem taxes. The cost of services to accommodate the current

population and ongoing steady influx of new residents has already caused local budgets to stretch almost to the breaking point despite the current strong economy. At the same time, most millage rates are fast-approaching their statutory caps. Per Article VII, section 9(a) of The Florida Constitution and Florida Statute 200.071, a municipality may levy a maximum of 10 mills for the general purpose of government. Any levy in excess of the Constitutionally-mandated 10 mills must be authorized by law. Leashing of ad valorem taxes by Amendment 10 may further exacerbate the fiscal stress under which these local governments are operating.

Given the controversy over the effectiveness of Amendment 10, and the fiscal stress experienced by local governments in Florida, two questions require an answer. First, does Amendment 10 provide the ad valorem tax relief its endorsers envisioned for lower- and fixed-income home owners, saving their homes, or provide disproportionate relief to upper-income homeowners, saving their mansions? Second, were original estimates of revenue loss or shift due to Amendment 10 accurate? This study answers these questions using data from the first five years of Amendment 10's implementation.

### Setting the Stage

Although this study is not intended to be a study of the ad valorem tax structure, to understand the parameters and setting in which Amendment 10 operates some basic tenets of the ad valorem structure and its importance, currently and historically, need explication. Ad valorem taxes have long been a prominent fixture of local government financing (Bahl, 1984; McCaffery, 1984; Ingram, Petersen & Martin, 1991; Mikesell, 1995). Increasing pressures from national and state governments for local areas to fund themselves keep property taxes important in the local government arena (Lewis, 1994; Cnaan & Perlmutter, 1995; Rafuse, 1995). "Property taxation has been a major source of government revenue at the state or local level in the United States since colonial times. Even now, it is far and away the largest source of local government tax revenue" (Bell & Bowman, 1991, p. 85). Florida is no exception. Without a state income tax, the ad valorem tax has provided a great resource for local and intergovernmental spending for years. The preponderance of general obligation bond-funded debt has also depended on the ad valorem structure. What, then, defines an ad valorem tax?

"An *ad valorem* tax is based on the principle that the amount of tax paid should depend on the value of property owned" (Eckert, 1990, p.3) and, "The assessed value of property is normally based on...its market value" (Shea-Joyce, 1992, p.148). Because of these premises, the ad valorem system of taxation was, for many years, considered to be one of the fairest and least regressive taxes. As expressed by Jewette Farley (1997):

This tax, which was a system of taxing property according to its value, was a very good way for local governments to finance their citizens' needs.... It met the criteria of a 'good tax'... fair, easy to collect, based on ability to pay, and very stable. This system was alive and well for many years and served the purpose for which it was intended. pp. 57-60

The relative equity of the system has not prevented taxpayers from an advancing hatred of property taxes (Bowman & McCaffery; Eckert, 1990; Bell & Bowman; Fisher, 1997). While arguably more equitable than other tax forms, the ad valorem structure had challenges of its own. The methodology poses one set of problems. Among them, difficulty for the assessors such as locating and assessing all property in a jurisdiction or determining assessed values (Eckert, 1990). A second set of challenges include elasticity. For example, inherent to the system is a lag-time between actual market increases and their reflected impact. This has clearly been the case in Florida's healthy real estate market. A 1993 study conducted by the Education and Research Foundation of the Florida Real Estate Commission (Diskin & Sirmans) determined that properties on the high end of market activity have the potential to out-pace assessment values while the values of those on the low end are more stable. In Florida's rapid growth environment, keeping up with values that increase exponentially in very short periods of time has been a formidable task for county property appraisers. The legal mandate of using historical (existing) data to set values in lieu of speculative data exacerbates the predicament.

Property taxes present a peculiar dilemma. If assessors follow the common practice of raising assessment more slowly than property values are rising, the tax is inelastic.... If assessors are aggressive in revaluing property,... then the property tax is elastic, but this emphasizes one of the most unpopular features of the property tax—it taxes unrealized capital gains and burdens those on fixed or slowly rising incomes. (Fisher, 1997, pp.40-46)

Besides inherent glitches in the system, external political forces have played a major part in the evolution of ad valorem taxation. The political nature of the budget process (Wildavsky, 1988), coupled with taxpayer resistance against any type of tax increase (Rosen, 1993, p.1) have clearly affected ad valorem tax policy decisions. Pressure from constituents has frequently put political leaders at odds with the whole issue of property taxation. The outcry of the masses is for administrators to give them "more bang for the buck" (Gaebler & Osborne, 1991) by providing increased services with the same or less money. Once again, the political climate in Florida has reflected the national sentiment. In the days before Amendment 10's passage, Reese stated that, "(n)o other segment of the (Florida)



em of taxing property  
 very good way for local  
 citizens' needs.... It met  
 fair, easy to collect, based  
 ble. This system was alive  
 served the purpose for  
 57-60

ystem has not prevented  
 atred of property taxes  
 1990; Bell & Bowman;  
 ore equitable than other  
 ure had challenges of its  
 :set of problems. Among  
 rs such as locating and  
 diction or determining  
 .second set of challenges  
 herent to the system is a  
 creases and their reflected  
 : case in Florida's healthy  
 udy conducted by the  
 ation of the Florida Real  
 irmans) determined that  
 market activity have the  
 values while the values of  
 : stable. In Florida's rapid  
 : with values that increase  
 :iods of time has been a  
 erty appraisers. The legal  
 (ing) data to set values in  
 es the predicament.  
 ular dilemma. If assessors  
 ice of raising assessment  
 values are rising, the tax is  
 : aggressive in revaluating  
 erty tax is elastic, but this  
 unpopular features of the  
 ealized capital gains and  
 r slowly rising incomes.

in the system, external  
 or part in the evolution of  
 ical nature of the budget  
 ed with taxpayer resistance  
 (Rosen, 1993, p.1) have  
 policy decisions. Pressure  
 ly put political leaders at  
 erty taxation. The outcry  
 s to give them "more bang  
 orne, 1991) by providing  
 or less money. Once again,  
 has reflected the national  
 Amendment 10's passage,  
 segment of the (Florida)

registered voter population turns out for elections in greater numbers than homeowners, so...property tax limitation...should pass with overwhelming majority" (1992, p.1).

Such grass roots attitudes reflect voter inclination, and those vying for elected office have listened. Public rhetoric from local government officials was summarized in a recent report published by the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities stating that, "overdependence on the property tax is reducing quality of life..." (Youngman, 1996, p. 32). While many mutations of the initial ad valorem system can be illustrated, the generally accepted pinnacle of ad valorem tax insurrection is embodied in California's Proposition 13 (Bowman & McCaffery, 1978). Defined rudimentarily, Proposition 13, which passed with approval of 64.7 % of the California electorate,

set(s) the maximum property tax rate at 4 percent of assessed value, limits to no more than 2 percent per year the assessed value increase for any real property with unchanged ownership, and requires that both state and local tax increases receive two-thirds approval. (Bowman & McCaffery, 1978, p. 248).

Although differences in methodology and administration between the two enactments are more numerous than any similarity, the fundamental intent (ad valorem tax relief) of both Florida's Amendment 10 and California's Proposition 13 is the same. Accordingly, no discussion of the policy impact of Amendment 10 or any other attempt at ad valorem revision would be complete without at least a mention of its benchmarking predecessor and subsequent spawn.

Following Proposition 13's installation in California, other states also made attempts to limit both taxation and expenditures. Notable among these, Massachusetts' Proposition 2<sup>1/2</sup> and the Idaho initiative were the most similar to Proposition 13, while others in Oregon and Michigan were designed primarily to limit spending (Gatzlaff, 1994, p.6). Most recently Georgia voters approved new ad valorem tax limits. Amendment 10 is merely the Florida approach to tackling the long-standing controversy surrounding ad valorem taxation. As seen in its manuscript, "Save Our Homes" did not attempt to lower millage rates or cap the amount of actual tax dollars paid. It was directed solely at restricting increases in assessed values.

From the foregoing it is apparent that Amendment 10 was adopted and implemented in the middle of a political and policy hotbed. The passage of time has not reduced the level of controversy surrounding its effectiveness in achieving its stated goals of primarily benefitting lower-and fixed-income homeowners. Nor has it blunted the criticism that Amendment 10 is creating revenue losses and shifts far beyond initial estimates to the detriment of Florida's local governments.

**Five Years of Amendment 10**

Enacted in 1992, Amendment 10 was implemented using 1994 as the base year. Several studies provided estimates of the amendment's impact on both citizens and the ad valorem tax revenues of local governments. Now that the amendment has been in force for five years, it is possible to examine the actual impact of the measure and compare these results with earlier studies to answer the questions posed earlier: Did Amendment 10 provide the ad valorem tax relief envisioned by its proponents? And were initial estimates of revenue loss or shift due to Amendment 10 accurate?

The data used in this study were provided by the Florida Department of Revenue and consists of two extensive data bases. The first is the Florida DOR 12D8 NAL 1995-1999 File for sixteen counties in Northeast Florida. The data in this file include the "just values" and "assessed values" for 61, 267 homes in Northeast Florida. The just value is the market value of the home according to the eight criteria imposed by Florida statute (F.S.193.011). The assessed value is the value of the home for ad valorem tax purposes based on the requirements of Amendment 10. The difference between these two figures is the "assessment differential" generated by the amendment.

The significance of this data base is that all of the homes listed have received the Florida homeowners' exemption of the first \$25,000 of value and thus qualified for limited assessments in every year since Amendment 10 was implemented. This allows an enumeration of the tax differential received on these homes, by year and in total, to determine the annual and cumulative effects of the ad valorem tax limits which would not be possible using data from homes which had not enjoyed the homestead exemption over the whole period. Ideally such data from the entire state would be desirable, however, problems in coding and recording made data from Florida's other counties questionable. Because this data base was used only to compare assessment differentials between several classes of homes based upon their 1995 just value, and because the effects of Amendment 10 is consistent across the state, the lack of data from other counties is not considered a limitation on this study. One additional comment concerning this data base is necessary; because, while all of the homes listed were under the homestead exemption for all five years, some of the homes may have been sold during the five-year period reducing their assessment differential slightly. Again, while this may result in slightly conservative estimates of assessment differential, it does not invalidate the results for comparison purposes.

The second data base used was extracted from the Florida DOR Ad Valorem Tax Section files for 1995 through 1999. This data base contains the average assessment differential for all Florida counties for each of the five years in question. When combined with county

and school district millage rates from the Florida DOR Data Books, 1995 through 1999, this data provides a measure of revenue shift or loss for the state's counties and school districts. Although similar data on municipal and other local governments was not available, the data on hand is sufficient for this study's purposes.

#### Effects on Homeowners

Amendment 10 was touted as benefitting the lower- and fixed-income homeowners of the state by effectively capping the rate at which their ad valorem taxes could increase due to market conditions and appreciation of the value of their homes. This cap would remain in effect as long as they owned the home and claimed the homeowner's exemption allowed by Florida law. In examining the effects of the cap, several points are evident concerning homeowner benefit in terms of assessment differential.

Table 1 shows the average ad valorem tax assessment differential for 61,266 homes which qualified for the state homestead exemption continuously since the implementation of Amendment 10. The assessment differential is the difference between the homes' "just" value, the value against which ad valorem taxes would be applied after subtracting the homestead exemption without Amendment 10, and their "assessed" value, the limited value resulting from the limits set by the amendment.

Table 1  
Average Ad Valorem Assessment Differential by  
1995 Just Value (in Dollars)(16 County Sample)

1995 Just Value	No. of Homes	95 Avg Diff	96 Avg Diff	97 Avg Diff	98 Avg Diff	99 Avg Diff
<25,000	4,299	177	550	961	1,573	1,909
25,001-50,000	16,864	449	1,120	1,427	2,108	2,824
50,001-75,000	21,221	597	1,298	1,474	2,120	3,628
75,001-100,000	10,032	1,129	1,745	2,255	3,114	4,692
100,001-250,000	8,312	2,370	3,585	4,559	6,517	9,858
>250,000	538	9,080	11,719	17,098	23,351	38,161
ALL	61,266	929	1,671	2,109	3,025	4,485

Source: Florida Dept. of Revenue 12D8 NAL File, 1995-99.

Homeowners in all classes are receiving benefits from the provisions of amendment 10. Those in the lowest category, with homes valued at \$25,000 or less in 1995, received an annual average differential of \$1,034. In general, those whose homes had 1995 just values of \$75,000 or less received only moderate assessment differentials. These homes comprised 68.7% of the sample, yet received significantly less than the typical assessment differential in any year. Homes valued at over \$75,000, on the other hand, received differentials far in excess of the average, and homes over \$250,000 received over 8.2 times the average

differential benefit.

A second point shown by the data is that the assessment differential increased each year for all classes over the five year period. However, the *rates* of change were very uneven reflecting market variations between the various groups. These changes are shown in Table 2.

The lowest group shows a steady increase in differentials until 1999 when their benefit was nearly halved. In contrast, homes valued between \$25,000 and \$250,000 all show a drop in differentials between 1996-97 followed by steady and, in the case of homes valued between \$100,000 and \$250,000, somewhat spectacular increases thereafter. Homes valued at over \$250,000 show steady, large growth each year with a slight slowing in the rate of increase between 1997-98. The average changes shown in the last column of Table 2 reiterate that while owners of lower valued homes do benefit, the owners of homes valued over \$100,000 clearly have benefitted disproportionately; more than twice that of the benefits for other homeowners.

The last example of the effects of Amendment 10 on the state's homeowners is shown in Table 3. This table shows the average change in just value and assessed value over the first five years of Amendment 10 and the change in assessed value as a percent of change in just value, a measure of regression, for homes in the same price ranges as shown before.

Table 2  
Average Change in Assessment Differential by Year  
(in Dollars)(16 County Sample)

1995 Just Value	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	95-99 Avg
0-25,000	373	550	612	336	433
25,001-50,000	671	317	681	716	596
50,001-75,000	701	176	646	1,508	758
75,001-100,000	616	510	859	1,578	891
100,001-250,000	1,215	974	1,958	3,341	1,872
>250,000	2,639	5,379	6,253	14,810	7,270
ALL	742	438	916	1,460	889

While homeowners in the lowest home value group experienced the lowest percentage of assessed value change per dollar of just value increase, Table 3 clearly points out one of the failures of Amendment 10—its increased regression compared to the basic ad valorem tax structure which preceded it. Homeowners with homes in the center range of home valuation clearly benefit less than those on either end of the scale while the highest value bracket homeowners pay less than the average. Although the figures presented in Table 3 may partially reflect slower increases in home value changes in the middle value ranges,



the data is that the  
 each year for all classes  
 the rates of change were  
 consistent between the various  
 Table 2.  
 steady increase in  
 benefit was nearly halved.  
 \$25,000 and \$250,000  
 between 1996-97 followed  
 homes valued between  
 spectacular increases  
 \$250,000 show steady,  
 slowing in the rate of  
 change changes shown in  
 that while owners of  
 owners of homes valued  
 and disproportionately;  
 or other homeowners.  
 of Amendment 10 on  
 Table 3. This table shows  
 assessed value over the  
 the change in assessed  
 value, a measure of  
 price ranges as

Differential by Year  
 Sample)

	98-99	95-99 Avg.
2	336	433
11	716	596
16	1,508	758
19	1,578	891
8	3,341	1,872
3	14,810	7,270
6	1,460	889

est home value group  
 assessed value change  
 Table 3 clearly points out  
 Amendment 10—its increased  
 valorem tax structure  
 homes in the center  
 benefit less than those on  
 highest value bracket  
 average. Although  
 partially reflect slower  
 middle value ranges,

Florida's unparalleled growth over the same period would suggest that slower growth in these ranges will persist even in a slower economy, further exacerbating the regressive nature of the Amendment 10 provisions.

In sum, Florida homeowners of all home value levels are benefiting from the ad valorem tax assessment limitation provisions of Amendment 10. However, it is clear that those with higher valued homes are benefiting to a far greater extent. Amendment 10 may be "saving our homes," but it is clearly also "saving our mansions". These results confirm the earlier Florida Department of Revenue study conclusion that the effects of Amendment 10 would be contrary to the principles of vertical equity and promote regressivity (Florida Department of Revenue, 1995).

Table 3  
 Average Change in Just Value and Assessed Value,  
 1995-1999 (in Dollars)(16 County Sample)

	Average Change		Change in Assessed Value as percent of Just Value Change	
	95 Just Val	95-99 Just Val		95-99 Assd Val
<25,000		2,509	776	30.9
25,001-50,000		4,395	2,019	45.9
50,001-75,000		5,058	3,287	65.0
75,001-100,000		7,799	4,237	54.3
100,001-250,000		13,848	6,360	45.9
>250,000		49,012	19,931	40.7
ALL		7,037	3,481	49.5

Source: Florida Dept. of Revenue I2D8 NAL File, 1995-99.

Effects on Local Government Revenues

Three studies early in the history of Amendment 10 concerned themselves largely with the effect of the amendment on local government revenues. The Florida Department of Revenue conducted a study which addressed the first year impact of Amendment 10 and also used Monte Carlo modeling to estimate 10 and 20 years projections of its impact. The Florida Real Estate Commission had two studies of the amendment conducted because of Proposition 13's negative impact on the California real estate market to the extent that it provided, "incentives for households to stay in their existing house" (O'Dell and Smith, 1994, p. 25). Of these two studies, one (Gatzlaff, 1994) addressed questions of the differences in counties which supported the amendment versus those which did not, the likely differences in assessed values of comparable housing over time, and the impact of the redistribution of property taxes. The other, by O'Dell and Smith (1994), compared Amendment 10 with California's Proposition 13 and focused on its effects on school funding.

Of the three studies, the Florida Department of

Revenue study provides the best basis for comparison of forecast and actual effects on local government revenue in the first five years of Amendment 10's implementation. Its projections for the end of the 10th year of Amendment 10 are compared to data from the Department of Revenue's Ad Valorem Tax Files for 1995-1999 in Table 4.

The five-year assessed value change of \$53.4 billion exceeded the state's ten year projections by nearly \$10 billion. While much of this increased change is due to property values rising more rapidly than expected in the state, the magnitude of the change subsequently signals an increased shift or loss of revenues for local governments at a much greater rate than anticipated. In fact, the actual five-year revenue shifts (or losses) for only counties and school districts nearly exceed total Department of Revenue predictions for the ten-year point. As stated earlier, millage rates were not readily available for municipalities and other local governments precluding accurate estimation of the revenue shifts or losses accruing to these entities. However, like county millage rates, those for many of Florida's cities are approaching the ten mil constitutional limit, so revenue shifts for cities can be said to be close to those for counties. If so, five-year actual revenue shifts far exceed the Department of Revenue ten-year projection. The details of these revenue shifts are contained in Table 5.

County and School district revenue shifts have increased steadily since the implementation of Amendment 10. School district shifts are greater because they have higher average millage rates than do counties. However, school districts are at a greater disadvantage when facing loss of revenue because they have fewer alternative revenue sources in which to shift the burden than do cities or counties.

In fact, revenue losses for school districts would be greater had their average millage rate not fallen in response to increased state support resulting from greater than expected state general fund revenues. This support may not be long-lived as the economy weakens, however, forcing school districts to seek voter approval for increases—a venture which is unlikely to succeed in many school districts because of voter resistance to any tax increase and the high incidence of elderly on fixed incomes who resist increases for education. Details of county and school district millage rates are shown in Table 6.

As can be seen, county millage rates continue to edge up reflecting their continuing fiscal stress despite the booming economy. Much of this stress comes from the rapid growth experienced throughout the state requiring counties (and most other local governments) to increase the amount of services they must provide to residents. School district millage rates show a mixed history, with most of the total decrease occurring in 1999, in response to the factors outlined above.

Proponents of Amendment 10 point to the moderate changes in millage rates as evidence that local governments are experiencing little loss of revenue from the amendment.

Table 4  
Comparison of Florida Dept. of Revenue 10 Year Projections  
and Actual Five Year Changes in Assessed Value and Revenue Shifts  
(in Dollars)

	DOR 10 Year Projection	Actual Five Year Results
Assessed Value Change	\$-43.6 Billion	\$-53.4 Billion
Tax Revenue Shift	\$-942.2 Million	\$-826.6 Million*

Sources: Florida DOR Study, 1995; Florida DOR Ad Valorem Tax Files, 1995-99  
\* County and School District Revenues only.

However, as mentioned previously, statewide tax bases have grown dramatically during this initial five-year period along with demands on local governments quite possible deferring millage rate increases which may have been required with a less robust economy. The statewide revenue shift in 1999 of over \$20 billion reflects how rapidly the gulf between market values and assessed values under Amendment 10 has widened. To supporters this is evidence of the amendment's success, a point with which those who are enjoying the large deferrals agree.

Conversely, local governments have traditionally not reduced millage rates in response to a prosperous economy because of the difficulty of securing voter approval for subsequent increases when the economy weakens. However, whether or not millage rates would have fallen without Amendment 10 is not the point. What is clear is that the ever-growing shift in revenues caused by Amendment 10 has thus far exceeded projections by a significant amount the real questions which remain are: What will happen when Florida's market values begin to level off? Will Florida go the way of California, or will modifications to Amendment 10 be needed to allow the state to continue to thrive?

Table 5  
Revenue Loss/Shift for School Districts and Counties  
in Florida, 1995-99 (in Dollars)

	School Districts	Counties	Total
1995	36,622,545	22,933,635	59,556,180
1996	55,184,721	39,899,976	95,094,697
1997	82,546,214	62,766,830	145,313,044
1998	128,980,976	90,081,367	219,062,343
1999	178,369,649	129,257,789	307,627,438
Total 1995-99	481,704,105	344,939,597	826,643,702

Source: Florida Dept. of Revenue Ad Valorem Tax Files, 1995-99. Florida Dept of Revenue Data Books, 1995-99.

