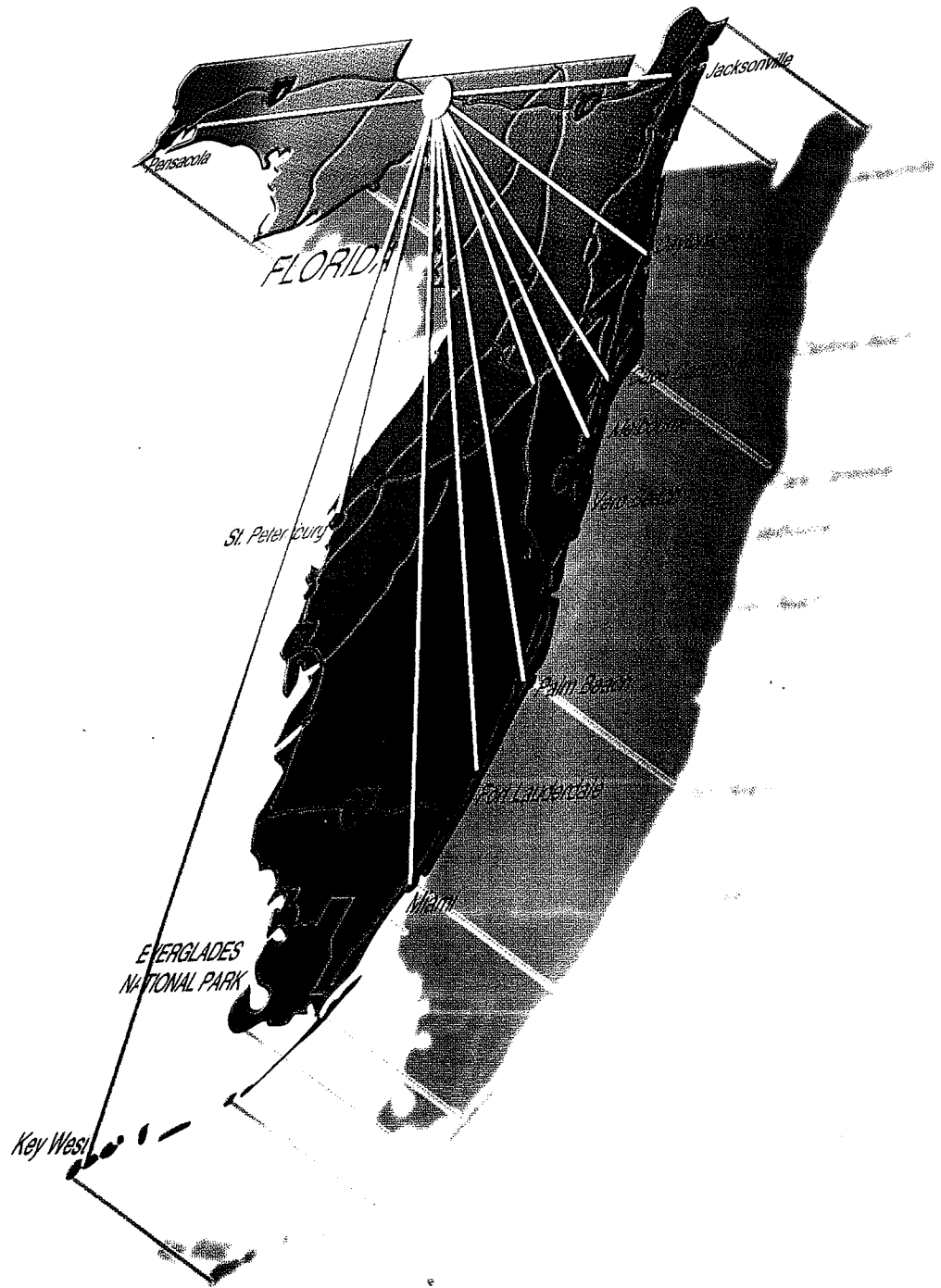


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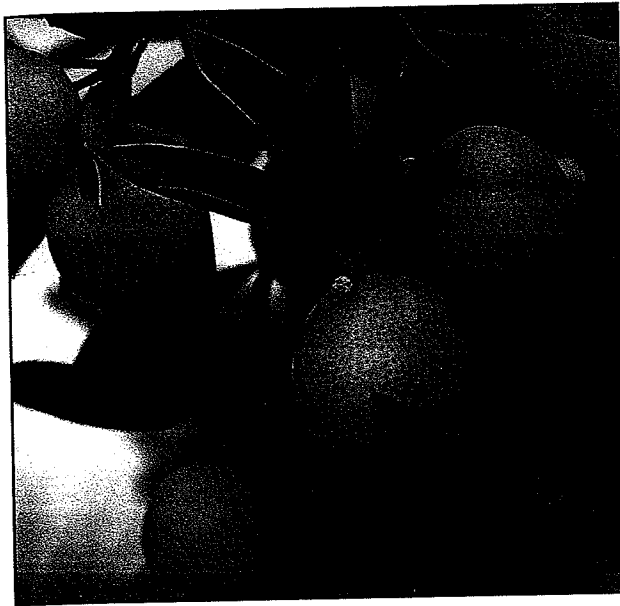


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J. Edwin Benton

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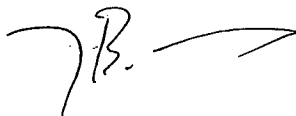
2008 is a presidential election year. Nevertheless, issues affecting higher education and property tax reform dominated the various special legislative sessions that have just ended. Therefore, we resisted the urge to focus solely on election topics for this fall 2007 issue. Drs. J. Rody Borg and Mary Borg in "The Reverse Robin Hood Effect: The Distribution of Net Benefits from Florida Bright Futures Scholarship" write about the economics and politics of state funded scholarship programs supported by state lotteries. They suggest that much of the support is provided for merit based purposes that benefit white, high income, well educated households.

In "The 2004 Florida Senate Race: Full of Firsts," Drs. Robert Crew, Terri Fine, and Susan MacManus write about the Senatorial Election of 2004 between Democrat Betty Castor and Republican Mel Martinez. Ms. Castor would have been the first female democratic US Senator from Florida but instead, Mr. Martinez became the first Cuban-American US Senator. This complete race is the focus of analysis of the article.

In "The Interplay of Party Leadership and Standing Committees in a Competitive versus Non-competitive State Legislative Setting: The Case of Florida," Dr. J. Edwin Benton traces the movement of the Florida Legislature from a Non-competitive Democratic setting to a Competitive setting to a Non-competitive Republican setting. The paper tests five hypotheses in an analysis of various forces of centralization and decentralization through the course of the competitiveness transformations.

I thank the authors for their patience during the review process and for their quality of work. I also thank Assistant Vice President David Jaffee, Dean Barbara Hetrick and Associate Dean Peter Braza of the University of North Florida for their support of the journal. The Executive Council of the Florida Political Science Association has also provided vital support for the journal. Special thanks go to Donna Cobis. Her dedication and perseverance to the publication process has made this edition a reality.

Thank you for your interest in the *Florida Political Chronicle*.



Henry B. Thomas  
Editor-In-Chief

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# The Reverse Robin Hood Effect: The Distribution of Net Benefits From the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship

J. Rody Borg, Jacksonville University  
Mary O. Borg, University of North Florida

Using data compiled by the Florida Lottery Commission that reports the total dollars received by each of the 67 counties for Florida Bright Futures (FBF) Scholarships, combined with county demographic data from the 2000 Census, we estimate a model of the distribution of FBF scholarships by county. In addition to examining the incidence of the benefits received by each Florida County for FBF scholarships, we also examine the budgetary incidence of the FBF scholarships by subtracting each county's lottery revenues from the amount of FBF scholarship dollars received. We examine the relationship between county income levels, education levels and race distributions and the net amount of Florida Bright Futures Scholarship dollars received. We find that counties with higher percentages of well-educated and high income households receive a disproportionately large share of the net benefits from the FBF scholarship. A geographical analysis shows that the counties with the highest levels of net benefits are well dispersed throughout the state, contributing to the wide-spread popularity of the program.

## Introduction

Florida is one of a growing number of states that use a portion of their lottery revenues to fund merit-based college scholarships. Georgia pioneered this trend in 1993 with the introduction of their Helping Outstanding Students Educationally (HOPE) scholarship, and Florida quickly followed suit with the introduction of the Florida Bright Futures (FBF) Scholarship in 1997. At the present time, eight of the 40 states with lotteries earmark a portion of their lottery dollars for merit-based scholarships. Ironically, five of these eight states are in the southeast United States where religious objections to gambling are

the strongest. In spite of religious opposition, it seems that many of these states feel a keen need to provide these merit-based lottery scholarships in order to compete with surrounding states. In Alabama, an effort to reintroduce a lottery to support merit-based college scholarships is gaining momentum in spite of the voters having defeated a similar ballot initiative in 1999.

In 2004-2005, approximately 18% of Florida's lottery tax appropriations went to fund the merit-based FBF scholarships, while only 1.7% of the state's lottery appropriations went to fund need-based financial aid.<sup>1</sup> FBF scholarships provide partial or full tuition to all qualified high school graduates attending public post-secondary institutions in Florida.<sup>2</sup> An equivalent monetary amount of funding is given to qualified students who attend a private post-secondary institution in Florida, as well. There is no doubt that these scholarship programs are popular with middle and upper-class voters. Given the political clout of this group of voters, it is likely that merit-based scholarships will be part of the fiscal landscape of these states for the foreseeable future. But should they be?

Using lottery tax dollars to fund merit-based college scholarships is likely to have an inequitable effect on the distribution of income. Studies on educational achievement, suggest that parents' levels of education, parental income, marital status and ethnicity are among the most significant predictors of a student's success in the classroom and on standardized tests (Bishop, 1977; Campbell and Siegel, 1967; Ellwood and Kane, 1999; Hansen and Weisbrod, 1969a, 1969b; Hoenack, 1967; Hopkins, 1974; Jackson and Weathersby, 1975; Mare, 1980; Peltzman, 1973; Radner and Miller, 1970). If the FBF program is like other merit-based scholarship programs, then students from

higher socioeconomic households are most likely to receive program benefits. On the other hand, numerous lottery studies have shown that lower socioeconomic households pay proportionately more of their income in lottery tax (Borg and Mason, 1988; Borg, et. al., 1991; Brinner and Clotfelter, 1975; Clotfelter, 1979; Clotfelter and Cook, 1987, 1989; Heavey, 1978; Koza, 1982; Livernois, 1987; Spiro, 1974; Stranahan and Borg, 1998a, 1998b; Suits, 1977; and Vailancourt and Grignon, 1988). In essence, public sector economists fear that the vast majority of taxes that fund this program come from lower socioeconomic households while the benefits are distributed largely to those in higher socioeconomic households, which leads to a reverse Robin Hood effect.

#### Literature Review

There is a growing body of research that concludes that the reverse Robin Hood effect is indeed a problem when lottery revenues fund merit-based scholarships. Two recent studies have examined Georgia's HOPE scholarship and Florida's Bright Futures scholarship. Rubenstein and Scafidi (2002) estimate the tax incidence of the Georgia lottery combined with the incidence of the benefits of the HOPE scholarship for households in each of Georgia's counties. Their results indicate that lower income and non-white households purchase a disproportionately large number of lottery tickets; whereas, higher income and white households receive a disproportionately large number of HOPE scholarships. They conclude that households that earn \$25,000 per year or less receive negative net annual benefits from the lottery funded HOPE scholarship, while households that earn more than \$25,000 per year receive positive annual net benefits. Households in the highest income group (\$75,000 or more) receive the highest amount of annual net benefits (\$384 per year).

Stranahan and Borg (2004) conducted a similar analysis in Florida. Using a choice-based sample of households, they estimated the budgetary incidence for three typical households (high socioeconomic status (SES), low SES, and the sample average household). Rather than estimating *annual* net benefits for households, as Rubenstein and Scafidi did, they estimated the household's lifetime net benefit from the FBF program. Under their assumptions, they found that the sample average household received approximately \$756 in net lifetime benefits from the FBF program. In contrast, typical high SES households received \$2248 in lifetime net benefits from the FBF program because their scholarship benefits significantly outweighed their lifetime lottery taxes, but typical low SES households lost \$701 from the program.

Campbell and Finney (2005) believe that the reverse Robin Hood effect of the HOPE scholarship may be mitigated by local high school grade inflation in the poorer and more African American counties in Georgia. They use a longitudinal data set containing 153 of the 159 counties

in Georgia over the period 1996-2002 to estimate a model of HOPE eligibility.<sup>3</sup> After controlling for income and student's educational achievement levels, proxied by the county SAT average and the percentage of students in the county taking the SAT, they find that more students qualify for the HOPE scholarship as the African American percentage of the county's population increases. They interpret this to mean that counties with larger African American populations are inflating their high school grades so that more students will earn the B average necessary for the HOPE scholarship. However, this result could also mean that SAT scores underestimate the academic abilities of African American students who therefore outperform their predicted levels of HOPE eligibility based solely on SAT scores. Regardless of the interpretation, their results are not relevant for Florida since eligibility for the FBF scholarship includes a minimum SAT or ACT score as well as a grade point average minimum.

Lottery-funded merit scholarships have other troubling unintended consequences in addition to their negative distributional effects. For example, Susan Dynarski (2000) found that the HOPE scholarship had a large impact on the in-state college attendance rates of middle and upper-income students in Georgia compared to the same set of students in surrounding states without lottery-funded scholarships. These were students who would have gone to college without the HOPE scholarship but were now staying in Georgia to attend college. Although this may have positive implications for the future economy of Georgia, the immediate effect has been to increase the average SAT scores of students entering the most competitive state universities in Georgia. Cornwell and Mustard (in press) show that this effect has caused the black share of freshmen enrollments to fall at the state's most selective universities—the University of Georgia and Georgia Tech. They believe that HOPE is exacerbating the racial stratification of Georgia's elite colleges and universities and may impede further progress in narrowing wage inequality.

In a recent book on state merit scholarship programs published by the Civil Rights Project at Harvard University, Donald Heller (in press) concludes that programs like HOPE and Florida Bright Futures are awarding scholarships disproportionately to students who have historically had the highest rates of college participation. By giving more to the "haves" than to the "have-nots," these programs are leaving poor and minority students lagging far behind their white and wealthier counterparts.

#### Data and Methodology

The data for this research came from three sources. We obtained the amount of lottery sales per county for the 67 counties in Florida during the 1999-2000 fiscal year from the Florida Lottery Commission. We obtained the amount of FBF scholarship benefits that were distributed to each county during the 2000-2001 school year from the

**Table 1: Independent Variable Definitions with Means and Standard Deviations**

Variable	Definition	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Dependent:</b> FBF Benefits	Per capita FBF scholarship benefits received in each county	\$9.53	\$2.86
FBF Tax	Per capita lottery tax expenditures that support the FBF scholarship in each county	\$9.95	\$3.07
FBF Net Benefits	FBF Benefits – FBF Tax	-\$0.42	\$4.47
<b>Independent:</b> WHITE	Percent of county population that is White	0.803	0.102
AGE60+	Percent of the county population that is age 60 and over	0.226	0.081
AGE18-24	Percent of the county population that is 18-24 years of age	0.085	0.032
EDUC16+	Percent of the county population that has a Bachelors degree or higher	0.167	0.081
INC60K+	Percent of county households with HH income \$60,000 and higher	0.237	0.071

Florida Department of Education (FDOE), and we obtained demographic statistics on each of the counties in Florida from the 2000 US Census. We combined these data to estimate three regression models.

The dependent variable in the first regression model is the per capita lottery revenue that supports the FBF scholarship in each county (FBF tax). We calculate this variable by taking the amount of lottery expenditures/revenues that are generated in each county and multiplying that amount by the proportion of lottery revenue that goes into the educational enhancement trust fund (38%).<sup>4</sup> We then multiply that amount by the proportion of the educational enhancement trust fund that funds the FBF scholarships (about 19% in 2000). Therefore the share of lottery expenditures/revenues that fund FBF scholarships is approximately 7.189% (.38 X .19) of total lottery revenues. We then divide each county's lottery revenues that fund the FBF scholarship (FBF tax) by the county's population to obtain a per capita amount. The dependent variable in the second regression model is

the per capita amount of FBF benefits that accrue to each county. The total amount of FBF benefits for each county is available from the FDOE; therefore, we just divide each county's amount by the county's population to obtain the per capita amount.

The dependent variable in the third regression model is the difference between each county's per capita FBF benefits and the county's per capita FBF tax. We call this variable the net benefits per capita of the FBF scholarship. This last model allows us to determine the budgetary incidence of the FBF scholarship.

In addition to the regression models, we conduct a demographic and geographic analysis of the data to answer the political question of which counties are winners and which are losers in the redistribution that occurs as a result of the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship. We hope to analyze the public choice rationale for why this inherently inequitable scholarship program is so popular.

