Firm Mobility, Mortality, and Immigration Policy Making in the US Senate

Margaret E. Peters[*]

Stanford University

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Abstract

What explains immigration policy formation in the US? In this paper, I argue that immigration policy is a product of interest group lobbying — especially the lobbying, or the lack thereof, by firms — and the increased competition for firms due to globalization. Increased globalization has led to the death of less competitive firms in the US. These firms were often supporters of open immigration in that they tended to rely on cheap labor. Their death allowed anti-immigrant groups relatively more influence over policy as these firms no longer lobby for open immigration. Additionally, increased globalization has allowed some firms to move their production overseas. This increased mobility gives these firms less incentive to lobby for open immigration but relatively more leverage as policy makers seek to keep these firms at home. I argue that, while politicians can give firms incentives to stay home in the short run, in the long run these incentives are unsustainable and immigration policy will become more restrictive. I show how this process works using new data on voting in the US Senate on immigration from 1945 to 1999. First, I show that voting on immigration in the Senate does not conform to the single left-right dimension that most voting conforms to. Instead, immigration is driven by constituency level factors including firm mobility, firm death, and the size of the welfare state in the constituency.

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[*]Department of Political Science, Stanford University, Encina Hall West, Room 100, 616 Serra St., Stanford CA 94305; mepeters@stanford.edu

1 Introduction

The conventional wisdom on immigration in the US is that the US is an immigrant country; its history suggests otherwise. When the US was founded, it adopted few restrictions on immigration and immigration remained unrestricted throughout the 19th century. Then, between 1917 and 1924 the US passed a series of laws that closed the door to immigrants. The US then reversed policy in a series of laws between 1965 and 1990 that re-opened the door to immigration. Most recently, the US has again embarked on a program of closure. In this chapter, I examine these shifts through the lens of Senate voting.

The extant literature on immigration policy formation in the US has been unable to explain all three of these major shifts in US policy under a single theory. The three main arguments, the rise of organized labor, the importance of immigration groups, and the rise of nativism, can help to explain one or two of these shifts, but not all three. Briggs (1984, 2001) argues that the shifts in immigration policy have been caused by variation in the power of organized labor in the US political system. Yet, the timing of the shifts in US policy does not bear this argument out; immigration was closed in the early 20th century when labor was relatively weak; reopened when labor was relatively strong; and then closed again in the 1990s when labor was again relatively weak. The rise of immigrant groups argument (Tichenor 1994, 2002) focuses on immigrants as an important lobbying group. Yet again, the shifts in US policy do not conform to the expectations of this argument; immigration was first closed in the 1910s and 1920s when foreign-born citizens formed a powerful interest group due to their sheer numbers; it was reopened in the 1960s when the number of foreign-born was at its lowest level since the founding of the Republic; and then it was closed less than 10 years after amnesty had given almost 3 million people legal permanent residence status.

Finally, the rise of nativism argument (e.g. Zolberg 2006) focuses on the nativist backlash against immigration as an explanation of these shifts. The problem for this argument is that nativist backlash has occurred several times in US history without leading to a policy shift. In the 1840s and 1850s, there was a major outcry against Irish and German immigration, which lead to the creation of nativist parties, like the Know-Nothing Party, but not to restriction. Backlash against Southern and Eastern European immigrants in the 1890s again led to little action on immigration. Most recently, nativist backlash against immigration has led to some action on the state level, for example Arizona's SB1070, but not at the federal level. Nativism is too ubiquitous a phenomenon to be the full explanation for immigration. The reason that these three arguments cannot explain the policy shifts is that they ignore the structural constraints that policymakers face due to variation in firm mobility.

When firms are immobile, the policymaker can make economic policy without worrying about whether firms will exit the state. Immigration policy, in this case, is formed through interest group politics. Firms become another interest group with an incentive to influence immigration policy because they need cheaper labor. As firms tend to be a relatively powerful interest group, I expect that immigration policy will be relatively open. The level of openness will depend on other factors as well, including the composition and size of the policymaker's constituency, which determines

how much she values the average citizen's preferences; the importance of other interest groups, which determines how much relative influence firms have; and the size of the welfare state, which determines how costly immigrants are to society.

When firms are mobile, the policymaker is much more constrained in her policy choices. Assuming she cannot restrict capital or trade, she can use increased immigration or lower corporate taxes to make domestic production competitive with production overseas. If the policymaker is unable or unwilling to lower corporate taxation or regulation, her support for immigration will increase with firm mobility. Over time, her support for increased immigration will be unsustainable, due to popular backlash. In the long run, I expect, then, that the policymaker will decrease her support for immigration. On the other hand, if the policymaker is willing to lower corporate taxes, then immigration policy should be unaffected or should become more restrictive with increases in firm mobility. Again, these dynamics will be affected in the same way by the senator's constituency, the importance of other interest groups, and the welfare state.

Trade openness, additionally, can affect not only the preferences of domestic producing firms in the district, but also their composition. In the context of the US, trade openness can increase the competitive pressures on domestic firms which produce labor-intensive goods. These firm have three strategies they can use to try to compete: decrease costs, move production overseas, or close. If the firms can move and choose mobility, the predictions of the effect of trade openness are the same as above. If the firms cannot move, they can decrease costs through increasing productivity, decreasing their labor costs through lowering wages, or decreasing their other costs, such as taxes or regulation. If they choose to increase productivity, their support for immigration should decrease. To lower labor costs, assuming full employment, the firm needs to increase the size of the labor force and can only do this through convincing the policymaker to increase immigration. To lower other costs, the firm needs the policymaker decrease taxes or regulation. The firm will lobby the policymaker for whichever policy the firm thinks the policymaker is more likely to change. In the long run if trade openness continues, increased immigration or decreased taxation or regulation are likely to be unsustainable at the levels need to keep the domestic producing firms competitive. These firms will either move or close their doors, decreasing the pressure for open immigration and leading to a more restrictive immigration policy.

Over the time period I examine, 1945-1999, I expect Democratic senators, who I assume are unable or unwilling to lower corporate taxes, will vote more often for open immigration at moderate levels of firm mobility than at low levels in order to keep firms producing in their state and then will increasingly vote for restriction at high levels of firm mobility when we expect that they face a backlash to increased immigration. Republican senators, who I assume are willing to lower corporate taxes or regulation, should change their voting behavior on immigration very little or they should increasingly vote for restriction with increases in firm mobility. Finally, in general I expect that senators will vote for restriction more often as the welfare state increased in size.

Similar to structural arguments on trade policy, my structural argument on immigration policy does not attempt to explain all the variation in the data; so, I also examine what other factors

have affected senatorial support for immigration. I examine the alternative hypotheses of labor, nativism, and immigrant groups. I also test other variables, such as the state of the economy. Finally, I include variables on the senator's reelection, her place in the election cycle, and her tenure in office.

An examination of senate roll call votes shows that the structural constraints of firm mobility do indeed affect senators' votes on immigration in both time periods. I find that increases in the welfare state also led to decreased support for immigration and that senators are more likely to support immigration when the economy is growing. Finally, I find little support for the labor, nativism, and immigrant groups arguments.

I focus on this period in US history for two reasons. First, it allows me to examine how senators reacted to changes in firm mobility that were largely outside of their control. Firm mobility was affected during this time period by technological and financial innovation, in addition to other countries' changes in capital mobility and decreasing US trade barriers. Technological barriers, again, were out of the control of the senator. As the US has maintained relatively open capital throughout its history, firm mobility was affected by the ability to move production into another state and the level of trade protection that the good they produce overseas would be subject to when it was brought back to the US. The capital policies of other countries were largely out of the hands of US policymakers, especially after the Sterling Crisis of 1947. Additionally, after the passage of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act (RTAA) in 1934, trade policy on individual goods was also out of the hands of the senator. They could be generally for or against trade, but they had much less authority to impose tariffs on goods produced in their district than they had prior to the RTAA. Therefore, the study of the US allows me to examine changes largely exogenous to the senator — changes in finance, trade, and technology that led to the creation of the global market.

Within the US, I examine Senate roll call votes because they are the best long run data on preferences that we have. Opinion polls on immigration only go back to the mid-1950s. Additionally, polls are rarely representative at the state or district level, which means that only cross-temporal variation can be examined. With Senate roll call votes, I can examine both cross-temporal and cross-state variation. I examine the Senate rather than the House for two reasons. First, roll call votes in the Senate are more likely than House votes to result in divisions within the parties due to the differences in party and agenda control which allows us to better measure the effect of changes in the district on voting. Second, data is often unavailable at the Congressional district level.

