Electoral Protectionism: How Southern Counties Eliminated Elected Offices In Response to the Voting Rights Act *

Mayya Komisarchik   *Harvard University*

How do dominant groups respond to electoral interventions designed to help minority groups? This paper explores this question by looking at the Voting Rights Act (VRA). The VRA, enacted despite strong Southern opposition, enfranchised millions of Southern blacks and sought to increase black representation. Its positive effects on the former are well documented, but what about its impact on the latter? Using a newly collected dataset on elected officials in 1,101 southern counties in tandem with a novel differences-in-differences design, I show that, in the period between 1965 and 1969, the VRA reduced the number of elected officials serving southern counties. I further show that this is especially true for counties with increasingly politically active black populations. This suggests that southern whites eliminated positions that they thought would be filled by southern blacks. More broadly, these findings suggest caution: When faced with an external intervention designed to impact representation, members of dominant groups may simply find ways to maintain the status quo.

1   Significance of the Voting Rights Act

In August of 1965, the Voting Rights Act (VRA) explicitly prohibited the most persistent and legally crippling vestiges of southern resistance to the Fifteenth Amendment. Section 2 (42 U.S. Code §1973) of the VRA required that "no voting qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure shall be imposed or applied by any State or political subdivision in a manner which results in a denial or abridgement of the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color," or status as a language minority.

Section 5 of the VRA targeted jurisdictions in which the federal government believed discrimination against minority voters was most severe. States, counties, and townships

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covered under Section 5 had previously employed literacy tests or comparable restrictions on voting, and whose rates of turnout and registration among eligible adults of voting age fell below 50% in November 1964. This group consisted primarily of southern states, including seven of the eleven former Confederate states and all five states in the Deep South (Davidson and Grofman (1994)).[1] The federal government required jurisdictions covered under Section 5 to seek approval from the Department of Justice ("preclearance"), for any proposed change to voting laws.

Scholars have consistently demonstrated that the VRA was a significant victory for the Civil Rights Movement. On the eve of the VRA's passage, registration rates among eligible black citizens of Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia averaged just 29.6% - compared to 73.7% among whites (Grofman, Handley, and Niemi (1992)). Rates of registration among eligible black citizens in southern states rose as much as 67% by 1968 (Cascio and Washington (2013)). More recently, researchers have leveraged the differences between preclearance and non-preclearance counties in North Carolina to demonstrate that the VRA increased black voter registration by 14% (Fresh (2018)). In eliminating literacy tests, the VRA significantly increased turnout among black voters, as well as the number of black legislators elected between 1965 and 1985 (Grofman and Handley (1991)). For blacks living in the South, the benefits of the VRA extended beyond the political sphere. Literacy tests had previously decimated turnout rates for blacks and some poor whites, and consequently diminished the public resources spent on black constituents, particularly in education (Kousser (1973); Naidu (2012)). Cascio and Washington (2013) find that the VRA's removal of literacy testing requirements significantly raised per capita state transfers to their communities.

2 Resistance and Circumvention in the South

While the VRA ushered in meaningful progress toward the full exercise of the franchise by blacks in the South, it did not extinguish all efforts to shut down the avenues of po-

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[1]Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Virginia and 39 counties in North Carolina

litical power before them. In much of the South the key provisions of the VRA were met with resistance and circumvention. Faced with the threat of increased electoral competition from black voters and unable to deny black citizens the *right* to vote, whites in power throughout the South sought ways to diminish the *value* of black votes (Keyssar (2000)). County consolidations, gerrymandering, and shifting previously single-member districts to at-large districts to dilute the influence of the black vote all represent examples of what Gerald Rosenberg termed the "time-honored" strategies southern states and localities used to limit black enfranchisement (Rosenberg (1991)). These strategies are explored extensively in the political science literature, where numerous studies have found that at-large elections tend to disadvantage minority groups, and tend to be adopted precisely when minority groups grow or demonstrate enough political mobilization to threaten majority interests (Aghion, Alesina, and Trebbi (2008)).

Less well-documented in the literature are some of the subtler tactics for disenfranchisement adopted in the South, among them: the abolition of elected offices, term extensions for white incumbents, and the substitution of appointed offices for elected ones (Rosenberg (1991)). One prominent instance of this type of discriminatory electoral administration occurred after Mississippi's 1966 Democratic primary election:

> Ever since 1906, county superintendents of education in Mississippi had been elected by the voters of each county... After the June 7, 1966 Democratic primary elections, which demonstrated that blacks might develop sufficient voting strength to influence or win county school superintendent positions in some counties, the Mississippi Legislature enacted a new bill authorizing counties to conduct countywide referendums on the question of abolishing county school superintendent elections and allowing the county school board to fill the position by appointment (Parker (1990)).

Yet for eleven counties in Mississippi - nine of which were majority black - this same bill *required* that county superintendents of education be appointed by the school board. The bill was amended in 1968 to require appointment of the superintendent for Yazoo county, which was also majority-black (Parker (1990)). As a result of this legislation,

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not a single black superintendent served in these largely majority-black counties. This had clear and far-reaching consequences, as white superintendents and school boards in Mississippi focused their policymaking efforts on resisting integration and refusing federal education funds tied to education requirements.

This paper concentrates on precisely these types of institutional reactions to the VRA. The period between the passage of the VRA and the Supreme Court's clarifying decision in *Allen v. State Board of Elections* (1969) is unique, and worth studying. By blocking the most direct and effective path to vote suppression preclearance jurisdictions had found in literacy tests, the VRA forced white incumbents in these jurisdictions to more furtive ways of repressing black voting strength - to change their electoral institutions in order to "protect" incumbent power. Since the VRA initially targetted explicit bans on voter registration for black citizens, white elites in the South considered these subtler strategies for disenfranchisement to be legal.

For white incumbents, the objective underscoring these strategies was to prevent black voters from electing black candidates (Parker (1990); Kousser (1973)), even if these strategies proved costly. One important difference between literacy tests and shifts from elected to appointed offices is that the latter prevents voting by *all* constituents, while racial disparities in literacy and discretion in enforcement both ensured that the burden of the former fell disproportionately on black voters. Another important cost associated with institutional changes to office selection rests in the fact that election confers a sense of democratic legitimacy. While white voters may not have recognized discrimination against black voters as an erosion of democracy, they recognized it in their own inability to elect public officials. State representatives opposing the 1966 Mississippi legislation voiced these very concerns (Parker (1990)).

In 1969, the Supreme Court clarified the intent of the VRA and argued that its proscription of voter suppression extended beyond literacy tests and other explicit barriers to registration and voting. That decision subjected conversion of elected offices to review by the Department of Justice, effectively curtailing it in the South. Nevertheless, the period between 1965 and 1969 is instructive; the reactions of Southern elites, voters, and incumbents demonstrate how stakeholders react to expansions of the franchise for

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out-groups in the absence of external intervention.

Several veins of literature in political science have explored the responses of "losers" in the context of civil rights and national democratizing movements. Weaver (2007), for instance, has provided evidence that the reinstatement of the death penalty, felon disenfranchisement, and other punitive crime policies were a direct response to the Civil Rights Movement. She calls this phenomenon "frontlash", because it is a "process by which formerly defeated groups may become dominant issue entrepreneurs in light of the development of a new issue campaign." The stakeholders who have been dealt a loss by the Civil Rights Movement, in Weaver's case, respond by making policy changes that disadvantage the winners. While Weaver's focus is on criminal justice policy, the results in this paper provide evidence for a similar phenomenon in the context of electoral rules.

The results detailed in this paper are also broadly consistent with Robert Mickey's comparative perspective on political development in the South. Local officeholders in the South, Mickey argues, sought ways to "lower the costs of democratization for incumbents and their clients" by resisting federal directives to democratize and desegregate. The forms of resistance southern states chose created largely undemocratic enclaves in the South (Mickey (2015)). In this paper, I provide an empirical demonstration of this phenomenon, where local officeholders in the South shifted away from democracy by eliminating elections in an effort to minimize the threat from black voters.

I use U.S. Census data on county-level elected officials, as well as voter registration from Matthews and Prothro (1966) and Alt (1994) to test two hypotheses. First, if covered counties did convert or abolish elected offices to prevent black voters empowered by the VRA from electing black candidates, then covered jurisdictions should have had fewer elected officials serving after the VRA passed than counties unaffected by pre-clearance under the VRA. Second, the Mississippi example suggests that the pressure to change office selection mechanisms should have been higher in areas where black voters demonstrated significant voting strength. In the following sections, I use a difference-in-difference design to provide evidence for both of these hypotheses. Section 3 describes the data in detail; Section 4 summarizes the research design; results are discussed in Section 5, Section 6 features a discussion of the results, and Section 7 offers concluding

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remarks.

3 Measuring Electoral Protectionism

The first empirical challenge for this research lies in measuring changes in the numbers of county level elected offices for a given period. Capturing some indication of whether counties abolished or converted elected offices in response to the VRA requires information on the numbers of elected offices in each county before and after the passage of the VRA. While no comprehensive data describing the numbers and types of county elected offices throughout the United States exists, a close approximation to that information is reported by the Census of Governments.

The Census of Governments provides counts of elected officials serving each county in 1957, 1967, 1977, 1987, and 1992.[2] There are two important limitations in this data. First, the Census of Governments does not provide separate counts of officials by elective office; only total counts of elected officials are provided by county. Second, the Census of Governments data does not explicitly specify whether reductions in counts of county elected officials result from the abolition of elected offices or their conversion to appointed offices. However, since both conversion and abolition can result from strategic choices made by white incumbents, this paper treats disproportionate reductions in elected officials stemming from both as evidence of deliberate institutional change. I perform additional robustness checks to rule out potential alternative explanations (e.g. economic downturn) for negative change in elected officials in Section 6. Additionally, the Census of Governments reports contain rich, qualitative descriptions of county governments operating within each state. This paper uses both types of information to show how southern counties responded to the VRA.

Just before the passage of the VRA, county governments existed in all states with the exception of Rhode Island and Connecticut (where, much like today, counties were geographic divisions without governing bodies). Approximately 53,326 elected officials held county posts throughout across the country. Almost half, or 20,443 of these elected

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[2]Available online at https://www.census.gov/govs/pubs/year.html

officials operated in southern states.[3,4] These elected officials were primarily concerned with justice and law enforcement, tax collection, infrastructure, and record keeping - functions traditionally prescribed to counties by the states. Accordingly, allowing for some differences resulting from population size, judicial jurisdiction, and school districts, southern county governments consisted of roughly the same core offices. Counties elected primary governing (legislative) bodies termed boards of supervisors or commissioners (Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia). In Arkansas and Tennessee, county governing bodies (called Quorum Courts and Courts of Quarterly Sessions, respectively) consisted of county judges and justices of the peace. Counties in the South universally elected sheriffs, and almost universally elected constables and justices of the peace. Counties across most former confederate states elected coroners, tax assessors, treasurers, and surveyors. School districts were not administered at the county level in most states, but some counties in Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas elected members of their school boards and superintendents of education.

To fill these core offices, the majority of counties in the South had fewer than 20 elected officials. The median southern county in 1957 had 15 elected officials. Notable exceptions to this include counties in Arkansas and Tennessee, where counties had considerably more elected officials.[5] Figure 1 represents the distribution of total elected officials by county in the former confederacy before and after the passage of the VRA. Table 1. provides information on the 1,101 southern counties included in this data.

4 Research Design

In order to determine whether this type of electoral protectionism took place in pre-clearance counties after the passage of the VRA, I compare the differences in the total

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[3]Census of Governments, 1957.

[4]South is defined in this paper as the 11 original confederate states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

[5]This is likely due to elected justices of the peace. Counties in Arkansas and Tennessee elected a minimum number of justices of the peace for each township or civil district contained within a county. Arkansas repealed this system in favor of county-level districts for justices of the peace in 1977, while Tennessee abolished the office altogether in 1978.