**Table 2: Results of the Regression Models**

(1) Independent Variables	(2) Dependent Var: FBF NET Benefits Coefficient Est. (T-statistic)	(3) Dependent Var: FBF Benefits Coefficient Est. (T-statistic)	(4) Dependent Var: FBF tax Coefficient Est. (T-statistic)
CONSTANT	-25.622*** (-4.12)	-1.532 (-0.44)	24.090*** (4.69)
WHITE	21.052*** (3.94)	14.057*** (4.68)	-6.994 (-1.58)
AGE60+	-10.965 (1.15)	-17.615*** (-3.28)	-6.650 (-0.84)
AGE18-24	59.52** (2.20)	6.52 (0.43)	-52.99** (-2.36)
EDUC16+	-10.92 (-0.78)	13.933* (1.77)	24.85** (2.14)
INC60K+	32.00** (2.04)	3.715 (0.42)	-28.28** (-2.18)
R <sup>2</sup> adj.	35.3%	50.4%	6.4%
F Statistic	8.19***	14.41***	1.90*

\*Significant at .10, \*\*Significant at .05, and \*\*\*Significant at less than .01

**The Regression Models and Results**

The definitions of the variables used in the regression models and their means and standard deviations are shown in Table 1. Table 2 shows the coefficient estimates of the regression models that estimate per capita county benefits, tax expenditures, and net benefits for the FBF scholarship.

Our regression results confirm what previous studies (Rubenstein and Scafidi, 2002; Stranahan and Borg, 2004) of the budgetary incidence of lottery funded merit scholarships have shown—white households and higher income households are the primary beneficiaries of these scholarship programs. As column 2 of Table 2 shows, the percentage of a county’s population that is white and the percentage that has income of \$60,000 or higher both have positive and significant coefficients in the model explaining the net benefits of the program (the scholarship benefit less the tax burden). The only other significant variable in the model is the percentage of the county’s population that is between the ages of 18 and 24, which is understandable since those are the prime ages for college attendance.<sup>5</sup>

We conducted a sensitivity analysis to determine the impact of some of the significant independent variables in the net benefits regression equation. The regression equation allows us to estimate that an “average” county loses 38 cents per capita from the combined taxes and benefits of the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.<sup>6</sup> However, if the percentage of whites in that average county increases by 10 percentage points (from 80.3% to 90.3%) then the net benefits increase to +1.73 dollars per capita. Similarly, if the percentage of households with incomes of \$60,000 or more increases by 10 percentage points (from 23.7% to

33.7%), then the net benefits goes from -38 cents per capita to +2.82 dollars per capita. These effects imply large premiums for counties that are mostly white and wealthy.

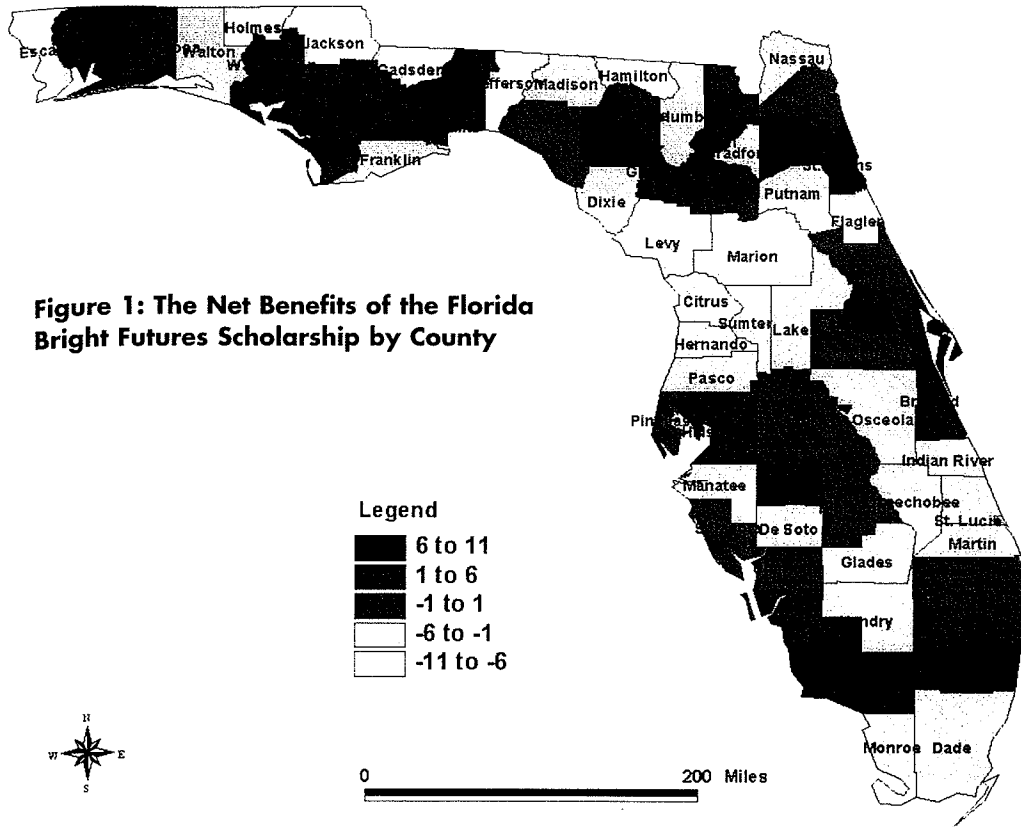
We separated the net benefits from the FBF program into its component parts, lottery taxes and scholarship benefits, and estimated regressions on those variables separately. The results of those regression models are shown in columns 3 and 4 of Table 2. This breakdown allows us to determine if the significant variables in the net benefits regression are due to the effect that the independent variable has on scholarship benefits received, lottery taxes paid, or both. For example, the WHITE variable seems to have its most powerful effect on the amount of FBF scholarship benefits received by the county since the coefficient estimate is 14.057 and is significant at the 1% level in the benefits equation. However, its effect is reinforced in the tax equation since the coefficient on WHITE in that equation is negative and almost significant (at the 12% level). This means that counties with higher percentages of Caucasians not only receive significantly more FBF scholarship benefits, they also pay less of the tax that supports the FBF scholarship. These two effects combine to produce the even larger and significant positive coefficient (21.052) in the net benefits equation.

Looking at the separate regressions in this way, we see that the AGE60+ variable only affects the distribution of the FBF benefits. This makes sense since counties with higher percentages of citizens over the age of 60 are less likely to have children in college. Surprisingly, the AGE18-24 variable seems to have its primary effect on the tax that supports the FBF scholarship, rather than on the benefits received from the scholarship, since the coefficient on the



**(4) Dependent  
Var:  
FBF tax  
Coefficient Est.  
(T-statistic)**

24.090*** (4.69)
-6.994 (-1.58)
-6.650 (-0.84)
-52.99** (-2.36)
24.85** (2.14)
-28.28** (-2.18)
6.4%
1.90*



**Figure 1: The Net Benefits of the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship by County**

variable is significant in the tax regression but not in the benefits regression. Although this seems counter-intuitive since 18-24 year olds are the primary recipients of FBF scholarships, households with children in those age ranges are also the most likely to be in their peak earning years. Therefore, this effect probably results from the spurious correlation between household income and having children between the ages of 18-24. Counties with higher percentages of 18-24 year olds are likely to be high-income counties that don't play the lottery as much as counties that have both higher percentages of young children and older residents. The EDUC16+ variable significantly affects both the benefits received from and the taxes paid for the FBF scholarship. However, since the effect in the benefit equation acts to increase the net benefits and the effect in the tax equation acts to reduce the net benefits, the overall effect is washed out and becomes insignificant in the net benefits equation. The income effect works primarily to reduce the tax burden of the FBF scholarship since the coefficient estimate on INC60K+ is significant in the tax equation but not in the benefits equation.

**Winners Versus Losers**

In order to understand the political appeal of the FBF scholarship program, we analyze the distinctive

demographic and geographic attributes of the "winners" and "losers" in the FBF scholarship program. We define the winners as those counties in which the net benefits per capita are positive and the losers are the counties in which the net benefits per capita are negative. There are more losers (n=39) than winners (n=28) among Florida's counties. We examine the means of each of the independent variables for the winning and losing counties and calculate a t-statistic to test for significant differences between the means of the two groups. Table 3 reports the results of this analysis.

There is little new information that comes from comparing the means of the independent variables for the losing and winning counties. Once again, we find that the losing counties have significantly higher percentages of older citizens (60 and over) and poorer citizens (incomes of \$40,000 and less). In contrast, the winning counties have higher percentages of well-educated (college and graduate degrees) and high income (\$60,000 and more) citizens as well as a higher percentage of 18-24 year olds and Asians. Politically, the citizens that drive the popularity of the FBF scholarship are the well-heeled, middle and upper income households who have college-aged children. These citizens are motivated by their own self-interest to support this extremely inequitable redistribution scheme, and they have the means and the connections to influence the political process.

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**Table 3: Means of Independent Variables for Losers and Winners**

Independent Variable	Winner Mean Value	Loser Mean Value	T-statistic
Percent White	0.815	0.794	0.89
Percent Black	0.126	0.149	-1.02
Percent Hispanic	0.072	0.095	-1.59
Percent Asian	0.121	0.008	2.04**
Percent 18-24	0.094	0.0794	1.79*
Percent Age 60 and Over	0.195	0.249	-2.89***
Percent Urban	0.604	0.578	0.32
Percent Rural	0.396	0.422	-0.32
Percent without High School Diploma	0.239	0.197	0.82
Percent with HS Diploma and/or Some College	0.317	0.320	-0.19
Percent with a College degree or more education	0.191	0.150	1.90*
Percent with Incomes of \$10,000 or Less	0.252	0.281	-1.76*
Percent with incomes between \$20,000 & \$40,000	0.289	0.304	-2.02**
Percent with incomes between \$40,000 & \$60,000	0.200	0.195	0.92
Percent with incomes \$60,000 or more	0.259	0.220	2.18**

\*Significant at .10, \*\*Significant at .05, and \*\*\*Significant at less than .01

Next, we examine the geographic distribution of the winning and losing counties to see if there is a particular region or area within the state that benefits most from the FBF scholarship program. Since a picture is worth a thousand words, Figure 1 shows a map of the net benefits received by each county in Florida. The amount of net benefits per county ranges from a low of about -\$11.00 per capita (a loss, in other words) to a high of about +\$11.00 per capita. As the areas of the map get darker, the amount of net benefits per capita increases. The map allows a more fine-grained analysis since a graduation of benefits and losses can be shown.

The northern part of the state from the panhandle across to the northeastern corner contains many counties

in darker shades of black and gray indicating that their net benefits are higher. The Interstate 4 corridor that runs southwest across state from Daytona in Volusia county to Tampa in Pinellas county and the southwestern Gulf coast of the state also appear in darker shades. The heavily populated Miami-Dade area appears in light shades indicating much lower net benefits, but just to the north of it, Broward County and Palm Beach counties are shaded darker. The map indicates that the counties that receive the greatest net benefits are indeed the high income counties, but the map also shows how geographically dispersed around the state these winning counties are. There are dark shaded counties in every corner of the state—the panhandle,

northeast Florida, the I-4 corridor, as well as southwestern and southeastern Florida. It is no wonder that the Florida Bright Futures scholarship and the lottery that supports it are so popular. There is no region of the state that does not share in its largesse.

#### Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

Using county level aggregate data, we confirm what other researchers have discovered about the budgetary incidence of lottery funded merit scholarships. The net benefits of the scholarships accrue disproportionately to counties with heavier concentrations of white, wealthy, and well-educated households. In a geographic analysis, we discover that the counties with the greatest amount of net benefits tend to be geographically dispersed throughout all regions of the state. Although there are more losing counties (negative net benefits) than winning counties (positive net benefits) in the state, those winning counties are located in every corner of the state, making it broadly popular. In the presence of a strong and influential group of advocates who stand to benefit handsomely from the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship program, there is no organized group of opposition coming from a particular region that is being harmed by the program.

However, there are many losers from this program and they tend to be members of the most vulnerable groups in our state. If the Florida Bright Futures Scholarships are going to be made more equitable, the citizens who are harmed—the poor, the less-educated, and minorities, as well as citizens who care about fairness—need to get involved.

#### Endnotes

1. This percentage was calculated from the numbers found on the Florida Lottery's web page, [www.flalottery.com](http://www.flalottery.com).
2. To qualify for the 100% Bright Futures Scholarship, students must have at least a 3.5 high school GPA, at least 75 hours of community service, and a score of at least 1270 on the SAT I or 28 on the ACT. To qualify for the 75% Bright Futures Scholarship, students must have at least a 3.0 high school GPA, at least 75 hours of community service, and at least a 970 SAT I score or a 20 ACT. These criteria are found at <http://www.firn.edu/doe/brfutures/acadrequire.htm>.
3. Six of the counties were discarded from the data set because they did not contain a high school.
4. For every \$1 lottery ticket sold in Florida, 50 cents goes to prizes, 12 cents goes to administrative costs and 38 cents goes into the state's educational enhancement trust fund to support education expenditures.
5. We controlled for the impact of the smaller rural counties by including a variable in the model that reflected the percentage of the county that was rural or urban. These variables were insignificant in all the

preliminary models so we dropped them from the final models. If there had been a significant difference in the way the other explanatory variables affected net benefits in the rural vs. the urban counties, one of these (urban or rural) would have been significant in the regression model.

6. In this example, the average county is actually a county with the average value of each of the independent variables inserted into the regression equation.

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#### T-statistic

0.89

-1.02

-1.59

2.04\*\*

1.79\*

-2.89\*\*\*

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## The 2004 Florida U.S. Senate Race: Full of Firsts<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

The 2004 Florida U.S. Senate race was a fiercely fought contest from start to finish. One of the nation's eight open Senate seats, it generated a crowded field of candidates in both the Democratic and Republican party primaries. This was a race filled with possible "firsts." Florida was one of only two U.S. Senate contests in the nation not featuring a white male.<sup>2</sup> Had she won, Democrat nominee Betty Castor would have been the state's first female Democratic U.S. Senator. The winner, Republican nominee Mel Martinez, became the nation's first Cuban American U.S. Senator. It was also the first time Hispanics outnumbered African Americans at the polls. This article highlights these "firsts" and suggests that having two path-breakers competing against each other contributed to a closer race than the presidential contest.

### One of the Nation's Most Competitive U.S. Senate Races

The 2004 U.S. Senate race turned out to be even more competitive than the much-anticipated presidential contest in Florida. Democrats were determined not to lose the seat held for eighteen years by U.S. Senator Bob Graham, a Florida political icon, and Florida Republicans saw the 2004 election as an opportunity to reclaim one of the state's Senate seats for the GOP.<sup>3</sup> Ultimately, the race ranked eighth among the costliest Senate contests in the nation. As the race progressed, the advertising and personal attacks became more venomous. The terrorism issue dominated both the primary and general election campaigns, cited by voters as the most important issue, according to exit polls.<sup>3</sup>

Florida was one of the nation's premier battleground states in 2004—seen by virtually every pundit as more of a purple state than a red one in spite of the fact that as of the

2004 election, Republicans controlled the Governor's office, all three of the state's elected executive offices,<sup>4</sup> two-thirds of the state House of Representatives, 65% of the state Senate and nearly three-fourths of the congressional delegation. But those statistics masked another reality—namely that both U.S. Senators, Bill Nelson and Bob Graham, were Democrats—proof that Democrats can and do win statewide races.

Even the party registration figures understated the real level of competition here. In August 2004, Democrats made up 42% of the state's 9,885,878 registered voters, Republicans, 38%, minor parties, 3% and no party affiliation, 18%. But when the Republican-leaning conservative Democratic registrants in rural and North Florida are counted Republican, the parties were more nearly equal. Polls asking voters to identify their party persuasion showed that Democrats outnumbered Republicans by only 2%.<sup>5</sup>

### The Parties' Regional Strengths

Florida's political parties have drawn their strength from different regions of the state. The Florida Democratic Party's greatest strength is found in the "Gold Coast" areas of southeastern Florida including Broward and Miami-Dade counties. The northern university communities of Leon<sup>6</sup> and Alachua<sup>7</sup> counties were also Democratic strongholds. The Republican Party enjoyed its greatest support in the southwestern "Treasure Coast" counties of Charlotte, Lee and Collier. Republicans also did quite well in the western Everglades and in the western portion of the Florida panhandle, especially in Escambia County (Pensacola). The Florida panhandle has a strong military presence, as seven of the state's 21 active military installations are located there.<sup>8</sup>

## Independent Voters: Young and Concentrated in Central Florida

In recent years, independents have been seen as the key to winning Florida. The state's "swing" vote is concentrated in the 10-county Tampa media market—the state's largest. Many of these independents are young voters—single and married—who have moved to the area for jobs created by the area's explosive growth. As it turned out, they were heavily supportive of Democrat Betty Castor.<sup>9</sup>

## The Critical Role of Hispanic Voters

Florida's Hispanic population played a critical role in the 2004 U.S. Senate race. While African Americans comprise 15% of the state's population, Hispanics make up 17%.<sup>10</sup> Exit polls showed that Hispanic voters made up a larger share of the Florida electorate (15%) than African Americans (12%) for the first time in the state's history.<sup>11</sup>

Political analysts divide the state's Hispanic population into two groups of voters: Cubans and non-Cubans. Cubans, who constitute 5% of voters, are staunch anti-communists who provide financial and electoral support to the Republican Party.<sup>12</sup> Non-Cuban Hispanics, especially Puerto Ricans and Mexicans living in the Orlando area, are more likely than are Cuban Hispanics to be Democratic, but are considered a key swing group of voters. Republicans have made major inroads into the non-Cuban Hispanic communities beginning with Jeb Bush's reelection as governor in 2002. The fact that Republican U.S. Senate candidate Mel Martinez is from the Orlando area, is a Cuban immigrant, and speaks Spanish was not lost on anyone trying to understand the White House's *interest* in his candidacy. Martinez' personal story of his assimilation into American life, educational pursuits, and career achievements resonated well with Florida's Hispanic voters.