The paper continues as follows. First, I discuss my theory on the effects of firm mobility and mortality on preferences over immigration. Then I introduce the dataset of roll call votes on immigration and argue that it is a good measure of policymakers' preferences over immigration. I also show that votes on immigration do not follow the same left-right policy dimension as votes on most other policies. Instead, immigration is affected by factors other than just the left-right balance of the country. Next, I describe the changes in the economy that have affected firms' mobility and mortality. I test my structural constraints argument on the data and show that the data is consistent with my argument. Finally, I conclude with the potential implications for immigration policy given

recent changes in the support for trade protection and capital control due to the Great Recession.

2 Firm mobility, mortality, and immigration

Few countries, including the US, have ever been open to the free movement of goods, people, and money. Instead most countries are open on one or two of the flows at a given time. In the case of the US, it was open to people and money throughout most of the 19th century until the interwar period. During the interwar period, the US was open to only to the free movement of money. After WWII, the US continued its open capital policies and liberalized trade. The US did open immigration during this period, but never to the extent that it was during the 19th century. Furthermore, since the early 1990s, the US has again begun to restrict immigration.

This constellation of policies is puzzling because according to the simple two-factor, two-good Stolper-Samuelson model, openness through the movement of people, goods, or capital affects prices and wages in the same way, benefiting the abundant factor while hurting the scarce factor.[1] Economic theory, therefore, is mute on what constellation of policies policymakers should choose. The reason that economic theory cannot explain this empirical puzzle is because economic theory ignores the political constraints that openness to capital and good place on policymakers. When a country opens its borders to the movement of goods, import-competing firms become uncompetitive. In the case of rich, labor-scarce nations like the US, the import-competing firms will be labor-intensive firms that also tend to rely on immigrant labor. These firms have two choices to remain competitive: reduce their costs or move overseas. Otherwise these firms will simply have to close their doors. Each of these three outcomes has effects on these firm's support for open immigration.

If firms choose to reduce their costs, their preference over immigration will depend on the way in which they reduce their costs. Firms have three ways to reduce their costs: increase productivity, decrease labor costs, or decrease other costs. Assuming that firms can increase productivity enough so that productivity increase can make them competitive with overseas production, their support for immigration should remain the same or decrease. As productivity increases, the firms can produce more at a lower cost with the same or fewer workers. If the firm relies on the same number of workers, then their preference over immigration should be for the status quo. If firms can use fewer workers, their preference for open immigration should decrease. If all labor-intensive firms can increase productivity to remain competitive, then as trade opens, support for immigration should remain the same or decrease. Generally, I expect that as productivity increases, firms' support for

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[1]The Stolper-Samuelson model of trade builds on the Ricardian model of comparative advantage by allowing countries to have different endowments. In the simple model, there are two countries, one relatively abundant in labor and the other relatively abundant in capital. When these two countries trade with each other, they export the good that uses the abundant factor intensively and import the good that uses scarce factor intensively. The scarce factor suffers a real decrease in the returns to their factor as domestic production moves out of the good that uses the scarce factor intensively and into the good that uses the abundant factor intensively. In contrast, the abundant factor will see a real increase in the returns to their factor. Similarly, opening borders to the movement of labor or capital will lead, respectively, labor to move from the labor abundant country to the labor scarce country and capital to move from the capital abundant country to the capital scarce country. Movement of factors, therefore also increases the real returns to the abundant factor while decreasing the real returns to the scarce factor.

immigration should decrease.

Instead of increasing productivity, firms could reduce their labor or other costs. Assuming full employment, the only way to decrease labor costs is to increase the amount of labor available. To increase the labor supply, firms need to increase immigration into the country. One way to decrease their other costs is to decrease the firms' tax and/ or regulatory burden (referred to from here on as decreasing taxation). Increasing immigration or decreasing taxation, of course, depends on policymaker's willingness to change either of these policies. Assuming the policymaker is rational, her willingness to change these policies will depend on the contributions the firms will give her for a change in the policy and her other constituents' preferences.[2] Knowing this, firms can determine through backward induction how large of a contribution it will take to move policy. Firms will choose how to lower their costs given the relative costs of the three strategies. If lobbying for more immigration or lower taxes is relatively more expensive than increasing productivity, the firm should increase productivity. On the other hand, if lobbying for one or the other policy is relatively less expensive than increasing productivity, the firm should increase lobbying.

If trade openness continues, firms will have to continue decreasing costs to remain competitive. Continuing to increase immigration or decrease taxation to cut costs is likely to become unsustainable. As we know from the survey literature on immigration, immigration, and especially low skill immigration, is disliked by the majority of natives (see for example Goldstein, Peters, and Rivers 2010; Hainmueller and Hiscox 2007, 2010; Hanson, Scheve, and Slaughter 2007; Peters and Tahk 2010). Historically, we know as well that large inflows of immigrants lead to backlash as well (for instance, the rise of the Know Nothing Party in the 1840s, anti-Chinese sentiment in the 1860s through the 1880s, or anti-Eastern and Southern European sentiment in the early 19th century). Decreasing corporate taxation is unpopular because it decreases the policymaker's ability to spend on the rest of his constituents. If the policymaker has to subsidize the firm to help it remain competitive, than she must raise taxes, which is also unpopular. At a certain level of trade openness, therefore, the policymaker can no long use immigration or tax policy to help the firm remain competitive. Instead the firm must increase its productivity or perish. Either way, firm support for immigration will decrease as firms either need less labor or simply no longer exist. A decrease in firm support for immigration gives anti-immigrant groups relatively more power, leading to a more restrictive immigration policy.

If capital is open as well, firms have one more response to increased foreign competition; instead of trying to beat the competition, they can join it by moving production overseas as well. This exit option gives firms relatively more leverage. Policymakers want to keep firms at home to keep the jobs and tax revenue they provide at home.[3] When firms threaten to exit, the policymaker can

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[2]I assume that the rational policymaker wants to stay in office and that to do so, she needs to generally represent her constituents' preferences and she needs campaign contribution. Without loss of generality, I will assume campaign contribution are monetary; although, they could as be the ability to get voters to the polls or otherwise provide patronage goods. Campaign contributions are given by organized interest, including firms. Firms, therefore, can lobby for their preferred policy through campaign contributions.

[3]Without loss of generality, policymakers need jobs for their constituents and tax revenue to provide public goods to stay in office.

offer the firm increased immigration to lower labor costs or decreased taxation to lower the firm's other costs. Again, in the long run as overseas production becomes relatively less expensive, the policymaker will have to further increase immigration or further decrease taxation to keep firms at home. At a certain level, the increased immigration or decreased taxation will lead to a backlash and neither policy can be continued. Firms will now find it in their interest to move overseas. Once these firms move, they will no longer support open immigration.[4] The lack of support by firms increases the power of anti-immigrant groups and leads to a more restrictive immigration policy.

As wealthy states, like the US, open their borders to the free movement of capital and goods, they increase the competitive pressures on domestic producing, labor-intensive firms.[5] In the long run as these competitive pressures increase due to increased openness, these firms have three choices: increase productivity, move overseas, or close their doors. All three choices lead to less firm level support — and less firm lobbying — for open immigration.

The response of immigration policy to changes in trade and capital policy — which I term "firm mobility and mortality " as decreased trade and capital barriers increase firms' ability to move overseas and increase the competition on firms — will depend on whether the firm can increase productivity and which policy — immigration or tax policy — the policymaker uses to respond to the firm. If the firm increases productivity, immigration policy should remain constant or become more restrictive. If the firm does not increase productivity, but instead the policymaker uses immigration policy, immigration policy should be curvilinear, opening from low to moderate levels of firm mobility and closing thereafter, as seen in figure 1. If the policymaker uses tax policy, immigration policy should remain constant from low to moderate levels of firm mobility and close thereafter, as seen in figure 2. The closing of immigration in both cases is due to policy backlash on the part of the policymakers' other constituents, which makes continued immigration openness or tax decreases politically impossible. The policymaker could of course use a combination of both policies, in which case immigration policy would look like something in between figures 1 and 2.

The main predictions for senate voting are that Democrats will respond as the policymaker in figure 1 and Republicans will respond as the policymaker in figure 2. This prediction comes from my assumption that Democrats will be less likely to cut corporate taxation as taxation, especially payroll taxes, pay for the social welfare programs that are very important to Democratic supporters. On the other hand, Republicans have been less supportive of these programs and are generally ideologically predisposed to support cuts in taxation. Finally, I expect that as labor productivity increases, support for immigration should decrease.

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[4]In fact, they might support restricting immigration if the country they move production to is a major sending country. For example, US firms producing in Mexico may support restrictive immigration policies in the US to keep Mexican immigration to the US low, which in turn keeps wages in Mexico low.

[5]The effects of openness will be felt by all domestic producing firms regardless of whether they are foreign or domestically owned. Additionally, the argument can be generalized to whether they produce for the domestic or foreign market.

