

**THE EFFECT OF RELIGION AND DEMOGRAPHICS
ON SUPPORT FOR REFORM PROPOSALS IN THE
STATE OF ILLINOIS**

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Introduction

When the indictment of former Governor Rod Blagojevich was announced by the Chicago office of the Federal Bureau of Investigations a reporter asked the special agent in charge, Robert Grant, what he thought about the level of corruption in the state of Illinois. “If it isn’t the most corrupt state in the United States, it’s certainly one hell of a competitor,” he responded (Suddath, 2008).

His comments stem from the fact that Illinois politicians, especially governors, have run afoul of the law in numerous high profile ways in the current lifetime of many Illinois voters. In fact, a governor who has served in each of the past four decades has spent time in federal prison on charges of corruption, bribery, or fraud. Older voters in the state of Illinois recall the term of Otto Kerner, Jr. who served as governor from 1961-1968. Kerner was tried and convicted of taking a bribe in exchange for allowing the construction of two Interstate exits close to a racetrack in the city of Chicago. The bribe was taken in the form of stock which Kerner wrote off on his federal income taxes as an ordinary and necessary expense of being the governor. He was subsequently convicted and sentenced to three years in federal prison (Frum, 2000). Dan Walker served as governor of the state of Illinois from 1973-1977 and left that office not because of impropriety but after losing the Democratic primary. His subsequent career as a banker would be one filled with corruption and scandal as he was convicted of bank fraud in 1987 and sentenced to four years in federal prison (Walker and Lang, 2007).

The 1990s saw the term of George Ryan, a lifelong politician from Kankakee, the only convicted governor who did not have strong ties to the city of Chicago. Near the end of his term as governor several allegations began to emerge that indicated that during his tenure as the Secretary of State he took bribes in exchange for giving commercial driver's licenses to those who would normally be disqualified from such a certification. A subsequent investigation by the federal prosecutor led to additional findings of corruption including using campaign funds for his personal expenses as well as funneling money to each of his five daughters. He was convicted of bribery and obstruction of justice and was sentenced to a term of six and a half years. (Hammer and McKinney, 2010). His successor, Rod Blagojevich, would fare no better under the scrutiny of the federal prosecutor. Blagojevich won reelection over Judy Baar Topinka by 11% in 2006 and was focusing on finding a position at the federal level or in the private sector when Illinois Senator Barack Obama won the 2008 presidential election, which vacated his Senate seat. The federal prosecutor had been tapping the governor's phone on an unrelated warrant and overheard conversations between Blagojevich and his staff indicating that he desired to exchange the open seat for favors relating to his career and that of his wife, Patti (Davey and Fitzsimmons, 2011). He was tried and convicted of seventeen counts of corruption and was later sentenced to serve fourteen years in federal prison (Davey, 2011).

With four of the last eight Illinois governors serving time in federal prison for charges related to corruption and fraud it seems likely that Illinois voters would have a favorable position on proposals aimed at creating a government that is both more accountable and transparent to the citizens of the state. What types of voters however are more likely to support ideas that have been discussed to create this reform? Are older voters, who have weathered the storm of four federal convictions more in favor of

change, or are they fed up with a system that they deem to be unfixable? Does what part of the state one lives in influence a voter's opinion? What about the role of religion in the case for reform?

With each of these four governors having committed great moral lapses, it would seem possible that those who are strong adherents of religious faith would be the most likely to be in favor of creating a more accountable government. As described below, there has been a long history of religious individuals rallying together to create lasting social and political change. Would the same be possible in the state of Illinois? This question will be considered in the analysis that follows.

Literature Review

The relationship between reform movements in American politics and the religious community can trace its history back to the nation's founding. Oftentimes the desire for the thirteen colonies to break away from their association with England was tinged with religious imagery and conviction. A scholar of the Colonies wrote, "By turning colonial resistance into a righteous cause, and by crying the message to all ranks in all parts of the colonies, ministers did the work of secular radicalism and did it better." (Bonomi, 2003, pg.186).