## The Primary: Competitive on Both Sides of the Aisle

On February 27, 2003, popular Democratic U.S. Senator Bob Graham announced that he would seek the presidency. It was a rather short campaign, and by October 6, he ended his presidential bid. A month later on November 3, 2003, Graham announced he would not seek reelection to a fourth term in the Senate, a race he would surely have won.

Graham's retirement drew three strong Democratic contenders into the race—U.S. Representative Peter Deutsch from Broward County, Miami-Dade County Mayor Alex Penelas, and former Florida commissioner of education Betty Castor from Tampa, plus a fourth lesser-known candidate, Bernard Klein, a businessman from Plantation.

Senator Graham's decision not to run again also opened up the floodgates among Republicans. Two candidates flirted with running but eventually backed out—U.S. Congressman Mark Foley of Palm Beach Gardens and State

Senator Daniel Webster of Orlando. Eight candidates were actually on the ballot, although one withdrew too late to be removed (Karen Saull, an independently wealthy businesswoman). That left seven: former ten-term U.S. Congressman Bill McCollum, who lost the 2000 U.S. Senate race to Democrat Bill Nelson<sup>13</sup>; Mel Martinez, who resigned his position as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development after having served as the elected chairman of Orange County (FL)<sup>14</sup>; Florida Speaker of the House Johnnie Byrd, a lawyer from Plant City; Sonya March, a retired Air Force Academy graduate and pilot, now patent attorney from St. Petersburg; Larry Klayman, Miami, founder of Judicial Watch and a former prosecutor in the Reagan Justice Department; Doug Gallagher, a wealthy Coral Gables businessman and brother of Tom Gallagher, the state's Chief Financial Officer; and William Kogut, a realtor from Ormond Beach. The newly-formed Veterans Party of America fielded candidate Dennis Bradley, a retired Army veteran, businessman from Kissimmee, and former Republican.

The entire Florida U.S. Senate race was overshadowed by the presidential race and by four powerful hurricanes that hit Florida between August 13 and September 26, causing loss of life and billions of dollars in property damage. Candidate schedules were impacted, as were their fundraising opportunities. Candidates, parties and interest groups understood that raising monies from persons who had been severely affected by the hurricanes would appear insensitive and cold.

## The Primary Campaign: Democrats

The three strongest Democratic candidates slugged it out in the primary. They each believed that they could capture a plurality of the vote and, with no runoff election, win the party's nomination.<sup>14</sup> Deutsch believed he could capitalize on his home base, Broward County, the state's most staunchly Democratic enclave and home to high-turnout senior voters, a sizable Jewish population, and a large bloc of African American voters. Penelas, from the state's largest county, calculated that he could hold his county's Democrats, win the votes of Hispanic Democrats throughout the state, and capture the anti-war vote because of his staunch opposition to the war in Iraq. Castor banked on her previous experience winning statewide office as education commissioner, her gender, and her appeal in the critical I-4 Corridor and in more conservative North Florida.

For Deutsch and Penelas, the primary was always an uphill battle. Castor led in the polls from start to finish. Deutsch's aggressive TV, radio, and direct-mail attack ads ineffectively tried to paint Castor as weak on terrorism for not firing a tenured University of South Florida (USF) computer science professor who was accused of being a fund-raiser for the Islamic Jihad.<sup>15</sup> Yet it was a picture that lingered long after Castor drubbed Deutsch in the primary

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 rg; Larry Klayman, Miami,  
 nd a former prosecutor in the  
 ; Doug Gallagher, a wealthy  
 nd brother of Tom Gallagher,  
 Officer; and William Kogut,  
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with a vote of 58% to 28%. The remaining votes were  
 captured by Penelas (10%) and Klein (4%).<sup>16</sup>

**The Primary Campaign: Republicans**

McCullum began his campaign well over a year in  
 advance of the primary.<sup>17</sup> Martinez entered rather late on  
 January 5, 2004. Once Martinez officially entered the  
 Republican primary, the race was cast as a two-candidate  
 contest: McCollum v. Martinez. Their battle dominated  
 media coverage, but that did not stop the other candidates  
 from fighting on, especially Byrd and Gallagher.

Doug Gallagher spent over \$6.5 million of his personal  
 funds on the race, primarily on TV ads.<sup>18</sup> The ads were  
 effective in raising his name recognition from a blip in the  
 polls to 83% one week from the primary.<sup>19</sup> Gallagher  
 portrayed himself as a political outsider and his opponents  
 as indistinguishable from each other.

A shocking direct-mail advertisement unleashed by  
 Martinez during the final week of the race attacked  
 long-time pro-life conservative McCollum for taking  
 positions "to appease certain political constituencies,  
 including the radical homosexual lobby" and suggested  
 that McCollum had become the "new darling of the extreme  
 homosexuals."<sup>20</sup> During that last week, a Mason-Dixon  
 poll showed Martinez pulling ahead of McCollum  
 33% to 27%.<sup>21</sup> Martinez likely saw the ad as an  
 opportunity to differentiate himself from McCollum among  
 social conservatives.

In a statewide TV debate on August 27, the Friday  
 before the August 31 primary, McCollum blasted Martinez's  
 tactics as "despicable" and vowed not to support Martinez  
 should he win the nomination. In disgust, the  
*St. Petersburg Times* retracted its endorsement of Martinez  
 and endorsed McCollum instead, thereby capturing  
 headlines across the state.<sup>22</sup> The "dirty campaigner" label  
 dogged Martinez until primary day and throughout the  
 general election. In spite of winning the nomination (45

to McCollum's 31%, Gallagher's 14%, and Byrd's 6%)<sup>23</sup>  
 and eventually getting a lukewarm endorsement from  
 McCollum, general election returns suggest some  
 McCollum supporters ended up voting for Castor  
 in retribution.<sup>24</sup>

In the end, the very effective television ads run by  
 Martinez, highlighting his immigrant success story and  
 showing him standing shoulder-to-shoulder with President  
 Bush, helped him win the primary. So, too, did skepticism  
 about McCollum's chances in the general election, following  
 his defeat in 2000 by Democrat Bill Nelson.

**The Role of Money**

Both Betty Castor and Mel Martinez had  
 well-funded campaigns with support for each coming from  
 individuals, political parties, and interest groups. Raising  
 money both outside and inside Florida was made easier by  
 the glass-ceiling-breaking biographies of the two candidates  
 and by the fact that the seat was a key to party control of  
 the U.S. Senate. Twenty-eight% of individual contributions  
 to Martinez's campaign came from outside of Florida while  
 30% of individual contributions to Castor came from out  
 of state.<sup>25</sup>

Still, the four hurricanes which devastated various  
 regions of the state delayed the fund-raising activities of  
 both candidates. The Senate candidates found that they had  
 to reschedule or cancel several campaign events, and they  
 found it hard to ask for money from persons who had suffered  
 severe property damage and loss. Neither candidate wished  
 to be seen as insensitive to the personal and financial traumas  
 facing many Floridians, their families, or friends.<sup>26</sup>

**Candidates**

The Federal Election Commission (FEC) reports that  
 Democrat Castor raised a total of \$11.5 million while  
 Republican Martinez raised a total of \$12.8 million.  
 Martinez received more support from PACs and his own

**Table 1 Candidate Receipts and Expenditures, Florida Senate Race, 2003-04**

	Betty Castor (D)	Mel Martinez (R)
From PACs	\$880,326	\$2,179,228
From individuals	\$10,162,049	\$9,794,320
From party	\$6,703	\$50,117
From candidate	\$214,480	\$0
Other contributions	\$250,012	\$753,213
Total receipts	\$11,513,570	\$12,776,878
Total expenditures	\$11,138,992	\$12,584,298
Cash on hand (as of 11/22/04)	\$372,331	\$193,581

Source: Federal Election Commission, "2003-04 U.S. House and U.S. Senate Candidate Info," November  
 22, 2004 ([www.fecinfo.com/cgi-win/x\\_candidate.exe?DoFn=&sYR=2004](http://www.fecinfo.com/cgi-win/x_candidate.exe?DoFn=&sYR=2004) [December 20, 2004]).

**Table 2: Independent Expenditures by Party Committee, Florida Senate Race, 2003-04**

Party Committee	Race	Candidate	Independent Expenditures FOR	Independent Expenditures AGAINST	Total	Party Total
DSCC	FL Sen	Betty Castor	\$3,726,182	...	<b>\$3,726,182</b>	<b>\$3,726,182</b>
	FL Sen	Mel Martinez	...	...	...	
NRSC	FL Sen	Betty Castor	...	\$3,178,765	<b>\$3,178,765</b>	<b>\$4,168,203</b>
	FL Sen	Mel Martinez	\$989,438	...	<b>\$989,438</b>	

Source: Federal Election Commission, (<http://fec.gov/FEC/>) (January 5, 2005)

party, while Castor's largest source of financial support came from individuals (see Table 1). Both candidates spent heavily on broadcast advertising, including broadcast and cable TV and radio.

The Castor campaign spent nearly \$8 million on TV advertising. The Martinez campaign far outspent the Castor campaign. They spent over \$9 million on TV advertising. The Castor campaign spent approximately 85% of its broadcast advertising dollars on TV in the Tampa, Orlando, Miami, Jacksonville, and Tallahassee media markets. In contrast, the Martinez campaign spent 99% of its broadcast dollars on TV advertising in those areas. (See Table 3.)

#### Parties

The national political parties were heavily involved in the race. Both the National Republican Senatorial Committee (NRSC) and Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC) put the Florida U.S. Senate race near the top of their funding priority lists. They spent nearly equal amounts on their respective candidates' races. The NRSC spent \$5,799,822 on TV and radio advertising supporting Martinez. The DSCC spent \$5,362,595 on Castor's behalf, a difference of some \$440,000, but for TV advertising alone. (See Table 3.)

The NRSC heavily supported Martinez because of his perceived electability and ability to win Hispanic votes. Hispanics voted for Martinez in large numbers (60%) and Martinez helped President Bush among Hispanics with a "reverse coattail" effect.<sup>27</sup>

#### Interest Groups

Interest groups were also big players in funding the U.S. Senate race. Castor's interest group support came primarily from EMILY's List and the AFL-CIO, both of which outspent all other pro-Castor interest groups on broadcast advertising. EMILY's List spent over \$1.2 million and the AFL-CIO spent just over \$750,000 on TV advertising. Castor also benefited from spending by groups such as Communities for Quality Education, Florida Women Vote, the Human Rights Campaign, and People

for the American Way, who ran sympathetic TV and/or radio ads on Castor's behalf. (See Table 3.)

Martinez benefited from limited advertising done by traditional Republican-leaning groups such as the National Rifle Association (NRA), the National Right to Life Committee, and from advocacy groups such as Progress for America and the United Seniors Association.

#### The Ground War

Media attention inside and outside Florida was heavily focused on the presidential race throughout 2004. It was understandable in light of the events surrounding the 2000 presidential contest, the 537 vote victory for Bush of 5.9 million votes cast, and the controversial recount.<sup>28</sup> Polls showing the strong possibility of another close election thrust Florida right back into the spotlight as a crucial battleground state. Frequent visits by the presidential and vice presidential candidates, their spouses, children, and other surrogates drew bigger crowds than appearances by the U.S. Senate candidates alone.

The issues dominating both the presidential and senatorial campaigns were virtually the same, but ranked differently. National exit polls showed that concern about moral issues was the most often cited reason voters chose Bush over Kerry, but in Florida, it was terrorism over moral issues (24% versus 20%, respectively).<sup>29</sup>

Terrorism loomed large in Florida for many reasons. The large number of military installations and deep water ports and the large number of commercial and private airports, combined with the fact that some of the 9/11 hijackers received their flight training in Florida and one of the anthrax deaths occurred in southern Florida, caused Floridians to be more concerned about terrorism than voters in other states. Plus, Florida's tourist economy was particularly hard hit after the 9/11 attacks.

Castor attempted to emphasize domestic issues. The Castor campaign's printed materials (direct mail and brochures left with potential supporters by canvassers) reflected her emphasis on domestic issues of interest to women voters. The Castor campaign mailed five unique



**ate Race, 2003-04**

al	Party Total
6,182	\$3,726,182
.	
8,765	\$4,168,203
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advertisements, all of which focused on the candidate's domestic policy record. Several of the mailers, as well as the canvassing materials, featured a bulleted list of four or five of Castor's issue positions. On every list, national security was listed last.<sup>30</sup> News coverage, however, of the missing explosives and the Osama bin Laden tape released in October kept terrorism and homeland security issues prominent.

The Martinez ground war stressed his personal biography, including his arrival in the U.S. as a young immigrant from Cuba and his service as a member of the Bush Cabinet. The four unique mailings generated by the Martinez campaign showed Martinez and Bush together, a strong visual endorsement from the president. Another ad highlighted a quotation from Bush endorsing Martinez and a photograph showing the two sharing a podium. Martinez' mailings also focused on his conservative issue positions, particularly with regard to domestic, social, and economic issues. In order to be clear to voters that Martinez and Bush held the same issue positions, the Republican Party of Florida distributed a door hanger that featured two columns. The left column featured a photograph of Martinez and three bullet points outlining his position on health care, taxes and terrorism. The right column featured a Bush photograph and the same positions on the same issues as those outlined under the Martinez photograph.

Most of the campaign materials collected for the study were printed in English. A few were printed in Spanish or had both English and Spanish elements in the same piece. The Martinez campaign had more Spanish-language literature than the Castor campaign. Castor's campaign, like that of Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry, has been criticized for not using more Spanish language campaign advertising. Critics say it hurt her campaign. Exit poll figures for the Hispanic vote support this claim.

Interest groups and political parties were also active in the ground war. Twelve different interest groups supported Castor's campaign while nine interest groups supported Martinez. Castor got more of her help from advocacy groups than from the Florida Democratic Party. The reverse was true for Martinez, who was heavily supported by the Republican Party of Florida and by the NRSC. Martinez benefited greatly from Florida's "three-pack" law that permits the party to advertise on behalf of a candidate if at least two other candidates are also mentioned in the ad.

The ground war mailings reflected each candidate's strongest assets from the perspective of the group being targeted by the mailer. For example, EMILY's List, which sent out two unique mailings, featured Castor's record on health care, specifically her role in creating Florida's "Healthy Kids" program. These ads claimed that it was "Betty's fault" that Florida's children were healthier thanks to the program. While EMILY's List is a strong supporter of reproductive choice, this issue was not mentioned in the mailings. The Castor campaign also benefited from

advertising by a national 527 group called "Women's Voices. Women Vote," which sent out three unique mailings aimed at increasing turnout among registered women voters. The Florida-based "Florida Women Vote," with the same goal, also supported Castor in its advertising.

NRSC-financed advertising for Mel Martinez filled voters' mailboxes. Several of these mailings focused on how Castor handled the Al Arian situation as president of the University of South Florida. Statements quoted from prominent Florida newspapers were featured in these mailings, such as "Two men who were professors under Castor at USF now face charges of helping Islamic Jihad terrorists kill civilians in Israel." That same print ad featured a photograph of apparent Islamic militants burning an American flag. The caption, a quotation from a *Washington Times* editorial published on October 7, 2004, read: "Alleged terrorists found safe harbor at the university on Mrs. Castor's watch." Quotations and photographs taken from Representative Deutsch's primary election campaign material were also included in this mailing. This approach was designed to undermine Castor's support among Democrats, independents, and some moderate Republicans by showing that even "one of her own" was against her on the terrorism issue.

The content of the ground-war materials was merely consistent with each candidate's overall campaign strategy. The Castor campaign, her party, and allied interests emphasized domestic issues and strong efforts to exploit the gender gap. The Martinez campaign, his party, and allied interests focused on Martinez's ties to Bush, including his pledge to support the confirmation of the president's nominees to the U.S. Supreme Court. The advertising also touted Martinez's Cuban immigrant background, reminded voters he would be the first Cuban-American in the U.S. Senate, and attacked Castor for her handling of the Al Arian situation.