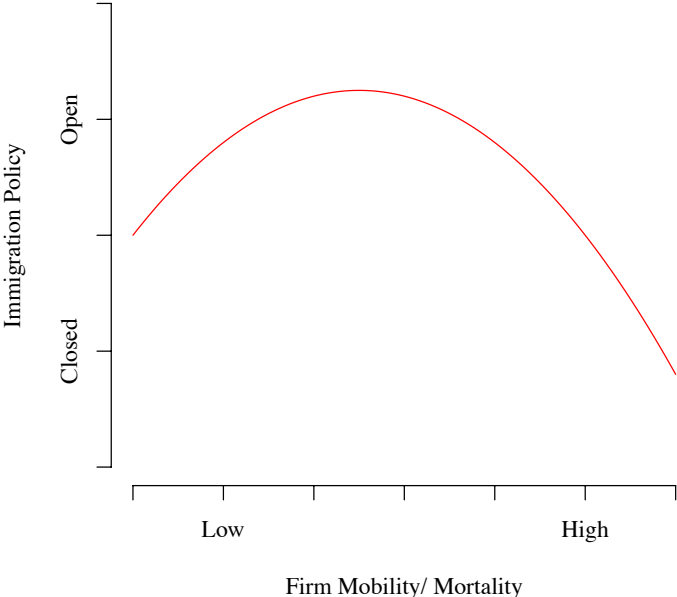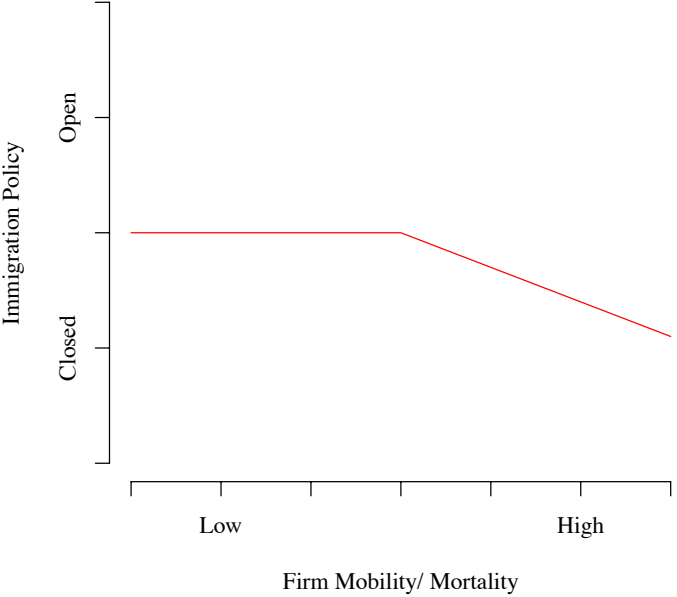Figure 1: Immigration policy in response to firm mobility if the policymaker uses immigration to keep firms at home

Figure 2: Immigration policy in response to firm mobility if the policymaker uses tax policy to keep firms at home

3   Voting on immigration in the US Senate

I use senate roll call votes to gauge how preferences in the constituency change with variation in firm preferences, electoral rules, and senator's preferences over taxation and regulation. I use roll call votes in a non-traditional way. Instead of using votes to generate the ideology of the senator (as an ideal point estimate would), I see how her voting changes due to changes in her constituency. Because I examine the year over year change in voting behavior, I ignore the senator's ideology. In part, I ignore his or her ideology because theoretically ideology should not change from one year to the next. Additionally, as I show below, immigration is not well described by our traditional measures of ideology such as ideal points.

This analysis is valid as long as senators place at least some value on their constituents' preferences instead of only placing value on their own ideology or their parties ideology. Canes-Wrone et al. (2002) find that voting behavior is strongly correlated with the district's (state's) preferences. Levitt (1996) shows that when senators vote, they place value on their constituencies, especially their supporters within the electorate, their party, and their own ideology. In terms of party control over senators' votes, the US Senate is a better institution for testing my argument than parliaments, such as the British parliament or the US House of Representative, because there has been less agenda control which has led to less party influence (Cox and McCubbins 2005; Cox and Poole 2002; Lee 2009). In chambers with so called "responsible parties," only votes that will divide the parties, rather than creating internal divisions within the party, are likely to be given a roll call vote. Therefore, party would always be the best explanatory variable for votes. Senate votes are less likely to be straight party votes — allowing us to examine how state-level characteristics affect the votes of the senator.

Regardless, both the senator's party and ideology are to some extent endogenous to the preferences of the state. Party is typically used by voters as a cue to gauge how the politician will vote on various issues (e.g. Popkin 1991). The position of the party of the senator chosen, therefore, should not be that far from the position of median voter. Finally, the senator's ideology, as measured by roll-call votes, will also be a function of the preferences of the constituency regardless of whether legislators vote strategically or if voters elect a politician with an ideology that matches that of the median voter.[6] Therefore, we can be relatively confident that roll-call votes should tell us about how constituencies' preferences and the policymaker's preferences change.

Each senator conditions her immigration vote on the preferences of the firms in her district —based on the composition of its economy —and her own, anti-immigrant preferences based on her concern for the employment of her constituency. Table 1 illustrates that party is not the only predictor of immigration votes in the US Senate. The left-hand side of the table shows the level of

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[6]See Bullock and Brady (1983) for a discussion of the nature of constituency and the role of constituenciesÕ heterogeneity in determining representatives voting patterns. See Clinton (2006) for new research on how well representatives reflect their districts. See Synder and Groseclose (2000) for a discussion on the role of the parties and the types of votes in which party influence is likely to have the greatest effect. Further, these two types of voting, it has been argued, can be distinguished by looking at the voting early in the senatorÕs term in contrast to votes closer to elections. It is argued that senators are more strategic closer to elections (Levitt 1996).

party cohesion and the right-hand side shows the cohesion between senators from the same state. I find that most immigration bills create internal divisions within the party (90 % of all votes) rather than divide the parties (10 % of all votes).[7] Nonetheless, the majority of the time (72 % of all votes) senators from the same state voted the same way. We can have greater confidence, then, that senators' votes represent the preferences of their constituency rather than simply reflect the control of the agenda by the majority party.

Table 1: Voting by party and state

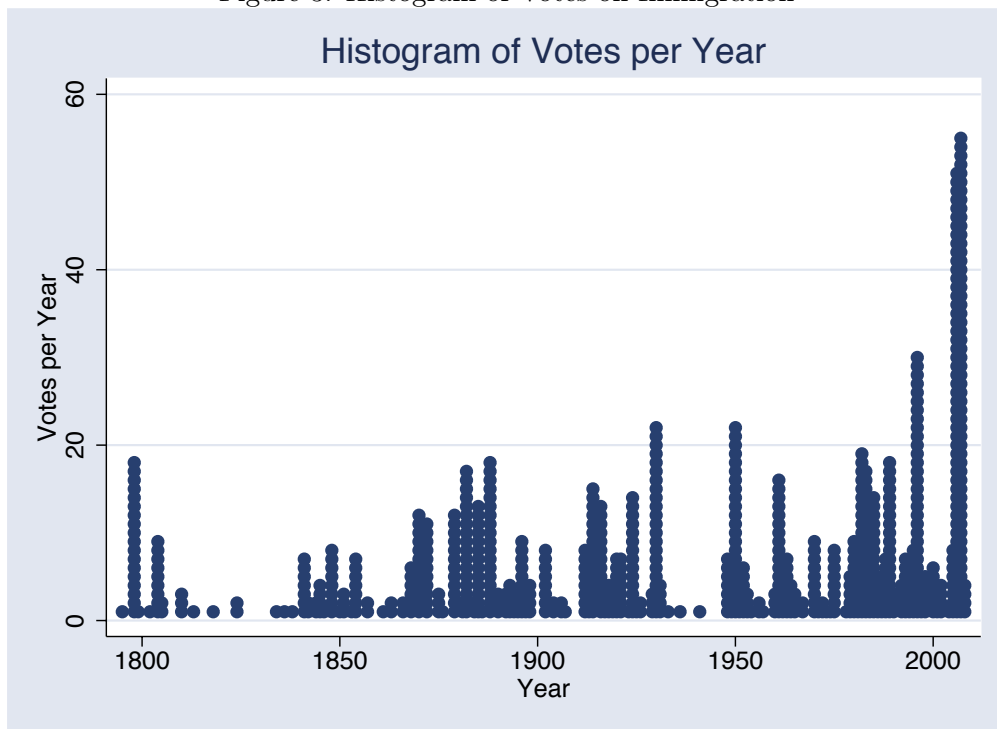| | Voting by Party | | Voting by State | |
	Not Cohesive	Cohesive	Senators Vote Differently	Senators Vote the Same
Number	1248	143	9169	23993
Percent	90 %	10 %	28 %	72 %