Jonathan Mayhew, one of the most influential religious figures in pre- Revolution America argued in a sermon given on the anniversary of the execution of King Charles I that counter to the prevailing view held by many Christians that they were to suffer under the oppression of a King, the proper Christian response was to overthrow the rule of a tyrant and this was a "glorious" duty that was necessary for all of those who professed the Christian faith (Mayhew, 1750). That is not to say, however, that all Christians of the time were in agreement with Mayhew's interpretation of the scriptures. Some of the most outspoken opponents of the movement were the Quakers

who were largely located in Pennsylvania and believed that the only proper position on this issue was one of pacifism (of Free Quakers et al., 1781).

This event in American history is illustrative of a number of crucial moments in the last two hundred and fifty years of the Republic where religion both emboldened men and women of faith to join the movement for reform, while it kept others firmly planted on the sidelines of the skirmish. At no other time in history is this more true than the battle over slavery that managed to tear the United States apart, both in the arena of government as well as the religious sphere. While the tensions were escalating in the nation's capital over the matters of 'free states' vs. 'slave states' there was a religious movement taking hold in the United States that would change the course of American religion. The Second Great Awakening began in the early 1800s when a number of camp meetings or tent revivals experienced a large number of conversions to Christianity. These early signs of a revival occurring were a foreshadowing of explosive growth in church attendance that was unprecedented. Several denominations, including Catholicism and Congregationalism, experienced a three fold increase in membership in the time period from 1820-1860 (Smith, 1980).

The emphasis of this Second Great Awakening was largely focused on the imminent second coming of Jesus Christ and the consequences of such an event. Many preachers used this impending event to argue for the possibility of piety and perfection for those who claimed to follow the teachings of Christianity. This brand of preaching often ended by pastors asking congregants to take part in a personal salvation through Jesus Christ. However the way this personal piety evolved in the northern states and the southern states differed dramatically. Those living in the north began to understand that if the pursuit of individual perfection was necessary and possible then the logical extension of this was a perfecting of the government. Many of

these individuals began to push for a number of reform movements; most notably the abolition of slavery in the United States. In contrast to this understanding, southerners believed that the primary relationship in Christianity was between an individual and his/her God and this relationship had little bearing on the role of government or the reforming of society (Miller et al., 1998).

The end result of the movement for abolition not only divided the country through a bitter Civil War, it also divided many of the major Protestant denominations. For example the Southern Baptist Convention, the largest Protestant denomination in the United States formed when disagreements over the issue of slavery caused a regional split in Baptists, with the remaining Baptist congregations joining together to form the Northern Baptist Convention (Ammerman, 1990). The Methodist denomination was also splintered over the issue of slavery with those opposing slavery creating the Free Methodist Church (Mathews, 1965). These two instances in history, the American Revolution and the Civil War, paint a clear picture of how religion can have a strong effect on the desire to join a reform movement, or generate a desire to not bother oneself in getting involved in conflicts “of the world.”

The desire to abolish slavery was not the only outgrowth of the Second Great Awakening. Instead the desire to create a perfect society led to many reform movements during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The figurehead for many of these movements was a Nebraska Senator named William Jennings Bryan who was also a fundamentalist preacher. Bryan entered the 1896 Democratic National Convention as a virtual unknown at the national party level but used his background as a pastor to give a compelling speech in favor of a reform movement to maintain both the gold and silver standards for currency in the United States. Using vivid religious imagery Bryan maintained that the New England bankers and other wealthy elites

moving to a gold only standard was having disastrous effects on poor farmers in the midwest. He concluded his speech with, "Having behind us the producing masses of this nation and the world, supported by the commercial interests, the laboring interests, and the toilers everywhere, we will answer their demand for a gold standard by saying to them: You shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns; you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold" (Kazin, 2007).

The result of this speech for Bryan were life changing. He was quickly affirmed as the Democratic candidate for the presidency in 1896, but the result for the nation was the first in a series of populist movements that infused the work ethic of the working class with the religion that many of them held so dearly (Bensel, 2008). What followed was a series of reform movements that sought to create a more open and accountable government through giving women the right to vote (Kyvig, 1996) as well giving voters more power to recall elected officials (Key and Crouch, 1939). In addition, the temperance movement was largely motivated by a desire to bring the personal piety that was a hallmark of American Christianity into the realm of the larger society. This desire is clearly illustrated through some of the earliest protest activities of the prohibitionists. A number of women would enter a saloon and asked the owner to sign a pledge to no longer serve alcohol in the establishment. If he refused dozens of women would flood the business and begin a prayer and hymn singing service which would continue until the saloon owner changed his position (Skandera-Trombley, 1997, 110-112).