**The Air War**

Since the 2002 gubernatorial election, some Democrats have questioned the degree to which their party and candidates emphasize broadcast TV as opposed to cable, radio, and direct mail.<sup>31</sup> Martinez's money edge allowed him to target heavily in North Florida in the waning days of the campaign. Castor attributes her narrow loss to her inability to compete with Martinez in that region at a key time in the campaign.<sup>32</sup>

The air war mimicked the ground war in terms of which organizations provided the strongest support for each candidate. The candidates themselves aired the greatest number of unique ads. Martinez's TV advertisements featured his humble background while Castor's advertisements emphasized her support for bread and butter domestic issues such as health care. However, it was Castor, not Martinez, who ran the first post-primary ad mentioning Al Arian. The Castor campaign undoubtedly

thought running the ad would allow her to move on to domestic issues. In retrospect the decision to run that ad may have been the costliest of her campaign. Rather than changing the subject, it legitimized hard-hitting Republican response ads on the subject—and they were unending.

The air war was limited to fewer players. Many organizations that participated in the ground war sat out the air war, probably due to the prohibitive costs of broadcast advertising, particularly TV. Nine candidate organizations or their allies sponsored TV advertisements while twenty-two organizations or their allies utilized direct mail. Of course, direct mail is easier to target with precision than either broadcast or cable TV because it is only sent to narrow groups of registered voters. Castor ran more unique TV ads than Martinez (nine versus five, respectively), while the Florida Democratic and Republican Parties aired two advertisements each. The Republican National Committee (RNC) played a more active role in the air war than did the Democratic National Committee (DNC); the RNC aired four different advertisements while the DNC aired two. Radio advertising by the candidates and their allies was far less prevalent than TV advertising. (See Table 4.)

#### The Election System: Lawsuits and Early Voting

The 2004 election was also the first presidential election to be conducted under election reforms put in place by the Florida Legislature and Congress via the Help America Vote Act (HAVA). The state outlawed punch card voting machines, mandated better poll-worker training and voter education, provided for provisional ballots, and expanded early voting.

Nonetheless, pre-election lawsuits challenging the absence of a paper trail for electronic touch screen voting machines, the counting of provisional ballots cast in the precinct in which the voter is registered and nowhere else, and other attributes of the election system led Florida voters to expect another election system meltdown on Election Day. These fears permeated both the presidential and U.S. Senate campaigns. Fortunately, the legal battles which typically pitted Democratic plaintiffs against the Republican-controlled Department of State's Division of Elections were resolved before voting began, but the fear of another 2000 had already been raised. Contrary to some predictions of a resulting decline in turnout, voter turnout increased from 70% to 74%.<sup>33</sup>

This was the first presidential election that gave Florida voters the option of voting early at either a Supervisor of Elections office or at select public libraries.<sup>34</sup> These early voting sites were required to be open for at least four hours each day, including weekends, in the two-weeks leading up to Election Day. Both parties and their candidates promoted early and absentee voting in their campaign literature. As a result, 30% of Florida's voters cast their ballots before November 2; that is, 18% voted early, and 12% voted absentee.<sup>35</sup>

Early voting clearly impacted the air and ground wars because it affected spending decisions. Many voters received recorded telephone messages from current and former politicians and other celebrities,<sup>36</sup> direct mailings, or were also approached by canvassers at their homes days, if not weeks, after they had voted.<sup>37</sup> This also meant that organizations that saved their money in order to spend it during the last days and weeks of the campaign found that their efforts may have been for naught as many of their targeted constituencies had already voted. Early voting clearly affected TV advertising strategies. Before early voting began on October 18, many of the ads featured older voters and their issues—Social Security, Medicare, health care, terrorism, and national security. Once early voting began, the ads featured young and female voters and their concerns. Both groups are renowned for making a late decision in whether to vote at all, and if so, for whom.

#### Conclusion

Heading into Election Day, the polls consistently showed both the U.S. Senate and the presidential races in Florida to be statistical dead heats. *In the end the Castor-Martinez Senate race (Martinez, 49%; Castor, 48%; Bradley, 2%)<sup>38</sup> was much closer than the presidential contest which Bush won 52% of the vote to Kerry's 47%.<sup>39</sup>* Castor had a tougher time holding on to Democratic voters (85%) than Martinez had in keeping Republican voters (90%) in the fold, but Castor did receive a majority of the votes from independents (59%).<sup>40</sup>

Each candidate hoped to secure support from their "niche" constituencies: women for Castor; Hispanics for Martinez. They did. Exit polls show that Castor received a majority of women's votes (53%), but more from non-white women (61%) than from white women (49%). Martinez won the Latino vote, receiving 60% of the bloc compared to Castor's 39%.<sup>41</sup>

The 2004 Senate election in Florida elected the first Cuban-American in American history to the prestigious post of U.S. Senator. It also affirmed what national party leaders had predicted, namely that support for Martinez among Hispanics, especially Cubans in South Florida, would help reelect Bush and help the GOP widen its control over the U.S. Senate. Still, the question remains whether Martinez' win indicates a possible sea change for the Democrats. When will the Democrats re-secure both Senate seats in Florida? Is Martinez' popularity, particularly with the politically active, strong and large Cuban-American community in South Florida, such that he can expect to continue serving in his Senate seat as long as he wishes? An alternate consideration is that Betty Castor's gender contributed to her loss. This would suggest that a male Democrat may be able to unseat Martinez, or fill an open seat should he choose to leave office. The bottom line? Florida's U.S. Senate race, with its many "firsts" was considerably closer than the presidential race

**Table 3: The Air War: Television & Radio Advertising Expenditures, Florida Senate Race, 2004**

Type and Organization <sup>b</sup>	TV	Radio	Total \$ Spent	CMAG TV
<b>Democratic Allies<sup>c</sup></b>				
<i>Candidates</i>				
Betty Castor for US Senate	\$750,195	\$129,420	<b>\$879,615</b>	\$7,816,123
<i>Political Parties</i>				
DSCC	\$2,485,753	...	<b>\$2,485,753</b>	\$5,362,595
<i>Interest Groups</i>				
The Media Fund	\$2,359,023	\$260,825	<b>\$2,619,848</b>	\$6,007,579
Florida Women Vote	\$383,450	\$13,800	<b>\$397,250</b>	...
EMILY's List	\$318,780	\$40,800	<b>\$359,580</b>	\$1,224,338
AFL-CIO	\$350,010	...	<b>\$350,010</b>	\$754,032
New Democrat Network	\$320,190	\$8,670	<b>\$328,860</b>	\$1,045,294
Communities for Quality Education	\$247,970	...	<b>\$247,970</b>	\$48,398
SEIU	\$113,320	\$73,078	<b>\$186,398</b>	\$403,843
Human Rights Campaign	...	\$122,500	<b>\$122,500</b>	...
Coalition to Defend the American Dream	...	\$116,836	<b>\$116,836</b>	...
Save Our Environment	...	\$18,700	<b>\$18,700</b>	...
This Vote Counts	\$10,155	...	<b>\$10,155</b>	...
People for the American Way	...	\$2,340	<b>\$2,340</b>	\$2,351
American Family Voices	\$1,300	...	<b>\$1,300</b>	...
Sierra Club	...	...	...	\$204,641
The Nature Conservancy	...	...	...	\$95,737
Natural Resource Defense Council	...	...	...	\$42,845
Communication Workers of America	...	...	...	\$6,553
National Right to Work Committee	...	...	...	\$6,428
Stronger America Now	...	...	...	\$6,406
<b>Republican Allies<sup>c</sup></b>				
<i>Candidates</i>				
Mel Martinez for Senate	\$2,692,322	\$16,108	<b>\$2,708,430</b>	\$9,077,985
<i>Political Parties</i>				

ted the air and ground wars  
ions. Many voters received  
from current and former  
s,<sup>36</sup> direct mailings, or were  
at their homes days, if not  
.<sup>37</sup> This also meant that  
money in order to spend it  
of the campaign found that  
or naught as many of their  
ready voted. Early voting  
strategies. Before early voting  
the ads featured older voters  
ity, Medicare, health care,  
y. Once early voting began,  
ale voters and their concerns.  
r making a late decision in  
), for whom.

Day, the polls consistently  
ate and the presidential  
cal dead heats. *In the end the*  
*Martinez, 49%; Castor, 48%;*  
*ran the presidential contest which*  
*'s 47%<sup>39</sup> Castor had a tougher*  
*c voters (85%) than Martinez*  
*voters (90%) in the fold,*  
*majority of the votes from*

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encies: women for Castor;  
y did. Exit polls show that  
f women's votes (53%), but  
en (61%) than from white  
n the Latino vote, receiving  
Castor's 39%.<sup>41</sup>

on in Florida elected the first  
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affirmed what national party  
ly that support for Martinez  
ubans in South Florida, would  
e GOP widen its control over  
question remains whether  
possible sea change for the  
emocrats re-secure both Senate  
popularity, particularly with  
g and large Cuban-American  
la, such that he can expect to  
e seat as long as he wishes? An  
that Betty Castor's gender  
is would suggest that a male  
seat Martinez, or fill an open  
ave office. The bottom line?  
, with its many "firsts" was  
: presidential race

Type and Organization <sup>b</sup>	TV	Radio	Total \$ Spent	CMAG TV
NRSC	\$2,568,040	\$78,335	<b>\$2,646,375</b>	\$5,799,822
Republican Party of Florida	\$60,100	\$21,700	<b>\$81,800</b>	\$330,708
Republican Party of South Florida	...	\$36,300	<b>\$36,300</b>	...
<i>Interest Groups</i>				
Progress for America	\$876,360	\$198,460	<b>\$1,074,820</b>	\$2,585,767
Citizens for a Fair Share	\$469,490	...	<b>\$469,490</b>	...
United Seniors Association	\$378,880	\$11,500	<b>\$390,380</b>	\$812,871
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	\$86,480	...	<b>\$86,480</b>	\$335,585
National Rifle Association	\$17,850	\$66,303	<b>\$84,153</b>	...
All Children Matter	\$84,140	...	<b>\$84,140</b>	...
National Right to Life	...	\$61,900	<b>\$61,900</b>	...
Coalition to Save Florida Jobs	...	\$2,500	<b>\$2,500</b>	...
<b>Nonpartisan</b>				
<i>Interest Groups</i>				
JustGoVote.org	...	\$285,450	<b>\$285,450</b>	...
AARP	\$143,770	\$14,400	<b>\$158,170</b>	\$768,560
Get Out to Vote	...	\$145,190	<b>\$145,190</b>	...
Mi Familia Vota	\$72,500	...	<b>\$72,500</b>	...
American Civil Liberties Union	...	\$53,400	<b>\$53,400</b>	...
Type and Organization <sup>b</sup>	TV	Radio	Total \$ Spent	CMAG TV
Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration	...	\$53,030	<b>\$53,030</b>	...
Families for a Secure America	...	\$29,700	<b>\$29,700</b>	...
Committed to Restoring Integrity in Politics	\$22,500	...	<b>\$22,500</b>	...
The Latino Coalition	...	\$17,800	<b>\$17,800</b>	...
Citizens Speaking Out, Inc.	\$13,700	...	<b>\$13,700</b>	...
Liberty Council	...	\$12,000	<b>\$12,000</b>	...
Citizens for Public Integrity	...	\$10,083	<b>\$10,083</b>	...
League of Women Voters	...	...	...	\$5,568

	<b>CMAG TV</b>
75	\$5,799,822
)	\$330,708
)	...
20	\$2,585,767
0	...
0	\$812,871
)	\$335,585
)	...
)	...
)	...
)	...
0	...
0	\$768,560
0	...
)	...
)	...
	CMAG TV
)	...
)	...
)	...
)	...
)	...
3	...
	\$5,568

Source for Table 3: Data compiled from David B. Magleby, J. Quin Monson, and Kelly D. Patterson, "2004 Campaign Communications Database," (Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy: Brigham Young University, 2005); and Campaign Media Analysis Group data.

a The ad-buy data collected for this study may contain extraneous data because of the difficulty in determining the content of the ads. The parties or interest groups that purchased the ad buys possibly ran some ads promoting House, Senate, or presidential candidates or ballot propositions not in the study's sample but still within that media market. Unless the participating academics were able to determine the exact content of the ad buy from the limited information given by the station, the data may contain observations that do not pertain to the study's relevant House, Senate, or presidential battleground races. For comparison purposes the CMAG data is included in the table. Because of the sheer volume of TV and radio stations and varying degrees of compliance in providing ad-buy information, data on spending by various groups might be incomplete. This data does not include every station in the state. This table is not intended to represent comprehensive organization spending or activity within the sample races. TV ads purchased from national cable stations that aired in this state are not reflected in this table. A more complete picture can be obtained by examining this

table with table 10-4.

- b All state and local chapters or affiliates have been combined with their national affiliate to better render the picture of the organization's activity. For instance, National Rifle Association Institute for Legislative Action and National Rifle Association Political Victory Fund data have been included in the National Rifle Association totals and Progress for America Voter Fund have been included in the Progress for America totals.
- c Determination of partisan and non-partisan allies was accomplished based on past organizational donation patterns and elite interviews with organizational and party leaders (See David B. Magleby, J. Quin Monson and Kelly D. Patterson, *Dancing without Partners: How Candidates, Parties and Interest Groups Interact in the New Campaign Finance Environment*. Center for the Study of Elections, Brigham Young University, 2005, p. 358. Available at <http://csed.byu.edu/Publications/DancingwithoutPartners.pdf>. Certain organizations that maintained neutrality were categorized according to which candidates their ads supported or attacked or whether the organization was openly anti- or pro-conservative or liberal. In blank cells, "..." only reflects the absence of collected data and does not imply the organization was inactive in that medium.

**Table 4: Number of unique Campaign Communications by Organization. Florida Senate Race, 2004<sup>a</sup>**

Type and Organization <sup>b</sup>	E-mail	Mail	Newspaper/Magazine	Personal Contact	Phone Call	Radio	TV	Total Unique Ads
<b>Democratic allies<sup>c</sup></b>								
<i>Candidates</i>								
Betty Castor for U.S. Senate	25	3	...	2	4	...	9	43
<i>Political parties</i>								
Florida Democratic Party	1	4	...	...	...	...	2	7
DNC	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	2
DSCC	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
<i>Interest groups</i>								
EMILY's List	8	2	...	...	...	...	...	10
Florida Women Vote	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	3

Type and Organization <sup>b</sup>	E-mail	Mail	Newspaper/ Magazine	Personal Contact	Phone Call	Radio	TV	Total Unique Ads
National Education Association	...	2	...	...	1 <sup>d</sup>	...	...	3
Women's Voices. Women								
Vote.	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	3
American Federation of Teachers	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
Human Rights Campaign	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	2
America Coming Together	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Environment 2004	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
People for the American Way	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Sierra Club	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Voices for Working Families	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
<b>Republican allies<sup>c</sup></b>								
<i>Candidates</i>								
Mel Martinez for Senate	15	4	...	...	2	2	5	28
<i>Political parties</i>								
Republican Party of Florida	...	17	...	1	1	1	2	22
NRSC	...	6	...	...	...	...	2	8
RNC	...	1	...	...	...	...	4	5
<i>Interest groups</i>								
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	...	6	...	1	...	...	...	7
National Rifle Association	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	4
American Democracy Project	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	3
Hispanos Unidos	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	3
All Children Matter	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Associated Builders and Contractors	...	1 <sup>e</sup>	...	...	...	...	...	1
Club for Growth	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1

Radio	TV	Total Unique Ads
...	...	3
...	...	3
...	...	2
...	...	2
...	...	1
...	...	1
...	...	1
...	...	1
...	...	1

2	5	28
---	---	----

1	2	22
...	2	8
...	4	5

...	...	7
...	...	4
...	...	3
...	...	3
...	...	1
...	...	1
...	...	1

Type and Organization <sup>b</sup>	E-mail	Mail	Newspaper/Magazine	Personal Contact	Phone Call	Radio	TV	Total Unique Ads
Florida Leadership Council	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1
National Federation of Independent Business	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
National Right to Life	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Nonpartisan								
Interest groups								
Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
AARP	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
League of Women Voters	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Rock the Vote	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1

Source for Table 4: Data compiled from David B. Magleby, J. Quin Monson, and Kelly D. Patterson, "2004 Campaign Communications Database," (Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy: Brigham Young University, 2005).

- a Data represent the number of unique or distinct pieces or ads by the group and do not represent a count of total items sent or made. This table is not intended to portray comprehensive organization activity within the sample races. A more complete picture can be obtained by examining this table together with table 10-3.
- b All state and local chapters or affiliates have been combined with their national affiliate to better render the picture of the organization's activity. For instance, National Rifle Association Institute for Legislative Action and National Rifle Association Political Victory Fund data have been included in the National Rifle Association totals.
- c Certain organizations that maintained neutrality were categorized according to which candidates their ads supported or attacked or whether the organization was openly anti- or pro- conservative or liberal. In blank cells, "..." only reflects the absence of collected data and does not imply the organization was inactive in that medium.
- d Dennis Friel, government relations manager, National Education Association, interview by Kelly Patterson and Betsey Gimbel, Washington, D.C., November 4, 2004.

e Ned Monroe, director of political affairs, Associated Builders and Contractors, interviewed by David Magleby and Kristina Gale, Washington, D.C., November 5, 2004.