3.1 Descriptive Data

The US has had a long and contentious history with immigration. The first vote pertaining to immigration in the Senate was in 1795 —on the naturalization procedures. The last vote in 2008 was on increased border security and enforcement procedures. I found each immigration vote by examining all votes in Vote View (Poole 2009; Poole and Lewis 2009; Poole and McCarty 2009). To ensure that each vote was captured, I relied on Hutchinson (1981) to create an exhaustive list of all immigration bills that came before the Senate for a roll call vote from 1789 to 1965.[8] For years after 1965, I relied on the Policy Agenda Project (Baumgartner and Jones 2009) and Congressional Quarterly (Congressional Quarterly 2003, 2005, 2006b, 2006a). I include all votes that are likely to change the number of immigrants in the US. The reason for including all votes is that I am interested in the labor market effects of immigrants, not the specific type of immigrant that enters the US. Immigrants are attracted by both openness of policy and the rights they receive; for this reason I include votes on provisions for entry, enforcement, rights of immigrants, naturalization, and refugees. Out of the 229 years, there were votes in 120 of those years, a total of 737 votes on 223 bills and 1793 senators voted on those bills. On average there were 6.14 votes on 1.85 bills per year.

Figure 3 shows the number of votes on immigration in a given year. There were few votes on immigration issues prior to the Civil War. At this time immigration was inextricably linked to the issue of slavery and therefore regulated mostly at the state level. While the Supreme Court decided that immigration control was strictly the purview of the federal government in the Passenger Cases in 1849, Congress did not do much to regulate immigration until after the Civil War. From 1870-1930, in contrast, the Senate voted on immigration almost every year. Surprisingly Congress did not

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[7]Here I measure cohesion as strict party line votes. Percentages do not change much if we relax this measure.

[8]Hutchinson (1981) examined the Congressional record from 1789-1965, recorded every bill that was introduced in the House and Senate (including those which never received a roll call vote or even made it out of committee), and discussed the progress the bill made in each chamber. His work, therefore, is an ideal source for checking my own examination of the roll call data.

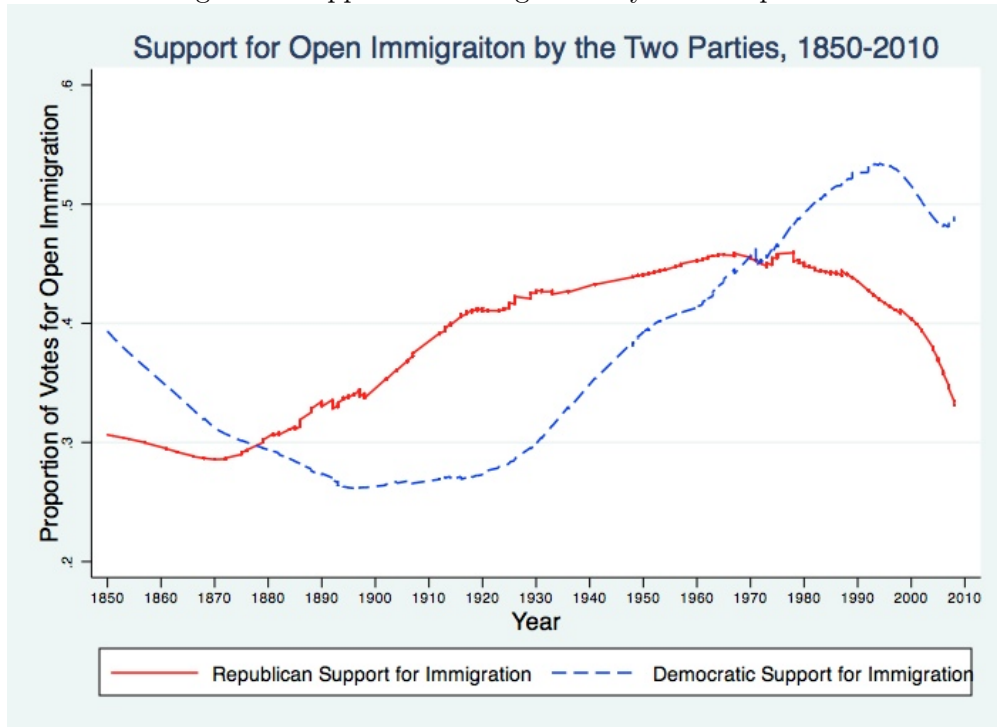Figure 3: Histogram of Votes on Immigration

focus much on immigration during the Great Depression or during the Second World War. Starting in the 1950s, Congress again began to consider immigration bills almost every year.

I coded the substance of each vote — what the senators were actually voting on, whether amendment, procedural, cloture or final passage — in the Senate as restrictive or expansive.[9] Votes that sought to restrict immigration were given a score of 0 and votes that sought to open immigration were given a score of 1. The coding of some votes was quite easy, for example, the following vote on an amendment in 1912: "To amend S. 3175, by excluding persons of African descent from admittance to the US whether from Africa or the West Indies, except Puerto Rico." Other votes were more difficult to code, such as a vote to amend the Displaced Persons Act in 1950 by "establishing a technical definition of 'displaced persons.' " In fact, the technical definition of "displaced persons" debated was the more expansive definition of "displaced person" used by the United Nations, including persons not in camps, rather than the more restrictive definition of only those in displaced persons' camps. For these more obtuse votes, I again relied on Hutchinson's (1981) description of the votes as well as reading the text of the original debates in Congress.

Figure 4 shows the breakdown of support for immigration between the Republican and Democratic parties. Each vote by each senator was given a score of 0 or 1. A zero indicates that the senator voted in the restrictive direction —either by voting for a restrictive bill or voting against an expansive bill. A one indicates that the senator voted in the expansive direction —either by

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[9]Procedural and cloture votes were included because they were often used to kill amendments or bills on the floor of the Senate.

Figure 4: Support for immigration by the two parties

Support for Open Immigraiton by the Two Parties, 1850-2010

voting for an expansive bill or against a restrictive bill.[10] Votes by senators from each party were aggregated and figure 4 reports the mean percent expansive votes for the party in a given year.[11]
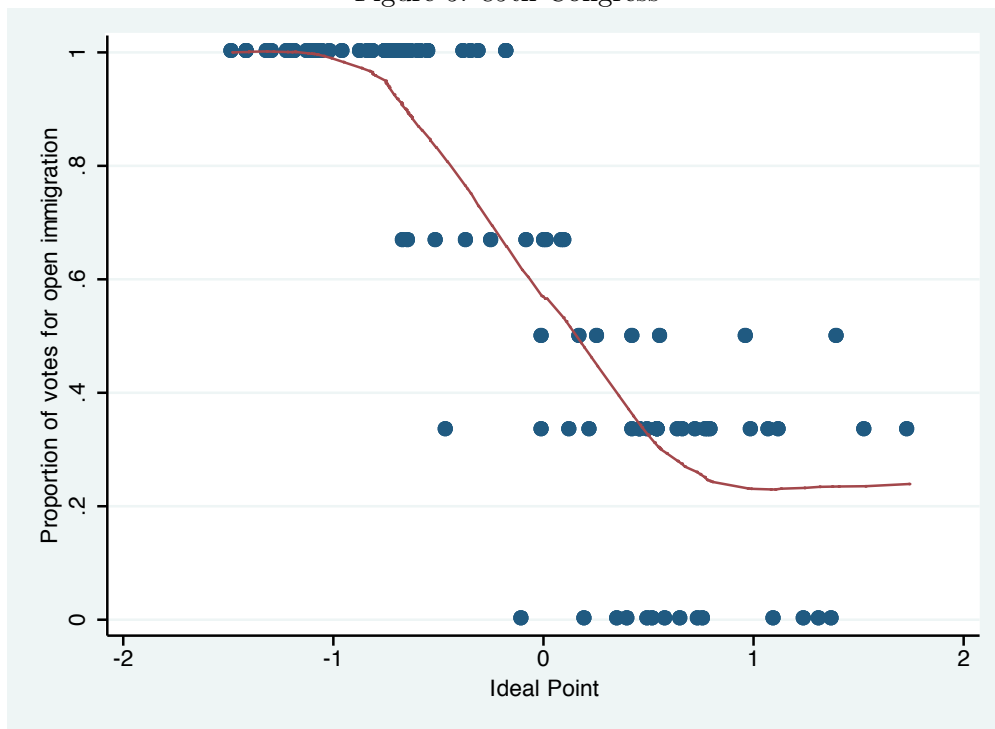
There has been a change in support for immigration by party over time. In the early days of the Republican Party, the party gained support from smaller parties, like the Know Nothings, which were anti-Catholic and anti-Immigrant. After the Civil War, Northeast producers, who favored open immigration to keep labor costs down, dominated the Republican Party; at the same time the Democratic Party increasingly represented labor. Most labor unions at this time sought to organize semi-skilled labor, which was typically comprised of natives or so-called "older" immigrant groups, such as the Germans, Irish, and Scottish. In order to keep a closed shop, these unions became increasingly anti-immigrant. After World War II with the rise of the Civil Rights Movement and the Republican's Southern Strategy, the parties again changed position with the Democrats more in favor of immigration than the Republicans.