### Conclusions and Recommendations

Florida's Amendment 10 was approved and implemented despite controversy over its anticipated effects on homeowners and local government revenues. Now that

five years of data are available to demonstrate the actual impact of this ad valorem tax limitation measure, the results are becoming clearer. In regard to its effect on homeowners, it can be said that although it is somewhat effective in limiting ad valorem tax increases for all homeowners who qualify for the homestead exemption, Amendment 10 has greatly increased the regression of the state's property tax system. Lower-income and fixed-income homeowners can point to meaningful differentials between just, or market value and actual assessments under Amendment 10. Whether these differentials are sufficient to allow lower- and fixed-income homeowners to retain their homesteads as the amendment's proponents claim is still not evident. However, what is evident is that homeowners whose homes have greater value receive disproportionate benefits compared to the state's majority of homeowners who have homes valued less highly. Thus, the answer to "save our homes" or "save our mansions" may be both, but weighted heavily in favor of the mansions.

The effects of Amendment 10 on local government revenues are clearer. Revenue shifts or losses accruing to local governments are far greater than anticipated. Based on the first five years of data, actual revenue losses at the ten-year point could outstrip initial projections by a factor of three or more. These losses are accelerating even as the economy weakens and local governments are straining to meet the demands of continuing and accelerating growth. Continued revenue losses for school districts have the potential to have a negative effect on the state's school system much like that which resulted from California's Proposition 13. Given the demonstrated reluctance of voters to approve tax increases, local governments will have to become more innovative in their search for alternative revenue sources, something which is much harder for school districts and other single-purpose local governments to accomplish.

What, then, can be done to ease this situation and make the reality of Amendment 10 match its promise? Because it is a constitutional amendment, any real change will have to go through the state constitutional amendment approval process, a long and often uncertain procedure. However, given the adverse effects of Amendment 10 for both homeowners and local governments, such an effort would be worthwhile if it resulted in meaningful change for the better.

Table 6  
Average Actual Florida County and School District Millage Rates  
and Annual Change (in Mills)

Year	County	Change	% Change	School Dist	Change	% Change
1995	7.6129	--	--	9.0380	--	--
1996	7.6640	0.0511	0.67	9.1422	0.1042	1.15
1997	7.7443	0.0803	1.05	8.9605	-0.1817	-1.99
1998	7.6160	-0.1283	-1.66	9.0214	0.0609	0.68
1999	7.7542	0.1382	1.81	8.6613	-0.3601	-3.99
Total	--	0.1413	1.86	--	-0.3767	-4.17

Source: Florida Dept. of Revenue Data Books, 1995-1999.

The major change needed to restore Amendment 10 to a true "save our homes" amendment requires addressing its regression. This could be accomplished by applying a sliding scale to the assessment differentials allowed homes of differing values. Such a scale would set increasing caps on the amount of assessed value increase allowed for more highly valued homes. Assessment increases for homes on the lower end of the value scale may be capped at 3%, whereas the most expensive homes might be capped at 8%. This would effectively reverse the current regression and restore the principle of vertical equity to the system.

A second change would be a "circuit breaker" provision which would allow local governments to increase their millage rates without further voter approval if their revenue losses under the amendment amounted to a specific percentage of their total locally generated revenue. The increased revenue resulting from the sliding scale of assessment differentials may obviate the need for this provision, but its inclusion would be reassuring to local governments and may secure their stronger support for changing the amendment.

Finally, continued examination of the actual effects of Amendment 10 is clearly in order, both by the Florida Department of Revenue and by independent researchers. A major contribution in this area would be implementation of a reporting and data analysis system which would provide more accurate and comprehensive data on the effects of Amendment 10. Future changes in the state's economy and population growth dictate the need to be constantly aware of how they affect Florida's homeowners and local governments.

#### References

- Bahl, R. (1984). The growing fiscal and economic importance of state and local governments. In Albert C. Hyde (Ed.), *Government budgeting: theory, process, politics*, (2nd ed., 251-264). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Bell, M. E., & Bowman, J. H. (1995). Financing local government. In John E. Petersen and Dennis R.

Strachota (Eds.), *Local government finance concepts and practice*, 85-111. Chicago: GFAO.

Bowman, J. H., & McCaffery, J. (1984). The growing fiscal and economic importance of state and local governments. In Albert C. Hyde (Ed.), *Government budgeting: theory, process, politics*, (2nd ed., 240-250). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Cnaan, R. A., & Perlmutter, F. D. (1995). Entrepreneurship in the public sector: the horns of a dilemma. *Public Administration Review*, 55(1), 29-47.

Diskin, B. A. & Sirmans, G. S. (1993). Property tax inequities: an examination of major Florida metropolitan areas. Education and research foundation of the Florida real estate commission.

Eckert, J. K., (Ed.). (1990). *Property appraisal and assessment administration*. Chicago: IAAO.

Farley, J. (1997). Once upon a time there was a property tax. *Assessment Journal*, 4(1), 57-60.

Fisher, G. W. (1997). Some lessons from the history of the property tax. *Assessment Journal*, 4(3), 40-46.

Florida Constitution, Millage limitations, Section 9(a), Article VII.

Florida Constitution 4(c), Article VII, Amendment 10, "Save our homes," (1992).

Florida Department of Revenue. (1995). *Fiscal impact of the "save our homes" amendment: evidence from the first year of application*. (Available from the Florida Department of Revenue, 5050 West Tennessee Street, Building K, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0100).

Florida Statutes, Chapter 193, Section .011, Assessment of property.

Florida Statutes, Chapter 200, Section .071, Millage limits.

Gaebler, T., & Osborne, D. (1991). *Reinventing government: how the entrepreneurial spirit is transforming the public sector*. New York: Addison-Wesley.

Gatzlaff, D. (rev. 1994). *An analysis of the recently enacted "save our homes" amendment: its potential impact on the Florida real estate market*. (Available from the

ve Year  
illion  
\*million\*

to demonstrate the actual  
itation measure, the results  
its effect on homeowners,  
is somewhat effective in  
s for all homeowners who  
nption, Amendment 10  
ion of the state's property  
ixed-income homeowners  
rentials between just, or  
nents under Amendment  
re sufficient to allow lower-  
to retain their homesteads  
claim is still not evident.  
omeowners whose homes  
s proportionate benefits  
of homeowners who have  
s, the answer to "save our  
may be both, but weighted

t 10 on local government  
is or losses accruing to local  
anticipated. Based on the  
enue losses at the ten-year  
ctions by a factor of three  
ating even as the economy  
are straining to meet the  
erating growth. Continued  
have the potential to have  
ool system much like that  
Proposition 13. Given the  
rs to approve tax increases,  
ecome more innovative in  
resources, something which  
s and other single-purpose

to ease this situation and  
nt 10 match its promise?  
endment, any real change  
onstitutional amendment  
ten uncertain procedure.  
cts of Amendment 10 for  
vernments, such an effort  
ed in meaningful change

- Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation)
- Hyde, A. C., Ott, J. S., & Shafritz, J. M. (1991). *Public management: the essential readings*. (pp. 60-61). Chicago: Nelson-Hall.
- Ingram, R. W., Petersen, R.J. & Martin, S. W. (1991). *Accounting and financial reporting for governmental and nonprofit organizations: basic concepts*. (pp. 128-139). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Lewis, C. W. (1994). Budgetary balance: the norm, concept and practice in large U.S. cities. *Public Administration Review*, 54(6), 515-524.
- McCaffery, J. (1984). The growing fiscal and economic importance of state and local governments. In Albert C. Hyde (Ed.), *Government budgeting: theory, process, politics* (2nd ed., pp. 251-264). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Mikesell, J. (1995). *Fiscal administration: analysis and applications for the public sector*. (4th ed.). New York: Wadsworth.
- O'Dell, W. & Smith, M. T. (1994). *Save our homes amendment: an analysis of the projected impact of amendment 10 on local revenue*. (Available from the Florida Real Estate Commission Education and Research Foundation).
- Rafuse, R. W., Jr. (1995). Financing local government. In John E. Petersen and Dennis R. Strachota (Eds.), *Local government finance concepts and practice*, (pp. 9-27). Chicago: GFAO.
- Reese, C. E. (1992). State tax policy and constitutional amendments, *Ideas in action*, II (2), 1-4.
- Rosen, E. D. (1993). *Improving public sector productivity concepts and practice*, (p. 51). Newborn Park, CA: Sage.
- Sarasota County v. Sarasota Church of Christ, Inc., 667 So. 2d 180 (Fla. 1995). Aff'd. (1997).
- Shea-Joyce, S. (Ed.). (1992). *Appraisal of real estate* (10th ed.) Chicago: Appraisal Institute.
- Wenner, K. R. (1992). Research report. *Florida Taxwatch Inc.* October, 1-4.
- Wildavsky, A. (1988). The politics of reform. In Albert C. Hyde (Ed.), *Government budgeting: theory, process, politics* (2nd ed., pp. 426-438). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Youngman, J. (1996). Local property tax reform: prospects and politics. *Assessment Journal*, 3(5), 32-44.
- annually on January 1st of each year; but those changes in assessment shall not exceed the lower of the following:
- (A) three percent (3%) of the assessment for the prior year.
- (B) the percent change in the Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers, U.S. City Average, all items 1967 = 100, or successor reports for the preceding calendar year as initially reported by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.
2. No assessment shall exceed just value.
  3. After any change of ownership, as provided by general law, homestead property shall be assessed just value as of January 1 of the following year. Thereafter, the homestead shall be assessed as provided herein.
  4. New homestead property shall be assessed at just value as of January 1st of the year following the establishment of the homestead. That assessment shall only change as provided herein.
  5. Changes, additions, reductions or improvements to homestead property shall be assessed as provided for by general law; provided, however, after the adjustment for any change, addition, reduction or improvement, the property shall be assessed as provided herein.
  6. In the event of a termination of homestead status, the property shall be assessed as provided by general law.
  7. The provisions of this amendment are severable. If any of the provisions of this amendment shall be held unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, the decision of such court shall not affect or impair any remaining provisions of this amendment.

Article VII of Constitution of the State of Florida Am. By Initiative Petition filed with the Secretary of State August 3, 1992; adopted 1992.

## Appendix

### Amendment 10 to the Florida Constitution

(c) All persons entitled to a homestead exemption under Section 6 of this Article shall have their homestead assessed at just value as of January 1 of the year following the effective date of this amendment. This assessment shall change only as provided herein.

1 Assessments subject to this provision shall be changed

# Women Follow Different Paths to the Florida Legislature: A Look At The Class Of 2002-04<sup>1</sup>

Susan A. MacManus  
University of South Florida  
Assisted by Brittany L. Penberthy

In Florida and across the U.S., women have failed to capture as many state legislative seats as expected following the enactment of term limits and the latest round of redistricting. Candidacy rates have flattened out, or even fallen, prompting scholars to reexamine the recruitment process. This in-depth study of the 40 women serving in the Florida Legislature in 2002-04 details the relative role of political parties, political interest groups, social, service and religious organizations, professional networks, friends and family, personal experiences and circumstances, the growing allure of local offices, and the media in the recruitment process. Data were gathered via a mail survey, interviews, campaign contribution reports, and professional association and government websites. Open seats, safe districts, resource availability (money and time), as well as the efforts of professional colleagues, friends, and neighbors were judged to be the most important factors promoting recruitment. But there is some evidence that state and local party organizations are becoming more involved in the female recruitment process due to the growing number of women party leaders and staffers.

### Florida: An Intriguing Case Study

In 2000, legislative term limits took effect. In 2002, the Florida Legislature redrew the Senate and House district boundaries following the release of the 2000 U.S. Census. Overall, women gained far fewer seats than expected following term limits and redistricting (Carroll & Jenkins, 2003; MacManus, 2004a). Similar patterns were observed across the U.S. prompting a number of scholars to begin research to find out why. We agreed that the search for answers should begin with in-depth analysis of recruitment in our respective states.<sup>2</sup> The focus of this article is

the recruitment of Florida's 40-member female class of 2002-04.

The Sunshine State's highly competitive political landscape makes it a particularly intriguing case study. Numerical party parity in each house was reached on January 6, 2004 when a Republican woman was elected via a special election to fill a House vacancy.<sup>3</sup> (See Figures 1 and 2.) This made Florida the only state with an equal number of female Republicans and Democrats leading some to label it the "20-20" state. However, female Democratic state legislators still made up twice as large a proportion of their party's legislative delegation in each chamber as their Republican peers. (See Table 1.)

Table 1  
Women as Percent of  
Party Delegation in Each Chamber:  
March 2004

	Women as % of Republicans	Women as % of Democrats
Senate	19.2	35.7
House	18.5	38.5

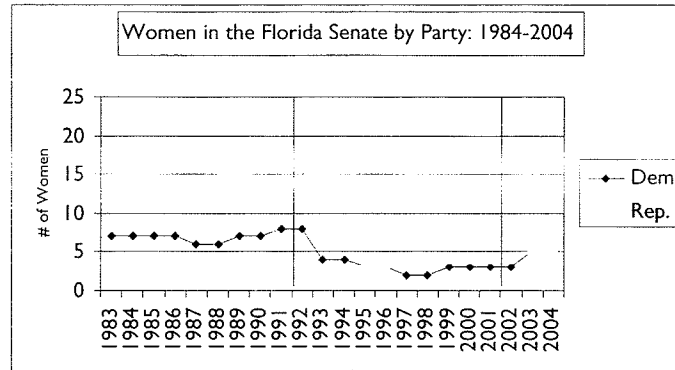
Sources: myflorida.com; 2004 Know Your Legislators (Associated Industries of Florida).

### The Study

This study examines the extent to which various factors, ranging from personal circumstances to party and organizational involvement, affected the recruitment of Florida's female state legislators, Class of 2002-04.

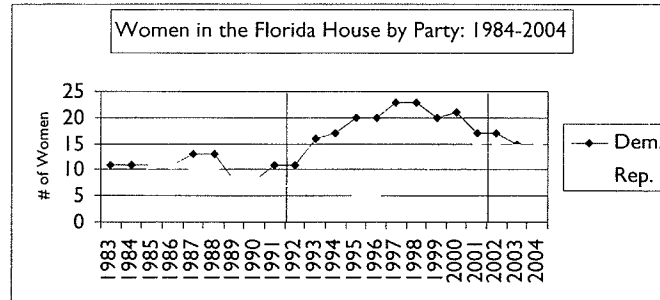
Information on the women's own recruitment experiences *the first time they ran for the state legislature* was gathered via a mail survey hand delivered on March 29.<sup>4</sup>

Figure 1



Note: Lines represent data immediately following redistricting. Democrats were in control of both houses of the Florida Legislature in 1992; Republicans in 2002. Source: Center for American Women and Politics, [www.rci.rutgers.edu/~cawp](http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~cawp); Know Your Legislators (Associated Industries of Florida, annual).

Figure 2



Note: Lines represent data immediately following redistricting. Democrats were in control of both houses of the Florida Legislature in 1992; Republicans in 2002. Source: Center for American Women and Politics, [www.rci.rutgers.edu/~cawp](http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~cawp); Know Your Legislators (Associated Industries of Florida, annual).

(The survey instrument is available from the author upon request.) In the survey, the women legislators were asked a wide range of questions about: (1) the relative effort made by various individuals and groups to recruit them (family, friends, professional colleagues and groups, state and local political party leaders, political groups, professional organizations, social and service organizations, religious and social service leaders); (2) the relative influence of experiential and structural factors on their initial decision to run (previous experience running for office, serving as a legislative aide, or attending a candidate campaign school, time and resource availability, term limits, partisan makeup of their district, presence of an open seat); (3) initial interactions with the state political party (first contact pattern, party promises of assistance); (4) trends in interest group recruitment of women state legislative candidates; (5) trends in the state political party's recruitment of women state legislative candidates; and (6) the role of the media as a "recruiter" of female candidates (through mentioning a woman as a potential viable candidate).

Data on the gender of state political party officers and staff were collected from each party's web site. The Florida Democratic Party and the Republican Party of Florida staff provided lists of the county party chairs and vice chairs. Insights into the role of women's party organizations were generated via interviews with party officials and activists as well as via web sites (national and state).

The gender composition of local governments—the potential candidate pipeline—was generated from lists posted on web sites (county constitutional officers; school boards; school superintendents) or those provided by professional associations (municipalities). Salary data were from reports published by the Legislative Committee on Intergovernmental Relations (county constitutional officers, school superintendents), correspondence from the Hillsborough County School Board office (school board), and data provided by the International City/County Management Association (city council members) and the Florida League of Cities (mayors). Campaign finance data were extracted from the Division of Elections website

(htt  
rept  
Uni  
Flor  
  
Fact  
A B  
  
affec  
follo  
facto  
but  
Poli

H1:  
less c  
more  
2001  
  
state  
becau  
many  
Mod  
conse  
state

(<http://election.dos.state.fl.us/>). State legislative reputational data were from the Florida International University Florida Poll conducted 1989 to 1992 and the Florida State Annual Policy Survey 1999-2003.

**Factors Affecting Recruitment of Women Legislators: A Brief Inventory & Overview of the Florida Setting**

The literature is rich with theories about which factors affect the recruitment of female legislative candidates. The following discussion identifies the most commonly cited factors along with others that have received less attention but warrant closer examination.

**Political Environment**

Table 2  
Ideological Leanings of Florida Voters:  
1996-2000

Ideology (Self Described)	Florida Voters		
	1996 %	1998 %	2000 %
Liberal	18	18	19
Moderate	48	49	50
Conservative	32	33	31

Source: Voter News Service exit polls.

H1: *Political ideology and culture.* Conservative states are less conducive environments for female candidacies than more moderate or liberal states (Moncrief, Squire, & Jewell, 2001, p. 25).

Florida is not a traditional conservative Deep South state (Carver, 1979; Ellis & Hawks, 1987), primarily because two-thirds of its residents were born elsewhere—many in the Midwest and Northeast (MacManus, 2004b). Moderate voters greatly outnumber liberals and conservatives (see Table 2), although there are parts of the state that are considerably more conservative than others

(panhandle, interior agricultural areas), and fewer women run from those areas.

H2: *Institutional reputation and respect.* Running for the state legislature is more appealing [than running for local posts] where the legislative is viewed more positively by the population at-large. Where there is greater animosity toward the state legislature than toward local governments (cities, counties, school boards), it is tougher to recruit women to run.

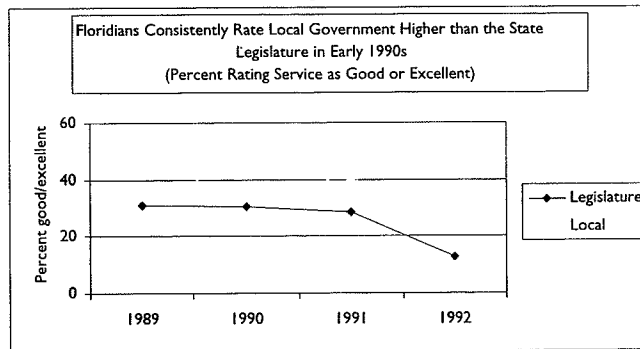
Florida's Legislature consistently lags behind local governments in citizen ratings. (See Figures 3 and 4.) This reputational gap occurs in many states but has rarely been viewed as a potential plug in the pipeline between local governments and the state legislature. It should be. (See MacManus, Bullock, Padgett, & Penberthy, 2005.)

H3: *"Safeness" of a district.* Women [and men] can be more easily recruited to run when the Senate or House district is relatively safe for their political party as measured by registration and performance (cf. Darcy, Welch, & Clark, 1994; Carroll & Strimling, 1983). Safer seats yield more candidates, especially when an open seat occurs in a state with term limits.

Florida's legislative districts must be rated *very safe* and thus are more likely to be a magnet than a deterrent for women candidates. Few are competitive. They were drawn for incumbency protection. In general, female Democrats represent "safer" legislative seats than Republican women. (See Table 3.) Specifically, African-American Democratic women represent the safest districts: a historical phenomenon related to redistricting and the attention to majority-minority districts in the 1990s (MacManus, 2002).

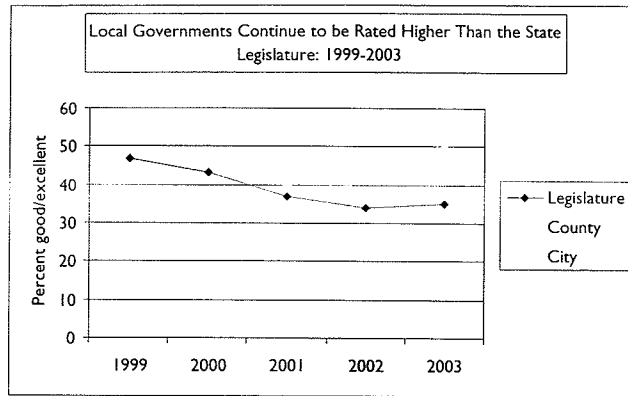
**Legal/Structural/Intergovernmental Attributes**

Figure 3



Note: Respondents were asked: "How would you rate the job that the Florida state legislature did this year—using the same system we all know from school, would you give the legislature an A,B,C,D, or F?" Excellent=A and Good=B.  
Source: J. Arthur Heise, Hugh Gladwin, and Douglas McLaughen, 1992  
FIU/Florida Poll. Miami: Florida International University Institute for Public Opinion Research, pp.111, 112.

Figure 4



Note: respondents were asked: "How would you rate the job \_\_\_\_\_ is doing? Would you say excellent, good, fair, or poor?"  
 Source: FSU Florida Annual Policy Survey, 1999-2003. Tallahassee: Florida State University, Public Opinion Laboratory.

H4: *Legislative professionalization.* Higher degrees of legislative professionalization (full-time; salary; staff) make the position more attractive and competitive. Some scholars have reported an inverse relationship between the level of professionalization and the number of women elected to legislative offices, especially among Republicans (cf. Moncrief, Squires, & Jewell, 2001. p.23).