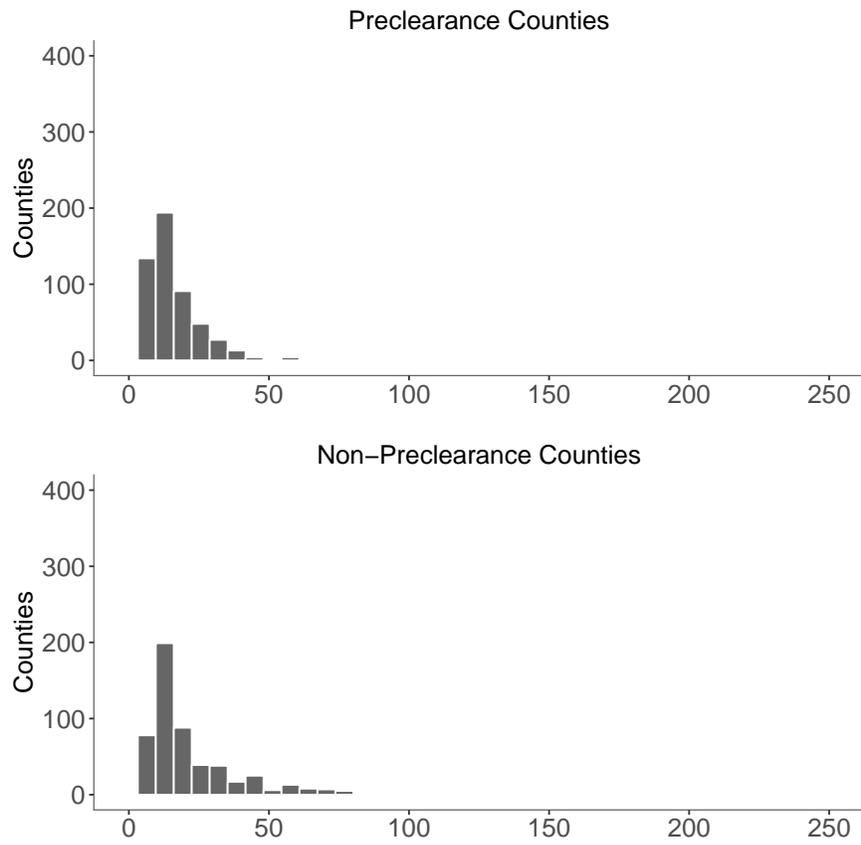Figure 1: Distribution of Total County Elected Officials, 1957

Preclearance Counties

Non−Preclearance Counties

Table 1: Counties, Preclearance, and Elected Officials by State, 1957

State	Counties	Covered 1965	Median Elected	SD Elected	Median Pct. Black
Alabama	67	67	11	6	29
Arkansas	75	0	32	30	10
Florida	67	0	12	8	22
Georgia	159	159	10	7	34
Louisiana	62	62	25	13	33
Mississippi	82	82	22	7	41
North Carolina	100	39	10	9	25
South Carolina	46	46	13	9	44
Tennessee	94	0	41	23	5
Texas	254	0	15	7	5
Virginia	95	95	12	6	23

number of elected officials between preclearance and non-preclearance counties before and after the passage of the VRA. There are two potential threats to the validity of this strategy. First, there may be unobserved, systematic differences between preclearance counties and non-preclearance counties that also affect the numbers of elected officials serving those counties. Comparing these two groups to one another directly would almost certainly yield biased results. Second, secular trends in the numbers of elected officials serving county governments may produce apparent increases or decreases in the numbers of county elected officials for reasons orthogonal to preclearance. Reductions in home values and resulting property tax revenues, for instance, might lead to staff reductions that affect the numbers of elected officials serving counties across the United States. If home values fall lower in preclearance counties, my estimate of the VRA's impact would be confounded.

To avoid these two potential sources of bias, I compare each individual county to itself before and after the VRA using a difference-in-difference design. Per Angrist and Pischke, I make the assumption that the unobserved characteristics of each county are the source of any omitted variable bias (Angrist and Pischke (2009)). I estimate a model of the following form for the period immediately surrounding the passage of the VRA:

$$\Delta Y_i = \alpha + \beta P_i + \gamma \Delta \mathbf{X}_i + \eta \mathbf{X}_i + \epsilon_i \tag{1}$$

where ΔY_i represents the difference in total county elected officials in county i from 1957

to 1967, and P_i is a binary indicator for whether or county i is subject to preclearance under the VRA. ΔX_i represents a matrix of county-level control variables that may affect levels and change in county i's elected officials, similarly differenced from 1957 - 1967. X_i represents the corresponding levels of those county-level covariates. These covariates include: total population, population growth relative to the prior census, county black population share, land area, percent of the population living in urban areas, median family income (indexed to 2014), the share of adults 25 or older who have completed high school, the proportion of the labor force that is male, proportion female, proportion 65 years or older, the proportion of the civilian labor force employed in manufacturing, the unemployment rate in the civilian labor force, and the share of total county land area devoted to agriculture. These county-level covariates come from the decennial Census;[6] I use linear interpolation to estimate the values of all covariates in the years for which Census of Governments data is available. The coefficient of interest is therefore β, which represents the effect of preclearance on change in county elected officials.

To address the question of whether or not preclearance counties are more likely to convert or abolish elected offices when black voting strength is high, I take a similar difference-in-difference approach and include an interaction term between preclearance status and the change in the proportion of county registered voters who are black:

$$\Delta Y_i = \alpha + \beta(P_i \cdot \Delta B_i) + \psi \Delta B_i + \gamma \Delta \mathbf{X}_i + \eta \mathbf{X}_i + \epsilon_i \tag{2}$$

ΔB_i represents the change in the proportion of county registered voters who are black between 1960 and 1968.[7] Here, β represents the difference in the relationship between the proportion of black registrants by county and the change in elected officials between 1957 and 1967; a negative value of β suggests that, counties where black voters formed increasing shares of the registered population in this period would be even more likely to convert or eliminate elected offices if they were preclearance than if they were not.

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[6]Haines, Michael R., and Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research. Historical, Demographic, Economic, and Social Data: The United States, 1790-2002. ICPSR02896-v3. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 2010-05-21. http://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR02896.v3

[7]This is the only pair of years for which data on black and white registrants is available in the Matthews and Prothro (1966) and Alt (1994) data.

Both approaches utilize a first difference estimator over a single period (1957-1967) because linear regression estimators with unit and time specific fixed effects are not consistent for average treatment effects when treatment assignment probabilities are heterogeneous across units (Imai and Kim (2017)).

5 Results

5.1 Preclearance

Figure 2 summarizes the results of the first difference-in-difference model, with (right) and without (left) county-level controls. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals. Complete regression results, including county level controls, are summarized in Tables 3 and 4. In the South, the average county not subject to preclearance saw growth by approximately 8 elected officials during this period. By contrast, preclearance counties experienced significantly lower growth in elected officials. These results are consistent with Figure 10. 1957-1967 is actually a growth period for county governments across the south; the key difference between preclearance and non-preclearance counties is markedly lower growth in among the former. Including county level controls makes the difference between preclearance and non-preclearance counties even more dramatic, with preclearance counties seeing a negative change of almost 7 elected officials relative to non-preclearance counties - all else constant.

5.2 Change in the Racial Composition of the Electorate

The results in Figure 2 suggest that preclearance counties had significantly negative change in elected officials relative to non-preclearance counties. But the Mississippi example suggests that the relationship between preclearance and office selection should also depend on the magnitude of the threat white incumbents felt from black voters. In this paper, I operationalize this threat as the change in share of county registered voters who are black between 1960 and 1968. This data originally appears in Matthews and Prothro (1966), with updated information filled in by Alt (1994). Data on county level registration by race is extremely limited. Information on county-level voter registration

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Figure 2: 1957-1967 Change in County Elected Officials for Preclearance Counties, Relative to Non-Preclearance Counties
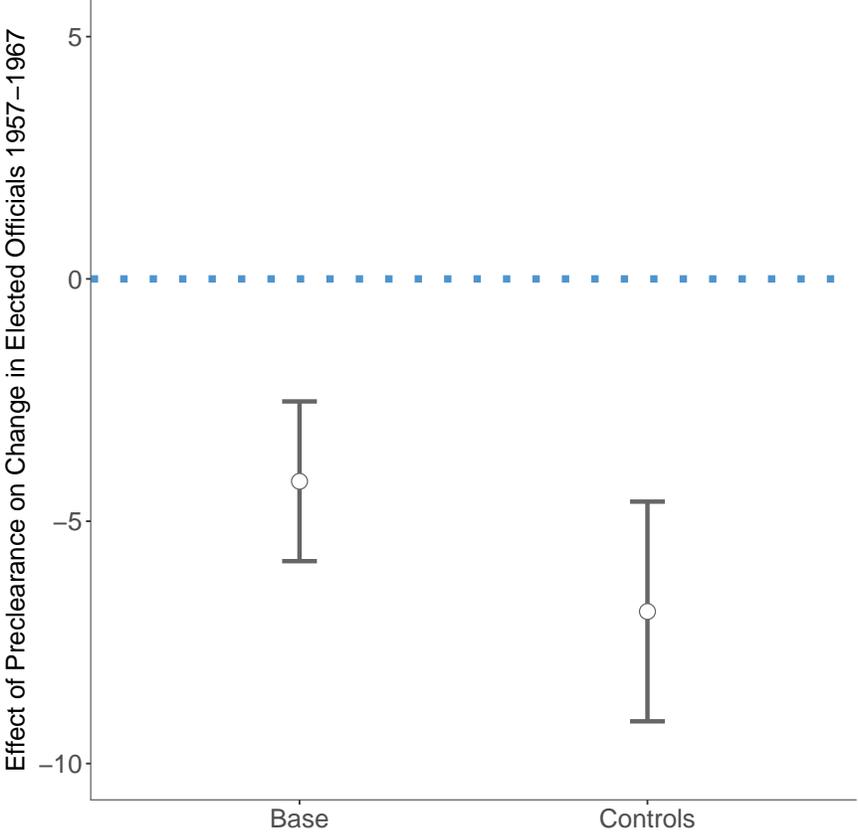
for white and black voters is provided for 301 counties in 6 states.[8]

Figure 3 summarizes the marginal effect of preclearance status across possible changes in a county's proportion of black registrants. The slope of the line implied by the point estimates in this plot represent the interaction effect of preclearance and the change in a county's proportion of black registrants from 1960 to 1968. That slope is significantly negative, and demonstrates that preclearance counties in which black registrants became a larger share of a county's total registered voters between 1960 and 1968 reduced their numbers of elected officials relative to non-preclearance counties. The marginal effect of preclearance is negative for counties in which black registrants made almost *any* positive gains in terms of the total share of registered voters they represented. Dark error bars in Figure 3 represent 90% confidence intervals for the marginal effect of preclearance at each value of change in share of black registrants and lighter error bars represent 95% confidence intervals. Full regression results can be found in Table 5. Note that Mississippi counties are excluded from these results because information on white registered voters is not available for Mississippi in the data. These results also demonstrate that preclearance counties had larger negative changes in elected officials in cases where black registrants made up a larger share of registered voters even if we exclude the most egregious recorded case of this behavior.

5.3 *North Carolina*

When the VRA originally passed in 1965, North Carolina was the only state that was partially, rather than wholly, subject to preclearance. North Carolina has 100 counties; 39 of these were subject to preclearance in 1965.[9] North Carolina merits special attention in this research for two reasons: first, it is the only state in which changes to county level elected officials in the period immediately surrounding the passage of the VRA results from the actions of county governments.[10] Second, it provides an opportunity to measure the effect of preclearance on change in county elected officials without the threat of

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[8]Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina

[9]Jackson county is added to the list of preclearance jurisdictions in 1972

[10]To the best of this researcher's knowledge, North Carolina did not pass statewide legislation that would have affected county elected officials following the VRA.