The number of domestic reform movements in the United States decreased dramatically during the first half of the 20th century as the average American was more focused on two World Wars as well as the Great Depression. However the 1950s and 1960s saw one of the most influential religious reform movements in the history of the

U.S. While the Civil War had provided freedom for millions of African Americans living in the south, a number of Jim Crow laws had been enacted which forced them to create a separate society. Douglas McAdam writes that with a lack of social outlets such as the American Legion, many black churches began to evolve into a place of not just spiritual development but also a social and political center for the African American community. McAdam goes on to explain that the Civil Rights movement would have been unlikely to succeed without the formation of black churches, especially in large cities in the south (McAdam, 1984). These churches served as a training ground for young African American men to learn how to speak, motivate, lead, and organize their fellow churchgoers. What made them even more successful however was the communication network that formed between churches. These channels became essential in organizing some of the first boycotts, sit ins, and protests that were hallmarks of the Civil Rights movement (Hunt and Hunt, 1977).

The most successful and high profile organizer of this movement, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was the epitome of a reform leader who used the motivating and organizing power of religion to garner support for some of the most pivotal events in the Civil Rights movement. King's "I Have a Dream" speech is permeated with religious imagery, but no passage more so than when he said, "I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together." The words King used were directly quoted from the book of Isaiah and the impact that they had on the audience was unmistakable (Lischer, 1997). It is crucial to note however that the active participants in the Civil Rights movement did not make up a majority of black church members. Some scholarship has indicated that just a small minority of black clergy

themselves became involved and motivated their congregations to do the same (Chappell, 2004).

The other defining social movement of the last fifty years is also one strongly infused with the rhetoric of religion. Beginning in the late 1970s and continuing into the current era many evangelical Christian leaders began to mobilize their congregants to become more involved in the political sphere. The period of the Progressive era had given way to fifty years of withdrawal from the larger society for many Christians (Armstrong, 2009), which led one commentator to write, “evangelicals are so heavenly minded they are of no earthly good,” (Wald and Calhoun-Brown, 2006, 213). This changed when a number of significant events coalesced that energized the evangelical community.

The first, and most prominent of which was the proposed Equal Rights Amendment, which provided equal treatment under the law for both men and women. The amendment was easily passed by both houses of the Congress and was handed over to the states for ratification. The process of ratification was proceeding without incident, with 30 of the required 38 states signing on in the first year of the process when Phyllis Schlafly (among others) began a campaign to energize evangelical Christians to oppose the ratification of the amendment on largely religious grounds (Tedin et al., 1977). The end result of this opposition was that just 35 states ratified the amendment, with five withdrawing their ratification under pressure from Christian groups. Subsequent research has shown that those who opposed the amendment were fundamentalist Christians and those who regularly attended worship services (Burris, 1983).

The fight over the Equal Rights Amendment was just the first of several important events in American politics that helped to mobilize the evangelical base. Thomas

Frank argues that the most influential moment in the movement for those evangelicals in state of Kansas was the 'Summer of Mercy' in 1991, when over 2500 pro-life supporters were arrested during a six week protest at an abortion clinic run by Dr. George Tiller. This event culminated in an event at Cessna Stadium in Wichita, Kansas when more than 30,000 people attended a rally that included an address by evangelical leader Pat Robertson (Frank, 2005). Frank goes on to argue that the after effects of this protest movement can still be seen at the ballot box when many working and middle class evangelicals will vote for the Republican candidate who is opposed to abortion instead of the Democrat who would be in their economic self interest.

This religious reform movement has had a discernible impact on scores of elections at both the national, state, and local level. Scholars point to the election of Ronald Reagan over Jimmy Carter as evidence of the power of this movement, as well as the narrow victory that the born again George W. Bush achieved over Vice President Al Gore (Wald and Calhoun-Brown, 2006). Quantitative political science has shown there is a discernible rightward movement in the political ideology of evangelical Protestants since the late 1960s (Layman, 1997, 2001; Layman and Carsey, 2002), with much of this change attributed to movement leaders who have continued to press the hot button social issues that energize evangelicals (Kellstedt et al., 1994).