Knowledge of the relatively low perks for state legislators may be a factor in tamping down interest in running for legislative posts in Florida. The Florida Legislature ranks tenth among the states in its level of professionalization—as measured by a state's legislative salaries, level of staffing, and session length (Moncrief, Squires, & Jewell, 2001. p. 21). Florida's statehouse is an average size (40 Senators, 120 Representatives), part-time (a 60-day regular session) legislature, with a relatively low

salary (\$29,916), and a higher-than-average level of staffing. Besides permanent staff for standing committees, each Florida Senator has two legislative aides and one administrative assistant; each Representative, one legislative aide and one administrative assistant.

H5: *Term limits.* There are two schools of thought on the impact of legislative term limits on recruitment and election of female candidates. Early studies predicted that legislative term limits would create a spike in female candidacies (and victories) because they would create more open seats (cf. Burrell, 1994; Darcy, Welch, & Clark, 1994). More recent research has found little evidence of a sharp, sustained upturn in female candidacies or electoral victories (cf. Carroll & Jenkins, 2001; Bernstein & Chadha, 2003; Carroll, 2004).

In 2000, following the imposition of term limits, the

Table 3

District Makeup and Competitiveness in 2004: Florida Female Legislators										
Elected Official	District	% Age 65 and Older 2000	% Fem. Reg. Voters 2000	Year Elected to Present Chamber	Party Affil.	Race	% Reg. Reps. 2000	% Reg. Dem. 2000	% Reg. Ind. 2000	District Competitiveness % Dem. - % Rep.
Senate Members										
Nancy Argenziano	3	31.2	54.1	2002	Rep.	w.	31.9	55.3	12.8	23.4
Evelyn Lynn	7	31.3	53.7	2002	Rep.	w.	40.1	43.3	16.5	3.2
Paula Dockery	15	27.2	53.9	2002	Rep.	w.	39	43.5	17.5	4.5
Anna Cowin	20	34.8	53.9	1996	Rep.	w.	45.4	38.3	16.3	-7.1
Lisa Carlton	23	40.8	54.2	1998	Rep.	w.	50.7	31.4	18	-19.3
Mandy Dawson	29	18.9	55.2	1998	Dem.	Afr.-Am.	16.5	68.6	14.9	52.1
Frederica Wilson	33	16.8	57.8	2002	Dem.	Afr.-Am.	14.5	72.3	133	57.8

Table 3 Continued on Next Page



Debbie Wasserman Schultz	34	17.2	54	2000	Dem.	w.	33.9	46.5	19.6	12.6
Gwen Margolis	35	29.6	54.4	2002	Dem.	w.	27.1	53.3	19.6	26.2
Larcenia Bullard	39	17.9	54.3	2002	Dem.	Afr.-Am.	25.6	57.8	16.7	32.2
House Members										
Anna "Holly" Benson	3	20.1	53.7	2000	Rep.	w.	37.8	48.8	13.4	11
Bev Kilmer	7	18.5	53.3	1998	Rep.	w.	28.7	60.8	10.5	32.1
Lorraine Ausley	9	12.8	54.4	2000	Dem.	w.	32.8	54.6	12.6	21.8
Jennifer Carroll	13	11.7	52.2	2003	Rep.	Afr.-Am.	48.2	36.9	14.9	-11.3
Audrey Gibson	15	16.5	56.1	2002	Dem.	Afr.-Am.	19.9	67.5	12.5	47.6
Joyce Cusack	27	30.9	55.7	2000	Dem.	Afr.-Am.	29.3	53	17.8	23.7
Suzanne Kosmas	28	31.8	53	1996	Dem.	w.	40.4	40.4	19.3	0
Sandra "Sandy" Adams	33	15.4	52.7	2002	Rep.	w.	46	35.3	18.7	-10.7
Sheri McInvale	36	17	54	2002	Dem.	w.	32.1	46.9	21	14.8
Heather Fiorentino	46	39.2	54.3	1998	Rep.	w.	40.2	40.8	19.1	0.6
Kim Berfield	50	30.9	55.8	2000	Rep.	w.	43.7	35.6	20.6	-8.1
Leslie Waters	51	31.9	55.3	1998	Rep.	w.	44.7	35.5	19.8	-9.2
Sandra Murman	56	13.6	52.3	1996	Rep.	w.	40.8	38.7	20.6	-2.1
Faye Culp	57	16.6	52.5	2002	Rep.	w.	40	41.3	18.7	1.3
Arthenia Joyner	59	17	58.5	2000	Dem.	Afr.-Am.	27.2	54.6	18.2	27.4
Marsha Bowen	65	31.6	54.4	2000	Rep.	w.	38.9	45.9	15.2	7
Donna Clarke	69	31.2	54.4	2000	Rep.	w.	50.2	32	17.8	-18.2
Nancy Detert	70	45.8	54.4	1998	Rep.	w.	55.2	27.6	17.2	-27.6
Carole Green	75	42.2	53.2	1998	Rep.	w.	53.5	26.3	20.2	-27.2
Gayle Harrell	81	33.4	53.2	2000	Rep.	w.	46.6	33	20.4	-13.6
Shelly Vana	85	19.2	53	2002	Dem.	w.	41.6	37.6	20.8	-4
Anne "Annie" Gannon	86	48.5	55.1	2000	Dem.	w.	27.5	53.3	19.2	25.8
Susan Bucher	88	40.6	56.3	2000	Dem.	w.	30.2	50	19.9	19.8
Mary Brandenburg	89	28	53.9	2002	Dem.	w.	34.1	44.5	21.4	10.4
Ellyn Bogdanoff	91	32.9	51.5	2004	Rep.	w.	48.2	32.3	19.5	-15.9
Stacy Ritter	96	26.1	55.2	1996	Dem.	w.	29.2	50.2	20.6	21
Nan Rich	97	8.9	51.9	2000	Dem.	w.	39.5	40	20.5	0.5
Eleanor Sobel	99	27.3	54.5	1998	Dem.	w.	28.1	54.6	17.3	26.5
Yolly Robinson	104	21.5	58.2	2002	Dem.	Afr.-Am.	12.1	73.3	14.6	61.2
Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall	109	19.9	58	2000	Dem.	Afr.-Am.	11.3	77.5	11.2	66.2

Source: Kevin A. Hill, Susan A. MacManus, and Dario Moreno, eds. *Florida's Politics: Ten Media Markets, One Powerful State*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida Institute of Government, 2004.

number of Florida women legislators elected actually fell by one—from 39 to 38 overall. (Women legislators elected to serve in the House fell from 32 to 31. The number in the Senate stayed the same—seven). In 2002, term limits led eight female Florida House members (4Ds, 4Rs) to seek Senate posts in the 2002 election cycle. Of those, five won (3Rs, 2Ds). Among the three who lost, two were Democrats<sup>5</sup> and one was a Republican. Election 2002 was

also the first under the newly-redistricted state legislature. With both term limits and redistricting in effect, the number of women in the Senate increased by three (from seven to ten) while the number in the House fell by three—from 31 to 28.<sup>6</sup> This is consistent with what other scholars have found about the impact of term limits on women state legislators—they did not create the expected boon.

H16: *Higher political ambition among local elected officials.*

Table 4

Local Governments in Florida 2004: Pipeline or Plug In the Recruitment Path to the Statehouse?				
Elected Posts	% of Women Currently in Post	Salary Range (Fiscal Year 2003-2004*) \$	Term of Office	Term Limits
Florida Legislature				
House (n=120)	25	29,916	2	Yes
Senate (n=40)	25	29,916	4	Yes
County Level				
County Commissioners (n=371)	25	20,861-84,213	4	No
School Board (n=368)	47	20,945-37,428**	4	No
School Superintendent <sup>a</sup> (n=67)	10	80,015-152,716*	4	No
Tax Collector (n=67)	49	81,644-156,168	4	No
Property Appraiser (n=67)	13	81,644-156,168	4	No
Clerk of the Circuit Court (n=67)	34	81,644-156,168	4	No
Supervisor of Elections (n=67) <sup>b</sup>	72	66,490-138,401	4	No
Sheriff (n=67)	0	89,504-164,028	4	No
Municipal Level				
Mayor (n=404)	20	\$1-\$150,000 <sup>c</sup>	2-4	Some (26%)
Council Members (n=1805)	29	\$1-29,661 <sup>c</sup>	2-4	Some (25%)

Notes: a) 44 are elected (of the 44 elected, 4 are female; of 23 appointed, 3 are women; b) 66 are elected, one is appointed (Miami Dade). The appointed Supervisor is a female.

c) The wide range of salaries of municipal officials is due to tremendous population size differences among the cities. The population of Florida's smallest city is 6; of its largest city, more than 800,000.

\* Last formula used to calculate elected school superintendent was for 2002-2003 fiscal year.

\*\* "School Board Member Salaries," 2003-2004 Commission Recommendation by the Legislative Committee on Intergovernmental Relations, October 21, 2003.

Sources: "Finalized Salaries of County Constitutional Officers for Fiscal Year 2003-2004. Pursuant to the Salary Formula in Chapter 145, Florida Statutes." Legislative Committee on Intergovernmental Relations, October 2003. Materials provided by the Hillsborough County School Board, March 2004. Term limit information for municipal officials: 2001 International City/County Management Association (Florida data); salary for council officials—ICMA. School board and constitutional officer composition from websites. Mayor and council member gender composition data extracted from list supplied by the Florida League of Cities, effective March 30, 2004.

It is easier to recruit someone who is already thinking about higher office. The traditional progressive ambition theory treats local elective offices as a rich recruiting ground for state legislative candidates—a pipeline to higher office (cf. Carroll, 1994). Earlier studies found a sizable number of female legislators previously held local offices, often a majority. But is this changing? Are local offices themselves becoming more attractive (higher salaries, fewer with term limits) and more winnable for females, putting a plug in

the pipeline? Do a state's citizens consistently rate their local governments more favorably than the state legislature, thereby enhancing the desirability of keeping local offices? If so, this may throw up a roadblock on the traditional path to higher office.

The answer to each of these questions in Florida is yes. (See Table 4.) In Florida, local offices are becoming more attractive and are beginning to plug the pipeline to the state legislature a bit.

**Personal Circumstances**

H7: *Self as Primary Recruiting Agent.* The most common hypothesis is that women are less likely than men to recruit themselves to run for the state legislature. Thus women need more external encouragement to offer themselves as candidates (Moncrief, Squire, & Jewell, 2001).

H8: *Time.* It is difficult to maintain an open mind about running for office when you have major limits on your time. Women are more likely to see time as a barrier to running than men, especially those with young children. But regardless of gender, the availability of time plays a major role in whether recruitment efforts are successful (Moncrief, Squire, & Jewell, 2001:6, 8).

H9: *Money.* The availability of resources (own, contributors) plays a major role in whether recruitment efforts are successful (Moncrief, Squire, & Jewell, 2001:6, 8).

H10: *Leadership Experience.* Holding organizational

leadership posts (political, professional, social) builds confidence. Previous studies have shown that successful candidates are more likely to have held such posts prior to running for the legislature (cf. Ellis & Hawks, 1987). Women are more likely to have been leaders of professional and social organizations than of political groups. This, too, may be changing as more women take the helm of political party organizations (especially at the state level) and various public sector boards and commissions.

The age, education, and organizational experiences of Florida's female legislators, Class of 2002-04, suggest each of these personal circumstance factors may have been important in their decisions to seek political office. As shown in Table 5, most of Florida's female legislators were over 40 years of age, had college degrees, and were employed in moderate-to-high income earning jobs. Nearly half had been active in civic and public sector boards and commissions before running—considerably more than

Table 5

Backgrounds of Florida's Current Female Legislators (April 2004)			
Characteristic	Total	Dem	Reps
Age	%	%	%
Under 40	7.5	5	10
40-64	85.0	90	80
65+	7.5	5	10
Highest Degree	%	%	%
Bachelors Degree or higher	80	80	80
Some College/Vocational	17	20	15
High School	3	0	5
Primary Occupation	%	%	%
Retired	10	10	10
Business Owner/Officer	13	5	20
Attorney	15	20	10
Educator: K-12	15	15	15
Government Employee	3	0	5
Real Estate/Insurance	10	10	10
Medical Employee	3	5	0
Farmer/Rancher	3	0	5
Consultant/Community Organizer	15	15	15
Legislator	15	20	10
Experiences Prior to Running for State Legislature			
Previous Elective			
Government Post	%	%	%
City	10	10	10
County	0	0	0
School District	10	5	15
Previous Elected			
Political Party Post <sup>a</sup>	%	%	%
State	0	0	0
County	3	0	5
Previous Experience			
as Legislative Aide/Staff	15	25	5
Previous Elected Organizational Post	8	10	5
Previous Appointed Bd/Commission Post	35	30	40

Notes:<sup>a</sup> Preliminary survey results.

Sources: Legislators' biographies ([www.myflorida.com](http://www.myflorida.com)) and mail surveys.

Table 6

Women in Florida's Democratic and Republican Party Posts (April 2004)		
Post	Democratic Party	Republican Party
Elective Posts		
State Party Chair	Male	Female
Female County Party Chairs	17/67 (25%)	12/67 (18%)
Female County Party Vice Chairs	30/67 (44%)	19/67 (28%)
State Party Staff		
Executive Director	Female	Male
Total Female State Party Staff (excluding Chair & Exec. Dir.)	10/19 (53%)	19/36 (53%)

Source: <http://www.rpof.org/action/staff.php>;  
<http://www.fladems.com/Staff.shtml>

had been involved in party organizations (See Table 5).

#### Role of Political Parties: State and Local

H11: *Political Parties as Recruiters*. Historically, studies have found that political parties play an important role in recruiting candidates (Moncrief, Squire, & Jewell, 2001; Frendreis & Gitelson, 1999; Aldrich 2000). Most studies have faulted the parties for overlooking females (cf. Sanbonmatsu, 2004; Niven, 1998) or for recruiting them to be token candidates in non-competitive districts. Parties are more reticent to actively recruit candidates, or even encourage candidacies in competitive states where few positions go uncontested, because it is seen as picking among friends and unnecessarily alienating party supporters. Thus, "To the extent that more districts become competitive, there should be less bias against women in the future" (Niven, 1998, p. 130).

Previous studies have said very little about the impact of: (1) the increasingly popular party-sponsored campaign schools; and (2) party incentives to persons they are attempting to woo as candidates (e.g. fund-raising, polling, etc.). One would surmise that candidate recruitment would be more successful when a party promises resources to a potential candidate, where that is possible, and where women recruit women.

Florida's state political party organizations are highly competitive with each other: reflective of politics in the Sunshine State. Both parties have sizable staffs in Tallahassee. Both have women in highly visible positions within their organizations. (See Table 6).

County-level party organizations have increasingly taken on a stronger role as grass-roots-level Get Out The Vote (GOTV) efforts have escalated in importance: paralleling the fast pace of Florida's emergence as a two-party state. County party organizations do not endorse candidates at the primary stage and it is unclear how large a role they play in candidate recruitment. (County party officials tend to

play a greater role in recommending persons to run in special elections to fill vacant legislative positions when they occur).

Both parties have active women's groups organized through their respective national party women's organizations. By the Spring of 2004, there were some 78 Republican Federated Women's Clubs<sup>7</sup> and 34 Florida Democratic Women's Clubs<sup>8</sup> in Florida. Like county party organizations, women's political party clubs cannot endorse candidates at the primary stage nor can they give money until after the primary. But they have provided supportive networks and forums for candidates. More recently, they have actively recruited younger members with the specific intent of grooming them to run for public office.

H12: *The Minority Party as Recruiter*. The party holding a minority of state legislative seats may recruit women candidates more aggressively than the majority party (Sanbonmatsu, 2004). The out-party needs more candidates and it is harder to get people to run for a minority seat (Nelson, 1991).

This pattern is not as clear cut in Florida as elsewhere. While Democrats are now the minority party in the state legislature, there is little evidence they have recruited women at a significantly greater pace than the Republicans. While it is true that females make up a greater proportion of the Democratic delegation, Republicans have been committed to playing the catch-up game (MacManus, 2004a).

H13: *Women in Party Leadership Posts at the County and State Levels*. Research shows that women party chairs are perceived as better recruiters of women candidates than their male counterparts (Niven, 1998, p. 132). The question is whether this has changed in more partisan competitive environments where political parties race to put "women's faces in high places" (MacManus, 2004a). There is little research examining whether women party chairs seek state legislative seats at the same rate as their male counterparts. Nor is there much research on the degree to which women's local party organizations serve as a major candidate selection

pool. However, in her seminal work *Women as Candidates in American Politics* (1985, p. 6), Carroll cautioned that "an elite active in party affairs does not constitute a particularly good measure of potential public office holding elite."

H14: *Political Party Leaders and Staff More Effective Recruiting Agents Than Women's Groups.* Early research found that women's groups played a key role in recruitment of women legislators. But more recent studies suggest that key party leaders or staff within the party are frequently more effective recruiters than women's groups (Sanbonmatsu, 2004).

H15: *Legislative Campaign Committees as Recruiters.* Legislative campaign committees are playing a larger role in candidate recruitment (Niven, 1998, p. 130) because of their superior fund-raising capacity (Sanbonmatsu, 2004). However, "they tend to emphasize the most competitive districts, offering vast sums of money to the races where the outcome is most in doubt while ignoring the vast majority of districts" (Niven, 1998, p. 130). There has been little evaluation of whether they are gender neutral in offering monetary incentives to potential candidates.

H16: *Candidate First Initiator of Contact With Party.* Early research often assumed that the initial contact between a party and a potential candidate would be made by the party. However, a more recent study by Sanbonmatsu (2004) shows that potential legislative candidates often contact the party seeking support rather than vice versa.

To date, there has been little research testing these party-centered hypotheses (H13-16) in Florida. Our survey of Florida female legislators was designed to fill this void.

#### Role of Interest Groups and Organizations

H17: *Women's Groups and PACs as Recruiters.* Women's groups play a vital role in recruiting female candidates by providing training, funds, networks, and encouragement (Rozell, 2000; Duerst-Lahti, 1998). Some have found they play a stronger role than political parties while others have found the reverse (Sanbonmatsu, 2004). Early research

reported that Democratic-leaning women's groups more aggressively recruit and train women legislative candidates than Republican or conservative-leaning groups. But is this still true? Could it be that highly competitive partisan landscapes yield more party parity in women's group recruitment efforts? Political scientists have just scratched the surface in examining the latter.

Out of Florida's 841 Committees of Continuous Existence (CCEs), Political Action Committees (PACs), and Party Executive Committees (PECs) [all three are collectively referred to as Committees] listed on the Division of Elections web site (<http://election.dos.state.fl.us/cgi-bin/ComList.exe>) in 2004, just 9 were active female-oriented listings (six Republican and three Democratic leaning groups).ix (See Table 7.) However, records indicate that 52 have at one time or another been active contributors.

In general, the data on campaign contributions was woefully inadequate and inconsistent, as acknowledged by the Division of Elections.<sup>10</sup> A search of Committee expenditures to candidates turned up more contributions than were listed on the candidate contribution reports. Conversely, many local party women's clubs that routinely gave to female state legislative candidates showed up on the candidate's contribution list but not on the list of Committees. (As an example, see Table 8.)

Regardless of the data shortcomings, it is clear from our analysis of the contribution data that active Republican women's political groups were more likely to give to both men and women candidates than Democratic women's organizations who tended to limit contributions to female candidates.

#### Role of the Media

H18. *Media as Recruiters.* As previously noted, there has been an increase in the number of political crystal ball-gazing columns in newspapers. These columns, which often speculate as to who might run, may allow the media to play

Table 7

Active Female Oriented Committees (April 2004)	
PAC/CCE	Leaning
Belleair Women's Republican Club	Rep.
Florida NOW PAC	Dem.
Winning With Women PAC/WWW PAC	Rep.
Florida Federation of Republican Women	Rep.
Florida Federation of Business & Professional Women Club PC	Rep.
Republican Women Win	Rep.
Lake Federated Republican Women's Political Committee	Rep.
Florida Emily's List	Dem.
Women's Campaign Fund	Dem.

Notes: For Definition of PAC and CCE, see Notes to Table 7.

Source: Division of Elections, Florida Department of State, <http://election.dos.state.fl.us/online/commsrch.asp>

ing persons to run in special positions when they occur). women's groups organized national party women's in 2004, there were some 78 n's Clubs' and 34 Florida Florida. Like county party party clubs cannot endorse e nor can they give money / have provided supportive idates. More recently, they members with the specific a for public office.

ruiter. The party holding a eats may recruit women than the majority party out-party needs more people to run for a minority

cut in Florida as elsewhere. minority party in the state they have recruited women en the Republicans. While a greater proportion of the icans have been committed MacManus, 2004a).

ip Posts at the County and at women party chairs are f women candidates than (1998, p. 132). The question more partisan competitive arties race to put "women's us, 2004a). There is little men party chairs seek state as their male counterparts. e degree to which women's a major candidate selection

a more positive role in candidate recruitment. For the most part, the media are seen as deterrents to candidacies. Fear of media scrutiny is frequently mentioned as a reason not to run; it is a big concern of women (MacManus, 1992).

In Florida, there are 40 daily newspapers and 133 weeklies (Marth & Marth, 2004). Many daily [and some weekly] newspapers now feature weekly political gossip columns authored by local and state government beat reporters. A favorite staple is the candidate guessing game, particularly when there is an open seat. Mention in such a column may embolden some women [and men] to run as others express their encouragement. We used the survey to discern whether this media trend has any impact since the proliferation of these types of columns is a relatively new development that has not yet been examined closely by political scientists.

#### Candidate Recruitment: Through The Eyes of Florida's Female Legislators

Optimally, research on the importance of gender in the recruitment of state legislative candidates should include all those running—men and women, winners and losers. Resources did not permit us to undertake such a study. But we were able to survey successful female candidates elected after the imposition of term limits in Florida took hold. In the course of doing so, we have tentatively confirmed some

of the conventional wisdoms about female recruitment patterns and personal backgrounds while rejecting others.