**Endnotes**

1. This research was partially funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts through a grant to the Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy at Brigham Young University. The authors were part of a national research team examining the role of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act on the 2004 election cycle. This article is an extension of a monograph titled "The Florida U.S. Senate Race: Contentious From Start to Finish," prepared for the larger study.
2. Illinois was the other; two African American males competed for that seat.
3. Republican U.S. Senator Connie Mack retired in 2000 after serving two terms.
4. See Edison Media Research/Mitofsky International, "U.S. President/Florida Exit Poll Survey" (President).
5. A 2000 Florida Constitutional amendment transformed the Secretaries of Education and State into appointed offices.
6. 2003-2004 Florida Annual Policy Survey, Social Science Survey Research Laboratory, Florida State University.
7. The location of Florida State University.
8. The location of the University of Florida.
9. Witt, in Hill, MacManus and Moreno, p. 104.

10. See Edison Media Research/Mitofsky International, "U.S. President/Florida Exit Poll Survey" (Senate).
11. See U.S. Census Bureau, "Florida QuickFacts".
12. See Edison Media Research/Mitofsky International, "U.S. President/Florida Exit Poll Survey" (President).
13. See Pew Hispanic Center, "Pew Hispanic Center Fact Sheet." P. 1.
14. McCollum, a ten-term Congressman, forfeited his safe seat to run for the open U.S. Senate seat vacated by Republican Connie Mack who retired after two terms.
15. Mel Martinez immigrated to the United States when he was 15 as part of "Operation Pedro Pan." He was a highly successful trial lawyer in Orlando when he first sought public office. In 1998 he ran, and won, the nonpartisan Orange County chairman position. He was the first Hispanic to ever hold that office. Two years later, Martinez co-chaired the Florida Bush for President Committee. Martinez was later nominated by Bush to serve in his Cabinet as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. Martinez served in that capacity until he resigned his position in December 2003. Orange County, Florida is comprised largely of Orlando and its environs.
16. In 2002 the state legislature suspended the runoff primary but only for the 2002 election. The legislation called for the runoff to be restored automatically in 2004 unless the legislature voted to again suspend it. It did. This was the first U.S. Senate nomination contest in Florida where it was understood that there would be no runoff, thereby affecting campaign strategy.
17. The professor, Sami Al-Arian, was later indicted by the U.S. government but that was well after Castor left the USF presidency to take another position. Castor repeatedly said she could not have fired Al-Arian with the evidence available at the time. Al-Arian's indictment came after passage of the Patriot Act, which allowed government records to be matched, but that Act was passed by Congress long after Castor had left USF. In December 2005, Al-Arian was acquitted on eight of the 17 charges against him. The following April, he pleaded guilty to a single count of conspiracy and agreed to be deported.
18. See Florida Department of State, Division of Elections, "August 31, 2004 Primary Election"
19. Although McCollum did not formally file to run until August 12, 2003, he was being mentioned as a possible candidate in early 2003, even before Senator Graham had made the decision to retire; See Cook, 2003. See also Evote.com.
20. See Hollis and Kleindienst, 2004.
21. Statewide survey of 500 likely primary voters conducted August 23-24, 2004 by Mason-Dixon Polling & Research for various news outlets in the state; margin of error: 4.5%.
22. The "basis" for Martinez's claims stemmed from McCollum's votes while in Congress to include homosexuals in a federal hate crimes bill and to step-up AIDS treatments in another bill.
23. Statewide survey of 500 likely primary voters conducted August 23-24, 2004 by Mason-Dixon Polling & Research for various news outlets in the state; margin of error: 4.5%.
24. See *St. Petersburg Times*, August 30, 2004. The editorial took Martinez to task for taking "his campaign into the gutter with hateful and dishonest attacks on his strongest opponent... The *Times* is not willing to be associated with bigotry. As a result we are taking the almost unprecedented step of rescinding our recommendation of Martinez."
25. The remaining four candidates listed on the ballot (Klayman, Kogut, March, and Saull) received less than 5% among themselves. See Florida Department of State, Division of Elections, "August 31, 2004 Primary Election."
26. The U.S. Senate/Florida exit poll showed that Castor got 18% of the conservative vote; 12% of the white conservative Protestant vote. See Edison Media Research/Mitofsky International, "U.S. President/Florida Exit Poll Survey" (Senate).
27. Castor's advantage in out-of-state contributions may partially be explained by EMILY's List's strong national support for Castor's campaign and her hiring of the former deputy campaign finance director for Howard Dean's presidential campaign as a key deputy. Larry Biddle, initially trained at EMILY's List, was brought into the Castor campaign specifically to raise money via the Internet. See Chachere, 2004. By July, Castor had collected 5,870 donations from EMILY's list members (5,315 from out of state and 555 from Florida. See Kumar, 2004. This pattern continued throughout the campaign.
28. Polls suggest that Republican candidates, including Martinez, may have benefited slightly from both the governor and the president's handling of the hurricane damage. The U.S. Senate/Florida exit poll showed that among voters who approved of government responses to hurricanes, 53% voted for Martinez, 44% for Castor. See Edison Media Research/Mitofsky International, "U.S. President/Florida Exit Poll Survey" (Senate).
29. "Coattail effect" is a term used to symbolize one candidate at one level of government benefiting by the popularity of a candidate of the same party seeking office at a different level of government. The imagery comes from a person wearing a tailcoat (such as a concert pianist or other formal wear), where the tail of the coat is easily grabbed and the grabber goes in the same direction as the person wearing the coat. In the reference here, we argue that Martinez' popularity



aims stemmed from Congress to include times bill and to step- bill. rely primary voters 04 by Mason-Dixon s news outlets in the 0, 2004. The editorial ig "his campaign into shonest attacks on his is not willing to be sult we are taking the of rescinding our es listed on the ballor d Saull) received less e Florida Department s, "August 31, 2004 oll showed that Castor ore; 12% of the white . See Edison Media rnational, "U.S. rvey" (Senate). ate contributions may MILY's List's strong mpaign and her hiring ;n finance director for npaign as a key deputy. l at EMILY's List, was ign specifically to raise achere, 2004. By July, nations from EMILY's of state and 555 from his pattern continued candidates, including slightly from both the ndling of the hurricane la exit poll showed that 'government responses artinez, 44% for Castor. fitofsky International, Poll Survey" (Senate). sed to symbolize one rnement benefiting by 'the same party seeking ernment. The imagery g a tailcoat (such as a il wear), where the tail nd the grabber goes in on wearing the coat. In at Martinez' popularity

helped President Bush. However, since Bush held a higher office than Martinez (who held no office at the time of his 2004 campaign), we use the term "reverse" coattail.

30. Florida's critical role stemmed from the fact that the Electoral College tally in other states resulted in neither candidate winning the necessary 270 votes without Florida.
31. See Edison Media Research/Mitofsky International, "U.S. President/Florida Exit Poll Survey" (President).
32. In the national security text bullet, terrorism was listed last, and the focus was on supporting veterans (a large population in Florida) and the military, as well as protecting communities from terrorism at home. There was no mention of international terrorism in these advertisements.
33. Some \$10 million of the \$15.7 million raised in the final weeks was spent on TV ads. See MacManus, 2003, p. 204.
34. Betty Castor, Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate, interview with Susan MacManus, Tampa, Fla. December 10, 2004.
35. See Florida Department of State Division of Elections. "Division of Elections November 2, 2004 General Election," and Florida Department of State Division of Elections. November 7, 2000 General Election.
36. Early voting was first used in the 2002 gubernatorial election.
37. Of those who voted early, 43% were Republicans, 39% Democrats, and 15% Independents. Of those who voted absentee, 47% were Republicans, 39% Democrats. Source: A telephone survey of a random sample of 800 Floridians who voted in Election 2004, conducted November 2-3 for The Collins Center For Public Policy, Inc. by Barcelo & Company and Hamilton Beattie & Staff. The survey's margin of error is +/- 3.5% at the 95% confidence level.
38. Bush-supporting celebrities making recorded phone calls included California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, many members of the Bush family (former First Lady Barbara, First Lady Laura, Florida Governor Jeb, and his son George P. Bush), former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, conservative political commentator Sean Hannity, Arizona U.S. Senator John McCain, Reverend Franklin Graham, and President Bush himself. Celebrities calling for Kerry included former Vice President Al Gore, celebrities Barbara Streisand, Jack Nicholson, Sean "P. Diddy" Combs, Michael J. Fox, Mary J. Blige, Vanessa Williams, Martina Navratilova, Spike Lee, U.S. Senator and former First Lady Hillary Clinton, former President Bill Clinton, former presidential candidate Jesse Jackson, and Caroline Kennedy.
39. See MacManus, 2004.
40. See Florida Department of State, Division of Elections, "August 31, 2004 Primary Election."
41. See Florida Department of State, Division of Elections, "August 31, 2004 Primary Election."
42. See Edison Media Research/Mitofsky International "U.S. President/Florida Exit Poll Survey" (Senate).
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Type and Organization <sup>b</sup>	E-mail	Mail	Newspaper/ Magazine	Personal Contact	Phone Call	Radio	TV	Total Unique Ads
National Education Association	...	2	...	...	1 <sup>d</sup>	...	...	3
Women's Voices. Women								
Vote.	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	3
American Federa- tion of Teachers	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
Human Rights Campaign	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	2
America Coming Together	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Environment 2004	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
People for the American Way	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Sierra Club	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Voices for Working Families	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
<b>Republican allies<sup>c</sup></b>								
<i>Candidates</i>								
Mel Martinez for Senate	15	4	...	...	2	2	5	28
<i>Political parties</i>								
Republican Party of Florida	...	17	...	1	1	1	2	22
NRSC	...	6	...	...	...	...	2	8
RNC	...	1	...	...	...	...	4	5
<i>Interest groups</i>								
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	...	6	...	1	...	...	...	7
National Rifle Association	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	4
American Democ- racy Project	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	3
Hispanos Unidos	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	3
All Children Matter	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Associated Build- ers and Contrac- tors	...	1 <sup>e</sup>	...	...	...	...	...	1
Club for Growth	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1

Radio	TV	Total Unique Ads
...	...	3
...	...	3
...	...	2
...	...	2
...	...	1
...	...	1
...	...	1
...	...	1
...	...	1

2	5	28
---	---	----

1	2	22
...	2	8
...	4	5

...	...	7
...	...	4
...	...	3
...	...	3
...	...	1
...	...	1
...	...	1

Type and Organization <sup>b</sup>	E-mail	Mail	Newspaper/Magazine	Personal Contact	Phone Call	Radio	TV	Total Unique Ads
Florida Leadership Council	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1
National Federation of Independent Business	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
National Right to Life	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Nonpartisan								
Interest groups								
Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
AARP	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
League of Women Voters	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Rock the Vote	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1

Source for Table 4: Data compiled from David B. Magleby, J. Quin Monson, and Kelly D. Patterson, "2004 Campaign Communications Database," (Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy: Brigham Young University, 2005).

- a Data represent the number of unique or distinct pieces or ads by the group and do not represent a count of total items sent or made. This table is not intended to portray comprehensive organization activity within the sample races. A more complete picture can be obtained by examining this table together with table 10-3.
- b All state and local chapters or affiliates have been combined with their national affiliate to better render the picture of the organization's activity. For instance, National Rifle Association Institute for Legislative Action and National Rifle Association Political Victory Fund data have been included in the National Rifle Association totals.
- c Certain organizations that maintained neutrality were categorized according to which candidates they supported or attacked or whether the organization was openly anti- or pro- conservative or liberal. In blank cells, "..." only reflects the absence of collected data and does not imply the organization was inactive in that medium.
- d Dennis Friel, government relations manager, National Education Association, interview by Kelly Patterson and Betsy Gimbel, Washington, D.C., November 4, 2004.

e Ned Monroe, director of political affairs, Associated Builders and Contractors, interviewed by David Magleby and Kristina Gale, Washington, D.C., November 5, 2004.

**Endnotes**

1. This research was partially funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts through a grant to the Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy at Brigham Young University. The authors were part of a national research team examining the role of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act on the 2004 election cycle. This article is an extension of a monograph titled "The Florida U.S. Senate Race: Contentious From Start to Finish," prepared for the larger study.
2. Illinois was the other; two African American males competed for that seat.
3. Republican U.S. Senator Connie Mack retired in 2000 after serving two terms.
4. See Edison Media Research/Mitofsky International, "U.S. President/Florida Exit Poll Survey" (President).
5. A 2000 Florida Constitutional amendment transformed the Secretaries of Education and State into appointed offices.
6. 2003-2004 Florida Annual Policy Survey, Social Science Survey Research Laboratory, Florida State University.
7. The location of Florida State University.
8. The location of the University of Florida.
9. Witt, in Hill, MacManus and Moreno, p. 104.

10. See Edison Media Research/Mitofsky International, "U.S. President/Florida Exit Poll Survey" (Senate).
11. See U.S. Census Bureau, "Florida QuickFacts".
12. See Edison Media Research/Mitofsky International, "U.S. President/Florida Exit Poll Survey" (President).
13. See Pew Hispanic Center, "Pew Hispanic Center Fact Sheet." P. 1.
14. McCollum, a ten-term Congressman, forfeited his safe seat to run for the open U.S. Senate seat vacated by Republican Connie Mack who retired after two terms.
15. Mel Martinez immigrated to the United States when he was 15 as part of "Operation Pedro Pan." He was a highly successful trial lawyer in Orlando when he first sought public office. In 1998 he ran, and won, the nonpartisan Orange County chairman position. He was the first Hispanic to ever hold that office. Two years later, Martínez co-chaired the Florida Bush for President Committee. Martínez was later nominated by Bush to serve in his Cabinet as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. Martínez served in that capacity until he resigned his position in December 2003. Orange County, Florida is comprised largely of Orlando and its environs.
16. In 2002 the state legislature suspended the runoff primary but only for the 2002 election. The legislation called for the runoff to be restored automatically in 2004 unless the legislature voted to again suspend it. It did. This was the first U.S. Senate nomination contest in Florida where it was understood that there would be no runoff, thereby affecting campaign strategy.
17. The professor, Sami Al-Arian, was later indicted by the U.S. government but that was well after Castor left the USF presidency to take another position. Castor repeatedly said she could not have fired Al-Arian with the evidence available at the time. Al-Arian's indictment came after passage of the Patriot Act, which allowed government records to be matched, but that Act was passed by Congress long after Castor had left USF. In December 2005, Al-Arian was acquitted on eight of the 17 charges against him. The following April, he pleaded guilty to a single count of conspiracy and agreed to be deported.
18. See Florida Department of State, Division of Elections, "August 31, 2004 Primary Election"
19. Although McCollum did not formally file to run until August 12, 2003, he was being mentioned as a possible candidate in early 2003, even before Senator Graham had made the decision to retire; See Cook, 2003. See also Evote.com.
20. See Hollis and Kleindienst, 2004.
21. Statewide survey of 500 likely primary voters conducted August 23–24, 2004 by Mason-Dixon Polling & Research for various news outlets in the state; margin of error: 4.5%.
22. The "basis" for Martínez's claims stemmed from McCollum's votes while in Congress to include homosexuals in a federal hate crimes bill and to step-up AIDS treatments in another bill.
23. Statewide survey of 500 likely primary voters conducted August 23–24, 2004 by Mason-Dixon Polling & Research for various news outlets in the state; margin of error: 4.5%.
24. See *St. Petersburg Times*, August 30, 2004. The editorial took Martínez to task for taking "his campaign into the gutter with hateful and dishonest attacks on his strongest opponent... The *Times* is not willing to be associated with bigotry. As a result we are taking the almost unprecedented step of rescinding our recommendation of Martínez."
25. The remaining four candidates listed on the ballot (Klayman, Kogut, March, and Saull) received less than 5% among themselves. See Florida Department of State, Division of Elections, "August 31, 2004 Primary Election."
26. The U.S. Senate/Florida exit poll showed that Castor got 18% of the conservative vote; 12% of the white conservative Protestant vote. See Edison Media Research/Mitofsky International, "U.S. President/Florida Exit Poll Survey" (Senate).
27. Castor's advantage in out-of-state contributions may partially be explained by EMILY's List's strong national support for Castor's campaign and her hiring of the former deputy campaign finance director for Howard Dean's presidential campaign as a key deputy. Larry Biddle, initially trained at EMILY's List, was brought into the Castor campaign specifically to raise money via the Internet. See Chachere, 2004. By July, Castor had collected 5,870 donations from EMILY's list members (5,315 from out of state and 555 from Florida. See Kumar, 2004. This pattern continued throughout the campaign.
28. Polls suggest that Republican candidates, including Martínez, may have benefited slightly from both the governor and the president's handling of the hurricane damage. The U.S. Senate/Florida exit poll showed that among voters who approved of government responses to hurricanes, 53% voted for Martínez, 44% for Castor. See Edison Media Research/Mitofsky International, "U.S. President/Florida Exit Poll Survey" (Senate).
29. "Coattail effect" is a term used to symbolize one candidate at one level of government benefiting by the popularity of a candidate of the same party seeking office at a different level of government. The imagery comes from a person wearing a tailcoat (such as a concert pianist or other formal wear), where the tail of the coat is easily grabbed and the grabber goes in the same direction as the person wearing the coat. In the reference here, we argue that Martínez' popularity