From table 1 and figure 4, it is clear that immigration tends to be a policy that creates divides within the political parties rather than divides between the parties. To examine this more rigorously, I examined whether votes on immigration followed the same left-right dimension as the rest of votes in a given congress. For each congress, I calculated the ideal point of each senator on all the votes

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[10]Abstaining (or simply not voting) and votes of "present" were excluded as it is unclear what they signal in this context. Additionally, I have coded the votes as 1 for voting for an expansive bill, -1 for voting for a restricting bill, and 0 for voting for the status quo and the results are similar.

[11]Only the Senators whose party was coded by Poole as a 100 (Democrat) or 200 (Republican) were included. The smaller parties that often caucused with them were not included.

Figure 5: 89th Congress

except for the votes on immigration using Martin, Quinn and Park (2010) MCMCpack Markov chain Monte Carlo for one dimensional item response theory. Figures 5 through 7 plots the proportion of support for immigration for each senator against his or her ideal point along with a smoothed trend line for three congresses — the 89th, the 99th, and the 104th. The 89th Congress passed the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act. The 99th Congress passed the Immigration Control and Reform Act and the 104th passed the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act as well as passing Welfare reform, which also impacted immigrants. If immigration was predicted by the left-right dimension, we would expect that the proportion of support for immigration would lie on a 45 degree (or 315 degree) line. The left-right dimension predicts a split between the parties in the 89th and 104th Congresses; however, the left-right dimension does not do a particularly good job of explain differences with the parties in these two congresses. Additionally, the left-right dimension gives us basically no predictive power on the support for immigration in the 99th Congress, as can be seen by the almost flat trend line. Other congresses similarly show that the left-right dimension does not predict all the variation on immigration within the Senate. This result shows that there are other factors which affect voting on immigration in addition to ideology.

4   Changes in firm mobility in the modern era

The ability to move production overseas in the modern era was affected by three factors: decreasing trade protection, increasing technological advances, and changes in other countries capital controls
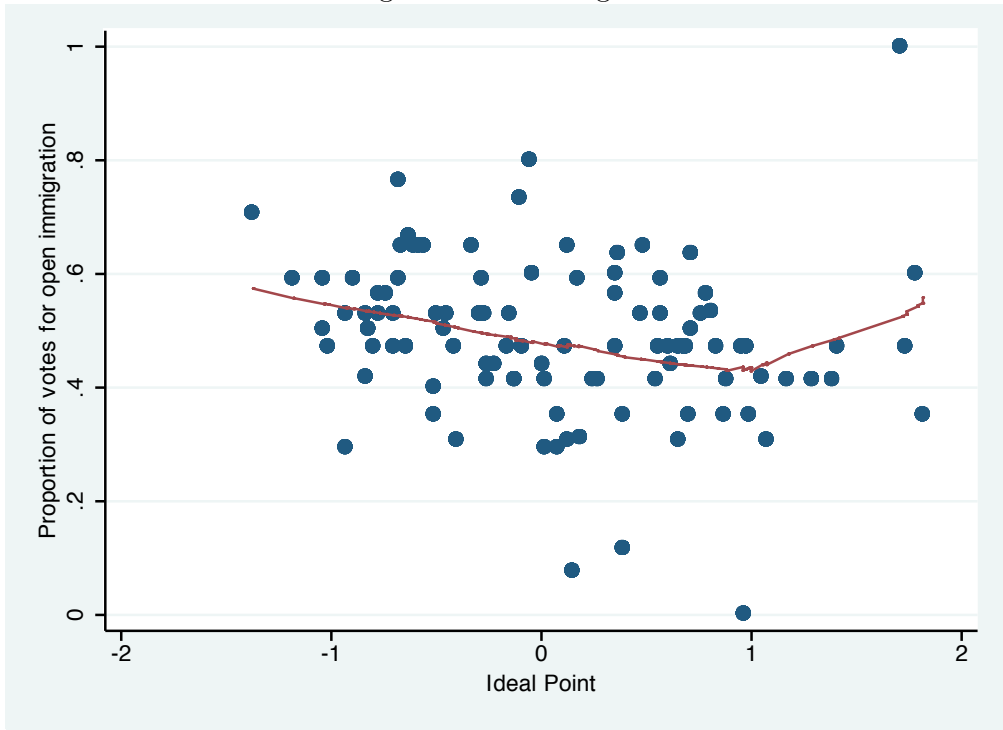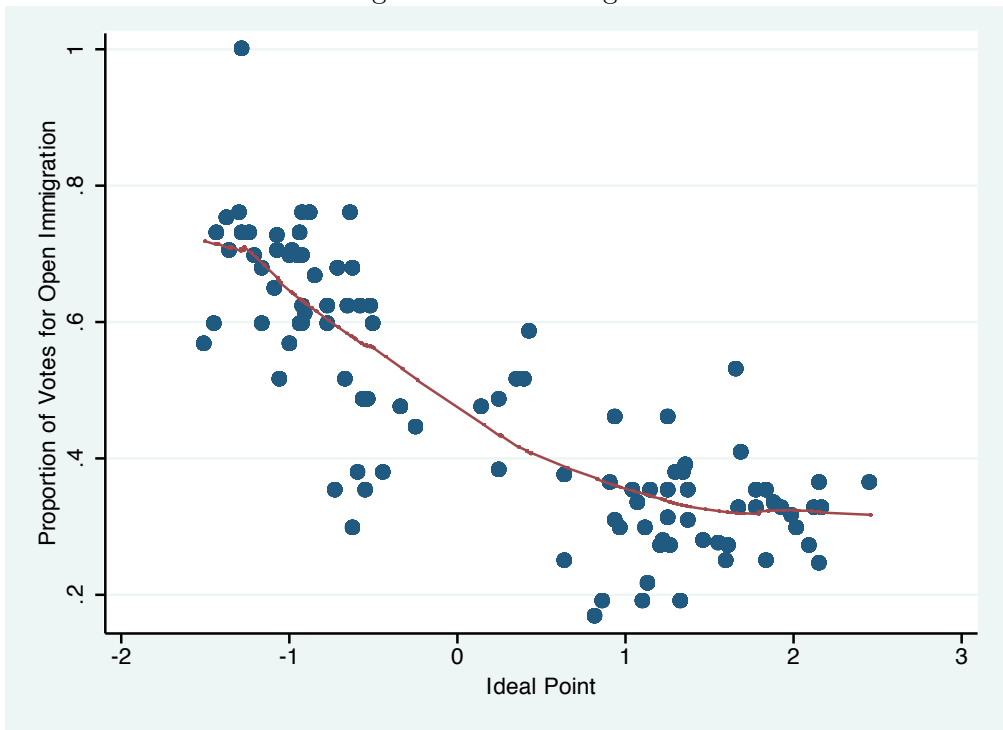
Figure 6: 99th Congress

Figure 7: 104th Congress

and willingness to expropriate foreign assets. Trade protection was decreasing throughout the modern era. This decrease was in part the result of changes in institutional rules, such as the RTAA and Trade Promotion Authority (Fast Track), which moved tariff policy from Congress to the White House. As such, the average senator lost her ability to legislate tariffs on goods produced in her district. She could, of course, still lobby the White House for protection for these goods, but she no longer had direct authority over the tariff rate. Additionally, much of the reduction in trade protection was done through international agreements, which meant that the re-imposition of tariffs on a good might lead to a trade war. Again, this meant that trade policy was taken out of the hands of the individual senator.

A second factor that affected firm mobility was technological changes in shipping and communications. Decreases in shipping cost meant that producing overseas for the domestic market became less expensive. Increases in communications technology meant that it was much easier to manage overseas production, again reducing its cost. Both of these changes were largely exogenous to the political process.