#### Personal Backgrounds: Previous Experience

In general, party posts were the least common path to the state legislature—consistent with what previous research has found. More of these female legislators served on appointed boards and commissions prior to running for the legislature than had held elected party posts or elected office.

Of the eight who previously held local elected offices, four served on the school board (3Rs, 1D) and four on a city council/commission (2Ds, 2Rs). None were recruited from county positions—those with the highest salaries and no term limits. In Florida, municipal elective offices appear to be a more direct pipeline to the legislature than county posts. Six previously served as a legislative aide or staffer (three senators—two Democrats and one Republican—and three representatives, all Democrats). Democrats were more likely to have held such posts prior to running for office.

#### Primary Recruitment Agents

Florida's current female state legislators were asked to reflect back on their own recruitment experiences the first time they ran for the post. Specifically, they were asked, "How much effort was made by each of the following

Table 8

Women's Groups Campaign Contributions: 1992-2004 Female Florida Legislators				
Official	Party	Date	Amount	Group
Senate				
Larcenia Bullard	Dem.	10/20/96	500.00	Dade's Women's Political Caucus PAC
Larcenia Bullard	Dem.	10/20/96	100.00	Women's Political Caucus/FL/PAC
Muriel "Mandy" Dawson-White	Dem.	9/29/96	228.00	Florida NOW PAC
Muriel "Mandy" Dawson-White	Dem.	9/29/96	228.00	Florida NOW PAC
Muriel "Mandy" Dawson-White	Dem.	10/18/96	100.00	Women's Political Caucus
Muriel "Mandy" Dawson-White	Dem.	10/29/96	250.00	Women's Political Caucus
Muriel "Mandy" Dawson-White	Dem.	8/24/98	100.00	Women's Political Caucus PAC
Muriel "Mandy" Dawson-White	Dem.	8/17/02	250.00	Florida NOW PAC
Muriel "Mandy" Dawson-White	Dem.	10/4/02	82.00	Dem Women's Club of Florida
Debbie Wasserman-Schultz	Dem.	9/29/96	304.00	Florida NOW PAC
Debbie Wasserman-Schultz	Dem.	10/28/96	250.00	Women's Political Caucus PAC
Debbie Wasserman-Schultz	Dem.	10/28/96	100.00	Women's Political Caucus Florida PAC
Debbie Wasserman-Schultz	Dem.	9/4/98	100.00	Women's Political Caucus Florida PAC

Table 8 Continued on Next Page

about female recruitment  
ands while rejecting others.

ous Experience  
re the least common path  
istent with what previous  
se female legislators served  
missions prior to running  
lected party posts or elected

y held local elected offices,  
f (3Rs, 1D) and four on a  
2Rs). None were recruited  
with the highest salaries and  
cipal elective offices appear  
he legislature than county  
a legislative aide or staffer  
ts and one Republican—  
mocrats). Democrats were  
1 posts prior to running

ite legislators were asked to  
ment experiences the first  
cifically, they were asked,  
by each of the following

PAC  
PAC  
PAC

Cont. Women's Groups Campaign Contributions: 1992-2004 Female Florida Legislators				
Official	Party	Date	Amount	Group
Debbie Wasserman-Schultz	Dem.	10/23/98	100.00	Women's Political Caucus Florida PAC
Debbie Wasserman-Schultz	Dem.	7/22/00	500.00	Florida NOW PAC
Debbie Wasserman-Schultz	Dem.	10/26/00	80.00	Democratic Women's Club of Florida, Inc.
Debbie Wasserman-Schultz	Dem.	10/11/02	82.00	Democratic Women's Club of Florida, Inc.
Debbie Wasserman-Schultz	Dem.	12/8/03	500.00	Women's Campaign Fund
Frederica Wilson	Dem.	8/27/98	500.00	Florida Emily's List
Frederica Wilson	Dem.	8/17/02	250.00	Florida NOW PAC
Frederica Wilson	Dem.	8/28/02	500.00	Florida's Emily List
Frederica Wilson	Dem.	9/4/02	500.00	Florida Emily's List
Nancy Argenziano	Rep.	10/4/02	500.00	Winning With Women
Anna Cowin	Rep.	10/7/00	500.00	Winning With Women
Paula Dockery	Rep.	2/16/00	20.00	Labor of Love Childbirth Services, Inc.
Evelyn Lynn	Rep.	8/25/98	50.00	Celebration of Republican Women in Politics
House				
Loraine Ausley	Dem.	10/4/02	82.00	Dem Women's Club of Florida, Inc.
Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall	Dem.	9/27/02	82.00	Democratic Women's Club
Mary Brandenburg	Dem.	8/17/02	250.00	Florida NOW PAC
Mary Brandenburg	Dem.	10/2/02	82.00	Democratic Women's Club of Florida, Inc.
Mary Brandenburg	Dem.	10/28/02	300.00	Democratic Women's Club of Palm Beach Co.
Joyce Cusack	Dem.	8/22/00	100.00	National Organization for Women
Anne Gannon	Dem.	2/23/00	100.00	Women's Clinic
Anne Gannon	Dem.	4/7/00	200.00	Presidential Women's Center, Inc. Florida Federation of Business & Professional Women Club PAC
Anne Gannon	Dem.	8/3/00	500.00	Women Club PAC
Anne Gannon	Dem.	8/29/00	50.00	Presidential Women's Center, Inc.
Anne Gannon	Dem.	9/22/00	500.00	Lee County Women's Political Committee
Anne Gannon	Dem.	10/20/00	500.00	Lee County Women's Political Committee
Anne Gannon	Dem.	7/10/02	500.00	Presidential Women's Center, Inc. Florida Federation of Business & Professional Women Club PAC
Anne Gannon	Dem.	8/11/02	500.00	Women Club PAC
Anne Gannon	Dem.	8/17/02	250.00	Florida NOW PAC
Anne Gannon	Dem.	8/28/02	500.00	Florida's Emily List
Audrey Gibson	Dem.	9/28/02	82.00	Democratic Women's Club of Florida, Inc.
Arthenia Joyner	Dem.	10/2/02	82.00	Democratic Women's Club
Arthenia Joyner	Dem.	10/25/02	75.00	Democratic Women's Club
Suzanne Kosmas	Dem.	10/15/96	500.00	Florida's Emily List
Suzanne Kosmas	Dem.	10/23/98	500.00	Florida's Emily List
Suzanne Kosmas	Dem.	10/23/00	500.00	Florida's Emily List
Suzanne Kosmas	Dem.	10/23/00	80.00	Democratic Women's Club
Suzanne Kosmas	Dem.	10/11/02	82.00	Democratic Women's Club of Florida, Inc.
Suzanne Kosmas	Dem.	10/12/02	500.00	Florida's Emily List
Sheri McInvale	Dem.	10/3/02	82.00	Democratic Women's Club of Florida, Inc.
Sheri McInvale	Dem.	10/25/02	100.00	Women's Political Caucus Florida PAC
Nan Rich	Dem.	8/22/00	100.00	Florida NOW PAC
Nan Rich	Dem.	8/17/02	250.00	Florida NOW PAC
Nan Rich	Dem.	10/2/02	82.00	Democratic Women's Club of Florida, Inc.
Nan Rich	Dem.	10/19/02	500.00	Florida Emily's List

Table 8 Continued on Next Page

Cont.  
Women's Groups Campaign Contributions: 1992-2004  
Female Florida Legislators

Official	Party	Date	Amount	Group
Stacy Ritter	Dem.	10/15/96	500.00	Florida's Emily List
Stacy Ritter	Dem.	10/29/96	250.00	Women's Political Caucus
Stacy Ritter	Dem.	8/18/98	100.00	Women's Political Caucus PAC
Stacy Ritter	Dem.	8/22/00	100.00	Florida NOW PAC
Stacy Ritter	Dem.	10/8/02	82.00	Democratic Women's Club of Florida, Inc.
Eleanor Sobel	Dem.	8/13/98	100.00	Women's Political Caucus PAC
Eleanor Sobel	Dem.	8/22/00	500.00	Florida NOW PAC
Eleanor Sobel	Dem.	10/25/00	80.00	Democratic Women's Club of Florida, Inc.
Shelley Vana	Dem.	8/17/02	250.00	Florida NOW PAC
Shelley Vana	Dem.	8/28/02	250.00	Florida's Emily List
Shelley Vana	Dem.	10/4/02	82.00	Democratic Women's Club of Florida, Inc.
Shelley Vana	Dem.	10/12/02	500.00	Florida's Emily List
Kim Berfield	Rep.	10/9/00	250.00	Belleair Women's Republican Club
Jennifer Carroll	Rep.	3/12/03	500.00	Winning With Women
Donna Clarke	Rep.	10/24/00	500.00	Republican Women's Club of Sarasota
Donna Clarke	Rep.	9/23/02	500.00	Republican Women's Club of Sarasota
Faye Culp	Rep.	10/4/02	400.00	Winning with Women PAC
Faye Culp	Rep.	10/7/02	100.00	Winning with Women PAC
Faye Culp	Rep.	9/10/03	250.00	The Women's Group
Faye Culp	Rep.	10/27/03	100.00	Tampa Republican Women's Club
Nancy Detert	Rep.	10/19/98	100.00	Republican Women's Club of South Sarasota Cnty
Nancy Detert	Rep.	10/21/98	50.00	Women's Political Caucus Florida PAC
Nancy Detert	Rep.	10/16/00	200.00	Republican Women's Club of Sarasota
Nancy Detert	Rep.	9/27/02	500.00	Winning With Women
Carol Greene	Rep.	8/9/02	500.00	Winning With Women
Bev Kilmer	Rep.	10/27/98	50.00	Women's Political Caucus Florida PAC
Bev Kilmer	Rep.	9/25/00	500.00	Winning with Women PAC
Bev Kilmer	Rep.	10/23/00	500.00	Winning with Women PAC
Bev Kilmer	Rep.	9/1/01	250.00	Tallahassee Republican Women's Club
Bev Kilmer	Rep.	10/26/02	250.00	Winning with Women PAC
Bev Kilmer	Rep.	10/26/02	250.00	Winning with Women PAC
Sandra Murman	Rep.	10/4/00	500.00	Winning With Women
Sandra Murman	Rep.	9/26/02	100.00	Winning With Women
Leslie Waters	Rep.	10/7/00	500.00	Winning With Women
Leslie Waters	Rep.	10/12/00	250.00	Belleair Women's Republican Club
Leslie Waters	Rep.	9/18/02	300.00	Belleair Women's Republican Club
Leslie Waters	Rep.	9/27/02	500.00	Winning With Women

Note: Florida law limits individual campaign contributions to candidates to \$500 per election (primary, runoff, general = \$1500). Runoff Elections were suspended in 2002 and 2004.

Italics represent contributions listed on the Division of Elections campaign expenditure reports of the PACs and CCEs but were not listed on the campaign contribution reports of the individual candidates. This demonstrates the difficulties of in-depth analyses of candidate contributions.

Source: Florida Division of Elections Campaign Finance reports, <http://election.dos.state.fl.us/>, accessed March 2004.

[family members; friends and neighbors; professional colleagues; other elected officials; local political party leaders; state political party leaders; political groups—broad membership; women's political groups; professional organizations—broad membership; women's professional organizations; social and service organizations—broad membership; women's social and service organizations; religious and social service leaders; women's religious and

social service leaders] to recruit you to run for the Florida Legislature the first time you ever ran? A lot? Some? Not much?"

Survey results revealed that among Florida's Class of 2002-04 female state legislators:

(1) Friends, family, and professional colleagues made the greatest efforts at recruitment, followed by other elected officials.



(2) Neither state party leaders nor local party leaders exerted much effort. Each group was cited by an equal percentage of respondents (17%) as having made "a lot" or "some" effort at recruiting them.

(3) Women's political, professional and social and service groups played a more important role than women's religious and social service leaders or state and local party leaders.

Confirming what previous research has found, nearly half (40%) of the female legislators described themselves as self-recruited. However, several acknowledged that while their initial decision to run was mostly their own, it was bolstered by support from a close family member or friend. (The interviewees were asked, "In the end, who most heavily recruited you to run for the state legislature the first time you ran? Or did you basically recruit yourself?") (See Figure 5.)

#### Interface With Their Political Party

Well over half (60%) believed that the recruitment paths of women serving in the Florida Legislature in 2002-04 differed substantially from those of the male legislators. When asked "How?", several mentioned that males were

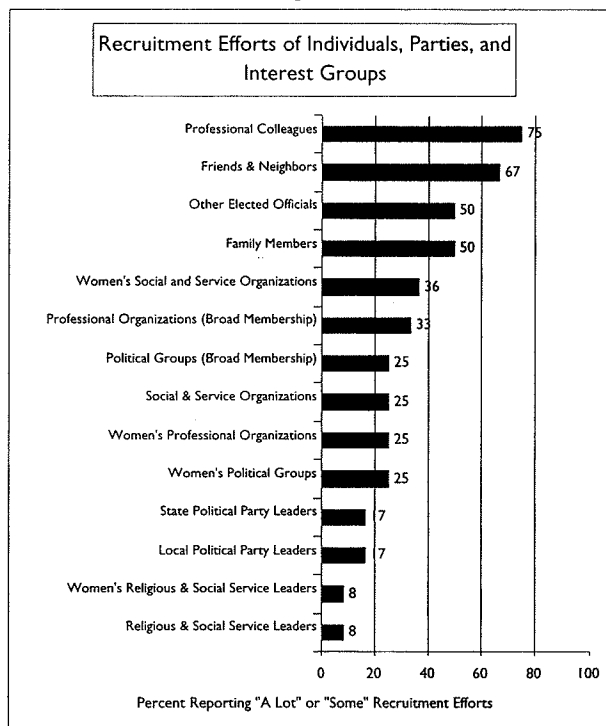
more likely to be recruited by political parties whereas women were more likely to be encouraged to run by women's groups or by female elected officials.

There was little consensus among the women legislators as to how much influence their party's campaign committee in their respective chambers had on candidate recruitment—of males or females. For half of the respondents these committees had a lot of influence. For another 21%, they played some role. But for 29%, party campaign committees in the legislator's own chamber were seen as having had little impact.

When specifically asked "Who does a better job of recruiting women candidates to run for the state legislature? Women party leaders, men party leaders, or is there no difference?" 38% said women party leaders. A plurality (46%) reported that party leaders did not play a large role in recruiting candidates in their party. The remaining saw no gender-based recruitment pattern recruitment by the party at all.

The involvement of the state party in candidate recruitment had not changed much since the time these women first ran for the state legislature. The overwhelming majority (77%) replied negatively to the question, "Does your state party more aggressively seek to recruit women candidates for the state legislature than it did when you first

Figure 5



Note: Legislators were asked: "How much effort was made by each of the following to recruit you to run for the Florida Legislature the first time you ever ran?"

rida, Inc.  
rida, Inc.  
rida, Inc.  
sota  
sota  
th Sarasota Cnty  
PAC  
isota  
PAC  
Club  
b  
b  
action (primary,  
reports of the PACs  
andidates. This  
e.fl.us/, accessed  
it you to run for the Florida  
u ever ran? A lot? Some?  
d that among Florida's Class  
ate legislators:  
nd professional colleagues  
rts at recruitment, followed  
ials.

ran?" In fact, when asked whether their first contact with the state party was initiated by the party or by them, 83% said they initiated the contact either informing the party they had decided to run (67%) or doing so, "gauge how receptive the party would be to my candidacy" (17%). The latter finding was consistent with recent research on legislative recruitment patterns.

The most recently elected female legislator was one of only two to acknowledge she was heavily recruited by the party to run in a special election to fill a vacancy. This scenario seems to confirm what others have hypothesized, namely that political parties' role in the recruitment process intensifies in such circumstances. In this individual's case, she had run several years earlier (1998) and came close to winning.

#### Role of Party Promises

What state parties may be able to do in the initial contact with a potential candidate is to promise certain types of support should the individual be nominated. (As previously mentioned, state and local party organizations do not routinely endorse at the primary election stage.)

The survey respondents were asked, "In your initial run for the state legislature, how much support did the state party promise to give you in [conducting polls; fund raising;

providing voter contact information; candidate training; selecting campaign consultants; helping with newspaper editorial boards; securing helpful group endorsements? A lot? Some? Not much?"

The majority of these women legislators received none of these promises. But of those who did, the most common were candidate training, providing voter contact information, securing group endorsements, and fund raising. (See Figure 6.) As "To what extent do a political party's promises affect a candidate's ultimate decision to run," almost one third (31%) said "a lot" but over half (54%) said "none."

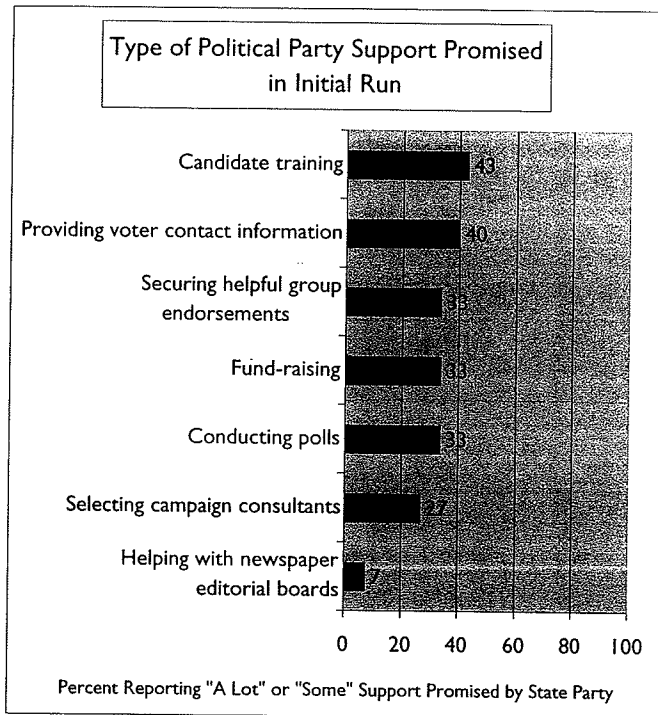
#### Role of Interest Groups v. Parties in Female Recruitment

Interest groups and organizations were perceived as playing a more aggressive role than political parties in recruiting women to run for the state legislature by a plurality of the survey respondents (40%). Just 20% saw political parties as playing a stronger role. Of the remainder, one-third did not believe that either interest groups or political parties played a very strong role in the recruitment game while 7% said both did.

#### Limited Impact of Legislative Term Limits

Almost three-fourths of the respondents (73%) saw

Figure 6



Note: Legislators were asked: "In your initial run for state legislature, how much party support did the state party promise to give you in:..."  
Source: Mail survey of Florida female legislators. March, 2004.

ation; candidate training; ; helping with newspaper il group endorsements? A

en legislators received none ho did, the most common roviding voter contact endorsemments, and fund what extent do a political are's ultimate decision to said "a lot" but over half

as in Female Recruitment s were perceived as playing itical parties in recruiting lature by a plurality of the 20% saw political parties : remainder, one-third did groups or political parties cruitment game while 7%

**Term Limits**  
e respondents (73%) saw

term limits as having little impact on the recruitment of female legislative candidates. However, among those who did, 20% believed term limits make it easier to recruit women candidates compared to just 7% who see them as making it more difficult. (See Figure 7.) None reported that being term limited out of a local office prompted them to make a run for the state legislature. Open seats were judged as a bigger incentive to run than term limits per se.

**Major Impact of Personal Circumstances and Legislative Structural Factors**

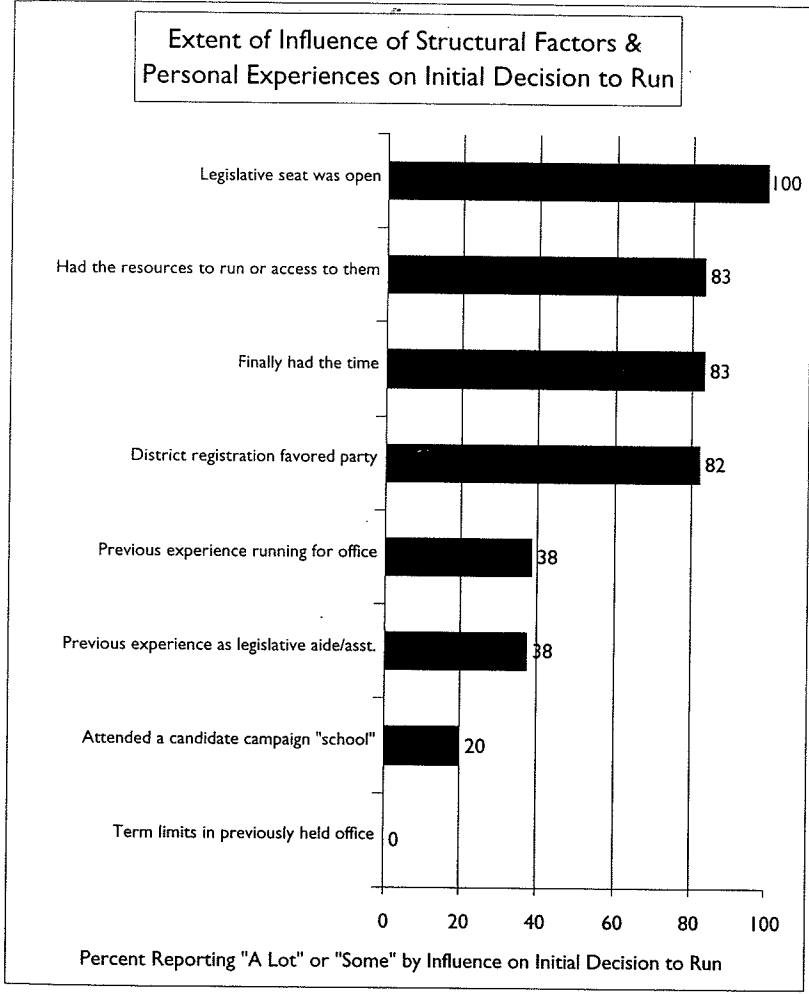
The most significant, although not surprising, survey finding was that open seats (no incumbent) and safe seats (favorable district registration statistics) had the most influence on these sitting female legislators' initial decision

to run for the statehouse. The structure of the position had a considerably heavier impact than the candidate's personal circumstances. (See Figure 7.) But of the personal circumstances examined, the availability of time and resources ranked as more important decision-to-run factors than previous political experiences (prior runs for office, legislative assistant posts) or candidate school attendance. In fairness, candidate schools were a relatively new phenomenon, one which might become a bigger recruitment factor in the future.