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- ... President Bush. However, since Bush held a higher office than Martinez (who held no office at the time of his 2004 campaign), we use the term "reverse" coattail.
30. Florida's critical role stemmed from the fact that the Electoral College tally in other states resulted in neither candidate winning the necessary 270 votes without Florida.
  31. See Edison Media Research/Mitofsky International, "U.S. President/Florida Exit Poll Survey" (President).
  32. In the national security text bullet, terrorism was listed last, and the focus was on supporting veterans (a large population in Florida) and the military, as well as protecting communities from terrorism at home. There was no mention of international terrorism in these advertisements.
  33. Some \$10 million of the \$15.7 million raised in the final weeks was spent on TV ads. See MacManus, 2003, p. 204.
  34. Betty Castor, Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate, interview with Susan MacManus, Tampa, Fla. December 10, 2004.
  35. See Florida Department of State Division of Elections. "Division of Elections November 2, 2004 General Election," and Florida Department of State Division of Elections. November 7, 2000 General Election.
  36. Early voting was first used in the 2002 gubernatorial election.
  37. Of those who voted early, 43% were Republicans, 39% Democrats, and 15% Independents. Of those who voted absentee, 47% were Republicans, 39% Democrats. Source: A telephone survey of a random sample of 800 Floridians who voted in Election 2004, conducted November 2–3 for The Collins Center For Public Policy, Inc. by Barcelo & Company and Hamilton Beattie & Staff. The survey's margin of error is +/- 3.5% at the 95% confidence level.
  38. Bush-supporting celebrities making recorded phone calls included California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, many members of the Bush family (former First Lady Barbara, First Lady Laura, Florida Governor Jeb, and his son George P. Bush), former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, conservative political commentator Sean Hannity, Arizona U.S. Senator John McCain, Reverend Franklin Graham, and President Bush himself. Celebrities calling for Kerry included former Vice President Al Gore, celebrities Barbara Streisand, Jack Nicholson, Sean "P. Diddy" Combs, Michael J. Fox, Mary J. Blige, Vanessa Williams, Martina Navratilova, Spike Lee, U.S. Senator and former First Lady Hillary Clinton, former President Bill Clinton, former presidential candidate Jesse Jackson, and Caroline Kennedy.
  39. See MacManus, 2004.

40. See Florida Department of State, Division of Elections, "August 31, 2004 Primary Election."
41. See Florida Department of State, Division of Elections, "August 31, 2004 Primary Election."
42. See Edison Media Research/Mitofsky International "U.S. President/Florida Exit Poll Survey" (Senate).
43. See Edison Media Research/Mitofsky International "U.S. President/Florida Exit Poll Survey" (Senate).

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# The Interplay of Party Leadership and Standing Committees in a Competitive Versus a Non-Competitive State Legislative Setting: the Case of Florida

J. Edwin Benton, University of South Florida

## Introduction

Most observers of American state legislatures are in agreement that an understanding of the role played by the party leadership and standing committees is indispensable to understanding how these bodies make policy decisions. Rosenthal (1998), for example, has characterized the role of legislative party leaders as critical to the decision making process since they are expected to "mobilize individuals who have different values, represent different interests and constituencies, and pursue different objectives." Others (e.g., Wahlke, Eulau, Buchanan, and Ferguson, 1962; Uslander and Weber, 1977; Jewell, 1982; Patterson 1995) have described the role played by these leaders as central to the organization, functioning, and accomplishment of the tasks of state legislatures. Although attention is frequently focused on house speakers and senate presidents as the principal party leaders in most state legislatures, majority and minority leaders and whips have an important role to play as well. Party caucuses usually are also part of the legislative party leadership team and function in a number of important capacities (e.g., serving as a vehicle for the election of officers, a convenient method by which party leaders can disseminate information, and a deliberative body to formulate party positions and floor strategy). One thing, however, is quite clear about the consequences of the role played by party leadership—centralization of influence in a few party leaders.

Committees are also viewed as having a substantial influence on the outputs of state legislatures. They have been referred to as the principal work groups or organizational units for processing legislation (Jewell and

Patterson, 1986; Keefe and Ogul, 1985; Francis, 1989; Rosenthal, 1998). Writing near the end of the nineteenth century, Woodrow Wilson (1885) described committees as "little legislatures," comprising a "disintegrate ministry." More recently, Hamm and Hedlund (1994) conclude what has become common knowledge: "Committees are the only means by which the legislature can hope to process the large number of bills introduced in a legislative session." The growing complexity and diversity of issues that confront legislatures place great demands on legislators' time and dictate the need for specialization and division of labor. This is the function most commonly performed by committees. Simply stated, the committee system is the best way that legislators have been able to develop to simultaneously provide careful and discriminating scrutiny of proposed legislation and the legislative oversight of executive agencies. Indeed, as Jewell and Patterson (1977: 177) have concluded, "the committee system is the main line of defense for...state legislators against the Twentieth Century trends that threaten to turn legislative bodies into rubber stamps for the executive." However, unlike party leadership, committees have a tendency to introduce a decentralizing influence into the state legislative decision making process.

The purpose of this paper is to explore further the critical roles played by the party leadership and standing committees in the state legislative process. Specifically, it examines the role that each plays in a non competitive versus competitive legislative setting. Does movement from a non competitive to a competitive state legislative environment result in a more centralized decision making arena? Likewise, does movement back to a non-competitive

legislative setting lead to a more decentralized system? These research questions will be investigated with the aid of data drawn from one state—Florida—that has experienced a shift from a one party (Democratic) dominant legislature to a two party competitive (Democratic advantage) legislature, then to a two-party competitive (Republican advantage) legislature to, more recently, a one-party (Republican) dominant legislature.

#### Shifting Party Control in Florida

Until recently, Florida was one of a number of mainly southern states in which the same political party had a majority in both chambers of the state legislature every year since the end of Reconstruction. In fact, it was not unusual for Democrats to hold 100% of the seats in both chambers of the Florida Legislature until the early part of the Twentieth century. During the early 1960s, Democrats still held over 90% of the seats in both the state Senate and state House of representatives. As recent as the late 1970s, Democrats won over 73% of the seats in both houses. Based on these statistics as well the voting record of its citizens, Florida was accurately depicted as being part of the "solid Democratic South."

By the early to mid 1980s, however, there were clear signs that the Democratic Party was beginning to lose its firm grip of control over the Florida Legislature, as more Republican candidates were running for and winning seats in both chambers. Specifically, the Democratic majority began to decline in the state house in 1982 and in the senate in 1986. For the remainder of the 1980s and into the 1990s, the number of Democrats holding seats in the state House decreased with Democrats constituting a majority (that is, 64 to 56 or 53 %) for the last time during the 1994-96 legislative session. The outcome of the 1996 election produced a 51% majority (that is, 61 to 59 seats) for the Republicans. In subsequent sessions, Republicans have held 60 (1998-2000 session), 64 (2000-02 session), and 68 (2002-04 session) % of the seats in a chamber of 120. A similar pattern developed in the state Senate as the number of Democrats began to decrease in 1986 and continued to dwindle until the 1992-94 session when the number of Republicans equaled the number of Democrats (that is, 20 to 20). Then, the 1994 state election resulted in a 53% majority (that is, 21 to 19 seats) for the Republicans. Since 1996, Republicans have held 58 (1996-98), 63 (1998-2000), 63 (2000-02) and 65 (2002-04) % of the seats in a chamber of 40.

This brief overview suggests that the political environment of the Florida Legislature has gone from a non-competitive to a competitive setting (both Democratic and Republican) and most recently back to a non-competitive situation. As a result, Florida makes for an interesting case study to test several assumptions about the relationship between party politics and the legislative decision making arena. In particular, it affords us the opportunity to

investigate whether or not these changes have brought about a centralized or a decentralized decision making process in the state legislature. A centralized decision making arrangement would be one where power and influence would be concentrated in the hands of a few legislators such as the presiding officers, majority and minority party leaders and whips, and party caucuses, while a decentralized set-up would entail the further dispersion of decision making power to committees and subcommittees in the legislature. The significance of the resulting style of operation cannot be underestimated since previous research (e.g., Hamm and Moncrief, 1982; Francis and Riddlesperger, 1982; Francis, 1989; Rosenthal, 1998) has demonstrated that different internal processes have the potential to produce substantially different policy outcomes. Therefore, the results of this study could have significant policy implications for not only legislative decision making in Florida but also for policy making in legislatures in other southern states that have been undergoing similar political changes as traditional Democratic rule has given way to new Republican majorities. In addition, this study could have relevance for legislative decision making in other formerly one-party legislatures outside of the South as well as ones that have shifted from traditional Republican control to new Democratic majorities (e.g., Utah, Vermont, Kansas, and Massachusetts).

#### Research Literature

Previous scholarly research that has focused on the interplay between party leadership and committees in congressional and state legislative settings has produced at least three plausible scenarios. One scenario, which has a strong centralizing tone to it, depicts the party leadership as having more than a passing interest in efficiently expediting legislation and would favor a system just efficient enough to facilitate adoption of its own agenda (see Liebowitz and Tollison, 1980). In this scenario, standing committees in American legislatures are viewed as entities created by the party leadership to facilitate the attainment of their policy goals, and the majority party structures the committee system to serve the party's needs, including re-electing enough incumbents to maintain majority status (e.g., see Cox and McCubbins, 1993). Consequently, committees exercise very little independent authority apart from what the party gives them. Simply put, the majority party leadership has an agenda, and it tries to maximize the number of agenda items that get favorable treatment. Since there is usually not enough time to consider every leadership agenda item in full forum, the leadership will choose to establish committees to speed up the processing of legislation. The committees can handle a large volume of bills while the legislature is in session, and floor action can be restricted to little more than a simple approval of committee decisions. Moreover, a congested schedule and a chair-dominated committee agenda would seem to



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advance leadership interests. In this way, leaders find it logical and convenient to "manage by committees." This scenario is often referred to in the literature as a hybrid party/committee model (e.g., see Shepsle and Weingast, 1994; Carsey and Rundquist, 1998, 2002).

In order for this scenario to work, party discipline must be practiced. The majority party leaders endeavor to assemble a winning party coalition, both in an active caucus and by assigning key and trusted members to important chair posts and committees. Indeed, loyalty to the party leadership may turn out to be a more important criterion for selecting party officers (e.g., whips, floor leaders, etc.) as well as in appointing committee and subcommittee chairs than seniority. Operationally, this means that the party leadership's agenda takes priority at every critical step of the legislative process. Members are rewarded or punished depending on their degree of support for party leadership positions (see Rohde, 1991). In such a setting, the committees exist mainly to serve the agenda-processing needs of the majority party leadership. Moreover, this would especially mean that the party leadership would appoint committee chairs loyal to the leadership, and subsequently, vest them with sufficient authority to control the agenda of their committees so as to ensure the processing of legislation at the top of the leadership's agenda.

Rhode's (1991, 1995) conditional party government model represents another alternative scenario. Under this scenario, the majority party would play a dominant role in organizing the legislature, but its influence would be felt only under certain circumstances or in limited areas of legislation. On an issue, the majority party's influence would be felt when the preferences of legislators—either their personal preferences or those reflecting the wishes of their constituents—are divided along party lines and when the preferences within the majority party are homogeneous. On a committee, party influence would be felt when the jurisdiction includes a significant proportion of issues that invoke partisan conflict. Francis (1989: 38) identifies a similar arrangement whereby "the leadership will have a fairly short agenda, and that upon its accomplishment, other non-contradictory demands will be accommodated." Stated differently, it would be a system in which "the party leaders will get their way on major party issues relating to, say fiscal policy, but the committees will get their way on everything else" (Francis, 1989: 38). While there is still a strong centralizing flavor to this scenario, it is not as strong as is the case for the hybrid party/committee model.

In contrast to the hybrid party/committee and conditional party government models, a third scenario describes an arrangement in which the influence of standing committees is paramount, thereby producing a system with strong decentralizing tendencies. According to this model, standing committees are established to satisfy the policy goals of the rank-in-file membership of the state legislature and not that of the party leadership (see Francis, 1989).

Each member of the legislature has a constantly shifting and overlapping agenda, and each member tries to maximize his/her success. Since reality dictates that a full forum of the legislature can consider only a small proportion of the total number of bills on the agenda of all legislators, most of the members will support the establishment of standing committees. In this setting, the party leadership attempts to assemble coalitions by acceding to as many members' requests for chair appointments and committee assignments as possible without any intent to impede or oppose the legislative proposals of fellow legislators. Indeed, the idea is more along the lines of what is referred to as "universalism" or "reciprocity" (Weingast, 1979; Shepsle and Weingast, 1981). As Francis (1989: 21) explains "...the omnibus bill may have a piece for everyone, and what the committee produces the committee gets." Winning coalitions in a political setting by any standards of reasonableness, however, are unstable and the uncertainties of pure majority rule politics may lead legislators to opt for a system with greater stability—that is, one in which the norm of reciprocity prevails (Weingast, 1979).

In this scenario, the party leadership may not be in a position or simply elects not to identify and insist on a wide array of party policies. Rather, it attempts to store up credits that will ultimately assist in the adoption of its agenda. This is accomplished in part as a result of the leadership (that is, the speaker and president along with the majority leaders and sometimes a "committee on committees") honoring as many members' requests for chair appointments and committee assignments as possible at the beginning of any particular session. The committees then act autonomously. Moreover, the norm of seniority is more widely practiced in the appointment of committee chairs and members. As a consequence, the party leadership must take its chances and depend upon the good will of the committee members for support on those items that are at the head of its agenda.

How can we explain the variation in legislative systems that develop across the states? Specifically, what factor(s) influence the type of state legislative system (i.e., centralized, decentralized, or something between these two extremes) that emerges? A review of the relevant research literature (e.g., see Patterson, 1995) suggests a number of plausible explanations for the existence of or change from a centralized to a decentralized (or from a decentralized to a centralized) decision-making system (e.g., formal and informal rules governing the operation of the legislature, degree of interest group strength, and shift in the legislative agenda from distributive to redistributive issues). One explanation that has received a fair amount of attention in the legislative studies research literature is the degree of party competition, defined as the partisan division in the legislature.

A decentralized committee system where distributive politics is practiced and reciprocity is the norm seems to be found in states where one political party is dominant—that

is, a non-competitive political environment (Jewell and Patterson, 1977; Weingast, 1978, 1979; Shepsle and Weingast, 1981; Jewell, 1986). In fact, there is evidence (Francis and Riddlesperger, 1982: 468; Hamm and Harmel, 1993) to suggest that "the centrality of the committee system is positively related to the proportionate number of seats controlled by the majority party." In such a system, the dominant political party and its leadership typically worries less about the opposition posed by the solidarity of the minority party than it does about the factionalism within its own party. Indeed, Francis and Riddlesperger (1982) report that the majority (dominant) party will begin to have factional difficulties as the majority party increases in number beyond a safe margin. In sum, as the majority becomes more dominant and the disruptive nature of factional disputes begin to surface more frequently, the majority party leaders may opt for a decentralized committee system, wherein most members can expect some benefit. A competitive political environment, however, is likely to produce a different set up and operation of the legislature. In the words of Francis and Riddlesperger (1982: 468): "When the parties are more evenly matched [a competitive political environment]...the committees become less central, and the party caucus becomes more significant." In a competitive environment, the party leaders may be less agreeable to permit the committees to make decisions without direction, particularly when it is likely that the committee party divisions will also be quite close—perhaps subject to being overturned by the shift of one or two votes. In addition, the party leadership may exert itself in other ways in a competitive, highly partisan way. For instance, Jewell (1986: 2) suggests that the existence of two strong parties may produce the following: party ratios on committees that more closely reflect proportions of members in the chamber, and at times, give even greater advantage to the majority party; committees are chaired by members of the majority party; and the majority party may appoint the committee chairs and members without regard to seniority and more on the basis of loyalty to the party leadership.

What support can be found for these theoretical propositions from an analysis of the legislative decision-making system found in Florida since the mid-1970s? The case of Florida makes for an especially timely and interesting study, given that the legislative partisan climate has shifted from a non-competitive Democratic dominant environment to a competitive Democratic advantage setting, then to a competitive Republican advantage setting, and most recently, to a non-competitive Republican dominant environment. Moreover, as suggested earlier, these findings will have relevance for other state legislatures undergoing similar changes.

#### Hypotheses and Data

This theorizing along with the findings of the relevant

research literature summarized above would suggest several specific hypotheses about the possible influence that partisan competition has on the extent to which the legislative decision-making process operates in a centralized versus a decentralized fashion.