It is difficult however to understand how the religious environment of the last thirty years will impact the way people of faith show support for reform issues at the statewide level that do not contain a strong religious component. While the religious movements of the Progressive Era were focused directly on the possibility of government reform and accountability, the support for direct democracy has not been seen in the public opinions of evangelical Protestants in the last several decades. Instead the primary focus of religious voters has not been on issues of transparency

and accessibility but instead of topics such as restriction of abortion and civil rights for homosexuals. Because of this lack of evidence in previous literature the nature of this paper will be more exploratory and will hopefully provide important insights into the feelings of religious people on reform movements that lack a strong religious undertone.

Data

Each fall the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute conducts a poll of Illinois voters that attempts to understand how they feel on a number of issues that are of relevance both nationally and at the statewide level. The data that were analyzed for this paper comes from the 2011 version of the Simon poll which surveyed 1000 registered voters across the state. Care was taken to insure that a significant number of respondents came from the four regions of the state: the City of Chicago, the Chicago suburbs, northern/central Illinois, and southern Illinois. The polling was conducted by Issues + Answers Global Media Research of Virginia Beach, VA who employed phone calls to both land lines as well as cell phones. The poll was paid for by the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute, where this researcher was employed at the time as a post doctoral fellow (Paul Simon Public Policy Institute Statewide Poll, 2011).

Five potential reform proposals were described to those who took part in the poll, each of which has been discussed to various degrees in the state of Illinois. Question one focused on term limits, specifically a proposal to limit state senators to three consecutive four year terms and state representatives to five consecutive two year terms. Question two asked voters if they favored a proposal to limit the amount of money someone can contribute to a judicial campaign. Question three asked voters if they were in favor of publically funding judicial races. Question four was focused on limiting the power of party leaders to distribute money to political campaigns at their

discretion. Question five was concerned with changing the primary balloting process, whereby a voter would not have to publicly declare which ballot they would choose. The results of these questions can be found in Table 1.

The results of this analysis show strong support for reform among Illinois voters. For every reform proposed to respondents a majority either strongly favored or favored each item. The three issues that receive the strongest overall support are the proposal to limit the terms of elected officials, the proposal to limit contributions to judicial campaigns, and a change in the way primary balloting is done in the state of Illinois, each of these proposals received over 70% favorability. The proposal to publically fund the judicial races in the state was the least liked by the respondents in a poll, by a significant margin, with only 53% of voters in favor of such a change. A picture emerges from these early data that there is a significant desire for reform among the rank and file Illinois voter, but further analysis will indicate which groups are most likely to support these proposals.

Findings

It is almost always instructive to understand how basic demographics interact with independent variables, especially so when there has been little previous analytical work in the area of interest. Table 2 indicates the frequency of those responding that they strongly favor each reform proposal from five different age groups. It is clear from these results that the youngest age group surveyed, those 18-29, are the least likely to support any sort of reform. From this low point in the youngest age group the level of strong support for reform consistency rises with age. In all five reform proposals offered in the Simon Poll, the greatest amount of support is found in those between the ages of 45-64. Interestingly, there is a noticeable drop in support for reform among those 65 and over in the poll, with the exception of changes in the primary ballot.

Table 3 is also focused on the interaction between demographics and reform support, in this case the level of education among respondents. The education measure was divided into three groups: those with a high school diploma or less, those with some education at the college level, and those with at least a bachelor's degree. It is clear that those with the least amount of education show the lowest level of support for these reform measures. There is no clear difference between the support for reform among those with some college experience and those with at least a Bachelor's degree. One important finding in Table 3 however is the relationship between the highly educated and support for public financing of judicial elections. While the amount of support is still low relative to the other four proposals, it is still much higher than those with a lower level of education.