The final factor that affected firm mobility during this time period was other countries willingness to allow the free flow of capital. Except for a brief time in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the US had few rules of the movement of capital. To move production overseas, therefore, firms only needed to be able to move production into other countries and move their profits out of these same countries. Many other countries, however, did place restrictions on both the capital and current account. The problem that these controls posed for US firms looking to move production overseas was that the firm might not be able to onshore its profits made in the foreign location. Capital controls were largely outside of the control of the US Senate. The US did push Britain to reduce her capital controls in the late 1940s. This resulted in the Sterling Crisis of 1947, which made the US leery of interfering with other countries capital control for several decades (Obstfeld and Taylor 2004). A second issue that firms were concerned about was expropriation by the foreign government. This too was outside of the control of senators. The senator could lobby the State Department to lobby foreign governments over the threat or incident of expropriation, but could do little to actually stop expropriation.

The main causes of increased capital mobility during this time period were out of the control of the US Senate. Senators, therefore, were left with two tools with which to keep footloose firms at home — immigration policy and tax (regulatory) policy. Their third choice was to simply let firms move production overseas, which they did when they were unwilling to use the other tools due to domestic pressure.

5   Testing the argument

I now turn to testing the argument on senator's votes from 1950 to 1999. The first independent variable I include is the change in the percent salaried workers as a fraction of all workers in manufacturing from the Census of Manufactures (Census Bureau). Goldin and Katz (1998) have

found that the percent salaried workers in an industry is correlated with the average education level of blue-collar workers in that industry. They argue that a larger nonproduction worker share of employment is associated with the average amount of skill required of all workers because white-collar jobs tend to require more education and because technical nonproduction workers tend to work with more educated production workers (Goldin and Katz 1998, 719). Additionally, more managerial and professional workers are associated with continuous-process and batch methods of production, which also require a more skilled blue-collar workforce (Goldin and Katz 1998, 719). Thus, producers who use more salaried workers should need a more highly educated workforce and be less likely to demand the relatively low-skilled immigrant. This variable is a better measure than the measure that I used in the earlier analysis, value added per worker, because unlike value added per worker it is only affected by firm demand for skilled labor and not by variation in the price of the good due to changes in consumer demand. The percent salaried measure, however, is often unavailable for earlier time periods.

The next independent variable I include is the change in firm mobility/ mortality and the change in squared firm mobility/ mortality. The change in firm mobility is comprised of two factors: the change in the ability to physically move production, measured as the percent of the state's economy not in agriculture from the Bureau of Economic Advisors State GDP series (Bureau of Economic Advisors 2009), and the ability to move production into other countries, measured as mean capital openness by Quinn and Toyoda (2006).[12] The Quinn and Toyoda variable is only available from 1950-1999. I then interact these two variables, as firms need to be able to both leave the US and enter another country to produce overseas. The variables without the interaction term are highly collinear with the interaction term and are not included; including these terms does not affect the signs of any of the coefficients below but does affect their statistical significance. The interaction term also correlates highly with the likelihood that a firm faces competition that might force it out of business if it did not move overseas. I therefore do not include a separate term which measures the increase in competition at home and abroad due to liberalizing trade in the US and in the major trading partners of the US. Instead, I use this interaction term to measure firm mobility and mortality.

Finally, I interact firm mobility/ mortality with party to examine the effect of preferences over taxation and regulation on immigration. I define these preferences in three ways — simply Republican versus Democrats, Republicans and Southern Democrats versus Northern Democrats, and low tax preference versus high tax preferences. To generate their tax preference, I use the National Taxpayers Union (NTU) ratings of senators (National Taxpayers Union 2010), which is available starting in 1979.[13] The NTU examines all votes that affect taxes, spending, and debt, weighs each vote on its effect on federal spending, and then gives each senator a score from 0 to 100, with 0 being the least taxpayer friendly and 100 being the most taxpayer friendly. The measure is not the same as preferences over corporate taxation, but is likely to be correlated with it. As senators'

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[12]As a robustness check, I also include mining and services as immobile industries. This inclusion does not affect the results substantively.

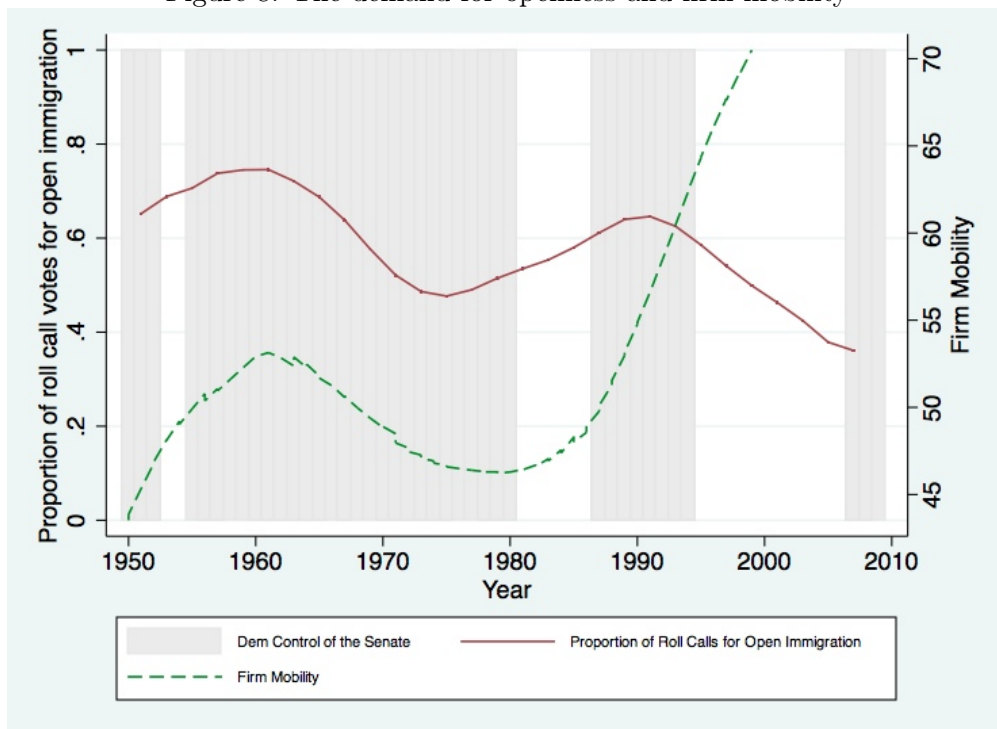[13]Therefore the regressions are only from 1979-1999 for this model.

scores do not change much year to year, I created an indicator variable, low tax preference, which was given a 1 if the senator was above the mean in a given year and a 0 otherwise.

The interaction between firm mobility/ mortality and party assumes that the parties have different preferences for which tool, immigration or tax (regulatory) policy, to use. I assume that Democrats are unwilling to lower corporate taxes or regulations due to their support for the welfare state and a regulated economy. Democrats, therefore, should increase support for immigration at moderate levels of firm mobility/ mortality and then decrease their support for open immigration at high levels of firm mobility/ mortality. I assume, in contrast, that Republicans are more likely to support lower taxes and less regulation. Republicans, therefore, should not change their voting behavior or should vote for restriction of immigration more often as firm mobility/ mortality increases. Finally, I assume that Southern Democrats have preferences similar to Republicans on the issue of taxes and regulation. Southern Democrats should, then, vote on immigration in a similar manner as Republicans.

I also include variables to test the alternative hypotheses. The change in percent of the labor force represented by a union, from the Statistical Abstract of the United States (Census Bureau), is included to test whether the variation in the political power of low-skill workers explains changes in senators' voting behavior. The change in unemployment, also from the Statistical Abstract of the United States (Census Bureau), is a second test of the political power of worker. If workers are powerful, then senators' support for immigration should vary inversely with unemployment, as senators will be worried about the employment conditions of their constituency. The change in the percent foreign born, from the Statistical Abstract of the United States (Census Bureau), is included as a rough test of nativism, as in Timmer and Williamson (1998) and Goldin (1994). As the percent of foreign born in a state increase, there are more opportunities for the foreign born to interact with the native born, which may lead to a nativist reaction. Support for immigration should vary inversely with the change in the percent foreign-born if the nativist hypothesis is correct. The change in lagged foreign born, in contrast, is used to test the power of immigrants argument. If immigrants form powerful ethnic lobbies, as the number of immigrants who can vote (i.e. have been here long enough to have citizenship) increases, so too should support for immigration by the senator increase.

I include the change in welfare spending per capita, from the Census of Governments (Census Bureau), and the change in welfare spending interacted with the change in foreign born to capture the costs of immigrants. Those states facing increased costs of immigration should have less support for open immigration. I also include the change in state spending as a percent of all government spending, from the Bureau of Economic Advisors (Bureau of Economic Advisors 2009). This measure examines the level of burden sharing of the fiscal costs of immigrants between the states. When burden sharing is higher, taxpayers within each state should be less concerned about immigration than when burden sharing is lower. I finally include agricultural wages as a measure of labor scarcity and interact the measure with party (Economic Research Service). I multiply impute the variables

Figure 8: The demand for openness and firm mobility

above where necessary using Amelia II (Honaker, King, and Blackwell 2010).[14].