**Hypothesis 1:** Majority party ratios on standing committees in competitive legislative settings are more likely to be at least equal to or higher than the party's proportion in the chamber, while the majority party's ratios in standing committees in non-competitive settings are more likely to be less than the party's proportion.

**Hypothesis 2:** Majority party ratios on key standing committees (appropriations, finance and taxation, rules and calendar, or others processing significant pieces of legislation during specific sessions) in competitive legislative settings are more likely to be larger than the party's proportion in the chamber than would be the case in non-competitive legislative settings.

**Hypothesis 3:** The party leadership in competitive legislative settings is more likely to appoint the standing committee chairs without regard to seniority than is the case in non-competitive legislative settings.

It is also plausible to predict that the party leadership in competitive legislative settings where it controls committee chair appointments also would want to have dominate chairs and chairs that would tightly control their committees' agenda. According to the hybrid party/committee model, obtaining such a situation would be consistent with the leadership's desire and objective to ensure support for those items that are at the top of its agenda. In short, a favorable outcome in a committee's disposition of a bill usually results in a favorable outcome when the bill comes up for vote on the floor. Such a scenario is likely to produce a more centralized legislative system.

**Hypothesis 4:** Committee chairs are more likely to exercise almost full control over their committee's agenda and dominate committee proceedings in competitive rather than in non-competitive legislative settings.

The potential impact that a competitive versus a non-competitive political legislative environment has on bringing about either a centralized or a decentralized legislative system also can be discerned from the views and perceptions of legislators. Legislators have a very keen sense as to where important legislative decisions are made, and particularly the role played by the party leadership versus that of standing committees. Therefore, legislators in a competitive legislative setting would be more likely to express the view that critical decisions are made by one or

more members of the party leadership, while those in a non-competitive situation would feel that these type decisions are made by standing committees. Hence, the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 5:** A larger proportion of legislators in competitive political settings is more likely to believe that significant decisions are made in the offices of the presiding officers and majority leaders (that is, the party leadership) than is the case for legislators in non-competitive political settings.

Data to test these five hypotheses are derived from several sources. First, the data necessary to test Hypotheses 1-3 was secured from an annual publication of the Florida House of Representatives known as the *Clerk's Manual*. This secondary data source provided information on standing committee assignments and chair appointments. Second, data that was used to test Hypotheses 4 and 5 came from four different surveys of Florida legislators. Two of the surveys provide data on the perceptions and assessments of Florida legislators in 1963 and 1981 and previously was reported in other works (see Francis, 1967, 1989; Francis and Riddleberger, 1982). Two other surveys were conducted by the author and supply the same information available on Florida legislators' perceptions and assessments in 1997 and 2003.<sup>1</sup> Finally, the secondary and survey data were supplemented with qualitative data collected from interviews with 16 former and present Florida legislators.<sup>2</sup>

#### Analysis and Discussion

As a prerequisite to testing the propositions contained in Hypotheses 1-3, it is necessary to provide operational definitions for party competition (that is, partisan division) that existed in the Florida Legislature between 1976 and 2004.<sup>3</sup> "Non-competitive" periods are defined as times in which the majority party held more than 60% of the seats in a particular chamber, while "competitive" periods are ones in which the majority party's proportion of seats was 60% or less. According to these definitions, four distinctive partisan periods can be identified—non-competitive Democratic dominant; competitive Democratic advantage;

competitive Republican advantage; and non-competitive Republican dominant. The exact time periods for each chamber can be seen in Table 1.

As can be seen from this table, the Democratic Party continued its dominance in the Florida House for a longer period (until 1992) than was the case in the Florida Senate (only until 1988). During the 10-year period of 1988-98, the Senate was a competitive body with the Democrats and Republicans each holding the advantage for two sessions. (The 1992-94 session of the Senate is not included in any of the categories since the membership was evenly split at 20 Democrats and 20 Republicans.) Meanwhile, the competitive period of the House lasted for a shorter period (8 years or between 1992-2000), with each party maintaining an advantage in two sessions. By 1998 and 2000 for the Senate and House, respectively, the partisan fortunes of the two political parties, when compared to less than two decades previously, had been reversed with the Republican Party ascending to a dominant position.

Hypothesis 1 predicts that the party ratios on standing committees will be at least the same as or larger than the proportions of members in a chamber during competitive periods (that is, when the partisan division is smaller), while committee ratios may be less than the party's proportion in a chamber during non-competitive settings. The majority party in a non-competitive setting is not as likely to be concerned that committee ratios are less than chamber proportions, since they typically enjoy a commanding advantage and have more than enough votes (assuming voting is done along party lines) to control committee decisions. It is only when the partisan divisions becomes smaller that the majority party seeks to ensure their numerical advantage in committees (see Kloha, 2003). Data to test these predictions are located in Table 2.

The data for the Florida Senate clearly follow this predicted pattern. In all six legislative sessions where the Democratic Party was the dominant party in a non-competitive setting (that is, 1976-88), standing committee ratios were less than that of the Party's proportion in that chamber. The same was true in those three sessions where the Republican Party was dominant (that is, 1998-2004). The data also confirm expectations that the majority party's

**Table 1: Level of Political Party Competition in the Florida Legislature, 1976-2004**

Non-Competitive, Democratic Dominant	Competitive, Democratic Advantage	Competitive, Republican Advantage	Non-Competitive, Republican Advantage
Senate Sessions (6)— 1976-88	Senate Sessions (2)— 1988-92	Senate Sessions (2)— 1994-98	Senate Sessions (3)— 1998-2004
House Sessions (8)— 1976-92	House Sessions (2)— 1992-96	House Sessions (2)— 1996-2000	House Sessions (2)— 2000-04

**Table 2: Majority Party Proportions and Committee Proportions of the Florida Legislature, 1976-2004**

FLORIDA SENATE						
Non-Competitive, Democratic Dominant Period						
	<u>1976-78</u>	<u>1978-80</u>	<u>1980-82</u>	<u>1982-84</u>	<u>1984-86</u>	<u>1986-88</u>
Majority Proportion	75	73	73	80	80	63
Committee Proportion	74	69	67	76	79	55
Appropriation	77	78	78	78	79	53
Rules and Calendar	79	69	69	77	85	53
Finance and Taxation	85	78	63	60	82	46
Competitive, Democratic Advantage Period						
	<u>1988-90</u>	<u>1990-92</u>	<u>1992-94</u>	<u>1994-96</u>	<u>1996-98</u>	
Majority Proportion	58	58	50	53	58	
Committee Proportion	58	58	50	56	59	
Appropriation	55	57	50	59	56	
Rules and Calendar	55	52	50	57	64	
Finance and Taxation	58	70	50	55	57	
Non-Competitive, Republican Dominant Period						
	<u>1998-2000</u>	<u>2000-02</u>	<u>2002-04</u>			
Majority Proportion	63	63	65			
Committee Proportion	61	58	62			
Appropriation	57	61	60			
Rules and Calendar	60	60	62			
Finance and Taxation	75	56	56			

(Continued) Table 2: Majority Party Proportions and Committee Proportions of the Florida Legislature, 1976-2004

FLORIDA HOUSE  
Non-Competitive, Democratic  
Dominant Period

86	1986-88		1976-78	1978-80	1980-82	1982-84	1984-86	1986-88	1988-90	1990-92
	63	Majority Proportion	77	74	68	70	65	63	61	62
	55	Committee Proportion	76	77	74	76	67	66	66	65
	53	Appropriation	83	87	85	86	86	75	71	74
	53	Rules and Calendar	81	82	83	80	76	84	73	73
	46	Finance and Taxation	72	83	74	77	63	69	67	65

Competitive, Republican Advantage Period	Competitive, Democratic Advantage Period	Non-Competitive, Republican Dominant Period					
1996-98	1992-94	1994-96	1996-98	1998-2000	2000-02	2002-04	
58	59	53	51	60	64	68	Majority Proportion
59	63	56	62*	65*	63*	66	Committee Proportion
56	68	58	64	62	64	68	Appropriation
64	70	58	62**	65**	67**	67	Rules and Calendar
57	65	58	57	59	62	68	Finance and Taxation

Source: *The Clerk's Manual*, for years 1976-2004.

\*These are the average proportions for the House's seven councils in the 1996-98, 1998-2000, and 2000-02 sessions. See note 4.

\*\*During the 1996-98, 1998-2000, and 2000-02 sessions, the House Rules and Calendar Committee was abolished and replaced with seven "rules and calendar committees" called "councils." See note 4.

proportions on standing committees will not fall below the party's proportion in the chamber during competitive periods. During the two sessions where Democrats continued to hold an advantage (that is, 1988-92), the standing committee and chamber ratios were exactly the same. In the other competitive period where the Republicans had recently won an advantage (that is, 1994-98), committee ratios exceeded the Party's proportion in

that body, as the new majority party was attempting to consolidate its control.

The pattern found for the Florida house, although not quite as clear-cut, still lends support to the hypothesis. During all but one of the eight sessions (the 1976-78 session) when the Democratic held a strong advantage (that is, 1976-92), party ratios on standing committees exceeded the Party's proportion in the chamber. However, in the two

sessions that the Republican Party assumed a position of dominance in the house (that is, 2000-04), party ratios on standing committees dropped below the Party's proportion in the chamber. During the two sessions while the outgoing majority Democratic Party still had an advantage in a competitive setting (that is, 1992-96), their committee ratios, as predicted, did exceed their proportion in the chamber. When the Republicans gained the advantage in the 1996-98 session by the slimmest majority (51%), they radically increased their committee ratios to 62%. Moreover, Republican committee ratios continued to be much higher than their proportion in that chamber in the second competitive session where they held an advantage (that is, 1998-2000).

Two factors—one political and one practical—provide some insight into the somewhat different pattern observed for the Florida house. First, a high level of partisanship has always characterized the house. In this regard, the Florida house is similar to the U.S. House of Representatives. The larger size of the Florida house (that is, compared to the senate) makes the exercise of party discipline a necessity in order for this chamber to process its workload. Second, the larger size of the house means that there are many more members of the majority party during non-competitive periods, and this means that there is less need for the majority to appoint more members from the minority party to relieve some of the pressure to serve on committees that sometimes occurs in the smaller Senate.

If it is the case that the majority party leadership tends to stack the decks on standing committees, generally, in competitive periods (but more so for the Senate than the House) does it mean that it will stack key committees as well with members from the majority party? It is generally understood that some committees traditionally have a great deal to do with the running of each chamber as an institution. For instance, committees that deal with important matters such as the budget (i.e., finance and taxation and appropriations) and the operation of each chamber (i.e., rules and procedures) would fall into this category. Therefore, it would be anticipated that the majority party leadership would be inclined to stack these committees with more of its own party's members. Furthermore, it would seem reasonable that the possibility of this occurring would be related to the degree of competitiveness in the chamber. Simply stated, there would appear to be a greater incentive to stack committees when partisan divisions are close (that is, a competitive setting) and the stakes are high (see Hypothesis 2). But, is this so?

Data to test this hypothesis can be found in the first, third, fourth, and fifth rows of Table 2. Inspection of these data indicates different patterns in each chamber. In the Senate, it appears that the majority party proportions on these three committees typically range from slightly above to slightly below the majority proportions in the chamber and the ratios on committees generally, but these

percentages do not vary with the level of party competition. In the house, the party leadership has consistently stacked these important committees in favor of the majority party over the years. However, the party ratios for these three key committees are not appreciably higher during competitive periods as compared to non-competitive periods.

These findings, which run counter to Hypothesis 2, quite possibly are the result of the typically large size of important committees. As a result of the largeness of both the majority party and key committees, the majority party leadership has less need to stack committees. For instance, in a chamber where the majority party has a 60% advantage and committee ratios closely reflect the chamber proportion, the majority party would have 18 members of its party on a 30-person Appropriations, Rule and Calendar, or Finance and Taxation Committee. Therefore, the majority party could survive several defections in committee and still pass the legislation it wants. Additionally, it is reasonable to speculate that these contrary findings for the Florida Senate may be the result of the fact that this body historically has operated in a more bipartisan atmosphere than the house (see Francis and Williams, 1998). Indeed, this point was made by all 16 of the former and present members of the State Senate that were interviewed for this project.

Nevertheless, it is important to consider the possibility that key or important standing committees could be ones other than those dealing with monetary matters or chamber rules and procedures. This possibility is consistent with Rohde's conditional party government model and posits that legislation important to the party leadership varies from session to session and ends up being referred to a number of different substantive standing committees. If this scenario is entertained, support for Hypothesis 2 can be found.

Our panel of former and present legislators were asked to identify other committees that they considered to have played a key or important role in processing highly significant legislation during competitive legislative periods. Subsequently, they named a number of such committees whose importance vacillated from session to session, although a number of them (education, judiciary, ethics and elections, and regulated industries/services) kept reappearing with greater frequency than others. These committees dealt with such issues as congressional and state legislative reapportionment, prison reform, judicial reorganization and reform, insurance liability coverage, indigent, child, and senior citizen health care, health care reorganization, growth management, natural resources, education reform, tort reform, government regulation of business, medical malpractice.

Table 3 lists these committees. In eleven of these committees, the majority party's ratio was 5-10% higher than the party's proportion in the chamber. In another four of these committees, the majority party's ratio was more than 10% greater. In addition, the majority party's

**Table 3: Key Legislative Committees and Evidence of Stacking**

	Stacking of <u>5-10 percent</u>	Stacking of more <u>than 10 percent</u>	Stacking of <u>5-10 percent</u>	Stacking of more <u>than 10 percent</u>
1988-90	Corrections, Probation and Parole	Community Affairs	---	---
1990-92	---	Health and Rehabilitative Services	---	---
1992-94	---	---	Business and Professional Regulation Commerce Education Higher Education	Regulated Industries
1994-96	---	Commerce and Equal Opportunities Ethics & Elections Health Care	Aging & Human Services	---
1996-98	Banking and Insurance Education Regulated Industries	---	---	All 7 Councils*
1998-2000	---	---	All 7 Councils*	---

Source: *The Clerk's Manual*, for years 1976-2004.

\*During the 1996-98, 1998-2000, and 2000-02 sessions, all House committees came under the supervision and authority of seven "councils" or "super committees." See note 4.

(Republican) ratio for the seven "councils" or "super committees,"<sup>4</sup> under whose control all other committees were located during the 1996-98, 1998-2000, and 2000-02 house sessions, exceeded the party's proportion of members in the chamber by 5-10% in the 1998-2000 session and by more than 10% in the 1996-98 session. By contrast, it should be noted that a review of committee ratios during dominant Democratic and dominant Republican legislative sessions did not reveal any evidence of stacking as was detected during competitive sessions.

It was also predicted that the majority party leadership in an effort to control better the decision-making process during competitive periods will bypass more senior

members of their party in the appointment of standing committee chairs in favor of more junior members (Hypothesis 3). The reason for this is quite simple and can be seen in the U.S. Congress and in state legislative settings where the norm of seniority is practiced with regard to committee assignments and chair appointments. The net effect of a system where the norm of seniority is operative usually is to increase the influence of committees (as well as members on them), in general, and chairs, in particular, and allows them a great degree of independence from the party leadership. Therefore, it would be expected that the use of the seniority system would work against efforts of the majority party leadership in its efforts to control the

**Table 4: Proportions of Committee Chair Appointments from among Less Senior Members of Majority Party During Non-Competitive and Competitive Periods**

FLORIDA HOUSE								
Non-Competitive, Democratic Dominant Period								
	<u>1976-78</u>	<u>1978-80</u>	<u>1980-82</u>	<u>1982-84</u>	<u>1984-86</u>	<u>1986-88</u>	<u>1988-90</u>	<u>1990-92</u>
Seniority Deviations	38	39	53	37	27	19	34	52
		Competitive, Democratic Advantage Period		Competitive, No Party Advantage Period		Competitive, Republican Advantage Period		
	<u>1992-94</u>	<u>1994-96</u>	<u>1996-98</u>	<u>1998-2000</u>	<u>2000-02</u>	<u>2002-04</u>		
Seniority Deviations	63	71	88	92	71	48		
FLORIDA SENATE								
Non-Competitive, Democratic Dominant Period								
	<u>1976-78</u>	<u>1978-80</u>	<u>1980-82</u>	<u>1982-84</u>	<u>1984-86</u>	<u>1986-88</u>		
Seniority Deviations	68	66	67	62	69	71		
		Competitive, Democratic Advantage Period		Competitive, No Party Advantage Period		Competitive, Republican Advantage Period		
	<u>1988-90</u>	<u>1990-92</u>	<u>1992-94</u>	<u>1994-96</u>	<u>1996-98</u>			
Seniority Deviations	79	83	*	81	83			
Non-Competitive, Republican Dominant Period								
	<u>1998-2000</u>	<u>2000-02</u>	<u>2002-04</u>					
Seniority Deviations	74	64	60					

Source: *The Clerk's Manual*, for years 1976-2004.