Table 4 is concerned with the varied geography found in the state of Illinois. The Simon Poll is intentional in gathering a significant number of respondents from each of the four regions of the state, the city of Chicago, the Chicago suburbs, those in the northern/central Illinois, and those who live in Southern Illinois. In four of the five cases those respondents in the city of Chicago were the most resistant to the reforms proposed, often by a wide margin compared to those living in the rest of the state especially those living just a few miles away in the suburbs. These results indicate that while southern Illinoisans are in favor of reform, they do not demonstrate as much support as those living in northern/central Illinois. The data from the question concerning public financing of elections is mixed however, with low levels of support seen across the state.

Table 5 is focused on the relationship between political ideology and support for reform. The results here are unsurprising in that they comport with what is generally understood about the political platforms of both major parties in the United States.

Those who claim Republican ideology were the most in favor of the term limits reform and were also the least likely to support limits on campaign contributions. A similar continuum is found on the proposal for public financing of elections with Democrats being the most in favor, while Republicans are the least. Interestingly, but unsurprising is the number of independents who strongly favor changes in the way primary balloting is done in the state. Under the current system an independent would have to publicly declare and choose just one ballot when it seems likely that they would like to vote for primary races of both parties, something not possible under the current law.

In the last two editions of the Simon Poll there have been questions concerning respondent knowledge of the Tea Party as well as their willingness to support candidates who are affiliated with the movement. A question was offered to subjects in the 2011 poll that said, "From what you know, do you strongly, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the Tea Party movement?", the results of which can be found in Table 6. What is of note in this table is how little difference there seems to be between those who agree with the Tea Party and those who disagree with the movement. The only major divergence comes over the issue of term limits for elected officials, where nearly 70% of Tea Party supporters are in strongly in favor, compared to just 55% of those who disagree with the movement. On the other four proposals offered there is a small statistical difference between the groups, but never more than six percentage points. It seems that there is not a strong relationship between Tea Party agreement and support for reform measures.

Religious Variables

All of these tables help to explain some of the potential causes for support for reform, with those who are middle aged, have some college education, and living outside Chicago generally showing the greatest support for these proposals. The relationship

between political ideology and reform is somewhat mixed with conservatives favoring changes in term limits but not on campaign finance limits or public funding of judicial elections. Does religiosity of respondents have a measurable impact on support for reform however? To understand this relationship religiosity was divided into three distinct types: behavior, belief, and belonging, a typology that is well known in the literature (Gilbert, 1993; Kellstedt and Smidt, 1993; Layman, 1997; Smidt et al., 2009). To measure behavior, a question was posed to respondents allowing them to indicate how often they attended religious services outside of weddings and funerals. To measure belief, those in the survey indicated how they viewed the Bible as an authority on faith. Finally, to measure religious belonging respondents were asked what sort of church they affiliate with, with follow up questions being asked if necessary.

Table 7 displays the results of the analysis of church attendance and support for the five reform proposals. The use of church attendance as a proxy for all religious behavior is widely used in social science (McIntosh et al., 1979; Hertel and Hughes, 1986; Lunn et al., 2001). It is evident from these results that there is no clear relationship between these two variables. The most interesting finding from this analysis is the vast difference in the opinions of those who attend church weekly and those who attend church at least monthly. In three of the five scenarios there is a difference in support of at least 8% between these two groups. The disparity is the most pronounced on the questions of public financing (a 12.6% difference) and placing limits on party leaders (15.1%). That is, the most observant were also the lowest in their level of support for these reforms. They were also less likely, by smaller margins, to support limits on campaign contributions and open primaries. Beside this result there does seem to be a small difference between those who attend at least once a

year and those who never attend, with the never attenders being more supportive of reform in the cases of public financing and limits on party leaders.

The relationship between a respondent's view of the Bible and their support for reform does show a clear pattern however. The Simon Poll used the question wording found in the General Social Survey which gives respondents three possible options: the Bible is the actual word of God and should be taken literally, the Bible is the inspired word of God but not everything in it should be taken literally, and the Bible is an ancient book of fables, legends, history, and moral precepts recorded by men. The use of this measure is widely regarded in the literature of sociology and political science (Jelen, 1989; Eisenstein, 2006, 2008; Hoffmann and Bartowski, 2008). The relationship between religious belief and favoring governmental reform is found in Table 8. There is a distinct and important pattern to be noted in the findings, specifically among those people who believe in a literal bible. In each of the five proposals they are the least likely to support reform measures as described in the poll. The difference between literalists and those who believe the Bible is inspired is smallest in the area of term limits but expands to 12% on the issue of campaign finance reform. In four of the five cases examined here those with the most liberal view of the bible (believing it to be a book of fables) were the most likely to support reform measures and they were virtually tied with the "inspired" group on the proposal to place limits on party leaders.