Figure 3: Effect of Preclearance and Change in Black Proportion of Registered Voters on Change in Elected Officials, 1957-1967
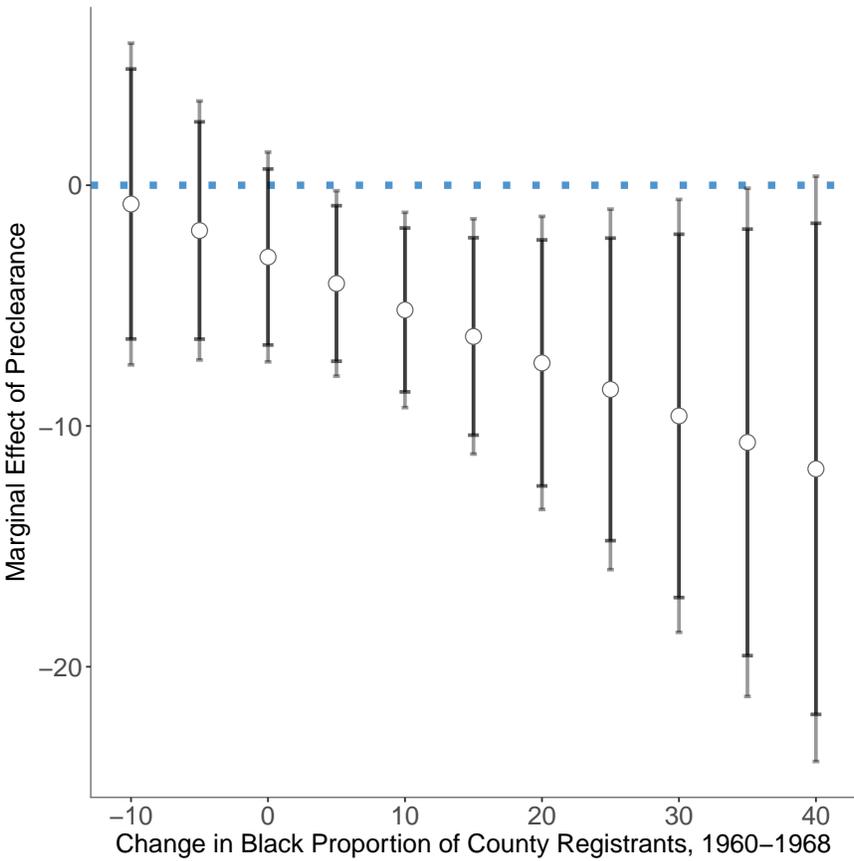
unmeasured confounding that could result from unobserved variation between states.

The effect of the interaction between preclearance and change in demand for black political participation on change in county elected officials mirrors the patterns that materialize in rest of the South. Figure 4 summarizes the marginal effect of preclearance across the range of changes in county shares of black registrants. In North Carolina, the effect of preclearance on change in elected officials is significantly and increasingly negative in counties where the black proportion of registered voters increased between 1960 and 1968. These results suggest that county elected officials *themselves* reduced or abolished elected offices in the presence of a meaningful threat that black voters might elect black elected officials.
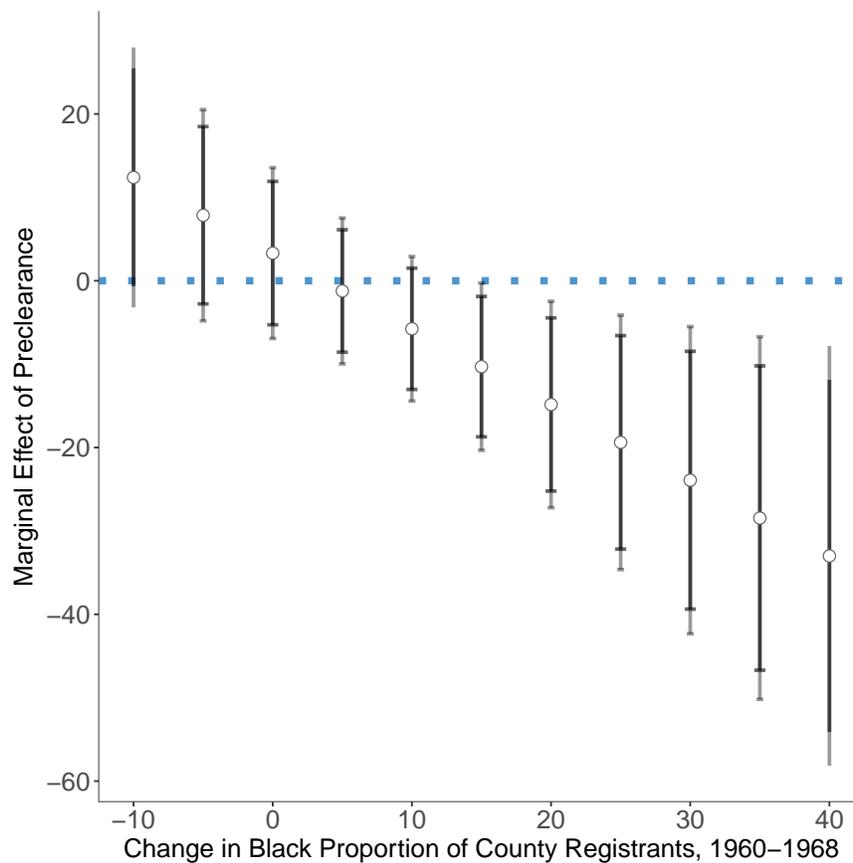
Figure 4: Effect of Preclearance and Change in Black Proportion of Registered Voters on Change in Elected Officials, North Carolina 1957-1967

6 Discussion

6.1 Parallel Trends

The internal validity of this difference-in-difference design rests on the assumption that, but for the preclearance designation imposed on "treated" counties by the VRA, preclearance and non-preclearance counties would have experienced the same changes in elected officials over time. Data limitations make this a particularly challenging assumption to validate in this case. The earliest year for which the Census of Governments reports counts of county elected officials is 1957 - the only year in the data that pre-dates the passage of the VRA. The Census of Governments does, however, provide some additional data summarizing counts of public employees by category at the county level. This data is available for 1957 and 1962, and the remaining years on-cycle with the Census of Governments reports on elected officials. The Census of Governments documentation explicitly notes that elected officials fall into two categories: general control and financial administration. These categories include governmental chief executives and their staff, legislative bodies, the administration of justice, tax enforcement, and other financial and general administration.[11] I use these data to proxy for trends in elected officials prior to the passage of the VRA. These are displayed graphically in Figure 5.

Figure 5 reveals three things. First, elected officials in preclearance and non-preclearance counties were growing, on average, at similar rates prior to the passage of the VRA. Second, the 1950s and 1960s were a growth period for all counties in terms of government size. Growth was dramatically faster, however, in counties that were not subject to preclearance under the VRA. State and local governments saw general declines in personnel and spending nationally after the 1970s. Finally, these trends make economic decline a less viable alternative explanation for the results presented in Section 5. This alternative explanation for the results would suggest that economic pressure, rather than an institutional reaction to political competition from black voters, might have explained the relationship between preclearance and change in elected officials. If preclearance counties had been hit particularly hard by economic downturn, their governments may

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[11]Census of Governments Compendium of Public Employment, 1957

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have been more likely to shed staff and ultimately elected officials. One reason this is unlikely is that elected officials were not all paid in this period, so counties might not have needed to shed elected officials for economic reasons. But Figure 5 also shows that the 1950s and 1960s were a relative boom period for local government in both preclearance and non-preclearance counties, which makes it unlikely that economic downturns - even if they did burden specific counties, were having much effect on local government in this period.

Figure 5: Trends in General Control and Financial Administration Employees, 1957-1987
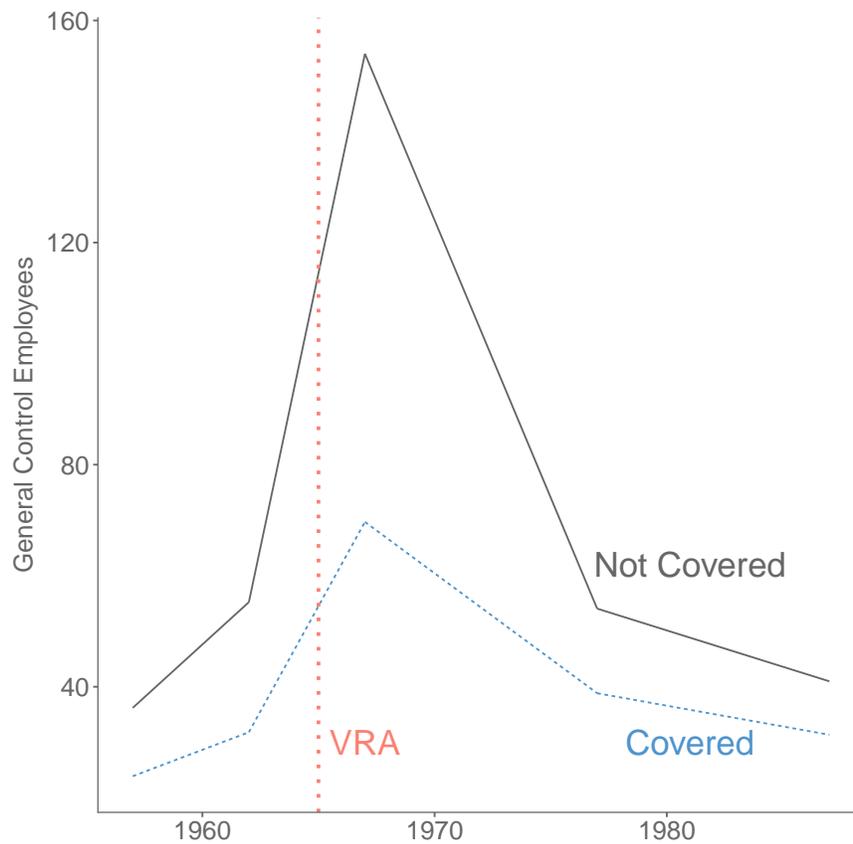
6.2 Allen v. State Board of Elections

In 1969, the Supreme Court struck down Mississippi's discriminatory 1966 laws and explicitly prohibited "back end" changes to electoral rules that might disadvantage black voters. This included the conversion of elected offices to appointed offices and strategic

abolition of offices. In *Allen v. State Board of Elections*, the opinion of the Supreme Court held that the VRA was "aimed at the subtle, as well as the obvious, state regulations which have the effect of denying citizens their right to vote because of race."[12] Before *Allen*, preclearance counties converted elected offices without applying for preclearance under the assumption that these changes didn't directly constitute changes to *voting* law (and in the hopes that the VRA itself might eventually be declared unconstitutional). The Court's decision in *Allen* made it clear that the Department of Justice would pursue and challenge these types of actions, and effectively reduced their incidence across counties.

Figure 6 suggests that the Supreme Court's decision changed the relationship between preclearance status and change in county elected officials. In the 1967-1977 period, the relationship between preclearance status and change in county elected officials is weakly positive. Similarly, the relationship between preclearance and the change in proportion of black registrants is weakly positive in this period. These results imply that, when white incumbents were further restricted from changing electoral institutions to their benefit, preclearance counties where black registrants constituted increasing shares of total registered voters grew faster in terms of elected officials. Full regression results are displayed in Tables 7 and 8.