Figure 8 shows the demand for openness as well as the changes in average world capital mobility as measured by Quinn and Toyoda (2006). The demand for openness is measured as the percent of all roll calls that are for opening immigration. I find that the demand corresponds to variation in capital mobility prior to the 1990s. In the 1990s, demand for openness becomes inversely related to capital mobility. Part of this change in the relationship can be explained by the change in control of the Senate. Most of period of the inverse relationship occurred when Republicans regained control of Congress in 1995. Yet, the relationship changed prior to the Republican take-over. This relationship is exactly what would be expected if Democrats are unable to continue to support open immigration in the face of increasing firm mobility.

Figure 9 presents the results from the regression of support for immigration on firm mobility/ mortality, party, and the alternative explanations The results presented are from an OLS regression model on the change in the proportion of votes for open immigration with Congress clustered standard errors. Most of the observations (93 %) lay between -1 and 1; therefore using OLS instead of tobit does not bias the results much. The results are very similar across all three specifications of the model if I use tobit instead of OLS. The different models place senators into subgroups based on party and tax preference, as noted at the top of the column.

The results are largely consistent with my argument. As the percent salaried workers in the
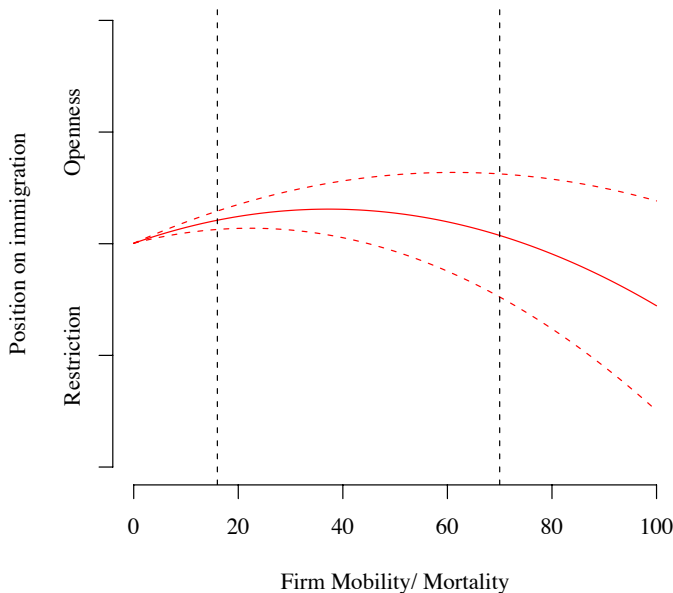
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[14]I do have full data coverage on my measure of firm mobility and mortality; however, many of the other variables were only measured every other year or less frequently

Figure 9: Regressions testing the argument and alternative explanations

DV: Change in Proportion of Votes for Immigration Openness	Congress Clustered Robust SE		
Subgroup:	Republican	Republican & Southern Democrat	Low Tax
% Salaried	-0.032**	-0.032**	-0.033*
	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.017)
Firm Mobility/ Mortality	0.082***	0.078	0.031**
	(0.022)	(0.086)	(0.013)
Squared Firm Mobility/ Mortality	-0.0011***	-0.0013	-0.00056***
	(0.00025)	(0.00082)	(0.00017)
Firm Mobility/ Mortality*Subgroup	-0.099***	-0.090	-0.021
	(0.030)	(0.087)	(0.023)
Squared Firm Mobility/ Mortality* Subgroup	0.0012***	0.0014	0.00038
	(0.00038)	(0.00086)	(0.00029)
Agricultural Wage	-3.93e-07	-0.000015	0.00014
	(7.73e-06)	(0.000010)	(0.000096)
Agricultural Wage*Subgroup	0.00028***	0.00030***	0.0024
	(8.49e-06)	(6.32e-06)	(0.0050)
% Unionize	0.17	0.19	0.17
	(0.19)	(0.18)	(0.20)
Unemployment	0.37	0.40	0.39
	(0.31)	(0.31)	(0.33)
% Foreign-born	0.016	0.053	0.018
	(0.077)	(0.060)	(0.074)
% Foreign-born (lagged 5 years)	-0.44	-0.45	-0.43
	(0.38)	(0.39)	(0.38)
Per capita welfare spending	-0.00020***	-0.00020***	-0.00020***
	(0.000052)	(0.000051)	(0.000054)
Per capita welfare spending* % Foreign-born	0.00034	0.00038	0.00032
	(0.00050)	(0.00045)	(0.00046)
State GDP (Billion $)	.0013***	.0012***	0.0013 ***
	(.0002)	(.0002)	(0.0003)
State Spending/ All Government Spending	-0.018***	-0.020***	-0.017***
	(0.0054)	(0.0050)	(0.0055)
Subgroup	-0.0017	-0.045***	-0.023
	(0.024)	(0.0080)	(0.014)
Constant	0.072	0.096	0.072
	(0.083)	(0.078)	(0.081)
Observations	2,559	2,559	2,559
R-squared	0.03	0.04	0.03
Number of Senators	327	327	327

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses; *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$. All variables listed except for subgroup are the year-over-year change. Also included: years served in the senate, election year, years since an election, and years since an election squared.

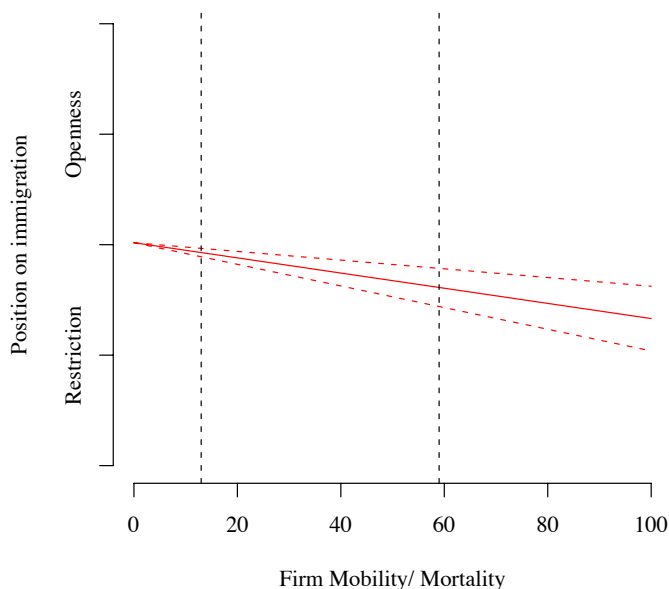Figure 10: Predicted effect of firm mobility/ mortality on Democrat's level of support for open immigration

state increases, support for immigration decreases. This is consistent with the argument that when producers increase the skill level of workers that they need, they are less likely to demand open immigration. Next I examine firm mobility. Figure 10 plots the predicted effect of firm mobility/ mortality on the level of support for open immigration for the Democrats, using the coefficients to predict the level of support.[15] The grey dashed lines denote the range of firm mobility/ mortality over this time period. For Democrats, their support for immigration at first increased as firms became more mobile and face more competition. At high levels of firm mobility/ mortality, however, support for immigration decreases, as I expected. I argue that this effect is the product of increasing immigration to keep mobile firms at home and save the uncompetitive firms until there is a backlash. In this era, firm mobility/ mortality was largely out of the hands of senators, which I argue meant that they responded to the backlash against open immigration by allowing firms to leave or to close and restricting immigration.