The final aspect of religiosity examined for the purposes of this paper is the religious tradition of the respondent. There have been dozens of different ways to approach this difficult subject, with lumping certain groups together (i.e. all Protestants) (Stouffer, 1955), or putting all the different religious traditions on a continuum between the most liberal and most conservative traditions of Christianity (Smith, 1990). Both these approaches however suffer from combining religious traditions that are dissimilar

from each other, especially in respect to seeing evangelical, mainline, and black Protestants as part of a single group. A more recent measure, dubbed RELTRAD by those who created it, separates respondents into seven different religious traditions based on the church which they affiliate. The seven traditions in the typology are: evangelical Protestant, mainline Protestant, black Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, other religion (encompassing all other faith traditions including Islam, Hindu, and Buddhism), and no religion (both atheist and agnostic) (Steenland et al., 2000). The use of this classification scheme has been widespread since its creation (Bader and Froese, 2005; Eisenstein, 2006, 2008; Froese et al., 2008). This sorting mechanism was employed and then a frequency table with the five different reform categories was created, which can be seen in Table 9.

While there are typically seven categories created under RELTRAD the sample size does not allow for accurate measurement of those of Jewish faith or those of other religious affiliation. Those evangelical Protestants in the sample show consistently high levels of support for term limits, campaign finance, putting limits on party leaders and changing the way primary balloting is done in the state. Their low level of support for campaign finance is not very divergent from the views of mainline Protestants and Catholics. It is interesting to note that black Protestants consistently show the lowest levels of support for any sort of reform proposal, a trend that appears in each of the five categories.

While these frequency tables can be instructive in understanding how different variables interact with each other, a regression analysis affords a researcher the ability to hold constant many variables while focusing on just a few variables of interest. For purposes of this project a linear regression model was constructed which tested for the relationship between each of the three B's: behavior, belief, and belonging and support

for governmental reform. Several important control variables were employed in the analysis including age, race, education, gender, region, and political ideology. The regression analysis was run separately for each of the five proposals given to respondents in the Simon poll, the results of which can be found in Table 10.

In the case of term limits, just two of the nine variables tested reach statistical significance at the $p < 0.05$ level. Being a biblical literalist shows evidence of reducing support for the proposal by two tenths of one point on a scale ranging from one to four, conservative ideology however has an opposite effect on those in the poll. An individual who indicates they are very conservative is 20% more likely to support term limits than one responding that they are very liberal. In the case of campaign finance limits on judicial campaigns, evangelical affiliation shows a positive and statistically significant relationship, in addition education has a significant impact on support for this proposal. On the issue of public financing of judicial races, none of the religious variables reach a statistically significant level, however increased education leads to more support for public financing, while living further from the city of Chicago shows a decrease in support for the idea as well as conservative ideology. The fourth proposals, focusing on giving party leaders less power to distribute money to campaigns, church attendance reaches statistical significance in a direction of less support. Two of the control variables are significant and signed in the positive direction, with both education and conservative ideology showing higher levels of support for this reform. Finally, the proposition to change the way primary balloting is done in the state of Illinois shows strong negative opinion for those who hold that the bible is the literal word of God. However, being a caucasian shows a strongly favorable opinion of this change.

Discussion

Oftentimes the results of careful analysis of polling data indicate that a clear pattern emerges about the relationship between a variable of interest (or a potential causal variable) and a dependent variable; it would appear that this is not the case in the this paper. It is clear generally that the Illinois voting public is in favor of reforms of government and elections, but how they see those reforms taking shape remains something of a mystery. While over 71% of respondents favor a proposal to limit campaign contributions in judicial elections, a much smaller percentage (just 53.6%) believe the proper way to curtail the influence of money is through public financing. It is apparent that there is very little opposition to some proposals as well. Less than one in five voters opposes the idea of limiting the amount of time elected officials can serve, as well as changing the way that primary balloting is done in the state of Illinois. It would appear from these data that if either of these proposals made their way through the legislature they would receive little opposition from the voting public.