These results are also a hedge against spuriousness. *Allen v. State Board of Elections* itself reflects the legal acknowledgement of conversion or strategic abolition of elected offices in the period immediately following the passage of the VRA, and was designed to thwart this practice. Accordingly, we would expect the relationship between preclearance and change county elected officials to be negative between the passage of the VRA and the *Allen* decision, and positive afterwards. The results presented in this paper are consistent with these expectations, and with the real-time legal events that shaped selection procedures for public officials in this period.

6.3 Outside the South

One natural question that arises about these results is whether or not the South is unique in its institutional reaction to the massive expansion of the franchise for black

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[12]*Allen v. State Board of Elections*, 393 U.S. 544, 565-566, (1969)

Figure 6: 1967-1977 Change in County Elected Officials for Preclearance Counties, Relative to Non-Preclearance Counties
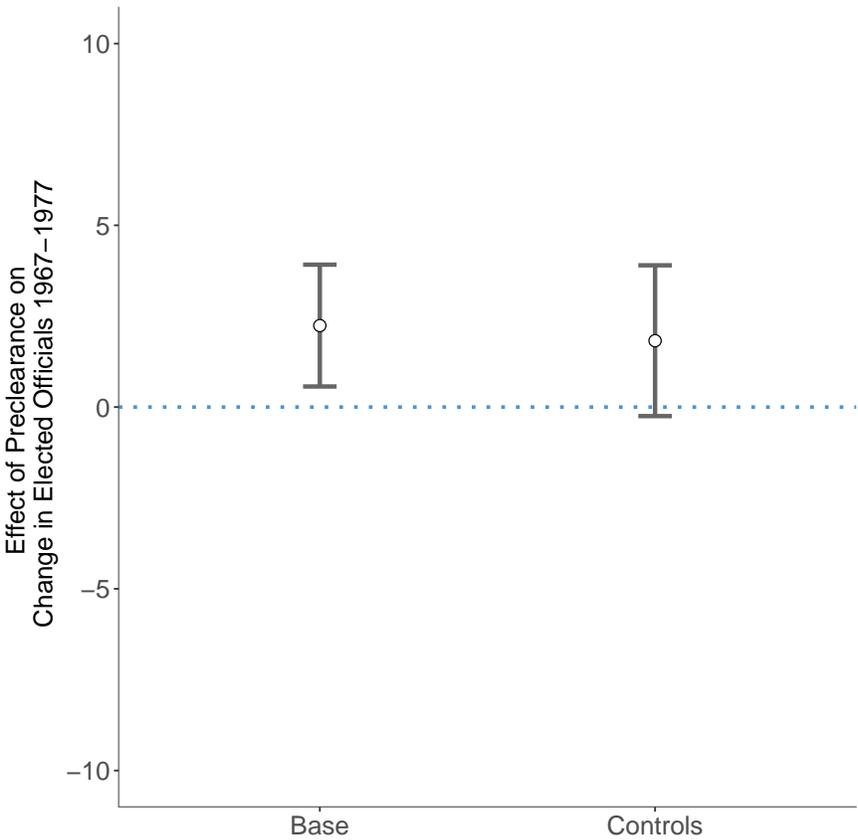
voters ushered in by the VRA. In one sense, the answer to this question has to be yes. On the eve of the VRA, the vast majority of the American black population was concentrated in the South (see Figure 7). Outside of the South, the median county's black population share was less than 1% in 1950; the same figure in the South is approximately 22%. As a result, any political or racial threat resulting from increased demand for political participation among black would have been felt most keenly in the South. The results presented in this paper are driven by changes in the South after the VRA.

There are, however, some counties outside of the South that could be reasonable counterfactuals for southern counties. Missouri and Kentucky, for instance, have 111 and 118 counties, respectively, that were more than 20% black in 1950. While neither state was ever partially or fully covered by the VRA, both were former slaveholding states. Including counties in these states, as well counties in all states outside of the 11 former confederate states, does not change the main results presented in this paper. The simplest version of these results, detailing the effect of preclearance on change in county elected officials from 1957-1967, appears in Figure 8. Full regression results are displayed in Table 10. Since voter registration data is not available by race outside of the South for this period, the second set of results in this study is limited to southern counties.

The other reason to focus on the South is that preclearance, the teeth of the VRA's enforcement of the franchise, only applied to southern counties in 1965. While Alaska, Arizona, three counties in California[13], three counties in New York[14], and two counties in South Dakota[15] became subject to preclearance between 1968 and 1972, most of these were added in the post-*Allen* period. Even if those jurisdictions experienced the same incentives to convert or abolish elected offices, they would have been aware that these changes were explicitly illegal.

It is nevertheless possible to compare some of the effects of the VRA on counties in and outside of the South. While preclearance initially applied exclusively in the South, the VRA's Section 5 prohibition on literacy tests and other discriminatory voting laws ap-

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[13]Kings, Monterey, Yuba

[14]Bronx, Kings, New York

[15]Shannon, Todd

Figure 7: Distribution of U.S. Black Population, 1950

African American Population Shares By U.S. County, 1950

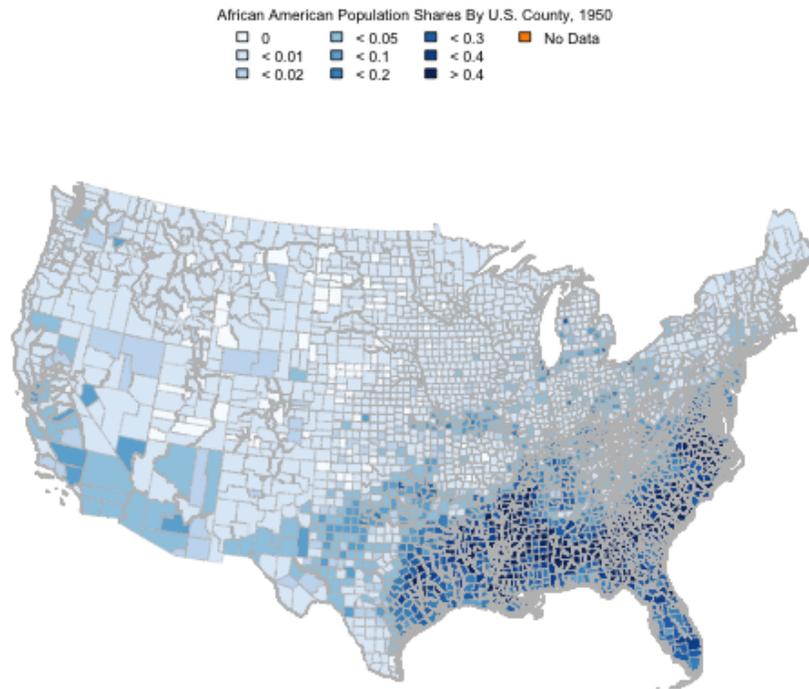|		
☐ 0	☐ < 0.05	■ < 0.3 ■ No Data
☐ < 0.01	☐ < 0.1	■ < 0.4
☐ < 0.02	■ < 0.2	■ > 0.4

Figure 8: Change in County Elected Officials 1957-1967 including Counties Outside the South
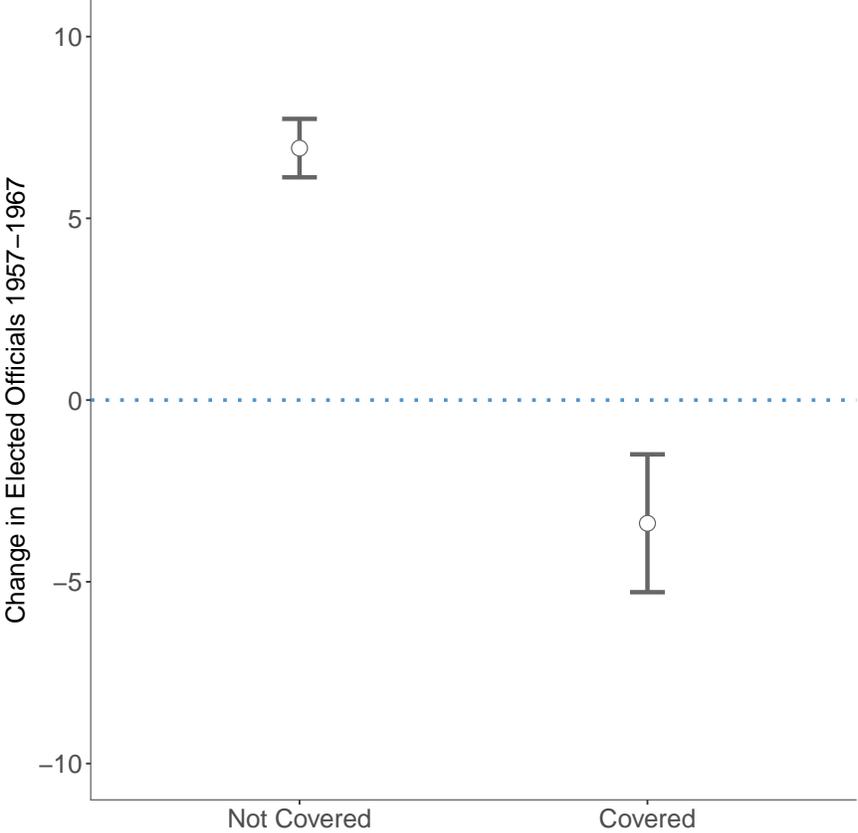
plied nationwide. Counties outside of the South that may have considered implementing explicit voting restrictions targeting black voters would have been stayed by the VRA, which may have incentivized some of the same subtle electoral protection apparent in the South for counties with sufficiently large black populations. To test this, I use the following difference-in-difference model:

$$\Delta Y_i = \alpha + \beta S_i + \gamma \Delta \mathbf{X}_i + \eta \mathbf{X}_i + \epsilon_i \tag{3}$$

This setup is very similar to model 1, which establishes the effect of preclearance on change in elected officials. As in model model 1, ΔY_i refers to the change in elected officials for county i from 1957-1967. $\Delta \mathbf{X}_i$ represents a matrix of county-level control variables that may affect levels and change in county i's elected officials, similarly differenced from 1957 - 1967. $\mathbf{X}_i$ represents the corresponding levels of those county-level covariates. Here, S_i represents the share of county residents who are black in 1967. We can also think of this as the differenced interaction between a binary indicator of whether or not the VRA has passed (0 for all counties in 1957 and 1 for all counties in 1967) and county black population share. This would be:

$$\Delta(S_i \cdot \text{VRA})_{1957-1967} = \text{VRA}_{1967} \cdot S_{i,1967} - \text{VRA}_{1957} \cdot S_{i,1957}$$

$$\Delta(S_i \cdot \text{VRA})_{1957-1967} = 1 \cdot S_{i,1967} - 0 \cdot S_{i,1957}$$

$$\Delta(S_i \cdot \text{VRA})_{1957-1967} = 1 \cdot S_{i,1967}$$

Results of this comparison appear in Figure 9. They suggest that the South is somewhat exceptional. A one percent difference in a southern county's 1967 black population share in this model is associated with a relative reduction of approximately 1 elected official. There is no statistically reliable evidence for the same phenomenon outside of the South.