**The Media**

It appears from the survey results that the gossipy crystal-ball gazing political columns in local newspapers are not yet playing a major role in the candidate recruitment

Figure 7



Note: Legislators were asked: "How much influence did each of the following have on your initial decision to run?"  
Source: Mail survey of Florida female legislators. March, 2004.

process. (Just one legislator said a newspaper mention of her potential run affected her decision to get in the race.) Like candidate schools, these columns are a relatively recent phenomenon that might yet play a role in candidate recruitment. They are certainly something to continue to monitor.

### New Thoughts On The Recruitment of Female Legislators

Research on the recruitment of female state legislators within a single state—Florida—confirms that “one size fits all” theories do not hold true in highly partisan-competitive environments, where the steady in-migration of residents from within and outside the U.S. constantly churn the political mix, and where state legislative term limits structure elective opportunities and make the timing of candidacies more strategic in nature.

The major findings of this probative study of women legislators in the Class of 2002-04 and new thoughts about future trends and research needs are that:

- Among those who were not “self-recruited,” more were recruited by family, friends, professional colleagues, and other elected officials than by interest groups or political parties.
- *Women* elected officials played a key role in recruiting other women to run for office—at all levels. This phenomenon has been insufficiently studied by political scientists.
- Being an attorney was not nearly the exclusive professional path to the state legislature for women as it once was. Just 15% of the Class of 2002-04 were attorneys.
- The “local-governments-as-pipelines” theory needs to be revisited and refined now that many local government elective posts are becoming more attractive than state legislative posts. Higher salaries, no term limits, smaller constituency bases (and thus lower campaign costs), along with more favorable ratings from the public than those garnered by the state legislature may put a plug in the pipeline in some places.
- Service on boards and commissions was a more common experience prior to these women running for the state legislature than having held another elective office or an organizational leadership post. Political scientists have not paid much attention to this trend, but women’s political party groups are actively promoting such appointments.
- School boards have been ignored as an effective pipeline to the statehouse for women. Among these women, 25% had previously served on county school boards.
- Greater gains from redistricting occur when a

larger share of the seats are substantially restructured. Such was the situation following the 1992 redistricting when majority-minority seats were drawn by court mandate, thereby creating more open seats than in 2002. In the most recent redistricting, fewer districts were significantly altered creating fewer open seats. It was more of an incumbency protection exercise.

- Term limits, while creating open seats, often attract a higher number of credible candidates into a contest, making the seats more competitive—and reducing the challenges to incumbents in the interim elections. Candidates are becoming more strategic in filing for office. No one (male or female) likes to be a sacrificial lamb—especially in safe districts.
- Women candidates have become quite calculating in their decisions to run for the state legislature. Our preliminary survey results show that they clearly assessed whether there was an open seat and how safe the district was for their political party. These structural aspects of the seat itself outweighed other more personal and experiential factors in their final decision to run.
- Interest groups played a bigger role in the recruitment of female candidates than did political parties. But, as this research has shown, the role of women’s interest groups versus that of more broad-based interest groups is often overstated. Perhaps this is more the case in states where there are campaign contribution limits.
- The impact of women’s groups on the recruitment of female candidates may be lessened where campaign contribution limits exist, like they do in Florida.
- Women’s political party organizations are beginning to play a larger role in candidate recruitment than in the past, targeting more of their membership efforts toward younger members, with the explicit goal of grooming them to run for office.
- The role of political parties as recruitment agents is greatly limited in partisan-competitive states. Parties fear that taking sides at the primary stage might threaten the general election outcome if disaffected party members stay home or cross-over to the other party’s candidate. But as was shown here, the unwillingness of political parties to appear to be playing favorites at the primary election stage greatly diminishes the role of parties in the recruitment process.
- State political parties have become more attentive to the gender-makeup of their leadership and staffs. Previous research has suggested that female party officials are better recruiters of women candidates

to  
an  
pe  
in  
ele  
20  
th  
div  
  
Re  
Alc  
  
Arc  
  
Ass  
  
Atk  
  
Atk  
  
Bae  
  
Ber

seats are substantially the situation following the in majority-minority seats mandate, thereby creating in 2002. In the most recent districts were significantly open seats. It was more of an exercise.

ing open seats, often attract redible candidates into a ts more competitive—and ges to incumbents in the lidates are becoming more office. No one (male or rificial lamb — especially

ve become quite calculating in for the state legislature. ey results show that they there was an open seat and as for their political party. jects of the seat itself a personal and experiential sion to run.

ed a bigger role in the andidates than did political arch has shown, the role of versus that of more broad- ; often overstated. Perhaps in states where there are n limits.

groups on the recruitment may be lessened where n limits exist, like they do

arty organizations are larger role in candidate ie past, targeting more of efforts toward younger icit goal of grooming them

rties as recruitment agents rtisan-competitive states. sides at the primary stage neral election outcome if ers stay home or cross-over ididate. But as was shown of political parties to appear t the primary election stage e role of parties in the

ive become more attentive f their leadership and staffs. ggested that female party iters of women candidates

than their male counterparts. This research supports that thesis.

- Parties played the biggest role in recruitment when a vacancy occurred unexpectedly — leaving little time for a candidate to gear up before a special election is held. In such circumstances, parties often turn to experienced candidates who may not have won the first time they ran but came close to winning.
- Historically, having to interface with the media has been a big deterrent to female candidacies. Our research suggests this may be changing as newsrooms and editorial staffs become more gender-diverse and political gossip columns that trade on the candidate name game become more influential. We found some evidence that the latter may be beginning to have an impact on candidate recruitment.

The paths along which women are enticed to travel to the Florida statehouse are likely to take different twists and turns depending on the local political terrain, personal perseverance, and the stepped up efforts of parties and interest groups to keep score on the number of women elected. This analysis of the female state legislative Class of 2002-04 has clearly demonstrated the dynamic nature of the recruitment process in a highly competitive, very diverse state.

#### References

- Aldrich, J. H. (1995). *Why parties? The origin and transformation of party politics in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Arceneaux, K. (2001). The 'gender gap' in state legislative representation: new data to tackle an old question. *Political Research Quarterly*, 54, 143-160.
- Associated Industries of Florida Service Corporation. (2004). *2004 Know Your Legislators*. Tallahassee, FL.
- Atkeson, L. R., & Rapoport, R. B. (2003). The more things change the more they stay the same: examining gender differences in political attitude expression, 1952-2000. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 67, 495-521.
- Atkeson, L. R. (2003). Not all cues are created equal: the conditional impact of female candidates on political engagement. *Journal of Politics*, 65, 1040-61.
- Baer, D. L. (2003). Women, women's organizations, and political parties. In Susan J. Carroll (Ed.), *Women and American politics: new questions, new directions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bernstein, R. A., & Chadha, A. (2003). The effects of term limits on representation: "Why so few women?" In Rick Farmer, John David Rausch, Jr., and John C. Green (Eds.), *The test of time: coping with legislative term limits*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Braden, M. (1996). *Women politicians and the media*. Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky.
- Burrell, B. C. (1993). Party decline, party transformation and gender politics: the USA. In Joni Lovenduski and Pippa Norris (Eds.), *Gender and party politics*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Burrell, B. C. (2003). Money and women's candidacies for public office. In Susan J. Carroll (Ed.), *Women and American politics: new questions, new directions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Carroll, S. J. (1985). *Women as candidates in American politics*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Carroll, S. J. (2004). Women in state government: historical overview and current trends. *The book of the states*. Lexington, KY: Council of State Governments.
- Carroll, S. J., & Jenkins, K. (2001). Unrealized opportunity? Term limits and the representation of women in state legislatures. *Women and Politics*, 23, 1-30.
- Carroll, S. J. & Strimling, W. (1983). *Women's routes to public office: a comparison with men's*. New Brunswick, NJ: Center for the American Woman and Politics.
- Carver, J. S. (1979). Women in Florida. *Journal of Politics*, 41, 941-955.
- Darcy, R., Welch, S., & Clark, J. (1994). *Women, elections, and representation* (2nd ed.) Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Dolan, K., & Ford, L. E. (1997). Change and continuity among women state legislators: evidence from three decades. *Political Research Quarterly*, 50, 137-151.
- Duke, L., (Ed.). (1996). *Women in politics: outsider or insider?* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Duerst-Lahti, G. (1998). The bottleneck: women becoming candidates. *Women and elective office: past, present, & future*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, M. C. & Hawks, J. V. (1987). Creating a different pattern: Florida's women legislators, 1928-1986. *The Florida Historical Quarterly*, 66, 68-83.
- Farmer, R., Rausch, J. D., Jr., & Green, J. C. (Eds.), (2003). *The test of time: coping with legislative term limits*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Frendreis, J. & Gitelson, A. R. (1999). Local parties in the 1990s: spokes in a candidate-centered wheel. John C. Green and Daniel M. Shea. (Eds), *The state of the parties* (3rd ed.), Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Githens, M. (2003). Accounting for women's political involvement: the perennial problem of recruitment. In Susan J. Carroll (Ed.), *Women and American politics: new questions, new directions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kahn, K. F. (2003). Assessing the media's impact on the political fortunes of women. In Susan J. Carroll (Ed.), *Women and American politics: new questions, new directions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Lawless, J. L. & Fox, R. L. (2004). Why don't women run for office? Taubman Center for Public Policy. Brown University, January.
- MacManus, S. A. (1992). How to get more women in office: the perspectives of local elected officials (mayors and city councilors): a research note. *Urban Affairs Quarterly*, 28, 159-170.
- MacManus, S.A., (Ed.) (2002). *Mapping Florida's political landscape: the changing art and politics of reapportionment and redistricting*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida Institute of Government.
- MacManus, S. A. (2004a). Partisan competition for 'women's faces in high places': Florida in the early 2000s. *Florida Political Chronicle*, 15, 19-38.
- MacManus, S. A. (2004b). An overview of Florida. In Kevin Hill, Susan A. MacManus, and Dario Moreno (Eds.), *Florida's politics: ten media markets, one powerful state*. Tallahassee: Florida Institute of Government, Florida State University.
- MacManus, S. A., & Bullock III, C. S. (1995). Electing women to local office. In J. A. Garber and R. Turner, (Eds.), *Gender in urban research*. Sage Urban Affairs Annual Review, 42, 1995.
- MacManus, S. A., & Bullock III, C. S. (1996). Second best? Women mayors and council members: a new test of the desirability hypothesis. In Lois Lovelace Duke (Ed.), *Women and politics: have the outsiders become insiders?* (2nd ed.) Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- MacManus, S. A., & Suarez, R. (1992). Female representation on school boards: supportive constituency characteristics. *The Political Chronicle*, 4, 1-8.
- MacManus, S. A., Bullock, III, C. S., Akins, F. E., Hoffman, L. J., & Newmark, A. (1999). Winning in my own back yard: county government, school board positions steadily more attractive to women candidates. In Lois Duke Whitaker (Ed.), *Women in politics*, (3rd ed.) Prentice-Hall, 1999.
- MacManus, S. A., Bullock, III, C. S., Padgett, K., & Penberthy, B. (2005). Women winning at the local level. In Lois Duke Whitaker (Ed.), *Women in politics*, (4th ed.) Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Marth, D. & Marth, M. (Eds.) (2004). *2004 Florida guide*, (14th ed.) Branford, FL: Suwanee River Press.
- Moncrief, G. F., Squire, P., & Jewell, M. E. (2001). *Who runs for the legislature?* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Nelson, A. (1991). *The emerging influentials in state legislatures: women, blacks, and hispanics*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Niven, D. (1998). *The missing majority: the recruitment of women as state legislative candidates*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Norris, P. (1993). Conclusions: comparing legislative recruitment. In Joni Lovenduski and Pippa Norris (Eds.), *Gender and party politics*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Powell, R. J. (2003). The unintended effects of term limits on the career paths of state legislators. In Rick Farmer, John David Rausch, Jr., and John C. Green (Eds.), *The test of time: coping with legislative term limits*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Sanbonmatsu, K. (2003). Candidate recruitment and women's election to the state legislatures. center for American women and politics, www.cawp.rutgers.edu.
- Sanbonmatsu, K. (2004). The status of women in Ohio politics, paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL.
- Thomas, S. (2003). The impact of women in political leadership positions. In Susan J. Carroll (Ed.), *Women and American politics: new questions, new directions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Thomas, C. & Hrebenar, R. J. (1999). Interest groups in the fifty states. *Comparative State Politics*, 20, 13.

# Understanding State Legislative Electoral Competition: The Case of Florida 1988-2002

Scot D. Schraufnagel  
University of Central Florida

This research scrutinizes Florida House and Senate races and tests alternative explanations for two measures of electoral competition: 1) victory margins and 2) uncontested seats. The focus is on electoral competition because of its strong theoretical ties to democratic accountability. Florida provides fertile ground for testing competition hypotheses because evidence suggests that the state is split approximately 50-50 in adherents to the two major political parties. Contrary to research that finds incumbency advantages a paramount predictor of competition; this research determines that redistricting leading to more homogeneous legislative districts is an equally important consideration, especially in the analysis of election margins. Moreover, the research finds that "quality challengers" and presidential election years are associated with more competitiveness.

It is commonly held that non-competitive elections compromise democracy (see Cohen 1971; Pitkin 1967; Powell 2000). Scholars argue "the presence of competitive elections, more than any other feature," defines a political system as democratic (Powell 2000, 4). When elections are safe for one party or one candidate, the fear of electoral retribution is gone; accountability may be compromised, and the abuse of power may follow. This possibility motivates the investigation into state legislative electoral competition. Specifically, the study tests alternative explanations for the dearth of competition for legislative seats in Florida.

In the American states, it is widely known that many state legislative seats go unchallenged by candidates from both major political parties. For instance, in 1992 and 1996, 60 percent of state legislative seats in Arkansas, Georgia, and Mississippi were uncontested (Moncrief, Squire, and

Jewell 2001). Although there may have been some intra-party competition, the general election in these contests was a mere formality. This finding is not surprising, or necessarily troublesome, if a state is relatively homogeneous in its partisan affiliation or political preferences. If one party has a much larger base of support than the other party we would expect less competition. However, if a state has sufficient partisan heterogeneity to be labeled a "competitive two-party system" (Bibby and Holbrook 1996), but electoral competition does not materialize, one is forced to contemplate why.

Two frequently mentioned alternative explanations for the lack of electoral competition have been incumbency and redistricting. Although this literature is vast and the findings are divergent, there is some consensus that the effects of redistricting in particular are not strong (Fiorina 1989; Gelman and King 1994). Much of this literature, however, focuses on the United States House of Representatives, and electoral competition for state legislative seats has received less attention (for notable exceptions see Carey, Niemi, and Powell 2000; Holbrook and Van Dunk 1993; Weber, Tucker, and Brace 1991). This research seeks to further our understanding of state-level legislative electoral dynamics. It does so by testing the influence of incumbency and redistricting in a setting that everyone can recognize as politically heterogeneous, one with near equanimity in support for the two major political parties, the state of Florida.

## Legislative Electoral Competition

Beginning with David Mayhew (1974), but also Morris Fiorina (1989) and Gary Jacobson (1992), there has been a plethora of attempts to understand the correlates

of election margins or electoral competition. Fiorina's (1989) work is particularly noteworthy because it posits two clearly opposing and parsimonious explanations for larger margins of victory in legislative elections. The first holds that victory margins are the result of augmented incumbency advantages or "possible changes in the effectiveness of congressional incumbents" (Fiorina 1989, 16). The second suggests changes in the socioeconomic homogeneity of congressional districts or that competition is attenuated as the result of legislative districts that become more uniform by virtue of redistricting. Ultimately, Fiorina provides convincing evidence of the increased prowess of congressional incumbents (*see also* Alford and Hibbing 1981; Born 1979; Erikson 1971; Ferejohn 1977; Tuftte 1975).

In the far-reaching literature on the subject of redistricting and electoral outcomes much of the discussion concerns the extent to which redistricting plans can benefit incumbent legislators (*for seminal work in this area see* Mayhew 1971; Tuftte 1973; *but also* Cain 1985). However, some argue that the incumbency advantage that comes from redistricting may be overstated (Gelman and King 1994). Another prominent discussion on redistricting involves partisan advantage (Bullock 1975; Campagna and Grofman 1990). One conclusion is that majority party electoral advantage is minimal and/or short-lived (Niemi and Jackman 1991). Findings such as these, which suggest the incumbency and partisan advantages of redistricting are minimal, are complimented by theoretical expectations. Hypothetically, a year following redistricting could bring more electoral competition, when compared to other years, because district lines are upset, constituencies are scrambled, and incumbents are sometimes pitted against one another.

Fiorina (1989), for his part, tests the redistricting thesis via an analysis of the Democratic vote for president in 1956 and 1968. He plots the percentage of United States House districts versus the percentage of the Democratic vote for president and obtains distinctly unimodal distributions that center just below 50%. During these

years, the largest number of districts voted about 50% of the time for the Democratic candidate. Evidence of partisan homogeneous districts would produce a bimodal distribution, with the Democratic presidential candidate receiving either 35 to 45% of the vote or 55 to 65% of the vote in districts. However, this does not occur; and Fiorina contends that House districts are not obviously consistent in their partisan makeup and redistricting cannot be the reason for large margins of victory.

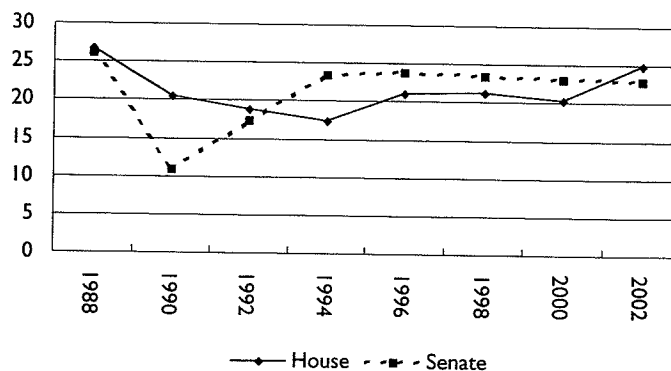
Even more, empirical research, which uses a calculation of the district party vote to party legislative seat ratio, has found redistricting responsible for "enhancing democracy," or responsiveness (Gelman and King 1994). The implication is that redistricting promotes democratic accountability. Hence, any hypothesis that redistricting will produce less electoral competition will be put to a considerable test. If redistricting is going to be associated with safe seats or less competition it will have to overcome both theoretical arguments and observed findings that pull in the opposite direction.

The study will begin by replicating, in part, Fiorina's approach. This initial effort tests whether the effects of incumbency or redistricting hold more promise as an explanation for the lack of state legislative competition in Florida. The analysis then turns to econometric models that address, in turn, two distinct dependent variables related to competition: 1) election margins and 2) uncontested races. More specifically, the first dependent variable analyzed is victory margins in the state when there is more than one candidate running; the second is uncontested races or instances with only one candidate running from the two major political parties.<sup>1</sup>

#### State Legislative Competition in Florida

To begin the analysis it will be useful to examine descriptive data on electoral competition in Florida. Figure 1 charts the average margin of victory by year in Florida from 1988 to 2002 and provides a sense of the growing lack of meaningful competition for state legislative seats in the state since 1990. It should be noted too that 1988 was a

Figure 1. Average Margin of Victory in Florida House and Senate Races 1988-2002





rixts voted about 50% of date. Evidence of partisan d produce a bimodal ic presidential candidate : vote or 55 to 65% of the es not occur; and Fiorina : not obviously consistent districting cannot be the ry.

research, which uses a te to party legislative seat sponsible for "enhancing Gelman and King 1994). ing promotes democratic othesis that redistricting petition will be put to a ; is going to be associated n it will have to overcome berved findings that pull

licating, in part, Fiorina's sts whether the effects of old more promise as an legislative competition in s to econometric models nct dependent variables lection margins and 2) ically, the first dependent ins in the state when there running; the second is with only one candidate litical parties.<sup>1</sup>

**in Florida**  
will be useful to examine petition in Florida. Figure victory by year in Florida a sense of the growing lack : state legislative seats in the : voted too that 1988 was a

particularly non-competitive year. If one examines only the data from 1990 to 2002, the observed lines represent a statistically significant increase in the average margin of victory in both the Florida House of Representatives (correlation with time  $r = .67$ ) and the Florida Senate ( $r = .67$ ).<sup>2</sup>

There is also the question of uncontested seats. Table 1 provides data on uncontested races along with average margins of victory for select years. Overall, from 1988 to 2002, about one half of state legislative elections went uncontested by candidates from both major parties. Perhaps what is most noteworthy, however, is the stand-alone data on election year 2002. That year, nearly two-thirds of the races were uncontested. When the two parties did compete in 2002 (see Row 2) the average margin of victory was nearly 25% in the House of Representatives, and 23% in the Senate. Using a victory margin in excess of 10% as an indicator of a safe seat (Fiorina 1989; Jacobson 1992; Mayhew 1974) only 7.5% of the 40 state-Senate elections and 10% of the 120 state House elections, in 2002, were competitive.