In terms of demography there is an unusual pattern in the distribution of age in the sample. Young voters are the most opposed to changing the system that is already in place, as are those who are of retirement age. The greatest support for reform comes as a voter grows in years and reaches its peak while many of them are still working. The overarching theme of the analysis based on education is that those with the least amount of academic experience are also the most resistant to change, with more time in the classroom mitigating this resistance. Geography, however exhibits a clear and noteworthy pattern. Without question voters who live in the city of Chicago are the most opposed to any of the reform options offered to them in the 2011 Simon Poll. This could be because of the rough and tumble nature of Chicago politics as these voters show a great deal of opposition to the idea of limiting party leaders' influence on the campaign

process as well as changing the primary ballot. Under the current system a voter has to publicly declare which ballot they wish to pick up, a process that is potentially vulnerable to peer pressure at the polling station.

In terms of the religious variables analyzed in this work, there are some interesting findings worth exploration. Those who attend church on a weekly basis are the most likely to resist these reforms, something that is not easily explainable by this researcher. It is crucial to note that this relationship does not hold up to regression analysis. Those who believe that the Bible is the literal word of God are also very resistant to the possibility of reform. The reason for this is likely explained through the large correlation between those who are literalists but are also self identified political conservatives (correlation = .81). In terms of religious tradition the only clear narrative that emerges is the connection between black Protestants and low levels of support for reform. Further analysis indicates however that this is likely due to geography more than religious tradition as over 60% of the black Protestants in the sample are from the city of Chicago.

These mixed results indicate that there is no systematic position of governmental reform which has emerged in the faith communities. Unlike say the Abolition Movement of the 1850s and 1860s, or the Civil Rights Movement in the black churches of the 1950s and 1960s, the churches are now divided into different camps. If there is an “ethic of reform” in the state of Illinois it is based more firmly in geography, education, and ideology than in religion.

The results displayed here indicate that there is a desperate need for further quantitative analysis in the area of governmental reform. This need for additional data collection is made more urgent by the fact that good statistical analysis could lead to changes in government that could result in a more effective and transparent

organization. If real reform is a possibility in the state of Illinois there will need to be a concerted effort to educate the voting public about the possible reform proposals as well as convince those, especially in the city of Chicago, that reform will only make the state of Illinois politics better than its current state. Both of these efforts will not be easy but could bear significant fruit in the near future.

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Table 1: Distribution of Support for Reform Proposals

	Term Limits	Limit Contributions	Public Funding	Party Leader Limits	Primary Ballot
Strongly Favor	54.4%	52.0%	29.2%	40.5%	58.3%
Somewhat Favor	20.6%	19.4%	24.4%	20.9%	13.5%
Somewhat Oppose	8.5%	10.5%	14.3%	11.2%	6.8%
Strongly Oppose	10.9%	10.7%	20.1%	17.1%	13.1%
Other/Don't Know	5.6%	7.4%	12.0%	10.3%	8.3%

Table 2: Support for Reform Proposals by Age Group

	Term Limits	Limit Contributions	Public Funding	Party Leader Limits	Primary Ballot
18-29	41.4%	39.3%	26.9%	40.7%	44.4%
30-44	59.6%	55.8%	30.6%	47.4%	60.0%
45-54	61.5%	64.2%	32.6%	45.4%	62.8%
55-64	60.0%	59.4%	37.2%	51.0%	65.9%
65+	54.9%	52.4%	33.9%	41.4%	65.8%

Table 3: Support for Reform Proposals by Education

	Term Limits	Limit Contributions	Public Funding	Party Leader Limits	Primary Ballot
H.S. or Less	50.0%	44.4%	24.0%	38.0%	61.5%
Some College	60.8%	57.1%	31.2%	45.5%	67.5%
Bachelor's or More	59.0%	61.2%	39.3%	48.5%	61.8%