Figure 9: Effect of Black Population Share on Change in County Elected Officials, 1957-
1967
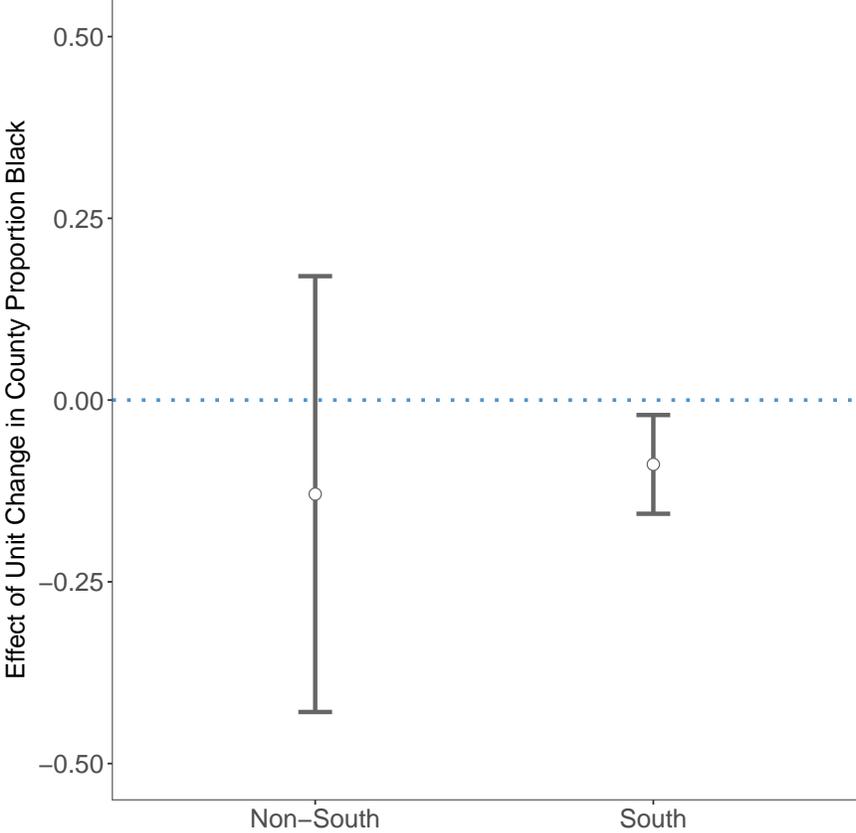
7 Conclusion

The results of this analysis show that preclearance under the VRA had a negative short term impact on the total number of elected officials serving counties in the South. In addition, this short term negative impact was worse in counties where black citizens expressed greater demand for political participation. These results, paired with qualitative and legal accounts from the period, suggest that this occurred in southern counties after the VRA because white incumbents sought to eliminate the possibility that black voters would elect black candidates to public offices.

An alternative explanation for the reduction in elected officials throughout preclearance counties - particularly in preclearance counties with politically active black populations, is difficult to imagine in this case because it occurs against the backdrop of substantial population growth and corresponding growth in the size of county governments.

These findings have profound implications for the way that political scientists understand massive expansions of enfranchisement. The received wisdom in political science is that extensions of the franchise improve representation, yet these results demonstrate that it is important to consider the incentives and responses of the *losers* in periods when the franchise expands. Those responses can include institutional changes that subvert franchise extensions like the VRA, and, indeed, democratic elections themselves.

8 Appendix

8.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 summarizes county coverage in this data, which includes information on 3,034 counties in the continental United States. Alaska and Hawaii are excluded because both states were granted statehood in 1959; no data is available on elected officials in either state prior to the passage of the VRA. Connecticut and Rhode Island are also missing in this data. Connecticut is divided into eight counties, but county governments in these jurisdictions were abolished in 1960. Similarly, Rhode Island's five counties serve

administrative, but no governmental purposes. This data excludes consolidated city-county governments, which can share elected officials across jurisdictions, and counties located in Native American territory. These counties, like South Dakota's Shannon County, do not have traditional county governments and may not have their own county seats.

The decade between 1957 and 1967 represents a period of growth in aggregate county elected officials. Almost 71% of southern counties added elected officials between 1957 and 1967, with the median southern county growing by 4 elected officials. Without taking differences in county demographic composition into account, observers might conclude that elected offices were added, and not removed, in this period. But these trends look different in covered and non-covered counties. Figure 10 shows that, while the distributions of change in elected officials from 1957-1967 largely overlap for pre-clearance and non-preclearance counties, preclearance counties both grow less than non-preclearance counties and are more likely to shed elected officials in this period.

Figure 11 displays the proportions of black voting age population (VAP) registered on the eve of the VRA by preclearance status. Vertical lines represent the mean of each respective distribution. Prior to the passage of the VRA, non-preclearance counties had significantly higher average proportions of black VAP registered. This gap narrowed significantly shortly after the passage of the VRA in 1965, illustrating the Act's substantial impact on registration in the South. Figure 12 compares the proportions of black VAP registered by preclearance status in 1967.

8.2   Regression Results

8.2.1   Preclearance

Table 3 summarizes the effect of preclearance status on change in county elected officials without county-level controls. Results incorporating differences and levels of county-level controls are reported in Table 4. Controlling for various county-level factors that may affect changes in county elected officials suggests an even more dramatically negative shift in the numbers of elected officials for preclearance counties relative to non-

Table 2: Preclearance and Data Coverage by State

State	Counties	Preclearance, 1965	Preclearance, 1972
Alabama	67	67	67
Arizona	14	0	14
Arkansas	75	0	0
California	57	0	4
Colorado	62	0	0
Delaware	3	0	0
Florida	67	0	5
Georgia	159	159	159
Hawaii	3	0	0
Idaho	44	0	0
Illinois	102	0	0
Indiana	92	0	0
Iowa	99	0	0
Kansas	105	0	0
Kentucky	119	0	0
Louisiana	62	62	62
Maine	16	0	0
Maryland	23	0	0
Massachusetts	12	0	0
Michigan	83	0	0
Minnesota	87	0	0
Mississippi	82	82	82
Missouri	113	0	0
Montana	56	0	0
Nebraska	93	0	0
Nevada	16	0	0
New Hampshire	10	0	0
New Jersey	21	0	0
New Mexico	32	0	0
New York	57	0	0
North Carolina	100	39	40
North Dakota	53	0	0
Ohio	88	0	0
Oklahoma	77	0	0
Oregon	36	0	0
Pennsylvania	66	0	0
South Carolina	46	46	46
South Dakota	63	0	0
Tennessee	94	0	0
Texas	254	0	254
Utah	29	0	0
Vermont	14	0	0
Virginia	95	95	95
Washington	39	0	0
West Virginia	55	0	0
Wisconsin	71	0	0
Wyoming	23	0	0

Figure 10: Change in County Elected Officials in Preclearance Counties (Top) and Non-Preclearance Counties (Bottom), 1957-1967
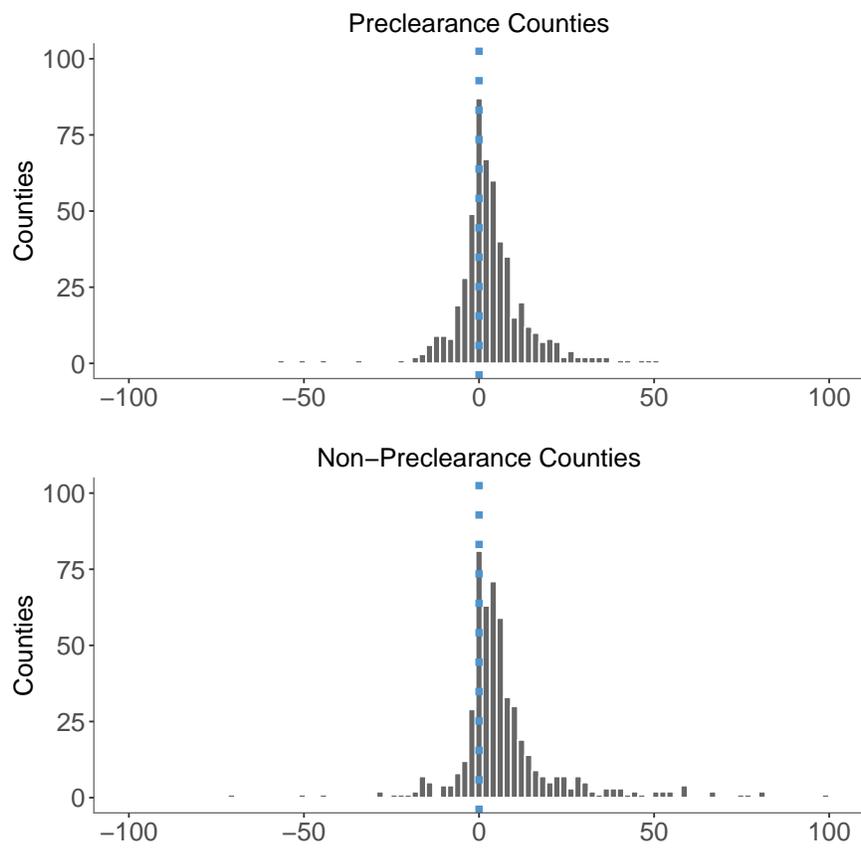
Figure 11: Distribution of % of Black Voting Age Population Registered in Preclearance Counties (Top) and Non-Preclearance Counties (Bottom), 1964
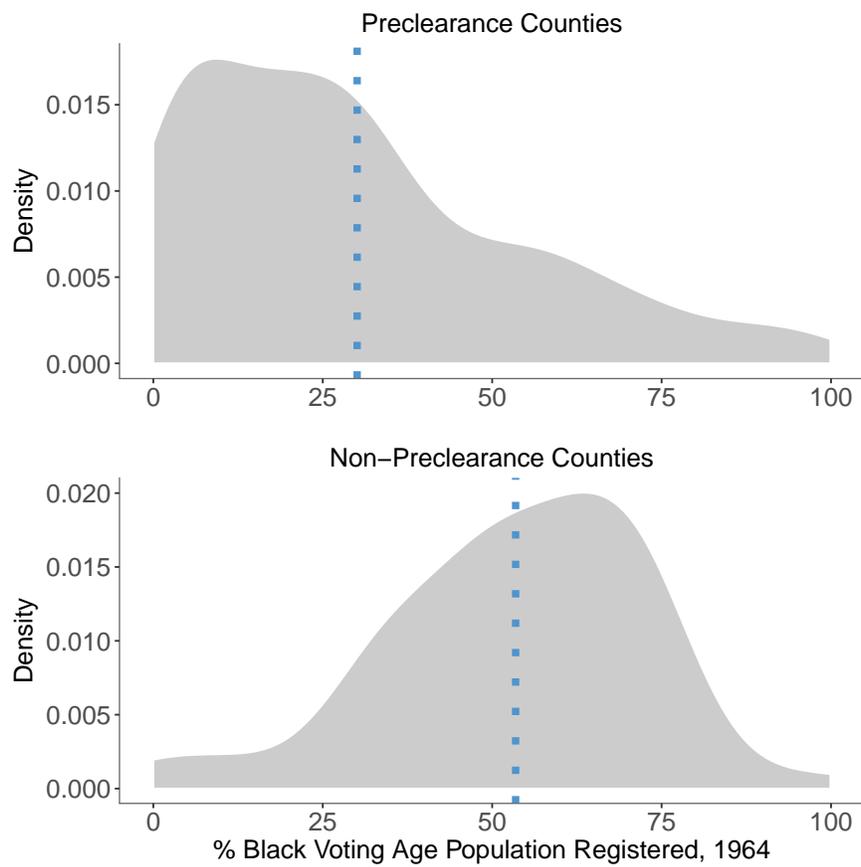
Figure 12: Distribution of % of Black Voting Age Population Registered in Preclearance Counties (Top) and Non-Preclearance Counties (Bottom), 1967
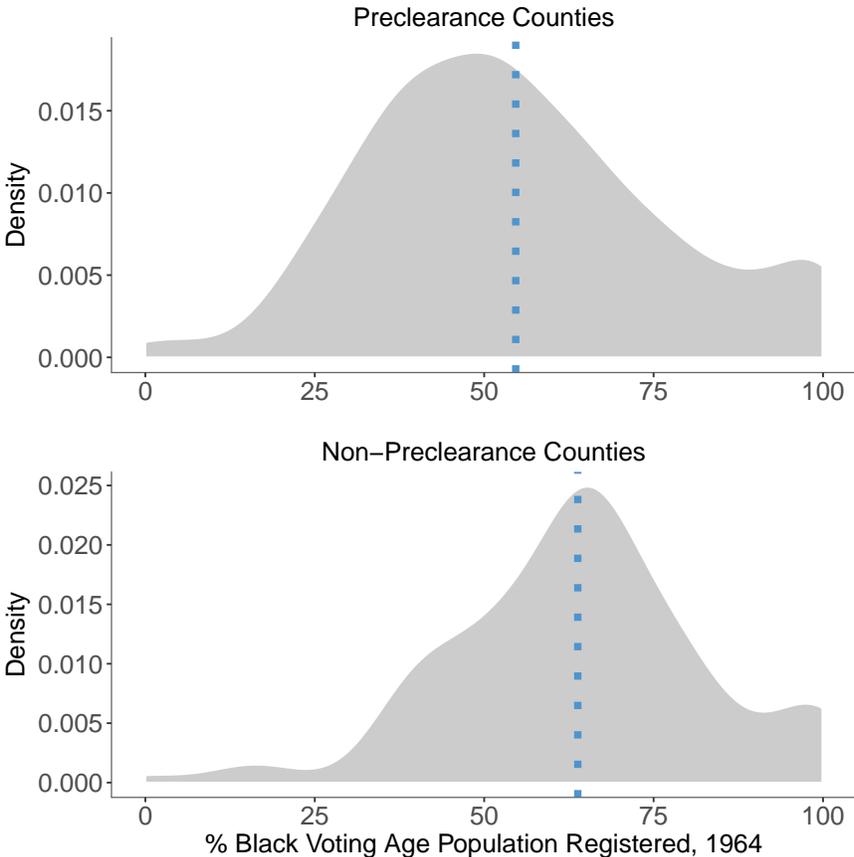
preclearance counties during this period. While preclearance is not strictly assigned at the state level[16], there is some clustering in preclearance in the sense that state level voting procedures affect county level election procedure and make groups of counties within states more or less likely to be declared preclearance. To account for this, I block bootstrap sampling distributions for the coefficients following Bertrand, Duflo, and Mullainathan (2003). The results of the block bootstrapping procedure are reported in first four columns of Table 4. Estimate Orig. and SE Orig. refer to the point estimates and standard errors for the corresponding variables in a single, classical regression of change in county elected officials on preclearance and county-level controls.