The lack of competition in Florida is particularly perplexing because of partisan heterogeneity. In a classification of state political systems, John Bibby and Thomas Holbrook (1996) characterized Florida as a "competitive two-party system" in the mid-1990s. In an earlier era, Florida was considered a dominant Democratic state, but the Republican Party began to enjoy considerable electoral success around the close of the 1980s. In 2002, the Florida Democratic Party still held a slight edge over its Republican counterpart in the number of registered voters (Conley 2003, 3). But, Republicans had comfortable majorities in both chambers of the state legislature. Also, in 2002, Governor Jeb Bush became the first Republican in the history of Florida to be re-elected to the top political office in the state, and the Republican Party swept all statewide executive races (Conley 2003, 75). Bill Clinton, however, won Florida's Electoral College votes in 1996, and, as of 2000, the two United States Senators from the state were both Democrats. Additional evidence from the 2000 presidential race suggests that the state is evenly split between Democrats and Republicans during the time frame of this study.

### Margin Analysis

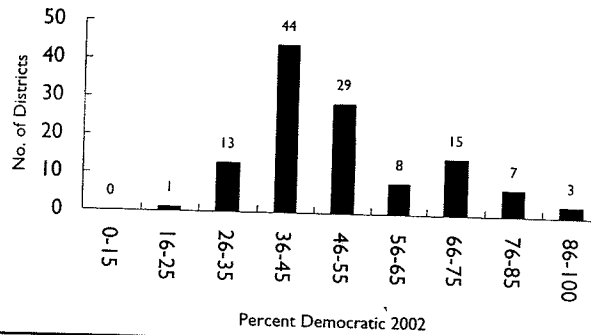
I begin the scrutiny of electoral competition in Florida by considering Fiorina's two arguments outlined above. The first suggests that incumbency advantages are responsible for larger margins and the second suggests that redistricting is culpable. A review of legislative statutes in Florida reveals that there was no movement in the amount of resources that Florida state legislators were afforded in order to promote their re-elections in the 1990s. For instance, the average number of staff members assigned to Florida legislators has been constant from 1988-2002 (two for House members and three for Senators with some variation based on the geographical size of the district they represent). Throughout this time period, taxpayers have been asked to fund only one post-session newsletter, suggesting no increase in free-mail privileges. An amendment to Florida Statute 106-141 that allows an increase in the amount of leftover campaign cash that can be used for the purposes of maintaining a district office has more recently been adopted, but is not relevant for the time period of this study.<sup>3</sup> In all, increased incumbency resources, at least those funded by the public, are not in harmony with larger victory margins in the 1990s and early 2000s. Moreover, when one tracks the average margin of victory for incumbents (only), there is no upward trend in the House of Representatives and only a marginally positive trend in the Senate. Indeed, the passing of time is negatively correlated ( $r = -.02$ ) with margins of victory for House incumbents, and the positive correlation ( $r = .38$ ) with time in the Senate does not meet conventional levels of statistical significance.<sup>4</sup> Put another way, when one considers all elections in Florida, there has been a growing average margin of victory since 1990. But when examining the subset of winners who were incumbents the statistically significant trend in the Senate disappears, and in the House of Representatives there is no trend. This suggests that non-incumbent winners are associated with larger margins of victory than incumbent winners—in both chambers. In the Senate the difference is not dramatic, but in the House of Representatives incumbents actually lower the average margin of victory for all House winners.

Next, I use Fiorina's approach to testing the effects of redistricting by examining the Democratic Party

Table 1.  
Electoral Competition in Florida House and Senate Races

	House			Senate		
	1988-2002	1992	2002	1988-2002	1992	2002
Uncontested Elections (No Major Party Opposition)	53.3%	44.2%	66.7%	49.5%	40%	65%
Avg. Margin of Victory (Two Major Parties Competing)	21%	18.8%	24.8%	21%	17.3%	22.7%

Figure 2. Distribution of Votes for Al Gore by Florida House District: 2000 Presidential Election



presidential vote in 2000 in Florida House districts. If legislative districts are not notably homogenous in their support for the Democratic candidate, then the modal category (or the highest number of districts) should be in the competitive range. If districts are homogeneous we should find a bi-modal distribution with the Democratic candidate winning many districts easily and losing others by large margins. Figure 2 provides the results of this assessment.

Note that the most competitive range, 46 to 55%, is not where most districts lay. Instead, the modal category is found in the 36 to 45% range, suggesting that the most common type of district was not competitive. If one adds the number of districts that were not competitive (defined as either Al Gore winning or losing easily) and compare these numbers to the frequency of districts that had competitive elections (46 to 55%), the precise bimodal distribution that Fiorina did not find at the national level appears. The evidence in Florida House districts shows relatively homogeneous support for both major party presidential candidates in 2000. The implication of this is that partisan homogeneous districts will produce larger margins of victory in state legislative races, because the district lines encapsulate like-minded people.

A second test of the homogeneity, or non-competitiveness, of Florida legislative districts can be conducted by examining the dispersion of the African-American population by legislative district. Examining the dispersion of this population in Florida (as opposed to the Latin-American population, for instance) has the added benefit of allowing one to generalize about partisan homogeneity because African-Americans are assumed to be Democratic Party supporters.<sup>9</sup> If the standard deviation of the African-American population in Florida House and Senate districts has been growing over time, it can then be argued that there is some movement in Florida toward more racially homogeneous legislative districts and, by default, more partisan homogeneous legislative districts. Table 2 provides the results of this analysis.

Specifically, note the maximum values and standard deviations of the percentage of the total population, in legislative districts and Florida counties, which is African-American after each of the last three redistricting efforts. By examining the dispersion of African-Americans, at three distinct points in time, we can learn something about the redistricting process. The standard deviation grows in both House and Senate districts over time, as does the maximum percentage of African-Americans in Senate districts. This suggests that legislative districts are increasingly likely to have either many or only a few African-Americans residing in them. In other words, there is an increase in racial segregation in Florida legislative districts. Note also, however, that there is no corresponding movement in Florida counties.

The county data suggests increased integration over the past 30 years. The incongruence with the legislative district data suggests that the increase in dispersion of the African-American population is contrived and not the product of naturally occurring population shifts. One might expect the jump in dispersion from 1982 to 1992 because of efforts in the early 1990s to create majority-minority districts. Yet, notice even after the increased segregation in Florida legislative districts, which occurred in 1992, there is even more dispersion (or more segregation) of African-Americans following the 2001 redistricting.

In all, after examining the plausibility of the two competing explanations for increasing electoral margins, this research must initially conclude that the thesis in support of redistricting receives more support in Florida than the argument about an increase in the electoral aptitude of incumbent legislators. It is highly plausible that the redistricting process in the state is, at least in part, responsible for the paucity of marginal or close state legislative elections. To test this contention further, I present econometric models that attempt to isolate a positive association between redistricting years and election margins and uncontested races in the state.

ict:

Table 2.

The Distribution of the African American Population by Legislative District and Florida County (In percentages)

Year	House of Representatives (n = 120)		Standard Deviation
	Minimum Value	Maximum Value	
1982	< 1	73	15.14
1992	< 1	63	16.60
2002	1	73	17.33

Year	Senate (n = 40)		Standard Deviation
	Minimum Value	Maximum Value	
1982*	2	49	8.71
1992	2	56	13.59
2002	2	63	15.66

Year	Florida Counties (n = 67)		Standard Deviation
	Minimum Value	Maximum Value	
1982	2	59	10.22
1992	2	58	10.07
2002	2	57	9.92

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

\* n = 39 because of missing data for Senate District 36.

Modeling Election Margins

Specifically, the dependent variable that I attempt to clarify in this instance is the difference between the percentage of votes received by the first and second place finishers in each Florida House and Senate race from 1988 through 2002, when there is more than one candidate running. Because it is pooled-time series data and the tests for serial correlation of error terms are negative, I employ a generalized least squares random-effects regression model to test for unique associations between election margins and a class of variables. I test each chamber separately.

The model is as follows:

$$\text{Election Margin} = \text{constant} + \text{redistricting} + \text{redistricting}(t+2) + \text{incumbency} + \text{redistricting} * \text{incumbency} + \text{term limits}(t-0) + \text{term limits}(t-2) + \text{presidential election year} + \text{quality challenger} + \text{GOP winner} + e$$

To test the effects of redistricting, elections in 1992 and 2002 are scored "1" and all other elections "0." In order to test the staying power of the redistricting scheme, I also include a variable (Redistricting t + 2) scored "1" in 1994 and "0" other years. An alternative operationalization of the resiliency of redistricting would have all cases in 1992, 1994, and 2002 scored "1" and all others "0." Neither specification radically changes the statistical significance or substantive significance of any of the findings in this analysis. In the result tables, I report findings based on the first measure. Explicitly, I hypothesize that redistricting will grow election margins because I assume that constituents of the legislature's minority party will have

been packed into specific districts to enhance electoral opportunity for majority party members in neighboring districts. Overall, districts are believed to be more homogeneous after redistricting takes place and, consequent to this, I anticipate less competition these years.

Incumbency is also tested using a dummy variable. Elections with an incumbent running are scored "1" and all other cases are scored "0." If we know anything about elections in this country, it is that, on average, incumbents have an electoral advantage. It was argued earlier that incumbents were not more successful as time passed from 1988 to 2002 (in particular, in the House of Representatives). This is far from suggesting that incumbents, on average, will not be associated with larger margins. The earlier finding was that incumbent electoral proficiency has stagnated, but does not imply the lack of incumbent electoral prowess. Although incumbents have not been winning by increasingly larger margins, they have still been winning and should be associated, in the aggregate, with larger margins of victory.

I also test the interaction between redistricting and incumbency. In Florida, incumbent legislators draw the lines and are given a unique opportunity to protect and promote electoral advantage. Explicitly, in each model this variable is scored "1" if the election occurs in a redistricting year and there is an incumbent legislator running for reelection; all other cases are scored "0." Both variables are expected to increase victory margins, and I suggest that their interaction will produce an additional positive effect. In other words, margins should be larger when incumbents are running, larger when the lines have been redrawn and still larger when the phenomena occur in tandem.

imum values and standard of the total population, in counties, which is African-three redistricting efforts. African-Americans, at three learn something about the rd deviation grows in both ime, as does the maximum ns in Senate districts. This s are increasingly likely to African-Americans residing re is an increase in racial tive districts. Note also, esponding movement in

increased integration over uence with the legislative crease in dispersion of the is contrived and not the upulation shifts. One might om 1982 to 1992 because create majority-minority ie increased segregation in h occurred in 1992, there re segregation) of African-redistricting.

ie plausibility of the two reasing electoral margins. nclude that the thesis in s more support in Florida ase in the electoral aptitude highly plausible that the , at least in part, responsible se state legislative elections. r, I present econometric ositive association between margins and uncontested

Theoretically, incumbent legislators who have had some say in the design of new districts may have encouraged drawing lines that increase their electoral chances.

In 1992, Florida implemented term limits for state legislators and the first cohort of forced exits occurred in 2000. This institutional change, which might bring about more electoral competition, needs to be controlled for (Fund 1992, 231). I score all cases where a legislator was evicted by term limits (term limits (t-0)), in either 2000 or 2002, "1" and other cases "0." The anticipation is that these open seat races will garner more meaningful competition and the average margins of victory will be lower in these contests. Term limits might have an additional effect on margins of victory as well. Namely, when a legislator is about to be ousted in two years (term limits (t-2)), one might expect a reduced probability that a quality challenger will surface, and the average margin of victory in these races ought to be higher. This expectation is based on the assumption that when a potential high quality challenger contemplates running for the state legislature, she will hold back this initiative until the election year when the incumbent is forced out. A rational quality challenger will wait for an open seat.<sup>8</sup> Specifically, I test this consideration of strategic quality challengers by including a variable scored "1" in 1998, 2000, and 2002 if an incumbent office holder will be forced out by term-limits in two years. I anticipate a positive association with election margins.

An additional control variable is presidential election years. The primary theoretical argument is that higher turnout in presidential election years will diversify the voting population and lead to more meaningful electoral competition. I anticipate a negative association with margins of victory. Specifically, I suggest that margins will be smaller when turnout is higher because a larger pool of voters in presidential election years will mean moderates, ticket-splitters, and others predisposed to make elections close will be showing themselves at the polls.<sup>9</sup>

Another important control variable in this analysis is the presence of "quality challengers," who ought to reduce margins of victory (Van Dunk 197). Specifically, the concern here should be with disparity in "quality." Election margins ought to be larger if one candidate is of high quality and the other is not. I test this hypothesis by scoring a case "0" if both candidates and neither candidate have previously held elected office. If only one candidate has previously won an election, I allege disparity in "quality," and the case is scored "1." A positive association with the margin of victory is anticipated.<sup>10</sup>

Last, I control for a Republican trend in Florida state politics. At the national government level, scholars argue that Democratic losses in 1992 and 1994 were not as much a product of the creation of majority-minority districts as they were the result of a Republican surge (Petrocik and Desposato 1998). Moreover, if there is a significant association

between incumbency and victory margins, one might argue that this is simply a by-product of the fact that more incumbents in the data set are Republicans. Incumbency effects will be inexorably correlated with a Republican trend. To control for this potential problem, I create a variable that measures whether the winner of each election was a Republican and expect a positive association between the variable and victory margins.

## Results

In the House of Representatives many of the hypotheses are validated. Table 3 reports the results. The notable exception is that term limits at t-0 are significant in the hypothesized opposite direction or are associated with larger margins of victory. The positive association at t-2 had been anticipated. The redistricting variable, as expected, is significant and positive in the House of Representatives, as is incumbency. The test of the interaction between redistricting and incumbency in the House suggests an even stronger effect and presents a clearer picture of the relevance of these two variables.

Considering the combined effects of incumbency and redistricting, I find an average increase in the margin of victory of nearly 32%. This occurs after controlling for presidential election years, quality challengers, and a Republican winner, all of which are statistically significant considerations in their own right. The finding relating to quality challengers in the House of Representatives suggests that, when only one of the candidates previously held elective office, there is over an eight percent increase in the margin of victory.

Overall, in the Senate, the findings on redistricting are not as strong. This should have been anticipated. There are fewer lines to draw (less gerrymandering opportunity), and district size is larger making it more difficult to create partisan homogeneous settings to thwart competition. However, the key interaction between incumbency and redistricting is still easily significant in the Senate and suggests an increase in the margin of victory when these two considerations occur in tandem. More precisely, Senate elections which occur during the year after redistricting takes place, when an incumbent is running, are associated with a roughly 19% larger margin of victory, on average, all else being equal.

Presidential election years matter in the upper chamber as well, but there is no notable Republican trend in the Florida Senate that is independent of the incumbency/redistricting finding reported here. Also, in the Senate, neither term limit consideration helps or hurts electoral competition. The quality challenger consideration has an even larger effect in the Senate than it did in the House of Representatives.

## Modeling Uncontested Elections

This test of the relationship between redistricting and

Table 3.

## Understanding Victory Margins in Florida: 1988-2002

DV = the difference between the 1st and 2nd place candidates' electoral percentages.

*Generalized Least Squares Random-Effects Model*

Independent Variables	House Coefficient (s.e.)	Senate Coefficient (s.e.)
Redistricting Year	9.22 (4.40)**	-.61 (8.67)
Redistricting Year $(t+2)$	-4.33 (2.97) <sub>b</sub>	2.72 (6.30)
Incumbent Running	7.35 (3.01)**	-4.07 (6.31)
Incumbent*Redistricting Year	15.51 (4.89)***	19.34 (9.39)**
Term Limited Seat	15.05 (4.17) <sub>a</sub>	6.18 (8.27)
Term Limited Seat $(t-2)$	7.78 (4.77)#	1.76 (24.39)
Presidential Election Year	-4.64 (2.25)**	-7.17 (4.72)#
Quality Challenger	-8.60 (3.15)**	-17.67 (4.82)***
Republican Winner	4.48 (2.27)**	-5.34 (4.57)
Constant	22.20 (3.21)***	35.75 (6.40)***
N	535	115
Wald Chi2	119.6***	28.9***

\*\*\* p < .001, \*\* p < .01, \* p < .05, # p < .10, <sub>a</sub> significant in the hypothesized opposite direction,<sub>b</sub> marginally significant in the hypothesized opposite direction

electoral competition examines all state House and Senate races in Florida from 1988 to 2002 and measures whether both major parties fielded a candidate. Specifically, the dependent variable is scored "1" if the race does not have candidates from both major parties running and "0" if the two parties compete for the seat. Because I have pooled time-series data, no evidence of serial correlation, and a dichotomous dependent variable, I employ a random-effects logit model to illuminate the effects of redistricting and incumbency on the absence of two-party competition.

The model is as follows:

$$\text{Uncontested Seat} = \text{constant} + \text{redistricting} + \text{redistricting}(t+2) + \text{incumbency} + \text{redistricting*incumbency} + \text{term limits}(t-0) + \text{term limits}(t-2) + \text{presidential election year} + e$$

All the independent variables in the analysis were coded the same. I do not include in this analysis, however, a measure for 'quality challenger' or 'GOP winner.' Obviously, one cannot determine these qualities in an uncontested race at time  $t$  because the winner and challenger are not known. Although it is possible to imagine that the presence of a quality challenger at  $t-2$  or a GOP winner at  $t-2$  would affect the likelihood that a seat will be uncontested at time  $t$ , this is impossible to measure because district constituencies are not constant during the time period of the study. The results of the logit analysis of uncontested seats are presented in Table 4.

## Results

The findings on term limits are again perplexing. In the Florida House of Representatives, term limited seats, or seats vacated because of term limits, were actually more likely to be uncontested. It seems that Florida political operatives were ready when term limits hit in 2000 and any propensity that term limits had to create competitive elections was effectively negated (perhaps through strategic recruitment). In the House of Representatives, I do obtain a positive coefficient as expected when a seat was to be opened up in two-years by term limits. However, the association this time does not reach even marginal levels of statistical significance.

More notably, the incumbency variable is statistically significant in both House and Senate models, and even after specifying an interaction with incumbency (which induces considerable collinearity) the redistricting variable is positive and marginally significant in both models. This suggests an increase in the likelihood of uncontested elections the year after the lines are redrawn. The interaction between redistricting and incumbency, however, provides no additional explanatory power.

Coefficients in logit models are difficult to interpret. Specifically, these findings suggest that the predicted probability of a seat being uncontested by both major parties is .36 in the House of Representatives and .20 in the Senate, from 1988 to 2002, when all variables in the model are held constant at their modal values. However, when there is an incumbent running, and it is the year after redistricting

Table 4.

## Understanding Uncontested Elections in Florida: 1988-2002

DV = Dichotomous measure equals 1 if election has candidates from both major parties, and 0 if there is no two party competition.

*Random-Effects Logit Model*

Independent Variables	House Coefficient (s.e.)	Senate Coefficient (s.e.)
Redistricting Year	-.49 (.35)#	-1.01 (.79)#
Redistricting Year $(t + 2)$	.07 (.23)	.92 (.66)#
Incumbent Running	-1.32 (.21)***	-1.23 (.41)**
Incumbent * Redistricting Year	.27 (.34)	.14 (6.36)
Term Limited Seat	-.81 (.29)**	-.24 (.53)
Term Limited Seat $(t - 2)$	-.31 (.27)	.45 (1.49)
Presidential Election Year	.36 (.15)*	.26 (.41)
Constant	.78 (.21)***	.54 (.43)
N	960	208
Wald Chi2	65.26***	15.70*

\*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$ , #  $< .10$

has taken place, the probability of the seat being uncontested grows to .68 in the House of Representatives and .80 in the Senate.

**Discussion**

By pitting incumbents against one another and creating open seat elections, redistricting is an institutional feature in American state politics that theoretically can increase electoral competition and enhance democratic accountability. The election year following redistricting is of particular interest for this reason. This study suggests, however, that when legislators control the redistricting process, any inertia toward more electoral competition is successfully annulled. New electoral dynamics caused by redistricting (and term limits), which might work against incumbent candidates and encourage quality challengers, are not sufficient to overcome the logical craving that legislators have to avoid competition and create partisan advantage.

It should be plain that if redistricting is part of the explanation for less electoral competition in Florida, it must be the case that legislative districts are becoming more homogeneous along party lines. This phenomenon, when it is the product of gerrymandering, is commonly known as "packing." The creation of majority-minority districts is a form of racial packing that is familiar to many. If the minority, which becomes a majority in a district, is African-American, this can by default be a form of partisan packing. Partisan packing, on the one hand, assures minority party representation, on the other, it leads to advantages for majority party candidates in all neighboring districts.

I set out to try and quantify partisan packing after the last round of redistricting in Florida in 2001 and develop a unique test. The first task was to acquire a measure of the aggregate partisanship of Florida legislative districts. The percentage of voters registered with a party is not a suitable indicator because often times people registered with a party and do not support that party's candidates.<sup>11</sup> Academics commonly use presidential vote totals to discern the partisanship or ideology of legislative districts (Klingman and Lammers 1984; Nice 1986). Consequently, I adopt this strategy and use the vote totals of the presidential contenders in 2000 to define the partisanship of legislative districts and the relative partisan gap in these districts in 2002.<sup>12</sup>

Specifically, "the gap" is the absolute value of the difference in the percentage of votes cast for George W. Bush and Al Gore in each Florida House district in 2000. Table 5 reports the result of a bivariate regression where I simply regress the partisan gap in House districts on the partisanship of the winning candidate. This tests the percentage of votes cast for a winning candidate after a minimum winning coalition has been established. Any surplus support would be considered an indicator of the amount of wasted votes or votes received after victory was already secure (see Hill 2002). More specifically, the regression tests whether the gap in district party affiliation is larger when a Democrat wins or when a Republican wins. If the party of the winning candidate is associated with a larger gap, on average, that party will be more prone to receive votes in excess of a minimum winning coalition or wasted votes.