Table 4: Support for Reform Proposals by Region

	Term Limits	Limit Contributions	Public Funding	Party Leader Limits	Primary Ballot
City of Chicago	48.2%	49.4%	33.5%	35.2%	48.8%
Chicago Suburbs	62.7%	59.3%	38.7%	48.9%	64.8%
North/Central IL	57.5%	57.6%	25.2%	45.9%	69.5%
Southern IL	53.2%	50.6%	32.9%	45.5%	67.0%

Table 5: Support for Reform Proposals by Party Identification

	Term Limits	Limit Contributions	Public Funding	Party Leader Limits	Primary Ballot
Democrat	50.8%	59.6%	41.2%	43.3%	57.7%
Independent	58.3%	58.3%	34.1%	43.8%	71.3%
Republican	63.4%	52.5%	27.5%	49.0%	60.2%

Table 6: Support for Reform Proposals by Tea Party Support

	Term Limits	Limit Contributions	Public Funding	Party Leader Limits	Primary Ballot
Agree	69.8%	57.7%	34.0%	50.0%	62.6%
No Opinion	49.6%	51.6%	21.4%	39.9%	67.8%
Disagree	55.1%	58.5%	40.6%	46.5%	62.2%

Table 7: Support for Reform Proposals by Church Attendance

	Term Limits	Limit Contributions	Public Funding	Party Leader Limits	Primary Ballot
Weekly Attendance	56.4%	54.0%	27.1%	39.9%	59.6%
Monthly Attendance	54.0%	56.1%	39.7%	55.0%	68.0%
Yearly Attendance	59.8%	57.6%	31.1%	40.1%	65.1%
Never Attend	57.7%	59.3%	38.7%	48.8%	63.2%

Table 8: Support for Reform Proposals by view of the Bible

	Term Limits	Limit Contributions	Public Funding	Party Leader Limits	Primary Ballot
Literalist	54.1%	46.6%	26.5%	39.0%	58.9%
Insipred	58.3%	58.6%	31.3%	47.3%	65.5%
Book of Fables	60.5%	63.3%	49.1%	46.6%	67.9%

Table 9: Support for Reform Proposals by Religious Tradition

	Term Limits	Limit Contributions	Public Funding	Party Leader Limits	Primary Ballot
Evangelical	60.6%	63.4%	34.3%	49.4%	67.4%
Mainline	63.3%	52.6%	37.7%	45.8%	64.9%
Catholic	59.3%	56.8%	30.4%	43.8%	65.4%
Black Protestant	51.5%	43.3%	26.8%	34.9%	38.1%
No Religion	52.8%	61.8%	52.1%	47.1%	66.2%

Table 10: Regression Analysis Predicting Support for Reform Proposals

	Term Limits	Limit Contributions	Public Funding	Party Leader Limits	Primary Ballot
Literalism	-0.19* (0.09)	-0.15 (0.09)	-0.17 (0.10)	-0.06 (0.10)	-0.19* (0.09)
Church Attendance	-0.04 (0.03)	-0.03 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.07* (0.03)	-0.00 (0.03)
Evangelical	0.13 (0.09)	0.23* (0.09)	0.14 (0.10)	0.18 (0.10)	0.01 (0.10)
Age	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.01* (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Caucasian	-0.09 (0.10)	0.05 (0.10)	0.13 (0.12)	0.17 (0.11)	0.46* (0.11)
Education	0.01 (0.03)	0.06* (0.03)	0.06* (0.03)	0.09* (0.03)	-0.00 (0.03)
Male	0.06 (0.07)	-0.09 (0.07)	-0.00 (0.08)	-0.09 (0.08)	-0.20* (0.08)
Region	0.04 (0.05)	0.01 (0.04)	-0.15* (0.05)	0.01 (0.05)	0.12* (0.05)
Conservative Ideology	0.14* (0.03)	-0.03 (0.03)	-0.12* (0.04)	0.11* (0.04)	-0.01 (0.04)
Constant	2.97* (0.24)	3.22* (0.23)	3.10* (0.27)	2.63* (0.26)	2.85* (0.25)
Observations	833	823	780	801	805
R^2	0.034	0.029	0.054	0.050	0.056

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$