Table 3: Effect of Preclearance on Change in County Elected Officials, 1957-1967

	Dependent variable:
	Change in Elected Officials
Preclearance	−4.18***
	(0.84)
Constant	7.72***
	(0.59)
Observations	1,060
R^2	0.02
Adjusted R^2	0.02
Residual Std. Error	13.69 (df = 1058)
F Statistic	24.66*** (df = 1; 1058)
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

8.2.2 *Preclearance and Proportion of Black Registered Voters*

The regression results in Table 5 summarize the underlying point estimates and standard errors reported in Figure 3. "Registrants Black" in Table 5 refers to the change in proportion of registered voters in a given county who were black between 1960 and 1968. This interaction is negative and significant at the 90% level.

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[16]North Carolina is partially covered despite having a state constitution with literacy requirements for voter registration. To calculate the coverage formula, registration rates were calculated for counties individually. Counties were similarly responsible for obtaining preclearance from the Department of Justice individually if they wished to make changes to county voting laws. Finally, additional counties throughout the U.S. became subject to preclearance individually after 1965, including counties in states that were never covered by the VRA statewide (e.g. CA, NY).

Table 4: Effect of Preclearance on Change in County Elected Officials, 1957-1967

Variable	Estimate	SE (Classical)	SE (Block Bootstrap)	|t|	P(T > |t|)
Constant	3.40	17.89	15.50	0.22	0.83
Preclearance	-6.86	1.16	2.32	2.96	0
Pct. Black, Change	-0.11	0.25	0.22	0.51	0.61
Land Area, 1950	0	0	0	0.06	0.96
Population, Change	0	0	0	0.89	0.37
Pop. Growth, Change	0.05	0.05	0.08	0.67	0.50
Pct. Completed HS, Change	-0.17	0.17	0.19	0.89	0.37
Pct. Male Labor, Change	-0.25	0.21	0.27	0.94	0.34
Pct. Female, Change	0.23	0.56	0.67	0.35	0.73
Pct. 65 +, Change	0.35	0.44	0.41	0.84	0.40
Pct. Urban, Change	0.12	0.09	0.07	1.80	0.07
HH Income, Change	0	0	0	0.96	0.34
Pct. Unemployed, Change	0.53	0.40	0.55	0.98	0.33
Pct. Agricultural, Change	-0.01	0.06	0.06	0.12	0.91
Pct. Manufacturing, Change	-0.03	0.11	0.12	0.27	0.79
Pct. Black	-0.01	0.04	0.02	0.56	0.57
Population	0	0	0	0.49	0.63
Pop. Growth	0	0.03	0.04	0.11	0.91
Pct. Completed HS	-0.01	0.11	0.19	0.03	0.98
Pct. Male Labor	-0.05	0.15	0.22	0.23	0.82
Pct. Female	0.17	0.30	0.26	0.65	0.52
Pct. 65 +	-0.45	0.24	0.35	1.29	0.20
Pct. Urban	-0.02	0.03	0.05	0.36	0.72
HH Income	0	0	0	0.64	0.52
Pct. Unemployed	0.38	0.33	0.32	1.21	0.23
Pct. Agricultural	0	0.02	0.03	0.13	0.90
Pct. Manufacturing	0.13	0.06	0.08	1.55	0.12

Table 5: Effect of Preclearance and Increased Black Registration on Change in County Elected Officials, 1957-1967

Variable	Estimate	SE (Classical)	SE (Block Bootstrap)	|t|	P(T >|t|)
Constant	15.84	26.06	33.27	0.48	0.63
Preclearance	-2.98	1.92	2.22	1.34	0.18
Registrants Black	0.08	0.13	0.16	0.51	0.61
Pct. Black, Change	-0.49	0.38	0.37	1.31	0.19
Land Area, 1950	0	0	0	0.19	0.85
Population, Change	0	0	0	1.23	0.22
Pop. Growth, Change	0.03	0.08	0.11	0.25	0.80
Pct. Completed HS, Change	-0.22	0.31	0.37	0.58	0.56
Pct. Male Labor, Change	-0.10	0.31	0.45	0.22	0.83
Pct. Female, Change	0.50	0.78	1.13	0.44	0.66
Pct. 65 +, Change	0.49	0.69	0.72	0.68	0.50
Pct. Urban, Change	0.11	0.15	0.15	0.73	0.46
HH Income, Change	0	0	0	0.40	0.69
Pct. Unemployed, Change	0.46	0.72	0.67	0.69	0.49
Pct. Agricultural, Change	0.20	0.12	0.09	2.31	0.02
Pct. Manufacturing, Change	0.04	0.18	0.23	0.16	0.87
Pct. Black	0.04	0.07	0.05	0.95	0.34
Population	0	0	0	1.47	0.14
Pop. Growth	0.05	0.06	0.08	0.62	0.54
Pct. Completed HS	0.05	0.20	0.16	0.33	0.74
Pct. Male Labor	-0.50	0.26	0.31	1.60	0.11
Pct. Female	0.71	0.46	0.67	1.06	0.29
Pct. 65 +	-0.88	0.45	0.75	1.18	0.24
Pct. Urban	-0.11	0.06	0.08	1.36	0.17
HH Income	0	0	0	2.17	0.03
Pct. Unemployed	-0.01	0.56	0.82	0.02	0.99
Pct. Agricultural	0	0.04	0.04	0.01	0.99
Pct. Manufacturing	0.27	0.10	0.13	2.13	0.03
Preclearance x Registrants Black	-0.22	0.13	0.17	1.29	0.20

8.2.3 North Carolina

Table 6: Effect of Preclearance on Change in County Elected Officials, North Carolina 1957-1967

	Dependent variable:
	Change in Elected Officials
Preclearance	3.32 (5.23)
Registrants Black	0.54 (0.34)
Pct. Black, Change	−0.82 (1.27)
Land Area, 1950	0.002 (0.01)
Population, Change	−0.0005 (0.0004)
Pop. Growth, Change	0.16 (0.53)
Pct. Completed HS, Change	−0.53 (0.66)
Pct. Male Labor, Change	0.52 (0.95)
Pct. Female, Change	5.53* (3.10)
Pct. 65 +, Change	−0.73 (3.13)
Pct. Urban, Change	0.65 (0.64)
HH Income, Change	0.0003 (0.001)
Pct. Unemployed, Change	−0.37 (1.76)
Pct. Agricultural, Change	0.33 (0.51)
Pct. Manufacturing, Change	0.44 (0.47)
Pct. Black	−0.10 (0.19)
Population	0.0003** (0.0001)
Pop. Growth	0.34 (0.43)
Pct. Completed HS	0.05 (0.54)
Pct. Male Labor	0.59 (0.68)
Pct. Female	2.86 (2.04)
Pct. 65 +	−2.09 (1.53)
Pct. Urban	−0.10 (0.17)
HH Income	−0.001 (0.001)
Pct. Unemployed	−0.79 (1.51)
Pct. Agricultural	−0.05 (0.11)
Pct. Manufacturing	0.35 (0.25)
Preclearance x Registrants Black	−0.91** (0.37)
Constant	−156.69 (121.89)
Observations	94
Adjusted R^2	0.33
F Statistic	2.66*** (df = 28; 65)
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

8.2.4 Allen v. State Board of Elections

Table 7: Effect of Preclearance on Change in County Elected Officials, 1967-1977

Variable	Estimate	SE (Classical)	SE (Block Bootstrap)	|t|	P(T > |t|)
Constant	-23.05	16.89	19.31	1.19	0.23
Preclearance	1.83	1.06	3.75	0.49	0.63
Pct. Black, Change	0.05	0.20	0.18	0.28	0.78
Land Area, 1960	0	0	0	0.59	0.56
Population, Change	0	0	0	0.69	0.49
Pop. Growth, Change	-0.06	0.04	0.07	0.97	0.33
Pct. Completed HS, Change	0.17	0.18	0.19	0.90	0.37
Pct. Male Labor, Change	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.98	0.33
Pct. Female, Change	-0.63	0.71	0.48	1.31	0.19
Pct. 65 +, Change	-0.82	0.40	0.98	0.84	0.40
Pct. Urban, Change	0.01	0.06	0.03	0.34	0.73
HH Income, Change	0	0	0	1.13	0.26
Pct. Unemployed, Change	-0.49	0.36	0.50	0.97	0.33
Pct. Agricultural, Change	0.08	0.08	0.09	0.87	0.38
Pct. Manufacturing, Change	-0.14	0.14	0.11	1.21	0.23
Pct. Black	0.05	0.03	0.04	1.09	0.28
Population	0	0	0	0.85	0.39
Pop. Growth	-0.06	0.03	0.06	1.02	0.31
Pct. Completed HS	0.40	0.09	0.15	2.62	0.01
Pct. Male Labor	0.27	0.15	0.21	1.31	0.19
Pct. Female	0.13	0.25	0.23	0.56	0.58
Pct. 65 +	-0.06	0.14	0.26	0.22	0.83
Pct. Urban	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.63	0.53
HH Income	0	0	0	2.02	0.04
Pct. Unemployed	-0.25	0.29	0.42	0.60	0.55
Pct. Agricultural	-0.01	0.02	0.03	0.16	0.87
Pct. Manufacturing	0.04	0.05	0.08	0.46	0.65

Table 8: Effect of Preclearance and Increased Black Registration on Change in County Elected Officials, 1967-1977