Table 5.  
Measuring Potential Wasted Votes in Florida House Races: 2002

DV – Partisanship Gap in Florida Districts: Measured as the Absolute Value of the Gore-Bush Vote Differential

Ordinary Least Squares Regression Model

Independent Variable	Coefficient (s.e.)
Democratic Party Wins	22.61 (3.06)***
Constant	38.52 (2.53)***
Adjusted R-squared	.31
F-statistic	54.37***
N	120
Bivariate correlation between gap and Democratic winner -	.56**

\*\*\* p < .001, \*\* p < .01

The analysis suggests that the partisan gap was greater in districts won by Democratic House candidates (bivariate correlation between "partisan gap" and "Democratic winner" .56). Moreover, the regression coefficient derived from this test suggests that when a Democrat won a Florida House race in 2002, the partisan gap was, on average, over 22% larger. That is to say, typically, there are 22% more Democrats (Gore voters) than Republicans in a district when a Democrat won a House seat. Republican winners, on the other hand, are not associated with a partisan gap or votes in excess of a minimum winning coalition. Indeed, in 2002 there was a much greater chance that winning Democratic House candidates received wasted (unnecessary-extra) votes.<sup>13</sup>

In all, this study further validates suspicions that redistricting can play a significant role in promoting larger margins of victory, less electoral competition, and by default depress democratic accountability. In Florida, all evidence points to more partisan homogeneous legislative districts and less effective competition the election year after redistricting takes place. This study also authenticates the very important role played by incumbency in our understanding of electoral competition. However, the research suggests that in Florida, control of the redistricting process is likely a more important incumbency advantage than any increase in public resources afforded to incumbent office holders.

It is interesting to note that tests of a redistricting effect two years out (in 1994), suggests that the staying power of the scheme in the 1990s was limited. Demographics in Florida are particularly dynamic. Earlier research on redistricting also finds the effects of redistricting are short-lived (Gelman and King 1994). It is possible that by 2006 or 2008 more electoral competition will materialize.<sup>14</sup> As it stands, competitive state legislative elections in Florida are rare and elections in many instances cannot be relied

upon to hold elected officials accountable. In a state where demographics or relative partisan heterogeneity suggest electoral competition should be present this is the case. It is clear that partisan gerrymandering helps explain this result.

#### Endnotes

- 1 In parts of the analysis that follows, unless there are candidates running from both the Democratic and Republican Parties the election is scored "uncontested."
- 2 Correlations calculated by the author and not present in any table.
- 3 The amended statute increases the amount of excess campaign funds that can be used for office purposes from \$5000.00 to \$10,000.00 for House members and from \$5,000.00 to \$20,000.00 for Senators.
- 4 Statistics not reported in any Table.
- 5 This finding is well documented in academic literature and has for all practical purposes become common knowledge. Perhaps the first to recognize that African-Americans were becoming an electoral asset for Democrats was V. O. Key (1949). In 2002, 84.8% African-Americans in Florida were registered Democrats versus 5.3% registered Republicans (Conley 2003, 6).
- 6 When I include all cases, assume that the winner of a one-candidate race received 100% support, and include a dummy variable to recognize that the election was uncontested, I do not obtain significantly different findings.
- 7 See Stimson (1985) for justification of modeling choice. Regardless of the model employed, all coefficient signs (+, -) stay the same, and there is no change in the variables that reach levels of statistical significance.

- 8 For academic evidence of this line of reasoning see (Mondak 1995; Van Dunk 1997).
- 9 One might argue that the causal direction of statewide voter turnout and election margins is unclear. To argue that close margins cause turnout requires the assumption that voters have sufficient information about the closeness of elections. I hold that it is more reasonable to think that the presidential election ever four years drives variance in voter turnout in the states.
- 10 I also use an alternative measure of 'quality challenger' based on a ratio of campaign contributions given to the first verses the second largest recipient of contributions. When the campaign contribution ratio is higher I assume more disparity in 'quality' and hypothesize that the margin of victory will be greater. In an analysis of the 1996 to 2002 elections in Florida little changes with the notable exception that the new 'quality challenger' measure overrides (or renders insignificant) the incumbency consideration in both House and Senate models. In the Senate model, however, the measure of 'quality challenger' is also not statistically significant.
- 11 For instance, in 2002, House District 5 in the Florida Panhandle had 51% registered Democrats and only 31% registered Republicans, but a Republican Representative won nonetheless. This happens; arguably, because many of the Democrats in that district do not support Democratic candidates.
- 12 When discussing Florida redistricting plans, after the most recent census, with someone who was involved in formulating alternative schemes in Florida it was learned that policy-makers were using the Bush-Gore vote totals in 2000 as a surrogate for the party affiliation of localities.
- 13 Further evidence of partisan packing comes in the increased number of African-Americans serving in the Florida legislature. From 1990 to 2002, the number of African-Americans has grown from 12 to 17 in the House of Representatives and from two to seven in the Senate. Of course, the increase is unusual because it occurs at the same time as an improvement in Republican electoral success in the state. All seven African-Americans serving in the Florida Senate and all but one of the seventeen House members, in 2004, were from the Democratic Party. A plausible explanation for their success is that they were elected from districts that were "packed" with Democrats.
- 14 In 2004, only 36 of 120 House races and 6 of 22 Senate races produced two-party competition.

#### References

- Alford, J. R., & Hibbing, J. R. (1981). Increased incumbency advantage in the House. *Journal of Politics*, 43:1042-61.
- Bibby, J. F., & Holbrook, T. M. (1996). Parties and elections. In Virginia Gray and Herbert Jacob (Eds.), *Politics in the American states: a comparative analysis*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
- Born, R. (1979). Generational replacement and the growth of incumbent reelection margins in the U.S. House. *American Political Science Review*, 29:330-47.
- Bullock, C. (1975). Redistricting and congressional stability: 1962-1972. *Journal of Politics*, 37: 569-75.
- Cain, B. (1985). Assessing the partisan effects of redistricting. *American Political Science Review*, 79:320-33.
- Campagna, J., & Grofman, B. (1990). Party control and partisan bias in 1980s congressional redistricting. *Journal of Politics*, 52:1242-58.
- Carey, J. M., Niemi, R. G. & Powell, L. W. (2000). Incumbency and the probability of reelection in state legislative elections. *Journal of Politics*, 62:671-700.
- Cohen, C. (1971). *Democracy*. New York: Free Press.
- Conley, R. S. (2003). *Florida 2002 elections update*. Boston, MA: Pearson Custom Publishing.
- Erikson, R. S. (1971). The advantage of incumbency in congressional elections. *Polity*, 3:395-405.
- Ferejohn, J. A. (1977). On the decline of competition in congressional elections. *American Political Science Review*, 71:166-76.
- Fiorina, M. P. (1989). *Congress: keystone of the Washington establishment*. (2nd ed.) New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Fund, J. H. (1992). Term limitation: an idea whose time has come. In Gerald Benjamin and Michael J. Malbin (Eds.), *Limiting legislative terms*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
- Gelman, A., & King, G. (1994). Enhancing democracy through legislative redistricting. *American Political Science Review*, 88:541-59.
- Hill, S. (2002). *Fixing elections: the failure of America's winner take all politics*. New York: Routledge.
- Holbrook, T. M., & Van Dunk, E. (1993). Electoral competition in the American states. *American Political Science Review*, 87:955-62.
- Jacobson, G. C. (1992). *The politics of congressional elections*. (3rd ed.) New York: Harper Collins Publisher.
- Key, V. O., Jr. (1949). *Southern politics*. New York: Vintage Publishers.
- Klingman, D., & Lammers, W. W. (1984). The 'general policy liberalism' factor in American state politics. *American Journal of Political Science*, 28:598-610.
- Mayhew, D. R. (1971). Congressional representation: theory and practice in drawing the districts. In Nelson W. Polsby (Ed.), *Reapportionment in the 1970s*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Mayhew, D. (1974). *Congress: the electoral connection*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.



and Herbert Jacob (Eds.), *Who runs for the legislature?* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

placement and the growth of political parties in the U.S. House. *Political Research Quarterly*, 29:330-47.

gating and congressional redistricting. *Journal of Politics*, 37: 58.

the partisan effects of congressional redistricting. *Political Science Review*, 1990, 58.

Powell, L. W. (2000). The probability of reelection in state legislative elections. *Journal of Politics*, 62:671-700. New York: Free Press.

*2 elections update*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown.

the decline of incumbency in congressional elections. *Journal of Politics*, 3:395-405.

*The decline of competition in congressional elections*. *American Political Science Review*, 87:101-112.

*Keystone of the Washington*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Redistricting: an idea whose time has come. Benjamin and Michael J. (Eds.), *Legislative terms*. Washington, DC: American Political Science Association.

(1994). Enhancing the quality of congressional redistricting. *American Political Science Review*, 88:541-59.

*Redistricting: the failure of the current process*. New York: Routledge.

Brace, P. (1993). Electoral politics in the states. *American Political Science Review*, 87:101-112.

*Redistricting and congressional elections*. New York: Collins Publisher.

*Redistricting and congressional elections*. New York: Vintage.

W. (1984). The 'general election' in American state politics. *American Political Science Review*, 78:598-610.

Proportional representation: drawing the districts. (Ed.), *Reapportionment*. New York: CA: University of California Press.

*Progress: the electoral process*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Moncrief, G. F., Squire, P., & Jewell, M. E. (2001). *Who runs for the legislature?* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Mondak, J. J. (1995). Elections as filters: term limits and the composition of the U.S. House. *Political Research Quarterly*, 48:701-727.

Niemi, R., & Jackman, S. (1991). Bias and responsiveness in state legislative redistricting. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 16:183-202.

Nice, D. (1986). State support for constitutional balanced budget requirements. *Journal of Politics*, 48:134-42.

Petrocik, J. R., & Desposato, S. W. (1998). The partisan consequences of majority-minority redistricting in the South, 1992 and 1994. *Journal of Politics*, 60:613-33.

Pitkin, H. F. (1967). *The concept of representation*. Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press.

Powell, G. B., Jr. (2000). *Elections as instruments of democracy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Stimson, J. A. (1985). Regression in space and time: a statistical essay. *American Journal of Political Science*, 29:914-47.

Tufte, E. R. (1973). The relationship between seats and votes in two-party systems. *American Political Science Review*, 67:540-54.

Tufte, E. R. (1975). Determinants of the outcome of midterm congressional elections. *American Political Science Review*, 69:812-26.

Van Dunk, E. (1997). Challenger quality in state legislative elections. *Political Research Quarterly*, 50:793-807.

Weber, R. E., Tucker, H. J., & Brace, P. (1991). Vanishing marginals in state legislative elections. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 16:29-47.

---

# Registering Jail Inmates in Orange County: A Personal Account A Research Note

Terri Susan Fine, University of Central Florida

On October 1, 2004, I was one of five volunteers allowed to enter the Orange County (FL) Reception Center (Orange County's main jail) in order to help inmates register to vote. This was the first time that any outside volunteers were allowed to enter the jail for this purpose. The experience compelled me to consider voter enfranchisement and civil rights issues far differently from those which my academic training and other voluntary voter registration experiences have afforded me.

This essay places the experience in the broader political context of the 2004 presidential election in Florida. Specific attention is paid to why voter turnout was considered so important by both political parties in 2004, how the invitation to enter the jail came about, my own experience there, and how that experience affected my views concerning voter enfranchisement and civil rights.

## Context

Like 48 other states, Florida requires registration as a voting prerequisite. Federal law forbids any state from requiring registration more than 30 days in advance of any election although many shorten that time frame. In Florida, the deadline is 29 days before Election Day. In 2004, Monday, October 4 was the deadline for the November 2 election.

During the weeks and months before Election Day, political parties and interest groups make concerted efforts to register voters. Unregistered voters are targeted by such groups in their efforts to enhance turnout. Such outreach efforts make registration easier for voters unfamiliar with the necessary steps in registering. Parties and interest groups are advantaged because persons who may have been otherwise ineligible would now be potential supporters.

Registration and turnout issues became particularly pronounced after the 2000 presidential election. That year, George W. Bush received all of Florida's 25 Electoral College votes (out of 270 needed in order to win) even though the gap between Vice President Al Gore and himself was 537 votes out of 5.9 million votes cast. Florida is a "winner-take-all" state. Whoever receives the plurality of the popular vote in that state receives all of that state's Electoral College vote.

At the national level, the electoral vote distribution before Florida's electoral vote was confirmed but could not determine a winner. Vice President Gore had 267 votes while George W. Bush had 246 votes. Neither person met the minimum 270 needed to win without Florida. Because the certified vote was so close, and because Florida's electoral vote winner won the presidency, it was expected, and realized, that Florida would play a pivotal role in the 2004 presidential election.

Coincident with the narrow popular vote in Florida were concerns about the disenfranchisement of otherwise eligible voters. Persons were turned away at the polls because they were told that their names appeared on a list of ineligible felons, that their names were not on the registered voter list in their precinct, or that they were not registered at all. Additionally, because some precincts lacked tabulators, many votes were disqualified due to ballot errors. The disqualification rate among African-American voters and votes cast by African-Americans was far higher when compared with the disqualification rate among white voters and votes cast by whites. As African-Americans are far more likely to support Democratic over Republican candidates, it was presumed that the outcome of the presidential race would have been different had these African-American

voters and votes not been disqualified.<sup>1</sup>

The end result for Florida was the critical realization that every vote mattered. In 2004, turnout was expected to be the key in determining who won the state's Electoral College vote and, perhaps, the presidency.

### Background

In July 2004, members of "The Movement Central Florida" asked the Orange County Chief of Corrections if they could enter the jail to register inmates. "The Movement Central Florida" is part of a larger national "Movement" that uses "hip hop" as a means to promote registration and civic education. Entertainers such as Sean "P. Diddy" Combs, Luther "Uncle Luke" Campbell, Wyclef Jean, LL Cool J, and Trick Daddy use their celebrity to encourage 18-35 year olds, their target demographic, to register and vote.<sup>2</sup> Most members of "The Movement" are African-American or Hispanic, although membership is not limited to racial or ethnic minorities.

In a letter dated July 31, 2004 to Bridget Norvell, president of "The Movement Central Florida," Timothy P. Ryan, Orange County Chief of Corrections, denied the group's request expressing concerns about safety and security. As a compromise, the group was given the option of sending a flyer to all inmates through the internal mail system. The flyer would notify inmates that registration materials were available in the law library. Chief Ryan indicated that 4000 copies of the flyer would be necessary so that every inmate could receive one. He also indicated that such a flyer would have to be approved by the Supervisor of Elections in advance. "The Movement Central Florida" rejected the offer.

Denying such a request would not keep inmates from registering. Inmates may complete registration and absentee voting materials from the jail's law library. The materials are then sent by regular mail to the Orange County Supervisor of Elections.

Having an outside group collect registration forms from inmates created two advantages, however. First, the volunteer registrars would hand deliver the completed registration forms to the Supervisor of Elections thereby insuring their timely arrival. A recent state law requires that a photocopy of Florida government issued identification, such as a driver's license, must be included with the form when registering by mail.<sup>3</sup> However, the law does not require that identification be presented when an authorized registrar collects this information from voters.<sup>4</sup> Inmates would not be required to secure such photocopies when an authorized group processed their registration materials.

Jail administrators were already notifying inmates by an interoffice memo that applications were available in the law library well in advance of the general election deadline. As with any other law library visit, requests are submitted, in writing, in advance. The interoffice memo was posted on July 30 while the registration deadline for the August

31 primary was August 2. Persons could not likely register in time for the primary because of the various hurdles associated with getting the registration materials completed and delivered to the Supervisor of Elections by close of business August 2.

Still, it appeared that there were two distinct, though related, issues of concern to jail officials when "The Movement Central Florida" requested entry. Was it these particular outsiders who were being denied entry while others might be allowed in? Alternately, was it the purpose of their visit? Administrators focused on the visitors themselves and not the process. They proposed that a flyer be distributed to inmates while a memo was posted. In its letter of refusal to "The Movement Central Florida", administrators stated that "Orange County recognizes the right to vote as a fundamental right."

"The Movement Central Florida" did not give up. They contacted State Senator Gary Siplin (D-Orlando), who supported the group's efforts at mobilizing young voters (Senator Siplin has also helped convicted felons get their voting rights restored).<sup>5</sup> Many members of "The Movement Central Florida" were also members of the Central Florida Voter's League, a voluntary organization focusing on voter education, registration and participation. The Central Florida Voter's League, at the urging of "The Movement Central Florida", asked Bill Cowles, Orange County Supervisor of Elections, to contact jail officials on their behalf. Supervisor Cowles responded that he could not force administrators to allow members of either group entry into the jail.

George Morning, the Assistant Manager of Inmate Programs and Support Division who reports to Chief Ryan, was asked to mediate the dispute between the jail and "The Movement Central Florida". Mr. Morning offered Supervisor Cowles a compromise. He offered that persons would be allowed to register voters provided that they were members of a non-partisan, established community group that was already engaged in voter registration efforts.

The Orange County Voter Education Alliance (VEA) was identified as a group that could enter the jail. The Orange County VEA is an organization formed by Supervisor Cowles soon after the 2000 Florida election debacle. It is comprised of several business, ethnic and educational organizations as well as political parties. The group's purpose is to educate representatives of these groups, who then inform other group members of election law changes and updates. All VEA groups are involved with voter education activities, including registration, mobilization and get out the vote efforts. VEA members also register voters on behalf of the Orange County Supervisor of Elections.

VEA members were contacted by e-mail on Wednesday, September 29, asking if they would register voters at the jail two days later, Friday October 1 (three days before the state registration deadline). At that time, October

s could not likely register  
e of the various hurdles  
tion materials completed  
of Elections by close of

were two distinct, though  
ail officials when "The  
ested entry. Was it these  
eing denied entry while  
nately, was it the purpose  
ocused on the visitors  
hey proposed that a flyer  
memo was posted. In its  
ment Central Florida",  
ge County recognizes the  
ght."

Florida" did not give up.  
ary Siplin (D-Orlando),  
rts at mobilizing young  
lped convicted felons get  
many members of "The  
ere also members of the  
a voluntary organization  
stration and participation.  
ue, at the urging of "The  
ked Bill Cowles, Orange  
to contact jail officials on  
responded that he could  
members of either group

stant Manager of Inmate  
who reports to Chief Ryan,  
between the jail and "The  
Mr. Morning offered  
e. He offered that persons  
rs provided that they were  
lished community group  
r registration efforts.

Education Alliance (VEA)  
could enter the jail. The  
rganization formed by  
he 2000 Florida election  
eral business, ethnic and  
ll as political parties. The  
esentatives of these groups,  
members of election law  
groups are involved with  
including registration,  
te efforts. VEA members  
of the Orange County

ntacted by e-mail on  
ing if they would register  
iday October 1 (three days  
ine). At that time, October

1 was the only day that VEA members would be allowed  
into the jail. Members would have to arrive and depart as  
a group.

VEA registrars reported to the jail at 7 am and were  
briefed by administrators. Administrators stressed that  
lunch was served at 10:30 am, and all registration related  
activities had to cease by that time, whether all inmates had  
been processed or not. A debriefing would occur once  
registration ended.

It was under these conditions that an outside group  
was allowed to enter the Orange County Reception Center  
in order to register voters for the first time.

The jail holds persons who are either serving sentences  
for misdemeanors, awaiting arraignment, unable to make  
bail or are awaiting trial. Those awaiting trial include those  
accused of both felonies and misdemeanors. None of these  
conditions, in and of themselves, precluded any of the  
inmates from voter eligibility. Any otherwise eligible inmate  
may vote absentee from the jail.<sup>6</sup> Others may anticipate  
release before November 2. These persons may request,  
receive and return registration materials before the deadline.

Registration and absentee requirements make no  
special provisions for jail inmates even though inmate status  
brings additional hurdles to those wanting to register and  
vote. Incarceration does not alter how any absentee ballot  
requests are handled. The result is a series of structural  
barriers all having the impact of making political  
participation much more difficult for this particular group  
than for other eligible voters.

For instance, inmates may register from the jail and  
list it as their absentee ballot mailing address. However,  
none of the inmates could list the jail as their home address  
even though many had been there for some time or  
anticipated being there well after Election Day  
(Misdemeanor sentences may last up to one year; those  
awaiting trial who cannot make bail may spend several years  
in jail.)

Some inmates faced residency hurdles because the  
judge sentencing them forbade them from returning home  
upon their release. Still others were homeless before their  
arrest or anticipated being homeless upon their release. One  
option available to homeless Orange County residents is  
to use the Central Florida Coalition for the Homeless as  
their mailing address. Yet the Coalition will not accept mail  
for persons who have not yet checked in at their facility.  
Persons anticipating the homeless shelter as their home  
address following their release, which might occur before  
Election Day, could not list the Coalition as their home  
address.

Those who anticipated being incarcerated on Election  
Day could apply for an absentee ballot. Some were not sure  
whether they would still be in jail on November 2. They  
may have requested that an absentee ballot be sent to their  
mailing (jail) address and not their home. Yet the absentee  
ballot may not have been received before their release.

Inmates released before Election Day who had not yet  
received their absentee ballot would be allowed to vote in  
person provided that the Supervisor of Elections confirmed  
that a requested absentee ballot had not been received by  
their office. This is the same procedure used for voters who  
requested absentee ballots who do not surrender those  
ballots once they arrive at the polls.

Inmates also faced critical information barriers. Being  
incarcerated means not being contacted by candidates,  
interest groups or political parties. Such mobilization efforts  
were particularly strong during the 2004 election season  
because Florida was "not quite red, not quite blue" after  
the 2000 election. Orange County, in particular, was highly  
prized because it has county level elected Democrats and  
Republicans, has a growing Hispanic population (a highly  
sought after electoral group), and was narrowly won by the  
Democrats in 2000. Central Floridians were bombarded  
with political information through television, direct mail,  
radio, e-mail and personal contact.<sup>7</sup> Inmates did not receive  
such contacts, except those who had access to television,  
because candidates, parties and interest groups were barred  
from contacting potential voters at the jail. Direct mailings,  
if any, were sent to inmates' home addresses. Inmates do  
not have their own telephones.