\*During the 1992-94 session when the Senate was split at 20/20, the parties agreed to appoint all Republican chairs in the 1992-93 term and all Democratic chairs in the 1993-94 term.



**Less Senior  
Periods**

88-90 1990-92

34 52

ve, Republican  
age Period

2002-04

48

1986-88

71

ve, Republican  
age Period

1996-98

83

Republican chairs in the

outcome of legislation—and especially, legislation at the top of its agenda—while in the committee stage. Accordingly, it would be logical for the leadership to be more inclined to appoint committee chairs from among the ranks of the junior members who want to rise in power and influence in the chamber and believe that this can be expedited if they demonstrate their loyalty to the leadership by successfully guiding the leadership's top agenda items through the committee stage.<sup>5</sup>

Considerable support for these predictions included in Hypothesis 3 can be found in the data arrayed in Table 4.<sup>6</sup> Deviations from seniority in the appointment of committee chairs have occurred much more frequently in the Florida Senate than in the Florida House. During the non-competitive Democratic dominant period (1976-88), around two out of every three appointments of committee chairs in the Senate ignored the norm of seniority, while they still ranged between 60 and 74% in the non-competitive Republican dominant period (1998-2004). Deviations from seniority, however, increased noticeably during the competitive Democratic advantage period where 79 (1988-90) and 83% (1990-92) of committee chair appointments went to someone other than the most senior member of the committee. Deviations from seniority increased even more once the Republicans ascended to the position of majority party (that is, the competitive Republican advantage period). During this period, 81 (1994-96) and 83% (1996-98) of committee chairs had less seniority than one or more members of his/her committee.

In the House, deviations from seniority have not been as widespread. Nevertheless, deviations from seniority occurred more frequently during competitive as opposed to non-competitive periods, although there is evidence that this trend was beginning even during the last session of Democratic dominance. During the non-competitive Democratic dominant period (1976-92, with the exception of the 1990-92 session), it was usual for 20 to 30% of House committee chairs to have less seniority than other members of their committee. Things began to change, however, during the competitive Democratic advantage period (that is, 1992-96), as the Democratic majority began to drop below 61%. During these two sessions, 52 and 63% of committee chairs, respectively, were not the most senior persons on their committee. The increasing tendency to ignore seniority continued during the competitive Republican advantage period (1996-2000). Indeed, Republicans were much more likely to deviate from seniority in the appointment of chairs, as the Republican leadership ignored seniority 71 (1996-98 session) and 88% (1998-2000 session) of the time in council (equivalent to committee) chair appointments.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, it can be seen that in the two most recent sessions (2000-04), when the Republican majority exceeded 61% (non-competitive Republican dominant period), deviations from seniority began to taper off to 71 and 48%, respectively.

Important insight into the reason for deviations from seniority in the appointment of committee chairs was gleaned from interviews with the group of former and current legislators. As one legislator put it: "The leadership seeks out and appoints individuals to chair committees who are willing to 'carry the ball' for the leadership's top legislative priorities." Another legislator remarked, "loyalty and commitment to the leadership and its legislative agenda are paramount...priority number one!" All of them confirmed that there was, at minimum, a tacit understanding that his/her appointment as chair was contingent on the expectation that he/she would be willing and able to successfully guide one or more pieces of legislation through his/her committee. Some related that they were asked if they would be willing to facilitate/expedite certain bills through the committee if appointed chair, and only upon giving assurances to the leadership that they would do so, were they formally asked and eventually appointed to the position. Furthermore, all of them agreed that, if a committee chair broke the covenant with the leadership, he/she would most likely face the prospect of not being re-appointed as chair of that particular committee or a committee of their choice in the future. Several such examples were given, and in one instance, a sitting chair was removed after the first year of the two-year session. In another case, the committee chair was permitted to complete her term as chair, but had her committee staff replaced with individuals hand-picked by the leadership.

Consistent with the theoretical assumptions posited in the hybrid party/committee model, Hypothesis 4 projects that standing committee chairs are more likely to be dominate forces within their committees in competitive rather than non-competitive legislative settings. Responses to a question posed to Florida legislators in 1981, 1997, and 2003 assist in determining the accuracy of this prediction. Specifically, legislators were asked if any of the following statements characterized the way committees were managed in their chamber: (1) a committee chairperson usually has almost full control over the committee agenda; (2) committee members have influence equal to that of committee chairpersons; and (3) most committees are dominated by the chairperson. Moreover, respondents were asked to note all characterizations that applied.

The responses, which can be found in the first row of Table 5, provide strong support for Hypothesis 4. There has always been greater consensus among members in both chambers that committee chairs "usually have almost full control over the committee agenda." But, most importantly, there appears to be a greater sense that this characterization is most pronounced during highly competitive periods. That is, 79 and 94%, respectively, of Florida House and Senate respondents in 1997 (a competitive Republican advantage period) believed that committee chairs wielded this kind of power (see the first row of Table 5). By contrast, smaller percentages of legislators felt that this was the case

**Table 5: Florida Legislators Perceptions On How Committees Managed**

	FLORIDA SENATE Non-Competitive, Democratic Dominant Period							
	<u>1963</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>1963</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>2003</u>
Chair Has Almost Full Control Over Committee Agenda	--	59	79	65	--	76	94	81
Most Committees Are Dominated By Chair	--	36	55	43	--	27	48	36
Significant Decisions Made in Offices of Presiding Officers or Majority Leaders	0	53	83	74	0	67	82	69

Source: Data for 1963 and 1981 are derived from surveys conducted by Wayne L. Francis and are reported in Wayne L. Francis, "The Florida Legislature and the Legislative Process." In *Government and Politics in Florida*, edited by Robert J. Huckshorn, 175-91. Gainesville, FL: University Presses of Florida, 1991. Data for 1997 and 2003 are derived from surveys conducted by the Center for Public Affairs & Policy Management at the University of South Florida and under the direction of the author.

during the non-competitive Democratic dominant (1981) and non-competitive Republican dominant (2003) periods. A similar pattern is evident for the belief that "most committees are dominated by the chair." More specifically, the data in the second row of Table 5 indicate that a larger proportion of legislators were likely to believe that committee chairs exercise this kind of influence over committee operations during a competitive period (1997) as compared to the two non-competitive periods (1981 and 2003).

Data on standing committee assignments, chair appointments, and how committees operate can provide important information on the degree to which a legislature body is organized and operates in a centralized or decentralized fashion and whether or not party competition (i.e., the partisan division of the legislature) is correlated with either type setting. These data can be supplemented and augmented by the first-hand knowledge and experience of legislators, and hence, assist in understanding how legislatures go about their work of making policy. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 seeks to factor into the discussion of the issues raised above the insightful views and perspectives of those closest to the way in which legislatures works—legislators.

According to Hypothesis 5, if most legislators believe that major chamber decisions are made in the offices of the presiding officers and majority leaders (that is, the party leadership), then the resulting decision making process is almost certain to be a centralized one. Conversely, a decentralized decision making process is quite likely to be operative in a setting where most major chamber decisions are believed to be made in committees or sometimes in committees in conjunction with sub-committees. Therefore, the central question becomes: is a centralized or decentralized system more likely when partisan divisions are narrow or wide (that is, in a competitive or non-competitive environment)?

Data to test the prediction in Hypothesis 5 comes from four different surveys (1963, 1981, 1997, and 2003) and covers a longer time frame (1963-2003) than was the case for the first three hypotheses (1976-2004). The first survey was conducted during a highly non-competitive period. In 1963, Democrats held 96 and 88% of the seats in the Florida Senate and House, respectively. By the time of the 1981 survey, the political setting in the legislature still could be labeled as non-competitive, but it was much more competitive than it was in 1963, as the Democratic

1997	2003
94	81
48	36
82	69

Party's proportion of seats in both chambers had declined to 68%. Indeed, the non-competitive period (as defined for the first three hypotheses) was rapidly coming to a close. Then, the 1997 survey was conducted in a competitive period with Republicans holding an advantage, while the 2003 survey occurred during a non-competitive Republican dominant period. In all four surveys, Florida legislators were asked to indicate where they thought the most significant decisions were made in the legislature. The choices provided legislators were: party caucus, regular committee meetings, governor's office, policy committee, pre-legislative session, subcommittees, on the floor, office of presiding officers or majority leaders and other.

A review of legislators' responses in these years reveals strong support for Hypothesis 5 (see last row of Table 5). In 1963, all respondents in both chambers indicated "regular committee meetings" (consequently meaning that *no one* cited "offices of presiding officers or majority leaders"), thus validating Jewell's (1982) assessment that the Florida legislature's practice of keeping control in committees resulted in a decentralized decision making system. By 1981, it was evident that the party leadership was becoming more meaningful and that the legislature was moving in the direction of a more centralized system. While 53% of senators indicated that significant decisions were made in the "offices of presiding officers or majority leaders," an even larger proportion (67%) of House members believed this to be the case. Then, in 1997 (competitive Republican advantage period), legislators in both the House and Senate were much more likely to perceive that significant decisions were made in the "offices of the presiding officers and majority leaders." That is, 83 and 82%, respectively, of House and Senate members in 1997 stated that important decisions in the legislature were made in the "offices of the presiding officers and majority leaders." By 2003 (non-competitive Republican dominant period), however, the percentage of legislators indicating that important decisions were being made in the "offices of the presiding officers and majority leaders" had declined to 74 and 69%, respectively, in the House and Senate, thus, suggesting a relaxing of centralized control.

#### Discussion and Implications

Confirmation of the five hypotheses of this study provides evidence that the operation of state legislatures may fluctuate between decentralized and centralized scenarios depending on the level of partisan competition. Specifically, it appears that a centralized process, whereby the party leadership plays a dominant role in the legislature's operation, is more likely in a politically competitive setting. Conversely, it seems more probable that a decentralized system, in which standing committees play a more prominent and independent role, is the result of a non-competitive environment. The significance of these findings is that previous research, while describing the centralizing

and decentralizing tendencies in the functioning of state legislatures, had not documented the association between the manner in which legislatures operate and the level of partisan competition.

The operation of state legislatures and the subsequent interplay of the party leadership and standing committees during competitive periods seem to include elements of both the hybrid party/committee model and conditional party government models. On the one hand, the party leadership consciously structures the committee system to serve its needs—that is, to facilitate the adoption of its agenda. On the other hand, the leadership may not attempt to impose its will on every piece of legislation. Generally speaking, this means that majority party ratios on committees minimally will be equal to the party's proportion in the chamber and often will exceed this proportion, while there will be evidence of stacking selected committees in favor of the majority party when these committees are slated to process bills that are at the top of the leadership's legislative agenda. Furthermore, to ensure that committees favorably process those bills that are at the head of the leadership's agenda, the party leadership tends to place considerable emphasis on the appointment of committee chairs (often ignoring the norm of seniority and fixating on loyalty to the leadership) and vesting chairs with the ability to dominate committee proceedings and control their committees' agendas. Indeed, these points seem to be reinforced by the perception of legislators that most significant decisions in the legislature are made in the offices of the presiding officers and majority leaders.

Meanwhile, the manner in which state legislatures are structured and operate in a non-competitive political environment appear to be described best by a model that ascribes a central role to standing committees that function with a great deal of autonomy as well as exercise considerable independence from both the majority and minority party leadership. In this arrangement, committees are established primarily to satisfy the policy goals of the rank-in-file membership of state legislatures as opposed to the policy agenda of the party (majority or minority) leadership. With the norm of reciprocity being practiced, "...the omnibus bill may have a piece for everyone [all legislators], and what the committee produces, the committee gets" (Francis: 21). Operationally, this means that majority party ratios on standing committees will not necessarily be reflective of the party's proportion in the chamber or for there to be instances of the stacking of committees by the majority party. Moreover, the norm of seniority will be practiced in the appointment of committee chairs, while chairs will not be seen as dominating their committee's agenda and operations. Finally, the perception of legislators that most significant decisions in the legislature are made in committees or subcommittees would seem to be the crowning verification of this model.

As suggested at the outset of this paper, the findings

reported in Wayne L. ... edited by Robert J. ... derived from surveys ... under the direction

legislators believe that ... in the offices of the ... ers (that is, the party ... ion making process is ... l one. Conversely, a ... ss is quite likely to be ... for chamber decisions ... tees or sometimes in ... th sub-committees. ... mes: is a centralized or ... hen partisan divisions ... n a competitive or

Hypothesis 5 comes ... 1981, 1997, and 2003) ... 1963-2003) than was the ... 1976-2004). The first ... ghly non-competitive ... 5 and 88% of the seats ... pectively. By the time ... ting in the legislature ... tive, but it was much ... 63, as the Democratic

and conclusions reached in this study of the Florida legislature, although important in their own right, also have considerable relevance for the legislative decision making process in several other southern states that historically have been part of the solid Democratic South. In recent years, legislative elections in most Southern states have become very competitive with Republicans holding the advantage in both chambers in South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia, in the Senate in Georgia and Kentucky, and in the House in North Carolina. Elections also have become very competitive for the state Senate in Mississippi, North Carolina, and Tennessee and for the state House in Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Therefore, given the shared political history and tradition of the South, it is reasonable to speculate that the findings regarding the relationship between competition and centralization/decentralization of legislative organization and operation are generalizable to these southern states. What has been learned from this study of the legislature in Florida also has relevance for legislative operations in other states that have recently experienced a change from a competitive to a non-competitive system.

Most importantly, this study's findings should assist in efforts to begin formulating some basic theoretical notions about the impact that changes in partisan control have on the state legislative decision making arena. To date, the previous literature on this subject is sparse and impressionistic at best. At minimum, this case study of the Florida experience is suggestive of several research questions that warrant the further attention of scholars in this area. First, if state legislatures tend to be organized and operate in a centralized fashion during competitive periods, are centralization efforts more pronounced when the partisan divisions are closer? Related, under what conditions are centralization efforts in competitive periods most visible—for the party going out of or coming into power as the majority party or for Democratic or Republican leadership majorities? Finally, will term limits reduce the influence of committees, and thereby, lead to more centralization? Answers to these questions should assist in understanding and explaining better the interplay of party leadership and committees in state legislatures under competitive versus non-competitive scenarios.

#### Endnotes

1. In 1997 and 2003 (mid-September through mid-November), the Center for Public Affairs & Policy Management at the University of South Florida conducted the Florida State Legislative Survey. Survey questionnaires were mailed to all 160 Florida legislators (September 11, 1997 and September 13, 2003), and by the closing date for questionnaires to be returned (November 15, 1997 and November 14, 2003), a total of 91 and 85 for 1997 and 2003, respectively, had been received by either mail or

facsimile. This resulted in a 57 and 53% response rate, in 1997 and 2003, respectively.

2. Between October 15 and November 30, 2003, interviews were conducted with a total of 16 legislators. To ensure a balanced perspective, eight were former legislators, while eight were current members of the legislature. Within each group, there were four Democrats and four Republicans with half of them having served in the House and half having served in the Senate. All present and former legislators who had served in the Senate had also served in the House for at least one term prior to their election to the upper chamber.
3. Other research along these lines has used different measures of party competition (e.g., see Ranney, 1975; Holbrook and Van Dunk, 1993; Barrilleaux, Holbrook, and Langer, 2002).
4. At the beginning of the 1996-98 session, incoming Speaker Daniel Webster exercised his authority under House rules to abolish the Rules and Calendar Committee that previously had served to schedule bills for floor consideration as well as establish the rules governing debate. It was replaced with essentially seven rules and calendar committees (government services, academic excellence, economic impact, justice, governmental responsibility, fiscal responsibility, and procedural) called "councils." Each council was given the responsibility to develop a priority order for consideration of bills that emerged from standing committees in its group for eventual floor consideration. Council membership consisted of the chairs and vice chairs of the standing committees under their particular grouping. This change, while streamlining the committee system, greatly enhanced the role of the Republican Party leadership and its speaker in their ability to control both the content and flow of legislation. In a move that further strengthened his hand as well as centralize power in the House, the speaker instituted a procedure whereby he would determine the amount of time in a legislative work day that would be allotted to bills coming from each of the seven councils. Then, it was up to each of these councils to manage the time allotted to them so as to dispose of as many of their bills as possible (that is, in the order of priority that they had established). In addition to his ability to effectively set the House calendar, the speaker was empowered to arbitrarily select bills from any of the councils for floor consideration by placing them on a House's "special calendar". In short, the speaker was able to ignore the scheduling priorities established by the councils and could bring up bills for immediate consideration.
5. There is a pretty large literature on the connection between the party leadership's loyalty expectations and committee/chairpersonship assignment in the

- U.S. House that supports this supposition (e.g., see Smith and Ray, 1983; Kiewiet and McCubbins, 1991; Cox and McCubbins, 1993; Rohde, 1994).
6. A deviation from seniority occurs whenever a junior member is appointed committee chair in spite of the fact that a more senior member of the majority party on the same committee, who is neither the chair of another committee nor holds another important position in the chamber (e.g., House Speaker, Senate President, Majority Leader, or party whip), is by-passed.
  7. See note 5.
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