Variable	Estimate	SE (Classical)	SE (Block Bootstrap)	|t|	P(T >|t|)
Constant	-1.03	23.75	38.15	0.03	0.98
Preclearance	0.51	1.65	1.29	0.39	0.69
Registrants Black	-0.12	0.11	0.21	0.57	0.57
Pct. Black, Change	-0.15	0.30	0.23	0.65	0.52
Land Area, 1960	-0.01	0	0.01	0.97	0.33
Population, Change	0	0	0	0.14	0.89
Pop. Growth, Change	-0.07	0.06	0.06	1.31	0.19
Pct. Completed HS, Change	0	0.31	0.46	0.01	0.99
Pct. Male Labor, Change	-0.24	0.49	0.58	0.41	0.68
Pct. Female, Change	-0.17	1.02	1.38	0.12	0.90
Pct. 65 +, Change	-0.47	0.62	0.96	0.49	0.62
Pct. Urban, Change	0	0.12	0.07	0.07	0.94
HH Income, Change	0	0	0	0.77	0.44
Pct. Unemployed, Change	0.31	0.53	0.55	0.56	0.58
Pct. Agricultural, Change	-0.15	0.13	0.07	2.15	0.03
Pct. Manufacturing, Change	-0.15	0.20	0.14	1.14	0.25
Pct. Black	-0.07	0.06	0.06	1.10	0.27
Population	0	0	0	0.81	0.42
Pop. Growth	-0.02	0.05	0.07	0.33	0.74
Pct. Completed HS	-0.04	0.15	0.14	0.30	0.77
Pct. Male Labor	0.19	0.24	0.17	1.15	0.25
Pct. Female	-0.21	0.34	0.70	0.30	0.76
Pct. 65 +	0.23	0.25	0.60	0.39	0.70
Pct. Urban	0.01	0.04	0.04	0.25	0.80
HH Income	0	0	0	0.98	0.33
Pct. Unemployed	0.08	0.47	0.53	0.15	0.88
Pct. Agricultural	-0.03	0.03	0.04	0.79	0.43
Pct. Manufacturing	-0.17	0.08	0.06	2.74	0.01
Preclearance x Registrants Black	0.27	0.11	0.22	1.24	0.21

8.2.5 Registration or Population?

One potential concern about the empirical results presented in Figure 3 and Table 5 hinges on treatment timing. In the context of these results (and, indeed, in all results that show the effect of preclearance on total elected officials across a range of county voter demographics) treatment refers to the interaction between preclearance status and black voting strength. Black voting strength is measured as the change in the black share of a county's electorate before and after the passage of the VRA. The reason for taking this approach is that part of the treatment of interest in this study is really the surge in black political participation throughout the mid-late 1960s. For white elites and voters, the danger which motivated the search for new ways to disenfranchise black voters stemmed from the risk that white elected officials might be replaced by black elected officials.[17] It's difficult to imagine that this threat would have been recognized in places where black citizens demonstrated no desire to increase their political participation (by, for instance, registering to vote).

A criticism that might be levelled against this approach is that a measure encapsulating the difference between a county's proportion of black registrants before and after the VRA necessarily contains a post-treatment component. The VRA was passed in 1965, and the "shocks" to black registration in this paper are measured using the differences between each county's share of black registrants in 1960 and 1967 or 1968, depending on data availability. Conditioning on the 1967 or 1968 data, as well as any other post treatment covariates, is a potential source of bias (Acharya, Blackwell, and Sen (2016), Montgomery, Nyhan, and Torres (2018)). I address this criticism by substituting the measure of change in black voting strength with a measure of *potential* change in black voting strength. Specifically, I interact preclearance with a measure of black voting age population in 1960. The results, described in Table 9 and Figure 13, remain consis-

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[17]Evidence for this motivation pervades the historical record. For instance, in 1962, the Jackson *Clarion Ledger* printed the warning that "the Legislature can be expected to re-district so as to split the Second District if a Negro's election ever appears imminent there." Similarly, the 1966 Mississippi laws that imposed a wide range of policies designed to disenfranchise blacks were described as "a hedge against both the threat of electing Nego [county] supervisors and county redistricting" (Parker (1990)). Morgan Kousser, writing about Tennessee, noted that "Although racist feelings were nearly univeral among whites...only those who lived in areas where the proportion of Negroes was high actually had to face the prospect (of) 'Negro Domination'" (Kousser (1973)).

tent with the findings presented using the other measure of black voting strength. Using black voting age population produces considerably noisier results than using the change in black registrants as a proportion of registered voters before and after the VRA. There are several possible reasons for this. First, voting age population is not a perfect proxy for voting eligible population. State laws disenfranchising felons, among other restrictions, would have further reduced the eligible population of black voters in each county in ways impossible to observe in this data. Second, even subtracting out ineligible individuals leaves just the 1960 pool of black denizens who *could* register to vote. In 1960, many of them did not. The median county's proportion of black voting age population registered was just 22% in 1960.[18] This measure falls short of identifying counties where black political participation was actually rising, but it does suggest that any bias that might stem from using the difference in the black share of a county's electorate before and after the VRA is small. Note the similarity of the point estimates in Tables 5 and 9.

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[18]This climbs to 29% in 1964.

Figure 13: Effect of Preclearance on Change in Elected Officials Across Levels of 1960 Black Voting Age Population
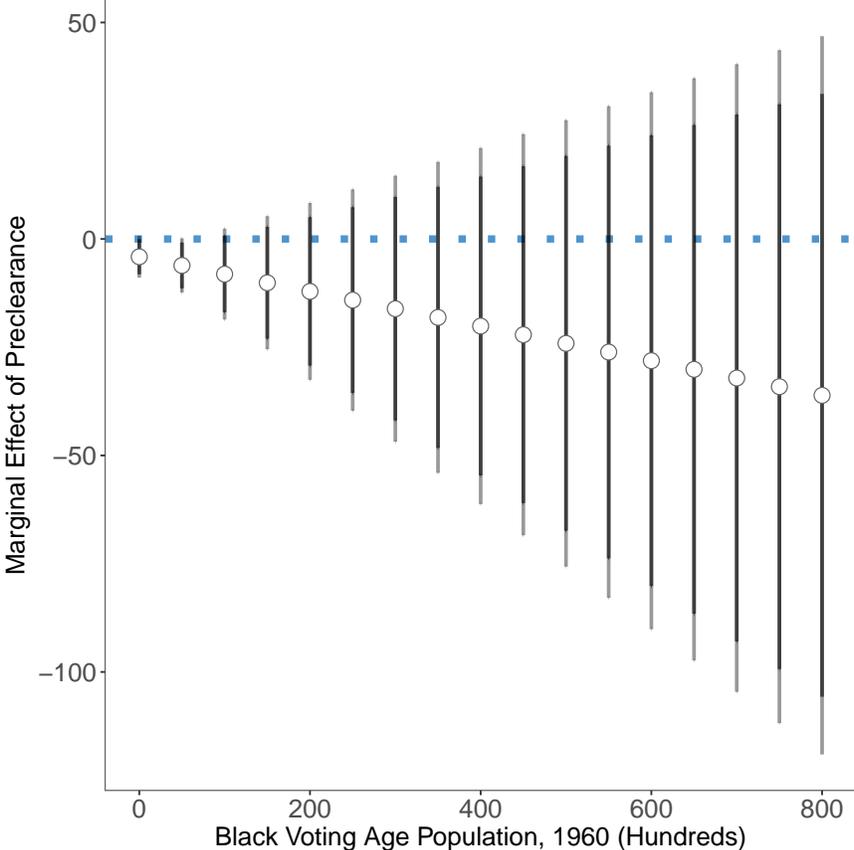
Table 9: Effect of Preclearance and Increased Black Registration on Change in County Elected Officials, Border Counties 1957-1967

Variable	Estimate	SE (Classical)	SE (Block Bootstrap)	|t|	P(T >|t|)
Constant	-1.76	19.56	13.22	0.13	0.89
Preclearance	-4.11	1.68	2.46	1.67	0.10
BVAP 1960	0.08	0.03	0.06	1.37	0.17
Pct. Black, Change	0.02	0.26	0.27	0.09	0.93
Land Area, 1950	0	0	0	0.04	0.96
Population, Change	0	0	0	0.20	0.84
Pop. Growth, Change	-0.03	0.07	0.05	0.57	0.57
Pct. Completed HS, Change	-0.37	0.21	0.24	1.55	0.12
Pct. Male Labor, Change	-0.09	0.24	0.38	0.25	0.81
Pct. Female, Change	-0.04	0.67	0.66	0.06	0.96
Pct. 65 +, Change	0.65	0.58	0.47	1.39	0.17
Pct. Urban, Change	0.15	0.11	0.07	2.09	0.04
HH Income, Change	0	0	0	1.37	0.17
Pct. Unemployed, Change	-0.19	0.48	0.51	0.38	0.71
Pct. Agricultural, Change	-0.12	0.08	0.10	1.18	0.24
Pct. Manufacturing, Change	-0.23	0.14	0.15	1.49	0.14
Pct. Black	-0.04	0.05	0.05	0.85	0.40
Population	0	0	0	1.01	0.31
Pop. Growth	-0.01	0.05	0.07	0.19	0.85
Pct. Completed HS	-0.03	0.13	0.16	0.17	0.87
Pct. Male Labor	-0.10	0.19	0.22	0.43	0.67
Pct. Female	0.36	0.33	0.38	0.95	0.34
Pct. 65 +	-0.75	0.35	0.60	1.27	0.21
Pct. Urban	-0.08	0.04	0.05	1.56	0.12
HH Income	0	0	0	0.04	0.97
Pct. Unemployed	0.47	0.43	0.44	1.09	0.28
Pct. Agricultural	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.74	0.46
Pct. Manufacturing	0.04	0.07	0.09	0.44	0.66
Preclearance x BVAP 1960	-0.04	0.02	0.05	0.80	0.42

8.2.6 Including Counties Outside the South

Table 10: Effect of Preclearance on Change in County Elected Officials: All U.S. Counties, 1957-1967

	Dependent variable:	
	Change in Elected Officials	
	(1)	(2)
Preclearance	−3.39*** (0.97)	−2.88* (1.47)
Pct. Black, Change		−0.17 (0.30)
Land Area, 1950		−0.0001 (0.0003)
Population, Change		0.0000** (0.0000)
Pop. Growth, Change		−0.12*** (0.04)
Pct. Completed HS, Change		0.36*** (0.10)
Pct. Male Labor, Change		−0.02 (0.18)
Pct. Female, Change		−0.03 (0.56)
Pct. 65 +, Change		−0.17 (0.36)
Pct. Urban, Change		0.09 (0.09)
HH Income, Change		0.0003** (0.0001)
Pct. Unemployed, Change		0.78** (0.31)
Pct. Agricultural, Change		−0.0000 (0.0001)
Pct. Manufacturing, Change		−0.12 (0.10)
Pct. Black		−0.05 (0.04)
Population		−0.0000 (0.0000)
Pop. Growth		−0.08*** (0.03)
Pct. Completed HS		0.21*** (0.06)
Pct. Male Labor		0.10 (0.13)
Pct. Female		0.52* (0.30)
Pct. 65 +		0.06 (0.18)
Pct. Urban		−0.03 (0.02)
HH Income		−0.0003*** (0.0001)
Pct. Unemployed		−0.45** (0.22)
Pct. Agricultural		0.05*** (0.02)
Pct. Manufacturing		0.04 (0.05)
Constant	6.93*** (0.41)	−31.31* (17.56)
Observations	2,932	2,932
Adjusted R^2	0.004	0.04
F Statistic	12.27*** (df = 1; 2930)	5.62*** (df = 26; 2905)
Note:		*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

8.3 Robustness Checks

8.3.1 Excluding Mississippi

The results presented in Figure 2 and Tables 3 and 4 hold even if all counties in Mississippi are excluded. Results without Mississippi appear in Table 11. This suggests that the effect of preclearance on change in county elected officials is not driven exclusively by Mississippi, which is generally thought to represent the most egregious case of electoral protectionism in the South.