Inmates represent low turnout, low mobilization  
groups separate and apart from their inmate status. Many  
are homeless, lack marketable job skills, were unemployed  
before their arrest, did not graduate high school, and  
anticipate being unemployed after their release. Inmates  
also lacked political resources because their daily concerns  
revolved around being incarcerated, the status of their  
criminal case, and the circumstances contributing to their  
incarceration such as substance abuse, domestic violence,  
other criminal activities and other forms of violence. Paying  
attention to, and participating in, the election campaign  
was not among their immediate priorities.

### Registering the Inmates

Five VEA members came to the registration event:  
two African-American men, one African-American woman,  
one Hispanic man and one white woman. We were all  
members of various educational, legal and political interest  
groups. The three African-Americans claimed membership  
in the Urban League and the NAACP. It was later  
determined that at least one of the African-American men  
was a member of "The Movement Central Florida" and  
the Central Florida Voter's League. The African-American  
woman worked as the legislative aide to State Senator Siplin  
while the while the Hispanic male represented what is  
understood to be a one-person organization that he calls  
"El Pueblo". The white woman was me, a University of  
Central Florida political scientist.

As the volunteers waited to be led inside, one television  
station arrived as did State Senator Siplin. The media were  
not allowed to enter the jail although they were allowed on

jail grounds and to interview us as we entered and exited various buildings. Senator Siplin left once his aide arrived.

Our experience was both educational and troubling. Volunteers were separated by sex; the women were escorted to the women's facility while the men were escorted to the men's facility. Inmates in the low risk populations were housed in pods, each of which held 40 inmates. Six pods opened into the same common area that was accessible through locked doors. Each pod housed 20 bunk beds, a toilet and shower, and a common area. Each inmate kept approved belongings under her bunk. Ceiling lights, controlled by a guard stationed behind the desk, were the sole illumination.

My partner and I entered each pod individually and announced our presence. We provided a short speech regarding our purpose, information about eligibility and deadlines, and asked if anyone wanted register. The Supervisor of Elections office gave my partner and I six pens each. The pens were a basic "click" type with an internal spring mechanism.

Once we distributed the forms, we were asked questions, many of which we could not answer, and many that I had not ever considered. For example, is a 37-year-old who has never voted and who was convicted of cocaine possession at age 15 eligible to vote? Did she have to have her civil rights restored since the felony was committed before she turned 18 and she was prosecuted as a juvenile? A statement on the registration form warns potential voters that knowingly providing false information is a third-degree felony punishable with a fine of up to \$5000 and a possible prison sentence up to five years. Would this woman be found guilty of a third-degree felony if she registered only to find out later that her conviction as a teenager left that felony on her record for voting rights purposes even if her criminal record was sealed once she turned 18? Another inmate wanted to know if she would be considered a Florida resident. She had moved from Louisiana and had been homeless in Florida before her arrest.

The Florida registration form requires that persons provide either their driver's license number or the last four digits of their Social Security number. None of the women had their driver's license with them while others forgot their Social Security number. One inmate had to request the Social Security information, in writing, from the guard. While the guard was not required to heed the inmate's request when she made it, I asked the guard for the information immediately as we were moving to the next pod. The guard provided it.

Before we left each pod, my partner and I counted our pens. If the total did not add to 12 between us, the guard signaled for the inmates' attention. The "click type" pens were not approved because their springs could be used to make weapons. Inmates knew that everyone's personal effects, including their body cavities, could be searched for missing pens. More than once, we waited while an inmate

searched her locker because she unknowingly put the pen away.

We were also taken to the more secure area. Here, several smaller cells, each with a bunk bed and a toilet, housed two inmates each. There was a small common area, and the guard worked from behind reinforced glass. There were fewer potential registrants in the more secure areas.

The process was slow, as it required that, in every pod or area, we make the same speech, explain the process, answer questions, collect forms, check them for completeness and count our pens. As we finished one pod around 10:10 am, we were told to proceed to the 10:30 am debriefing even though we had not yet visited many of the women's pods.

The media approached us as we left the women's facility. Reporters asked whether it was acceptable to go to such lengths to help criminals vote. My response was that these persons, while an unpopular group, and one that would not be targeted by candidates, parties or interest groups, were eligible voters. And, in a representative democracy, all eligible voters should have the opportunity to exercise their rights. Because it was more difficult for inmates to register than for others, it was important to assist them with this process. It was not that these persons were criminals; rather, it was because they were both eligible and resource-poor that motivated me to help the inmates overcome at least some of the barriers that being in jail created.

At the debriefing, we expressed our concern that many inmates did not have a chance to register. We asked to remain after lunch and were politely refused. I left, somewhat deflated, because I knew that I had helped several eligible persons register who would not have otherwise gone to the effort of securing a turn at the law library, getting a copy of their photo identification if they could, and mailing the form out in time for the registration deadline. That there were several women whom I had not had a chance to contact concerned me, because it helped me realize how resource-poor these otherwise eligible voters really are. The *Orlando Sentinel* reported that 80 inmates registered at the Orange County Reception Center that day,<sup>8</sup> out of 3600 inmates.

A jail administrator called me later that day to invite me to return on Monday morning, October 4, the last possible registration day. We would still need to begin and end as a group, and be escorted at all times. We were not allowed to register inmates over the weekend. While I did not return to the Reception Center, a Central Florida Voter's League member told me later that nearly 120 inmates were registered on October 4. Between the two days that we were allowed in, about 200 inmates were registered.

#### **An Update**

The Central Florida Voter's League followed up on absentee ballot requests and determined that not one

absentee ballot request was generated by a Reception Center inmate. The late timing of our registration visit, coupled with the hurdles associated with absentee ballot requests, created difficulties for these voters to meet state deadlines. Further, many voters did not have the 'know-how' to secure an absentee ballot nor did many know where they would be living on Election Day. While we provided registration forms and the means to process them, we did not have the time to educate inmates about the voting process itself.

### Final Thoughts

During the last 40 years, efforts at the federal and state level aimed at reducing voting barriers to eligible voters have all achieved some positive impact. While many of those initiatives have not resulted in increased voter turnout per se, they have had the effect of increasing the percent of eligible persons registering to vote. Efforts to ease the mandatory registration process can only enhance the possibility of voting. For jail inmates, voting barriers are magnified and made more complex. Access to political information is quite limited, while the registration process is made difficult simply as a consequence of being incarcerated. Individuals and groups who might otherwise contact potential voters must exclude inmates because jail rules only allow certain outsiders entry and only under strict conditions. Persons who move frequently would be ineligible to vote whether they were incarcerated or not. Many inmates did not know if they would be in jail on Election Day, let alone where they would be living once released. Together, being incarcerated brings with it reduced access to political information, reduced access to the outside political world and registration difficulties. The result is an already resource-poor group experiencing even greater political poverty.

Is this a problem that warrants government attention and intervention? Probably not. After all, targeting inmates as potential pockets of voters is highly problematic. Not only are the inmates not likely to vote, but candidate reputations are likely to be hurt should they be perceived as sympathetic to the inmates' circumstances.

At the same time, those who believe that every eligible voter should have the chance to do so should try to enhance voter registration among resource-poor groups as that would at least help these potential voters take that first step toward democratic participation and civic involvement.

### Endnotes

- 1 See Tova Andrea Wang, *African-Americans, voting machines, and spoiled ballots: A challenge to election reform*. New York: The Century Foundation, 2004; Reyathi I. Hines, The silent voices: 2000 presidential election and the minority vote in Florida. *The Western Journal of Black Studies* Summer 2002. Vol. 26, Issue 2, p71-75. Hanes Walton, The disenfranchisement of the African-American voter

in the 2000 presidential election: the silence of the winner and loser. *The Black Scholar*, Summer 2001. Vol. 31, Issue 2, pg. 21-24. Voting irregularities in Florida during the presidential election: executive summary. *U.S Commission on Civil Rights*, June 2001.

- 2 Those behind bars still can be voters: activists will talk to non-felons at the Orange jail about getting involved. Beth Kassab, *The Orlando Sentinel*, October 1, 2004, p. B1. See also 80 inmates register to vote. Kelly Griffith, Mark Schlueb, Beth Kassab, Alicia A. Caldwell, Laurin Sellers and Melissa Harris, *The Orlando Sentinel*, October 2, 2004, p. B3.
- 3 Those registering by mail who do not send in a photocopy of the proper identification are sent a letter by the Supervisor of Elections. If the identification does not arrive before Election Day, then voters must supply one at the polls. Persons voting absentee are not allowed to vote if their files are missing the necessary identification.
- 4 For instance, one need not present photo identification when registering at a community registration drive.
- 5 Rap the vote: will the hip-hop bloc be the one to rock the elections? Some, such as P. Diddy, think so. Others disagree. Mark K. Matthews, *The Orlando Sentinel*, August 24, 2004, p. E1.
- 6 Florida is one of seven states requiring that civil rights may only be restored following the resolution of all felony-related matters and that the person complete the civil rights restoration process. Most other states allow ex-felons to vote once all of their felony-related matters have been resolved. Persons in jail for misdemeanors may have prior felonies, which would preclude them from voting unless their civil rights had been restored.
- 7 Robert Crew, Terri Susan Fine and Susan A. MacManus. The impact of BCRA on the 2004 Presidential and Senate Elections. Southern Political Science Association, New Orleans, LA. January 2005.
- 8 80 inmates register to vote. Kelly Griffith, Mark Schlueb, Beth Kassab, Alicia A. Caldwell, Laurin Sellers and Melissa Harris. *The Orlando Sentinel*. October 2, 2004, p. B3.

she unknowingly put the  
re more secure area. Here,  
h a bunk bed and a toilet,  
e was a small common area,  
ind reinforced glass. There  
ts in the more secure areas.  
: required that, in every pod  
eech, explain the process,  
forms, check them for  
ns. As we finished one pod  
o proceed to the 10:30 am  
not yet visited many of the

us as we left the women's  
er it was acceptable to go to  
vote. My response was that  
pular group, and one that  
didates, parties or interest  
And, in a representative  
ould have the opportunity  
se it was more difficult for  
rs, it was important to assist  
not that these persons were  
: they were both eligible and  
d me to help the inmates  
he barriers that being in

essed our concern that many  
e to register. We asked to  
e politely refused. I left,  
new that I had helped several  
uld not have otherwise gone  
at the law library, getting a  
in if they could, and mailing  
egistration deadline. That  
m I had not had a chance to  
e it helped me realize how  
eligible voters really are. The  
80 inmates registered at the  
nter that day, 8 out of 3600

d me later that day to invite  
rning, October 4, the last  
ould still need to begin and  
d at all times. We were not  
r the weekend. While I did  
ter, a Central Florida Voter's  
at nearly 120 inmates were  
n the two days that we were  
were registered.

er's League followed up on  
determined that not one

---

# The Myth of Representation and the Florida Legislature: A House of Competing Loyalties, 1927-2000

*Eric Prier; Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2003, 357 pages.*

Review by Kevin M. Wagner, University of Florida

Eric Prier presents a thoughtful and thorough look at the character and effectiveness of representation in the Florida legislature. While it initially appears that Prier's work is an examination of the intricacies of state level representation through an empirical examination of the Florida legislature, it quickly becomes clear that he has a much more ambitious goal in mind. Prier's book is an expansive look at the nature of representation using a strong underlying conceptual framework based in democratic theory. He combines this analytical and theoretical approach seamlessly with observed data concerning the Florida legislature in order to make more generalizable conclusions about the nature and implications of representative democracy. In doing so, Prier blends theory and data concerning the workings and failures of our modern democracy which are often hidden under myths and assumptions.

The central theme of the book is an attempt to pierce the almost ceremonial veil that surrounds the study of democracy, beginning with the operation of elections and campaigns with the goal of judging the process on its merits. Prier observes that many Floridians do not feel well-represented in their state government, and he demonstrates this with theory and data that those feelings are well-founded. The support for this determination is both analytical theory and empirical data, which demonstrated that many factors are important, ranging from the nature and structure of elections to the cross-purposes with which representatives are often faced. It is a sobering and direct look at modern democracy.

The initial chapters focus on theory and myth. Beginning with a review of classic theoretical work from Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau, Prier sets a consistent and

logical theoretical context in which to understand the nature of representation, and more broadly, democratic theory. He defines and analyzes theories of representation with a meticulous care, raising and scrutinizing each major perspective on the nature and purpose of representation. Prier systematically identifies the underlying myths associated with the theory of representation including popular sovereignty, group theory, engaged citizenry, and efficacy.

It is worth noting that the strong theoretical framework of the book makes it far broader in application than its title might suggest, and, as a result useful in a wide range of political science disciplines. This initial work could stand alone as a well researched primer on democratic theory and effectively covers the major works and assumptions concerning the American system of government and the theoretical relationship that exists between the government and the people.

Using this strong theoretical foundation, Prier adds systematic empirical research on Florida's legislative branch to illustrate some of the basic fallacies of the dominant models of representation. In each chapter, Prier compares assumptions about representation with observed outcomes or analytic scrutiny. While initially pedantic, his methods quickly become persuasive because of this dispassionate and systematic approach. By the end of the book, it is clear he has effectively accomplished the scholarly aim of replacing myth with observation, analysis and data. For readers looking for support for devolution and the return to stronger state level policy-making, Prier's work constitutes little help. Under the author's microscope, the perceived beneficial nature and character of state-level representation takes a serious blow. Further, readers who

---

are looking for a book to paint the American system as the paramount example of democratic representation also will be dissatisfied with Prier's results. Systematically, Prier takes aim at and dispels much of the representative imagery and myth that supports the governing system. There is a particularly effective analysis of the issue of consent and its uneasy relationship with popular elections.

While thorough, the book does plow some familiar ground. Prier is almost too effective in his criticisms of governing and representation, and for good reason. Many of the concerns voiced by Prier are consistent with earlier scholarly work if not presented and addressed with the precision and depth that Prier employs. Some of those concerns, such as assumptions about the failure of representation for, among other things, the dearth of knowledge in the electorate, have been challenged by approaches that suggest the population may demonstrate more consistent and rational behaviors than can be easily seen in individual level data.

Further, Prier focuses his critique of representation in part by illustrating the failure of rational collective outcomes. Rational voting models, while initially appealing, are often more persuasive in the abstract and can be overwhelmed by empirical realities. It is a truth that Prier demonstrates with great consistency in the book. Additionally, observations such as the strong influence of institutional rules on election outcome are well settled. As a result, the central conclusion concerning the failure of representation is unsurprising to scholars familiar with related literature.

Nonetheless, Prier's work is significant and powerful as it ties the familiar theoretical assertions to the practical operation of representation and government in the state of Florida. Too many scholars lack the ability to ground the broader abstract notions in a more practical and realistic understanding of the operation of actual governments. Prier's use of the Florida experience with representative democracy lends color and context to the failure of many of the myths of representation and does so in a convincing and credible manner.

In particular, Prier effectively demonstrates Florida's history of systematically altering the structure of elections so as to prevent each person from having an equal opportunity to influence the political outcome. This is combined with examinations of campaign practices, governing structure and voting behaviors that continue the pattern of creating unequal and ineffective representation. The data and the analysis are so effective that by the end of the book, the conclusions are evident and authoritative. As a result, I would strongly recommend this book. Prier presents a broad theoretical overview of the nature of representation along with the myths and assumptions that accompany representative government. This is a strong contribution to the study of state government and useful resource for both students and instructors looking for a detailed review of democratic theory in application.



---

## Author Biographies

### **Terri Susan Fine**

Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Central Florida. She is author of several works about public opinion, race and gender politics and political parties.

### **Pamela P. Mann**

Assistant Property Appraiser for St. Johns County, Florida. She holds a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of North Florida.

### **Susan A. MacManus**

Distinguished University Professor of Public Administration and Political Science in the Department of Government and International Affairs at the University of South Florida. She is author and editor of numerous books and articles on Florida politics and women elected officials.

### **Scot D. Schraufnagel**

Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Central Florida. He is author of several articles on legislatures and state public policy.

### **Theodore J. Stumm**

Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at the University of North Florida. He is author of several articles on public fiscal management and public/private sector productivity.

### **Kevin M. Wagner**

Visiting Professor at Florida Atlantic University. He is a doctoral candidate at the University of Florida.

The *Florida Political Chronicle* is an annual journal in political science research. The editors are particularly interested in articles regarding Florida politics but invite submissions in the fields of political and social sciences, history, public policy and international affairs. The *Florida Political Chronicle* is the official journal of the Florida Political Science Association.

#### Correspondence

Articles for submission should be sent to Henry B. Thomas, Editor-in-Chief, the *Florida Political Chronicle*, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, University of North Florida, 4567 St. Johns Bluff Road, South, Jacksonville, Florida 32224; phone: (904) 620-2978; fax: (904) 620-2979; hthomas@unf.edu. Information regarding subscriptions should be addressed to Matthew T. Corrigan, Managing Editor, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, University of North Florida, 4567 St. Johns Bluff Road, South, Jacksonville, Florida 32224; phone: (904) 620-1926; fax: (904) 620-2979; mcorriga@unf.edu. The subscription rate is \$50. For more information, please contact Donna Cobis, Editorial Assistant, at the same address; phone: (904) 620-1635; dcobis@unf.edu.

#### Manuscripts Requirements

The *Florida Political Chronicle* is a peer-reviewed publication with manuscripts anonymously reviewed by at least two external referees. The editors regard submission of a manuscript to the *Florida Political Chronicle* as an implied commitment to publish in the journal. Authors submitting manuscripts should not simultaneously submit to another publication, nor should manuscripts have been

published elsewhere in substantially similar form or with substantially similar content. The editors prefer articles of 15-25 double-spaced pages, (approximately 250 words per page). Longer articles will be evaluated in terms of whether their scholarship and importance warrant the additional space required for publication. Book review essays may be considered if they are less than ten double-spaced pages.

Manuscripts should conform to the American Psychological Style (APA) guide, typed in English and sent electronically. Manuscripts should be no more than 30 double-spaced pages in 12-point Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins. End-notes and reference notes are accepted; embedded notes are not acceptable. If contributors cannot submit manuscript electronically, please send four copies. Manuscript submissions cannot be returned. All text, including notes and block quotations, should be doubled-spaced. The manuscript should be reasonably subdivided into sections, and all pages numbered. Bibliographical references should follow specific APA style. Authors are responsible for the accuracy of all quotations and for supplying complete references. Manuscripts should be accompanied by a brief biography and an abstract of no more than 200 words. All accepted manuscripts are subject to editorial modification. To facilitate anonymous review, please provide author's name, institutional affiliation, address, phone number and e-mail address on a separate cover page. Provide only the title as identification on the manuscript and abstract.

The editors attempt to inform authors of their decision within three months of receiving a submission. Only manuscripts conforming to the APA style will be published. Contributors will receive three complimentary copies of the issue.

---

### **Subscriptions, Editorial Inquiries, Submission Policy**

The *Florida Political Chronicle* is the official journal of the Florida Political Science Association. Now located at the University of North Florida, the *Florida Political Chronicle* is keenly focused on the dynamics of Florida politics. We believe that since Florida has become one of the political bellwether states in the nation, a journal focused on Florida politics and policy will resonate with our audience. We also remain committed to publishing articles with non-Florida topics.

#### **Subscriptions**

Subscriptions are \$50. Individual subscriptions include complimentary membership to the Florida Political Science Association. For more information, please contact Matthew T. Corrigan, Managing Editor, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, University of North Florida, 4567 St. Johns Bluff Road, South, Jacksonville, Florida 32224; phone: (904) 620-1926; fax: (904) 620-2979; mcorriga@unf.edu or Donna Cobis, Editorial Assistant, at the same address; phone: (904) 620-1635; dcobis@unf.edu.

#### **Editorial Inquires**

Articles for consideration should be submitted to Henry B. Thomas, Editor-in-Chief, the *Florida Political Chronicle*, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, University of North Florida, 4567 St. Johns Bluff Road, South, Jacksonville, Florida 32224; phone: (904) 620-2978; fax: (904) 620-2979; hthomas@unf.edu. For more information, please contact Donna Cobis, Editorial Assistant, at the same address; phone: (904) 620-1635; dcobis@unf.edu.

#### **Submission Policy**

The *Florida Political Chronicle* is a peer-reviewed journal. Manuscripts should be no more than 30 double-spaced pages in 12-point Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins and follow standard APA style. End-notes and reference notes are accepted; embedded notes are not acceptable. Please submit manuscripts electronically. Only those manuscripts conforming to these guidelines will be published.

Florida Political Chronicle  
University of North Florida  
Department of Political Science  
& Public Administration  
4567 St. Johns Bluff Road, South  
Jacksonville, FL 32224

Non-profit Org.  
U.S. Postage PAID  
Jacksonville, FL  
Permit No. 3558

Edwin Benton  
15904 Danboro Ct.  
Tampa, FL 33647

### Table of Contents

*Save Our Homes or Save Our Mansions?: Impact of Florida's  
Amendment 10 as Public Policy*  
Pamela Pearson Mann and Theodore J. Stumm

*Women Follow Different Paths to the Florida Legislature: A Look at  
the Class of 2002-2004*  
Susan A. MacManus  
Assisted by Brittany L. Penberthy

*Understanding State Legislative Electoral Competition: The Case of  
Florida 1988-2002*  
Scot D. Schraufnagel

*Registering Jail Inmates in Orange County: A Personal Account  
A Research Note*  
Terri Susan Fine

*Book Review: The Myth of Representation and the Florida Legislature:  
A House of Competing Loyalties, 1927-2000 by Eric Prier.*  
Review by Kevin M. Wagner

Published at the University of North Florida

ISSN: 1549-1323