Figures 11 and 12 plot the predicted effect of firm mobility/ mortality on the level of Republicans' support for immigration from 1950-1989 and 1990-1999. Again, the grey dashed lines show the range of firm mobility/ mortality during these two time periods. As can be seen in figure 9 by adding the coefficients on firm mobility/ mortality and its interaction with Republicans and squared firm

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[15]Since the first difference regression is the derivative of the regression on the levels, the coefficients on firm mobility/ mortality from a regression on the levels should have the same signs as the coefficients above. However, due to the difference in magnitude of the change in firm mobility and the levels, the predicted effect of the coefficient on the levels lays outside the bounds of 0 and 1 for some values of firm mobility and mortality. Additionally, some predicted results lay outside of 0 and 1 because these coefficients were generated by OLS and not tobit. For ease of interpretation, I label the y-axis using the general terms of "openness" and "restriction."
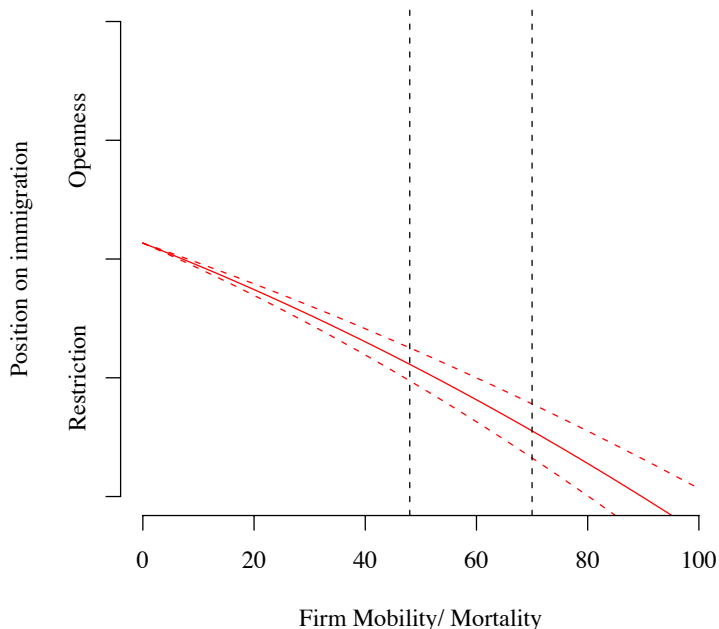
Figure 11: Predicted effect of firm mobility/ mortality on Republicans' level of support for open immigration pre-1990

mobility/ mortality and its interaction with Republicans, there is overall no effect of firm mobility/ mortatlity on the support for immigration by Republicans. This is not surprising if Republicans are mostly decreasing taxation in response to mobility and mortality. However, if we split the time period into pre and post 1990, we see there is a different effect. Prior to 1990 firm mobility/ mortality moved between low to moderate levels. After 1990, with the opening of China and other emerging markets to capital inflows and the lowering of trade barriers in developed country markets to emerging market goods, firm mobility/ mortality greatly increased. I would expect that there would be little effect of firm mobility/ mortality on Republicans prior to 1990; nonetheless, I would expect the effect to greatly increase after 1990. After 1990 Republicans support for open immigration should monotonically decrease with firm mobility/ mortality. These two predictions are what we seen in figures 11 and 12.

The Democrat-Republican split is the only significant split between senators. Southern Democrats often vote like their Northern counterparts and there is no difference between members based on their NTU scores. Although it is surprising that there are no differences based on tax preferences, the NTU scores measure much more than preferences over corporate taxation; they also include votes on individual taxation as well as spending bills that are likely to impact the federal deficit. The fact that Southern Democrats vote like Northern Democrats suggests that the difference between the parties is not just based on their preferences on immigration due to cultural concerns. Southern Democrats were probably the group most likely to oppose to immigration on cultural concerns, yet they voted with the Northern Democrats who tended to get the most votes from immigrants. The split in preferences, therefore, likely measures a combination of cultural preferences

Figure 12: Predicted effect of firm mobility/ mortality on Republicans' level of support for open immigration post-1990

over immigration and preferences over taxation and regulation.

In addition to the main results on firm mobility, I find that the state of the economy matters. When the economy is growing, measured as the change in state GDP, senators are more likely to support immigration. When the economy is shrinking, they are less likely to support immigration. Additionally, labor scarcity in agriculture makes Republicans more likely to support immigration; as the wage in agriculture increases, Republicans are more likely to vote for openness. The state's spending on welfare and the change in burden sharing with the federal government also affect preferences over immigration. Senators from states with increasing welfare spending are less likely to support immigration, regardless of the size of their immigrant population. Similarly, senators from states receiving fewer federal dollars, measured as the change in the percent of state spending over all government spending, are less likely to support immigration. When senators perceive that immigrants will be a greater welfare burden and that the federal government is less likely to share that burden, they are less likely to support immigration. Finally, Republicans were also affected by the agricultural labor market. When agricultural labor was scarce, they were more likely to support open immigration.

I find little support for the alternative hypotheses of the rise of labor, the rise of nativism, and the rise of immigrant groups. The coefficients on both the change in the percent unionized and in unemployment have neither the hypothesized sign nor are they statistically significant. The statistical insignificance of unions is not surprising given the rise of public sector unions and the change in the composition of union membership. Public sector employees often do not compete with

immigrants since immigrants cannot do many public sector positions and public sector employees often serve immigrants; increased immigration, therefore, may lead to increased work in the public sector. Additionally, unions have, in the private sector, increasingly organized unskilled, immigrant workers. Unions like the Service Employees International Union are basically immigrant rights organizations, as much of their membership is comprised of recent immigrants. I also find little support for the hypothesis about nativism or about the strength of immigrant lobbies. Neither the coefficients on foreign born or on lag foreign born have the hypothesized sign or are statistically significant. This result could reflect that increased immigration may increase nativism for some but reduce it for others due to increased interactions with non-natives; thus, creating a null effect.

For robustness I also included whether the senator is up for reelection in a given where, where the senator is in the election cycle and her overall tenure in the Senate (not shown). I find no statistically significant effect of any of these variables and there inclusion does not change any of my results. Additionally, I also include a variable for the Cold War (not shown). Senators were less likely to support open immigration during the Cold War than after; although this effect was small. Inclusion of the Cold War variable did not affect my other results. I also reran the regression results for each decade (not shown). While the coefficients change in magnitude some; they are statistically significant and have the predicted signs.

Overall, then, 1950-1999 generally supports my arguments that firm mobility/ mortality constrains policymakers. As firm mobility/ mortality increases, Democrats first increase their support for immigration. At high levels of firm mobility/ mortality, however, Democrats become less supportive of immigration. Republicans, on the other hand, do not increase their support for immigration with firm mobility/ mortality, especially during the period from 1950-1990. After 1990, Republican support for immigration drops off precipitately, as predicted by my argument. Finally, I find that these constraints, the state of the economy and the fiscal burden that immigrants place on the states affect senate voting on immigration.

6   Conclusion

In this paper, I examined changes in support for immigration between 1950 and 1999. I chose this period because the changes that made firms more mobile and more susceptible to overseas competition were largely exogenous to the policymaker, the US Senator. Firms became mobile and faced competition due to the integration of world markets. The integration of world markets was caused by technological changes as well as other countries' willingness to reduce capital controls, in their willingness to refrain from expropriating foreign businesses, and the lowering of US trade barriers. Due to institutional changes, including the RTAA, Trade Promotion Authority, and the increased use of trade treaties, the responsibility for tariffs on individual goods was taken away from the senator and given to the Administration. The senator could be generally for or against free trade and she could lobby the Administration for protection of goods produced in her district, but she could no longer protect individual firms in her district through action in the Senate.

I find that variation in firm mobility and mortality affected preferences over immigration in a manner consistent with my argument. Policymakers who were willing to use immigration to keep firms at home first opened immigration to appease them. At high levels of firm mobility, these policymakers were unable to sustain their support for immigration due to a backlash from their constituents. Policymakers, who were willing to use other tools to appease footloose firms, decreased their support for immigration.

Finally, I examined the other factors that determine voting in the Senate on immigration. I showed that three factors affected senator's voting: the change in producer preferences due to firm mobility and mortality combined with the senator's willingness to use other tools, the state of the economy, and the fiscal burden that immigrants placed on the state. Democrats first increased their support for immigration at moderate levels of firm mobility and mortality and then decreased it at higher levels. Republicans, in contrast, were less affected by changes in firm mobility and mortality from 1950-1990 and then decreased their support for immigration with the great increases in firm mobility and mortality in the 1990s. Republicans were also affected by the agricultural labor market. When agricultural labor was scarce, they were more likely to support open immigration. All senators were affected by the overall economy; unsurprisingly, senators were unwilling to support immigration when the economy was in a recession. Finally, senators were less likely to support open immigration when state welfare spending was increasing and when the burden of paying for spending increasingly fell on the state.

In contrast, I find little support for the alternative explanations. Nativism, measured as the percent foreign born, does not affect the way that senators vote. Neither does the existence of a constituency with a large percentage of foreign-born potential voters; the coefficient on lag foreign born is not significant either. Finally, I find that unions do not seem to matter either. This may be an effect of the increase in public sector unions, whose preferences over immigration are unclear, and an effect of the increase in unions organizing low-skill workers who typically are foreign born.

Given these results, what can we expect for the future of immigration policy in the US Senate? For the moment, it looks unlikely that the Senate would pass any immigration reform that would make immigrating to the US easier. Firms are highly mobile these days due to low US trade barriers and few restrictions on the movement of capital worldwide. Yet, the backlash to the economic effects of the Great Recession might lead, somewhat paradoxically, to increased support for immigration. Since the Great Recession, there has been increased support for capital controls and trade protection. If Congress enacted restrictions on either capital or trade, firms would be less mobile. These now immobile firms would act as an interest group for open immigration and help balance the nativist reaction, which has also arisen during the Great Recession.

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