8.3.2 Border Counties

The objective of controlling for various county level covariates in this design is to find the counties that represent the best counterfactuals for preclearance counties in terms of levels and changes along various dimensions that might affect changes in elected officials. One additional covariate along which non-preclearance counties can be compared to preclearance counties is geographic: counties that are geographically close to one another are likely to be more similar than counties that are far apart - even across state lines. Figure 14 shows the results of model 1 (without controls) if I restrict the sample to preclearance counties and counties that border them. Complete regression results for model 1 for border counties appear in Table 12.

Figure 15 summarizes the results of model 2 for border counties. These results echo the trends apparent across the South; counties in which black registrants made gains as a proportion of the total registered population were more likely to lose elected officials if they were preclearance than if they were not. Full regression results appear in Table 13.

Table 11: Effect of Preclearance on Change in County Elected Officials Excluding Mississippi Counties, 1957-1967

	Dependent variable:
	Change in Elected Officials
Preclearance	−5.77*** (1.24)
Pct. Black, Change	−0.15 (0.27)
Land Area, 1950	−0.0002 (0.001)
Population, Change	−0.0000 (0.0000)
Pop. Growth, Change	0.05 (0.05)
Pct. Completed HS, Change	−0.02 (0.18)
Pct. Male Labor, Change	−0.23 (0.22)
Pct. Female, Change	0.29 (0.59)
Pct. 65 +, Change	0.31 (0.46)
Pct. Urban, Change	0.13 (0.09)
HH Income, Change	0.0001 (0.0002)
Pct. Unemployed, Change	0.68 (0.44)
Pct. Agricultural, Change	−0.01 (0.07)
Pct. Manufacturing, Change	0.01 (0.12)
Pct. Black	−0.02 (0.04)
Population	0.0000 (0.0000)
Pop. Growth	−0.01 (0.04)
Pct. Completed HS	0.10 (0.12)
Pct. Male Labor	−0.03 (0.16)
Pct. Female	0.24 (0.32)
Pct. 65 +	−0.46* (0.25)
Pct. Urban	−0.03 (0.03)
HH Income	−0.0002 (0.0001)
Pct. Unemployed	0.44 (0.36)
Pct. Agricultural	0.01 (0.02)
Pct. Manufacturing	0.16** (0.06)
Constant	−3.11 (18.81)
Observations	981
R^2	0.06
Adjusted R^2	0.04
Residual Std. Error	13.87 (df = 954)
F Statistic	2.39*** (df = 26; 954)
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Figure 14: Effect of Preclearance on Change in Elected Officials, Border Counties 1957-1967
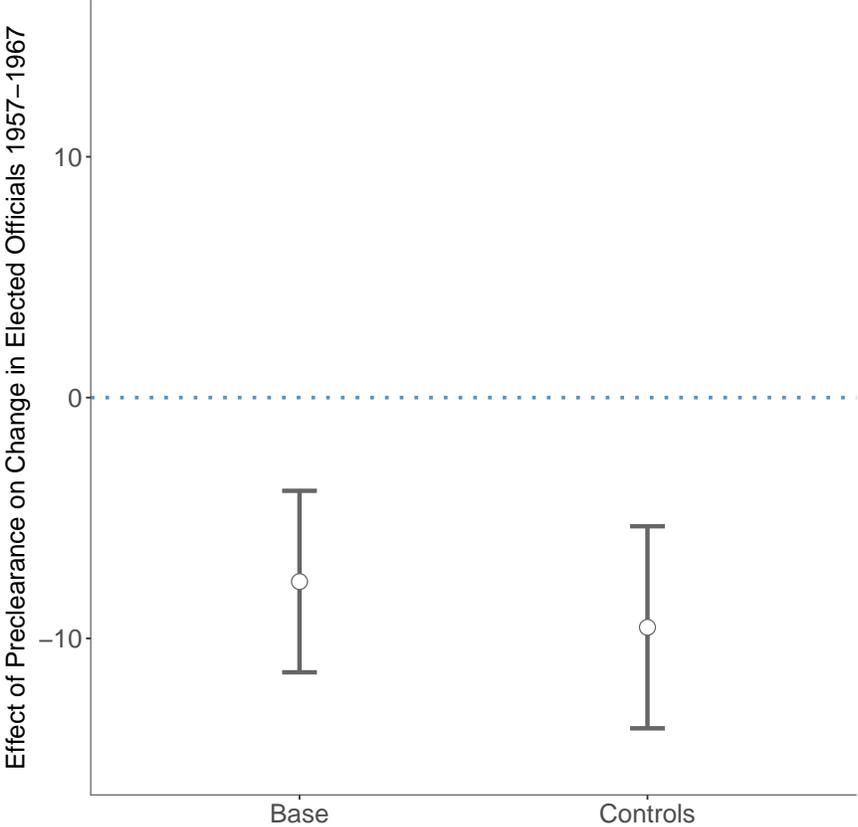
Figure 15: Effect of Preclearance and Change in County Proportion of Black Registrants on Change in Elected Officials, Border Counties 1957-1967
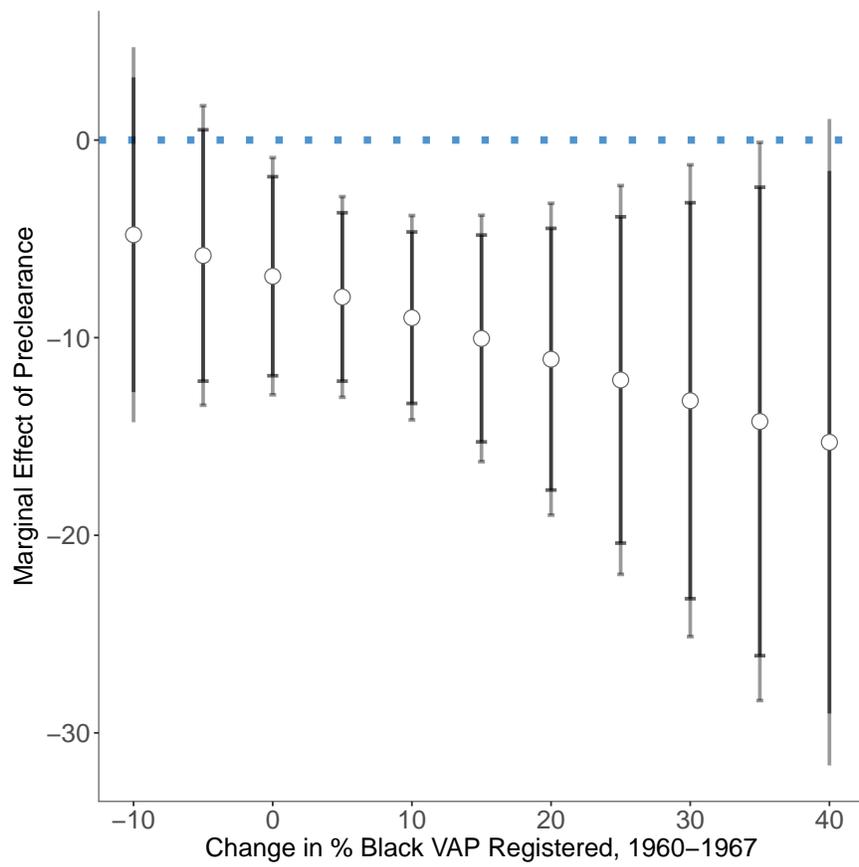
Table 12: Effect of Preclearance on Change in County Elected Officials, Border Counties 1957-1967

Variable	Estimate	SE (Classical)	SE (Block Bootstrap)	|t|	P(T >|t|)
Constant	5.22	67.45	90.92	0.06	0.95
Preclearance	-9.54	2.14	3.28	2.91	0
Pct. Black, Change	-0.46	0.68	0.85	0.54	0.59
Land Area, 1950	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.86	0.39
Population, Change	0	0	0	1.13	0.26
Pop. Growth, Change	-0.08	0.16	0.24	0.32	0.75
Pct. Completed HS, Change	-0.12	0.48	0.59	0.20	0.84
Pct. Male Labor, Change	-0.21	0.56	0.48	0.44	0.66
Pct. Female, Change	0.21	1.34	2.02	0.11	0.92
Pct. 65 +, Change	-0.20	1.86	1.82	0.11	0.91
Pct. Urban, Change	0.37	0.29	0.23	1.61	0.11
HH Income, Change	0	0	0	1.03	0.30
Pct. Unemployed, Change	-0.83	1.04	0.71	1.17	0.24
Pct. Agricultural, Change	-0.16	0.22	0.26	0.63	0.53
Pct. Manufacturing, Change	0.12	0.30	0.23	0.51	0.61
Pct. Black	-0.05	0.09	0.10	0.46	0.64
Population	0	0	0	1.84	0.07
Pop. Growth	-0.19	0.16	0.28	0.69	0.49
Pct. Completed HS	0.41	0.34	0.55	0.74	0.46
Pct. Male Labor	-0.08	0.38	0.52	0.15	0.88
Pct. Female	0.36	1.16	1.49	0.24	0.81
Pct. 65 +	-1.54	0.81	1.33	1.16	0.25
Pct. Urban	0.02	0.09	0.08	0.25	0.80
HH Income	0	0	0	0.13	0.89
Pct. Unemployed	-0.66	0.74	0.57	1.15	0.25
Pct. Agricultural	0.08	0.07	0.08	1	0.32
Pct. Manufacturing	0.17	0.13	0.16	1.06	0.29

Table 13: Effect of Preclearance and Increased Black Registration on Change in County Elected Officials, Border Counties 1957-1967

Variable	Estimate	SE (Classical)	SE (Block Bootstrap)	|t|	P(T > |t|)
Constant	30.57	97.41	600.74	0.05	0.96
Preclearance	-6.89	4.25	16.47	0.42	0.68
Registrants Black	0.04	0.07	0.47	0.09	0.93
Pct. Black, Change	-1.50	0.88	20.13	0.07	0.94
Land Area, 1950	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.15	0.88
Population, Change	0	0	0	0.03	0.97
Pop. Growth, Change	0.02	0.34	1.99	0.01	0.99
Pct. Completed HS, Change	-0.79	0.67	10.96	0.07	0.94
Pct. Male Labor, Change	0.65	0.89	6.44	0.10	0.92
Pct. Female, Change	0.69	2.44	13.23	0.05	0.96
Pct. 65 +, Change	-0.35	3.04	13.81	0.03	0.98
Pct. Urban, Change	0.64	0.46	1.84	0.34	0.73
HH Income, Change	0	0	0	0.23	0.81
Pct. Unemployed, Change	1.04	1.69	4.42	0.24	0.81
Pct. Agricultural, Change	-0.35	0.33	1.02	0.34	0.73
Pct. Manufacturing, Change	-0.02	0.45	2.48	0.01	0.99
Pct. Black	-0.17	0.14	1.31	0.13	0.90
Population	0	0	0	0.05	0.96
Pop. Growth	-0.16	0.30	2.48	0.07	0.95
Pct. Completed HS	0.02	0.50	2.93	0.01	0.99
Pct. Male Labor	0.06	0.57	1.02	0.06	0.96
Pct. Female	0.61	1.72	13.37	0.05	0.96
Pct. 65 +	-3.92	1.37	12.61	0.31	0.76
Pct. Urban	0.03	0.14	0.53	0.06	0.95
HH Income	0	0	0	0.22	0.82
Pct. Unemployed	-0.30	1.20	4.99	0.06	0.95
Pct. Agricultural	0	0.10	0.14	0.01	1
Pct. Manufacturing	0.20	0.23	0.21	0.97	0.33
Preclearance x Registrants Black	-0.21	0.12	0.24	0.86	0.39

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